Colonialism Unraveling: Race, Religion, And National Belonging In Santo Domingo During The Age Of Revolutions

Charlton W. Yingling
University of South Carolina

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DEDICATION

For my parents, Kevin and Mary Alice. I love you.
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Along my academic meander I have accrued a great many debts to many great people. As far as I can tell, we only get one pass at our careers, and at life on Earth, for that matter. Matt Childs, I am forever grateful for having spent five years of that journey as your student. It is one of the best decisions I have ever made. You have a big mind, a bigger heart, and have been the perfect advisor for me. I look forward to many years as your friend and colleague. Thank you for everything. Gabi Kuenzli, thank you for always making time, for all the advice, for believing in me, and for being your intense and funny self. You have been a major force in my professional growth and personal sanity. Dan Littlefield, thank you for all of the comments and for giving me a home in the Institute for African American Research. Martine Jean, I appreciate you letting me pop into your office for quick chats and for all the book suggestions. Anne Eller, you decided for reasons as of yet unbeknownst to me to become quite supportive of me and invested in my work – thanks for tracking me down at Rice and subsequently sharing your personality and smartness. Much respect and affection to my entire committee. I cannot thank you enough for imparting so much of your time, expertise, and professional support.
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ABSTRACT

Santo Domingo, the first European colony in the Americas, was the original thread at the edge of an expansively woven Spanish imperial tapestry. From 1784-1822 this hem frayed, threatening to unbind the most basic stitches that tied Caribbean colonies to Spanish imperial power. My dissertation analyzes colonial Santo Domingo's cultural, racial, political trajectories amidst influences of the Haitian and French revolutions, Spanish reaction, African Diaspora, and Latin American independence movements. A uniquely Dominican cultural politics of race and nation were born at the intersections of these social and cultural forces, unraveled colonialism, and set terms of engagement with their Haitian neighbors for generations to come. Across the 1790s Spanish colonialism regressed from inclusive counterrevolution and popular piety to linking blackness with impiety and violence while Dominicans of color pursued their own often radical social ambitions. From 1802-1809 Spain surrendered Santo Domingo to French occupation, and despite Spanish recolonization from 1810-1821 Dominicans increasingly abandoned decrepit empires to explore national self-definitions. Popular Dominicans undertook frequent anti-colonial, pro-republican
conspiracies in collaboration with Haitian conspirators. By 1822 demands for citizenship and sovereignty propelled Santo Domingo toward two competing independence movements – one more elite and moderate, the other popular and pro-Haitian. I argue that Dominicans navigated the signature contests of this era to ultimately achieve the most progressive Spanish American independence – immediate emancipation, unqualified citizenship, and stable sovereignty – as they were bound into a New World fabric of anti-colonial racial solidarity via annexation in 1822 to Haiti, the world’s first black republic.
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INTRODUCTION

WHO BELONGS, WHO BELIEVES?: BECOMING DOMINICAN IN HAYTI

In 1785 Antonio Sánchez Valverde, a prominent priest in Santo Domingo with metropolitan intellectual connections and strong ties to local planters and politicians, lamented the disparities between lucrative French Saint-Domingue and economically stagnant Spanish Santo Domingo. Sánchez resentfully admired French exploitation of their much smaller portion of the island of Hispaniola, while Dominicans, “lived drowning in poverty,” but walking upon the “gold and silver” of “more fertile soil.”¹ He interchangeably called his homeland Hayti, just as Oviedo had in the sixteenth century. This was the name that Spanish colonizers in the 1490s inherited from Taíno inhabitants who they eliminated by violence, forced labor, and disease in the ensuing decades, and whose memory they dissipated by renaming the place Isla Española – “Spanish island” – or, Hispaniola.

Sánchez wrote specifically in his hopes of improving the lives and afterlives of the “creoles of Hayti” – otherwise known as Dominicans – for whom he deeply cared.\(^2\)

This astute observer of contemporary social affairs, who acted out of duty to his deity and as a Dominican, had a deep understanding of the island’s strained symbiosis involving the Spanish in the east, and the French in the west, who had by the time of his publication occupied the French western one-fourth of the island for roughly a century.\(^3\) His adoption of this term, “Haiti,” was nearly prophetic, as in just under twenty years an entirely separate group would use this name for an unthinkable project of nation building. Since the Haitian Revolution, Dominicans have been tied to national definitions in comparison or contrast to their neighbors to the west, and this engagement was shaped by the depth and extent of those ties before and during the revolutionary era. The Age of Revolutions produced nations \textit{naturalized} from complex contingencies, rather than \textit{natural} divisions between Dominicans and Haitians.

Dominican locals and Spanish officials understood this connection beyond abstractions on printed pages. The two societies that Sánchez described differed substantially even before Sánchez characterized Santo Domingo as more

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\(^3\) French colonial Saint-Domingue was territorially smaller than the future independent Haiti, which later permanently absorbed territory west of what is now the central border region with the Dominican Republic from roughly Lago Enriquillo to Dajabon.
Catholic and creolized than the hedonistic whites and unassimilated Africans of Saint-Domingue. However, he wrote with admiration of French legal and labor practices that fomented Saint-Domingue’s financial flourish through building a profitable plantation society. Imperial interfacing and multiethnic exchanges were facts of daily existence for the two European colonies with majority populations of African descent cohabiting on one Taíno island - *Hayti*. In 1796 a French official, in an attempt to begin integrating Dominicans into the French Republic, asked the Archbishop of Santo Domingo if he might want to stay as the prelate of a unified island.4 In 1804 the first universally liberated independent state of the Americas made Saint-Domingue into the new, black state of Haiti.5 In 1820 the President of the Republic of Haiti began asking Dominicans of their interest in “the whole island of Hayti” uniting under with one government and one citizenry.6 In 1821 two movements for independence from Spain gripped Santo Domingo. One venture raised the flag of the neighboring “Republic of Hayty.”7 The other, elite-
led project declared an autonomous Spanish Part of Hayti. In early 1822 thousands of Dominicans greeted the mostly black army of the neighboring Republic of Haiti. While the elite-led independence projects fell without violence, the greatest fight of the preceding and ensuing decades pertained to unresolved tensions of race, nation, and religion that Sánchez began to identify in 1785, and which transformed across the island over the decades that followed. With time, some Dominicans came to viscerally reject their place in Haiti, and their shared past and future of one place – Hayti.

**APPROACH & QUESTIONS**

Santo Domingo, founded in 1496 as the first European colony in the Americas, served as the original hem that tied together a widely spun and diverse Spanish imperial tapestry. Social transformations from the 1780s through the 1820s frayed this thread, threatening to unbind the fundamental stitches that wove Caribbean colonies into Spanish imperial power. Haiti shredded the fabric of colonial order, while Dominicans more gradually unraveled the ties that bound them to Europe. Ensnared by Atlantic turmoil, Dominicans maneuvered through

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this era’s transformative schisms between royalism and republicanism, religiosity and secularism, and slavery and abolition, altering paths of European empires and foreshadowing trajectories of Spanish American independence.

From 1791 to 1804 the Haitian Revolution transformed the wealthiest plantation colony in the Americas into the world’s first black republic through the largest and only successful slave revolt in history. After this infinitely complex, watershed event Haiti’s subsequent nation building spilled over the border into the Dominican side of Hispaniola and shaped anti-colonial aspirations, struggles for emancipation, and desires for civic participation. Their ambitions, manifested in plots and revolts, taxed Spanish power and spread debt, prisoners, and agitation to colonial neighbors. Competing paths of empowerment, including the heavy involvement of people of color in Spanish military forces, combined to form lasting legacies of irreversible popular mobilization. The self-empowerment of slaves in Saint-Domingue, and eventually oppressed Dominicans, pressed Spanish colonialism to offer upward mobility to these formerly excluded social sectors in exchange for much needed support. To secure loyalties and prevent enemies from arising within, Spain championed inclusive colonialism based around popular religion and populist royalism. The long-lasting legacies of Catholicism and Spanish culture tied emergent Dominican identity to selective memories of Iberian heritage.
Dominican society was born into modernity in many ways as a fraternal twin to their Haitian neighbors. Their parentage from Catholic piety, a century of Bourbon dynasties, slaveholding labor regimes, agro-export economies, and military alliances on one shared island made them inextricably linked. These societies were varyingly locked in cooperation or conflict, locked on admiration or admonishment, but always locked with what could be accurately described as fraternity at best, and a sibling rivalry at worst. Whether in collaboration or conflagration, coexistence was unavoidable. Santo Domingo, with synchronicity and synergy at every pivotal point of this process, was also remade in the registers of race, nation, and religion with repercussions for their shared island that extended throughout the Age of Revolutions and far beyond. This dissertation examines these foundations of Dominican ideas of national, racial, and religious differences from Haiti.

In the well-known typology used by scholars of Atlantic slavery, Spanish Santo Domingo was a society with slaves rather than a slave society like French Saint-Domingue.10 Furthermore, legal questions pertaining to coerced labor did not define the over eighty percent of Dominicans who were neither enslaved nor owned slaves, including many of whom were free people of color and peasants.

Dominicans of color – whether loyalists or subversives, but always pragmatically multivalent – rejected, appropriated, and modified European symbols into their own cultural politics. By and large, they sought advancement and security wherever opportunity and conviction coincided amidst revolution and reaction.

Why do Dominicans consider themselves to be so different than Haitians? How did Dominicans begin to define themselves as more European and civil, and Haitians as more African and depraved, while exploring their distinctions from Spain, France, and Britain? How did religiosity – both in the socially-binding practices of belief and ritual, and in the ideological discourses of cosmology and position in the universe – influence ideas of Dominican distinction? How did Spanish colonialism and Dominican culture evolve through unanticipated popular empowerment? How did Santo Domingo presage competitions central to the emergence of Spanish American independence conflicts?

ARGUMENTS & RESEARCH

This dissertation examines how amid the French Revolution, Spanish reaction, mass slave insurgencies, formation of the Haitian nation, and emergent Latin American independence movements a uniquely Dominican cultural politics of race, nation, and religion emerged that served to unravel colonialism and set terms of engagement with their Haitian neighbors for many generations to come.
on Hispaniola. I analyze these macro processes through microcosmic episodes, which offer scholars unique vantages into the affinities of Dominicans of color whose crucial actions remain peripheral in most historical canons. I will show how their daily struggles engaged and formed changing ideas and structures signature of the Atlantic Age of Revolutions, and portended trials of race, nation, and citizenship in Latin American independence.

I use underutilized records on underrepresented peoples to reveal how they remade Dominican society at the epicenter of the Age of Revolutions, a body of scholarship from which they are typically excluded. This dissertation is founded upon archival materials from the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Spain, the Vatican, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Understanding marginalized actors through almost any collection of this period entails using sources that were often composed by privileged people for state, church, or commercial uses. These sources occlude certain voices, which necessitates a deconstructive discursive analysis to cut against textual intentions to reconstruct the ambitions, attitudes, and actions of the disempowered majority. For studies of Santo Domingo during this time period, and in Haitian revolutionary studies generally, ecclesiastical texts

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have been largely underutilized by scholars. Few sources yield more nuance than those composed by observant priests cataloging the cultural drift of congregants.

Chapter One examines in detail the context of Sánchez’s appeal to Spain to revitalize the Dominican slave system by borrowing strategically from Saint-Domingue. This chapter establishes the background of social and economic connections between the two colonies, including the profusion of maroons from Saint-Domingue with whom Dominican administrators contended. Dominican slaves were far more creolized than their counterparts in Saint-Domingue: a far smaller portion of the populace; and rather that working in brutal sugar regimes engaged at a much higher rate as hired out day laborers, as domestic workers, and in the less brutal livestock industry that primarily supplied Saint-Domingue. To optimize economic performance, Dominican planters and Spanish officials proposed many innovations to imperial slave codes in the 1780s, and began to crack down on black autonomy. Spanish evangelization was critical to incorporating dissenters into the Dominican body politic. Policies crafted in the 1780s served to establish a template for spiritual reconquest and to assimilate black populations during the revolutionary years to come, though these policies also antagonized many Dominicans of color.

Chapter Two analyzes how the early eruptions of the French Revolution in 1789 shocked Spanish officials and Dominicans with discourses of natural rights
and open attacks on the monarchy, the church, and social hierarchy. As the opulent ruling classes of Saint-Domingue began to fracture between whites and gens de couleur, and between royalists and republicans, fractious political discourse descended into civil warfare. The admiration that Dominican elites so recently had for Saint-Domingue proved fleeting. A gens de couleur revolt prompted a violent backlash, after which conspirators who had been demanding equal rights to whites fled into Santo Domingo, which resulted in a protracted extradition battle. Next the governor of Saint-Domingue took exile in Santo Domingo after a revolutionary white mob executed his chief of staff. Before any slave revolt commenced, Dominicans and Spanish officials knew well of the anti-clerical, anti-monarchical tide inundating France, and washing upon Caribbean shores. The concept of counterrevolution that Spanish officials in Santo Domingo advanced at this time was diametrically opposed to these two ideologies above all else. When the largest slave revolt in Caribbean history erupted in Saint-Domingue in August 1791, the insurgents’ vehement anti-French stance, along with their professions of religiosity and monarchism, appeared as divine providence to many in Santo Domingo.

Chapter Three explains how the most formidable slave insurgents in Saint-Domingue became formal affiliates of King Carlos IV of Spain, and whose form of self-liberation and legally free status as Spanish subjects became the
vanguard of black revolution on Hispaniola, and counterrevolution to French radicalism. This chapter details how black insurgents and Spanish officials participated in a range of mutually affirming public rituals of piety and popular monarchism that structured a westward sweep of Spanish forces. Spain offered upward mobility and resources in exchange for much needed military skill. This popular empowerment of ex-slave insurgents served as an example to Dominican populations of color for many years. To secure their loyalties, and to prevent enemies from arising within Santo Domingo, Spain championed inclusive colonialism based around popular religion and populist royalism. This was the Spanish alternative to what officials cast as destructive slave revolts and impious republicanism, and it attracted a wide range of new adherents that scholars have yet to study in detail.

Chapter Four explores how this military conquest cooperated with a spiritual revival directed from Santo Domingo with support from Madrid and the Vatican. Through this process Spanish operations attempted to integrate new black, white, and mulatto subjects from Saint-Domingue into an improvement project that nearly succeeded by 1793 and 1794. The black auxiliaries – the most powerful groups of ex-slave insurgents who formally aligned with Spain – had so pressured and impressed republican officials in Saint-Domingue that in 1793 French commissioners in Saint-Domingue decided to issue makeshift
emancipations to attract much-needed black support, followed in 1794 by confirmation of emancipation from Paris. This chapter also unveils how the public piety of the black auxiliaries reinforced Dominican ideas of their difference from their French colonial neighbors and encouraged the profusion of evangelization as a means of social mediation through the supernatural. These public ceremonies that cemented alliances also set an expectation for black inclusion in which sufficient professions of faith and royalism merited social belonging in Santo Domingo, whereas secularism or overt African spirituality, republicanism, and racial radicalism increasingly signified “blackness,” Frenchness, and eventually, being Haitian.

Chapter Five analyzes the fallout of the unexpected Treaty of Basel in 1795 through which the cession of Santo Domingo became a peace offering from Spain to the French Republic as part of a broader cessation of hostilities between the empires. The once outward-looking mission to conquer and evangelize quickly pivoted inward to protect Dominican territory and traditions. Social unrest, from which Santo Domingo had largely been spared through the first four years of the Haitian Revolution, increased substantially with the arrival of a provisional French envoy. Slavery had been central to the revolution in Saint-Domingue, where roughly 500,000 of the 600,000 total inhabitants were in bondage. Over eighty percent of Saint-Domingue was enslaved in 1791. At the height of Spanish
involvement, as many as 14,000 ex-slaves fought for King Carlos IV, a number that equaled or surpassed the total number of Dominican slaves in Santo Domingo, where roughly 125,000 people lived in total. One condition of peace was to relocate the black auxiliary leadership off of Hispaniola. The other hurdle for Spanish officials was how to employ the thousands of remaining black troops who still hated France and might otherwise side with the British. Furthermore, slavery was far less central in Santo Domingo. The transfer of Santo Domingo to France that was supposed to transpire in twelve months instead lagged on for over six years. Just after the treaty, one French general attempted a strategically-significant abolition in Santo Domingo which Spanish officials quickly rebuffed with a legal argument that maintained slavery in Santo Domingo until formal French occupation years later. This precipitated an apology on the matter from Paris and an admittance that such actions would violate the Treaty of Basel. Spain continued day-to-day management in the majority of the colony, and although French officials were politically present and denounced slavery they had no jurisdiction, as evinced in the ongoing Spanish adjudication of slave transactions in numerous notarial records. There was no invisible nor failed emancipation in 12 Sánchez, *Idea del valor*, 117–150; Geggus, *Haitian*, 5, 69–74, 132, and 179-180.


14 For example, only from 1796 to 1799, see: Archivo General de la Nación Dominicana (AGN)-Archivo Real de Bayaguana (ARB), leg.1, exp.58, and leg.3, exp.38, and leg.4, exp.54, and leg.49,
Santo Domingo the 1790s, a confusion elsewhere derived from exuberant rights discourses in overwhelmingly French sources. As Spain lost collaborators, spiritual control, and political power, they reverted into increasingly negative racial ascriptions that tied blackness to impious republicanism.

This chapter also explains how some Dominicans celebrated Bastille Day in 1796 in Santo Domingo, read revolutionary texts, and commandeered churches for republican meetings, all of which scandalized Spanish officials and many Dominican residents. A mulatto priest even denounced the king, renounced his vows, married an enslaved girl in a secular ceremony, and declared himself a citoyen. When the largest slave revolt of this era in Santo Domingo erupted at one of the colony’s few major sugar plantations just west of the capital the initial, superficial presumption made by Spanish officials was that French influence was to blame, a plausible explanation that some historians have since embraced and projected upon this event. Once thwarted, a Spanish investigation based upon testimonies from hundreds of slave insurgents showed that the revolt had been organized by a clique of Kongoolese friends who had particular local grievances about treatment on the plantation. To stage their insurrection, they sought advice

exp.25; AGN-Archivo Real de Higüey (ARH), leg.37, exps.77 and 85 and 95, and leg.39R, exps.28 and 36 and 64 and 65 and 69 and 73.

from other nearby Kongolese residents who had actually fought as black auxiliary troops with Jean-François and Biassou in the revolution. One tangential conspirator even took the alias “Viasu” during the plot. This shows the more substantial influence of the original engines of revolution who had initiated the slave revolts in Saint-Domingue, and not the ephemeral notion of republicanism nor lesser-known ideas of citizenship. It also underscored a major problem of Dominican society, which was what to do with underemployed, highly influential black auxiliaries.

Chapter Six reveals a little-known but critically important response to the French republican influence that swept Santo Domingo from mid-1796 through 1798. With a growing sense of abandonment by Spain, and a disgust for French radicalism, a spike of pro-British sympathies inspired a series of Dominican towns to raise the Union Jack. This included a large conspiracy in the capital, which involved included black auxiliary officers. This plot implicated a wide range of powerful figures in Santo Domingo, and resulted in a series of proclamations, secret letters, and spies sent by British generals into the colony. Should this coup have transpired, British military forces could have swept in without a shot being fired and made Santo Domingo a British colony, much like the British occupation of large swaths of Saint-Domingue. This Anglophilic moment drew in a cross section of Dominicans due to British promises to protect Catholicism, incorporate
Dominicans into a moderate constitutional monarchy, and open Santo Domingo to the more prosperous commerce of the British empire. Though this large movement failed, it further hardened grievances against Spain and France and heightened the debates of local distinction from the island’s revolutionary west.

Chapter Seven recounts Santo Domingo’s resignation to the Republic after 1799. Despite repeated French promises since the announcement of the Treaty of Basel that the Republic would respect the religiosity of Dominicans, every indication from Saint-Domingue was that the Republic would actively antagonize Dominican connections to their divinity. This included the brief 1799 revival of the Cult of Supreme Being, which in its Hispaniola iteration included freemasonry, vodou, and Christianity as co-equal predecessors and elevated Toussaint Louverture to a place of historical importance alongside Mohammed and Jesus. More than ever, Santo Domingo became embroiled in the civil war of Saint-Domingue between Toussaint and Rigaud. However, even when Toussaint occupied Santo Domingo in 1801 his own actions on the emancipation question were quite vague.16 When French officials arrived to restrain Toussaint and restore slavery across the island, Dominicans entered a period from 1802-1809 of a French empire receding across the Americas. The French had already retreated from

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16 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 4 February 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 171. Philippe Girard also has found no clear indication of Toussaint extolling emancipation in Santo Domingo: Girard, Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon, 39.
racial egalitarianism. France soon retreated from Saint-Domingue, then Louisiana, and finally Santo Domingo in 1808-1809. Thereafter, French colonial power in the Greater Caribbean was largely confined to smaller outposts in Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Cayenne in the eastern Caribbean. Dominicans of color witnessed firsthand the failings of French republicanism and their natural rights rhetoric.\textsuperscript{17} Many Dominicans with resources, most of whom were white, fled \textit{en masse} in the wake of anemic French rule. During this brief occupation the French governors closed churches, tried to impose their own religious officials into Catholic offices, sold church property, and quite emblematically turned a monastery’s chapel into a cannon turret. The Napoleonic period in Santo Domingo soured quite rapidly.

\textbf{STATE OF SCHOLARSHIP}

Certain contests of the Age of Revolutions are well-known, such as the emblematic American and French variants, or later Latin American independence projects. Santo Domingo, though, has largely been ignored as a component of this era’s momentous legacy. In recent decades historian David Geggus has not only recovered the nuance and gravity of the Haitian Revolution, but traced the ripples

of upheaval emanating from it.\textsuperscript{18} Carolyn Fick has unveiled Saint-Domingue’s colonial combustibility and revolutionary eruption, particularly with the organization and motivations of slave insurgents in the North and West of Saint-Domingue.\textsuperscript{19} John Thornton has shown the deep roots of royalism among slave insurgents of Saint-Domingue, often with African provenance.\textsuperscript{20} Jane Landers has built upon this interpretation, and has traced in detail the career trajectories of Spain’s black auxiliaries.\textsuperscript{21} Laurent Dubois has given us the most readable popular narrative on the Haitian Revolution, which deviates from these scholars to read slaves’ embrace of French rights discourses and radicalization of the Enlightenment into their military and political actions.\textsuperscript{22} Philippe Girard has offered a finely detailed account of the Napoleonic French demise in the revolution’s final years, including important glimpses into Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{23} Jeremy Popkin has published a thorough account of white French colonial politics


\textsuperscript{19} Carolyn Fick, \textit{Making Haiti}.


\textsuperscript{21} Jane Landers, \textit{Atlantic Creoles}, Chapter Two.

\textsuperscript{22} Laurent Dubois, \textit{A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean 1787-1804}, Chapel Hill, 2004;

\textsuperscript{23} Girard, \textit{Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon}. 
in Cap-Français that preceded local emancipation decrees in 1793. Finally, Julia Gaffield has recently detailed the growing pains of a new Haitian state seeking commercial stability and diplomatic recognition in an Atlantic context.

Scholars have only begun to explore Spanish reactions and popular power in Santo Domingo, particularly into the nineteenth century toward the time of Haitian annexation. Recently scholarship has even examined Colombian, American, and Cuban ties to Haiti, among others, while Santo Domingo – the polity that actually shared the same island, was more impacted by the revolution, and eventually became Haiti – has been less studied. Dominicans have largely been overlooked, or misunderstood, due to a prevalence of teleological narratives tightly focused on French emancipations, republicanism, nation-state formation and natural rights ideologies. These elements had only limited influence in Santo Domingo, and such readings tend to overly dichotomize this complex, multipolar social and political landscape. Historians often celebrate revolutionary intrigues instead of parsing the competitions and lasting consequences of more complex

24 Jeremy Popkin, *You Are All Free*.
25 Gaffield, *Haitian Connections*.
cultural configurations, such as religiosity and reactions to revolution as ingredients in nation building.

Nevertheless, new studies based on under-unexplored French sources by César Cuevas Pérez, Guillermo Díaz Bidó, Fernando Picó, and Graham Nessler have yielded substantial clarifications on the brief French occupation of Santo Domingo from 1802-1809. Anne Eller has recently suggested that nineteenth-century popular political engagements by Dominicans of color with Haitians, including work on a fascinating anti-imperial conspiracy in 1810 with far-reaching implications for pro-Haitian popularity toward the 1822 merger. Nor, as Eller has importantly demonstrated, was this Haitian support for Dominican anti-imperialism limited to the independence era, as Haiti extensively aided successful Dominican popular resistance from 1863-1865 to Spanish recolonization that had commenced in 1861.

Aside from attempting to attribute the mode of vodou in the eruption of the initial slave revolts in Saint-Domingue in August 1791, and from brief

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explorations of certain leaders’ spiritual compass, the study of religious faiths and its ubiquitous functionality have remained absent from scholarship. This is particularly concerning given the definitive divide of divinity in Dominican nationalism and its deleterious descriptions of Haiti. The Haitian Revolution and its aftermath challenged all participants to reconsider their own positions in their known universe. Scholars have a far better grasp and far more comfortable analyzing modern political and social registers – such as rights discourses, nation-state formation, and abolition – especially in Saint-Domingue. However, each cultural group, and indeed each individual, managed these events through their own varied conceptualization of what it meant to be human and how the natural, preternatural, and supernatural worlds operated. Belief served a series of structurally significant systems of ritual, rhetoric, and routine. These faith professions identified participants within layered societal strata of empire and economy, race and region. Evangelism was more pronounced in Santo Domingo than Saint-Domingue. Indeed, Spain emphasized the supernatural far more than French monarchical rule did. The greater divergence came when the Republic traveled anti-clerical and secular paths unthinkable to a majority of Dominicans and Spanish subjects more broadly. The greater openness of African spirituality

and of freemasonry in Saint-Domingue further startled many in Santo Domingo. Over time, one prominent version of Dominican belonging developed in this era was defined by Catholicism, the Spanish language, and Iberian heritage and history as the cultural repertoire that differentiated them from their Haitian neighbors.\textsuperscript{31} As Scott Eastman has shown regarding Spain and Mexico, the Hispanic nationalism that developed in the Age of Revolutions marked by a Catholic public sphere, with legal protections for faith, and monarchical sanctity became transformed into a liberalizing, “mixed modernity” that integrated belief and ritual into Enlightenment political developments.\textsuperscript{32} Such discourses thrived in Santo Domingo. With Spanish abandonment of Santo Domingo, and Dominican criticism of Spain, this Catholic cultural core became tied to an idealized Spanish past rather than a shared Iberian imperial future.

Finally, works on Latin American independence ignore the Dominican variation of independence, largely due to its unique trajectory of annexation to an extant independent state – Haiti.\textsuperscript{33} This confluence of ambitions formed early

\textsuperscript{31} David Howard, \textit{Coloring the Nation: Race and Ethnicity in the Dominican Republic} (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2001); Andrés L. Mateo, \textit{Mito y cultura en la era de Trujillo} (Santo Domingo: La Trinitaria, 1993): 12, 25, and 141.

\textsuperscript{32} Scott Eastman, \textit{Preaching Spanish Nationalism across the Hispanic Atlantic, 1759-1823} (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2012).

Dominican national aspirations, a key variation among contests of Spanish American independence, civic belonging, and political modernity in the Atlantic Age of Revolutions more broadly. This specifically includes connecting themes in this dissertation to other movements of Latin American independence, and the suggestion that Santo Domingo joining Haiti in 1822 was one of the most peaceful and progressive forms of independence in the entire Americas. Without understanding the intricate cultural politics of revolution, reaction, and their fallout in later defining race and nation in Santo Domingo we seriously risk fundamental misunderstandings of interwoven Spanish colonialism and religiosity, and Haitian radicalism and republicanism.

WHO BELONGS AS DOMINICAN?

For twenty years Dominicans had a front row seat to European imperial mismanagement. Increasingly, Dominicans of color, who were shunned by Spain and France and affronted by local elites’ interest in the status quo or perhaps greater autonomy (primarily for themselves), came to embrace a multiethnic, multinational citizenship with more radical tenets such as immediate emancipation and racial egalitarianism. Dominicans revolted against French rule

from 1808 to 1809 and welcomed Spanish recolonization in 1810. Many Dominicans of color reacted negatively to the new evangelization project by Spain and the failings of the Cortes de Cádiz to incorporate people of African descent into Spanish liberalism. Simultaneously, they engaged Haitian spies who sought to expand Haitian nation-building projects into Santo Domingo. Derived from discourses forged during the revolution, Spanish officials portrayed the new Haitian state as immoderate, African, and religiously and socially aberrant. Resurgent Catholicism and Spanish culture tied emergent Dominican identity to memories of Iberian heritage, a cultural repertoire that differentiated them from their Haitian neighbors. At the outset of separatist sentiments sweeping across Latin America these ideas were far more concrete than abstract for Dominicans given the immediacy of the Haitian example. Many Dominicans came to embrace Haiti, which had just been unified under Jean-Pierre Boyer after lingering years of civil war between Christophe and Pétion. As opposed to the often corrosive Dominican national memory of the present, this dissertation asserts that the unification of the island under Haitian rule was one of the most peaceful and progressive forms of independence in the Americas as a multiethnic state of immediate abolition and citizenship.

34 Howard, Coloring the Nation; Mateo, Mito y cultura.
Understanding this variant of independence for Santo Domingo as the culmination of a lengthy, successful collaboration contradicts the national incompatibility projected on the past that undergirds much of Dominican nationalism and historiography. Indeed, Dominicans attained freedom, rights, equality, and state belonging as Haitian citizens in what was perhaps the most resounding victory for popular ambitions in Spanish America during the Age of Independence. And, even more remarkably I would suggest this represented one of the most unique contests over race and nation in the Atlantic Age of Revolutions as an apex slave colony turned black republic brought independence to a Spanish Caribbean colony. However, the defeated elite faction that had sought to ally with the moderate republicanism of Simón Bolívar’s Gran Colombia are nevertheless to this day wistfully heralded in scholarship and national historical memory alike. Accordingly, this elite nationalism has whitewashed the aspirations of popular Dominicans in the Age of Revolutions. For them, membership in the Haitian state was the epitome of citizenship, racial solidarity, and national future. Such exclusionary historical memory casts the decisive anti-colonial actions of popular Dominicans and Haitian collaborators that forged independence and inclusion for the entire island as a black menace of Haitian “occupation” that impeded Dominican modernity. This has distorted a sense of belonging for Dominicans of color and the legitimacy of ethnic Haitians within the Dominican nation to the
present day. Popular Dominican demand for the 1822 Haitian union was among the most progressive and inclusive forms achieved in the course of Latin American independence.

In the worst examples of this sibling rivalry, Dominican discourses depict Haitians as more African, more depraved, less civilized, even less human. Dominicans are championed as more Catholic, with Spanish as a more distinguished language than Kreyol, and a more cultured, more moderate, and more urbane lifestyle. These characterizations present Santo Domingo as a stable society being only acted upon by radical Haitians or French revolutionaries. It describes a series of black invasions as unprovoked aggressions – Toussaint in 1801, Dessalines in 1805, and Boyer in 1822 – while ignoring the deep Dominican influence in the Haitian Revolution and later the favor for Haitian rule among many in Santo Domingo. Such depictions range drastically on the scale of racist overtones, and this phenomenon cannot simply be blamed on the era of the notoriously anti-Haitian Trujillo dictatorship. The historical memory of

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“unwarranted” Haitian aggression and racial or ethnic contamination dates to at least the nineteenth century with ties to the Spanish administration during the revolution. Even left of center intellectuals in the twentieth century failed to question or empirically validate such assertions, and largely accepted that involvement with Haiti was one of the most disruptive phenomena of Dominican history. Explaining the formation of anti-Haitian discourses is thus critically important. The turbulence of late colonialism and independence from 1784 to 1822, including the uniquely Dominican fetishizing of Spanish Catholic culture, is key to understanding this rivalry between two nations with populations both of majority African descent. Historical distortions have been invoked to legitimize and legalize contemporary exclusions of people of Haitian descent in Dominican

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36 For a more expansive discussion on this entire issue, see: Pedro L. San Miguel, The Imagined Island: History, Identity, and Utopia in Hispaniola (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005): 8-34; Sibylle Fischer, Modernity Disavowed, Part II. Prominent intellectuals during the Trujillo era who did deliberately craft an anti-Haitian Dominican nationalism with many direct references to the Age of Revolutions included Joaquín Balaguer, a top advisor and vice president to Trujillo who later served as an autocratic President of the Dominican Republic for almost twenty-four of the next thirty-six years following his death: Joaquín Balaguer, La isla al revés: Haiti y el destino dominicano (Santo Domingo: Fundación José Antonio Caro, 1983). Scholars such as Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi who is well known for his numerous compilations of primary sources not only toed the Trujillo anti-Haitian line, but actively attacked Haitian scholars who suggested a shared past and future with Dominicans. Juan Bosch, now the emblem of modern Dominican democracy, was more nuanced and less essentialist toward Haitians, and mentored one of the most important twentieth-century Dominican politicians – José Francisco Peña Gómez – who was of Haitian descent. However, he never fully abandoned the idea that Haiti was to blame for much of the economic and social languishing of nineteenth-century Dominican history: Juan Bosch, Trujillo, las causas de una tiranía sin ejemplo (Santo Domingo: Editora Alfa & Omega, 2005).
society, and contribute heavily to deleterious, internationalized stereotypes of Haitian culture.

From the Dominican split from Haiti in 1844 to Haitian aid against Spanish recolonization in the 1860s, the 1937 massacre of tens of thousands of Haitians by a Dominican dictatorship, Dominican assistance after Haiti’s ruinous 2010 earthquake, Haitians and Dominicans have long been entangled in layers of antagonism and amicability, hostility and harmony, conflict and cooperation. Anti-Haitian racism often fills Dominican policy, evinced by the Dominican revocation of citizenship from thousands of ethnic Haitians in 2013 followed by their tragic mass deportation in 2015. This most corrosive cases of Dominicans asserting their national difference draw directly upon a series of grievances against Haiti rooted in a particular national memory of the late colonial era. Ideas about this era have enormous contemporary consequence.
CHAPTER 1
ANTECEDENTS: SANTO DOMINGO THROUGH THE 1780S

When the priest and intellectual Antonio Sánchez Valverde lamented the disparities between lucrative French Saint-Domingue and stagnant Spanish Santo Domingo in 1785 his words transcended simple disparities in profits or jealousy to specifically criticize the weak Dominican slave regime and legal order as the, "paramount cause of the difference between the wealth of Saint-Domingue and Spanish poverty." Among other factors, Sánchez blamed autonomías held by people of color – peasants, peddlers, maroons, and even enslaved wage earners – for defying racial boundaries and setting examples of social ascent, which allegedly eroded slave obedience, and thus, the vitality of the Dominican economy.

Father Sánchez argued that French prosperity rested upon their massive importation of Africans, who – unlike Spaniards and criollos, he asserted – were perfectly suited to working in the torrid climate despite what he called their "vain, self-flattery." Spain’s ambitions to catalyze a plantation regime had been foiled by

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1 Sánchez, Idea, 138-151.
the French, English, Dutch, and Portuguese control over the African slave trade. Those few enslaved Africans sent to Santo Domingo had been passed over for some physical ailment due to their traumatic passage, and other slaves sent to the island were, “second- or third-hand” castoffs from Saint-Domingue or elsewhere in the Caribbean. Sánchez appealed for more direct access to slaving vessels by opening the asiento contracts to more suppliers and the expansion of regional commerce for Dominican hacendados to capitalize on larger slave markets in other Caribbean ports through direct purchase, when possible.

Sánchez dramatically cited thievery, festivities, random truancy, prostitution, and aiding runaways as vices of free people of color that had also rendered the slave population less productive by undermining slaves’ discipline. He pleaded for severe restrictions on the social and spatial mobilities of Dominicans of color to coerce them toward religion, obedience, and work. Sánchez also sought to curb their numbers by ending emancipation by self-purchase, owner granted manumission practices, and marronage. He argued, rather erroneously, that the efficient French had cut these practices, and hoped that these prohibitions would draw underemployed whites back into skilled jobs.²

Finally, he advocated corporal punishment to actualize reform, writing that though the screams of a beaten soul might shock Europeans, it was a rational act to maximize profit. This even included whipping free people of color to affirm racial subordination. He said that a planter would never do that, “except when a slave has failed badly.” His defense of corporal punishment primarily regarded slaves, though the new Código Negro Carolino and subsequent ordinances did make it quite likely that free people of color could experience the lash. The local cabildo and audiencia endorsed these codes but they were never fully accepted at the imperial level, and most legal innovations were overturned in 1789 by a somewhat less robust imperial slave code that was itself never completely implemented. Sánchez, and many other well-off white urbanites, bureaucrats, and planters wanted to enact prohibitions to severely curtail the hiring of slaves in...
cities and further accused them for giving their owners only part of their earnings and resting at length.³

Sánchez expressed a range of perfunctory, racist diatribes mixed in with a collection of distinct and newer policy recommendations regarding the perceived leniency toward free people of color and slaves. However, the real novelty of Sánchez’s treatise was its mass printing and direct appeal to King Carlos III, both of which superseded common local complaints. Thus, a wide metropolitan audience learned of policy designs that Dominican elites had already recommended in testimony to colonial officials. Their common goal was to revitalize the moribund economy of Santo Domingo into a dynamic agro-export colony, which it had never been aside from a brief sixteenth-century flourish. Sánchez’ book reinforced the lobbying efforts of the master class to coincide with the imperial review of the pivotal, newly-drafted Código Negro Carolino of 1785.

These wishful laws that attempted to limit geographic mobility and non-plantation labor of slaves ultimately had little impact. However, in the mid-1780s local Spanish officials quickly implemented statutes designed to curb the social and economic lives of Dominicans of color. Sánchez appraisal of the colony as a whole, and the unrealized value thereof, transcended the carefully focused scope

³ Sánchez, Idea, 155-156.
of the new slave laws. It was also a timely socio-cultural introduction to a colony that would become unrecognizable over the ensuing three decades, during which time the tempo of change in the sleepy, small, and economically forgotten colony would outpace any events or periods of the preceding three hundred years. Finally, Sánchez Valverde demonstrated the entanglement of the church with colonial politics, imperial policies, slavery, and definitions of local history and identity. This was not an isolated case, and would only become a more strident and essential relationship in the ensuing years.

This first half of this chapter focuses on the 1780s and considers the consequences of new restrictive racial policies, views of Saint-Domingue in Santo Domingo, anti-colonial affinities of Dominicans of color, and attempts at evangelization to mediate these social and cultural tensions. The second half of this chapter examines how this collection of social antecedents set the stage for the three tumultuous decades that followed on the island, particularly as Spanish officials and Dominican elites implemented restrictive resettlement policies upon two particular communities of color, one beside the capital, and the other on the extreme imperial periphery.

This chapter will advance three arguments. First, the process of forming new legal codes for slavery in the colony was, though ultimately ineffectual, a process of projecting local particularities within the Spanish empire and
Dominican differences from Saint-Domingue. Second, influential images of French sugar, coffee, and indigo profits swayed officials and planters in Santo Domingo to emulate the brutal racial dominance that they observed in Saint-Domingue, albeit with overtones of evangelical purification. This renewed emphasis on evangelical mediation to assimilate black subjects prefaced geopolitical strategies of spiritual allegiance and conquest that would emerge during the Haitian Revolution. Third, subversions by Dominicans of color a decade later in the 1790s transpired within the context of these recent draconian efforts, mixed with the ideological ferment and structural vulnerability unleashed from 1789-1791. To reconstruct their lives and influence requires an examination of administrative, ecclesiastical and military papers kept by powerful Spanish men and institutions that many Dominicans of color tried to avoid. This chapter seeks to dissect textual biases and intents that construed decisions by people of color as contradictory or confused, and instead reveals their “transcript” of actions.4

SANTO DOMINGO, SAINT-DOMINGUE

From the first fort that Christopher Columbus built on Hispaniola in 1492, and the first 39 crew members that he left there, the colony that soon became Santo

Domingo a backwater. It was the first European colony in the Americas, from which Spain “discovered” Jamaica and Cuba, and in which it founded the first permanent European settlement in 1496 – the city of Santo Domingo. Even before the Columbus brothers were stripped of ruling power, the settlers on the island had proved hard to govern, many Spaniards and Taíno having fled further west into the island’s distant and rugged interior. In 1508, after less than twenty years of Spanish rule the 60,000 Taíno out of the perhaps 400,000 when Columbus arrived had managed to survive forced labor (mostly in gold mines), Spanish atrocities, and disease, which was truly the greatest killer. In 1511 that number dropped to about 33,000. In 1514 the number hit 26,000. In 1516 they numbered 11,000, and in 1519 the Taíno – at 3,000 – were nearly eradicated from the island. Much of this decline transpired before the major smallpox epidemic of 1518-1519. The systems of *repartimiento* and *encomienda* labor regimes had forced indigenous peoples into virtual slavery and forced conversions under Spanish power, but this dire demographic collapse, which laid bare Spanish profit motivations and disdain for indigenous humanity, also produced one of the most significant figures of the

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sixteenth century world – Bartolomé de las Casas. This encomendero turned priest became a champion of protecting indigenous lives, however his momentous writings also opened the door to increasing the African slave trade, then in nascence.⁷

The depletion of gold supply and indigenous labor allowed for livestock and sugar to grow as colonial enterprises. In the newly-depopulated interior, cattle escaped pens and wandered across the island, constantly reproducing and consuming the lush vegetation. Prior to the cattle trade becoming a dominant economic force in the colony, horses, in fact, were regularly raised and exported to support other colonization efforts. Dozens of ingenios began to dot the landscape around the capital, the only population center capable of the requisite capital investment for sugar production equipment. African slavery rapidly expanded. By the mid-1540s only 5,000 Spaniards lived in the colony, compared to 15,000 slaves, a number that rapidly grew to well over 20,000 by the late-1560s. The average ingenio slave population exceeded 100. The numbers of slaves, ingenios, and sugar output at this time in the sixteenth century likely exceeded any time in the eighteenth century. At least a few thousand maroons fled sugar

plantations and regrouped into autonomous bands in the rough interior. They would steal and resell Spanish goods to smugglers along the unguarded coastline, just as many other colonists engaged in similar contraband. The economy in the majority of the north and west of the island was based on contraband by the 1570s. A variety of new products that could be produced more cheaply and fetch better profit margins (often illicitly) surpassed sugar, which was not as easily smuggled, and at the same time new sources of sugar – namely Brazil – cut into market share.\(^8\) Santo Domingo saw the first sugar boom in the Americas, and it was also the first colonial economy to go bust. This was the colony that Sánchez Valverde lamented having lost and wanted to recover, and the same model colony that contemporary French planter Médéric Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry admired in his own contemporary study of Spanish Santo Domingo.\(^9\)

As much as Spanish officials despised contraband, their preoccupations with smuggling also focused on their desire to defend against foreign spiritual and political ideas and affiliations form infiltrating the island and its populace. In 1605

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Governor Osorio marched northward and westward from the colonial capital and evicted colonists to great protest and revolt. Intending to deprive colonists of unholy and illicit activities, they instead opened territory for smugglers and rivals to perch on the empty lands. These “devastations” also ruined the colony’s economy as slaves fled and their overall numbers collapsed, livestock died or ran away, and crops rotted in the ground. Their poverty was so extreme that Spanish imperial officials directed a new *situado*, or budget supplement, from the rich colony of Mexico. Over the seventeenth century the Dutch, English, and French jockeyed for settlement space on the island, with many early settlers having been the same smugglers that the Spanish tried to undercut. During that time residents of Santo Domingo suffered from hunger, little imperial aid, hurricanes, and epidemics. By the 1670s the French had settled about a dozen small but prosperous towns across the western and northwestern edge of the island. After the Treaty of Ryswick of 1697 formally assigned the western third of the island to French control, Santo Domingo continued to sputter across the eighteenth century as Saint-Domingue became the most profitable acreage in the Americas by the end of the 18th century.10

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This cross-island, trans-imperial relationship had developed over three centuries into alternating sibling rivalry and symbiosis. In the eighteenth century the cattle trade became the tie that bound Santo Domingo to its French neighbor. The French were unwilling to dedicate much of their fertile land to livestock or subsistence, and as their export crops and profits soared they generated a cash flow that afforded a negative balance of trade with neighboring Spanish domains for certain staple crops, and for the draught animals, and hides of the cattle trade in particular. Thousands of slaves and free blacks in Santo Domingo were those who tended herds owned by colonial elites, which benefited the French elites and fueled the sugar and coffee expansions that brutalized African labor next door. The dynamic exchange of goods transformed the interior and border region of Santo Domingo. Most notable among the settlers colonizing the border regions were migrants from the Canaries.

Dominican cattle traders were in constant tension with Spanish officials, and sometimes French officials, regarding bureaucratic efforts to tax, regulate, and sometimes politically undercut the powerful livestock trade. This was a central contention regarding the border region as well, and despite the number of treaties over the century that tried to demarcate and recognize the respective colonial entities the issue was never fully resolved. By the 1760s and 1770s the volume and importance of the livestock industry was so essential to both colonies that it
required top-level negotiations in both colonial capitals to secure lines of trade, prices, and property rights. In 1762 this contract stipulated that about 9,600 heads of cattle per year would be sent across the border to Saint-Domingue. In 1787 the French deregulated their cattle ordinances and allowed for the free purchase at market rates.\textsuperscript{11} That same year the king’s councils in Spain received a map delineating the estimated annual trade in cattle to Saint-Domingue. The explanatory notes indicated that about 33,000 heads of cattle entered Saint-Domingue from Santo Domingo annually, and another 3,000 from Puerto Rico. They not only crossed the frontier, but were sometimes sent from Monte Cristi, Puerto Plata, or Samaná. It included a fascinating list of individual locales and their estimated overall intake, which in total represented an impressive geographic coverage of all major towns in Saint-Domingue. Some of the notable numbers included 1,500 heads of cattle to Port-au-Prince and to Saint-Marc each, and an incredible 6,900 to Cap-Français alone, the latter city having a population approaching 18,000 at the time.\textsuperscript{12}

Cattle production was the major industry in Santo Domingo during the eighteenth century. However, Dominican elites and Spanish officials were painfully aware of its far inferior profitability to Saint-Domingue’s exports, of their

\textsuperscript{11} Moya Pons, \textit{Dominican}, 73-89.

\textsuperscript{12} 29 November 1787, AHN-Consejos, 20762; Popkin, \textit{You Are All Free}, 58.
own reliance upon Saint-Domingue’s markets, and of their comparative weakness and economic subordination to the French. That is the sentiment that Sánchez Valverde had articulated, and that was the motivation behind the mid-1780s project to collect planters’ testimonies and critiques of the status quo to improve Dominican society in the image of their neighbor. Unquestionably the peasantry of color, maroon communities, slaves and free blacks in the livestock industry, and slaves in the capital who worked liberally for pay had a very different existence than the majority of sugar and coffee slaves only so many miles away in French domains. That is what Spanish officials and Dominican elites sought to change.

Figure 1.2: Spanish Santo Domingo.
French Saint-Domingue flourished through its vicious agro-export regime, which was fueled by massive importation of enslaved Africans. Between 1785 and 1790 the colony imported about 31,400 African captives a year, creating a population of 500,000 slaves out of nearly 600,000 residents.13 Meanwhile Santo Domingo had less than 14,000 slaves in a population of roughly 125,000.14 In Saint-Domingue roughly 8,000 plantations were under cultivation. Its reputation as the “Pearl of the Antilles” was built by slave labor, and contributed to at least 40% of France’s overseas economic activity. By itself, a geographic entity barely larger than Maryland, Saint-Domingue exported more commodities in worth than the United States. It produced more total exports than all of the British Caribbean colonies combined. Its slave population alone was roughly four times the size of Spanish Santo Domingo’s entire population, despite Spanish Santo Domingo having over three times the geographic size of its neighbor to the west. Its slave population was twice the slave population of the closest major sugar and coffee rival, Jamaica.15 Perhaps the jobs of one million of France’s 25 million people relied

14 Sánchez, Idea del valor, 117–150; Geggus, Haitian Revolutionary Studies, 5 and 69–74.
directly upon Saint-Domingue, and about 15% of the National Assembly members owned property there. It produced more sugar than perhaps Cuba and Jamaica combined.\(^\text{16}\)

Figure 1.3: French Saint-Domingue.

Saint-Domingue had nearly 800 sugar and cotton plantations each, and over 3,000 coffee and indigo plantations each. It produced as much as 40% of the

\(^{16}\) Dubois, *Avengers*, 21.
world’s sugar and half of its coffee.\textsuperscript{17} In the year 1790 alone Saint-Domingue produced 60,000 metric tons of sugar. By comparison, Cuba produced 15,000 in 1790.\textsuperscript{18} Around that same time Santo Domingo had fewer than 50 \textit{ingenios}, and a sugar plantation with 50 slaves was considered to be large.\textsuperscript{19} In Jamaica the average was over 150 per plantation, and in Saint-Domingue it was 185.\textsuperscript{20} Furthermore, the meteoric rise of Saint-Domingue had occurred in only one century, whereas Spain had a two-century head start on colonization on the island. The French side of Hispaniola had not even been formally recognized until the Treaty of Ryswick of 1697. Only then did Spain finally concede \textit{de jure} status to the \textit{de facto} colony that had sprung up from the inauspicious start of deliberate Spanish depopulation to curtail contraband trade that enabled the eventual settlement on land by those same smugglers and pirates who they tried to undercut.

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\textsuperscript{19} Moya Pons, \textit{Dominican}, 89.
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NEW SLAVE CODES AND THE MIND OF THE MASTER CLASS

As early as the 1760s planters in Santo Domingo had tried to reform their slave laws to fortify racial hierarchies but were thwarted by royal reluctance. With an envious eye on their neighbor Saint-Domingue, in the 1780s Dominican elites again schemed for social and political dominance in the service of economic resurgence. Their complaints about black autonomies such as freedom of movement, lack of white oversight, participation in small-scale commerce, and their perceived rowdiness prompted the Consejo de Indias (Council of Indies) to sanction the composition of new laws. Thus, just prior to Hispaniola’s inundation by the Haitian Revolution, officials in Santo Domingo set out to graft Saint-Domingue’s success and Code Noir onto local conditions. The resultant Código Negro Carolino, provisionally adopted in Santo Domingo in 1785, codified many suggestions advocated by Sánchez and sparked debates leading to the imperial Código Carolino Negro of 1789. It was one of the latest, and most


ambitious, attempts of the Bourbon reform. With blessing from the king and Consejo de Indias, the order went forth in late 1783 from Madrid to begin collecting suggestions and testimony from leading political, military, and especially economic officials in Santo Domingo. José de Galvez, one of the most important Enlightened advisors to King Carlos III, conceded that the empire needed to draft new ordinances for the governance of political economy and morality of the blacks on that island and other colonies, and specifically referenced the success that the French had extracted through their *Code Noir* in Saint-Domingue.

The process of forming new slave laws began in Santo Domingo in March 1784. The instructions informed the Audiencia to collect and review all old and more recent laws regarding blacks and slavery to study their relevance and build off the French *Code Noir*, and collect elite testimony regarding the applicability of such laws. With direct oversight from Governor Isidoro Peralta, officials instructed the powerful roster to consider reforms for the “economic, political, and

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25 “Testimonio de los informes pedidos por el oidor Dn. Agustín Emparan y Orbe; con acuerdo del Presidente de la RI. Aud. A a los hacendados, y demas sugeros de inspeccion de la ciudad de Santo Domingo para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro, con arreglo al extraordinario celebrado por los señores de ella en siete de febrero del año pasado de ochenta y quarto,” José de Galvez to the Gov.r of Santo Domingo, Madrid, 23 December 1783, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 1-1v.

26 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Audiencia de Santo Domingo, 6 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 1v-2v.
moral governance of the blacks of this island.”

Contributors included Antonio Dávila Coca, a major haciendo near the capital. He voiced his enthusiasm to participate in a process that he viewed as essential to stimulating agriculture. He argued that one of the primary impediments to developing haciendas was the management of blacks, both enslaved and free. Nearly all participants voiced similar sentiments. Other testimony came from Antonio Mañon, a militia officer who had served in the region for twenty-five years, Andrés Herédia, a distinguished and high-ranking commissioned officer who had served on the island and particularly the frontier for over thirty years, and Ignacio Caro, another seasoned military officer. Francisco de Tapia, José Nuñez, and Francisco Cabral were all prominent community members who also testified.

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27 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Audiencia de Santo Domingo, 7 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 2v-4v.

28 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Antonio Davila Coca, 10 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 6-8.

29 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Antonio Mañon, 11 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 8-10; Joaquín García to Secretaría del Despacho de Guerra, Santo Domingo, 20 January 1790, Archivo General de Simancas (AGS)-Secretaría del Despacho de Guerra (SGU), 7155.”Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Andrés Heredia, 20 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 50-55v.”Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Ignacio Caro, 12 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 10-16v.

30 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco de Tapia, 16 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 33-35v.”Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” José Nuñez, 18 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 41-43. Some historians have said that this José Nuñez was in fact José Nuñez de Cáceres. The latter, born in 1772, was likely not giving imperial-level testimony at age twelve.”Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco Cabral, 19 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 43v-47.
Their testimony indicated a number of common areas of concern, and depicted a range of racial tensions that churned around the institution of slavery in Santo Domingo. One of the primary complaints centered on the cost, efficiency, and demonstrations of Catholicism of the enslaved. As did nearly all deponents, Caro criticized the slaves’ “excessive fiestas” and claimed that slaves received more than ninety sanctioned days for religious observance, though his number might have included Sundays. He suggested that the archbishop reduce the number of such holy days and obliquely criticized church protections for this free time that were established about three centuries before by Pope Paul III, who certainly prioritized souls over planters’ profit. Dávila Coca complained that holidays and religious fiestas seemed to only increase in number. When masters excused slaves to attend an extended mass, he said, he could busy himself with his oxen and work but the slaves were able to refuse to help unless he financially contributed to the archbishop for their Festivals of Two Crosses, some of the largest celebrations of the year. On these various days of the year, separate from Sunday observances, both Spaniards and the racial castas were obligated to stop work and hear mass and an evening vesper, which drew from a Vatican imperative issue by Pope Paul

31 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Ignacio Caro, 12 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 10-16v.

32 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Antonio Davila Coca, 10 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 6-8.
III to honor certain saints. Because of the dismissal from labor duties, these days had raucous reputations elsewhere in Latin America.\textsuperscript{33}

Mañon also complained about the boisterous nature of these specific celebrations.\textsuperscript{34} Caro said that the slaves’ celebrations of the patron saints were notorious and excessive, and he particularly detested their celebrations at Christmas time when many slaves and free blacks travelled extensively and without any oversight. He suggested limiting celebrations to only three major holidays a year. Caro said that a century before the archdiocese had even supported priests at various locations to administer sacraments and celebrations, and without cost incurred to the hacendados. However, without this funding “slaves without spiritual delivery” had become the religious responsibility of individual planters who supposedly paid priests a piecemeal fee for each confession they heard from blacks.\textsuperscript{35} Nuñez appreciated that slaves were always provided the fundamentals of religion and give “Christian care”.\textsuperscript{36}


\textsuperscript{34} “Testimonio… para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro…,” Antonio Mañón, 11 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 8-10.

\textsuperscript{35} “Testimonio… para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro…,” Ignacio Caro, 12 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 10-16v.

\textsuperscript{36} “Testimonio… para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro…,” José Nuñez, 18 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 41-43.
complaints over the festivals, Cabral suggested moderating the use of aguardiente in those events to avoid drunkenly disorder. He said that slaves should just pray and then quickly return to their masters’ homes, rather than stay away all day.37

Undeniably, the enslaved exploited the resources at their disposal to ameliorate their daily existence, in this case taking advantage of church protections for their spiritual wellbeing. Not only did slaves in Saint-Domingue endure harsher labor regimes in sugar, coffee, indigo, and cacao, whereas a great many Dominican slaves worked in cattle and various urban or domestic roles, but the vibrant Dominican debate over how to evangelize slaves and allow for religious holidays was, by comparison, a muted whimper in French Saint-Domingue.38 Spanish governance in Santo Domingo at least considered slaves as souls, a distinction that slaves in Saint-Domingue experienced to a far lesser degree.39

Planters also wanted to claim greater oversight over public rulings in colonial courts regarding slave conduct. Dávila Coca recommended that all such legal proceedings should be advised by a co-judge who should be an intelligent planter capable of arranging better subordination of the slaves to white owners.

37 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco Cabral, 19 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 43v-47.
and overseers and, implicitly, to erode their limited privileges.\textsuperscript{40} Cabral also suggested that if a slave raised a complaint against a slaveholder that there should be co-advisement on discipline and legal matters from an experienced planter.\textsuperscript{41}

Specifically, slaves’ opportunity for self-purchase, known as \textit{coartación} in many parts of the empire, was a legal maneuver that perplexed planters.\textsuperscript{42} Mañon advocated prohibition of this practice, which he said sometimes transpired without consent from their masters and had caused many social problems.\textsuperscript{43} Caro speculated that peasants of color sometimes helped slaves pay for their freedom, which he thought contravened the law. He also stated that many freed people were subsequently so poor and indigent that they became criminals, vagrants, and “bad women”.\textsuperscript{44} Herédia did not like freed people and thought they were bad examples who availed themselves of the laws of the “Incas of Peru” which, to him, apparently meant undue privileges. He said that French restrictions on slave manumission were worthy for adoption, and aside from extracting greater labor

\textsuperscript{40} “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Antonio Davila Coca, 10 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 6-8.

\textsuperscript{41} “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco Cabral, 19 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 43v-47.


\textsuperscript{43} “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Antonio Mañon, 11 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 8-10.

\textsuperscript{44} “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Ignacio Caro, 12 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 10-16v.
demands from the existing population, he advocated for the introduction of more slaves. In his treatise Sánchez Valverde lambasted the practice of self-purchase as a distortion of religious rights and principals that produced criminals and prostitutes, implicitly to both pay for freedom and sustain freed people thereafter. He admired the French rejection of the practice.

Several of the additional testimonies collected by the Audiencia of Santo Domingo whole-heartedly endorsed the effectiveness of French law and the Code Noir. In his three decades on the island, Andrés Herédia had served on frontier commissions that allowed him to observe how the French managed slavery. He strongly favored their approaches, and even collected additional ordinances from Saint-Domingue to submit for consideration. Self-purchase was not only easier in Spanish lands than in Saint-Domingue, there was no similar provision in the Code Noir, and in general the free population of color was larger in percentage in Santo Domingo. Basic differences in Spanish slave law arose from the Siete

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45 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Andrés Herédia, 20 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 50-55v.

46 Sánchez Valverde, Idea, 152-153. He said, probably deliberately, that the French had coartado, or ‘cut’, this practice of self-purchase, the same word used to describe self-purchased slaves under Spanish law.

47 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Andrés Herédia, 20 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 50-55v.

**Partidas**, a statutory code created by King Alfonso X of Castile in the late thirteenth century, which defined slavery as something other than a natural condition, allowed slaves control of property, and opened a path to manumission.⁴⁹ At this very moment how *coartación* worked was in debate across the entire empire.⁵⁰

Unsurprisingly, colonial elites believed slaves had too much freedom of movement and privilege. Mañon recommended that no slave should be able to leave their masters’ properties without a signed license. He even said that any free blacks who wandered the countryside without passes should be caught and sent to the jails as delinquents.⁵¹ Francisco de Tapia suggested that any black traveler carry a “seal or mark of iron or other material that accredits them.” to a master or a superior. These passes would be distributed by the *ayuntamiento* to avoid any fraud, with harsh penalties for any slave pretending to be free or have permission.⁵² Cabral concurred that blacks should carry a mark or token when

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⁵¹ “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Antonio Mañon, 11 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 8-10.

⁵² “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco de Tapia, 16 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 33-35v.
they travelled, which he thought should be registered with the local authorities to record the legitimacy of different seals.\textsuperscript{53} Cabral was against jornaleros – daily laborers who moved between the city and country, or plantation to plantation – outside the city walking freely, and thought that they needed greater oversight from their masters.\textsuperscript{54} Finally, the testimony revealed a great deal of concern for the lax practice of blacks carrying weapons in the colony. Caro noted that the prohibition on slaves carrying arms from 1772 was rarely enforced, nor were they usually made to carry travel licenses on the roads.\textsuperscript{55} Cabral and de Tapia also complained about free blacks using arms, both inside and outside of the capital, and advocated restrictions of weapons.\textsuperscript{56}

Added to these elites’ concerns over travel and weapons were manifestations of broader problems with discipline among slaves and the wider black population. Mañon recommended tougher punishment against slaves in general.\textsuperscript{57} Caro also complained about the “feigned illnesses” that the slaves

\textsuperscript{53} “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco Cabral, 19 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 43v-47.

\textsuperscript{54} “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco Cabral, 19 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 43v-47.

\textsuperscript{55} “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Ignacio Caro, 12 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 10-16v.

\textsuperscript{56} “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco de Tapia, 16 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 33-35v; “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco Cabral, 19 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 43v-47.

\textsuperscript{57} “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Antonio Mañon, 11 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 8-10.
repeatedly used against weak overseers. To counter this practice, he wanted to establish medical *bohios* at every large plantation where slaves who said that they were suffering from illness could be verified their claims and recuperated as quickly as possible, or disprove their feigned malady and send them back to work. He added that foot-dragging was a common delay tactic that hampered production and efficiency across the colony.\(^5^8\) Nuñez commented that on the plantations he knew the slaves had been treated with, “the greatest care and mildness,” and with consideration to their abilities and assigned work, though he did concede that during the grinding and harvest seasons they did work overnight in shifts. Nuñez said that punishment for offenses was moderate, and only to deter undesirable behavior. He thought planters usually maintained subordination without the problems of resistance or flight.\(^5^9\) For those who did runaway, Cabral said that slavecatchers were not enough to stop fugitives, since they often fled beyond the range of trackers.\(^6^0\)

The planters also identified other local customs that undercut agricultural output. For example, Mañon argued that inefficient planters should be prohibited

\(^{58}\) “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Ignacio Caro, 12 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 10-16v.

\(^{59}\) “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” José Nuñez, 18 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 41-43.

\(^{60}\) “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Francisco Cabral, 19 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 43v-47.
from renting out their lands to free blacks for small-scale peasant production, which might incentivize their own production and limit black autonomy. Caro also complained about planters leasing their land to free people of color, whose self-sufficiency served as a bad example to slaves. Instead, he thought that free blacks should be collected together and segregated into separate settlements with heavy-handed moral, political, and labor laws to govern their daily lives. Another common concern was that slaves were sometimes underfed, and were also often supplied food at cost to the planters. Caro suggested slaveholders make their slaves grow plantains, potatoes, and other produce like the French did to avoid shortages of staple crops and to make slaves feed themselves. De Tapia and Herédia concurred, and suggested that slaves could increase their own production of basic foodstuffs such as rice, maize, beans, millet, and other legumes to support their wellbeing and relive costs from planters.

For its prodigious length and expansive range of topics, the most notable testimony came from Joaquín García, a well-known military officer who would

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61 “Testimonio… para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro…,” Antonio Mañon, 11 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 8-10.
62 “Testimonio… para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro…,” Ignacio Caro, 12 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 10-16v.
63 “Testimonio… para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro…,” Ignacio Caro, 12 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 10-16v.
soon become the governor who ruled the colony throughout the Haitian Revolution. García was born in 1731 and having arrived in Santo Domingo from Puerto Rico in the late 1760s had spent nearly three decades in the colony. He endorsed the project to renovate the slave code as a “wise and pious decision” that would make him the happiest inhabitant of the island. García admitted that he knew less about plantations and management than others, but had observed many issues by travelling around the island with the militias and was more directly familiar with “the few domestic slaves that God has given me.” He noted that the colony was depopulated, but fertile and lovely, and was confident that savvy colonists knew best how to rearrange the “distinct classes of blacks and their descendants,” which he identified as black slaves, freed people, *libres mas antiguos*, and mulattoes of various legal categories. Most freed people strived only for momentary impulses and day-to-day existence, he said, without much consideration of long-term plans. He mentioned the sometimes “prideful presumptions” of slaves against their masters, or freed people against white residents. García claimed that these people confused their realm of color with that of the white social sphere, or of “honored patrician” culture. All this combined for

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65 “Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...,” Joaquín García, 16 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 17-32v.

a “lethal idleness” among workers and a “propensity to theft” of their own plantations or properties nearby. Some near the coast traded illicitly, often including stolen goods. He also complained that nobody bothered to stop fugitives or track them down, and said that runaways operated with impunity around the island. Sometimes these people would steal Spanish mules, horses, or cattle and then sell them on the French side. To whatever extent these latter points were true, it showed that people of color exposed themselves to a wide array of influences and ideas with such connections.

García also indicated that, “There are countless blacks and pardos that live in the countryside in dispersed shacks, without more patrimony than that which they or their ancestors brought from Guinea, and they are content…only because they are free. They do not work, but only when they are hungry, and they kill at the cost of their closest neighbor who has supplies.” He continued, saying, “Among themselves they hide fugitive slaves from the haciendas. How are they to learn what suits the owner or the state?” Here he hit on major differences between Dominican society and Saint-Domingue. Santo Domingo featured an expanse of under-occupied territory in which descendants of freed people or

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67 “Testimonio… para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro…,” Joaquín García, 16 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 17-32v. García even gave suggestions of how to possibly maximize the most ‘robust and agile’ slaves for the grueling midday hours and rotate the less capable at other times.

68 “Testimonio… para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro…,” Joaquín García, 16 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 17-32v..
runaways settled the expansive terrain as free peasants, relatively untethered from the government and property relations, and therefore also more separated from the impositions of racial hierarchies.⁶⁹

García offered concrete policy solutions. García suggested that a standardized census administered at regular intervals would help monitor the population, with territorial divisions to ease management and local commissioners to enact stable governance. He recommended that those free people of color who did not verifiably produce goods, nor labored to sustain themselves, should all be forced into residence and cultivation on certain plot of land. He also suggested that they be required to apply for license to work as a jornalero to curtail fugitives, vagabonds, and deserters from wandering the countryside with ease. Aside from the Code Noir, which he stated he had not read himself, he recommended that they consult the widely-used Traité sur le gouvernement des esclaves by Émilien Petit who published this treatise on slave management in 1777 after four decades as an official and planter in Saint-Domingue and Martinique. García thought this could help with the formation of what he called the, “Código Dominicano” (Dominican Code). He also thought it

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would be prudent to form a council of distinguished planters to decide public matters regarding the black population. Like the others, he complained about slaves who routinely asked their owners or colonial authorities how much they were worth to initiate self-purchase through *coartación*, and thought that emancipation was simply too easy and often without merit. He believed that liberated slaves should also be drafted into public service, such as in hospitals. Though he echoed complaints about religious festivities and time off, he strongly advocated Christian education as a civilizing influence. Toward solving the runaway problem, he suggested that all slaveholders in the colony contribute a small, annual fee to fund a gang of robust trackers, or slave patrols, to scour the countryside and pursue fugitives, vagrants, criminals, and those without passports. In a colony so depopulated and occupied mostly with raising livestock animals and subsistence crops he complained that there were too many blacks who simply travelled about freely. He also recommended that this fund could indemnify the cost of fugitives who died in chase or did not return.\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{70} "Testimonio... para la formacion del Carolino Código Negro...," Joaquin García, 16 March 1784, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, 17-32v. García even gave suggestions of how to possibly maximize the most ‘robust and agile’ slaves for the grueling midday hours and rotate the less capable at other times. He said that food supplies were often short for slaves, and that many plantations had skinny looking slaves, which was likely due to the export to Saint-Domingue. He thought the sacrifice of work for holy observances was poorly used, and that slaves should be made to work after mass. Officials in Cuba considered similar policies, see: Gabino La Rosa Corzo, *Runaway Slave Settlements in Cuba: Resistance and Repression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2003); Manuel Barcia, *Seeds of Insurrection: Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808-1848* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2008): 33, 52-65, and 95-101.
This collection of testimony reveals the state of affairs in Dominican slavery, and though only from an elite perspective nevertheless details points of friction across society. There was a tension among the ruling class between their narrative of paternal mildness and their desire for maximizing labor output, between their narrative of religious instruction and their craving for profits like Saint-Domingue. Their envy of Saint-Domingue pervaded the testimony. This envy motivated their detailed description of the colonies’ divergences and their own ambitions, which influenced the social strain they placed upon free people of color in the short-term and would inform geopolitical strategy in the era of the Haitian Revolution. These testimonies from planters and officials, like the published plea from Sánchez Valverde, depicted an idealized Dominican future of prosperity and racial discipline modeled at least in part on Saint-Domingue, also voiced a Dominican elite identity distinct from Spanish imperatives that offered correctives for a past of colonial languish, and sought to moderate any French extremes with a robust Catholic cultural mediation and corporate social order.

Once the new slave code was written it had to be sanctioned by imperial officials before its eventual implementation across the colonies, although it was

approved locally by the Audiencia de Santo Domingo on 16 March 1785. Ultimately this new black code had few lasting effects across the empire when it was finally disseminated in 1789. Locally, though the extent of *de jure* enactment remains unclear, the spirit of the law guided a renewed *de facto* crackdown by creating heavy new restrictions that curtailed basic rights for people of color, and particularly free people of color. The ordinances restricted free peoples’ basic sumptuary conduct, such as the wearing of silk, lace, and gold, or carrying swords. It obligated free blacks to religious instruction and observances specifically to supplant “superstitions” with loyalty to the church, crown, and Spain.

More harshly, any perceived disrespect toward whites could be met with the lash. Free people of color could not verbally contradict whites, and any of them who put their hand against a white could receive one-hundred lashes, two years in prison, cut rations, and fetters. Free blacks were restricted from education and instruction. A slave who put their hand against a white could be executed. *Tercerones* or *cuarterones* (that is, people with one-third or one-fourth African descent) would be fined for disrespecting whites, the former classified as the progeny of a *mulato* or *pardo* and white and the latter as the offspring of a *tercerón*.

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and white. Individuals and groups who had enjoyed property, physical mobility, and cultural diversity to various degrees were summarily stripped of significant autonomy all in the name of making an anemic society with slaves, ostensibly more robust and similar to Saint-Domingue. Santo Domingo’s slavery regime never developed as elites had hoped, but that was not required to alienate large segments of free Spanish subjects in the Dominican populace.

This policy was not predicated entirely upon simple coercion, though. The goal was to offer conciliation and assimilation by faith and conduct into self-regulating royal subjects. Their compulsory relocations mirrored long-running Spanish centralization of “others” into missions to expedite their subjugation and acculturation. This underscored venerated views of municipalities as bastions of metropolitan values and order. While the elite testimony had castigated urban free blacks for supposedly corrosive inattentions to racial boundaries, officials also feared maroon communities throughout the colony that had attracted slaves to flee for freedom. Urban free blacks and maroons both influenced the aspirations of less-privileged blacks and were key targets for subjugation. Specifically, the


74 Consejo de Indias to Joaquín García, Aranjuez, 29 May 1788, AGI-SD, leg.1102, no.24; Marqués de Balamar to Consejo de Indias, San Lorenzo, 27 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg.1102; Arzobispo Isidoro, Primer Quaderno, Santo Domingo, 20 September 1787; Fernando Portillo y Torres to José Urizar, Neiba, 6 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg.1014; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno y Amirola, Santo Domingo, 20 October 1794, AGI-SD, leg.1031. Richard L. Kagan, Urban Images of
maroons at Maniel and “negros ganadores”, or black wage earners near San Lorenzo de los Mina were two such groups. Their resettlements under Catholic instruction and state supervision, and later anti-colonial responses, illuminate broader trends for free people of color in Santo Domingo in this era.\textsuperscript{75}

CONFINING FREE PEOPLE OF COLOR & SAN LORENZO DE LOS MINA

The town of San Lorenzo de los Mina was initially formed in the late 1670s when Spanish officials gave sanctuary and freed status to several runaways, whose collective title “Mina” might indicate Akan origins or ties to the Mina region on the Gold Coast of West Africa. By the 1780s it had several hundred inhabitants.\textsuperscript{76}


In 1786 San Lorenzo became the focal point of several new ordinances issued by the Cabildo of Santo Domingo following the new slave codes of 1785. Residents of San Lorenzo were specifically accused of neglecting civic duties, but the new ordinances extended far beyond the scope of their town. On the premise that these free people of color had abandoned Christian life and committed thefts, a range of purportedly delinquent Dominicans of color around the capital city were uprooted and forced to relocate their families and livestock to San Lorenzo to labor on nearby fields.\textsuperscript{77} Another complaint was that they engaged in loud dancing and singing that lasted until late into the night, and to the detriment of their neighbors. This scheme to relocate free people of color came as part of a larger plan to reorganize the barrios of the capital city and “whiten” portions where the populations converged, or where the influence or visibility of free people of color was pronounced.\textsuperscript{78}

Targeted free people of color had only forty-five days to resettle. The policy separated married couples from singles who were then subdivided by males and females. It tore farmers, peddlers, and artisans from their livelihoods and heavily restricted their economic and social opportunities. On the pain of fifty

\textsuperscript{77} “Ordenanzas del Cabildo,” Cabildo de Santo Domingo, 5 April 1786, Santo Domingo, AGN-Archivo Real Higüey (ARH), 2, leg.10R, exp.89, fol.1-2.

\textsuperscript{78} “Ordenanzas del Cabildo,” Cabildo de Santo Domingo, 5 April 1786, Santo Domingo, AGN-ARH, 2, leg.10R, exp.89, fol.9-10.
lashes the law compelled San Lorenzo residents to take their produce to one central market and to stop haggling over prices. These codes even restricted their use of horses and limited their travel, and prevented those who kept livestock from breeding them. A magistrate was sent to adjudicate their every action, and a priest was sent to minister to residents whose earnings supported his salary and who were coerced to hear his weekly sermons. Also, their children were forced to daily learn Catholic doctrine. If any of these legally free people fled San Lorenzo or tried to live elsewhere they could receive fifty lashes and be made to wear shackles for six months. Second-time offenders could receive one-hundred lashes. Third-time offenders could get two hundred lashes and six years in public works, service that was open for purchase as plantation labor. These free people of color were thrown from commercial viability and physical mobility into quasi-bondage. The autonomies that they had once enjoyed were being extinguished.

The Cabildo also issued sweeping restrictions on wage-earning slaves near the capital, often called jornaleros, and certainly targeted residents San Lorenzo de los Mina as well. Though unfree, some could purchase freedom with income and their spatial and social mobility influenced other slaves. On threat of punishment and fines, they were forced to procure a license for their work. Any

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79 “Ordenanzas del Cabildo,” Cabildo de Santo Domingo, 5 April 1786, Santo Domingo, AGN-ARH, 2, leg.10R, exp.89, fol.11v-16v. These punishments were to be exacted by a clerk chosen from San Lorenzo.
payment slaves received had to match established rates and masters had to report
receiving anything over or under expected amounts. If any slave was seen outside
of their masters’ properties after evening prayers they would receive twenty-five
lashes, ending chances to work far from home. Owners were instead encouraged
to send all slaves into fieldwork. Beyond restricting free people of color, these
codes also confined this large intermediate sector of skilled slaves who had already
experienced varieties of freedom in an urban setting.

THE MAROONS OF MANIEL

As early as the mid-seventeenth century some residents along the south-
western edge of Santo Domingo contended with what they perceived as an evasive
menace. By 1784 Archbishop Isidoro Rodríguez repeated Spanish lore about
Maniel, saying, “For over one hundred years a few small mountains around
Neiba…have been inhabited by some entrenched blacks (whose number in the day
amounted to about three hundred, among whom there are many seventy-year-
olds born there) who have always lived only from theft and insult, who have
persecuted the region, the people personally, and their fruits, livestock, and

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80 “Ordenanzas del Cabildo,” Cabildo de Santo Domingo, 5 April 1786, Santo Domingo, AGN-
ARH, 2, leg.10R, exp.89, fol.16v-19v. Female slaves had to make a third less than males, and if seen
about after evening prayers would receive two hours in the pillory.
women.” Maniel occupied dense forests that leached imperial wealth rather than producing it. Maroons’ bodies, self-removed from slavery’s modes of production, defied the capital valuations of their former status as commodities and tore at the boundaries of colonial labor relations. Their raids on plantations and travelers, peaceful but illicit trade with neighboring peasants, and the cost of numerous military expeditions to stop them, further depleted Spanish and French resources. Thousands of slaves, especially those brutalized in Saint-Domingue, fled bondage to *palenques* (maroon communities) in less-populated Santo Domingo. Around that time scores of Spanish troops spent weeks combing the wilderness for a notorious maroon named *Come Gente* (People Eater), ultimately subduing twenty-four maroon collaborators. This consistent *marronage* also sustained Maniel.

Yet the Maniel maroons had distinguishing advantages. First, they exploited a fictive border devoid of imperial governance. Their presence pulled the two outward-looking, metropolitan-oriented colonies into a treaty in the 1770s

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81 Isidoro Rodríguez to Consejo de Indias, 23 October 1784, AGI-SD, leg 1102, no.1.
84 Pedro Catani to Eugenio Llaguno, 25 May 1793, AGI-SD, 929; Eugenio Llaguno to Consejo de Indias, 31 December 1793, AGI-SD, 929.
to define interior boundaries, areas previously inscribed as maroon territory on official maps. Subsequently, the maroons manipulated imperial geopolitics by moving between colonies, capitalizing on armistice treaties between France and Spain and the jurisdictional boundaries of state power. French attempts to reclaim runaways as property and lax Spanish policies toward fugitive slaves further complicated bilateral pacification of the maroons. As a result, Spanish and French administrators bickered incessantly over strategy and responsibility for restoring frontier order.

In this phenomenon of slave flight to the refuge of neighboring polities, especially Spanish colonies, Santo Domingo stood alongside several other prominent cases. British slaves from southern North America fled to Spanish Florida Dutch slaves paddled canoes from Curacao and other nearby Dutch islands to the coast of Venezuela. So did Danish slaves who fled St. Croix, St.

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86 Embajador de Francia to Conde Floridablanca, 5 September 1786, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, sub no.13; Embajador de Francia to Conde Floridablanca, 7 August 1786, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Deive, Cimarrones, 5–16; Pekka Hämäläinen, The Comanche Empire (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008): 345–350.

87 Landers, Black Society in Spanish Florida.

Thomas, and St. Jan – later the “Virgin Islands” – to Puerto Rico. The case of French slaves fleeing into Santo Domingo fits into this litany of Spanish policy that weakened the labor regimes of neighboring rivals by siphoning off human capital that, once converted to Catholicism, could become highly-motivated free subjects of the Crown of Spain and useful builders of empire in their own right.

After numerous French hostilities, which included offering cash for each captured maroon, in 1783 envoys from Maniel used trusted local proxies to initiate dialogue with Spanish forces. They hoped to gain legal freedom in exchange for peace and resettlement. Santiago, a fifty-year-old maroon from the Spanish side, renegotiated their fugitive autonomy into protected subjecthood and requested cultivable land. Santiago, freeborn maroon Philippe, and bozal LaFortune were Maniel’s primary leaders. Though months earlier they had made similar contact with the French, Dominican officials considered that these proposals were meant in earnest. Amid this détente Juan Bobadilla, a trusted creole priest in nearby Neiba, visited Maniel as a goodwill emissary. He quickly established a rapport, and a few dozen maroons reciprocated by agreeing to be baptized. After building


this initial relationship Bobadilla would work directly with these maroons over the next fifteen years.\footnote{Felipe Frómesta to Isidoro Peralta, 17 May 1783, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Moreau, Partie française, Tome II, 500–3; Deive, Cimarrones, 17–20; Lienhard, Disidentes, 109–11.}

While coinciding with Spanish interests, the choice made by the Maniel maroons was strategic, and corresponded with the actions of maroons in Jamaica, Colombia and elsewhere who also pragmatically rejoined colonial society with legal protections of their earned free status.\footnote{Aline Helg, “A Fragmented Majority: Free ‘Of All Colors,’ Indians, and Slaves in Caribbean Colombia During the Haitian Revolution,” in Impact of the Haitian Revolution, Geggus, ed., 157-175.} The Maniel maroons were hampered by illness and food scarcity. They preferred the Spanish, who might compromise, over the French, who still tried to re-enslave them. They also probably knew of ongoing treaty negotiations which would lead the Spanish to return all fugitive French slaves as part of officials’ and planters’ efforts to revitalize slavery and commerce. With an envious eye on Saint-Domingue, the Spanish severely curbed free black autonomy that might inspire slave dissent, and crafted harsh new laws especially against the impugned maroons.\footnote{‘Testimonio... Para la formación del Carolino Código Negro...’, 7 February1784 to 25 March 1785, AGI-SD, leg. 1034, fol.1–55; Audiencia de Santo Domingo to Cabildo de Santo Domingo, 4 May 1786, AGN-ARH, 10, exp.89; Sánchez, Idea del valor, 151–95; Childs, Aponte, 35–8 and 105–6; Ghachem, Old Regime, 1-120.} Ceasing hostilities immediately benefited all parties, as the maroons evaded the French, kept their freedom, and
recuperated, while the Spanish removed an impediment to their exploitative labor regime.\textsuperscript{94}

The Spanish began this resettlement project in the 1780s amid local and imperial anxiety to revitalize the struggling Dominican economy and the institution of slavery. The maroons hindered both for over a century by repulsing frequent armed imperial incursions. The \textit{palenque} (maroon community) of Maniel had existed for at least several decades, and was the single most visible and consistent fixture of black autonomy on Hispaniola. Naranjo, only founded in 1790 after years of wrangling, was a few miles away from Maniel; its settlers had agreed, at least officially, to submit to the authority of the Spanish state and church. Maroon groups were colloquially known as \textit{manieles} in Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{95}

At Naranjo both maroons and Spanish officials temporarily suspended customary contentions to search uneasily for stability. The intertwined turmoil of the French and Haitian Revolutions in the 1790s, though, caused a decrease in emphasis on the Spanish project of reinvigorating Dominican slavery. Instead, the military potential of the maroons provided the desired catalyst for the Spanish counter-

\textsuperscript{94} Isidoro Peralta to José Gálvez, 24 July 1783, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; “Extracto del Código Negro Carolino... Capítulo 34, Negros Cimarrones,” Audiencia de Santo Domingo, 14 March 1785, AGI-Estado, 7, no.3, fol.77–80.

\textsuperscript{95} Joaquín García to Fernando Portillo y Torres, 30 October1789, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.2; Marqués de Balamar to Consejo de Indias, 27 September1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.32; Carlos Esteban Deive, \textit{Los guerrilleros negros: Esclavos fugitivos y cimarrones en Santo Domingo}, Santo Domingo, 1997, 69–90.
revolution’s campaign against “impious” republicanism and slave insurrection. Despite being constrained by Spanish and French collaboration, threatened with re-enslavement, and jeopardized by warfare, as pins in major imperial hinges these maroons wielded pivotal influence.96

The maroons’ acceptance of a peace offer in the 1780s sacrificed their achievement of non-state, outsider status.97 The state extended beyond urban bastions of power and into unfamiliar geographies to initiate new subjects through rituals of popular royalism and piety that constituted a proselytic colonialism. Through a politics of elusion – that is, a realpolitik of evasiveness – they savvily navigated cultural and material constraints to maximize their autonomy and quality of life. At each juncture the maroons adapted to and exploited state encroachments that sought to confine and use them, whether by re-enslavement, resettlement, or conscription. In contrast to the ineptitude and indecisiveness that Spanish officials perceived, maroons consistently made anti-state choices. Their alignment with metropolitan power, which may seem counter-intuitive to readers


today, was a temporary defense against more invasive legal and property relations that would have drastically limited their autonomy.

Maroon submission was more performative than real. Under Spanish tutelage the maroons consistently undermined deals, demanded more concessions, consorted with enemies, and sometimes simply disappeared. Maniel and Naranjo sat on the rural colonial periphery nearly 125 miles west of the capital of Santo Domingo in the Baoruco region, an area between Saint-Domingue and the southern coast of Santo Domingo that had harbored defiance against colonialism since the sixteenth-century Taíno uprisings, such as the well-known and long-lasting Enriquillo revolt. They maximized this precarious location as a spatial buffer to waylay imperial power. Their pragmatic multivalence of selective cooperation and conditional allegiance came to sour Spanish hopes of assimilating dissident blacks and reconquering the entirety of Hispaniola from the French. By the mid-1790s violence and re-enslavement returned to the maroons, partly due to their proximity to a Spanish state that had only temporarily safeguarded their liberties. Faced with this later crossroads, the majority of these maroons simply


99 Fernando Portillo y Torres to José Urizar, 6 June 1794, AGI-SD, 1014; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, 20 October 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; James C. Scott, Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance, New Haven, 1985, 316–41.
returned to sanctuary in the mountains instead of heeding Spanish or revolutionary entreaties.

The maroons of Santo Domingo complicate often teleological and simple historical categories. Despite their position at the confluence of disparate historical currents, these maroons have remained peripheral – in proportion to their own geographic remoteness – to the insights of the last two decades’ most significant analytical trends. Absenteeism dissipated the inherent tensions of bondage by providing an opportunity for enslaved people to cross into fugitive status and enjoy temporary liberties. Many of these petit marrons (minor maroons) resumed former state and labor relations after protesting against conditions, or posed as free people in towns, or stayed in small local groups until caught. Resolutions of liminal processes, like petit marronage returning to plantations or legal tactics to free the enslaved, often reaffirmed social order. Quite separately long-lasting grand marrons (major maroons), rather than approaching state and society for guarantees, held to starkly different ideas and methods for freedom.


grand marron groups formed that successfully broke with colonial society. Yet geographically and chronologically disparate maroon communities shared similar politics of elusion. This was a politics that drew on incisive knowledge of colonial states and lifestyle adaptations to property relations that claimed them.

Another year passed before Maniel and Spanish officials again negotiated. During this interlude of ambiguity the maroons covertly bargained with the French, reviewed their options and utilized their internal cultures of dissent and decentralization. The French in turn pressured Spain to resettle the maroons on similar terms in Saint-Domingue, in accordance with their recent treaty on runaways. This haggling severely delayed progress, and both colonies feared that if word of negotiations spread then more slaves might flee to Maniel to gain

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104 Gabriel Debien, “Marronage in the French Caribbean,” in Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas, ed. Richard Price, Baltimore, 1996; Manuel Barcia, Seeds of Insurrection: Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808–1848, Baton Rouge, 2008, 49–70; Rafael de Bivar Marquese, ‘A dinâmica da escravidão no Brasil: Resistência, tráfico negreiro e alforrias, séculos XVII a XIX’, Novos Estudos 74, March 2006. Unsubdued separatist strongholds such as Maniel, the Saramakas of Suriname, and Palmares in Brazil raided and traded but they were not structurally integrated, nor were they simply anti-slavery vanguards or African restorationists, as some romantic scholarship suggests. Scholarship on maroon dissent has focused more on commonalities in culture, subsistence, and defense, and less on how and to what effect grand marrons achieved outsider status.

liberty. Both states disliked negotiating with the maroons, whose tactics bought
time, renewed imperial conflict, and assured greater concessions.

In 1785 a tentative agreement between the Spanish and the Maniel
maroons stipulated that the maroons would be pardoned, relocated to their
original colony, and resettled under “civilizing” Catholic tutelage with names
recorded to prevent interlopers. This supervised, formalist freedom averted re-
enslavement, but from the beginning some refused to acquiesce, remained at
Maniel, and took in new runaways. The two groups of maroons – those who
agreed to resettlement and those who resisted it – never ceased collaborating with
one another, which presented a perplexing challenge to the Spanish authorities.
Santiago, who represented this maroon group to the Spanish, had initially claimed
to lead 137 women, men, and children, perhaps the largest of a few local bands
rumored to total more than a thousand maroons. Ultimately, 133 ethnically-
diverse maroons were listed in the treaty. The majority had fled from Saint-
Domingue while a handful were from Santo Domingo.106 Many were freeborn and
native to Maniel. Names ranged from Holandés (Dutch), to Quamina and Ybie,
which indicate possible Akan and Edo origins respectively. Pemba possibly
referred to the Mpemba region of the Kingdom of Kongo, and the names Masunga,

106 Joaquin Garcia and Jean Formati to Audiencia de Santo Domingo, 18 July 1785, AGI-SD, leg.
1102, no.20; Isidoro Rodriguez to Consejo de Indias, 25 November 1787, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Moreau,
Partie française, Tome II, 497–503.
Macuba, and Sesa correspond phonologically to Bantu languages.\textsuperscript{107} The Angola and Kongo regions supplied roughly half of the Africans who entered Saint-Domingue, their languages were spoken widely, and, not surprisingly, many maroons previously captured from Maniel were identified as having been from West Central Africa.\textsuperscript{108} However, both the names on the Maniel roster and the patterns of slave importation into the West region of Saint-Domingue indicate an important variation in African import patterns that influenced both the resulting maroon and slave population in Santo Domingo.

In the regions of Saint-Domingue closer to Maniel and the southern side of Santo Domingo more generally the ethnic diversity of imported African captives was much greater than the likely majority of West Central Africans in North. This is evident in the names recorded in the Maniel roster, as maroons fleeing from the nearby Cul-de-Sac or other locales would have had a much easier and shorter distance to traverse to refuge in the mountains of Baoruco. As indicated by the \textit{Slave Voyages Database} out of the almost 109,000 Africans trafficked directly into


Port-au-Prince and the Cul-de-Sac in the eighteenth century about 40,000 were from West Central Africa, or about 36% of the total captives disembarked, with 69,000 from elsewhere on the continent. The Bights of Benin and Biafra sent about 40,000 captives to Port-au-Prince and the Cul-de-Sac by itself, roughly equal to the Kongo and Angola regions of West Central Africa. While Africans from the Bights may have been a slight plurality overall, about 20,000 disembarked slaves around Port-au-Prince were from Porto Novo and Whydah, neighboring ports on the Bight of Benin, which surpassed the total known quantity of any two ports in West Central Africa. Whydah sent about 78,500 captives to Saint-Domingue, or over 12% of total slave imports to Saint-Domingue, making it one of the heaviest single contributing ports to Saint-Domingue.

Well over two-thirds of the over 27,000 captives sent out from Porto Novo disembarked in Port-au-Prince, Saint-Marc, Léogâne, or Les Cayes, a peculiarity

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in the patter flow of French slave imports.\textsuperscript{112} Roughly 63\% of the captives arriving around Port-au-Prince did arrive in the decade just preceding the outbreak of revolution, and approximately two out of three ships arriving from West Central Africa to the region at that time came from unspecified ports.\textsuperscript{113} By comparison, in only the decade preceding the revolution Cap-Français disembarked almost the entire century-long total of Port-au-Prince’s slave importation. About 54\% of the roughly 328,000 Africans that landed there were from West Central Africa. Less than a quarter arrived from the Bights of Benin and Biafra combined. Over 134,000 of these West Central Africans landed in Cap-Français between 1764 and 1790.\textsuperscript{114}

Such Spanish intervention had recent precedents both in eastern Cuba, where royal slaves were concluding their lengthy settlement and conversion program, and in Florida, where runaways who themselves had manipulated geopolitical borders entered colonial service.\textsuperscript{115} Generally, enlightened Spanish Bourbons had veered toward assimilating what they called \textit{bárbaros} (barbarians)

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\textsuperscript{114} Slave Voyages Database. \\

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on the imperial fringes, rather than annihilating them. Across the Americas, the Spanish reinforced evangelization as a tool of soft power and cultural internalization to subdue exogenous peoples, gain their consent, and transform them into useful subjects while securing volatile borderlands. Amid these trends Santo Domingo was unique, as those troubling this coarse imperial perimeter were maroons, whereas officials had tailored such policies to unassimilated indigenous populations. In these contexts, Spanish officials in Santo Domingo planned to instill religiosity as a means to moderate what they cast as an intransigent African character and to remake maroons as vasallos (vassals). Yet incongruities between metropolitan ideals and local realities afforded the Maniel maroons leeway in molding their lives, state engagements, and colonialist policy.  

RENEGOTIATING AUTONOMY, RECONFIGURING COLONIALISM

Problems abounded after the Maniel roster was composed in 1785. Some maroons had afterthoughts about the French deal to resettle many of them in Saint-Domingue. French officials grew impatient and suggested joint military action, but Spanish officials welcomed this prevarication. The maroons permitted Bobadilla to visit Maniel to mediate. Those maroons he encountered were tense

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and well-armed, while others retreated further into the hills. This new diplomatic impasse jeopardized the deal, yet soon thereafter French resolve faltered as their governor was recalled, their negotiator fell ill, and a hurricane hit. By late 1785 it seemed clear that the maroons would remain in Santo Domingo where they trusted and could use Bobadilla (whom the French accused of enabling their recalcitrance) and where the Spanish were more tolerant of their decentralized decision-making and diplomatic disingenuousness.¹¹⁷

In September 1787 King Carlos III, who had sanctioned the creation of the Código Negro, authorized unilateral Spanish pacification of Maniel. Bobadilla then informed four maroon leaders that the Spanish would continue with the reduction of Maniel to “sociable life” and Christianity despite maroon reluctance to honor the agreement. The archbishop commented: “I am afraid that with procrastination we will lose everything,” adding that it did not “leave me with hope of harmony,” but rather “distrust in the blacks.” And, he would “weep inconsolably” over the loss of time as “each infant” was a missed opportunity.¹¹⁸ The archbishop lamented postponements that reduced the efficacy of evangelization, as young maroons were maturing away from priestly counsel. Bourbon rule magnified

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¹¹⁷ Luis Chaves y Mendoza to Isidoro Peralta, 7 April 1785, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Embajador de Francia to Conde Floridablanca, 7 August 1786, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Ignacio Caro to Isidoro Peralta, 28 August 1785, AGI-SD, leg. 1102.

¹¹⁸ Isidoro Rodríguez to Consejo de Indias, 25 October 1787, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.18; Real Cédula, 23 May 1787, AGI-SD, leg. 1102.
children’s centrality to the Hispanic world’s social, economic, and spiritual futures. The Bourbons invested in nurturing youths across the empire, and expanded this policy through royal edict in 1790. The Spanish hoped that maroon children could be Hispanicized more easily than the adults, and that they would internalize and reproduce colonialist values in their later lives.

Heavy Spanish clerical intercession began with the aid of a slave who carried Bobadilla’s bed and belongings from Neiba to Maniel, where the priest relocated to live with the maroons. In 1788 Bobadilla even gained an official church commission to diligently shepherd his new flock toward spiritual and material well-being and gradual pacification. In the late 1780s an assertive governor, Joaquín García, and a firebrand archbishop, Fernando Portillo, came to assume power, and while Bobadilla micromanaged Maniel’s resettlement.

Remarkably, within a few years the maroons’ leaders met personally with the highest European authorities on Hispaniola, a tribute to maroon negotiating power, social importance, and geopolitical position. In late 1787 Santiago, Philippe, Surita, and Andrés, maroons charged with deciding Maniel’s strategy,

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went with Bobadilla to the capital to meet the governor. There they accepted Spanish plans without demur. As they fine-tuned details of their free status, other representatives – LaFortune, Juan Manuel, Pedro Alejandro, and Miguel – promised to not abduct or harass any nearby Spaniards. In return, the church constructed a hospital to treat their numerous ailments, and the archbishop praised this initial progress.

During the three-year delay, however, Spanish officials were aware that Maniel’s hold-outs continued to lure runaways from both colonies. Elite rumors depicted Maniel as a riotous den of iniquity that even at times accepted white and mulatto fugitives, suggesting it was a nexus of popular collaboration against colonialist hierarchies. Estimates of the maroons’ total numbers fluctuated, signaling a group whose members moved among a cluster of palenques. When the French eventually relented and accepted Spanish plans for the maroons, they only requested that they be relocated further from the border to interrupt their regular contact with Dominguois (from Saint-Domingue) slaves. The maroons had

121 Isidoro Rodríguez, ‘Testimonio de...la reduccion a vida sociable de los negros del Maniel de Neiva’ (Primer Quaderno), 20 September1787, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.18.
122 Isidoro Rodríguez, Primer Quaderno, 9 October1787, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.18.
123 Isidoro Rodríguez to Consejo de Indias, 25 January1788, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.21; Isidoro Rodríguez, Primer Quaderno, 10 and 15 October1787, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.18; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Joaquin García, 13 September1789, AGI-SD, leg. 1110.
124 Joaquin García to Fernando Portillo y Torres, 30 October1789, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.2; Consejo de Indias to Joaquin García, 29 May 1788, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.24.
effectively obstructed French ownership claims, accepted new members, and stalled Spanish advances.\textsuperscript{125}

Meanwhile, Bobadilla dreamed of an abiding community of ex-maroons, purified by a Christian lifestyle for those who had “groaned under the cruel bondage of heathenism.”\textsuperscript{126} Spaniards, in the spirit of earlier readings of terrain in which untamed landscapes and unevangelized occupants were satanic havens, likely regarded the maroons’ wilderness lifestyles as diabolically-influenced.\textsuperscript{127} This justified the imposition of spatial management through reducción (reduction), which mirrored long-running Spanish practices of concentrating mobile populations into centralized missions for conversion and assimilation. This would in theory render maroons immobile.\textsuperscript{128}

For two years some maroons stayed in Neiba while Maniel’s leaders, especially Felipe, haggled over the new town’s location. By early 1790 they had selected Naranjo, an area near to both the coast and Maniel. At Naranjo, the church initially constructed some small thatched huts called bohios where residents would

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{125} Vicente Tudela to Manuel González, 26 August 1787, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Deive, \textit{Cinarrones}, 43–51.
\item \textsuperscript{126} Juan Bobadilla to Antonio Porlier, 25 January 1790, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.26.
\item \textsuperscript{127} Canizares, \textit{Puritan Conquistadors}, 120–186.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Consejo de Indias to Joaquín García, 29 May 1788, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.24; Marqués de Balamar to Consejo de Indias, 27 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Isidoro Rodríguez, Primer Quaderno, 20 September 1787; Weber, \textit{Bárbaros}, 303 n.14; Elliott, \textit{Empires of the Atlantic World}, 73–75.
\end{itemize}
meet nightly with Bobadilla to learn the rosary. Priests administered instruction, catechisms, the sacraments, and state surveillance worked toward rehabilitating maroons into Spanish subjects.¹²⁹ Their municipal focus underscored venerated Spanish views of organized towns as bastions of metropolitan values and frontier control.¹³⁰ Families built homes and received “1,000 yards” of land, materially embedding European-styled kin and property relations. The residents of Naranjo came to form a black administration and, in time, an armed militia. Yet Spanish administrators still worried that maroons would slip undetected into Saint-Domingue or the mountains instead of fully submitting. Others were paranoid that the maroons could be “useful instruments” of French power.¹³¹ The Consejo de Indias nevertheless continued to support this project, which they thought was “frustrated by the capriciousness and absolute resistance of the black maroons of Maniel,” but explicitly requested that Governor García, “protect them in freedom.”¹³²

¹²⁹ Consejo de Indias, 15 April 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.28; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Antonio Porlier, 24 January and 26 December1790, AGI-SD, leg. 1110.


¹³² Consejo de Indias to Joaquín García, 29 May 1788, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.24.
After six years of church presence, however, many maroons remained broadly impervious to Spanish power. In mid-1791 Governor García complained of their, “treachery, fickleness, and infidelity of the wicked...” He lamented that, “Their union is not and has been nothing but a federation, and a body of outlaws, who mock our government and the authority of our laws.” He even claimed that the maroons, with their proximity to the coast, had illicitly traded with trespassing foreign merchants whom he lambasted for their corrosive pecuniary influence. Although García recognized that some maroons accepted the “gentility and fairness” of the Spanish, he postulated that most were disingenuous and manipulated their “candor and sincerity.” He argued that “nothing has settled them, nothing suits them, and perhaps nothing will ever accommodate them but their existence in libertinage, clumsiness, and dissolution...” Yet he also feared “cruel offences” if the maroons were abandoned to their “native character.”

Many Maniel maroons hesitated to abandon their lifestyle because they feared Spanish betrayal following arrests of local blacks. Bobadilla patiently met with recalcitrant maroons to coax them toward Naranjo. Cleverly, one of the leaders, LaFortune, suggested that if he and others could visit Spain to hear their pardons

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133 Joaquín García to Antonio Porlier, 25 April 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.34.
directly from the king himself, then they would fully cooperate. The Naranjo resettlement’s earliest notable result was that the maroons had produced frustrated Spanish priests and officials.

From 1785 to 1791 the Maniel maroons adeptly antagonized classic and longstanding European rivalries by reigniting local contentions that dated at least to Spain’s loss of western Hispaniola to the French in 1697. All the while they demonstrated intimate knowledge of social and legal possibilities in both colonies. Their political tact and hard bargaining tangled trans-imperial politics enough for a better solution to emerge. Unlike European protestations faulting their fickleness, arrogance and deceit, they had, as much as possible, adroitly charted their own course. Excuses and aspersions masked the fact that African-descended maroons were negotiators as skilled and effective as any European. The worst scenario for Spain would have been that these maroons would become politically radicalized or affiliated with the French.

By the end of the summer in 1791 and on the brink of the epic Haitian Revolution, only a few dozen maroons actually lived at Naranjo. With

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134 Juan Bobadilla to Joaquín García, 25 February 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Lorenzo Núñez to Joaquín García, 9 November 1790, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Deive, *Cimarrones*, 62–65.

135 Embajador de Francia to Conde Floridablanca, 7 August 1786, AGI-SD, leg. 1102.

136 Juan Bobadilla to Joaquín García, 8 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, 99–102.
enticements of land and stability more maroons began to resettle there, including some resistive leaders. 137 Some maroons intermeshed with Spanish colonialism as sincere and co-operative converts. The remainder performed enough piety and obedience to assuage the Spanish, cleverly disguising their continued practice of maroon activities and their reunions with those who still lived at Maniel. Yet officials were optimistic that the interweaving of Spanish culture and Catholic devotion was starting to colonize minds and reform what they saw as the innate and pernicious habits of black nature so as to produce useful subjects. With the Haitian Revolution initial impulses to solidify the frontier and body politic changed. Maroons, once irritants to slavery and colonialism, became transformed into prospective facilitators of territorial and spiritual conquest, but also potential “enemies within” should they succumb to radical egalitarianism. The maroons again repositioned themselves within broader geopolitical struggles to gain and use new leverage at a time of rampant disorder – much to the frustration of state claimants.

Maroons have appeared disproportionately in scholarship on the Haitian Revolution. 138 One prominent interpretation presents maroons as a revolutionary

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137 Lorenzo Nuñez to Joaquín García, 29 August1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Marqués de Balamar to Consejo de Indias, 27 September1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.32.

engine, though it conflates rebels and runaways with *grand marrons*, while others emphasize *petit marrons* as facilitators.\textsuperscript{139} Most convincingly, it seems that *grand marrons* were not critical actors in the revolution.\textsuperscript{140} Specifically, the community at Maniel displayed ambivalence toward overthrowing state power, liberal individualism, racial solidarity with enslaved people, and egalitarian rights discourses. Their tendency, played out across the mountains of Baoruco, only became more apparent as Spain sought frontier allies amid ensuing turmoil on the island. Historians have seen as states do, that is, by misunderstanding maroons’ fundamental aversion to entanglements with exogenous powers, complicating the narrative settlement of these restive people.\textsuperscript{141} As society splintered on Hispaniola, Spanish visions of absorbing popular dissidents eventually reverted to a racist pessimism that assumed the eternal inferiority of people of African descent. Also, the revolutionary era increasingly ruptured the social structures that confined the maroons to their settlement with Spain at the same time that Spanish officials attempted to coax maroons to defend these very colonial institutions.


THE IMPERIAL CÓDIGO NEGRO ARRIVES

During these years of cajoling the maroons of Maniel and black residents near Santo Domingo a morass of metropolitan bureaucrats slowly considered the proposed slave laws of the mid-1780s. Finally, in 1789 the long-awaited Carolino Código Negro arrived from Spain which promised sweeping reforms. They were received by officials and especially planters in Spanish colonies with an indignation directly inverse to the enthusiasm with which they were proposed in Santo Domingo. King Carlos IV finished the project started by his then-deceased father King Carlos III, and the decree that he issued stipulated more protections for slaves than anything that had been written and approved in Santo Domingo five years prior. It protected slave marriage, obliged religious access and education, and clarified food and clothing requirements. In fact, the code also placed limits on planters when it came to how and how much they could whip or otherwise punish slaves, and limited workday hours. One provision that was included was that religious holidays had to be dedicated to spiritual edification and reflection, not as an excuse for slaves to fraternize or drink alcohol, as so many Dominican elites had complained. Many planters interpreted this as a step backward from the status quo, and an attack on their interests, so few complied. In Cuba, for example, the code prompted planters to write the king with predictions of economic ruin for the colonists, and a decline in church tithes and
port receipts, due to the costs associated with implementing these new provisions. They also emphasized their extant magnanimity in providing religious training, clothing, food, and care for their slaves as a means of refuting the need for such formal policies. The code was ultimately ineffective, and quickly forgotten after at best half-hearted efforts to implement it.\textsuperscript{142}

In Santo Domingo the entire project to revitalize the colony’s slave regime and suppress free people of color by pressured assimilation fell out of official correspondence. The successive reception of an unwanted code, the outbreak of strife in Saint-Domingue and France, and negotiating the arrivals of Vincent Ogé and then Governor Blanchelande into exile from Saint-Domingue, left Spanish officials perplexed and highly distracted from profit motivations, particularly since Saint-Domingue had ruptured due to the very racial and legal structures that Spanish officials and Dominican elites had envied. Officials in Santo Domingo certainly paid public homage to the new slave code created in 1789. They emphasized its intent “to favor and protect the miserable slaves” and avoid their unnecessary suffering or unjust treatment, and celebrated the Catholicism

prescribed by it. This was, they said, all intended to increase agriculture. These officials hoped the new provisions would remedy slaves’ lack of education, and the “pernicious example of their fathers, containing them in the just yoke of subordination,” and emphasized the magnanimity of the code’s rationale.143

Another wish granted to planters and colonial elites, and a point that Sánchez Valverde had asserted, dealt with the opening of the slave trade. The asiento contract system had dominated the comparatively weak Spanish Caribbean system of importing African laborers. This system had dictated fixed prices for cargo with various suppliers from various nations, and was seen as lacking incentives for slavers who could get better returns elsewhere, and for planters who had to pay fixed rates instead of market values based upon perceived quality. This was truly a radical shift that opened the Spanish Caribbean to a surge in African populations and slave labor into the nineteenth century. It primarily Cuba, though, that benefited from this motion, and only after the complete collapse of Saint-Domingue when it then filled the demand gap for European commodities markets. Santo Domingo, mired in problems internal to its island, never actually saw a change from this policy.144

143 Abad, Urízar, Catani, and Bravo, Santo Domingo, 17 May 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

Into 1791 a handful of runaways from Saint-Domingue were still regularly arrested in, or on the border of, Santo Domingo, most of whom were identified as being of “Congo” and “Nâgo” (that is, Yoruba, generally) ethnicities in runaway ads in the newspapers of Saint-Domingue.\(^{145}\) No wonder, then, that the maroons at Maniel and Naranjo had to constantly decide whether to accept fugitives, thereby augmenting their community and proving safe haven, or turn over new fugitives who sought refuge, and thereby honor their peace treaty with Spain.\(^{146}\)

That same year for example, a *bozal* (unassimilated African) whose body apparently bore the marks of both ritual scarification and French branding walked into Azua, a town over seventy miles east of the Saint-Domingue border.\(^{147}\)

Sánchez Valverde had already detailed how the slave population in Santo Domingo had been afflicted by some physical ailment due to the horrendous Middle Passage, and other slaves sent to the island were “second- or third-hand” castoffs, he said, from Saint-Domingue or elsewhere in the Caribbean.\(^{148}\) At times the colony had, both in the capital of Santo Domingo and at Monte Cristi and likely

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\(^{145}\) *Affiches Américaines* 21, 12 March 1791, 131.

\(^{146}\) Vicente Tudela to Manuel González, 26 August 1787, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Joaquín García to Fernando Portillo y Torres, 30 October 1789, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.2; Consejo de Indias to Joaquín García, 29 May 1788, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.24.

\(^{147}\) Andrés Álvarez Calderón, 24 December 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.

elsewhere, welcomed illegal intercolonial shipments of slaves.\textsuperscript{149} Certainly local demand for enslaved labor may have surpassed \textit{asiento} availability. Overland slave trading routes from Saint-Domingue, which would be a more difficult process that mirrored the sending of thousands of cattle from Santo Domingo westward, likely did bring in slaves from the French that were often identified as being unfit, old, or disorderly.\textsuperscript{150} The ethnic composition of slaves in Santo Domingo is, therefore, very difficult to ascertain. The majority of Dominican slaves had long been creoles from within the colony, or if not then were likely creoles from other Caribbean locales.\textsuperscript{151} The documented flow of cross-island or cross-Caribbean slave trading is, by nature, quite sparse. We do know, though, that at most the direct trade from Africa was around only 2,000 captives in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{152} In any given year the number of maroons arriving in Santo Domingo from Saint-Domingue, or the number of illicit intercolonial slaves

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\textsuperscript{151} Frank Moya Pons, \textit{La otra historia dominicana} (Santo Domingo: Librería La Trinitaria, 2008): 84-85.

\textsuperscript{152} \textit{Slave Voyages Database}. Several of the voyages attributed to having arrived in Santo Domingo during the preceding two centuries actually arrived in Saint-Domingue or Cuba. The direct African trade was almost nonexistent for Santo Domingo. Thanks to David Eltis for confirming this finding in an email conversation (24-31 May 2015). The number of African captives calculated as having had arrived in Santo Domingo will likely be revised downward in the next database update. This could impact the following voyages: 17181, 27182, 36105, 36399, 36462, 75222, 80431, 80815, 80979, 81376, and 84074.
\end{flushright}
trafficked into Santo Domingo, could have easily exceeded the number of African captives directly imported into the colony. Including the free blacks and mulattoes of Santo Domingo, Dominican society featured quite a heterogeneous mix of creole and African cultures among its population of color.¹⁵³

Because of all of these factors the heterogeneity of African culture in and around Port-au-Prince was far greater than in North. This had a direct impact on the mix of people who fled or were subsequently resold into the areas around Santo Domingo from the much closer Cul-de-Sac region. Also, this differentiates the Cul-de-Sac region from the heavy Kongoese influence of North which is often heralded as a major revolutionary force in its own right. With all of that in mind, with the additional fact that the direct African trade to Santo Domingo was virtually nil, many of those of African ethnicity who entered Santo Domingo did so through Saint-Domingue. These people entered as maroons, as resold slaves, eventually during the revolutionary years as soldiers, and after that as citizens of independent Haiti. The specificity and diversity of African backgrounds factored prominently at various pivot points of Dominican history in the Age of Revolutions.

CONCLUSION

Dominican planters and Spanish officials, fueled by pecuniary motives and envy of French Saint-Domingue, imposed racial immobilities in the 1780s that sowed seeds of subversion among disaffected people of color in Santo Domingo. These caustic social measures further antagonized Dominicans of color whose years of frustrations toward Spain ultimately eroded Spanish colonialism and Dominican profit in years to come. Subversions by Dominicans of color in the 1790s responded to the context of draconian measures, mixed with the ideological ferment and structural vulnerability unleashed from 1789-1791 and thereafter. These cases unveil the patchwork of localisms that comprised the antecedents and arrivals of the Age of Revolutions as it was dispersed, received, and transmuted in Santo Domingo and across the broader Caribbean. Also, they demonstrate how Dominicans of color pragmatically exploited structural weaknesses and anti-colonial momentum to radically remedy their own immediate grievances.

The case of San Lorenzo the litany of adversities and alienations that free people of color in Santo Domingo endured from Spanish officials and Dominican planters in the 1780s, including forced relocations, coerced religiosity, destruction of livelihoods and lifestyles, and corporal punishment. Having already lost their autonomy, they had little reason to protect the status quo. They were prime audiences for radicalization. These episodes were related to, but distinct from,
processes in the epic rise and fall of Saint-Domingue. Relatedly, the crackdown on the maroons of Maniel also showed the means by which Spain attempted to mold new and useful subjects through the facilitation of routinized religious practice and limited physical mobility. These policies operated in coordination, and to Dominican elites the elimination of these loci of black autonomy was essential to revitalizing the Dominican plantation regime.

The process of forming new legal codes for slavery in the colony was, though ultimately ineffectual, a means of inventorying and projecting local particularities within the Spanish empire and Dominican differences from Saint-Domingue. Influential images of French sugar, coffee, and indigo profits swayed officials and planters in Santo Domingo to emulate perceived brutal racial dominance in Saint-Domingue, albeit with overtones of evangelical purification. In this time period Dominican and Spanish actors decided – voluntarily – to inventory their political economy, customs, and traditions. Before the French Revolution, or the Haitian Revolution, they began a process of documenting a renewed identity of not only envy, but of what made them unique from the French in what they regarded as positive aspects. This included, perhaps above all, their commitment to religiosity and social moderation, and the role of clergy and the church in regulating the racial hierarchy and maintaining cultural tranquility, themes that would play out with variations over the ensuing decades. A renewed
emphasis on evangelical mediation to better assimilate black subjects prefaced geopolitical strategies of spiritual allegiance and conquest during the forthcoming Haitian Revolution.

At the dawn of the Age of Revolutions no two rival colonies in the Caribbean were more intimately integrated in commerce, in migration, or in cultural awareness. These sometimes uncomfortable interactions transpired across a border that seemed distant from major colonial cities, and even more distant from the metropoles that the colonies intently watched from afar. Yet, in the next phase of cultural politics on Hispaniola this border region would become a flashpoint for pivotal activity that captivated the attention of the most important military and political figures on either side of the island. Instead of dividing the island, the border became a conduit for the cross-pollination of major ideas, projects, intrigues, and violence emanating from both sides of the island, and heavily influenced both Dominican and Dominguois affairs. Without hyperbole, it was one of the critical battlefields of the Age of Revolutions.
CHAPTER 2

POLITICAL UNREST, REVOLUTIONARY FUSE: ACROSS BORDERS, 1789-1792

By March 1791 the course of the previous five months had seen the tenuous peace, ideological turmoil, and ruthless prosperity of Saint-Domingue under Governor Philibert-François Rouxel de Blanchelande deteriorate into open political unrest. In an additional five months the colony as it was known and begrudgingly admired by Dominican elites would be irreparably changed by social revolution. Mounting Spanish fears that Santo Domingo would irreversibly change in the process eventually came true.

Specifically, that March García informed metropolitan authorities that French republicans had “ignited a new fire” in Port-au-Prince. José Arata, the commander of the Spanish border town Las Cahobas, had relayed intelligence reports to colonial leaders in Santo Domingo about the pathetic state in which Governor Blanchelande had fled into protective custody in Spanish domains. The governor of the most profitable Caribbean colony fled with but a small group of family and aides, and without much luggage or clothes other than what he had
been wearing when he abandoned the government buildings in Port-au-Prince in the face of a radical white mob.\textsuperscript{1} Blanchelande had hoped to make his way northward to Cap-Français, but so feared for his own life given the violent political turmoil in Saint-Domingue that he sought refuge on Dominican soil until, he said, “I am totally certain that the representative of the King will be respected, meanwhile I will stay in the Spanish part.” He was hopeful that in Santo Domingo he would receive Spanish material support against these “revolutions” emerging in Saint-Domingue.\textsuperscript{2} Soon enough, he returned to Saint-Domingue, but without Dominican support. Later in Blanchelande’s public self-defense, printed just before he was guillotined in Paris in 1793 for anti-revolutionary actions and malfeasance, he saved himself the embarrassment of mentioning his respite in Spanish domains and his begging for Dominican resources to aid against Dominguois unrest.\textsuperscript{3} Cries from French officials for Spanish aid had crescendoed over the last year, but would soon be drowned out when political tussles among the ruling class transitioned to all-out social upheaval. Blanchelande would not be the last to walk away from Santo Domingo empty handed.

\begin{footnotes}
1 Joaquín García to Porlier, Santo Domingo, 16 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.29.

2 Philibert-François Rouxel Blanchelande to Joaquín García, Las Cahobas, 6 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

\end{footnotes}
In exile on the Dominican frontier Blanchelande told García of the “deplorable circumstances” that had forced him into temporary exile. He explained that military reinforcements had recently arrived from France and had intermixed with radical local white patriots, or the “malicious of Port-au-Prince,” which resulted in a spontaneous revolt.¹ At the beginning of March two warships had disembarked troops from France to maintain the peace there and assist the colonial government. One was a battalion from Normandy and the other from Artois. The new troops were “deaf to the voice of their superiors” and blindly mixed in the politics of the local militia with violent outcomes.²

Rather ironically, only days earlier Vincent Ogé had been executed under Blanchelande’s orders.³ Ogé, a wealthy mulatto planter from the North had striven for political rights for his social caste. He had been extradited from his own attempt at political asylum in Santo Domingo less than three months before after leading a disastrous insurrection against Blanchelande’s government. The tables had turned for Governor Blanchelande who now found himself a political refugee at Spanish mercy just as Ogé had been only several weeks before.⁴

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¹ Philibert-François Rouxel Blanchelande to Joaquín García, Las Cahobas, 6 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
² Joaquín García to Porlier, Santo Domingo, 16 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.29.
³ Joaquín García to Lerena, Santo Domingo, 25 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.259.
⁴ Consejo de Indias to José Urízar, Aranjuez, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
García was shocked and repulsed by the chaos in Saint-Domingue, and declined to offer Blanchelande any tangible aid.\textsuperscript{8} However, trepidation and torpor in Santo Domingo would prove poor barriers to inevitable involvement in Saint-Domingue’s unfolding civil strife. The Spanish handling of the Ogé extradition fiasco that started in November 1790 signaled a critical shift in their policy. Who would Spanish officials negotiate with or not? How would they begin to define their own strategic goals based on the available human resources in Saint-Domingue? How would they use these instances of unrest to their geopolitical benefit? What rhetoric of royalism and religion attracted potential allies and provided unifying political and cosmological professions?\textsuperscript{9} News of radical unrest, and even the human embodiment of it, would only circulate more frequently in Santo Domingo in correlation to the fracturing of white power in Saint-Domingue, especially in 1791.

From 1789 through the summer of 1791 the upheaval of the French Revolution swept like a tidal wave across the Atlantic, crashing against the shores of Saint-Domingue and creating a riptide of social havoc that submerged the ruling

\textsuperscript{8} Joaquín García to Philibert-François Rouxel Blanchelande, Santo Domingo, 11 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

classes. Spanish officials and many Dominican residents retreated to their higher ground of royalism and faith, and watched on with fear as their wealthy neighbors were inundated. People of color – both enslaved and free, and on both sides of the island – soon had the opportunity to exploit imperial weakness, dissent among the elite, and ideological innovations to maximize their wellbeing and liberty. Instead of the model of prosperity, Saint-Domingue quickly became the exemplar of greed gone awry.

This chapter argues that this era of extremism and chaos in Saint-Domingue forced Spaniards and Dominicans in Santo Domingo to again question their collectivity in juxtaposition to their neighbors. It also gave Spanish officials an opportunity to reflect upon their own geopolitical goals vis-à-vis Saint-Domingue. In historiographical retrospect this moment was a prelude to the “real” revolution that began in late 1791. Long before the “real” revolution began, Spaniards and Dominicans knew they would not be able to avoid Saint-Domingue’s fracases. Furthermore, this chapter details the ways in which Santo Domingo and Spanish became intricately entwined with the turmoil of Saint-Domingue, a factor not usually considered in scholarship on either side of the island in this period. In contrast to the emphasis usually placed on the Ogé revolt of October 1790, the fracturing of white power and privilege in Saint-Domingue – highlighted by the flight of Governor Blanchelande – and the display of contempt
for Catholicism, drove Santo Domingo to consider and present ideological alternatives to the French decadence.

Ogé, Blanchelande, and maroons were early and heavily politicized examples of the thousands who were yet to traverse the Santo Domingo border in search of respite and, often, military support against violence in Saint-Domingue. Blanchelande explained the he fled when, “they cut off the head of Monsieur Mauduit...and have committed many other crimes.” Colonel Mauduit, who commanded local militiamen in Port-au-Prince, had been a defender of the French colonial establishment and royalism. Mauduit had actually tried to dissipate the approaching mob around government offices, and became a sacrificial victim that allowed Blanchelande to escape. The white mob paraded his body around the streets and to the church where they then demanded that the priest sing a Te Deum blessing over the severed head, only the newest offense to devout Catholics as republicans had already been using churches for political meetings. Arata, who hosted Blanchelande and lived less than fifty miles from Port-au-Prince and had direct exposure to Saint-Domingue that García did not. He offered his own rather prophetic analysis, saying, “You can consider the colony lost.” Their radical

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10 Philibert-François Rouxel Blanchelande to Joaquín García, Las Cahobas, 6 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

11 Joaquín García to Porlier, Santo Domingo, 16 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.29.
neighbors had “profaned the Catholic religion and offended our creator” with heretical offenses that devoutly Catholic Spanish subjects could not countenance.\textsuperscript{12} This particular act of violence deeply disturbed Spanish officials, and in response, Governor García further strengthened Spanish military presence in the borderlands out of fear that such discontent would reach the Dominican side.\textsuperscript{13}

Only six months later and fifty miles further north on the Santo Domingo and Saint-Domingue border, eight heavily-armed blacks in mid-September 1791 passed by a Spanish garrison at San Rafael. These rebels raised their voice to the guards and proclaimed “Peace with Spain.” Their purpose, instead of raiding and overwhelming lightly-defended Spanish properties, was to burn the home of Monsieur Bouget and unite with other insurgents in the vicinity. Almost daily these Spanish troops reported watching black rebels engage, and usually defeat, white troops. Almost nightly they watched plantations burn in the far distance.\textsuperscript{14} The largest and only successful slave revolt in the history of Atlantic slavery was less than one month old. Slaves from some of the wealthiest plantations in the world took provisional weapons, organized, and killed thousands of French whites. This capital in human form eliminated hundreds of thousands of livres in

\textsuperscript{12} Arata to García, Las Cahobas, 6 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
\textsuperscript{13} Joaquín García to Porlier, Santo Domingo, 16 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.29.
\textsuperscript{14} Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030
fixed capital, real estate, and commodity crops. They changed their own world. More than any contemporary observers could have predicted they changed the worlds of slavery and emancipation, race and empire, and eventually citizenship and universalism. More than anyone has yet understood they changed the world of Dominican and Spanish neighbors. The affability that the slave rebels demonstrated toward Spanish subjects was not isolated. In so many words they explained that their actions were not indicative of an all-out race war, and that in fact they had no quarrel whatsoever with their Dominican neighbors. Maintaining the peace along the lengthy, weakly-defended border was key, and at first that meant interfacing with slave rebels, despite whatever racist repugnance that conjured among their Spanish military counterparts. However, in this moment of pragmatism Spanish officials listened to what the slave insurgents said, often in cautiously optimistic incredulity.

These three new points of contact – Blanchelande, Ogé, and slave rebels – thrust the white, mulatto, and black racial tensions and incumbent radical politics of Saint-Domingue upon Dominicans and Spanish officials. Throughout the revolutionary era many actors from Saint-Domingue would seek some type of support from Spain or advantages drawn from Santo Domingo to augment their own domestic positions. These new ties became as unavoidable for the Dominican side as the trade, marronage, and envy of Saint-Domingue had been. In the short
term, Spanish officials realized that playing into Saint-Domingue’s internal chaos could further their own geopolitical aims and potentially exact retribution against French profits drawn from territories Spain lost a century prior. Over the longer term, Dominicans of color began to find material and ideological pathways in this revolutionary moment, often imbricated with revolutionary events to the west or Spanish distractions due to them, to pursue their own redress of grievances and upward mobility. In this period the clouds of revolution gathered, though the epic slave revolts of late 1791 had not yet begun. The strains of ideological radicalism that challenged the divine right of monarchies, the church, and racial hierarchy scandalized Spanish and Dominican observers.

FRENCH REVOLUTION, SAINT-DOMINGUE FALLOUT

The French Revolution unquestionably exacerbated the precarious political and demographic situation in Saint-Domingue. Soon enough the promises of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen – liberty, natural rights, and popular sovereignty – abounded in the colony, followed by the more succinct cries for liberté, égalité, fraternité. Alongside unfolding debates about the future of royalism, the Société des Amis des Noirs, a French metropolitan abolitionist society founded in 1788, locked in a parallel debate about the future of slavery with the Club Massiac, a well-funded, politically well-connected planter and merchant lobby. The Amis des Noirs only actively campaigned for ending the
slave trade and for rights for the *gens de couleur* (free people of color), which was by itself sufficient to antagonize the privileges of white planters and colonial merchants. In Paris another powerful ally for the mulattoes and slaves emerged – the Abbé Baptiste Henri Grégoire – a priest who defined mulattoes as “descendants of Europe” and advocated for their equality, while supporting the attempts by the Amis des Noirs to attack slavery. He attempted to advance these positions in front of the National Assembly but was vociferously overwhelmed by the pro-planter lobby. His predictions, and open calls for slave insurrection, were seen as treasonous. Consequently, he and the Amis des Noirs became easy targets for blame when unrest among the *gens de couleur* and slaves occurred in Saint-Domingue.

The power of poor white mobs in Paris, and then across France, ushered in the National Assembly in in the metropole in the summer of 1789. Elected assemblies in the three provinces of Saint-Domingue – North, West, and South (in French *Nord*, *Ouest*, and *Sud*, respectively) – soon followed. Planters and other colonial elites had no voice when the States-General had first gathered in 1788, but instead wielded backroom financial power to broker representation. In colonial assemblies their representation was open and dominant – at first. Their power

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15 Geggus, *Haitian*, 9-13, 159-16
was mediated by merchants or professionals who could be elected as well. Traditional local military power devolved to local elected control, and the militias shifted into “national guards” with heavy influence from the grand blancs (that is, “big whites,” the wealthiest and most powerful segments of white French colonial society). By 1790 the governor – then Peinier, and Blanchelande later that year – held fragile authority over a decentralization moving beyond imperial control.

In April 1790 a “Colonial Assembly” began meeting in Saint-Marc, where it proclaimed its sovereign power and wrote a constitution that curtailed French oversight. Some of its most belligerent representatives even promoted independence. These radicals, known as either “patriots” or pompons rouges, pushed the governor into an uneasy alliance with the assembly of North, which was still dominated by conservative planter interests. Within the city of Cap-Français more moderate political forces held power through 1791, while in Port-au-Prince petit blancs (“little whites” or middling, working people of French descent) echoed demands of the metropolitan masses, which drove them toward a collision with the governor, the most disruptive of which occurred in March 1791. Politics among free people – the extreme minority on the island, whether white or mulatto – began to divide these racial lines, and among the whites even along lines of class, region, and ideology. Debates raged about colonial autonomy and who could or could not vote and hold office. Discussion on the future of
slavery did not exist in the colony, though, and gens de couleur use of the tricolore (the blue, white, and red of the French Republic) cockade and revolutionary discourses made colonial whites quite uncomfortable. White politicians in Saint-Domingue and France demonstrated their selectivity with rights discourses and clarified who they excluded – people of African descent.

Some gens de couleur who asserted their citizenship as free people and property owners were murdered in the colony. The assembly of West forced powerful people of color to give an oath of obedience. Although a gens de couleur militia supported the governor in eventually quelling the Colonial Assembly in July and August 1790, they gained no favors. For the time being the National Assembly in Paris kept quiet on colonial racial questions.17 By August 1790 interior parishes near the Dominican border – Dondon, Ouanaminthe, Fort-Dauphin, and others closer to Cap-Fran – began to write letters with concern for the deteriorating situation over the rights of people of color.18 For many Spanish and Dominican observers the chaos unleashed in France and Saint-Domingue was abrupt, politically dramatic, and culturally repugnant. It became a new impetus from which to define themselves, reaffirm Spanish and Dominican differences, and

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17 Geggus, Haitian, 9-13, 159-16; Abbé de Courmand, 1790, "Requête Présentée a Nossigneurs de L’Assemblée Nationale, En Faveur des Gens de Couleur de l’île de Saint-Domingue," Bibliothèque Haïtienne des Frères de l’Instruction Chrétienne (BHFIC), B-2b2a.

18 "Nouvelles de Saint-Domingue, paroisses Ouanaminthe, Dondon, Fort-Dauphin, Trou, et Limonade," 8-30 August 1790, BHFIC, B-2a44.
ponder strategic possibilities as the wealthiest and likely tensest colony in the Americas slid into disarray.

OGÉ & CHAVANNE

When Vincent Ogé returned to Saint-Domingue from Paris in October 1790 this pro-slavery, pro-colonial, and affluent merchant and planter brought with him some of the most intense ideals of the French Revolution. He intended to practice them, but it is uncertain that he desired to start a revolution in the colony. Ogé had arrived in the French capital at the beginning of 1789, the year in which he turned thirty-two, and was thus present for the break toward full-scale political transformation. Though his motivations appear to have been quite complicated, he was clearly perturbed by the racial subordination of free people of color in Saint-Domingue, which had only worsened from the 1770s onward with the reclassification of free-born mulattoes as affranchis – a term for freed slaves that marginalized their fiercely-guarded freeborn status – and other significations of their second-class status. He and his peers could not vote nor hold office, and while in Paris he politicked to moderate revolutionary influence from being launched upon Saint-Domingue. Ogé certainly sought equal political rights of citizenship that white elites in the colony, or even less-wealthy whites, enjoyed by default. He, along with many other gens de couleur in Saint-Domingue and
metropolitan circles, embraced the fervor of rights and representation, *liberté* and *égalité* – though not for the thousands of slaves their class collectively held. In many ways, their financial privilege and indebtedness to much of the imperial status quo made this cadre unlikely agents of change.19

When he returned to his family’s lands around Dondon near the Dominican border, a critical strategic position in the mountains just south of Cap-Français, he rejoined colleague Jean-Baptiste Chavanne. Unlike Ogé, Chavanne had actual military experience, having served with French imperial forces in Savannah, Georgia during the War for Independence in the United States. Also, unlike Ogé, his resources were few. However, he was an ambitious free man of color who also came from a coffee-planting family, and had participated in illicit conventions of *gens de couleur* in North around the town of Grand-Rivière in the spring of 1790. This was one of many shadow conventions by *gens de couleur* across the colony who wanted to send their own delegates to colonial and French assemblies when whites barred them from participation in their parish-level nomination conventions. After colonial authorities persecuted these groups he chose, quite interestingly, to flee into self-imposed exile in Spanish Santo Domingo before returning later that year. Both men would flee to Santo Domingo on 6

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Ogé and Chavanne had written provocative letters to colonial officials that demanded their citizenship and political rights. They had amassed a force of 300 or more, mostly \textit{gens de couleur}, to back up their militant claims. Ogé definitively declined Chavanne’s pleas to arm local slaves for their cause, likely to delineate his measured intentions. Later \textit{gens de couleur} activists were not so mindful of maintaining the socio-political status quo, particularly after the massive slave insurrections in North in 1791, and did arm some slaves.\footnote{21 Consejo de Indias, Madrid, 15 July 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029; John D. Garrigus, “Vincent Ogé Jeune (1757–1791): Social Class and Free Colored Mobilization on the Eve of the Haitian Revolution,” \textit{The Americas} 68, no.1 (July 2011): 33-62; Fick, \textit{Making Haiti}, 130-131.} Perhaps more importantly, this debate over the inclusion of slaves in free peoples’ own intrigues stunted the comprehension of slaves’ own politics and motivations when the full-fledged slave rebellions erupted.

The arrival of free colored activists at the Dominican border thrust the disintegration of Dominguois society into Spain’s purview. For Santo Domingo, a colony with a higher portion of free colored residents, the stridence and violence shocked officials and elites who wanted to quarantine the colony from similar
unrest. They subsequently handled the flow of politically-minded French subjects and citizens with much greater delicacy and deliberation than in years past. Before, maroons like those at Maniel and Naranjo, and dissidents like Chavanne, could find safe haven in Santo Domingo where Spanish officials were often willing to tradeoff their provocative presence and example for locals to inflict political or economic injury upon their French rivals.²²

Ogé and Chavanne spent roughly as much time in Spanish custody as with the French. In fact, they begged and pleaded in the right language to give Spanish officials pause about their extradition, which France demanded. Finally, after Spain interrogated the prisoners, and engaged in extensive internal debate about the expediency of extradition, Ogé and Chavanne, and their associates were given handed over to French officials in Saint-Domingue on 29 December 1790. The French expressed their extreme gratitude for this decision, and encouraged French officials that their Spanish counterparts would cooperate in their attempts to suppress radicalism or threats to their racial hierarchy.²³ While Ogé and Chavanne were extradited, it was not without dissent from some Spanish officials who wanted to either wait for royal orders on how to proceed, or debilitate French


²³ Joaquín García to Porlier, Santo Domingo, 20 January 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.27.
rule by allowing these dissidents safe haven. By April 1791 the Spanish crown had been notified of the occurrences of the revolt and the arrest of Ogé and conspirators at Hincha. Ogé and Chavanne had both requested to be vassals of King Carlos IV, and pleaded using all the right language and appeals to religion and mercy. Yet Spain declined, despite the fact that soon enough they would entertain the professions of loyalty of thousands of slave rebels who were clearly more seditious in material and symbolism.

In July 1791 the king’s ministers in Madrid reviewed the events and reactions of officials in Santo Domingo. They had received nine groups of letters and testimonies on Ogé, a mulatto or sangmelé, as they borrowed from French, of “daring thoughts” who wanted to amend the old French colonial system and to open the assemblies to people of not exclusively European descent. They reviewed the details of Ogé’s stay in Paris, visits to London and the United States, his return to Saint-Domingue, and his refuge in Santo Domingo. In particular, Spanish officials focused on Ogé’s depiction of the way that his class had once even been treated like whites and criticism of whites for eroding their old privileges. That this privilege had once been the case, and that Ogé and others were ostentatious enough to demand this treatment, riled metropolitan Spanish officials, especially

24 Joaquin Garcia to Porlier, Santo Domingo, 20 January 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
25 Consejo to José Urizar, Aranjuez, 6 April 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
their request that they wanted to be treated like “men, citizens, and French.” The penalties imposed on mixed people who violated these new rules, abuse from whites, and political exclusion further antagonized wealthy gens de couleur. They were appalled at their militancy to recover status, and the “seditious” letters they wrote to then-Governor Peinier. In particular, they lodged strident demands for implementation of their rights as described in the decrees issued on 8 and 28 March 1790, and other writings with mulattoes in Mirebalais and Port-au-Prince. Mulattoes in Mirebalais and Port-au-Prince wanted to see the documents of their rights that he claimed to bring from the National Assembly, and Peinier was furious that he had returned without permission and with intent to dissent. The Spanish officials observed that in this moment Ogé decided to live by the fiery words on the portraits he carried with him, *Vivit, et Ardet* (roughly “he lives, and he burns” in Latin). He tried to rally the mulattoes of Mirebalais and Port-au-Prince, and told them he was one of six deputies of the National Assembly under the title of *Colonos Americanos*. As if these details were not disturbing enough for the royal officials, the fact that Ogé and Chavanne fled to Spanish Santo Domingo set the problem squarely within their own jurisdiction.26

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26 Consejo de Indias, Madrid, 15 July 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
Figure 2.1: Proximity of Dominican (square) and Dominguois (circle) towns.
The royal officials did not mind the extradition process that colonial officials used in observing their reciprocity treaties with the French, which the twenty-six prisoners were sent by ship into French custody in the last few days of 1790. At the moment local and imperial bureaucratic levels were equally paranoid about inciting French aggression, involvement in French civil strife, or favoring a particular political side give the uncertainty of who would emerge with power, both in Saint-Domingue and Paris. However, the captured mulattoes told them that the whites were divided on whether or not to invite British rule, but Ogé, Chavanne, and the twenty-odd other prisoners of course expressed their preference for the Catholic Majesty, which, considering their predicament, was an excellent choice of words. Of course metropolitan officials doubted their statements of submission and loyalty to Spain. They agreed that Spain could not harbor such people, and could not threaten their tenuous peace with. They concluded that Ogé should have submitted his protests in Paris and not with guns in the volatile colony. The officials said that asylum would have been difficult to issue anyway given their violent actions. This entire situation provided further proof of “a true anarchy” engulfing Saint-Domingue, which apparently now included debates over possible independence or British rule. Spanish colonial authorities were also quite concerned about setting a precedent for welcoming disaffected mulattoes into the refuge of Santo Domingo during what seemed then
like an unfolding revolution. They ultimately commended officials in Santo Domingo for keeping “sparks of that volcano” at bay with their wise conduct, while keeping peace with the French and even British as best as possible.\textsuperscript{27} The buffer that they managed was not simply the fractious border, or diplomatic peace, but the firewall against the conflagration of the entire Caribbean.

News arrived in Santo Domingo that just before Ogé was executed in February 1791 a group of armed mulatto sympathizers had attempted to take the guards by surprise to free him and others. The plot failed, the guard was enhanced, and the prisoners were soon executed anyway.\textsuperscript{28} Saint-Domingue watched the result of the failed Ogé protest, as Ogé and his remaining accomplices suffered gruesome, exemplary public executions.\textsuperscript{29} Spanish officials immediately understood that the looming clouds to their west, and across the Atlantic in France, portended a storm that would test the exclusionary racial hierarchies.

**WATCHING & WORRYING**

Dominicans and Spaniards collected information from docking ships that regularly delivered rumors and newspapers regarding Saint-Domingue. Reports

\textsuperscript{27} Consejo de Indias, Madrid, 15 July 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

\textsuperscript{28} Joaquin Garcia to Lerena, Santo Domingo, 25 February 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

\textsuperscript{29} *Affiches Américaines* 21, 12 March 1791, 129.
trickled in from Paris, but flooded in from Saint-Domingue. José Antonio Urízar summarized the Audiencia’s caution, saying, “I am persuaded that the confused and bellicose state that the French part has had until now…will be more favorable. Our government, although exposed to and even fighting the sparks from that volcano fire, has managed itself with dignity and respect, and without lacking essential principles has conserved the best harmony with the French…” With the collegial exchange of Ogé and Chavanne, and the temporarily diminished dissent by *gens de couleur* in Saint-Domingue, perhaps it seemed the French had stabilized. Urízar complimented the diligence and restraint that García had used in handling the situation. He also thought that a renewed favorable demeanor from the French was partly due to Dominicans who travelled to Saint-Domingue with positive stories and attitudes about Spanish governance. Furthermore, a looming rumor of warfare with the British, who could lure in discontented subjects and put Spain “between two fires” could greatly challenge their small forces. Therefore, implicitly, it was better to present a friendly front to their Bourbon colleagues.\(^\text{30}\)

Sooner or later Spain would actually have to take a side in the proceeding storm of Atlantic warfare. The press in Saint-Domingue conveyed the governmental turmoil that enveloped Paris in November 1790 in parallel with the

\(^{30}\) José Urízar to Antonio Porlier, Santo Domingo, 26 January 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
ogé and Chavanne unrest. Paris had been on edge over the dismissal of ministers, openly pondered the risk of war, and speculated on the risk of losing Spanish or French colonies to independence with British support. Imperial dividing lines were being drawn, as reports from London indicated that Earl Stanhope, had railed against the, “odious...mercurial writing on France,” and accused the English revolutionary societies of being closely linked to French Jacobinism, which aggravated concerns over growing British hostility generally. As if the new French National Assembly did not have enough pressure, prominent merchants and officials of Bordeaux, a city intimately tied to Saint-Domingue, asserted “incontestable rights” to their properties and their considerable sums invested in the colony – implicitly including human capital, should the revolutionaries veer toward truer definitions of equality.31 This geopolitical posturing portended the eventual strategic British hostilities on Hispaniola that aimed first at seizing Saint-Domingue, and second at adding Santo Domingo, amidst the destabilization of both colonies.

The press in Saint-Domingue also praised the journey of “good citizens” from North to Paris to explain their positions. Only a year before similar representatives from Saint-Domingue had been Ogé and his colleagues requesting

31 6 January 1791, Courrier Politique et Litteraire du Cap-Francais, par M. Gatrau.
representation and rights. Now more threatening possibilities to French profits – independence and emancipation in Saint-Domingue – had drawn the ire of elites on both sides of the Atlantic, in Cap-Français and Bordeaux alike. These particular visitors – “patriots” – defended their cause in Saint-Domingue, and reiterated their ties to the mother country in spite of wanting their local demands taken seriously.32

In January 1790 in Port-au-Prince Governor Blanchelande awaited the arrival of one Colonel Mauduit who had just left a garrison of 200 to keep the peace in Les Cayes so that he could escort the governor to Cap-Français. Blanchelande fretted over the spreading disorders and subversions by some citizens in Petit-Goâve, where he asked citizens to assist in resisting the secret landing of some eighty men by a Monsieur Montaut 3 miles from the city. Blanchelande sent a preemptive proclamation there and to the North regional assembly to buttress his authority. The proclamation called for patriotism and commitment to public affairs. Given the difficult circumstances he even selected a delegation to visit Santo Domingo to engage with Spanish officials. He hoped for “civic virtue” and cooperation from Dominicans and “Don Joachim de Guarcia” who Monsieur Negrier praised for helping the French mission. Negrier had witnessed García’s

32 6 January 1791, Courrier Politique et Litteraire du Cap-Français, par M. Gatrau.
merit during his time on the island, and while the delivery of Ogé was primarily
due to Aranjuez and treaties, but García fulfilled his duty anyway.\textsuperscript{33}

As reports of social turmoil emanated from Saint-Domingue, French revolutionary
discourses circulated among white leaders in Saint-Domingue, who even flirted with declaring independence, and the absence of governmental rights for free people of color incited subversion against the colonial assembly.\textsuperscript{34} The Consejo de Indias deliberated over warnings of impending “false liberty” that had consternated Archbishop Portillo.\textsuperscript{35} They asserted that, “The French had made anarchy, they had beheaded their government at our borders... Resulting in total division and heading for ruin, mainly in Guarico [Saint-Domingue], where there is a difference between whites, blacks, mulattoes, slaves, and freed.” They also warned against neighboring leaders who exacerbated social tensions and fostered suspicion among racial groups, particularly the mulatto Vincent Ogé.\textsuperscript{36} However, rumors suggested that some had sought refuge among maroons, including those at Maniel. As aforementioned, Ogé was arrested north of Baoruco and later executed in Saint-Domingue, but it is possible that some of his supporters may

\textsuperscript{33} 6 January 1791, Courrier Politique et Litteraire du Cap-Francais, par M. Gatrau.

\textsuperscript{34} Fick, Making of Haiti, 79–85.

\textsuperscript{35} Fernando Portillo y Torres to Antonio Porlier, 24 January 1790, AGI-SD, leg. 1110.

have trekked further southward and hidden at Maniel. Officials, fearing that maroons would be radicalized by widespread discussions of racial equality, urgently reprioritized their attempts to acculturate the maroons. The church was the Spanish cultural antiseptic to disinfect the Dominican body politic of the social maladies afflicting Saint-Domingue, and particularly against the possibility of rights discourses radicalizing newfound collaborators into revolutionaries.

**FRACTURED WHITE POWER, SUMMER 1791**

Brazen violence in Saint-Domingue and the fissures within white power continued to shock observers in Santo Domingo. In March 1791 news arrived through Neiba of the execution of Ogé, forwarded by a resident of Port-au-Prince. On 25 February the same ship arrived in Port-au-Prince that had taken “the haughty Mr. Caradu (sic)” to France when, to protect the power of the colonial assembly, Caradeux had been attacked in 1790 in Saint-Marc by Mr. Mauduit. Once in sight, French officials and residents noticed that, in fact, there were two ships sailing together flying a white flag decked with purple and black stripes in the top-left corner. Mauduit had supposedly received new instructions from the king, and Caradeux wielded 3,000 armed men who were to be boarded in locals’

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houses. Caradeux then published a paper calling for a general political assembly in the church. At that hour Caradeux arrived with his men, and Mauduit confronted him with his own contingent. That day, 4 March 1791, Mauduit wore a white cockade, to which Caradeux took exception and told Mauduit that he had to remove it before he could be admitted to the Assembly. Mauduit informed him that he had, “sworn to that emblem, and it could not be removed.”

The troops of Normandy and Artois that had just arrived and joined Caradeux’s militia which had been insubordinate on the whole Atlantic voyage and were uninterested in supporting the ancien régime on the island. False decrees about the political situation circulated, and the troops were at a state of near mutiny when they refused Blanchelande’s attempts to send them northward in the colony. The gens de couleur took advantage of this moment of governmental dysfunction to help free Rigaud, who they saw as an unjustly-confined political prisoner, from jail. These soldiers were welcomed by local petit blancs, and in turn the soldiers supported their popular assemblies and demanded the return of their flags that French royalist troops under Mauduit had taken at the same time as Caradeux’s arrest the previous August. Part of this confrontation between

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38 ‘Noticias de Neiba,’ 8 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
Mauduit and Caradeux was to return these banners, but Mauduit would not submit to removing his royalist insignia, nor to kneeling and apologizing.\textsuperscript{39}

Caradeux then reprimanded him a second time. Mauduit answered that, “nobody would take it off the cockade without his head,” and without a reply an officer, “removed both with a strike of a sword.” It fell to the ground alongside his body. Caradeux rallied men loyal to him to take arms in that plaza and deferred the political assembly to the next day. They dragged Mauduit’s body through the streets, following his head atop a pike. The rumor was that Caradeux brought with him orders from the colonial committee, that had conferred with the National Assembly and had royal approval, and that 12,000 troops were destined to regarrison the colony. Another rumor was that he had orders for the execution he committed, and the same for two or three other residents. The rather impromptu manner of Mauduit’s death might suggest otherwise. In any case, Caradeux sent letters to all the towns across the West, claiming command, freeing prisoners, and reforming the troops all the while Blanchelande fled to Las Cahobas to avoid a similar fate as Mauduit.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{39} Herbert Elmer Mills, “The Early Years of the French Revolution in San Domingo,” Ph.D. Diss., Cornell University, 1889, 91-94.

\textsuperscript{40} “Noticias de Neiba,” 8 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
The political assassination of Mauduit and flight of Blanchelande were momentous events for Saint-Domingue, both politically and racially, despite being overshadowed in historical memory by the Ogé revolt before and the monumental slave revolt of 1791 in the Plaine-du-Nord afterward. Early protests by the *gens de couleur* and later insurgency by the black masses bookended these events of largely white-on-white violence and radicalism. Racially, it was not a strike at the hierarchy, but an irreparable crack in the façade of white power on the island. Politically, it signified a shift from royalist control to rapid republican ascendance. Geographically, it was a shocking shift within Port-au-Prince and the Cul-de-Sac region, not in North. Ogé had quickly been crushed, and while it was a dramatic threat and set a precedent of dissent for other *gens de couleur*, for Dominicans and Spanish officials the chaos of white power in Saint-Domingue was far more ominous. Future major upheavals from below would likely have a less improbable path toward social revolution without a unified response of white supremacy to immediately crush dissent.

For Spanish officials who observed these events, it was closer in proximity to Santo Domingo, and it was appalling to see someone of their own ruling class – both Blanchelande and Mauduit – so treated. Mauduit had been a royalist check on the island, and actively shut down prominent and dissenting radical republican, *gens de couleur*, and independence assemblies in the colony, and was
certainly a well-known figure on the island. He was involved in a public dispute with the commander general of the colony over his handling of the closure of the popular assembly at Saint-Marc, which involved expelling *citoyens* from the church their meetings occupied, an event that on the whole ended with loss of life and damage to property. Like Chavanne and many later powerplayers in the Haitian Revolution Mauduit had served with distinction in the United States’ War for Independence, and was an influential adviser to both Governors Peinier and Blanchelande. Mauduit had arrested Caradeux in August 1790 for his role in undercutting the governor in the General Assembly, put down a suspected revolt by André Rigaud in South, and was generally known for his intolerance and severity. With his death, and Blanchelande’s confinement in Santo Domingo and later in Cap-Français, the General Assembly and assembly at Saint-Marc had gained popular power among the whites in the Cul-de-Sac. It signified a more substantial political and social shift than the failed Ogé revolt.

Arata recounted the disorders in Saint-Domingue that he had learned from Port-au-Prince and his new guests Governor Blanchelande, his son, nephew, and ten others who had fled to his protection in Spanish lands. After they had cut

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41 “Capitaine general du district de Port-au-Prince: Preuves de la faussete de la relation impr. De M. Mauduit, colonel du regiment du Port-au-Prince,” 1790, Port-au-Prince, BHFIC, B-2a44e.

off Mauduit’s head and put it on a pike they marched to the church with great music and clamor and obligated the priest to sing a Te Deum of thanks which, he said, “profaned the Catholic religion and offended our creator.” The troops that had arrived in Port-au-Prince numbered 1,600 men. However, ship crews from various vessels had joined them along with the local militia, which then amounted to 5,000 men, along with other ‘vagabonds’ around the port. “You can consider the colony lost,” he said, because these troops and locals had elevated Caradeux to provisional power. The situation was so pathetic that Governor Blanchelande and his son had no clothes, and Arata had none to give, so he instead helped them wash theirs.43 Other news arrived regarding Port-au-Prince, indicating that indeed Caradeux had taken power in the assembly. Spanish officials were sure that the dissidents would try to gain independence soon and perhaps try to expand the colony by taking Spanish lands. Either through this scenario or a multiplicity of others, they were more certain that the conflict would spread to Dominican side.44

García and Spanish officials began to decipher the falsehoods Mr. Caradeux had spread regarding the orders he claimed to have from the National Assembly to take command of the colony. They were equally perplexed by his use of the white flag with purple and black stripes while the whole nation used the

43 José Arata to Joaquín García, Las Cahobas, 6 March 1791, 6 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
44 Joaquín García to Porlier, Santo Domingo, 16 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.30.
vertical bands of the blue, white, and red *tricolore*. It made them quite paranoid at the possibility that these “patriots” would soon declare independence from France. The legitimacy of Caradeu’s power was entirely in question, and Saint-Domingue’s descent into anarchy was gaining speed.45

By June 1791 there at least seemed to be greater tranquility on the French side though discord still remained in the North and West. Spanish officials were very interested to see what would happen when the new commissioners sent by the French National Assembly arrived, and particularly regarding the contentious colonial constitution. Those were the biggest and most fraught questions of the vibrant assemblies of Saint-Marc and Cap-Français, and even in smaller towns. The regiment of Port-au-Prince, after the horrific murder of their leader Colonel Mauduit, had embarked for France. García opined that the press in Saint-Domingue was far too open. Every day there were prejudicial and incendiary papers circulating in the public arena inciting dissent in Saint-Domingue and fear in Santo Domingo. One could not read them and not be appalled by the writing that paraded as truth, he said, which included the most “diabolical and insulting species” that “conspires against the powers and their wise dispositions.” They aspired to a mass movement, and published their ideas under banners of

45 Joaquín García to Lerena, Santo Domingo, 25 March 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.250.
eloquence and labels of “Glory” and “French Liberty.” These papers were arriving on the Dominican side frequently, but he said that Spanish subjects continued to manifest their loyalty anyway.⁴⁶

At least García gained reinforcements that month from the Cantabria regiment, which had arrived in Santo Domingo without specific instructions from metropolitan officials. Compared to the past months the frontier was quieter for the time being, and the island seemed more moderate although Santo Domingo was suffering from lack of funds which it awaited from the Viceroy of Mexico.⁴⁷ That same day, García asked specifically for financial support from Mexico for that regiment.⁴⁸ This began a cycle of heavy dependence upon neighboring, wealthier Spanish colonies for military expenditures in Santo Domingo, costs that would soon become exorbitant, highly unpleasant deficits that further fragmented support for an unpopular conflict.

In July 1791 conflict erupted anew in Saint-Domingue. Their French neighbors were consternated because of a decree from the National Assembly sent 15 May of that year which declared that all mulattoes of free fathers were full, active citizens and admissible to the voting assemblies. Spanish officials expected

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⁴⁶ Joaquín García to Marqués de Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 18 June 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.35.
⁴⁷ Joaquín García to Conde de Serena, Santo Domingo, 18 June 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.256.
⁴⁸ Joaquín García to Conde del Campo de Alange, Santo Domingo, 18 June 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.90.
a civil war over this matter, and were again scandalized by the brazen contempt for religious authorities displayed by their neighbors. García and Spanish officials continued to watch Saint-Domingue with alarm following the arrival of news from the National Assembly. Reports passed across the frontier regarding the “major consternation” that arose on 10 July. All districts of Saint-Domingue joined together “to treat this grave matter” and “made many debates, and criminal views” and some “went voting with many noisy voices.” One opponent stridently suggested that, “that all neighbors and planters would take arms to end the people of color.” In response after leaving the assembly, “many individuals put on the black cockade and…hanged in effigy the Bishop of Blois, previously the Abbé Grégoire, who they supposed to be the author of this decree.” They resolved to send representatives to the National Assembly to ask them for this law to not take effect, since they were concerned that when the naval ships arrived with commissioners and troops that they would force this law into practice. He mentioned two armed factions in Saint-Marc. García predicted that the whites would not settle upon indifference, but this ruling from the National Assembly would “ignite a war among the troops who they awaited, the white locals, and the free people of color.”

49 Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 24 July 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.36.

50 Joaquín García to Conde de Serena, Santo Domingo, 24 July 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.262. For more on the highly influential Grégoire within a deeper French context, see also: Alyssa Goldstein
Early in the next momentous month, August 1791, García was disturbed by intelligence that he had received from the frontier regarding a British ship had appeared at Cap-Français. It had been sent from Jamaica with an offer of eighteen naval warships and troops to augment the French parties who opposed the decree of 15 May from the National Assembly for the rights of gens de couleur. The message bearer, who García thought was the captain, had jumped to land and rushed to the Provincial Assembly. However, the white leaders declined his offers because they still believe that the decree would not be placed into full effect. The rumor still circulated about the British military being poised in Jamaica for deployment in Saint-Domingue. Soon enough, a new rumor circulated on the island that just off the coast of Saint-Domingue was a British fleet of twenty-five vessels that were already prepared to intervene. On 14 August a large citizens’ assembly met to debate whether or not to admit this fleet. Spanish officials were highly aware of the very proactive stance the British had taken from Jamaica to exploit weaknesses in Saint-Domingue to their own strategic economic and political advantage.


51 Joaquín García to Conde de Serena, Santo Domingo, 24 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.267.
52 Joaquín García to Conde de Serena, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.268.
The deputies from the Saint-Marc assembly returned with three commissioners for the colonial government, and it was assumed that these commissioners would publish the decree. García thought that the grands blancs of the North and West would fiercely resist equality with the mulattoes. Indeed, many French colonists were “resolved to sacrifice their lives and haciendas before admitting the decree of equality.” However, García had collected enough intelligence that indicated to him that the decree would not go into effect – at least not yet. As if the changing of the political guard next door was not enough, newspapers from Saint-Domingue also told of the flight of the King of France from the court in Paris disguised as a butler, and his detention in Varennes because he had been recognized by a postmaster. The farcical chaos of French affairs baffled Spanish authorities who might have otherwise laughed had the consequences not been so terribly dire.53

As if the National Assembly had not unsettled Saint-Domingue’s slave regime enough already, later in August 1791 news from the border town San Rafael informed García of a new French decree that stipulated that any slave who presented twenty-five pesos to their master would be freed, and that any others who served for five years would also be free. This was the implementation of a

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53 Joaquín García to Conde de Serena, Santo Domingo, 24 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.267.
clear coartación-like policy where previously there had been none, and the prospect of legally limiting the length of what had always been a permanent condition, confirmed to Spanish observers that the rival colony and profits that they had once hoped to emulate would soon no longer exist.\textsuperscript{54} By the time García wrote this report this path was more certain than he could have yet known. The massive slave revolt in Saint-Domingue’s Plaine-du-Nord was less than three days old, and would expand exponentially.

**SLAVES REVOLT, AUGUST 1791**

As political tumults afflicted every corner of the colony and French power fractured, slaves led by Dutty Boukman, who toiled at some of the most profitable sugar plantations in the world in Saint-Domingue’s Plaine-du-Nord, revolted and began murdering their managers on 22 August 1791. This event had been coordinated and planned by many slave conspirators across these wealthy plantations, with one such meeting in the days preceding the revolt featuring a binding vodou ceremony and sacrifice of a pig. Participants in this meeting took an oath of retribution against whites and redemption for themselves, possibly of the Petro tradition with specific ties to Aja-Fon blood oaths that influenced the Rada

\textsuperscript{54} Joaquín García to Conde de Serena, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.268.
tradition. This event, called Bois-Caïman for the “alligator wood” in which it was reputedly held, has served as the origin story for the Haitian Revolution. Even in the time of contemporaries who participated in this ceremony, whatever it actually entailed, the connotation of the event was depicted as anti-Christian, anti-white, and diabolical, particularly by French whites who disseminated stories on the buildup to open revolt. As news reports flooded into Santo Domingo, Spanish subjects looked westward with initial concerns of self-preservation. Gradually their gaze revealed avenues of opportunity, but also showed the inevitability of Spanish and Dominican involvement in the revolution. Nearly every vying party in Saint-Domingue sought trade, refuge, or military and political support from specific potential partners on the Dominican side. The deep pre-revolutionary ties prefigured this unavoidable connectivity.

Less than 48 hours after the revolts began in the Plaine-du-North, Spanish border officials began sending detailed intelligence from Dajabon to Governor Joaquín García regarding a large revolt of blacks – and reportedly mulattoes – that had occurred near Cap-Français. García collected intelligence reports on the revolt, which explained that without warning the uprising began the night of the

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56 Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
22nd and morning of the 23rd by the slaves on wealthy and highly reputable plantations around Petit-Anse, Limbé, Plaine-du-North, and elsewhere. For example, in Petit-Anse the well-known plantation of Sanite had been burned to the ground. The rebels set vicious fires on homes and plantations with “depraved intention” against the whites, who were laid waste if found. The residents of Ouanaminthe – a river-crossing town almost forty miles east of the revolts just on the Saint-Domingue side of the border just across the river from Dajabon – fled into Santo Domingo in droves, especially women and children frightened by the rapidly spreading fires and black insurrections.57

Officer Francisco Pepin told García that around Fort Dauphin, an important port over thirty miles east of the initial slave revolts and close to the border, they had observed a great deal of militant activity at night. In the weeks following the revolts the Assembly of Saint-Domingue also formally requested Spanish assistance, because, “North is a mountain of ashes,” and they said 100,000 rebel slaves had burned 100 sugar ingenios and killed 100 owners, along with numerous coffee plantations.58 Spanish officials hesitated in addressing these requests, and their wait-and-see approach became default policy. The French had

57 “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 24 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

58 Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030. The common Spanish name for Fort Dauphin was “Bayajá” – this dissertation utilizes the French nomenclature instead.
requested this support under Article 9 of their extant peace and aid accords with Spain. While Spain pondered their options, the French had rallied some 300 veterans and 3,000 militiamen as an impromptu defense force. Among the admittedly confusing news that Pepin sent was a rumor that about “130 men from Europe” had “put the blacks in movement,” another whisper of white radical machinations that denied slaves’ own cultural politics in forming the uprising. These supposed 130 white subversives had diffused throughout the colony telling the blacks that the National Assembly had made them free. Some French observers also wondered what influence the 15 May decree of citizenship for mulattoes had on these events. Whether intentional or not, these reports obfuscated the roots of the revolt as having been from slaves’ ingenuity against slavery’s brutalities, all the while the raging fires persisted and spread eastward toward Fort Dauphin and the Dominican border.

Reports and pleas also arrived from French officials. Just after the revolt began Governor Blanchelande informed the nearest Spanish outpost, which happened to be at Dajabon, that in North a massive rebellion of blacks had erupted, which destroyed all whites in its path, burned the cane fields, and leveled

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59 “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 29 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
60 “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 29 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
61 “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 30 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
their buildings. French troops had been completely unsuccessful at suppressing it or its growth. Blanchelande begged for support to secure the border region, and to send Spanish troops to unite with the French forces due to their alliance, treaties, and national friendship.\(^6^2\) Blanchelande also begged Francisco Nuñez, commander at San Rafael, a town further southwest along the border, for military assistance. Whites, he said, were being massacred in droves.\(^6^3\) On 26 August the Marquis de Rouvray, a staunch royalist, was named to command the eastern areas of the province and sought Spanish support, yet Spanish officials still equivocated.\(^6^4\) They voiced their concern, but refused to act, and were willing to preserve their own forces should the revolt spread to the border while watching the opulent French planter class be humbled.

Information and implorations also crossed the border directly from French planters, including Monsieurs Maire and Coussac at Dondon near the border, who reported widespread revolts, murders, and fires already in that area. Their reports alleged, likely erroneously, that some mulattoes were stoking this insurrectionary conflagration. This had the same negating undertone toward

\(^6^2\) Philibert-François Rouxel Blanchelande to Pepin, Cap-Français, 24 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029 (A).

\(^6^3\) Philibert-François Rouxel Blanchelande to Francisco Nuñez, Cap-Français, 24 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.2.

\(^6^4\) Philibert-François Rouxel Blanchelande to Andrés Andrés Herédia, Cap-Français, 26 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029 (B).
slaves’ grievances as the rumors of seditious white influence on the revolts.\textsuperscript{65} Other informants said that Limbé had been torched, which it had, and that beyond an isolated slave revolt a general revolution had arisen, a realization that French whites formed within days of the initial uprising. While the rebels obliterated anything European and killed all owners, they actually spared most priests and women, who they used for spiritual and carnal satisfaction, respectively. Some insurgents were armed with guns, but the vast majority had swords or other makeshift weapons.\textsuperscript{66}

Into early September information also crossed the border with the stream of refugees, such as Monsieur Coustard. He told of the new disorders in the Cul-de-Sac region, well over 100 miles from the slave revolts in North. Coustard explained that the free people of color at Port-au-Prince and around the whole Cul-de-Sac and adjacent areas raged against the Provincial Assembly, and that when they had taken up arms many black slaves had been enlisted into their cause. The residents of the Cul-de-Sac having felt the necessity of ceasing this disorder and with the fear of a general insurrection among the slaves had made proposals of peace to the people of color. However, some in Port-au-Prince demurred, and did

\textsuperscript{65} Latour Maire and Coussac to Commander of San Rafael, Dondon, 24 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.1; Jacques de la Ville, n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

\textsuperscript{66} Jacques de la Ville, n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
not want to hear from envoys sent by the parish of Croix-des-Bouquets. The people of color encamped at Carbonera and had fought with some white soldiers in the area in which some whites were lost, injured, and captured. A detachment of national guardsmen from Port-au-Prince confronted them a second time a few days later at a plantation outside of Port-au-Prince. At that time the armed *gens de couleur* killed 48 troops, captured the commander, and seized two prized pieces of artillery. Officials in Port-au-Prince accused many residents of the Cul-de-Sac of aiding the mulattoes, and put a price on some of their heads, including Coustard. 67

At least in this case, unlike in North, the slaves around Cul-de-Sac were more involved with mulatto and white revolutionaries, though their threat of choosing general insurrection remained very real, especially now that some were armed.

Mariano Caro first hosted Coustard in Santo Domingo, after which he moved into the home of Gregorio Recio, whom he had known long ago because this Spanish subject had married a “natural daughter” of one of his uncles, who was likely a Dominguois *mulata*. These networks of kinship, friendship, and commerce linked the colonies, and in this moment panicked Dominicans on the personal and familial level as much as governmental or military concerns, especially since the revolt could have spread into Dominican territory. While in

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67 Monsieur Coustard, 8 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.5.
exile, Coustard continued to receive news from the Cul-de-Sac daily, often within hours of an event and which he then passed on to the Spanish. The latest news had suggested a new lull and possible peace between Port-au-Prince and the mulattoes of the Cul-de-Sac. On this Coustard opined that, “if not, one of the richest parts of the colony will inevitably run to its total ruin.” Also, the growing sentiment in Saint-Domingue stood against any counterrevolution, both on the island and in Europe. In Europe movements were afoot to reestablish the King of France to his throne, and rumors were that an army of 180,000 composed of Prussians, Russians, and Swedes would be moving against France after harvest time. Coustard, like many others, was astounded at how this powerful political philosophy had grown over five decades, and remarked “Blessed are the people who have judiciously conserved the principles of their parents, their customs, and their religion.” 68 With this onslaught of information Spanish officials initially perceived the uprisings in Saint-Domingue to by based in both North and West, with similar causes rooted in the years of building dissent and triggered by French revolutionary upheavals. They did not yet, and perhaps could not, distinguish the slave revolts that rocked North as being fundamentally distinct and more profound phenomena than the preceding events.

68 Monsieur Coustard, 8 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.5.
In the last week of August, the French commander Rouvray begged for Spanish assistance. He said that, “Already the bandits with torch in hand have passed to Grande-Rivière, devastated all the territory from Placensia to the forum of Limonade.” The rapid spread of the revolt was clear, and he warned that if the fires and uprisings spread to Ouanaminthe then soon similar “disgraces” would befall the Spanish side of the island. He concluded by pleading, “In the name of our common interest, in the name of humanity, in the name of the House of Bourbon, we require your assistance,” and tried to curry sympathy by explaining the despair of French women and children.69

The desperation in Rouvray’s letters increased. He wrote to Herédia to again beg for assistance, and he began to comprehend and explain the world-changing scope of the events, saying, “Likewise I warn you that in two years’ time Spain will have no more colonies – this is a disorder of the globe.” Rouvray prompted Herédia by stating that, “You and I, sir, are under the eyes of Europe.”70 This reference to their metropolitan roots carried more than a passing plea for white solidarity. Their home continent would judge those Spaniards who were unwilling to suppress the greatest threat to European empires in the Caribbean – black solidarity and insurrection. Rouvray continued to beg for Spanish material

69 Marquis de Rouvray to Andrés Herédia, Caracoles, 28 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029 (C).
70 Marquis de Rouvray to Andrés Herédia, 31 August 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029 (D).
support, but also pleaded for Spanish protection of his own wife and children. He claimed total destruction was possible, and that many whites including himself had even considered taking slaves, leaving property behind, and moving to Havana. Even while he was trying to defeat the slave insurgents he asked for asylum in Cuba, and explained his and others’ needs for new sugar and coffee land and their desire to practice Catholicism. He appealed to religious commonalities, to the memory of King Henry IV, the Bourbon family connection, and the recent unfortunate dethroning of King Louis XVI.\textsuperscript{71} He knew how to play to his Spanish readership to hedge his bets in Saint-Domingue.

The inferno expanded exponentially throughout September. In one battle French troops had arrived from near Limonade had move toward the Paruese plantation. There they had found a great deal of purified sugar and clothing of the whites’ in black homes, which made them suspicious. On those grounds the commanding French officer ordered 200 blacks of both sexes massacred as an example to any potential rebels. Such brazen violence only deepened the already near-irreparable racial chasm. That afternoon the troops found the plantation of Monsieur Chevalerie burned by 200 black insurgents who rode good horses and carried some type of white banner with them. The French failed to stop these

\textsuperscript{71} Marquis de Rouvray, Jaquezy, 6 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029 (C).
rebels before they escaped through the cane fields, but not before killing a soldier from the Ouanaminthe detachment, likely someone known on the Spanish side.\textsuperscript{72}

The royalist officer Marquis de Rouvray demanded that his men wear a white royalist cockade to distinguish from the enemies, whether white radicals, mulattos, or blacks. The white cockade, a symbol of monarchist affinity, was a reminder of the social and political divisions still afflicting the French in their time of trying to suppress their greatest crisis and worst fear – massive slave revolt. His French troops had lost Monsieur Dormon, who was a distinguished resident and son of the Count Dormon of a nearby plantation. He had tried to be a hero by following some slave insurgents into the cane with sword in his teeth and pistols in hand. The younger Dormon had been the courier of initial French letters to Dajabon regarding the revolt. He had served as a deputy to the Assembly at Léogâne only three months after coming from France, and had considered a promising career in the church. One small detachment of blacks did surrender, though, and asked for mercy from the French. They were disarmed and taken to the general.\textsuperscript{73} Likely, they were then quickly executed as many prisoners of war were. The uprising steadily spread toward the Spanish, both through territorial and personal connections.

\textsuperscript{72} “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 1 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

\textsuperscript{73} “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 1 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
On 7 September 1791 García explained to Herédia his hesitance to help the French. García was very concerned about growing black and mulatto power and wanted to maintain resources to prevent “infection” on the Dominican side of the island. He was even quite concerned about letting French refugees seek refuge in the colony given all the recent political unrest they might bring with them, though he viewed women and children differently. He was very suspicious of men who wanted in, and urged caution about their spreading of disorder and seditious thoughts. The “bordering towns of Ouanaminthe and Dondon” could only send refugees of women, children, the infirm, and the old out for humanity’s sake. However, any French prisoners, colored or white, had to be sent back to Saint-Domingue immediately. He also absolutely forbade any support and supplies from crossing the border.74 When violence dissipated around Ouanaminthe, the Spanish officials decided to send back some women who had been staying there in early September.75

Throughout September 1791 correspondence from French officers and civilians poured across the border, all of which informed of the, “latest horrors that have fermented in the French colony,” where, “slaves, free people of color, and even some bastard whites have put fire to the cañerales,” a continuation of the

74 Joaquin García to Andrés Heredia, Santo Domingo, 7 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, (D).
75 “N.1, Daxabon…,” Santo Domingo, 8 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
myth that slaves needed such guidance. Certain parties had discussed arming
their slaves, including Ogé and Chavanne, so this was not a strategic stretch. The
overarching initial assumption seemed to be that black slaves could not possibly
have planned and accomplished the level of uprising at hand, especially at the cost
of so many white lives and in defiance of the French military.\textsuperscript{76}

In the early weeks of the revolt rebel groups remained extremely
fragmented, and while some operated in concert and virtually all attacked French
property, people, and power, their motivations and cohesion differed drastically
and remained local. Soon enough, particularly-talented black generals and heirs
to Boukman – such as Jean-François, Georges Biassou, and Jeannot, and eventually
Toussaint Breda – began consolidating their command of thousands of slave
insurgents into a crudely unified force.\textsuperscript{77} In any case, thereafter the demands of
the rebels became more clearly distinguishable through their collective actions,
including the political and ideological power of black ex-slaves who they had so
underestimated.

This force included the less famous officer like Paul (Pablo) Ali. He was
then just over thirty years old, likely of Islamic heritage, and had been born into

\textsuperscript{76} Joaquín García to Bajamar, September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.39.

\textsuperscript{77} Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030; “Lettre de M. De
Blanchelande, au minister de la marine,” Cap-Français, 14 and 29 September 1791, in Archives
parlementaires de 1787 à 1860: Recueil complet des débats législatifs et politiques des chambres françaises,
slavery near Grande-Rivière. He may have participated in, or at least had intimate knowledge of, the Bois-Caïman ceremony. Over the next three decades he not only proved his talent, bravery, and intelligence time and again, but would factor as a major figure at nearly every pivot point in Dominican cultural politics. His influence did not surpass other in his cohort, which included Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe, but he came to have a disproportionately important role in Santo Domingo and outlasted all these peers as a public figure on the island.78

An early sign of the devastation came with French reports that by early September the dead and captured black insurgents already numbered up to 25,000. To the French these deaths represented millions of livres of destroyed human capital, on top of the scorched mills and cane. This was, of course, only a fraction of the overall number rebels ringing Cap-Français and providing the conditions and inspiration for revolutionary hostilities elsewhere in the colony.79

In the countryside around Rocou the French forces under Rouvray sustained a fight against 800 rebel blacks who they defeated with the benefit of cannons and

78 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 19 December 1796 and 20 April 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 42-48 and 316-318; Céligni Ardoin, Essais sur l’histoire d’Haïti (Port-au-Prince: Bouchereau, 1865): 16-18 and 146. This book was published posthumously by his brother Beaubrun, also a noted chronicler of Haitian history and culture. Ardouin included rich detail in footnote six on page sixteen. For a paragraph summary of his fascinating career, see: Geggus, Haitian, 201.

79 “N.1, Daxaban…,” Santo Domingo, 3 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
cavalry. Notably, after the engagement they reported that, “one of the blacks after examined and washed was found to be white.” It is impossible to say how this made it into Spanish intelligence, but it would seem to have been yet another rumor fostered by the suspicion of racial egalitarianism, along with doubts about the ability of slaves to organize themselves or wield socio-political aims.\textsuperscript{80} A free black prisoner of status in Cap-Français said that within the territory some, “600 whites have part in the conspiracy.”\textsuperscript{81} One black captive even stated that one Monsieur Vincent, apparently a reputable local, was even involved in the uprising. French commanders Cambefort and Tousard did not believe him. While the prisoner may have simply been trying to delay or distract his captors from discovering whatever real activities in which he may have been involved, he may have also been deliberately trying to sow seeds of paranoia among the already fractured master class.\textsuperscript{82}

In the earliest weeks of the slave insurrection the army of Boukman pressed incessantly against the outskirts of Cap-Français. One convent near the edge of town may have had a certain non-conformist nun of African descent named Améthyste who would leave in the night and allegedly practice \textit{vodou} away

\textsuperscript{80} “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 6 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

\textsuperscript{81} “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 8 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

\textsuperscript{82} “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 7 September, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
from the Catholic control. This convent, which had accepted women of color for several years, may have had others *vodouizan* who joined Améthyste. When Boukman, Biassou, and Jeannot approached the city it is possible that she and her cohort aided the insurgents’ maneuvers.83

Violence accelerated directly adjacent to the Dominican border. In Ouanaminthe on 7 September French authorities hanged two black slaves from the Pitober plantation and one free mulatto for alleged seditious activities. In nearby Moka one rebel group supposedly numbered up to 15,000, and burnings of plantations continued regularly around Fort Dauphin near the border. In Cap-Français reports suggested that residents and troops were taking up the white cockade of royalism, not the republican *tricolore*. Considering the Bourbon royal connections, the political proclivities of elites on both sides of the island, and preexisting personal ties, it is likely that French royalists were the ones most vociferously begging for Spanish aid were also depicting an agreeable cultural scene to readers in Santo Domingo.84 One black prisoner said that in the doorway of a certain home they could find a black man observing and relaying the signs of

83 Jean-Marie Jan, *Les congrégations religieuses à Saint-Domingue, 1681-1793* (Port-au-Prince: H. Deschamps, 1951): 225-229. The details of this figure named Améthyste are murky given that the only surviving accounts about her were summarized almost a century after these events and from primary sources that apparently no longer exist. See also: Fick, *Making Haiti*, 104-105; Geggus, *Haitian*, 90; Ramsey, *Spirits*, 275n.83.

84 “N.1, Daxabon…,” Santo Domingo, 7 September, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
what was happening in the Plaine-du-Nord. When captured, the French then took a sharp sword and decapitated him. Any and all people of color increasingly fell under great suspicion.

Instances of interpersonal violence escalated in Saint-Domingue alongside the open revolt. In Cap-Français the slave of a baker made two fresh batches of bread. For some reason the backer became suspicious of his slave, and pulled a pistol on him. Gun drawn, he forced the slave to eat one batch of the bread. Soon thereafter the slaves became nauseated and fell at the baker’s feet. He had poisoned both batches of the bread which, presumably, was to have been for sale to white customers. Such intimate interpersonal violence from an urban slave engaged in a trade, not from a sugar plantation, drove home a new paranoia in Santo Domingo about who could be trusted to evade radicalization.

Spanish officials learned that urban slaves within the city of Cap-Français were loaded onto ships in the harbor to preclude their participation in revolts. Black rebels nearby had seized two artillery pieces, one of 24 caliber, and had turned the weapons back upon on the French. The rebels were short on supplies, and reportedly willingly “discarded” women, the old, and children as victims to lighten their forces. In Moka the white officer Baubard had success, as he had led

85 “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 8 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
86 “N.1, Daxabon...,” Santo Domingo, 24 August to 25 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
130 troops against an enormous party of rebels, killing thirty-five and taking another forty-four prisoners. However, dulling the enthusiasm for this minor victory was news that the commander of Grande-Rivière had been captured by the rebels. The insurgents then cut off his head and placed it in the same spot where Ogé’s head had been displayed, which they interpreted as an homage of sorts to the former rebel.87

These snippets of information that funneled into Santo Domingo through Dajabon further confirmed to Spanish observers that there was some link between the revolutionary movements of whites and free people of color with the massive, vicious devastating slave revolts reordering French Saint-Domingue. The motivations and power of the insurgent slaves were, though, extremely different from any forerunners of dissent. Their worldview and affinities were mediated through African culture and cosmologies more than Enlightened European rights discourses, especially in these early years of black-led social revolution.88

French Governor Blanchelande continued begging García directly for assistance, again appealing to Article 9 of their imperial treaties. He said that the state of “fermentation” of the slaves in Saint-Domingue was critical.89

87 “N.1, Daxabon…,” Santo Domingo, 13 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
89 Joaquín García to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
Blanchelande judged that García would not act due to not wanting to involve Santo Domingo with internal French dissensions. That was, in fact, García’s legal strategy, as a clause in the treaty prevented meddling in issues of internal unrest. Blanchelande tried to assuage García’s concerns, saying that because, “The white race, the class of the people of color, and the free blacks are reunited, and none other than the slaves are in open uprising, who kill their owners and burn their habitations.” This desperate portrayal belied the well-known facts. This was not like the Ogé case, Blanchelande continued, as it was not the mulattoes raising the revolt. This was an expedient shift of blame French officials had cited mulatto organizing for influencing the initial revolts. He pleaded for any help against the “400-500,000 enemies within...to impede 60,000 souls from being slaughtered.” Blanchelande warned García not to fool himself into thinking that these slaves, once having killed the French colony, would not turn toward Spanish interests in Santo Domingo.90 Through the end of that month García reiterated to Blanchelande that his intelligence showed that the people of color were still in active dissent against the assembly, and especially in the West, and he pointed out that Port-au-Prince was in arms, including some slaves there. His intelligence assured him that among the rebels were many people of color, with some “white

90 Philibert-François Rouxel Blanchelande to Joaquín García, Cap-Français, 8 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
“caudillos” among them, and that he would continue to withhold Spanish troops and supplies since this was a domestic issue.91

Rouvray increased his personal attacks on Spanish officers’ honor as they bided their time and guarded their resources. He implored Spanish troops to rally around their common “Roman Religion” which the Parliament of Great Britain had already tried to supplant with Protestantism over the last century, and which was now threatened by slaves. He said that they confronted a, “great conspiracy that threatens the whole globe with total subversion, and that all the colonies of the world – French, Spanish, British – all should be the first victims,” and that Spain’s willful decision to not engage would doom them all. Returning to his royalist rhetoric, which unknowingly contradicted Blanchelande’s own appeals, Rouvray said that Spain should not fear the French blacks alone, but “a multitude of whites…who deserve hanging, who the conspirators have sent for six months to the colony for your destruction and ours. They are the ones in sum who have put our slaves to revolt by the principle of the Declaration of the Rights of Man.” Rouvray, like many, was still unable to distinguish the French Revolution from the more radical political motion afoot in the minds and actions of slave insurgents.92

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91 Joaquín García to Philibert-François Rouxel Blanchelande, Santo Domingo, 23 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
92 Marquis de Rouvray, September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029 (E).
In mid-September some members of the General Assembly of Saint-Domingue – Paul Cadouch, the president, and Poncignon, the vice-president – wrote to the National Assembly in Paris. At the time they claimed that 100,000 blacks had revolted in North and burned more than 200 sugar plantations, murdered the owners, and taken women captive whose lives were now worse than death. The blacks had already secured most of the mountains, and had burnt many coffee plantations, too. Those whites who could escape the carnage fled onto ships in the harbor of Cap-François. They begged for help from France.93

While French colonists begged Dominican neighbors and the National Assembly for aid, the Spanish found out that they had also requested British aid, and that perhaps over one thousand troops and guns had been sent from Jamaica to assist efforts against the insurrection. That day at Caracol, between Cap-François and Fort Dauphin, 300 sailors disembarked and destroyed a camp of insurgents at the Chabanon plantation near Limonade. Another detachment of soldiers departed Cap-Français that night and dislodged the rebels at the Gallifet plantation who had entrenched themselves there with many cannons.94 Soon thereafter, 2,000 French troops departed from Haut du Cap and destroyed a camp

93 General Assembly of Saint-Domingue to the National Assembly of France, Cap-François, 13 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029 (F).
94 “N.1, Daxabon…,” Santo Domingo, 24 August to 25 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
at the Nort plantation near Fort Dauphin, killing or executing around 350 black insurgents. After this engagement, rumor circulated that Cambefort had seen a white man in a blue uniform at the head of the rebels.95

The legend of white radicals’ complicity continued to form Spanish perceptions as white radicalism held Spanish blame alongside lack of French evangelicalism and their brutality toward slaves. While overstated, and supported by some fictitious anecdotes, white radicalism had fractured the elite whites, and powerful gens de couleur from solidarity with propertied interests.96 The French had failed to creolize their slaves’ cosmological vernaculars.97 The slaves themselves cited French cruelties as compelling their actions.98 Spanish comprehension was distorted, but not wholly inaccurate. Their understandings of French whites reaping what they had sowed as divine providence, their historical disdain and envy of the French possessions to the west, and their perceptions of which groups were most potent, all shaped Spanish dispositions.

The French had sent their own emissaries Jean-François Bertrand and Monsieur de Borie representing Port-au-Prince and West to Santo Domingo to beg

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95 Cap-Français, 15 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029 (L).
96 Geggus, Haitian, 9-14; Popkin. You Are All Free, 23-52.
98 Belair, Santo Domingo, n.d., AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
for supplies and ships to aid their Assembly. These emissaries had the authority to create any type of pact relative to the much needed support under the “honor of the French name, and under the guarantee of the French possessions in America, and notably from the French part of West of Saint-Domingue.” They answered to Monsieurs Desaulnoi and de Blie, both having risen in power after the assassination of Mauduit. Mr. de Blie had expressed to García “that the General Assembly and the Provincial Assembly of the North...have concurred to request from foreign powers all the ships, men, arms, munitions, and provisions” to avoid their “total destruction with the insurrection of the slaves.” One commissioner had told García that, with the unrest, some malcontents might even declare independence from France. Spanish officials were floored by the “confusion and disgrace” infringing upon them from Saint-Domingue, and with apparent French governmental paralysis and ineptitude that had continued for two years. Spanish officials already knew that the French had also asked Jamaica and the United States for similar support.99

The French emissaries promised their friendship and cooperation, and tried to convince Spanish officials of peace in Saint-Domingue among the whites,

99 Alexandre Petitbois to Marcellis Mercader, Mirebalais, 13 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029. Underscoring is from the original. Spanish emissaries at Philadelphia, José Jaudenes and José Ignacio Viar, had relayed their own information on the state of the French colony, when in late September the Colonial Assembly asked the legislature of the United States for aid and supplies. See: Joaquín García to Serena, Santo Domingo, 15 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.279.
mulattoes, and free blacks, arguing that the insurrection was only the work of black slaves. Urízar rebuffed them outright, and lengthily noted the in-depth Spanish understandings of their dishonest depictions. He said that in West the free mulattoes especially were strident and organized to gain the rights they thought were promised them, which contradicted their claims. Urízar adamantly traced origins of the Saint-Domingue revolt to “two-hundred of the seditious of Paris,” thus linking radicalization to metropolitan ferment in the National Assembly. Urízar said that, “Chief of all is a habitant…called Milsant de Mogé,” who, feeling mistreated, went to Paris with other mulattoes where they plotted revenge, especially after the whites refused to implement the 15 May decree of equality. Indeed, reports circulated that free mulattoes and a growing number of blacks had threatened to attack Port-au-Prince to enforce this decree. These mulatto activists had circulated printings of the decree and asked for priests to sing Te Deum over its implementation.100

Nevertheless, even pro-mulatto sympathizers were weary of the possible recourse to Ogé’s tactics if their dissent remained unaddressed. Urízar claimed that these free colored partisans had recruited many black slaves, “seducing them with the philanthropic doctrine, of liberty of man, assuring them that all would

100 José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
enjoy it all since slavery was contrary to the rights of man,” and “deceived these rude and innocent wretches with such flattering hope.” Furthermore, Spanish officials feared that “missionaries” from Paris would spread these “philanthropic doctrines” to produce an eruption of thousands of new followers who demanded liberty. To Spanish officials, republican and revolutionary actions offended religion at every possible turn. Thus, while white citizens of the National Guard of Port-au-Prince under Caradeux met with the citizens of color from the army of Croix-des-Bouquets this peace was stained by the secular meeting in a church with a Te Deum performed in gratitude for their reunion of whites and people of color.

Spanish officials had seen the peace terms set between whites and mulattoes in West, and forwarded a copy of the “Concordat” to Spain, which proposed terms for inclusion and cast aspersions on the tactics of Ogé and Chavanne. They were dubious of its stability, as both parties were driven to an accord due to the more threatening revolts of black slaves across the colony, and their unity was required to spare Saint-Domingue from annihilation. Many slaves that had been armed in this conflict returned to their plantations, though many others did not and took to open revolt. Nothing about this agreement

101 José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
102 Alexandre Petitbois to Marcellis Mercader, Mirebalais, 13 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
103 Joaquín García to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029, no.40; Geggus, Haitian, 102-104.
encouraged Spanish perception of the French demise. Soon enough, Spanish officials learned through reports from the southern border town of Neiba that officials in Port-au-Prince were restricting the movement of free mulattoes and black slaves due to the growing rebellion in West that produced symbolic atrocities, massacres of white, and the widespread burning of plantations.

By mid-September 1791 Governor García began to increase military presence and security on the border, particularly with new reports of violence in Ouanaminthe and the burning of plantations and cane fields nearby. He reasonably feared that the rebellion of slaves would simply pass into Spanish populations, or that the rebels themselves would make incursions into Dominican lands. If Spanish military forces along the frontier had actually rushed to the immediate aid of white French planters and officials under attack by black rebels then the spread of the rebellions and retreat of French troops could have been stopped or reversed. Soon enough, tentative and informal Spanish dealings with ascendant black leaders such as Jean-François, Georges Biassou, Jeannot, and Toussaint Breda would provide critical financial, political, and military aid to their insurgent faction – support that other slave leaders and groups lacked – and which

104 Coustard to Joaquín García, 20 September 1791, AG-SD, leg. 1029.
105 Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
106 Joaquín García to Conde de Serena, Santo Domingo, 18 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.273.
solidified this rising cadre of revolutionary black talent as the revolutionary vanguard. Before any direct involvement, and before any formal policy, the interest of non-intervention and self-preservation, of schadenfreude and retribution toward the French, and of appeasement and curiosity toward amicable black rebels, all swayed the precarious balance of white power in Saint-Domingue.

CAUTIOUS CONTACT: BLACK INSURGENTS, SPANISH OFFICERS

A remarkable overture arrived in Santo Domingo on 21 September 1791 near the border town of San Rafael. A letter came from the chief of the black rebels at Dondon on the eve of the uprising’s one-month anniversary. In it the rebel leader promised to engage on topics of great importance with the King of Spain. The “Ethiopian General” explained his interests in finding and developing mutual interests between his camp and the Catholic Monarch. He had recently suggested these political terms during a face to face with General Joaquín Cabrera facilitated only by an interpreter, at which time he frankly explained the motivations of the blacks in rebelling and their interests in offering services to the Spanish crown.107

Jeannot had captured Dondon about a week before, giving the black insurgents direct access to the Spanish border less than a month after the revolts had begun.\textsuperscript{108}

Cabrera said of this meeting that, “After a lengthy reasoning of fine and suggestive political expressions in favor of the Spanish nation, he made me offers of sugar…asking in recompense powder and balls to continue the war made in the name of God and of his King against the whites, rebels to both majesties.” The black general very tactfully understood Spanish monarchism and disdain for the disruptive radicalism of French whites and their new Republic. Cabrera continued, saying, “After he made these relations, so distant from that which I had conceived from his letters, I manifested him my gratitude for his reverent offers,” though Cabrera declined to provide munitions at the time due to his own forces’ needs and defense responsibilities. Intriguingly, this newest letter came not only after the meeting, but apparently a series of missives that had enticed Cabrera to meet with the rebels under a modicum of trust and confidence.\textsuperscript{109}

After the meeting, Cabrera observed the black officer depart “accompanied with about 200 men of his color, and other mulattoes, all on horse,


well-armed with shotguns, pistols, and swords.” The officer’s uniform was “blue, adorned with a cross that I could not understand of which order it was, many number of his entourage adorned with epaulettes as insignias of colonels, one and the other calling themselves by that title.” This impressive retinue did not alienate Cabrera, and though he said the matter was settled respectful contact between the parties obviously continued. Cabrera sensed, “in these people of color much pride, much disposition to combat against the whites...[and] the spirit of decadence within them.” During their visit the blacks had hinted that they had not yet taken Marmelade because they had lacked good opportunities, but that they had ambushed and taken prisoner some white officers and troops by surprise as they were casually sipping their coffee. This seemed to impress the Spanish general as an act of precision and tact.\footnote{Joaquín Cabrera to Joaquín García, San Rafael, 13 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.}

As early as September the top black officers – who in this case was likely Georges Biassou, though he was unnamed in the sources – began to court Spain with interest in a range of strategic, and ostensibly monarchist and spiritual, commonalities. Spanish officials viewed this dalliance with cautious optimism, given the context of white republicanism, mulatto demands for rights, and the multitudinous, splintered parties of slave insurgents of varying motivations and
aims. From the very first weeks of the revolution these insurgent groups began to build trust, trade, and eventually military and political partnerships toward defeating their mutual enemy – the French. This trajectory would take years to form, and would only become formal after open declarations of war between Spain and France in 1793.\textsuperscript{111} How to communicate with Spanish officials became a time-consuming task. Jean-François delegated this responsibility of how to gain Spanish favor to lesser-known black officers including Fayette and Bouce. Their goal was to also stave off Spanish support for royalist French whites, and to collect whatever intelligence from the Spanish for their own military and political needs.\textsuperscript{112} All the while this unlikely relationship formed, Spain denied assistance to the French, and Blanchelande reiterated his bewilderment at the Spanish decision to only protect their frontiers to officials in Paris.\textsuperscript{113}

In the meantime, the neighboring \textit{gens de couleur} had regained full French citizenship. French republican printings circulated into Santo Domingo and flagrantly insulted Spanish principles. In fear of contagion, Urízar warned

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\textsuperscript{111} Popkin, \textit{You Are All Free}, 49.
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metropolitan officials to pay much closer attention to political sentiments developing just outside its domains. Spain could not directly intervene and thus leave their own colony undefended to similar insurrectionary sentiments. Thus, the potential of an alliance with the friendly black insurgents yielded many strategic advantages. Spanish officials trusted Herédia and Cabrera to defend the border, but also to prudently manage these newfound points of leverage with politics in Saint-Domingue.\textsuperscript{114}

The black insurgents near Santo Domingo continued to increase the territory in their control. A French \textit{mulata} woman from the plantation of Monsieur Canais had crossed the border to inform the Spanish officers that a number of blacks had passed to Dondon to burn it. On 24 September locals from Dondon wrote the Spanish commander to beg for help and to inform him of this attack by local blacks, the massacre of many whites, and the burning of many plantations. The Dondon whites also relayed reports that on the night of 22 September blacks from various plantations gathered in the night to coordinate burning the city of Cap-Français, starting with a cane field beside the city to draw attention and give light. The French troops rallied to the defense. The next day in their heightened fears French troops found a mulatto walking on Rue Espagnole who had just come

\textsuperscript{114} José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
in from the countryside. When the man still seemed hesitant after three queries from an officer, the Frenchman drew his sword and hacked the mulatto to death based only on suspicions. This encroaching violence further panicked the city. Soldiers roamed the streets with guns loaded while merchants shuttered their goods inside and homes barricaded their doors. A detachment went to Morne Rouge where they expected to find 2,000 black rebels with, according to rumors, some whites as their leaders. These French troops did retake some plantations and sent back two whites and ten blacks as prisoners suspected of taking part in the uprising. Military orders dictated that any people of color in the area of the rebellion were automatically suspects, and they were as likely to be shot or knifed as apprehended. Of course, this draconian French reaction only deepened the racial divide and created newly-radicalized enemies to fuel the rebellion.115

The black rebels of northern Saint-Domingue produced growing white columns, as the countryside of the colony was choked with smoke, and as its roads were choked with French colonists in flight. Many newly-arrived French women and children had entered Santo Domingo at San Miguel, and some were admitted on toward Hinche. After Dondon burned both Limonade and Limbé were put to the flames, too. Through 26 September French troops engaged in heavy fighting

115 Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
with black rebels in the Grande-Rivière region. The insurgents consumed plantations’ foodstuffs before torching them, and after eating they provoked the French with “arrogant” shouts and taunts of “Vive la Liberté.” Monsieur Barada and another official, who served in the militia from Marmelade, who told of 25 soldiers moving toward Grand Morne, and 300 troops left Guarico to engage rebels, and the recent deaths of an estimated 2,000 blacks. Rumors continued that mulattoes and some whites were likely leading the revolts. The rebels increasingly surrounded the remaining 300 French troops near Dondon, and Grande-Rivière was then burning, too.

One party of rebels involved in these attacks advanced to the border hill of Jatiel. There, “a black with his machete, spear, and holster with pistols” realized that he was about to enter Spanish territory and preemptively explained to the nearby Spanish guards that his black insurgents had no quarrel with Spain, but said bluntly that they did not want to leave a single French white alive, including any refugees in Spanish possessions. To this end these insurgents began issuing passports to those who travelled under their protection.

At San Rafael a group of people of color arrived looking for whites of the Bajon militia. These rebels passed on to the plantation of Monsieur Flaman where

116 Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

117 Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
they stole horses and arms, killed all the whites, and set the plantation on fire. Residents of San Rafael circulated rumors that rebel bands were trying to utilize Spanish territory, and so forces were sent out to intercept them. Instead, the local black rebels explained that they were only seeking the plantation of Monsieur Cavanis, that they wanted nothing but friendship with the Spanish, and that they had been ordered by their general to show respect to Spanish subjects. Despite the fact that these rebels were seen “well provisioned with bottles” and had a well-earned reputation for raucous hostility, they did exhibit consideration for Spanish interests.\textsuperscript{118}

In fact, in early October 1791 a black rebel general who was likely Jeannot Bullet, but identified himself only as \textit{Médecin Général} based at Grande-Rivière (partly due to his \textit{vodou} healing activities), discussed leadership strategies of who and how to interface with the Spanish. Jeannot was one of three, alongside Jean-François and Biassou, who Boukman prophesied would lead the revolution. In the earliest weeks of the revolution he was the closest and most powerful operator to Boukman, and the “judge” of the revolution who oversaw the rampant torture and gruesome executions of white prisoners.\textsuperscript{119} Jeannot’s violent reputation grew

\textsuperscript{118} Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.

ravelly.\textsuperscript{120} Two weeks later in a letter apparently to Biassou, Jeannot discussed forming ties with the Spanish, his apparent interest in better establishing their military position before such undertakings to show their strength, including destroying more French properties around Cap-Français, a priority because without this “their people” would be exposed to “butchery” of the whites. He mentioned the opinions of “Bouqueman” (Boukman) and also Jean-François, whose retinue of young women he sarcastically referenced.\textsuperscript{121}

Only weeks later in November 1791 white French troops killed Boukman and severed his head for public display. This prompted profound bouts of mourning among the slave insurgents. At almost the same time Jean-François ordered the controversial execution of the Jeannot due to his extreme use of brutality and heinous torture against white prisoners and any blacks who dared to draw his ire.\textsuperscript{122} For example, recently Jeannot and Biassou had made advances toward Cap-Français until they arrived at the convent of the vodouizan nun named Améthyste with chants of “Glory to the Almighty, eternal hatred to France.”

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\footnotetext{78 and 81; Fick, Making Haiti, 92 Furthermore, Jeannot was still alive at this time, if only for a few additional weeks.}
\footnotetext{120 Laurent Dubois, “Avenging America: The Politics of Violence in the Haitian Revolution,” in The World of the Haitian Revolution, eds. Geggus and Fiering, 114-116.}
\footnotetext{122 Fick, Making Haiti, 112-114.}
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Allegedly, Jeannot approached the convent with a white child on a pike, and commenced atrocities against all the women who he assumed were French. He had nuns sawed in half, with appendages amputated and eyes gouged beforehand. Nuns who protested by saying that they were creoles were made to say, “Nanett allé n’en fontaine, Cherché d’l’eau, Cruche à li cassé.” If nuns did not pass this shibboleth they were bayoneted for being French. Jeannot may have collected their blood in a receptacle mixed with rum and gunpowder to later consume. These nuns, who had long treated the black population with far greater dignity than they rest of the French due to their evangelistic imperatives, were likely a scandalous retribution, even for Jeannot’s colleagues.123

The core of the revolutionary black leadership who were part of the revolts from the start then dwindled down to two – Biassou and Jean-François, with Jean-François assuming greater political and military responsibility. The death of Boukman sent the rebels into deep mourning, followed by spiritual ceremonies, and then a three-day commemorative celebration.124 Shortly thereafter, Jean-François assumed the responsibility of dealing with Spanish and Dominican neighbors. At a moment in which the black insurgent leaders sought Spanish

123 Jan, Les congrégations religieuses à Saint-Domingue, 228-229. Again, the fidelity of such details surrounding this incident are less durable given the summarized nature of a source that was itself chronologically removed from the event.

124 Fick, Making Haiti, 112-114.
collaboration, they also made peace overtures to the French, and aside from protesting Jeannot’s cruelties Jean-François could not abide the impression that such excessive torture against white prisoners gave to white powerbrokers.\textsuperscript{125}

Elsewhere on the border Spanish troops encountered, “thirty-six insurgent blacks close to the line saying with a high voice \textit{God, and King}.” These rebels offered to share food and rest with the Spanish troops. During this conversation they asked the troops to not allow any French whites to flee to the Dominican side. The situation only miles away in Saint-Domingue was that, “The terror that the whites have is great, in terms that if only the blacks would yell they flee and abandon their own homes, leaving them in desertion to the rebels.” \textsuperscript{126} Spanish officials did continue to accept white refugees, which was a constant strain with the black insurgents, but they could hardly believe their fortune with the black insurgents’ affability.

However, a week later news arrived that a separate party of black insurgents had shouted some insults at Spanish border guards. In response, they had received exemplary punishment from their black leaders, both as a sign of cooperation to Spanish officials (who had actually complained about the matter, \textsuperscript{125} Benot, “The Insurgents of 1791…,” \textit{The World of the Haitian Revolution}, eds. Geggus and Fiering, 108. \textsuperscript{126} Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030
which was in itself a sign of recognition and relationship), and as a sign of the sanctioned conduct for the rebels to follow when dealing with Spanish subjects, their potential allies. Once again, at the beginning October 1791, a group of black rebels passed along the border at Villarubia and went to the home of a Spaniard married to a French *mulata*. There they captured several French women who were in hiding at the property and took them along as captives. The Spanish complained to rebel commanders nearby at Dondon, who subsequently punished their soldiers for lack of discipline with Spanish interests.\textsuperscript{127}

The tide of battle was also clearer with time. The French camp at Marmelade numbered 600 troops, while the aforementioned camp at Dondon included an estimated 4,000 black rebels. Blacks largely dominated the rural interior of the Plaine-du-Nord, while pro-French residents and refugees crowded into Cap-Français. In mid-October news arrived of the French retaking of the Gallifet plantation, the location which was often considered the epicenter of the initial slave rebellion. Part of this report baffled Spanish officials, as the “Capuchin father Cayetano had married a daughter of a sugar planter from the plain with a black, and that after the nuptial prayer the two were proclaimed King and Queen.” Since the marriage, the “priest [Cayetano] of Petit-Anse was arrested and had been

\textsuperscript{127} Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030
executed. The Queen of the Brigands had been arrested,” as well but she refused to talk, and her execution was suspended to see if they could gain information from her as they had from the priest.\footnote{128 Joaquin García, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030}

The idea of this priest participating alongside the rebels, of him conducting a holy sacrament among their racial insubordination, and of these insurgents taking royal titles within a radical insurrection was a confluence of cultural dissonance that the Spanish were yet ill-equipped to comprehend. Paired with rebels’ articulations of respect for the divine, for monarchy, and for Spain particularly, the officials in Santo Domingo monitored the threats of violence and sedition, but also the content of their mixed of ideological messages. They were shocked that a radicalized priest had profaned a sacrament to flaunt racial hierarchy and consecrate local African political leadership.\footnote{129 Letter from Ouanaminthe, 3 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.} The catch-all term for African-derived spirituality embraced by the French across the late eighteenth century, le vaudou, has imparted our contemporary popular names for diasporic religions in present-day Haiti vodou, or “voodoo.” In this range of practices engaged by the extremely cosmopolitan African population of Saint-Domingue, the designation of a “King and Queen” in “vaudou” communities to signify the primary religious leadership was also quite common. In this case it is unclear whether such African
spirituality factored into these titles, but across the similar cases of proclaimed local “Kings” and “Queens” across the Haitian Revolution it would seem likely that religious power contributed to these titles.\textsuperscript{130} When such overtly African clerical categories appeared to Spanish observers their outrage only increased.

However, even when Spanish slaves tried to join the cause and cross from the Dominican side the black insurgent commanders were quick to redress their Dominican neighbors’ concerns. For example, a refugee planter who owned a coffee plantation adjacent to the Spanish border near the Aponte family plantation on the Dominican side said that the borderlands were full of blacks who had put fire to homes and cut down all the coffee. During this local event about twenty Dominican slaves from the Aponte plantation had joined the uprising, and that property in Santo Domingo temporarily passed into black control. However, the priest who served as executor for Aponte complained to the insurgents from Saint-Domingue, and crossed the border to meet with their general. There he met with an officer named “Bautista,” who may have been Jean-Baptiste Marc. This black commander told him that his officers had returned forty-four Spanish blacks to their plantations, implying that it was policy to not admit Spanish blacks to their corps. He further explained that they had not encouraged such rebellion, and said

\textsuperscript{130} Moreau, Description Saint-Domingue, Tome I, 68-70; Ramsey, The Spirits and the Law, 40-41; Doris Garraway, Libertine Colony, 253-255; Pierre Pluchon, Vaudou, sorciers, empoisonneurs, 67-71.
that his troops were instructed to make certain that these slaves returned to their plantations and did not rejoin the insurgents.\textsuperscript{131}

On 27 September the Cabildo of Santo Domingo reviewed the “sacrilegious revolutions of the French” that had exploded, especially in Cap-Français, Port-au-Prince, and along the frontiers. They again formally blamed, “The seditious fermentation of the French of Europe has served as incentive to those of the colonies of the same nation to move themselves to equal restlessness and revolutions, removing governments...killing leaders, murdering, robbing,” and installing civil assemblies in their own name instead of the legitimate king. They referenced the precedent of Ogé and Chavanne, which served as evidence of mulatto ferment, and as a warning to direct involvement with Santo Domingo. They began to welcome certain French men, such as Monsieur Nicolle, a former battalion commander and son of a French general, and Monsieur Laviegeri, a French consul. By bending the policy toward refugees, they set a new precedent of exceptions to the rules, and more refugees would follow.\textsuperscript{132} At least for the time

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\textsuperscript{131} “Testimonio...Gérard...4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 20 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 410. As fears of slave-led violence paralyzed Saint-Domingue, Spanish officials confronted a case of infanticide by the Dominican blacks Andrés and María Antonia shocked Dominican officials. Though little was recorded about this incident, these two had thrown their newborn baby into a river. If both were enslaved then the denial of their child’s life may have, as with many cases of infanticide, served as an act of sparing the child a life of equal misery. See: Andrés Alvarez Calderon, “Lista de Causa,” 15 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.

\textsuperscript{132} Cabildo of Santo Domingo, 27 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029.
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being García saw these royalist newcomers as potential geopolitical assets, and not yet as a drain on colonial coffers.

Many, such as Monsieur Melio de Melsant, a former metropolitan official and regiment of Normandy commander who fought for the king, had united under the flag flying, “Long Live Religion, Long Live the King, and Death to the Traitor Nation.” These new partisans aligned with the Spanish and might enhance border security and planning. Given Rumors were circulating that the British were openly interested in putting down the conspiracy and taking territory with royalist support from French whites, García recognized his need to intercept their support. Various British ships had even been seen along the coast.¹³³ What also caught Spanish attention was that the British had offered six million pounds in aid, a power play that ingratiated them with colonists but one that Spain was hesitant to make.¹³⁴ This was an enormous amount of money, especially considering the cash flow in Santo Domingo to support Spanish troops, such as regiments from Cantabria and Puerto Rico. It became common practice for neighboring Spanish colonies to send troops and funds to Santo Domingo, and receive only disruptive

¹³³ Cabildo of Santo Domingo, 27 September 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1029; Joaquín García to Conde de Serena, Santo Domingo, 17 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.278.
¹³⁴ Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
prisoners from it. Finances were also a distinct problem when Spanish officials in the course of the conflict attempted to win over, and employ, new allies.\footnote{Viceroy of Mexico, San Lorenzo, 3 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030. The Viceroy of New Spain explained that, “to put our frontier of the island of Hispaniola of Santo Domingo under suitable shelter from the occurrences, insults, and disorders experienced until now in the neighboring French colony…royal orders of 25 May this year sent to the governor of that island the infantry regiment of Cantabria that was found to be in Puerto Rico.” The Cantabria regiment would factor heavily into the Spanish geopolitics on the island in the ensuing years, at the high cost of 16,734 pesos a month, much of which was funded by New Spain.}

Fires closed in closer to the border with Dajabon, some that Dominicans could even observe firsthand. The towns of Limbé, Anse, and Trou all burned. Many mulattoes and even blacks put the white cockade in their hats, and carried signs reading, “Long live the King.” The committee of notables from Ouanaminthe and Fort Dauphin had communicated to the Provincial Assembly their favorable stances toward the mulattoes and by 3 November the mulattoes commanded Ouanaminthe.\footnote{Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.} These self-identified “people of color” in Ouanaminthe wrote to Herédia. In a gesture of royalism and righteousness these free officers of color professed that, “We, the citizens of color of the dependencies of Ouanaminthe and Fort Dauphin, together have taken the resolution of living and dying as good Christians and faithful to our King.” These men, Amilcar, Monsino, Levetre, and Mar, identified themselves as “captains” and were loyal to the King of France and complained about republican officials, saying that
Catholicism was no longer practiced in the colony, that anarchy reigned, and that certain groups wanted to surrender the colony to the British. This confirmed and heightened existing Spanish fears. These free people of color who lived just miles from Saint-Domingue said they knew that their slaves and others in their area were on the brink revolt, and planned to tell them that the King did not condone such rebelliousness and crimes. Perhaps this was due to the local circulation of a rumor of a suppressed royal emancipation. The free officers of color explained their decision to take Ouanaminthe and the surrounding area, in part to avoid alarming Dominican neighbors. They wanted open communication with Dominican locals and Spanish officials, and expected to hear from Herédia if he had any concerns about their actions.\(^{137}\)

However, on 9 November some slaves of Ouanaminthe, Maribaroux, and Fort Dauphin did revolt and united with those who had taken Ouanaminthe earlier. They tried to communicate with the insurgent “arsonists” of Grande-Rivière and Santa Susana to pause their fires and negotiate. Spanish officials thought these free people of color were engaged in asking the rebelling blacks exactly what their demands were. García believed that the slaves had asked for three days of their own per week, which the planters refused. Details of these

\(^{137}\) Ouanaminthe, 3 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030. On royalist emancipation rumors, see: Wim Klooster, “Slave Revolts, Royal Justice, and a Ubiquitous Rumor in the Age of Revolutions,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 71, no.3 (July 2014): 401-424.
occurrences came from the elderly priest of Ouanaminthe, a “dandy” capuchin of 80 years who had fled to the Dominican side “from the hands of the insurgents.”  

The request from slave insurgents for three days mentioned by García came from negotiations due to a unique window of transition. That month new commissioners arrived in Saint-Domingue from the National Assembly in Paris. They brought news that the Republic had not only overturned the monarchy, but that at least for the time being rights of *gens de couleur* were suspended, complicating the political situation for the armed free people of color in Ouanaminthe and across the colony. The new commissioners did, however, relay the news that those involved in revolution could be pardoned if they put down their arms. Jean-François and Biassou saw this as an opportunity to make a favorable peace with France and achieve modest gains for slaves in North. They black insurgents halted hostilities while these precarious negotiations occurred alongside those of their precarious new free colored allies in Ouanaminthe.  

By the end of November 1791 the mulattoes and now their black allies were back in firm control of Dondon and Ouanaminthe. In December 1791 García observed Saint-Domingue careening to its total ruin. It was immersed in

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138 Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
140 Joaquín García to Serena, Santo Domingo, 25 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.283.
anarchy, where white powerbrokers had no recourse but to entertain mulatto allies, who he guessed would betray them as soon as it suited their ends. In some locales mulattoes also forged new alliances with rebelling slaves. By the end of 1791 the Haitian Revolution was barely over four months old, but was ensconced in most of the rural reaches of North, and in the minds of the majority black population therein. Not only would the revolution spread across the year 1792, but Dominicans and Spanish officials would be more closely pulled into the conflict as they shed their observer status and embraced, whether they welcomed it or not, the role of participants.

CONCLUSION

While the ferocity and immediacy of the massive slave revolts that erupted in August 1791 paralyzed both French and Spanish authorities with fear, they also began to open new avenues of geopolitical opportunism for Spanish interests. Many Dominican and Spanish observers of Saint-Domingue had feared that the French colony was a dormant volcano, so to speak, as contemporaries and historians alike have described it. The first phase of the unraveling of colonialism in Saint-Domingue emerged in the period from 1789 to late 1791 when the

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141 Joaquín García to Serena, Santo Domingo, 25 December 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.287.
shockwaves of the French Revolution hit the island. Only by the end of 1791 were French and Spanish officials fully aware that the slave revolts represented a social revolution distinct from the preceding political chaos. Soon the colony’s social revolution would push the French far beyond what they had intended for their triumphant universalisms.

This extremism and chaos in Saint-Domingue forced Spaniards and Dominicans to review their collective roots and ties in contrast to their neighbors, but in this case not due to their extravagant living and decadent wealth. It halted all attempts of the 1780s for the revitalization of the Dominican slave regime, and deeply devalued the once-esteeming French model for plantation economies. As Spanish officials began to reflect upon their own geopolitical goals vis-à-vis Saint-Domingue, including their fears of growing British aspirations to seize that colony, they were approached by highly savvy and strategically-minded black insurgents who began to court their machinations.

These three new points of contact – Blanchelande, Ogé, and slave rebels – thrust the white, mulatto, and black racial tensions and incumbent radical politics of Saint-Domingue upon Dominicans and Spanish officials. Throughout the revolutionary era many actors from Saint-Domingue would seek some type of support from Spain or advantages drawn from Santo Domingo to augment their own domestic positions. Santo Domingo became intricately entwined with the
turmoil of Saint-Domingue, a factor not usually considered in scholarship on either side of the island in this period, and these connections extended far beyond the Ogé revolt of October 1790, his flight to Santo Domingo, and the subsequent extradition fight. As the complex Gérard case showed, above all other operatives in Saint-Domingue the black generals Jean-François and Biassou were militarily brilliant, skilled in imperial and local-level politics, and wielded their highly-motivated force of slave insurgents with aplomb. From the morass to the west Spanish officials began to see a new potential ally emerge.
CHAPTER 3

IMPROBABLE BLACK ALLIES & THE WHIRLPOOL OF WAR, 1792-1793

In the summer of 1793 Father José Vázquez, a mulatto priest from Santo Domingo, learned of rumors that Jean-François had received enticing offers from the civil commissioners and might reconsider his affiliation with Spain. Only several weeks before with the declaration of war from France had the black insurgents become formal black auxiliaries of Spain. Vázquez galloped on horseback directly to meet with Jean-François, much to the black general’s surprise. In response to the concerns Jean-François, “put himself on his knees pledged [his obedience] before God and the sacred name of the King of Spain.” Jean-François also willingly surrendered an unopened recruitment letter sent to him by a pro-Republic mulatto adversary. Both parties satisfied, Jean-François then discussed his newest battle plans Father Vázquez.

1 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 3 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.390.
2 Popkin, Your Are All Free, 250-260; Ferrer, Freedom’s Mirror, 90-92.
3 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 3 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.390.
In the days preceding this encounter the French commissioners Sonthonax and Polverel had issued an emancipation decree to slaves around Cap-Français in exchange for their support against internal threats. In July Sonthonax expanded this emancipation to include the families of those who served. By the end of August this emancipation included slaves across the North province. By the end of October all people of African descent across the colony were declared free, equal, and recipients of the Rights of Man. The logical extension of universalist egalitarianism espoused by the French Republic came only at the threat of black insurgents toppling the white utopian project. Practically speaking, Sonthonax and Polverel cynically wanted to keep their republican friends close, and their black enemies closer with these emergency measures, with perceived revolutionary virtue as an ancillary bonus. These decrees aimed to end the slave-led revolution that had the Republic reeling on the island, and from which Jean-François, Biassou, and their formidable black auxiliary troops had formed, and to incorporate new military support into the French cause. The French commissioners desperately struggled to incorporate these powerful black forces into the Republic to support their sagging prospects. Spanish officials, rightfully
fearful of defections, were thus rather moved and quite impressed with the overt royalism, Catholicism, and loyalty demonstrated by Jean-François.⁴

By the end of 1793 Spanish forces, including the newly-formalized black auxiliaries under Jean-François, Biassou, and the ascendant Toussaint Louverture, had captured perhaps three-quarters of North and half of West in Saint-Domingue. The black auxiliaries alone totaled up to 14,000 troops at the time and were the premier fighting force on the island.⁵ In comparison, at the height of this alliance the Spanish black auxiliaries likely outnumbered the entire slave population of Santo Domingo.⁶ The new French commissioners in Saint-Domingue tried to rally disparate bands of mulatto and ex-slave rebels to the Republic, and were increasingly desperate to convince the powerful black auxiliaries to defect with enticements to more fully develop radical universalisms of the French Revolution.

While the Spanish counterrevolution peaked in 1794, the countervailing French social and political experiments that started to undercut this massive project began in the latter half of 1793, and at least came partly in response to the stunning successes of pro-Spanish forces. First, French abolition decreed in the summer of 1793, the deliberate inclusion of people of color in military and political affairs,

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⁴ Popkin, You Are All Free, 209-211 and 251-256; Dubois, Avengers, 157-164.
⁵ Geggus, Haitian, 132 and 179-180.
and offers of higher salaries and ranks to enemy forces, all chipped away at the opposition to the French Republic and, with numerous key defections, bolstered French forces and territorial recovery. Second, British assistance for French planters, especially in South and West, combined with their envy of the colony’s commodity abundance resulted in an all-out invasion in September 1793 that lasted in significant parts of Saint-Domingue for the next five years, eventually resulting in direct conflict with Spanish interests. 7

In the unopened letter that Jean-François turned over to Vázquez, commissioner Léger Félicité Sonthonax – who had by then become the most influential French republican on the island – decried Jean-François’ loyalty to Spain, criticized monarchism, and predicted that Jean-François would die for a misguided, losing cause. None of these condescending rhetorical flourishes swayed Jean-François, particularly due to the unwavering spiritual counsel of Vázquez, who García described as, “the principal spring of Jean-François and [his people], a zealous ecclesiastic, active, full of a love that merits the greatest considerations, and has made himself worthy since the first moment of the appreciation and distinction of this Captain General, and by consequence should merit that of you and of the King.” This remarkable decorum prompted Governor

7 Popkin, You Are All Free; Geggus, Slavery, War, and Revolution.
García to celebrate Jean-François’ loyalty, “compliments of his words of being a true Spaniard.”

To further prove his steadfast loyalty Jean-François then sent two of his closest officers with a personal letter of gratitude to García. After their visit, the governor claimed that their conduct, “belies the stain covering his body.” This intended compliment emphasized the black auxiliaries religiosity and civility as a progression from their natal racial condition, further distinguishing them from unallied black rebels or pro-French black troops in Saint-Domingue who outwardly represented African or republican heresies to Spanish observers. The dynamic pairing of Jean-François and Vázquez encapsulated the improbable military, ideological, and political ingenuity that characterized Spain’s intervention in Saint-Domingue’s social revolution.

Several critical unanswered questions remain about this pivotal period of the Haitian Revolution and its shaping of Dominican history. How did this discursive divergence of the sacred and profane emerge from the black insurgents, and how did the black auxiliaries become a canvas upon which Spaniards could portray this divide? What was the significance of the black auxiliaries’ religiosity and royalism to the Spanish counterrevolution? How did black demonstrations of

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8 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 3 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.390.
9 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 3 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.390.
piety and civility recognizable in Hispanic registers deepen cross-island divides? How did evangelical strategies formulated by Spain, and forged by the black auxiliaries, forward a counterbalancing cosmological narrative to the French Republic? How did this momentum carry Spanish colonialism toward nearly conquering the whole island by 1794?

This chapter will demonstrate how the formation of a practical ideological, military, and strategic geopolitical relationship consolidated around notions of popular Catholicism and monarchism among ex-slave insurgents. The integration of these new black auxiliaries drove the Spanish military and spiritual reconquests of Saint-Domingue, all the while this project incorporated less reliable white French royalists. This broad-based movement operated across the volatile frontier, with administrative roots in Santo Domingo and Madrid, and attempted retake Saint-Domingue for the Spanish empire after a century of opulent, but decadent and corrosive, French rule. Vázquez, Jean-François, García, Biassou, Portillo, Toussaint, and many others planted the seeds of this project in 1792, and nurtured its growth across 1793. In these practices at the confluence of utility, sincerity, and partisanship, people of color left their material mark on the Haitian Revolution and contributed to forming the beginnings of a Dominican religious exceptionalism that later supported anti-Haitian nationalism that has endured from the 1790s to the present. Over 1792 Spanish subjects on the Dominican side
of the island became proactive in laying the foundation for conquests that, after official warfare commenced between France and Spain in 1793, yielded them rapid and stunning gains as part of a Caribbean Reconquista.

**BORDERING BLACK POWER & THE CAUTIONARY CASE OF GÉRARD**

Perhaps more so than the three aforementioned points of dramatic contact that emerged in November 1790, March 1791, and August 1791, the little-known trial of Charles Gérard that began in January 1792 illustrates the prerevolutionary and revolutionary ties among all three major racial sectors in Saint-Domingue and the Dominican border region. Perhaps more importantly, the Gérard trial also reveals how Spain began to form a cogent, nuanced response to these groups for their own geopolitical interests. Ultimately, Gérard found himself in Spanish custody due to the strategic brilliance of Jean-François who during the months of late 1791 and early 1792 recognized the impossibility of negotiating with the French, secured territory along the Dominican border, outflanked competing political or rebel factions in the process, and forced the Spanish to see his forces as their most logical ally to wage a proxy war in Saint-Domingue.

This last point was of incalculable importance as Jean-François was strapped for resources, and began a partnership that drew Spain deeply into the war in Saint-Domingue in which the avowed monarchist and increasingly Catholic
forces under Jean-François and Biassou and their Spanish allies became the exemplars and engines of slave insurgency and social change. Furthermore, the Gérard case illuminated for Spanish officials the personal networks of sympathies or simple commerce in Santo Domingo upon which political operators in Saint-Domingue drew. To forestall unwanted influence upon Dominicans and uncontrolled lines of support to unaligned parties, Spanish officials suspended certain resources or connections from Santo Domingo. Particularly in North of Saint-Domingue, and in West to a lesser degree, Spanish withholding of support from the French white establishment, their passive approbation of insurgents of color, and their manipulation of Dominican-based support networks all had tipped the balance of power in Saint-Domingue.

In the early weeks of 1792 Spanish authorities began to abandon reactionary passivity toward the neighboring revolution. They instead more assertively pivoted toward cutting unfavorable cross-border factionalism, welcoming the strategic precision and amenability of Jean-François and his forces that occupied key border crossings and substantial territory in Saint-Domingue, and fueled white French partisanship between republicans and royalists, the latter who they soon welcomed as allied combatants against the Republic. The collapse of peace negotiations between the black insurgents and French, in which Gérard seems to have factored heavily, was a tipping point in these shifts. The Gérard
case offers a previously unknown detailed vantage into early and momentous Spanish and Dominican dabbling in Saint-Domingue’s revolution, and specifically into how they slow-played a developing relationship with black insurgents.

Amid the calamities and violence to their west, and because of them, on 26 January 1792 in the city of Santo Domingo Governor García commenced the trial of one “Carlos César Agustín Gérard,” or Charles Gérard in his native French. This white French national had been arrested at the order of Herédia in Dajabon, the Dominican town that was increasingly tied to the neighboring conflict due to its border with Saint-Domingue. Gérard had been arrested on suspicion of being a, “firebrand and accomplice in the revolutions of the people of color of that colony,” and to, “prevent the ills that his evil spirit from pouring out and spreading to the same people of the same class in our towns.” With the assistance of Dr. Vicente Antonio de Faura and interpreter Don Joaquín Pellon, the Spanish officials hoped to uncover any secret plots or operatives in Santo Domingo with which Gérard may have been associated.  

Gérard was held in seclusion. When he was taken into custody he had been searched for weapons, at which time Spanish officers found a hidden bundle

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10 “Testimonio de la causa criminal seguida contra el francés Carlos César Agustín Gérard por sospechoso, 1.a Pieza,” 26 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 321-322 and 325. Perhaps due to his family ties, “Gérard” is also used as a name for the area around Maribaroux just northwest of Ouanaminthe
of papers. One document was a passport issued on 14 January by the French commander of Ouanaminthe. It was apparently intended for a patrol of eight men, headed by a “Monsieur MacDonal”, who was killed the following day by black forces under ascendant black general Jean-François who sacked the town. He also carried a small scrap of a letter signed by “Monsieur Tousard,” the prominent French general in North. The third paper was a letter that had apparently been split in half. Another letter was an unused recommendation. Spanish officials deemed other documents less important.11

When Gérard testified the next day he told the officials that he was 31 years old, originally from Marseille in France, and he did not know the reason for his arrest.12 He lived in Maribaroux near Ouanaminthe, was unmarried, and worked in planting.13 Gérard said that he had been arrested when he fled the recent attack on the French forces in Ouanaminthe, and in so doing had passed into Spanish territory on Sunday, 15 January at around ten in the morning. On the banks of the river near Dajabon he encountered two soldiers. They ordered him

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11 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 26 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 323-324. This did support his claim that he worked four Tousard, at least some of the time. Gérard exchanged information about his troops with an officer named MacDonal and separately with Tousard. See: “Testimonio...Gérard...3.a Pieza,” n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 383-384.

12 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 27 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 325-328.

13 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 23 March 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 359-367.
to halt, when coincidentally the official Juan Sánchez passed them. Due to their acquaintance Sanchez allowed Gérard to continue on openly into Dajabon. There he housed with “a French mulata” named Martina. He said that the following day Captain Francisco Pepin arrived at the house and took Gérard to see Brigadier Herédia, who ordered him to be escorted to Santiago and then to the capital. Gérard clearly knew Dajabon and its residents fairly well, and had a history with at least Sánchez and Martina.

The officials asked Gérard if he had ever resided in Spanish Santo Domingo. Gérard explained that he had indeed spent significant time in various parts of Santo Domingo. He had lived in Dajabon for three months with the permission of the Spanish commander starting in May 1789. After this time the commander told him he could no longer continue enjoying asylum in Dajabon. Instead of returning to Maribaroux, Gérard then moved on to Santiago where he lived for five or six months before then returning to French Saint-Domingue. He had relocated to Santo Domingo to avoid a pending court case against him involving a Monsieur Lagrave, and warrants posted for his arrest, his brother, and his first cousin. He and his brother had both taken asylum in Spanish dominions.

14 “Testimonio…Gérard…1.a Pieza,” 27 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 325-328.

15 “Testimonio…Gérard…1.a Pieza,” 27 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 328-329. By May 1789, under “persecution” driven by “machinations of an enemy” who was a well-off French colonist Gérard asked the Spanish for refuge in Santo Domingo. With the understanding
Shortly after going to Dajabon his brother had secretly returned to Saint-Domingue and then fled to New England. His equally-persecuted cousin had fled to Port-au-Prince. Lagrave had litigated against them regarding a dispute over the ownership of a sugar mill. The case became criminal when Lagrave suspected that Gérard, and his brother and cousin, tried to burn this sugar mill in question to the ground. Perhaps conveniently for Gérard the revolution had left the case unresolved.16

of Monsieur Lamote, commander of Ouanaminthe, and of Francisco Barba, then commander of Dajabon. Spanish records showed that he was allowed to live in the latter city for four or five months after which he lived in Santiago for seven or eight months. Gérard was sure that residents in both towns would testify about his good conduct, including Luis Pérez, Spanish commander of Santiago. While he waited personal resolutions the revolution began, and amid this turmoil and violence in September 1791 he even pondered returning to Santo Domingo to enjoy peace and liberty there, and queried the Spanish about asylum. He even promised loyalty to the King of Spain, who he praised, and asked to bring over his slaves and to reestablish in Dajabon area. See: “Testimonio…Gérard…2.a Pieza,” n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 372-376. Rather ironically, it was his purported old “friend” Luis Pérez who had to forward Gérard in custody to Santo Domingo along with intelligence gathered by Herédia that the general thought condemned the prisoner. See: “Testimonio…Gérard…2.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 16 January 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 376-377.

16 “Testimonio…Gérard…1.a Pieza,” 27 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 329. In the course of their investigation Spanish officials uncovered information on Gérard that furthered their denouncements against him. A letter from 4 June 1789 indicated that the Gérard brothers, who had sold slaves across the border to Espaillat, had taken asylum after being accused of burning the cane fields of Lagrave and were wanted for arrest by French officials. The commander of Fort Dauphin had written to Spanish border officials about intercepting them. See: “Testimonio de varias cartas relativas a los execsos y apprehension de Mr. Gérard, 4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 4 June 1789, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 396-397. Spanish officials had replied on 15 July 1789, saying that they would not avail their illegal immigration and self-exile, and wondered if they had marched onward to Santiago, or perhaps even the capital. See: “Testimonio…Gérard…4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 4 June 1789, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 397-398. A month later Spanish officers located one Gérard brother in Santiago, the other having seemingly fled to New England, though they apparently did not share this information with the French. See: “Testimonio…Gérard…4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 5 August 1789, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 398-399.
Spanish officials questioned why, if he had not been convicted, had he fled to the Spanish side. Gérard informed them that Lagrave was a very powerful man in Saint-Domingue and that in Santo Domingo he had avoided a public “trampling.” Eventually, Gérard’s friends in Saint-Domingue had written him assuring that risks to his person no longer existed, and thus he went back to his home in February 1790, temporarily spared by the political upheaval across the colony as all proceedings had been suspended due to the revolution. The officials asked if he had ever returned to Santo Domingo. Gérard said that in August or September 1791, despairing his case with Lagrave and the fatal state of the colony he had asked Herédia if he could pass into Spanish territory with some blacks (who were likely his slaves) to reestablish himself there. Gérard never received a response, but came to trust in the protection of French commander Monsieur Tousard and hoped for an improved social situation on the French side.17

Spanish officials were suspicious of his choice to remain, particularly since he had not been harmed in the interim as so many others had. Gérard said that only during the attack on Ouanaminthe was he threatened. When the attack on Ouanaminthe began Gérard was in the home of free mulatto Jean Tamplier. When they saw that armed blacks were encircling the house, Tamplier hid Gérard in a

17“Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 27 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 330-331.
box and evacuated him from the area by having an enslaved mulatto carry Gérard about halfway to the river.\textsuperscript{18} Thus Gérard was able to flee his imminent demise into Santo Domingo for the second time in his young life.

Given this peculiar drama Spanish officials wondered if Gérard had held any public offices or military positions in Saint-Domingue. Gérard said that he had only served the interests of Tousard, but did mention that the people of color had a great deal of confidence in him. Gérard explained that the free people of color had frequently consulted with him about the affairs of the revolution, conversations through which he claimed to have induced them to submit themselves to the orders of Tousard. He presented himself as a trusted go-between for the people of color to deal with Tousard. Spanish jurists were very curious to hear about how he could have possibly built confidence with the free people of color when Tousard’s political positions were directly opposed to their ideas and projects. Gérard contested that at the outset of the revolution the gens de couleur who he knew were not affiliated, and thus he offered them advice while their minds were open to different opinions. Gérard explained that when Tousard arrived that many free people of color thus submitted due to his counsel.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{18} “Testimonio…Gérard…1.a Pieza,” 27 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 331.

\textsuperscript{19} “Testimonio…Gérard…1.a Pieza,” 27 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 331-333.
These explanations seemed to make Spanish officials all the more suspicious. They demanded to know upon what character or authority he earned the respect and ability to take his ideas to a multitude of insurgents. Gérard replied that he neither had an esteemed character nor art of persuasion, but had lived in the area for eighteen years. He suggested that these free people of color had agreed with him until the invasion of Ouanaminthe when many had joined the insurgents. Gérard noted that he had gradually lost his rapport with local people of color, while Tousard and his officers of color were more immediately involved. Gérard claimed to never have participated in their combat. When asked, Gérard explained what the free people of color fought was against “The Committee”, which he said represented the public authority and the popular voice of the whites. Gérard said that the first intent of the mulattoes was to dispel this assembly and administrative body, but was not against all whites. Gérard said that he was himself against the Committee, and had been from the beginning.

This white Frenchman, with ties to both sides of the island, with apparent political and moral flexibility, was a broker of mulatto and white power on the border and,

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20 “Testimonio...Gérard...I.a Pieza,” 27 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 333-334.

21 “Testimonio...Gérard...I.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 339-340.
as a hub of connection, began to reveal to the Spanish the inner workings and social contexts of key groups of insurgents that operated along their frontiers.

Spanish officials pointedly asked where Gérard had been on 3 November, 1791. The prisoner said that he did not recall. Upon further prompting Gérard recalled going to visit Herédia and Spanish officers in Santo Domingo twice to assist Tousard, and that those meetings were in November and December 1791. Gérard recalled that during a night in November he had spoken with Herédia about the first invasion and taking of Ouanaminthe and the critical state of events, and that he had done so in the presence of various other people, some of whom were actually French. He recalled that one of those present had come from Santiago with a letter from a physician there. Spanish officials asked if he knew a Monsieur Decavilletaine another Spanish prisoner who was apparently at this same meeting. Gérard claimed he did not know the other prisoner, and that he did not know much about the messenger who had brought the letter from Santiago.

Spanish officials aggressively asked Gérard if Herédia had questioned him about allegedly leading the mulatto rebels. Gérard said he had no memory of

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22 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 334-335.

23 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 336-337.
such a conversation. They then asked if Gérard had not effectively admitted to Herédia that he had in fact been the leader of mulatto insurgents, defended their actions, claimed that their cause was just, and even asked Herédia to abet their actions. Again, Gérard denied such a discussion. The officials then asked specifically if Herédia had not scolded Gérard for a commission with a white militia in favor of leading mulattoes in revolt. Gérard again denied this, retorting that the jefe of the mulattoes in question was one Jean-Baptiste Marc, who Gérard claimed to never have dealt with, as other whites apparently had.24

Jean-Baptiste Marc, who was actually a free black, had fought as a commander alongside rebel slaves near Dondon but he had feigned submission to the forces of Tousard, who supplied him with weapons and allowed him to occupy the Ouanaminthe area alongside free people of color there aligned with Tousard. He served Tousard with distinction until, without warning and in what seems to have been calculated duplicity, he and his men turned their guns on the pro-Tousard mulattoes and placed Ouanaminthe under the direct command of rebel

24 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 337-339. In February 1789 the court at Versailles sent notice to the North region to form a blanc militia under Gérard around Ouanaminthe. Gérard thus became a lieutenant of the white riflemen. Granted at Versailles on 1, placed under command of governor, but was only certified as evidence on 23 November 1792 in Santo Domingo. See: “Testimonio...Gérard...2.a Pieza,” Versailles, 1 February 1789, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 372.
slaves apparently commanded by Jean-François. Tousard argued that the people of Ouanaminthe owed their lives to the mulattoes for preventing the blacks from enacting atrocities against the whole town. Gérard said that in the three or four days that the black insurgents were in the town he stayed with them, after which he remained in Ouanaminthe when the blacks left for Santa Susana.

Gérard explained that the whites of Ouanaminthe fled or hid in their homes when the “black incendiaries” took the town for the first time. Local whites had assumed that the mulattoes would defend the town, and that this more than the humanity of Jean-François gave them a sense of security. Gérard had tried to stay in Ouanaminthe, too, and that he had no interaction when these black troops when they invaded with hostile intentions. When asked, Gérard admitted that he had actually been part of a council from Ouanaminthe that mediated between Monsieur Tousard and the mulattoes. On 18 November 1791 Tousard had sent a letter to the mulattoes intimating to them that there was a pardon and that they should discuss the matter. The town selected and sent deputies for this meeting, and Tousard said it would be of value to have Gérard there, as he regularly wrote

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26 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.A Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 337-339.
for the mulattoes. On 23 November 1791 Gérard and the mulattoes went to meet
Tousard in the place called Pueblo Viejo.27

Upon questioning, Gérard said that he spoke to one Monsieur Corbière
about the joining of the mulattoes and whites against the blacks. Gérard noted
that the mulattoes would not go along with the ideas and projects of Corbière
because they thought he wanted to preserve the Committee.28 Apparently
motivated by some paranoia, the Spanish officials asked whether he and Corbière
spoke about the possibility of Spanish rule in northern Saint-Domingue, to which
Gérard responded that they only spoke about the mulattoes and a letter for
Herédia, not about Spanish rule. He said that the letter was an explanation to
Herédia about the motives for the mulattoes’ revolt, just cause, and attempts to
contain the unrest in Saint-Domingue, in his handwriting, and signed by the free
people of color.29 Herédia’s reply said that he would only trust those who behaved
honorably and submitted themselves under the general of the colony.30

27 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 340-341.
28 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 341-342.
29 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 342-343.
30 “Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 343-344.
These exchanges with Gérard reveal that the Spanish were far from passive observers in the adjacent revolution. Herédia and Gérard clearly knew each other, and Herédia in Dajabon had developed a network of informants in Ouanaminthe who made Spanish and royalist preferences known to a range of rebel factions. Spanish officials were aware of rumors of their own geopolitical machinations for northern Saint-Domingue, and perhaps had already discussed such possibilities with certain operatives, thus prompting some of their edgy questions. They were undoubtedly focused on preventing the conflict from jumping the border to their own populations.

Further questioning revealed that Gérard had frequent contact with at least one Spanish officer and some French residents in Santo Domingo. He exchanged letters with Santiago’s commander Luis Pérez Guerra on two or three occasions, and with François Espaillat and a Monsieur “Cabiro” on three to four occasions each. With Espaillat in particular he had discussed transactions of slaves.31 He explained that his recent correspondence with Espaillat and Cabiro covered subjects like the dependence on the slave trade, and that his letters were

31 “Testimonio…Gérard…1.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 344-345. Espaillat was French colonist in the Cibao, naturalized as a Spanish subject in 1787. He became a factor of tobacco for Santiago by 1790s. His slave Santiago was later indicted as part of the Boca Nigua revolt, and Espaillat had previously purchased slaves from Gérard. It is possible that this slave was even from Saint-Domingue. Espaillat later had sons, Ulises Francisco and Santiago, who became national leaders in the Dominican Republic, and eventually president. Papeles de Espaillat: para la historia de las ideas políticas en Santo Domingo, 474, indicates that he and family went to Puerto Rico in 1805 with the Haitian invasion by Dessalines, and that he died there in 1808.
not secretive and mostly only dealt with personal issues, though one did perhaps pertain to national proclamations. One was a manuscript from Tousard for the “powers of the sirs, inhabitants, and citizens of the part of the L’este” and another concerned the rebels’ negotiations for pardon.\(^{32}\) Just as Herédia had meddled into Ouanaminthe, Gérard and some of his colleagues had been complicit in funneling a particular royalist message to the Spanish side in hopes of securing support for his own political and military engagements around Ouanaminthe.

Herédia submitted his own account from Dajabon roughly six weeks later. Unlike how Gérard defined himself, he referred to the prisoner as “General Monsieur de Gérard, putting himself at the head of the mulattoes of the part of Ouanaminthe and Fort Dauphin, who surprised the people of Ouanaminthe with his troops and arms on 2 November 1791.” Herédia reported that his force later united with the “black incendiaries” of Jean-François, “who those maleficients call ‘General’.” He claimed that Gérard and Jean-François then collaborated to “extort” the locals. Spanish officials pursued testimony from one Pierre Martin, a prominent free mulatto whose correspondence they had captured.\(^{33}\) Martin confirmed Gérard’s position as leader of mulattoes near Ouanaminthe and Fort

\(^{32}\)”Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 28 January 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 345-347.

\(^{33}\)”Testimonio...Gérard...1.a Pieza,” 2 March 1792, Dajabon, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 347-349
Dauphin, and, “when the men of color met together at the end of last October the Monsieur Gérard…was General of that camp.”

Martin related that before the black invasion of Ouanaminthe, Gérard was widely known in this role, and that he actively protected property of whites and gens de couleur. He visited one Monsieur Escot, and afterward sent a detachment of troops to disarm some guards working for certain blanc planters. Gérard allegedly took keys from the Committee and seized their powder and cannons from the armory. A few days later he returned with the troops of Jean-François, who had combined forces with his own troops of color. Gérard was at the front of these troops when they occupied the city of Ouanaminthe. Gérard then instructed “all the men of color or free blacks and those who did not have the cockade in their hats put on those that said “Vive le Roi Louis XVI” (Long live King Louis XVI). Shortly after he made them put on a tan or white royalist cockade (cucardas encarnadas). Then, “Monsieur Tousard arrived at Fort Dauphin and sent deputies to meet with Monsieur Gérard so that he could make his demands.” However, after Gérard sent emissaries to meet with Tousard he took up the “national cockade”, or the tricolore of the French Republic, and the two parties – the gens de couleur from Ouanaminthe under Gérard and French whites under Tousard – negotiated a treaty with each other. However, to Martin this treaty served nothing, as black insurgents began the massacre of 15 January.
It was unknown what actions Gérard took either to incite or prevent this violence, but he had sneaked into the Spanish side to avoid implication with the atrocities and to save his own life. He was in danger due to his affiliation with the “evildoers…[who] sacked and burned” the town, whether he opposed or went along with it. Martin proclaimed his own innocence in the debacle, and said that Chasset, Hermand, Escot, Camas father and son, the Mazago son, the Dugoirian brothers, Sayaune brothers, Bossier, Jean-Charles, and Hilario Gaston were also innocent, and perhaps others, including the Dufresne family.34

Considering these depositions, it seems that Gérard was in fact the intermediary who had been duped by Jean-Baptiste Marc, the officer under Jean-François, who won the approval and material support from local gens de couleur and then Tousard before sabotaging French control of Ouanaminthe from the inside for the black rebels. Even by his own admission Gérard had been in contact with the black rebels of Santa Susana and Valier, and therefore Jean-François. After Gérard calmed the whites in Ouanaminthe about these affiliations, and after he had disarmed the white guards, he brought in mulattoes under his command accompanied by troops of Jean-François’ brigades, appalling all the whites in the community. Gérard responded to resistance against his peace plan with

34 “Testimonio…Gérard…1.a Pieza,” 3 March 1792, Dajabon, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 349-352.
executions of the few who did not cooperate in Maribaroux, namely Monsieurs Minac, Revello, and Comune. This violent display drove others to pledge loyalty to Gérard’s camp.35

The Spanish then collected testimony from the free people of color mentioned by Pierre Martin who confirmed his account. Antoine Escot from Ouanaminthe added that Gérard had published an order that all the men of color who did not follow his intentions had to pass in front of a council of war. Jean-Baptiste Bossier added that he had heard Gérard and his associates discuss whether the Spanish would bother protecting the French whites against the insurgent blacks.36 Apart from the trial evidence, a Monsieur Hurvoy, the commander of the “patriotic” forces at Ouanaminthe, later recorded his confrontation by a few soldiers of color and Gérard himself, who wanted to discuss Jean-François and to have him reassure the town of their intentions. Hurvoy said Gérard was particularly interested in a peace deal, and that the people of Fort Dauphin and l’Acul-des-Pins might have as well. After parting peacefully, Hurvoy said he then went out to calm several plantations regarding Gérard’s intentions, only to return to town to find the citizens of color in arms. He was able to warn Tousard just before he was supposed to arrive. Negotiations over the fate

35 “Testimonio…Gérard…1.a Pieza,” 3 March 1792, Dajabon, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 352-358.
36 “Testimonio…Gérard…1.a Pieza,” 7 March 1792, Dajabon, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 358-359.
of Ouanaminthe commenced at the Escot plantation, property of a free family of color.\textsuperscript{37}

The trial moved back to Santo Domingo, where in May 1792 Spanish officials hoped to obtain a confession from Gérard. He did admit to having been a militia officer, but only for Tousard. He also admitted to having issued political proclamations. Spanish officials doubted the extent of his admissions, and wondered if the people of color had actually fled Ouanaminthe to avoid the fury of the blacks due to his political actions. Gérard tried to justify his actions of interfering with whites and their property, disarming the white guards, taking cannons and powder, and later uniting with troops under Jean-François. He claimed that Tousard knew about all of his actions in the town. Interestingly, he said that his meeting with Jean-François was not necessarily voluntary, and that the black rebels had surprised him and the smaller forces of the people of color, and troops that were definitely not under his command.

Gérard adamantly denied that he was seditious, that he had commanded mulattoes, that he helped give the town to the blacks during their attack, and that he participated in the violence. He agreed that Jean-François and his troops

committed atrocities but that in Ouanaminthe the mediation of the mulattoes diminished the violence. When pressed he also claimed that he never said anything about Spanish involvement with the French whites against the insurgents. He insisted he only advised the free people of color. He did admit, though, to knowing many people of color in the Ouanaminthe area who submitted to Tousard after having received a pardon.38

These testimonies and lines of questioning reveal critical details pertaining to all involved parties. Spanish officials were extremely upset about rumors circulating regarding their own interests in adjacent areas of Saint-Domingue, and were specifically concerned about the idea that they were in support of French whites against troops of Jean-François, perhaps due to their peaceful and growing ties to those insurgents. Furthermore, any Spanish support for the whites in Ouanaminthe may have only been as a counteraction against the rise and dominance of free people of color and in such close proximity to Dominican populations. They were also concerned over Gérard’s apparent autonomy from Tousard and his precarious intermediary position between French regulars, the free people of color around Ouanaminthe, and even apparently black insurgents. Whatever the actual intent of Gérard, they were equally alarmed at depth of

38 “Testimonio...Gérard...I.a Pieza,” 23 March 1792, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 359-367.
connections to people on the Spanish side of the island, and how their own covert geopolitical interests were understood and by whom.

The documents collected into evidence also reveal a complicated relationship with Spanish officials and Dominicans. A letter from just over a month after the slave revolts began revealed Spanish concerns that if the French actually dislodged the black insurgents from Dondon and Grande-Rivière then the black insurgents would have no other recourse or refuge than to take hold in the mountains on the border with Santo Domingo. It speculated about direct Spanish involvement to preempt black rebels from entrenching themselves in the border mountains and to preserve Santo Domingo. This letter reveals conversations among Spanish officials and certain operators in Saint-Domingue about seeking Spain’s own geopolitical interests regarding intervention and how, despite their undisclosed friendly early meetings with the black insurgents, Spanish officials feared that if given no choice that the rebels might bring their rebellion into Santo Domingo. This gave them all the more reason to encourage amicable interactions with the rebels, and to also collect detailed intelligence from French informants about the true situation on the ground in Saint-Domingue.

39 “Testimonio…Gérard…4.a Pieza,” 1 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 399-400.
The next week in early October 1791 Herédia sent a letter explaining the French leadership paralysis, and lamented the possibility that Spaniards would become subject to black whims, and suggested supplying the French through Manzanillo if roads were unsafe.⁴⁰ That same day, Gérard petitioned Herédia to enter Santo Domingo. Per the unpopular policy of only granting asylum to those whose lives were overtly threatened, Herédia denied Gérard, who stayed in Ouanaminthe and obviously became more involved in local politics.⁴¹ Eleven days later and from Santo Domingo García refused Gérard’s appeal. Amid negatives news from Banica, García further worried that in all parts of the Spanish colony reigned a great silence due to the blacks, “they say nothing from Cahobas, Neyba, nor San Raphael.” All of these Dominican border towns were afflicted by the revolution, and now Dajabon was being pulled into the fray.⁴²

Spanish officers reported on 3 and 5 of November that, “free mulattoes and slaves from the part of Ouanaminthe, Maribaroux, and part of Fort Dauphin” had revolted. They encamped in the hills, and soon arrived at Ouanaminthe where they captured four small canons, powder and shot, and horses, and freed political prisoners before returning to their camp “where they communicated with the

⁴⁰ “Testimonio…Gérard…4.a Pieza,” 9 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 400-402.
⁴¹ “Testimonio…Gérard…4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 9 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 402-403.
⁴² “Testimonio…Gérard…4.a Pieza,” Santo Domingo, 20 October 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 403-404.
incendarios of Grande-Rivière [and] Santa Susana,” likely the troops of Jean-François.43 Separate from the trial, Hurvoy reported on this takeover. He received resistance from troops of color under his command, which he thought was related to a meeting of free people of color a l’Acul-des-Pines. Gérard asked for a meeting, which made Hurvoy hesitate. Gérard told him of his troops’ intention to seize the town. Without Hurvoy’s consent, but without firing a shot, these troops overtook guard positions throughout Ouanaminthe, took the keys to the jail, and suppressed whites. Hurvoy visited the headquarters of the free people of color, who intimidated him, but he supposed that he had to cooperate with them to forestall takeover from the slave insurgents.44

After a lull of gens de couleur occupation, at four in the morning of 9 November “eight blacks from Santa Susana came down and incorporated themselves with the mulattoes,” and that afternoon “they took over the town of Ouanaminthe” while both disarming and guarding local white elites. More men arrived on horseback, bringing the number of troops to six hundred men. Some white and free black residents tried to flee into Dominican territory, and that afternoon the local Dajabon militia had hurriedly assembled out of fear for cross-

43 “Testimonio...Gérard...4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 9 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 404-409; Fick, Making Haiti, 111-113.

44 “Lettre de M. Hurvoy, commandant pour le roi, à Ouanaminthe, du 4 novembre, à l’assemble générale,” in Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860, 309. Hurvoy had received reinforcements from Roucou, some of whom were to defend against the insurgents at Valliere.
border violence. Then, as Herédia explained, “At four in the afternoon four blacks on horseback arrived at the mouth of the river, asking permission of the garrison to give me a message from their general. They announced that their black general would have “the honor of visiting” the following day. Herédia speculated that “their general was Monsieur :::::::::: free black that had come briefly from France decorated with the Cross of Saint Louis that the king had given him.” The name of the supposed leader was in fact missing from the record, reading “so it is” beside these transcribed dots, but given his personal description it could have been Jean-Baptiste Marc, who was already a free black, or potentially Jean-François himself given his own propensity to wear the Cross of Saint Louis, though the latter had certainly never visited France.45

Herédia had also heard that Gérard had become the leader of mulattoes. Gérard tried to make amends with Herédia, who said that, “this night it displeased me to see him coming to talk with me.” Herédia accused Gérard of having incited the mulattoes into insurrection. Gérard countered by saying that he was only a spokesman for their cause. He also asked Gérard why he had allied with the incendiarios, or black insurgents, and Gérard said they had surprised him that morning and obliged him to collaborate. Later, Herédia watched fires burn across

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45 “Testimonio…Gérard…4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 9 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 404-409; Fick, Making Haiti, 111-113. The name of the black general is marked out accordingly in the court records.
the border all night, and at daybreak morning saw the home of “Madame Carrera” (a Spanish surname) and others burn. Spanish troops remained on high alert at seeing the rebels in such proximity. Hurvoy, the French commander responsible or defending the town, was arrested but somehow escaped into Dajabon.46

Ahead of Herédia’s meeting with this “General of the Brigands”, rumors arrived that the insurgents in Ouanaminthe might force whites to declare all mulatto and black slaves under their dependence free, with the stipulation they continue to work the ingenios and houses. Herédia speculated that this would ruin the whole colony. At eight in the morning on 10 November Herédia received a letter from the black general about their meeting. An hour later black troops approached the river on horseback, followed by a tense haggling of who exactly could attend the meetings. Spanish officers who dealt directly with this black general said that he was a, “very dark black with two crosses on his chest, one of Saint-Louis and the other which was unknown, that he spoke little,” and that perhaps he had delegated negotiations to his officers. Nothing, it seems, actually came from this visit. Ironically, during this meeting over thirty refugees entered Dajabon with their many slaves.47 The blacks were the military muscle who had

46 “Testimonio…Gérard…4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 9 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 404-409.
47 “Testimonio…Gérard…4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 9 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 404-409.
won the mulattoes’ victories at Ouanaminthe, even if the *gens de couleur* did not go looking for armed black involvement.\(^{48}\)

One letter from Gérard’s college the “Count of Corbière” apparently went to Herédia on 9 November 1791, the day that some insurgent slaves had first entered Ouanaminthe. The letter requested a license to pass to the Spanish side at Dajabon under the auspices of Herédia and gave a military report of French affairs. It mentioned that Tousard’s forces were at l’Acul-des-Pins and discussed reuniting at Vollines and strategized about how to reconnect with, “subjects of my beloved King who they serve.”. Corbière and his partisans were intent upon negotiating with the powerful free people of color in the borderlands. He identified “600 brigands” in the area who had burned plantations around Maribaroux, violence that would force refugees to stay longer on the Spanish side. Corbière also complained to Herédia about one Frenchman in particular, a Monsieur Legras, who the Spanish had given asylum.\(^{49}\) No wonder, then, that Herédia was concerned about what conversations Gérard had with Corbière, considering that the latter readily supplied intelligence to the Spanish, operated in Dajabon among Dominicans and refugees, and coordinated with Spanish officers on military,

\(^{48}\) “Testimonio...Gérard...4.a Pieza,” n.d., AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 410.

\(^{49}\) “Testimonio del oficio de remision del francés Mr. Gérard con varios documentos del mismo,” 2.a Pieza,” 9 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 369-371.
royalist, and refugee affairs. Spain had other informants. For example, a note from Monsieur Petiton written on 15 November provided intelligence to the Spanish on the rebel presence around the mouth of the Rio Masacre. Tousard had yet to arrive, instead staying near Fort Dauphin with some 800 troops. 50

Also, Gérard seemed to have sent letters to friends in Santiago in which he was perplexed at how to explain his leadership of a group of gens de couleur and free blacks from his region. He said that the people of color in his area sought his counsel, and he tried to moderate them from imprisoning or attacking whomever they wished, and hoped to guide them through their treaty of 23 November with Tousard, all the while blaming, “enemies of the constitution...[who] have projected the ruin of this lovely colony.” Gérard then bragged of his own heroics, saying, “I liberated the part of Maribaroux; I protected...their haciendas without doubt,” and said he was sending a proclamation from French officials. He noted that the regiment of Provence had arrived and that corresponding French troop movements were expected. With regards to the insurgent slaves he did say that, “The chiefs of the bandits have repeatedly sent deputations toward the end of pursuing pardon,” and those who had just recently agreed to a deal were possibly hiding out at the nearby house of Saint-Michel where they were amassing all their

50 “Testimonio...Gérard...2.a Pieza,” 15 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 371-372.
white prisoners. In reference to these rebels, who were likely troops of Jean-François, Gérard said that, “We must hope that all will compose and submit to the laws.”

The proclamation that he may have sent into Santo Domingo was from the French commissioners Ignace-Fréderic de Mirbeck, Edmond Saint-Léger, and Philippe-Rose Roume de Saint-Laurent (hereafter Philippe Roume, as he was usually called), who called upon refugees to return home and promised tranquility. It is no wonder, then, that if Gérard came to a compromise and support for French republican positions that he would circulate a call for support and the return of capital and powerbrokers through the French expatriate community in Santo Domingo that he knew very well. His immodesty at newfound power in letters to residents of Santo Domingo seem to prove that Gérard was in fact a leader of free people of color and actively negotiated with black insurgents under Jean-François.

When arrested Gérard also carried the terms of peace that Tousard had arranged with the “Deputy Sirs” of the free people of color and free blacks of Fort Dauphin from, apparently, 25 November 1791, lending credence to his claims of

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51 “Testimonio de los documentos aprehendidos y exhividos por Monsieur Gérard, 3.a Pieza,” Ouanaminthe, 24 December 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 378-382.

having been a peacemaking intermediary. It called for a union and fraternity. It recognized the demands by people of color for political representation and legal equality, but asked “citizens of color” to abide by the law. The deal included several actionable articles, including the implementation of the contentious national decrees regarding rights for citizens of color and a pardon for those involved in armed uprisings. The deal stipulated that people of color who committed violent excesses would not be pardoned and were subject to the “severity and vengeance of the law.” All qualified people of color who signed the pact and united at Ouanaminthe were to become part of the French army of the east under Tousard and would serve to reestablish order in the colony, implicitly against slave insurgents. Officers of color could keep their status and troops, and Tousard would personally visit Ouanaminthe to receive pledges of obedience from the citizens of color and free blacks in common cause against the “bandits.” Tousard in turn would be their advocate to high-ranking French officials and would circulate their treaty to colonial assemblies, the National Assembly, King Louis XVI, and the public. Tousard would also have a *Te Deum* blessing to thank divine providence for this peace and pray to maintain it.\(^{53}\) This was the pact that

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\(^{53}\)“Testimonio…Gérard…3.a Pieza,” 23 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 389-394.
Gérard claimed to have engineered for peace along the northern border of Hispaniola.

On 14 January 1792 Gérard wrote directly to Espaillat to share about, “the good that I have done to my territory,” which he said he had enacted with the cooperation of French leaders. He asked about procuring pack animals through Santo Domingo that he could not find in Saint-Domingue, and mentioned having written to the physician Joseph Cabiro, a Frenchman who had lived on the Spanish side for at least a decade. He mentioned that the “bandits” had asked for grace.54 This reference to Jean-François proved wrong when the black insurgents seized Ouanaminthe the very next day.

Gérard’s role in these series of events was already turbid, Corbière proceeded to make them even murkier. Corbière, who concurred that Gérard had led the mulattoes of Ouanaminthe, had been dispatched to deal with Gérard and the free people of color to form a treaty with whites and then attach the “black incendiaries.” Gérard had apparently cautioned Corbière in confidence that the Spanish wanted to take over the North of the colony, a hope that Corbière had taken with him into refuge in Santo Domingo. Gérard allegedly had shown Corbière a letter from Herédia on this matter, and Corbière wondered if perhaps

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54 “Testimonio...Gérard...3.a Pieza,” Ouanaminthe, 14 January 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 382-383. On Cabiro, see: *Affiches Americaines de Saint-Domingue*, 19 Floréal an XI / 9 May 1803, no.37.
Gérard was actually conspiring with the insurgents to surprise Ouanaminthe. Herédia expressed his disbelief about these accusations to García. The details of Herédia’s dealings with Gérard, Corbière, and others are almost impossible to discern, though it seems clear that Herédia dealt with people and plans unbeknownst to officials in the capital.\(^5\) Herédia was highly suspicious of both Gérard and Corbière due to their ties to insurgents and their deep connections to the Cibao region around Santiago. For example, Spanish troops also intercepted a mulatto who was trying to deliver a letter from Gérard to the Dominican resident Juan Aranda, which seemed unusual, and two other letters bound for Santiago.\(^5\)

Proceedings against Gérard closed in May 1792 without a clear verdict or paper trail regarding his fate, which was likely forwarded for review in Spain. Quite surprisingly, years later Gérard reappeared as a free man and French envoy in Santo Domingo where he continued to antagonize Spanish authorities.

More importantly than the trial outcome, the sum of the Gérard case unveils complicated cross-border networks through which Herédia cagily monitored Spanish interests. This included his anxious role in the Gérard case,

\(^5\) “Testimonio...Gérard...4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 20 November 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 410. Herédia was relieved to finally declare that, “I have managed to rid myself of the French refugees,” after sending Corbière, sixty five other whites, and all their slaves to Monte Cristi by sea on 20 November. This diversion of exiles was only fleeting relief from the droves and continued chaos that would follow.\(^5\)

\(^6\) “Testimonio...Gérard...4.a Pieza,” Dajabon, 19 January 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, n.9, 413-414.
before and after his arrest, which seemed to indicate a greater familiarity between
the two men than what the court record revealed. Gérard told Corbière of Spanish
designs for North. Gérard knew several Spanish officers, had lived in Santo
Domingo, probably spoke Spanish, and had many friends who were either
Dominican or permanently resided in Santo Domingo. Less powerful Spanish
officials were not really questioned regarding their plans for North, nor their
contact with Gérard, Corbière, or other operators in Saint-Domingue, despite their
months of direct contact with insurgents. Gérard clearly conspired with the armed
gens de couleur, held espoused royalist preferences, wore monarchist emblems, and
cooperated with Tousard for a treaty. He also met with Jean-François, who along
with Biassou and the emergent free black Toussaint Breda had conducted their
own peace negotiations with the French commissioners.

Jean-François had patiently asked for four-hundred manumissions and
three days a week of free time for slaves, along with the improvement of living
conditions and treatment. The white planters and assembly had no interest in
acknowledging their movement as a political act, and held out that their crime
against governmental order deserved unconditional surrender and punishment.
A white planter even slapped Jean-François during one meeting regarding peace.
By January these negotiations were in tatters, and the French would not even offer
the insurgents sixty manumissions or any stipulations on increasing slaves’ time off or bettering their treatment.57

Most likely, Jean-François understood that Gérard had made a peace deal with Tousard, took up the “national cockade,” and started transitioning Ouanaminthe to the Republic. He had planted Jean-Baptiste Marc and others loyal to him as feigned partisans of the Ouanaminthe mulattoes. He had also forced Gérard into a quasi-partnership with his forces, as much to present a unified front among insurgents to the French. By January he understood that the slave insurgents had been forsaken by these uneasy gens de couleur allies, and thus he decided to outright capture the key strategic town and border crossing. With the chance of peace with France eliminated, this also gave Jean-François and his black insurgents another point of direct contact to Spanish officials whose support he desperately needed. The duplicity accomplished by Jean-Baptiste Marc was brash, exceedingly clever, and was an important free black allegiance to the slave insurgent cause, as was the newfound talent of Toussaint Breda. This action resulted in a major geopolitical loss for the French, all of which had to impress Spanish observers. It showed Spanish officers who the savvy powerbrokers in Saint-Domingue really were – in this case, Jean-François outmaneuvered local

57 Fick, Making Haiti, 114-117; Dubois, Avengers, 125-127.
royalist whites, republican officials in the colony, and militant free people of color. Spain, with growing opportunistic interests in the conflict beyond self-defense, had a new point of contact with talented black insurgents – Ouanaminthe.

OPPORTUNISTIC DIVINE PROVIDENCE: DOMINICAN-INSURGENT TIES

Into early 1792 Governor Joaquín García still faulted French philosophy and actions as the root cause of the adjacent unrest, and in so doing he and others continued to chronically underestimate the social, cultural, and political motivations of the black majority in Saint-Domingue. Soon, this would cause him to further underestimate the shrewdness of new black allies of Spain. Their eventual recognition of black political autonomy would primarily develop in parallel with the continued espousal of monarchist and Catholic values by rebels near the border who had, by early 1792, been interacting in peace and amity with Spanish military personnel and Dominican residents.\(^{58}\)

Newly-appointed French commissioners Philippe Roume, Ignace-Frédéric de Mirbeck, and Edmond Saint-Léger had arrived in Cap-Français in November 1791, though they did not last long. However, around that time news also arrived that the 15 May decree that provided juridical and political equality

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\(^{58}\) Joaquín García to Serena, Santo Domingo, 25 February 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.298.
for free people of color had been supplanted in the metropole. While mulattoes in North affiliated with Gérard negotiated a peace treaty after this announcement, it instead plunged the tenuous stability between whites and free people of color in the Cul-de-Sac region back into open turmoil. These conflicts in West featured free people of color who increasingly relied upon the military labor of their own slaves. While this mobilization differed distinctly from open revolt, they were nevertheless an irreversible precedent of popular empowerment. This represented a frightful precedent to local political and economic elites in West who hoped to avoid replicating the slave uprisings of North. Soon thereafter in Spring 1792, though not in direct correlation, both Léogâne and the Cul-de-Sac witnessed tens of thousands of slaves in open revolt under the leadership of Romaine la Prophétesse (who may have been Dominican originally) and Hyacinthe, respectively. The former was a man who took a female title of prophetess, held mass in a church with an upside down cross, and claimed that the Virgin Mary was his godmother who communicated directly to him in writing.\textsuperscript{59} The latter of the two later became an outlier as a black auxiliary of Spain in the Cul-de-Sac,

\textsuperscript{59}Popkin, \textit{You Are All Free}, 38; Fick, \textit{Making Haiti}, 139-140; Dubois, \textit{Avengers}, 106. For an in-depth analysis of the insurgent leader Romain Rivière, known by his feminine \textit{nom de guerre} Romaine la Prophétesse and who may have hailed from Santo Domingo, see: Robert D. Taber, “The Issue of Their Union: Family, Law, and Politics in Western Saint-Domingue, 1777 to 1789,” Ph.D. Diss, University of Florida, 2015: 138-144. Pamphile Lacroix, who served in the area during the revolution, said that Romaine was a \textit{griffe} (three-quarters African descent) and of Spanish origins. Lacroix, \textit{Mémoires}, 142.
though his brief but bold career was pocked with self-inflicted conundrums. By the start of 1792 the regions surrounding Port-au-Prince began to resemble the scorched plantations of North as West fell similarly into open social revolution.

Despite the recent uptick in violence in West and from black insurgents in North whose peace dealings with the French had failed, the thousands of black rebels in Saint-Domingue under Biassou and Jean-François continued to respect Dominican borders and Spanish interests. By that time General Herédia regularly corresponded with the black “colonels” who increasingly sought Spanish support. Through his contacts those relationships expanded and matured in trust and intensity across 1792. García opined that the arrival of the French Republic’s commissioners in Saint-Domingue had brought a much anticipated slowdown to hostilities. Spanish officials welcomed this lull, and it eased their immediate concerns of being sucked into direct warfare especially when they were so short on funds.

Only months later, in June 1792, news from Cap-Français indicated the local implementation of the declaration of equality for mulattoes and free blacks with whites, which Spanish officials saw as one of the fundamental and earliest

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60 Joaquín García, 22 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.129.
62 Joaquín García to Serena, Santo Domingo, 25 February 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.298.
63 Joaquín García to Serena, Santo Domingo, 25 January 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.291.
points of discord that instigated the revolution. Thanks in part to the arrival of the commissioners, whites and mulattoes began to negotiate again despite their obvious recent tensions and with a great deal of mutual suspicion. While the Republic focused on securing the cooperation of elite and middle sectors, the black generals Biassou and Jean-François professed their doubts about the lasting success of the decree, and postulated that if the free colored people aligned with the whites that they would quickly lose any support from among the blacks. That is, Biassou and Jean-François seemed to logically conclude that mobilized and newly-politicized slaves would expect to share in the benefits of a peace agreement, and that without addressing their interests the Republic would only further lose traction among the majority of rebels – the black masses. Earlier attempts at a compromise with the French had nearly caused a mutiny from among their ranks as the self-liberated ex-slave troops felt that their gains were jeopardized, and that they might never trust promises from the French anyway.

Additionally, Biassou and Jean-François specifically doubted that rebel leaders could trust or ever strike an accord with the Assembly and Commissioners. García, who was well aware of this, understood that this fundamental tensions between the armed slaves and the French, who represented many of their former

\footnote{Joaquín García to Marques de Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 11 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.59.}
masters, would never be resolved, and that Biassou and Jean-François would likely never agree to terms with the Republic. García analyzed the new status of slave rebels in Saint-Domingue, saying, “These men since the day in which they took up arms against their owners and masters have lived with an imponderable liberty, they have named captains, colonels, brigadiers,” and have lived unlike blacks typically did. He was certain that such blacks would not easily resubmit to the yoke of servitude.65 The black insurgents’ negotiations with the French for a peace had already completely failed by January 1792, and were confirmed when Jean-François attacked Ouanaminthe that month.66

Because of mounting cross-island tensions between Spanish and French officials, García also suspended the extradition of a mulatto named Louis Guedey from Santo Domingo to French custody until he was assured of a peaceable state on the border in Saint-Domingue. The nature of his case is unclear, however, what the Guedey case does show is that Spanish officials were increasingly cautious about who, exactly, was finding their way into Dominican territory and which political faction such prisoners’ rendition into Saint-Domingue might benefit most. Beyond human movement García criticized the invasive, “public papers...always satirical and scathing [that] continue speaking with arrogance,” and remitted

65 Joaquín García to Marques de Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 11 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.59.
66 Fick, Making Haiti, 115-117.
copies of the Moniteur General de la Partie Française de Saint-Domingue and a proclamation by Blanchelande to prove his point.⁶⁷

In June 1792 Archbishop Portillo remarked about similar encroachments form the west, saying that, “each day to our side arrives more colonists from the three parties,” which likely meant fugitives of the republican, royalist, and free colored camps.⁶⁸ Spanish officials had accepted more refugees for asylum, but refused sanctuary to any perpetrators of violence.⁶⁹ That same month, García was surprised at the relative silence in Saint-Domingue surrounding the debate over the decree for the equality of free people of color. Referring to the French he said, “This silence, opposed to the character of this nation,” was tied to the, “sensible pain caused by the equality of some men who they have always seen with contempt, and that their hearts full of confusion and depression machinate new discords.” To García and other elites in Santo Domingo the prospect of reshuffling racial order had haphazardly chipped away at the foundation of social stability.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, the slave insurgents of North continued their rebellion, and had just burned more properties just outside of Fort Dauphin. Five subaltern officers of the rebels gave a splendid celebratory banquet for their general Jean-

⁶⁷ Joaquín García to Marques de Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 11 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.59.
⁶⁸ Fernando Portillo y Torres to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 24 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
⁶⁹ José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
⁷⁰ Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.314.
François in Maribaroux, south of Fort Dauphin near Ouanaminthe. García explained that further south on the border, “In Mirebalais the mulattoes made a fort in the highlands called Masicot, a gunshot away from the town, and have in place three cannons and continue their active work.” Around Mirebalais the local Dominguois mulattoes and whites held great suspicions of the insurgent blacks of the Cul-de-Sac plain and the mountains of Grand Bois, likely troops of Hyacinthe.⁷¹ In the roughly ten months since the slave revolts began open revolution had splintered into varied, local fragments across Saint-Domingue, which by summer 1792 encompassed nearly the entire border region with Santo Domingo.

In hopes of procuring additional support, officials in Santo Domingo praised the king’s magnanimity, piety, and attention to the dangerous situation on the island where the influence of “new philosophers” and new laws formed a threat that cascaded across the Atlantic from Bastille Day in Paris to the present turmoil in Saint-Domingue.⁷² Spanish officials insisted that for the time being their efforts had prevented the fervor from the French side from spreading to the

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⁷¹ Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.314.
⁷² José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
Dominican populace and disturbing their domestic peace. García again reinforced garrisons on the frontier in spite of the spiraling costs.

In June 1792 Urízar recorded an interpretation of the “anarchy” in the French colony from officials observing through the Dominican context for metropolitan bureaucrats. He explained that, “dissensions of the mulattoes, free blacks, and slaves with the whites have remained relentless, with major obstinacy and tenacity.” He noted the several treaties in place with white colonists, including one from 14 April between those parties in Petite-Rivière and Artibonite that contained nine articles, all substantially directed at the political rights of the citizens of color. The whites and mulattoes of North did not respect the republican officials and never handled strife over juridical equality with any semblance of order, he thought. Another agreement between whites and the four parishes of the Saint-Marc region came the week prior and featured the same objectives while obligating armed slaves to return to plantations and obey their masters, which he thought was nearly impossible. Slaves rebels’ continued absences from plantations provoked a new crisis for Saint-Domingue when food supplies diminished. Since many slaves were no longer working, and some sugar

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73 José Urízar, Catani, Bravo, and Toncerrada to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.

74 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.311.
plantations had been converted to grow subsistence food. This latter provision, of course, was unlikely to succeed, and Urízar was unsure of how the Republic could proclaim peace since so many blacks were free on their own accord and had made themselves rulers of their masters’ plantations. “This is the much vaunted French liberty,” he retorted.75 The armed rebels under Jean-François had reacted severely to his own attempts to negotiate a return to plantations with better conditions.

In contrast to this perceived French disorder, Urízar said that the pro-Spanish “black chiefs are demonstrating with us extraordinary attention and utmost respect, and publicizing that they are addicts [to the Spanish cause] and submissive to our will.” Some in Santo Domingo doubted these rebels’ professions of love for Spain and the sustainability of their impressive successes. Spanish officials bided their time to see how these “black chiefs” behaved and if they could capture more territory before entertaining their loyalties in any formal sense. Urízar himself speculated that these friendly rebels simply needed support and had nowhere else to turn, while some of his colleagues more readily believed their adherence to monarchism and Catholicism.76

Urízar elaborated on his hesitance toward the black chiefs, saying that in March 1792, “One of their generals called Biasiu (sic), having brought himself up

75 José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
76 José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
to our frontier of the southern part in company of the famous general in chief Jean-François, sent word to the commanding general...he sent a message with such haughtiness, and at the presence of the official of our guard and troop, he complained that we were assisting the whites, and denying the blacks.”

Spanish officials recoiled at Biassou’s seeming presumptuousness regarding Spanish policy on aid, and quite preferred Jean-François’ more supplicant attitude. The complaint Biassou made had most to do with the preferable Spanish treatment of the French royalist refugees and those French whites who collaborated with Spain either militarily or politically. Biassou and his troops were far more potent military, the black general seemed to have forgotten that whatever furtive contact and support Spain gave them, and they remained second-class allies because there was no official state of war between France and Spain. It was impossible to openly acknowledge the black rebels whereas it was quite easily justifiable for Spain to welcome and affirm desperate or collaborative French whites.

Urízar had taken exception with Biassou’s appeals, yet, Dominicans and Spanish officers along the border still generally enjoyed favorable interactions with the blacks. Nevertheless, after that heated exchange Spanish officials dispatched two more companies of the Cantabria regiment to secure that border.

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77 José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
area, perhaps as an insurance policy in case Biassou changed his mind about the utility of his informal friendly ties to Spain. Urízar did express a difference between the two black generals, saying, “We have recognized in the mentioned General Jean-François the greatest affection and respect to the Spanish at all times and cases.”

For example, a few days earlier a black Dominican man had gone to the border at Dajabon to give two horses a drink. At that same spot was a soldier who fought with Jean-François who then took the horses. Whether this was theft, or a gift, was unclear, though Spanish officials assumed the former. If the black Dominican was independently abetting the rebels he likely did not try to tell them otherwise. This interaction transpired while a Spanish soldier who was supposed to have been on guard was bathing nearby in the river. Spanish officers immediately complained to Jean-François who then investigated that matter, arrested a suspect, and even sent the prisoner to the Spanish. Jean-François then issued threats of harsh punishment, including execution, to any of his soldiers who committed “insults” against Spanish interests.

Economic conditions on the French side of the island were even more dire, as intelligence filtered into Santo Domingo that a trade had arisen between certain

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78 José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
French planters and Jamaican merchants, in which those in Saint-Domingue would sell their slaves for British food, money, and arms. This foray, Urízar feared, came due to a growing British desire to capitalize on the unrest and take Saint-Domingue from the French. Aside from possible French aggressions, the specter of British interference daunted Spanish officials. Growing contraband trade, including between Spanish subjects and the black insurgents, began to bolster distinct war efforts among competing parties in Saint-Domingue.

Urízar assured the metropole that he and other officials would conserve order in Santo Domingo even if they did have to rely upon support from Havana, San Juan, and Caracas. This reliance was never particularly popular in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, or any other neighboring Spanish colony. The economically languid colonists of Santo Domingo could not fund their own defense. Santo Domingo regularly siphoned hundreds of thousands of much-needed pesos from Mexico to support Spanish military buildup. Chronic cash shortages, exorbitant expenses, and overreliance upon neighboring Spanish colonies would all increase exponentially in the ensuing two years. These were problems that only compounded existing infiltration of unrest through radical

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79 José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
80 José Urízar to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
81 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.333.
publications, politicized refugees, and the constant contact of Dominican border residents with revolution next door.

**ARRAYS OF ROYALISM THROUGH LATE 1792**

On 15 June 1792 the French general and royalist sympathizer Monsieur de Rouvray, having recently retaken Ouanaminthe, appeared at Dajabon with four planters, four mulatto captains, and the priest of Trou parish. This delegation asked Spanish officials permission to have Dominican locals print copies of the new declaration of equality for free people of color along with other documents for public circulation. In particular, this group sought to attract the return and support of French refugees in Santo Domingo, including *gens de couleur*, for whom they had drafted a special proclamation. Another document was a decree from Blanchelande. The Rouvray party also sent letters to García which included a plan to retake all of Saint-Domingue. In these letters they complained against Spanish officials on the border who had helped and consorted with the insurgents, and yet another request for Spain to side with the French military efforts to suppress the revolution. Spanish dealings with the black insurgents were no longer secret, and drew the great indignation of French whites, both republican and royalist. Rouvray then asked his mulatto companions in this entourage to visit a separate, specific building nearby in Dajabon to appeal to those “of their own class” and
color who apparently congregated there. Herédia flatly denied all of their requests. He found Rouvray and his mulatto colleagues to be ostentatious and pretentious, and refused to print foreign political documents in Dominican presses. On the one hand, Rouvray’s envoy reminded Spanish officials of the turmoil surrounding the Ogé case. On the other hand, their impression of growing incompetence and dissension in Saint-Domingue prompted them to more proactively ponder how to position themselves against a British takeover there, which seemed increasingly possible. Tensions between French and Spanish officials on the island had become inflamed by not only the lack of inter-imperial support, but of course by the quasi-affiliations constructed between Spanish officers and top black generals. Rouvray was rightfully concerned about the proxy war that Spain had positioned itself to wage against his and his allies’ interests, managing operations from the Dominican borders deep into Saint-Domingue through newfound allies. Soon enough this specter haunting French whites would become much more real.

For example, roughly two months after this confrontation with Rouvray the black general Jean-François was back in control of Ouanaminthe. There he moved to bolster his defenses against another French assault near the border by

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82 Joaquín García to Bajamar, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.62.
rearranging the placements of five cannons. “Boliu” and the mulattoes resisted this move and tried to capture the cannons and a redoubt to undercut the growing local power of these black rebels. Jean-François reacted by attacking this position, taking cannons, and killing about 50 mulattoes and free blacks arrayed against him, and he pursued those who fled to “make them feel the lack of obedience to their General Jean-François.” García was convinced that every day Saint-Domingue tried to destroy itself.83

In October 1792 García also reported on the recent arrival in Cap-Français of the new interim governor, Desparbès, three new civil commissioners, and 6,000 additional French troops, all to reestablish the order against the black insurgents. These new units were preparing an attack against the blacks at Ouanaminthe, specifically. Of course, with the proximity to the Spanish side this violence would certainly impact Santo Domingo. He thought that Ouanaminthe was the primary fixation for French officials at that moment because of its great concentration of important rebels. What he did not mention, though, was that it was also a critical transit point through which insurgents could deal with sympathetic Spanish officials or willing Dominican trade partners.84 About half of these new troop

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83 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 23 September 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.326.

84 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.330.
arrivals would die before the close of 1792. At best, the temporary governor was ephemeral in his impact. However, two of the three new commissioners – Etienne Polverel and Léger Félicité Sonthonax – would soon contribute to some of the most pivotal events and enduring legacies of the entire revolution.85

By that time about 11,000 troops in total had arrived from France to support the Republic on the island, García estimated. In response, Jean-François busily attempted to unite politically disparate and geographically dispersed black rebels. He sought to meet their detachments, coordinate fortifications in various localities, and await French attacks to collectively defend what he thought was their just cause. Jean-François’ forces, which nearly totaled those of the French armies he fought, had recently put fire to the few homes and haciendas that had remained in the plains between Ouanaminthe and Cap-Français. This was a deliberate strategy to clear the countryside and ease their observation of French army maneuvers. Jean-François’ tactics consciously exposed French troops to the “strength of the sun” by day, and the “excessive humidity of the night,” to which the slave insurgents were far better acclimatized, and García complimented Jean-François’ efforts as, “orders of skill uncommon to the rusticity of the black…from an intelligence in the art of war.” He trusted Herédia’s wisdom of border affairs,

85 Fick, Making Haiti, 315n3; Popkin, You Are All Free, 85-92.
implicitly including whatever discrete ties he had to the black insurgents. The admiration with which Spanish officials observed Jean-François signaled not only their increasing trust in his character and abilities, but the strategic importance of his skill to their own geopolitical ambitions.

Regardless of Jean-François’ preparations, by 7 November 1792 the French army had overrun Ouanaminthe and driven the blacks out who were friendly to Spain. The newly-arrived General Rochambeau had commanded this expedition with 1,300 soldiers and cavalry, having had one column advance from Terrier-Rouge and the other from Fort Dauphin. By that evening forces of the Republic had raised the French tri-colore flag over the turret that the rebels had constructed in the steeple of the town’s church, a marker of local military and political change that was highly visible from the Spanish side. Herédia observed the battle, mobilized Spanish forces, and watched the numerous fires rage. He and García were surprised at the weak rebel defense of Ouanaminthe. Many black rebels died in the attack, and many more fled up into the mountains to avoid pursuing French troops. On 9 November Rochambeau wrote to Spanish officers and then personally visited Dajabon. He was accompanied by Monsieur Pouget, a colonial intendant, and other avowed citizens of the Republic, who all pleaded with the

86 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.330.
Spanish officials to return any blacks that passed to their side to their respective French owners.\textsuperscript{87} Apparently many of Jean-François’ troops had fled into the safety of Dominican territory in retreat from Rochambeau. Compared to the relative conviviality of their recent occupying neighbors – the rebels under Jean-François – Spanish officers were met with, and also returned, frosty suspicion with their French republican counterparts.

That month Spanish troops on the frontier near San Rafael witnessed the black rebels near the line reinforcing their defensive sites and enhancing security measures in response to the widespread French offensive. New military operations pushed new refugees across the frontier. García reported that on 27 October a group of “144 free mulattoes of both sexes” approached the line at Villarubia, “asking for asylum in our lands to free themselves from the fury of the black rebels.” They were admitted, and then escorted to Marmelade to stay with the white refugees there. This newfound persecution of both the mulattoes and free blacks transpired because these groups had aligned themselves with the camp of the well-known mulatto named “Raimundo” at the Seynet plantation near Haut de Trou. This was not the famed Julien Raimond, who was actually in France at the time. Allegedly this Raimundo, and 300 people “of his color”, passed toward

\textsuperscript{87} Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 18 November 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.336.
Marmelade to deliver black slaves to the whites in conformity with supposed secret treaties. “The black slaves, vigilant and attentive of conserving their liberty, understood the conspiracy of their commander and...took measures to encircle and attack...making most mulattoes pay with their lives for the treason.” That is, in accordance with new white and mulatto peace treaties and power-sharing agreements Raimundo had tried to return ex-slave black soldiers into bondage with their old masters, which of course backfired. The mulatto Raimundo demonstrated his bravery by, “sustaining combat until his forces were reduced to twenty-five men.” After this battle the black rebels persecuted the routed ancien libres with great enthusiasm as the free people of color fled to Marmelade where the whites received them.⁸⁸ These brutal conflicts further signified the increasingly irreparable relations between ex-slave combatants and those mulattoes or free blacks who had made accords with the Republic.

By December 1792 French efforts to re-enslave rebels had proven more effective in Ouanaminthe, which they had recently re-occupied, than in most other places. Four warships had arrived in the harbor at Cap-Français enforced the decree of equality for the mulattoes. Both measures, in concert, were an attempt to resolidify the French racial regime over labor, while simultaneously opening

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⁸⁸ Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 November 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.338.
their ruling ranks to powerful *gens de couleur*, all toward forming a new French colonial order. Some Spanish observers suspected that the “patriotic” forces that Rochambeau had rallied would support the mulattoes in any potential struggle that might result from recalcitrant whites, and that his presence and actions would further erode the old *grand blanc* political positions.89

At the close of 1792 the social revolution in Saint-Domingue was even farther from resolution than twelve months prior. At the imperial level, French forces were perhaps in less control, Spain awaited open warfare with the French and had grown more tied to friendly rebels under the direction of Jean-François and Biassou. All the while Britain pondered their own prospects for direct involvement in the warfare. Dozens of Spanish troops in Dajabon and San Rafael who were supposed to protect the borders had fallen very ill, just as their French adversaries had in the inhospitable climate and unfamiliar disease vector, which made soldiers born into locales with these physical vexations, including local black insurgents, all the more durable in combat. Slave rebels themselves were frequently divided on strategy. For one, García thought that the black leaders of all rebel bands were finally coming to terms with their precarious lack of funds, and their disparate variety of motivations. Implicitly he thought, and hoped, it

89 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 December 1792, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no. 346.
might yield the black insurgents greater unity. The following year brought drastic realignments not only in black allegiances, particularly with Spain, but also direct Spanish and British military engagement, all of which contributed to the conditions for the French republican commissioners in Saint-Domingue to abolish slavery.

**IMPERIAL REALIGNMENT FROM SOCIAL RUPTURES: EARLY 1793**

In January 1793 García fretted over the expanding public debates in Cap-Français concerning liberty for slaves, which he described as, “taking in one hand the wick, and in the other the revolution for this new world, they put into execution the perfidious ideas that the French Revolution expressed in its first public papers.” Across 1793 this debate would expand into piecemeal French action. As García and Spanish officials had feared, these strident discussions of emancipation had developed from the logical extension of rights discourses. Rochambeau wrote García to explain his newest operations against the blacks, and he and Pouget sent García various decrees from the National Assembly. One of these documents included the news that the French National Assembly had just recently abolished royal privilege and had declared national unity and the

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indivisibility of the French Republic, which shocked Spanish officials. This anti-monarchism was yet another clear indicator of the political dividing lines developing between Spain and France. As France raced toward egalitarianism and undoing traditional social structures, officials in Santo Domingo retrenched into Hispanic concepts of, religion, social virtue, corporatism, and crown.

At the end of January 1793 French troops had recently extended their offensive against rebel blacks near the southern border close to Neiba. French regular forces also recaptured Dondon from pro-Spanish black insurgents without much bloodshed. The insurgents, under orders from Jean-François, moved on to regroup on the mountain of Tatiel. Rochambeau left North for Martinique in mid-January, as did a voyage of 120 delegates affiliated with the renegade Assembly of Saint-Marc who were subsequently sent to France for having caused such political rifts in the colony. His departure was likely a small strategic gain for Jean-François. More importantly, news had also just arrived that France had declared war on Britain, Holland, and Spain. Among the fear of looming open warfare between Spain and France, García discovered that the Republic was more proactively trying to win over the black insurgents that had been interacting so favorably with Spanish officials. If Jean-François were to unify with the French,

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91 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 January 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.352.
their hardened and accomplished forces could pivot eastward with an all-out attack on the Dominican side of the island, a dire prospect for Spanish rule.\textsuperscript{92} This provided all the more reason for Spanish officials to court the black insurgents.

By March 1793 the majority of the recent outcomes of conflicts in Saint-Domingue had favored the French Republic. The insurgents had suffered a major setback with heavy casualties at Fond-Parisien in West near the border, which García said, “had obliged them to retire into the mountains.” Amid heightened tensions across the island, Spanish forces seized a ship that allegedly was in transit to Hanus de Jumécourt, who was the mayor of Croix-des-Bouquets, a previously conservative planter, and the “protector of the blacks,” as García called him. The ship was loaded with war materiel including 800 rifles, 100 blunderbusses, 600 swords, 400 pistols, and huge quantities of powder and ammunition. The captain of the intercepted ship explained that he had left from North America with an order to deliver this equipment to Jumécourt and the black general Hyacinthe.\textsuperscript{93} Jumécourt was rumored to be a clairvoyant among some black insurgents and had at times coordinated with both free people color and Hyacinthe, the major black

\textsuperscript{92} Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 February 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.359.

\textsuperscript{93} Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 March 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.365; Fick, \textit{Making Haiti}, 157-158.
insurgent leader of the Cul-de-Sac. With shortages across the island insurgents collected resources and support from wherever they could find it.

Royalists in Santo Domingo were shocked by news in March from the gazettes of Saint-Domingue that had finally published stories on the regicide of Louis XVI in Paris, whose “disgraced death” had occurred on 21 January. García observed that, “since that sad news arrived one observed a great suspension of arms against the blacks,” and the French had augmented their activities in Ouanaminthe, seemingly implying that French whites themselves were in a political disequilibrium from this news. It was as of yet unclear to him how the death of the king had impacted the mulattoes and blacks. The shockwaves of outright regicide would heavily influence the coalescence of the nascent Spanish counterrevolution, including an increased exodus of militant French royalists into the Spanish camp, and the perhaps under-anticipated continued gravitation of monarchist black rebels toward Spain as well.

After the death of Louis XVI fears of brutal and devastating open warfare with France mounted for García, who awaited the Republic’s offensive to seize the Spanish side. He reported that, “The sad news of the unfortunate death of the king

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95 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 March 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.365; Fick, *Making Haiti*, 157-158.
caused the greatest dread, horror, and emotion in all sensible subjects who view the French Revolution as a scourge and want to get away from that colony and all those who follow the…republic.” With this latest episode of exemplary republican violence, the flow of refugees into Santo Domingo increased dramatically. With the prospect open, inter-imperial, cross-island warfare, “the civil commissioner Santonax [sic] with his companion Polverel published a decree of pardon to all the blacks who surrender their arms and deliver themselves to the nation, with professions of being well-received, treated with humanity, and forgetting their criminal actions.” These French commissioners also understood quite well that open war between Spain and the Republic could also mean that developing ties between the most powerful black rebels and their rivals in the east would only grow, and to their great detriment. French arms would open wider to the rebels incrementally throughout 1793. A year and a half after the initial slave revolts, the black insurgents under Jean-François had quickly become sought after imperial personnel assets.

Despite the apparent olive branch of this pardon, black generals had a very difficult time believing that any French offers were in good faith. They were fearful of imprisonment, reenslavement, or even death if they acquiesced to their

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96 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 April 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.372.
former imperial masters, and well-remember their treatment during the negotiations from November 1791 to January 1792 that failed so miserably. García was relieved the black insurgents’ hesitated, and that they had interpreted the French commissioners’ offers as belated opportunism and desperation. Furthermore, dissent was rife among French troops. Their French garrison at Ouanaminthe was so displeased with republican military officials that it hinted at allying with the Spanish in the case of war between the Republic and Spain. Perhaps this was due to their latent monarchist nostalgia or lack of trust in the already-volatile Republic trying to managed a ruined sugar colony.97

García noted that, “the civil commissioners have dispatched three deputies – a mulatto and two whites – to General Biassou (sic) with advantageous propositions for ceasing with his ideas, recognizing his flaws, and passing to the party of the Republic.” To García’s great relief, Biassou did not listen, and instead “manifested his love for the Spanish nation with expressions worthy of gratitude.”98 That spring, Archbishop Portillo mentioned his clergy’s enlistment to emphasize the greater freedom, stability, and satisfaction of serving Spain as part of direct spiritual counsel with governmental backing to Jean-François and the black troops. For this noble cause he had “given them his vicar at Dajabon,”

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97 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 April 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.372.
98 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 April 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.372.
Father Vázquez. This was, he concurred, a prudent contribution toward governing the “five-hundred or six-hundred thousand” blacks on the island, and that such mercy might moderate their alleged bad faith, insolence, and violence. Portillo said he had thought of this as a solution as early as December 1791 to "achieve greater progress in a glorious recuperation, availing ourselves of the forces of blacks," referring to the alliance with Jean-François’ forces to reconquer the whole island and triumph over the Republic. He hoped Spain could somehow spiritually rehabilitate and utilize troops that were now content to, he said, “sit under a tree to eat, drink whatever is closest to their voices, and kill a man to get a plantain.”

This extremely negative impression changed rapidly into affection and praise the longer that Vázquez knew Jean-François and his troops.

Jean-François had to frequently deal with competing bands within his force that often divided on ethnic lines. Given the demographic dominance of Kongoles and Angolan captives in the North of Saint-Domingue, many of his troops were from these African cultural backgrounds. This was the foundation from which the Kongo-born general Macaya famously proclaimed himself the subject of the kings of Kongo, France, and Spain, also a veiled reference to the three magi who visited the Christ child. Given the extensive Portuguese presence in

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99 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Pedro Acuña, Santo Domingo, 24 April 1793, British Library (BL), Western Manuscripts (WM), Egerton 1794, Volume II, 317-324.
both locales over the preceding two centuries, which their evangelical efforts to convert African populations to Catholicism and the establishment of a separate Kongolesi church hierarchy. Perhaps many of the black auxiliary troops had at least been exposed to Christian ideas that they internalized or incorporated to their extant spiritual repertoire. Just as many insurgents already had military experience from civil warfare in Africa, many also entered the revolution wielding longstanding understandings of royalism and Christianity.\textsuperscript{100}

When Biassou declared himself the “chief of the counterrevolution” and promised to serve heaven and religion it was in protection of these traditions from the unproven ideas of a self-immolating republic, and from a French populace that had so recently brutalized them and separated them from their homes.\textsuperscript{101} Biassou also included “sorcerers and magicians” in his circle of advisors who were likely \textit{vodouizan}, and included symbols of African spirituality on his domicile.\textsuperscript{102} Perhaps his professions of Catholicism seemed disingenuous. More likely, he saw them as compatible cosmologies.


\textsuperscript{101} Georges Biassou and Gabriel Bellair to Joaquin García, San Miguel, 15 July 1793, AGS-SGU, leg. 7157, no. 7. See also: Landers, \textit{Atlantic Creoles}, 55; Nessler, “A Failed Emancipation?”, 36. Biassou clearly calls himself “chief,” and not the usurping title of “king.”

\textsuperscript{102} Madiou, \textit{Histoire}, Vol I., 96-98.
As summer approached in 1793 the clouds of war gathered along the frontier, the necessity of formally recognizing and supporting the steadfast and cooperative black forces of Jean-François and Biassou became obvious for Spain, to block French advances both among those ranks, to defend from incursions into Spanish territory, to further disrupt the French social experiment, and to retake productive land lost a century before to France. Thus, as soon as word of open warfare with France arrived, and with approval of the king and his ministers, Jean-François, Biassou, Toussaint Breda, and the black insurgents of North, and Hyacinthe in the West, became the Black Auxiliaries of King Carlos IV, a formalized ally in the unfolding revolution on Hispaniola.103

BLACK AUXILIARIES, SPANISH PLURALITY: SUMMER 1793

In June 1793 Spanish officials wanted to deflect what they saw as the incredible confusion of four years of political and social upheaval that had befallen Saint-Domingue. They decried the civil dissensions that had produced a tyranny that ignored authority through uprisings, deaths, and burnings, all of which had driven away much of the planter class and their capital. Many French attempts to put down the slave revolts failed, in part due to Spain steadily refusing to help.

103 Pedro Acuña to Alange, Aranjuez, 27 February 1793, AGS-SGU, leg. 7161; Pedro Acuña to Joaquín García, Aranjuez, 26 March 1793, AGS-SGU, leg. 7161; Popkin, Your Are All Free, 250-260; Ferrer, Freedom’s Mirror, 90-92.
When Rochambeau’s forces had dislodged insurgents from Ouanaminthe, the commander at Dajabon had basically ignored his request that Spanish troops surrender any fugitive blacks who crossed into Santo Domingo. Insurgents had fled to Santo Domingo, and some were apprehended, but the process of remitting these captives back to Saint-Domingue was circuitous, and the incentives were few for even bothering with such cases. Averting the imperial gaze was geopolitically and bureaucratically advantageous. One of the aforementioned problems was that the French offered many excellent enticements to compete with Spain for the loyalties of the black rebels. As García explained, the blacks who had as of then yielded to the Catholic deity, “as the Lord touches them, and their persons belong to him, their care, protection, and courtesy will be instructed in the Christian doctrine, and employed with utility.”\(^{104}\) Of course, to García this was geopolitically providential. As the ties between the Spanish and friendly black insurgents became formalized their hope was that overtures toward Christianity would mature into full-fledged Catholic piety.

García postulated that one path toward restoring social stability might be for French masters to sell recalcitrant and susceptible slaves who were not yet in rebellion to Spanish planters, whose dedication to fair treatment and Christianity,

\(^{104}\) Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, 19 June 1793, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
he said, would lead to greater submission and social peace. He thought this could limit more revolts and curb social complications such as marronage. García also determined that any unclaimed fugitive slaves from Saint-Domingue could be sold at “public auction” in Santo Domingo with the funds put in the royal coffers, and thus the war effort. He claimed that no such slave would be sold without due diligence in recording their “signs” or brandings, stature, age, characteristics, and a declaration, even if it was in the “creole of Guinea” that they might speak. García said that before such a sale Spanish officials would also document owners of such slaves, the part of Saint-Domingue in which they lived, the specific plantation, the slaves’ labor specializations, and other details.105 Perhaps paradoxically, Jean-François and Biassou also sold slaves deemed unhelpful or unfit into Santo Domingo as payment for weapons and supplies.106 These newly-arrived slaves might have confirmed to Spain that they could be integrated into peacability in Santo Domingo. While the Spanish opportunistically built their ties to ex-slave rebels, they also cynically captured fugitive slaves fleeing the same conditions that the insurgents fought directly, and did so only with the clear rationale of profit, with both contradictory engagements being justified through evangelical vocabularies. To some extent Spain executed this plan by capturing unaffiliated

105 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, 19 June 1793, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
black insurgents as prisoners of war and selling them to either Dominican planters or transporting them off the island to toil on nearby Spanish plantation colonies.

As formal Spanish war plans formed, in July 1793 officials in Santo Domingo reviewed alarming secret papers provided to them by a new French defector at Dajabon. Apparently, as García explained, these were, “premeditations of the civil commissioners [of Saint-Domingue] to unite sea and land forces with desire to have a landing in Ocoa,” under the protection of French naval warships. This coastal town, on a bay roughly fifty miles west of the capital, would put French troops within an easy march on Santo Domingo. García wondered if these leaked documents might have been a ploy by the commissioners to stir Dominican fear or dissent in favor of the Republic, and to pry away the loyalties of new black allies like Jean-François. García made an intriguing distinction between their new blacks allies and the slave insurgents aligned with the French Republic, the latter who he said were of “indefensible character” and indolent, of whose “birth…distinguishes them from all men of rational principals and...permits them to commit all the villainies and unjust actions.” By contrast, the black auxiliaries had proven their diligence despite French enticements of the, “many proclamation papers that the civil commissioners have running in favor of the mulattos and free
blacks, and even the insurgent blacks.” Such papers had already made a great political commotion, and circulated widely into Santo Domingo.\(^{107}\)

In response, Spanish officials had issued their own proclamations from Santo Domingo targeting potential sympathizers in Saint-Domingue. Each day new French refugees arrived in Dajabon seeking asylum, “and manifesting lively desires to fight against the captious...enemies of human society and religion.” One such partisan, the “gentleman” Dugres, offered a corps of French royalists who were appalled by the revolution and positioned at Marmelade. They had been attracted by proclamations – Spanish public papers – and pledged to serve the King of Spain with their abilities.\(^{108}\) In July French royalists described anti-Republic gains in North, which they partly credited to the proclamations that García had made. Unallied parties there openly debated whether the King of Spain or the French commissioners could offer more or could be better trusted.\(^{109}\) García also noted that his proclamations had started drawing in subjects from the French side, many whom would soon fight under Spanish flags and with Spanish salaries.\(^{110}\)

\(^{107}\) Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, June 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.387.

\(^{108}\) Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, June 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.387.

\(^{109}\) Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 3 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.390.

\(^{110}\) Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 4 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.391.
That summer, García celebrated Jean-François’ loyalty, “compliments of his words of being a true Spaniard.” First, in early June the archbishop was concerned about the loyalty of Hyacinthe, who some priests on the frontier had suspected of cutting deals behind Spain’s back, though he was pleased to have been assured of his loyalty. Father Vázquez also reported that Jean-François, whose thousands of troops had just been supplied with new weapons by Spain, received overtures from French republican General Galbaud. Jean-François rejected these offers very publicly, gave “a fierce response,” and insisted that all his troops were passionately for Spain. He speculated that relations with France were irreconcilable for the black general, whose loyalty, “is the most solid foundation you can secure from a black.” Spanish officials then gave Jean-François an impressive new general’s uniform. To solidify these ties, Portillo had ordered his priests on the borderlands to welcome the black troops, treat them well, give them care, and inspire their affection. The archbishop closed his letter by relaying his plans to preach against the French the next day in Santo Domingo.

The temptations of Jean-François were far from completed. The recruitment letter that Jean-François had handed over in June had come from the

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111 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 3 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.390.

112 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Pedro Acuña, Santo Domingo, 2 June 1793, BL, WM, Egerton 1794, Volume II, 325-328.
mulatto Martin Sessesa, commander of pro-Republic forces around Terrier-Rouge. As a token of trust Jean-François passed it, unopened, to Father José Vázquez, a humble, respectable operative for Catholic and Spanish order on the frontier. It included some information of interest from the civil commissioners. In the letter sent by Sessesa, Sonthonax decried Jean-François’ loyalty to Spain, criticized monarchism, and predicted that Jean-François would ultimately die on the wrong and losing side. None of this provocative rhetoric swayed Jean-François, particularly because of Vázquez, who García described as, “the principal spring of Jean-François and [his people], a zealous ecclesiastic, active, full of a love that merits the greatest considerations, and has made himself worthy since the first moment of the appreciation and distinction of this Captain General, and by consequence should merit that of you and of the King.”\footnote{Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 3 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.390.}

In this case, when Vázquez learned of rumors that Jean-François had received overtures from the civil commissioners and might waver in his loyalty, Vázquez immediately galloped on horseback directly to Jean-François’ camp. He told Jean-François of his concerns, which apparently surprised the general. After the general pledged his loyalty to Spain on his knees before the priest, the two moved on to discuss the black general’s plans to retake Ouanaminthe.\footnote{Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 3 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.390.}
pairing of Jean-François and Vázquez – the ex-slave from Saint-Domingue and mulatto priest from Santo Domingo – formed a previously improbable yet dynamic military, ideological, and political tandem that characterized Spain’s intervention in Saint-Domingue’s social revolution.

After these French offers and rumors about his loyalty, Jean-François tried to vigorously prove the sincerity of his friendship and allegiance to the Spanish throne. He sent one of his closest aides to visit García and submit a letter explaining his respect, submission, and affection for the governor and the king. On the first day of July at eleven in the morning two black officers – “Bernardino” and the interpreter “Pedro”, or likely Bernardin and Pierre – appeared in Santo Domingo. There they met García, who reported that they respectfully presented him with the credentials of Jean-François and proclaimed their gratitude for Vázquez. After a visit they departed for their inn, citing their need to rest. García reflected that these men were faithful and clever, and that a, “great presence adorns Bernardin, with a pleasant and good mode of expression that belies the stain covering his body. He is fine in his demonstrations, and has much moderation. The secretary and interpreter, called Pedro, is lively, insightful, and boisterous. He understands some Spanish, and one knows that there is liveliness
in his mind, but he is attentive to the orders of Bernardin.” García’s compliments for these black officers emphasized the progression of the black auxiliaries into a trusted status that transcended the “stain” of their race and skin color, as he put it, and further distinguished them from non-aligned or unallied black rebels in Saint-Domingue. To García and others, their decency was due in no small part to spiritual uplift and moral improvement.

In the summer of 1793 Spanish officials on the island also determined to formally outfit the black auxiliaries with uniforms, a major symbol of their formal alliance. Soon thereafter Vázquez informed García that Jean-François had, as a gesture of conformity and reciprocity, “resolved to marry himself and because of this sent his fiancée to Dajabon to protect her from the attacks and calamities of the war.” Jean-François, “asked permission to realize his proposal and live in the security of his conscience.” Archbishop Portillo and Governor García both asked Vázquez to perform the marriage and to treat Jean-François’ fiancée with distinction to thereby win over more of Jean-François’ respect and loyalty through lavish treatment. Toward this end, Spanish officials in the capital sent silk and stockings for the bride and provided new blue cloth and golden braids for Jean-François and his officers. Not surprisingly, costs of the counterrevolution soared.

115 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 3 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.390.
This was due not only for the new black allies but also for French royalist émigrés, some of whom ironically used to be the slaveholders of the black auxiliary troops, which incurred a separate range of problems in the esprit de corps.\textsuperscript{116} Officials in Santo Domingo appreciated his salute to the sacraments and the enhancement of their vows of alliance. Jean-François benefited from his voluntary Catholic conformity, but in so doing affirmed the Spanish narrative of civilizing piety.

Also that July an officer at the Dajabon border, Luis Quero, suspended several French immigrants from participating in combat. The émigrés were to form their own force, primarily because of irreconcilable differences with the black auxiliaries. Still, the royalist refugees refused to treat the black troops like anything other than slaves. In turn, the black auxiliaries accused French royalists of not acting in good will and only fighting with the Spanish out of necessity – not conviction – and warned that these whites might turn against Spain in the future. One suggestion that Jean-François fielded was to put the whites on the border at Las Cahobas where there were then no black auxiliary troops.\textsuperscript{117}

Despite heeding these concerns and tightening their ties with the auxiliaries, the Archbishop nevertheless lamented the slow progress that García had made in his command of the \textit{Reconquista} of Saint-Domingue. Contrary to

\textsuperscript{116} Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 7 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030, no.393.

\textsuperscript{117} Joaquín García, 19 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.126.
García’s depictions of dedicated Spanish support, Portillo had received many letters from Vázquez and Jean-François about bad pay, poor conditions, short supplies, and limited munitions that all hampered the black auxiliaries’ military efforts. They were left alone with their faith and politics to confront their enemy. He praised Jean-François’s loyalty, who kept successfully fighting despite this.\textsuperscript{118} This was but one of many examples in which the church shadowed the state as a political and intelligence network.

**INTERNECINE TENSIONS & THE RISE OF TOUSSAINT**

As white royalists continued fleeing eastward, Sonthonax consistently tried to persuade the black auxiliaries to join the French Republic by offering to significantly increase officers’ pay, including double for higher ranks, along with abundant provisions. Although Jean-François had affirmed his loyalty, García fretted over the black general, “Biasou (sic) [who] has given some signs of inconstancy...but Colonel Joaquín Cabrera had procured a valorous and loyal black named Toutsaunt (sic), who fought under the orders of Biasou, and if he faltered could direct his army.”\textsuperscript{119} On one level, this was one of the earliest and most significant mentions of Toussaint Breda in Spanish records. Toussaint, a man

\textsuperscript{118} Portillo, 1 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

\textsuperscript{119} Joaquín García, 14 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.124.
who was freed long before the revolution, had joined Spain before Jean-François or Biassou, though he fought under them, and in August 1793 he adopted the new surname Louverture, “the opening”, as his revolutionary nom de guerre. Toussaint Louverture became the common denominator among the flamboyant egos of the Spanish-affiliated black auxiliaries following his rapid ascent as an officer and adviser among their ranks.¹²⁰

While García and others galvanized the black auxiliaries, new infighting between mulattoes and ex-slaves erupted in North. General Galbaud attempted to bolster the Republic’s forces with several warships and 150 merchant ships stationed along the coast and the French commissioners were camped with 80 men in a plain near Cap-Français reviewing the esprit de corps. Likewise, his counterpart Jean-François toured the countryside distributing 4,000 pesos in an attempt to pay and persuade his troops to remain a coherent and unified force.¹²¹ Soon thereafter Spanish-affiliated forces took Dondon and Petit-Bois, thanks in large part to the ingenuity of Toussaint. His troops had ambushed and captured a detachment of over 70 troops of the Republic who were foraging for food and supplies. After being searched one French soldier was found to be carrying a letter detailing dire needs of the Republic’s troops in Dondon. Armed with intelligence regarding

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¹²⁰ Geggus, Haitian, 15-16.

¹²¹ Joaquín García, 20 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.127.
troop strength, Toussaint then rerouted his troops to attack the weakened enemy at Dondon, taking the French forces in the area by total surprise and preventing much bloodshed. In the victory Toussaint captured roughly 600 prisoners and all of their weapons. As a gesture of gratitude, García sent him 400 pesos for his valor and considered commending him with a gold medal as he had the three for Jean-François, Biassou, and Hyacinthe.122

The last mentioned – Hyacinthe – was somewhat of an outlier compared to the other major black generals given his comparative youth (he was in his early twenties, his regional base the Cul-de-Sac, not North), and his more open practice of vodou (while the others, at least publicly, more readily professed a Catholicism). Unlike Biassou, Jean-François, or Toussaint, Hyacinthe was more of a political enigma who furtively played all anti-Republic sides, including the gens de couleur, white royalists, and the Spanish.123 Also, unlike the other generals in North his ties to Spain were handled by the experienced Dominican creole Ignacio Caro who served García’s geopolitical agenda.124 Compared to the other three, who loom large over the narrative of the war and Spanish involvement, the importance of

122 Joaquín García, 22 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.129.
123 Geggus, Haitian, 49, 78, 117, and 248n69; Fick, Making Haiti, 139-140, 157-158, and 185-187.
124 Ada Ferrer, Freedom’s Mirror, 90-93.
Hyacinthe’s pro-Spanish influence in the Cul-de-Sac, thought brief, was nevertheless critical to extending García’s influence into West.

In late July roughly 550 French troops supported by cannons attacked Spanish positions in the hillsides of Petit-Bois. Spanish forces rebuffed the attackers after a thirteen-hour fight, and the ground was razed. The French nevertheless kept a camp nearby. Into August 1793 the Havana battalion maneuvered to support Jean-François’ offensives in the field. Subsequently, droves of prisoners arrived in the capital from across the war front, which produced an unanticipated crisis for Spanish management. Most of these prisoners were black and mulatto, and were far more politically radical than the local population of color. They mostly hailed from Dondon, Tannerie, Petit-Bois, San Rafael, and Banica. Only one thousand Spanish troops were actually in the capital of Santo Domingo to manage crowd control.

The only remaining option was for officials in Santo Domingo to export their prisoners of war, and thus their political ferment, to neighboring Spanish colonies for detention. In August 1793 Governor Creagh of Puerto Rico received over 200 prisoners of war in a shipment. At least 14 of these enemy combatants

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125 Joaquín García, 30 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.130.
126 Joaquín García, 22 July 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.129.
127 Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 23 July 1793, no.398.
were black and, unlike their mulatto or white counterparts, were to be sold at auction as slaves.\textsuperscript{128} The sale of these 14 captives netted 2,149 pesos for the Spanish treasury, or roughly equivalent to two-thirds of one day of Spain’s wartime operations on the frontier of Hispaniola.\textsuperscript{129}

That same month Jean-François continued to garner compliments from Spanish officials for his rational and effective command, yet he firmly resisted answering directly to the Spanish officers at Dajabon and insisted on answering only to the governor directly. The governor called upon Jean-François to organize his troops into regiments, companies, and squadrons, but that proved impossible. Disorder, García thought, was the greatest impediment to the effective utilization of their limited funds. He estimated that Jean-François had just over 6,600 troops. Further complicating matters, Jean-François and all other black auxiliary commanders had to confront new internal divisions and defections in the aftermath of the proclamations of abolition made by the French commissioners in August 1793.\textsuperscript{130} Almost a year passed from French general abolition to the first major defections to the Republic. Slave insurgents loathed their former French masters, were unimpressed with yet unproven republican government, were

\textsuperscript{128} Creagh to Diego de Gardoqui, Puerto Rico, 6 August 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.35.
\textsuperscript{129} Creagh to Diego de Gardoqui, Puerto Rico, 16 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.49.
\textsuperscript{130} Joaquín García, 12 August 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.131.
unswayed by arguments of natural rights, and were unlikely to trust and fight for a state that had tried to crush their movement from its outset.\footnote{Popkin, \textit{You Are All Free}, 236.}

Toussaint nevertheless continued his military successes as more white émigrés – \textit{grand-blancs} – were fleeing from the “despotism of the mulatto commander” into Santo Domingo and joined Spanish ranks. Spanish forces were also reinforced with “black émigrés” from Dondon who burned a municipal building and a commander’s house, dislodged a French garrison, and took cannons and munitions that the retreating forces abandoned. Spanish forces sustained only one injury in this fight. Cabrera moved to take command of the area, but in contrast to the black auxiliaries’ successes he was pinned down at San Miguel with only 500 men and confronted by a French force of 1,200 under Desforneaux. Spanish lines at Grand-Boucan were also attacked, but were held by the valiant “Spanish blacks from Dondon.” The French sustained heavy casualties there, with about sixty killed. Eight white prisoners were taken, three of which the black auxiliaries decided to decapitate. Increasingly the mulatto parties sided with the French Republic rather than remaining autonomous, but were hard for the Republic to control. However, Spain had their own concerns, headlined by their growing fears of inconstancy among the black auxiliaries.\footnote{Joaquín García, 23 August 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.132.}
In addition to these preoccupations, by the end of August 1793 García had to beg for royal assistance in meeting the “extraordinary cost” of supplying their troops along the frontier cordon. Soldiers lacked supplies.\footnote{Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, 23 August 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.408.} Martin Mueses had explained the problems to García, saying that many of those transporting foods to the interior towns and troops were not trustworthy. They needed sound people to supply the towns of Banica, Azua, Santiago, Monte Cristi, and other frontier positions without incurring the attrition of graft and corruption.\footnote{Martin Mueses to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 21 August 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.410.}

Spanish war efforts were compounded by what Archbishop Portillo called the “United Provinces,” or crews from the newly-founded United States of America. He criticized them as were the cruelest enemies on the seas, because many sailed with phony papers from Martinique, took ships as prey, and conducted them to New York and Philadelphia as prizes for resale. Portillo also lamented the “French blacks” – apparently distinct from the black auxiliaries – who he said were killing, burning, and pillaging at leisure. He complained bitterly about the irreverent customs of the French royalists at San Rafael, whose town priest informed him of their reprobate conduct that neither befit royalists nor Spaniards.\footnote{Portillo, 24 August 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.} The Spanish were apt to believe and trust many of the black
auxiliaries’ leadership because of their professions of piety, and were readily suspicious of white French allies for behavior that seemed excessive, unholy, or opportunistic. While Portillo complained about some of García’s strategies, he did praise the diligent work of priests all along the frontier who kept the black soldiers loyal and increased the socio-political trustworthiness of piety among their ranks.  

That summer Spain also gained a huge symbolic victory when the Marques d’Espenville agreed to defect to the Spanish side. Many powerful French whites were further alienated from the Republic due to Sonthonax’s appointments of mulattoes into elevated military and governmental ranks. However, the white Frenchmen of Mirebalais were divided on whether they should join Spanish or entertain other options. In the meantime, Spanish forces had made no progress toward the conquest of Fort Dauphin. The army was ill, injured, and underequipped. To relieve pressure on depleted forces across the colony Spanish officials sent 500 prisoners from the Dondon region to Caracas at the end of August, again exporting the side effects of social revolution.  

Through September 1793 discord continued to creep into the relationships between Spanish officials and the black auxiliaries. Even worse, outright acrimony

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136 Portillo, 25 August 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

137 Joaquín García, 25 August 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.133.
beset ties between the top black generals. For example, García had no choice but to accept Toussaint’s professions of contrition for his regular disobedience of the Spanish operational plans. Perhaps more significantly, the rivalry and rift between Jean-François and Biassou had only grown, which provided endless exasperation for Toussaint, as did their respective personality traits. Part of the friction between Jean-François and Biassou was over which of the two could claim superiority in rank, talent, and success. This division grew after Spanish officials decided to favor of Jean-François. García ultimately decided that Jean-François was first in command, and that Biassou was the second highest-ranking officer among the black auxiliaries. Unsurprisingly, Biassou was furious while Jean-François responded with submission and gratitude. Subsequently, both of the generals then requested the arrest of their counterpart. Biassou sent an officer and a secretary close to him to the governor to argue these points.¹³⁸ Not only did the black auxiliaries expend an enormous amount of funds, their distractions over prestige and comparative power pulled their attention away from organizing their disparate forces and from defeating the surging French Republic in the field. Spain’s *Reconquista* atrophied.

¹³⁸ Joaquín García, 4 and 25 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, nos.134 and 143.
FRENCH ABOLITION, SPANISH GAINS, FIRST DEFECTIONS: LATE 1793

The black general named Pierrot, who fought for the French civil commissioners, added to the climate of mistrust when he wrote to Jean-François. Pierrot told Jean-François that very few whites remained in North, and that people of color were largely in governmental control. He tried to persuade Jean-François to unite his forces under the “banner of liberty” of the Republic. Jean-François and Toussaint both declined this most recent invitation, and as yet another sign of loyalty Jean-François also placed this particular letter in the hands of Father Vázquez, who in turn passed it to the commander of Dajabon. Pierrot and Macaya, former black officers for Spain, were some of the earliest defectors who helped the commissioners Sonthonax and Polverel put down a the internal threat by Galbaud and French sailors in June 1793, one of the key impetuses for the abolition decree. Even then, some defectors still preferred Spain, and held a thinly-veiled contempt for the Republic and commissioners. Macaya even returned to Spanish forces. The most important black generals, including Toussaint, gave scathing rejections of the commissioners and their emancipation and offers. Furthermore, Jean-François even wrote a blistering reply to Pierrot’s letter in which he lambasted him for trusting and collaborating with the French, and

139 6 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.135.
Toussaint arrested several envoys sent by the civil commissioners to entreat with him.\textsuperscript{140}

Very soon, though, more details of the French commissioners’ abolition began to infiltrate the Dominican border following the 29 August decree.\textsuperscript{141} The 38 articles written by Sonthonax attempted to mesh newfound liberty for slaves with the duty of service to the Republic. At first, Spanish officials doubted that this decree would impact their loyal black troops, and even thought more of the French commissioners’ troops might defect to their more formidable forces. However, the mulattoes were firmly devoted to the French, and to celebrate the proclamation they arranged a meeting with “Colonel Candi, black subaltern of Jean-François.” Candi did not refuse these envoys as Toussaint and other officers had, and flanked by a substantial escort these pro-French mulattoes tried to persuade Candi to switch sides.\textsuperscript{142} If the French could not win over the major black generals, it seems their backup plan was to pursue a campaign of debilitation by gradual attrition among talented black officers who were comparatively overshadowed and might – whether due to ego, opportunism, or ideology – defect to the Republic.

\textsuperscript{140} Popkin, \textit{You Are All Free}, 251-255.

\textsuperscript{141} Étienne Polverel, “Sure les evenements qui ont eu lieu dans cette isle, depuis le commencement de la Revolution, jusqu’a la proclamation de la Liberte general,” BHFIC, B-2a40.

\textsuperscript{142} 13 and 25 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, nos.136 and 142.
Once notified of this meeting, Jean-François marched with Father Vázquez to visit Candi and evaluate his loyalty. Candi assured them of his commitment and the constancy of the troops he commanded. Candi was a valued, effective commander, who was reportedly as ferocious as the legendary Jeannot. Allegedly, a favorite torture of his was to pull white French prisoners’ eyes out with a corkscrew. Yet despite his apparent hatred of the French, and his avowals to Jean-François, Candi defected to the French with all of his troops, and was given a key garrison post at Terrier-Rouge in Republic-held Fort Dauphin. If Jeannot had lived, Candi, his subordinate, might never have considered French offers of earlier amnesty for free people of color, nor later offers for the wider integration of ex-slaves. Neither Biassou nor Jean-François could control him as Jeannot had.

Even once Candi negotiated his transition to the Republic, French observers were skeptical of his sincerity due to the duplicitous actions of seemingly amiable militants of color, particularly considering the actions that

143 13 and 25 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, nos.136 and 142.
144 Pamphile Lacroix, Mémoires pour servir a l’histoire de la revolution de Saint-Domingue, Tome Premier (Paris: Chez Pillet, 1819): 159-160 and 300.
146 13 and 25 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, nos.136 and 142.
147 Pamphile Lacroix, Mémoires, Tome I, 159-160 and 300.
involved Gerard and his retinue at Ouanaminthe. The French demanded that Candi send the families of his force to the Republic’s lines as a demonstration of his trustworthiness and as hostages against any contradictory behavior. When droves of hungry and tattered women and children arrived the French officers surmised that Candi’s defection was at least partly driven by the lack of supplies – that is, of Spanish material deficiencies. He and his troops, the French perceived, were hardly willing republicans, and their transition of command to General Pageot was extremely tense.\textsuperscript{148} Nevertheless, once under French orders Candi bravely served the Republic at Trou and nearby Sainte-Suzanne.\textsuperscript{149}

After having unsuccessfully confronted Candi, Jean-François took the fort at La Tannerie and subsequently sent 166 white prisoners to Santo Domingo for imprisonment. He left La Tannerie immediately to oversee attacks on other advanced positions and placed the newly-captured fort in charge of “Miso, black subaltern of the chief Biassou.” However, the French quickly retook the position when reinforcements from Dajabon were delayed in their arrival. Jean-François was furious and seemed to suspect treason given the context of French offers and recent defections. He had an altercation with Michaud, who was then executed, likely by Jean-François’ own orders. Spanish officials were terrified that his death


\textsuperscript{149} Lacroix, \textit{Memoires}, 160; Popkin, ed., \textit{Facing Racial Revolution}, 144-146.
would deepen animosity between Jean-François and Biassou because not only was Michaud a prominent officer under Biassou, he was Biassou’s nephew. Spanish officials in Santo Domingo believed that the black troops were absolutely essential, but that their pride, indiscipline, and ignorance made them far too difficult to manage. García, who presumed Spain’s ultimate victory, said, “I will not know what to do with [the black auxiliaries] when the hostilities end, and that might be to reduce them to police.” This was, of course, a major question to all white, imperial managers – what would be the status and social position of tens of thousands of armed ex-slaves once combat concluded.

Losses of black officers continued. In mid-August Spanish officials reported that the young black general Hyacinthe had, “paid with his head for the artificial conduct” that he had engaged in by trying to place himself politically between his Spanish allegiance and furtive dealings with pro-French mulattoes. Apparently six Spanish officers had invited him to breakfast, arrested him, and tortured him to elicit a confession and the names of white accomplices to his treason. Shortly thereafter, he was executed when they “finally put him on the pole.”

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150 13 and 25 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, nos.136 and 142.
151 13 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.137.
In the weeks following this dissension the increasingly trustworthy and prominent Toussaint prevailed by taking the French camp at Marmelade then took the places of “Pilvoro” (likely Morne Puilboreau) and also Ennery, all with few casualties. He captured five officials and over fifty white soldiers. In light of recent internal dissent and some defections to the Republic Toussaint had distinguished himself as the most reliable and capable operative for Spanish interests in Saint-Domingue. Spanish officials thought that this, despite recent defections, showed how weak the French actually were that they would readily surrender to avoid being killed. The only real French force was comprised of, “mulattoes, patriots, and vagabonds,” so the Spanish estimated. Some unallied, “renegade” black rebels were still in the mountains, but were sparsely armed. Despite these signs of success, Spanish regular troops were often very ill, as were their French white counterparts, and were limited to guarding the borders. Nevertheless, Spanish officials asserted that “the conquest should continue” in capturing territory and fortifying all the newly-won positions. Spanish officials considered dividing their military management between Cap-Français and Port-au-Prince zones of operation to more agilely oversee daily operations. They also considered sending ships to new territories to forcibly remove French patriots, mulattoes, soldiers, and

152 17 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.138.
provocateurs from the general population, ostensibly to ready the area for Spanish colonial renewal. Spanish officials thought that, “Purged from that type the colony would be found in a prospering state like before, if provided the appropriate means for allowing the fruits of its agriculture.” That sentiment might have likely implied the reinstallation of slavery among the unaligned black population.

BRITISH INVASION, FRAGMENTED ROYALISM, MILITARY MORASS

One remaining consolation for Spanish officials was that they had yet to hear “echoes” of Paris and Versailles, of the French constitution, or of social revolution that had dominated French domains since 1789 being voiced by “these faithful” Dominicans. They attributed those raucous upheavals to the “school of their grand and celebrated modern philosophers” in France, greatly appreciated the King’s approval of their local royalism against their opprobrious neighbors, just as Spain battled French republicanism along their European borders. However, a completely new complication came in late August 1793 when twenty-five officials and planters from the French side arrived in the port of Santo Domingo on a British merchant vessel, accompanied by the HMS Penelope, a naval frigate. They arrived from Jamaica carrying letters for Spanish officials. Upon

153 17 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.138.
154 José Urízar to Pedro Acuña, Santo Domingo, 21 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.
their arrival, Monsieur L’Oppinot presented one letter to García, and explained that he had been Lieutenant Governor of Saint-Domingue at the time of the beginning of the revolution. To save his life he had fled to Jamaica with some companions. Monsieur Cougnae, who accompanied him, was the royalist representative of the colony to the Regent of France and the Comte d’Artois, who had urged them to “suffocate the seed of revolution” on the island.\footnote{23 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.140.}

However, metropolitan royalist support never arrived from the Regent or anybody else, and following the burning of Cap-Français and revolutionary successes of the civil commissioners these local royalists considered it their autonomous obligation to save the fragments of Saint-Domingue by their own accord. They claimed their submission to the “legitimate authority” of Louis XVII, and with direct material support from the Governor of Jamaica sought a strategic partnership with the Spanish government areas of common interest. This proposed allegiance of the two crowns would punish factious revolutionaries, avenge a dead Bourbon king of their mutual dynastic family, and reestablish the Catholic religion.\footnote{23 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.140.} It was in the interest of these Dominguois elites to cooperate with Spanish officials, and was even more in the interest of the growing British
presence in Saint-Domingue to quell Spanish angst about their actions through the practical pleas of this third party.

However, García saw their political positioning as a British ploy contrary to Spanish efforts to retake the whole French side with a dash of disingenuous sentimentalism. He asserted to his unwelcomed guests that Spain was better able to defend their properties and stability than the British, though he did not openly oppose their operations. L’Oppinot reiterated their interest in cooperation to defeat the “criminal, bloodthirsty, and sacrilegious” and argued that “iron and fire” could not solely “annihilate the brigands” without crucial naval support from the British that could capably fend off French seaborne attacks. This might even, he hinted, defend Santo Domingo if French geopolitical designs expanded to include that colony. García thought that the arrival of L’Oppinot on the frontier might galvanize other planters, as royalist exiles continued filing into Santo Domingo. Thus, Spanish officials agreed to support the French royalist planters on the frontier regions with arms and supplies, in cooperation with the interests of the Regent of France and House of Bourbon with the stated goals of restoring Louis XVII and the respect of religion in French domains. However, García was resolute in his hope that these royalist operations would occur under the banner
of Spanish rule and without British meddling. Nevertheless, at times Spanish forces did, albeit in a minor way, coordinate with the British.

Aside from notable victories by Toussaint, the Spanish Reconquista had become bogged in its own path. It was further impeded when, in an attempt to accelerate defections to the Republic, in September 1793 the French commissioners sent copies of their abolition decrees to Biassou after having established contact with him through a confidante with compromised loyalties. The French offered Biassou a handsome commission, but he resoundingly declined as he had before. Despite this constancy by Biassou, that same month the British operating through Jamaica were collaborating more aggressively with French royalists, including operations that recruited Spanish partisans and blatantly interrupt Spanish conquests in West, all under the pretext of having a common cause just as García had feared.

Archbishop Portillo lamented British meddling on the front lines and the generally slow progression of the war. He had hoped that Spanish forces would take advantage of the chaotic situation to rapidly seize more towns. Moreover, he

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157 23 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.140.
158 Antonio Valdez to Manuel Godoy, Aranjuez, 17 June 1794, AHN-Estado, leg. 4829; Gabriel Aristizabal to Antonio Valdez, Fort Dauphin, 19 March 1794, AHN-Estado, leg. 4829.
159 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.141.
160 25 September 1793, 1031, no.142.
was critical of whites who had fled Saint-Domingue with their liquid capital, leaving the Spanish-held territories economically moribund, and creating a sector of royalist refugees in Santo Domingo who, separated from the cane fields and slaves, were simply a burden to the Spanish state.161

Although Portillo praised the loyalty of Vázquez and Jean-François, he noted that the black auxiliaries themselves were also growing impatient with the leisurely pace and haphazard handling of the Reconquista. He also worried that Spanish military officials both suppressed the value and took for granted the merit of their black allies, thus jeopardizing their loyalties. Not only were they sometimes poorly treated, but the black auxiliaries lacked basic material needs, such as weapons. Jean-François and Vázquez were risking their lives to take towns, all the while Dominicans were largely shielded from violence at the hands of the French or mulattoes. Finally, Portillo relayed complaints against Matias Armona levied by Jean-François and Vasquez for his mismanagement of Michaud, which apparently they thought could have avoided the terminal confrontation. More broadly, Portillo argued that Spain needed to heed and calm the mounting tensions between the black leaders Biassou and Jean-François, a rivalry that had crescendoed because of Jean-François’ execution of Michaud.162

161 25 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.142.
162 25 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.142.
In September 1793 while Spanish officials were preoccupied with managing the black auxiliaries, who Urízar insulted for their “vile condition, rude education, and infamous conduct,” they also worried about how difficult it would be to control or re-enslave blacks remaining in Saint-Domingue after their experience of liberty and knowledge of the abolition decrees. Without this, though, Urízar speculated that it would be “very difficult to reestablish the state of opulence” of the French colony, and to do so would require “a powerful hand that destroys the anarchy,” and reducing rebel blacks to subordination would be very dangerous. He feared the “spirit of revolution” communicated to their loyal black auxiliaries by the “French mulattoes and whites” who were “fanatics for their vaunted liberty.” Of course, he and others were oblivious to the double standard of embracing the black auxiliaries while attempting to re-enslave their adversaries, and of the likelihood that either population would likely politicize Dominicans of color given the probability of increased contact. He continued to believe that blacks were still more interested in Spanish rule, though he ridiculed their “vile condition, rude education, and infamous conduct.”

At that same time Urízar authored an economic report on the state of the colony, though it did not circulate in the court of Madrid for many months.

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163 José Urízar to Pedro Acuña, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
Despite his aforementioned fears he wrote with optimism about restoring the robust commerce of Saint-Domingue under the Spanish empire. A level of complementary economic collaboration had already existed between Saint-Domingue and Spanish colonies – albeit largely in contraband – including Santo Domingo foremost, but also Caracas and Puerto Rico, which often sold the French planters draft animals. Of course, Santo Domingo dominated this livestock circuit, as they did the regular tobacco trade from Santiago. However, the overall commerce of Santo Domingo was appallingly small compared to their neighbor, whose hypothetical expertise within the Spanish empire could augment Santo Domingo’s own sugar regime.  

Setbacks continued into November 1793 with the dire health of Spanish troops. The arrival of the Puerto Rico battalion had provided much-needed support, but the corps’ health was dubious, exemplified by their chaplain who had been afflicted with severe fevers since August and looked like a skeleton. Implicitly, the spiritual health of these troops was now in danger. As another sign of French weakness, reports arrived that Governor Galbaud had been arrested in Cap-Français. Interestingly, one Spanish official thought that the French might rally the Indian “savages” of Louisiana against Spanish rule there as retribution.

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164 Eugenio Llaguno to Manuel Godoy, San Ydefonso, 22 and 25 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
for Spain’s anti-French actions among the population of Saint-Domingue and as a territorial *Reconquista* of their own. 165

Into December 1793 Urízar reported on the continual discords and grievances between Jean-François and Biassou, which had only escalated over the previous weeks due to provocations from Biassou. 166 In spite of this recalibration of allies, Jean-François soon conducted a disastrous operation at Trou in which his forces sustained over 100 dead and over 200 lost to injuries and capture. 167 Worse yet, Spanish fears of direct British intervention had materialized. A British expedition arrived from Jamaica and in the name of King George III had taken the fort at Môle-Saint-Nicolas, one of the most secure and defensible harbors in the Americas, with 100 cannons that could handle 100 ships. So defensible was Môle-Saint-Nicolas that it carried the nickname the “Gibraltar of Hispaniola,” an irony not lost on the Spanish. This new British perch would easily allow them to harass key Spanish shipping routes that connected Mexico and Havana to metropolitan ports. Spanish officials were flummoxed as to how they could prevent British incursions without open conflict. 168

165 Juan Quiñones to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Monte Cristi, 30 November 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
166 José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 8 December 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
167 José Vázquez to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Dajabon, 18 December 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
168 José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 8 December 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
Spanish officials responded to these situations. First, for the time being mediation had curtailed the disputes between Jean-François and Biassou. Second, the Spanish had sent proclamations across the island that detested the actions of the commissioners, who, these papers attested, were “two monsters who unbound all divine and human links and, and they only study to increase the horrors of fire and blood.” One of their proclamations sent to the French side was expressly for unaligned black rebels who they hoped to sway to the Spanish side. The other was expressly for the white colonists who doubted the Spanish government and intents and were, perhaps, favoring the British.\textsuperscript{169}

In December 1793 several ships were captured and sent to Curaçao and Puerto Cabello for refitting and renovation for wartime use. Apparently this was part of an operation against the white Frenchman François Gay and the “perverse revolutionaries from the coast of the Pedernales” who were suspected of contraband trade along with social subversion. “The effects taken by the perverse Gay,” were a large quantity of precious military equipment. The pro-Spanish French royalist Garraud arrested him, and sent him to the capital.\textsuperscript{170} He was held in the fort in Santo Domingo on charges of mistreating the residents of Jacmel and

\textsuperscript{169} José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 8 December 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.

\textsuperscript{170} Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 17 December 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.431.
with circulating seditious texts for the republican commissioners, including in Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{171} Through these surreptitious personal connections Dominicans were introduced to the decrees and proclamations that Spanish officials so loathed.

On 18 December 1793 Father Vázquez reported that spiritual conquests along the frontier progressed incrementally, especially as Father Quesada had just arrived to manage the troubled church in Valliere.\textsuperscript{172} Father Porta, previously stationed at Valliere, had been suspected of speaking against the Spanish there. Jean-François had been the first to actually suggest substituting him for a loyal Spanish priest, which Vázquez facilitated by finding the mendicant Father Manuel Quesada who had worked in Dajabon and even spoke French. As Porta went to the capital for investigation, and García thought that Quesada was well-suited to aid Vázquez’ work with the black auxiliaries.\textsuperscript{173} The completion of this plan, which Jean-François had offered months earlier, actively expanded pro-Spanish religiosity in his spheres of power and pleased officials.\textsuperscript{174} This initiated a process in which Spain sent Francophone priests to minister to the black auxiliaries and residents in conquered territory, which included royalist French priests who had

\textsuperscript{171} 15 September 1794, AGI-Estado, 13, n.11.

\textsuperscript{172} José Vázquez to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Dajabon, 18 December 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

\textsuperscript{173} Joaquín García to Alange, Santo Domingo, 17 September 1793, AGS-SGU, 7151, no.353.

\textsuperscript{174} Joaquín García to Alange, Santo Domingo, 17 September 1793, AGS-SGU, 7151, no.353.
been exiled in Spain.\textsuperscript{175} Meanwhile, Archbishop Portillo was thrilled with the evangelical work of Vázquez in Dajabon at winning the trust of Jean-François.\textsuperscript{176}

In late December 1793 Father Vázquez told Portillo that a letter for Jean-François had arrived from the Commissioner Sonthonax in Cap-Français who he called “Pene,” a rather unpriestly reference to male anatomy. Sonthonax again tried to convince Jean-François that he had made a huge mistake in trusting the Spanish, and that if his error was uncorrected he would meet a similar end to Ogé and Chavanne. Jean-François’ former subordinate Pierrot who then fought for Sonthonax, also again wrote the black general with similar indications.\textsuperscript{177} These offers, and particularly the promises circulating from Pierrot throughout the black auxiliaries’ ranks, greatly troubled Vázquez and Portillo.\textsuperscript{178} French agents had also sowed rumors of impending re-enslavement by the Spanish, which further aggravated doubts about Spanish goodwill among free people of color.\textsuperscript{179} Soon thereafter, in March 1794, five French republicans – one white, one mulatto, and

\textsuperscript{175} José Vázquez to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Dajabon, 18 December 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo to Eugenio Llaguno, 17 May 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Consejo de Estado, Aranjuez, 12 May 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

\textsuperscript{176} Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 20 December 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

\textsuperscript{177} José Vázquez to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Dajabon, 23 December 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

\textsuperscript{178} José Vázquez to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Dajabon, 1 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

\textsuperscript{179} José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, 25 March 1794, AGI-Estado, 13, n.9.
three blacks – were arrested near the border for spreading sedition. Such instances were commonplace, intensifying Spanish anxieties.\(^{180}\)

**CONCLUSION**

During 1793 the Spanish gained tremendous territorial conquests far from the border across northern and western Saint-Domingue, largely due to their formal alliance with the black insurgents – the “auxiliaries” – commanded by Biassou, Jean-François, and Toussaint. Their profound faith professions dovetailed with Spanish motivations for spiritual and territorial *Reconquista* from the “impious” French republicans to their west. While their successes continued into 1794, the complicating factors of the recent French abolition and British invasion soon curtailed Spain’s counterrevolution on the island. French republican officials were able to gradually redirect talented black officers from their Spanish affiliations and into service of the Republic. Internal rivalries and squabbling greatly diminished Spain’s black auxiliary forces and the forward momentum of territorial acquisition. Likewise, British incursions compromised the loyalties of French royalists on the island, captured regions that were targeted

\(^{180}\) José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, 24 March 1794, AGI-Estado, 13, n.8.
by Spanish officials, impeded Spanish progress toward regaining the entire island, and threatened open conflict with yet another major imperial rival.

Over 1792 Spanish subjects on the Dominican side of the island became quite proactive in laying the foundation for territorial recovery. After official warfare commenced between France and Spain in 1793, yielded them rapid and stunning gains as part of a Caribbean *Reconquista* through an improbable military, ideological, and political ingenuity that at least nearly ended Saint-Domingue’s social revolution. This chapter has demonstrated the formation of a practical ideological, military, and strategic geopolitical relationship of popular Catholicism and monarchism among ex-slave insurgents whose integration into a Spanish counterrevolutionary, all the while integrating white French royalists and propagating broad-based movement to cross the volatile frontier and retake Saint-Domingue for the Spanish empire after a century of opulent French rule. In these practices at the confluence of utility, sincerity, and partisanship, people of color left their material mark on the Haitian Revolution and contributed to forming an anti-Haitian Dominican religious nationalism that became more deeply fixed in the local Hispanic body politic across the remainder of the 1790s.
CHAPTER 4
BLACK ROYALISM & BLACK RELIGIOSITY, 1794

In mid-1794 General Georges Biassou first met Archbishop Fernando Portillo on the borderlands of French Saint-Domingue and Spanish Santo Domingo, their respective home colonies. Biassou and Portillo represented two drastically different phalanxes of a Spanish counterrevolution that by that spring had nearly defeated the French Republic’s social revolutionary experiments on Hispaniola. Following the initial revolts of August 1791, the over one hundred thousand self-liberated slaves, including Biassou, had ruptured the brutal plantation regime that made Saint-Domingue the world’s most profitable plantation colony. Though the French had issued a general emancipation and tried to recruit the black auxiliaries into the Republic, the powerful ex-slave allies of Spain had not defected in significant number or rank, and Spanish forces controlled nearly half of Saint-Domingue, from Gonaïves to the outskirts of both Cap-Français and Port-au-Prince. For the first time since the French colonization
of western Hispaniola well over a century before, Spanish rule stretched from the east coast to the west coast of the island.¹

The Spanish *Reconquista* accomplished this with a broad spectrum of political, social, and religious ideas that during the early 1790s adhered a range of disparate actors. Monarchism and virulent Catholicism stood as traditionalist bulwarks against surging French rights discourses of egalitarianism that, to many observers, seemed to have triggered this deluge of violence, impiety or outright anticlericalism, and chaotic social reordering. The movement included Dominicans from a range of social backgrounds motivated by employment, by faith, by maintaining their preferred social order, by love of the crown, or by wanting to preserve their property. Yet in opening years of the revolution their direct involvement was limited to border towns or military engagement. Spanish troops from across the empire participated, though as regular troops their motivations and voices were more muted by their simple explanation of proving service and following of orders. French white royalists, many from wealthy backgrounds and formerly planters in Saint-Domingue, also affiliated with Spain in hopes of regaining a lost colonial world that once seemed like a paradise to them. Their monarchism mattered, and many were devout Catholics, but Spain’s

¹ Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Banica, 14 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; 14 December 1793, AGS-SGU, 6850, fol. 655; Geggus, *Haitian*, 130-135.
continued support for slavery and their restoration of property that drove their participation, the same reason that many of their colleagues supported the British invasion. The truly dominant force on the island remained the insurgent slaves who, in 1793, formalized their positions as “black auxiliaries” of King Carlos IV. Though Spain made them free, they knowingly supported a Spanish movement that promised to uphold and restore slavery. Their motivations for continuing to fight for Spain even after the French declared general abolition were complex, as were the cultural and social practices that bound them to Spain.

Before his first in-person meeting with Archbishop Portillo, Biassou specifically and the majority of his black auxiliary troops rejected French overtures of abolition, racial equality, and well-compensated positions as troops of the Republic as discussed in the previous chapter. Furthermore, he and his colleagues’ appropriation of Spanish counterrevolutionary and cosmological vocabularies to explain their geopolitical ambitions and motivations bolstered the cultural mode of the Spanish counterrevolution along with local, Dominican ideas of difference from their neighbors to the west who they increasingly viewed as republican, irreligious, violent, and more black, savage, and African. Unlike the anti-colonialism and vodou often conjured in popular memory on the Haitian Revolution, Biassou publicly professed devotion to Catholicism and King Carlos IV, as did more than ten thousand black auxiliaries. During their meeting on the
frontier, Biassou and Portillo performed a ritual of respect by exchanging gifts and praise, thus mutually affirming the improbable spiritual ties that had bound them together over the preceding two years.²

However, when Biassou requested the sacrament of marriage, the Archbishop harshly rebuked him for openly keeping seven mistresses. Biassou, the accomplished black general so critical to the Spanish war effort, sulked away. However, his response shortly thereafter sharpened public divides over black religiosity and the political symbolism of union – in this case as an individual marital act became a metaphor for the complex, fraught relationships borne of the revolutionary era and its responses. Dominican and Spanish discourses depicted piety as increasingly opposed to the “other” of radicalism from the French Revolution and vodou that marked the type of black ascendancy and French radicalism to the west.³ This episode – and many others like it – defined this upsurge of black participation in the Spanish counterrevolution and the interpretation of these events in Dominican culture.

² Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Banica, 14 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Bell, Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice, 109-110 and 140-141.

Need a transition before you jump into these questions. How did public displays of devotion, or irreverence, distinguish Spanish subjects from revolutionaries during the identity crises surrounding the Haitian Revolution? How did people of color, in a Dominican body politic with a majority of color, contribute to a national inclusion predicated upon the rejection of Haiti based upon the conflation of heresy and violence with blackness?

Some scholarship has broken ground with analysis on the roots of African royalism among some black rebels. Yet despite the Haitian Revolution having been a cosmological upheaval, scholars have habitually under-explored black Christianity, white depictions of African beliefs, and the cultural politics of public religiosity. Rituals such as prayer and marriage offer us a window into partisan ambitions, power relations, and the intricate weavings of social networks. Cultural inclusion became more evident as secularism challenged religious assumptions that explained and justified the divine right of monarchy, human nature, causation, and universalisms. Diasporic divergences have created varied

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4 Jane Landers, *Atlantic Creoles*; John Thornton, “I am the subject of the King of Congo.”
territorial identities and multiethnic friction that often preceded and even helped consolidate some nation-states.7

Dominican concepts of belonging expressed by the colonial elite, which shaped aspects of popular culture, embraced virulent Catholicism, Hispanic culture, and the disavowal of blackness, while Dominican ideas of Haiti emphasized the worst caricatures of African primitiveness. Imperial dichotomies between Spain and the French Republic helped map this proto-national line. Also, while Vodou was unquestionably influential and practiced by Spain’s black auxiliaries, Catholicism was the hegemonic supernatural idiom of their allies in Santo Domingo. For Catholic observers, the black auxiliaries’ success and upward mobility appeared as blessings for their faithful service. For the black auxiliaries, Catholic belief was a social practice at a convergence of utility, sincerity, and partisanship. For them, this actionable belief offered material function with weapons and cash, and metaphysical flexibility to mask or blend with extant African cosmologies.8

This chapter demonstrates how Afro-Catholicism merged with Spanish fears of rampant African heresy and French anti-clericalism to contribute to a

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discourse of Dominican difference. Unaffiliated black rebels and people of color aligned with the French Republic in Saint-Domingue were demonized based on ideals of Hispanic civility and piety, in which a person of color could attain Spanish inclusion with sufficient Catholic devotion. Thus, people of color coincidentally contributed to this elitist element of Dominican religious nationalism that endures in anti-Haitian sentiments even today. The macro processes that these records and episodes illustrate add to our variegated understandings of national belonging and modernity in the Black Atlantic.\(^9\)

However, the array of participants that Spain tried to incorporate into this project frayed their royalist coalition, including many French whites who the black auxiliaries first tried to eradicate in their early days as slave rebels. As defections increased into 1794, the counterrevolution stalled. The inverse of this process of spiritual, military, political, and territorial reconquest came when the outward project turned to defending Hispanic institutions internally. At that time, by the mid-1790s Dominicans began to explore secular ideals and, in Spanish and Dominican eyes, also passed toward being more French, more black, or, eventually, more Haitian.

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At the start of 1794 Governor García personally visited the frontlines to review the *Reconquista* for himself. In January García had departed Santo Domingo for the frontier, leaving Urízar in charge of his duties, explaining to the metropole that the commanders wanted him by their sides.\(^\text{10}\) He spent a great deal of time with Father Vázquez and Jean-François around the newly-besieged Fort Dauphin, and gave him an account of the poor conditions in that area.\(^\text{11}\) While Spanish forces slogged along, conditions were even more deplorable for the French at Fort Dauphin, likely due to disease and shortages of food. At night, seven mulattoes surrendered and notified the Spanish of several notable deaths within the city.\(^\text{12}\) The Spanish policy to besiege, starve out, and weaken the French through attrition appeared to be yielding results.

While the Republic’s losses in North meant gains for Spain, in West the decline of French rule came at the hands of British incursions. From his position near the southern border, Father Bobadilla reported rumors pertaining to the British blockade and siege of Port-au-Prince. He supposed that the British had likely already taken the city, as some residents of Port-au-Prince were approaching

\(^{10}\) García to Diego de Gardoqui, 22 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.434.

\(^{11}\) José Vázquez to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Dajabon, 8 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

\(^{12}\) José Vázquez to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Dajabon, 9 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
the border to seek asylum. The French had lost many troops in these resounding
defeats. Also, previously closeted royalists defected either to the British or the
Spanish once the French began to suffer military defeats. Louis-Jacques Bauvais
retreated toward Mirebalais and the Spanish commander Arata at Las Cahobas
prepared for hostilities. Bauvais was a free man of color from Port-au-Prince who
had been educated in France, served in Savannah during the American Revolution,
had entered the revolution in Saint-Domingue as a collaborator with Jumécourt,
and worked for the Republic commanding the “Legion of Equality” in the Cul-de-
Sac.\textsuperscript{13}

Bobadilla opined that all border towns should garrison themselves against
likely French advances as the British pushed their forces eastward and out of the
Cul-de-Sac. He specifically feared the arrival of any unknown operatives who
might introduce conflict to the border towns of Maniel and Naranjo, and even
considered sending warnings out to Maniel and the uncontrolled maroons there
to be on the alert. Furthermore, this eastward pressure caused by British advances
had pushed the French royalist refugees from Grand-Bois to return to defend their
homes and perhaps leave their families and precious goods in Santo Domingo.
This wavering caused Spanish officials to also doubt the veracity of white French

\textsuperscript{13} Fick, \textit{Making of Haiti}, 120-245; Geggus, \textit{Haitian}, 8, 14, and 104-106.
royalist allegiance, particularly with recent defections of royalists to the British side.\textsuperscript{14}

The Spanish, already struggling to fend off French and British seditions, were poorly equipped to deter buccaneers and illicit slave traders who began to terrorize the southern coast in the midst of this imperial flux. Bobadilla wrote that, “This has put the blacks reduced to Naranjo in such fear, that already three families have retired to Maniel, taking with them the slaves they had acquired in battle.” In other words, some maroons actually fought for Spain like the black auxiliaries when it suited them, seized black prisoners of war from Saint-Domingue, and brought them to Naranjo. Yet the majority of maroons were conspicuously content to bide their time and exploit imperial volatility to leverage for greater autonomy rather than delve into revolutionary egalitarianism or Spanish counter-revolution. Spain’s opportunity to use maroons as instruments of empire had largely failed after years of strategizing. Spanish officials feared their turn toward British or French militancy, but more so the maroons’ overwhelming suspicion toward legal guarantees and states motivated their break from their settlement at Naranjo in favor of a return to \textit{grand marronage}. Over the following years, the trickle of families retreating to Maniel from Naranjo turned

\textsuperscript{14} Bobadilla to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Neiba, 5 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
into a stream that overflowed the dam of Spanish bureaucracy. Hundreds of maroons chose a less volatile and more secure life in the mountains away from confinement, indoctrination, re-enslavement, material deprivations, warfare and clamoring state claimants.15

As maroons fled back to the mountains, and some black auxiliaries defected, Bobadilla also reported that in Saint-Domingue the towns of Arcahaye and Léogâne many French royalists who may have otherwise allied with Spain had joined the British. Bauvais had burned several homes in Grand-Bois and enticed the blacks there to join his ranks, causing dozens of mulattoes and white refugees to flee.16 Portillo, who seemed to always sense geopolitical opportunism provided an ideal moment to petition for material support to serve spiritual needs, begged for money to support his parishes on the frontier who bore the brunt of counterrevolutionary cultural combat.17 Furthermore, Bobadilla informed Portillo that of a dozen or so French émigrés who had recently arrived in Neiba, ten were under suspicion for having openly criticized Spain. Several had voluntarily

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15 Juan Bobadilla to Fernando Portillo y Torres, 8 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Deive, Guerrilleros, 230–231.

16 Bobadilla to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Neiba, 9 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Bobadilla to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Neiba, 10 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031. On Bauvais, see: Fick, Making of Haiti, 120-127, 161, 184-188, 194-195, 202-203.

17 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Garcia, Santo Domingo, 9 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031. There were only 414 pesos in church accounts, and many interior parishes such as Bani and Santiago contributed very little financially.
chosen to return to Saint-Domingue, which indicated they might have actually been spies, though it was unclear for whom they were working.\textsuperscript{18} This was a moment of great migratory and political flux, particularly along the southern borderlands which, compared to northern sugar zones of Saint-Domingue, had yet to experience this degree of competition, and none of which favored Spanish interests.

Against these antagonisms the Spanish counter-revolution relied heavily upon priests as decisive foot soldiers of cultural politics and upon black adherents, including the presumably loyal cadre of resettled maroons, as partisans and military labor. Bobadilla even suggested to the archbishop, “If you think that Pedro Luiz, Juan Bautista, Simon, and some other pardoned blacks from Naranjo could secretly form a posse to go to the colony, learn of Commissioner Santonax\textsuperscript{sic} or Commissioner Polverel, you could offer them two-hundred pesos fuertes (hard cash) for each of the commissioners who they bring as prisoners; I leave it to your prudence.” He even mentioned the mercurial La Fortune as a possible agent.\textsuperscript{19} In that impromptu message, haphazardly scrawled as marginalia on the back of a letter, Bobadilla clearly suggested utilizing the most trusted remaining maroons from Naranjo to drift into Saint-Domingue, using their skin color and

\textsuperscript{18} Bobadilla to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Neiba, 10 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

\textsuperscript{19} Juan Bobadilla to Fernando Portillo y Torres, 12 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
French language skills and seize some of the highest ranking French revolutionary agents. As Spanish desperation deepened, so did their reliance upon such expedient allies. Undoubtedly, the communities at Maniel and Naranjo recognized their own leverage and geopolitical importance increased in correlation to Spain’s desperation.

At the end of January 1794 the French Republic’s forces and partisans in North at Fort Dauphin finally proposed some terms of surrender for the Spanish to consider. General Gabriel Aristizabal reviewed these proposals as the Spanish naval squadron anchored itself in the bay and menacingly angled its heavy guns at Fort Labouque. The French requested to keep their ranks or commissions and weapons, but Aristizabal said the first was up to the king, and the second was impossible since they would be prisoners of war. The French also asked that, “the political rights of the gens de couleur, our brothers, will be conserved with all integrity,” but Aristizabal again deferred that question to the King (who, of course, could not effectively respond). Aristizabal, did, however, promise to protect their property. At the French request, he also pledged to keep any allied black troops away from the city and agreed to allow the French general to retreat to Port-de-Paix. The French asked that all Spanish deserters in their camp be pardoned, to which Aristizabal said, “that concession would be shameful.” The French citoyens Candi, Knapp, and Boneaud submitted these proposals, and had the difficult task
of relaying the Spanish commander’s inflexible position to their own officers.\textsuperscript{20} The Spanish bargained with a heavy hand, and as a military power that could either enforce or wait out better terms they were not likely to negotiate.

Health was a factor in the depletion of sedentary French forces, but the Spanish were no better off against mosquitoes, germs, and the Caribbean climate. Archbishop Portillo himself reported that he had suffered fevers during his trips to the frontier. However, at the time he seemed more concerned with dedicating 1,000 pesos for his own holy garb, including a “precious miter,” despite the dire funding situation for all Spanish operations and his own begging for evangelization funds. As astute as some of his geopolitical observations were, his personal pretensions and spiritual ostentations sometimes interfered with the very priorities that he championed. A new miter would likely not win over republican converts. In late January he stood encouraged, though, that the French priest of Petite-Rivière had not fled with the church ornaments and holy vessels to Cap-Français as his peers had when they abandoned their congregations. Portillo claimed to have trusted this particular priest from his arrival at that parish in 1786, implying he could be a priest with whom the Spanish could work. He celebrated news from his informant priests in Dajabon and Monte Cristi explaining that

\textsuperscript{20} “Proposiciones de la Guarnicion, y vecinos del Fuerte Delfín,” Gabriel Aristizabal, Bahia de Manzanillo, 28 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.2.
Spanish forces were within view of Fort Dauphin, and he speculated that Spain would soon be, “owners of the whole colony, without leaving a piece for the British.” However, the British capture of Mole Saint Nicolas and Saint-Marc, Port-au-Prince, and Jérémie soon thereafter were major setbacks for all Spanish efforts. This shakeup in imperial control of major town and regions fueled contraband trade, including food stuffs produced in Spanish Santo Domingo that could otherwise support the Dominican populace and Spanish war efforts. As part of this odd cycle, this lack of sustenance drove Spanish forces to rely upon major shipments of grain in the food-deprived areas of Spanish conquest, many shipments of which came in “Anglo-Americano” ships from the fledgling United States. These supplies were critical, but the prices were extortive. It was, though, a sign of the general distress for Spanish colonialism in the Caribbean that they were forced to rely upon the over-priced staple crop exports from the sometimes unfriendly new republic of North America.

**BLACK PERFORMANCES OF PRO-SPANISH PIETY**

Not only was the consolidation of territory a major challenge for Spanish military efforts due to French and ascendant British operations, but the archbishop

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21 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 29 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

22 José Urízar to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 20 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
noted the difficulty of assimilating the diverse and discordant partisans that Spain inherited within the new territory. Portillo criticized the qualities of newly-gained French colonists, saying, “not only are they atheists, libertines, apostates, schismatics, [and] Anabaptists, they are divided for the British, Spanish, royalists, and assemblyists.” Republican mulatto enemies opposite their southern border had also grown dominant at that time, but he thought they had forgotten the lessons of Ogé within the French imperial structure. The overwhelming hope for Portillo remained the publicly pious black auxiliaries, who did their best to perform their conformity with Spanish cultural norms. Portillo complimented Bernardin, a black officer who he said conducted himself well, as “a black of hope, reflection, and valor.”

This letter from “Bellair,” who was likely the older Gabriel Belair – not the somewhat better-known adolescent Charles Belair who was the nephew of Toussaint – was an experienced officer who worked closely with Georges Biassou. In this impassioned letter he made the case for Biassou’s quality and character before the Spanish officials, as he did in person in Santo Domingo. Belair dramatically wrote, “I avail myself of my badly cut plume” to write some introductory words to explain the motives for their struggles, perhaps a metaphor.

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23 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 29 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
for his unfamiliarity with formally-written treatises. Belair argued that there were many legends and falsehoods that mischaracterized the initial August 1791 slave revolt, many of which were propagated by their enemies. Belair continued, saying that, “The protesting, sad, and sweet cries of the lamb are at least as touching as the howls of the wolf that devours us,” seemingly casting his ex-slave companions as the lamb and the French as the wolf, and argued that these enemies had brought this war upon themselves. Belair said that he and his comrades fought to free themselves from, “the shackles to which some dastardly men had reduced them under the most outrageous tyranny.” However, he noted that their efforts had been in vain due to the “barbarity” of the French, “the most remarkable seen in the world.” With offers from the French continuing to reach the black auxiliaries, with a few defections having occurred, with the shortages of resources for their troops, and with a deepening divide between Jean-François and Biassou, the latter black general seems to have been trying to out-pious the former in a competition for Spanish blessings of war materiel.

Aside from these obvious abuses, Belair pointed to a deeply spiritual context, saying that, “The second motive that made us take up arms against these ferocious people has been for our holy religion to celebrate the divine office, the

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24 Belair, Santo Domingo, n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1031. This letter is not dated, but given the archival strata in which this letter is located, and the specific concerns of the year, Belair almost certainly wrote this letter in 1794.
churches having been converted into places of common assemblies, and in these sites where they commit the most horrendous horrors and where they profess the most indecent words.” Belair and his colleagues knew quite well the umbrage that Spanish officials took with holy sites being appropriated as French republican venues. Belair claimed that “our holy religion” had been reduced and abandoned entirely in Saint-Domingue prior to the slave revolts of August 1791.25 This recurring blame of French cruelty, excess, and irreligion, and particularly their inability to offer Catholic integration to slaves, blended smoothly with Spanish explanations for the revolution. Implications of brutality were certainly truthful causes for the revolt, and if Belair’s references to persecutions of religious lifestyles were taken as a metaphor for the French antagonisms against their African cosmologies, and by extension their ethnicities and community life, then perhaps his words gave a second truth in a more palatable, digestible form for Spanish readers.

Belair continued, explaining the leadership of the early revolution, saying, “General Biassou, the deceased Bouequeman (sic), as well as Jean-François, were all three first chiefs of this revolution, I being the second general of Bouequeman who accompanied his valor and courage,” although his beloved Boukman was

unable to realize the “sweetness” of his plans against the sugar regime. Belair continued discussing Boukman, saying, “He was the first victim of the perfidious maneuvers of those who worked to extinguish the holy religion, and it can be said that he gave his last breath fighting for God and our King. This loss made me very emotional, losing a man who was worthy to command.”

This depiction of Boukman as a Christian martyr, and his call to revolt as a cry for the restoration of Catholic practice, is a far cry from his historical memory of Boukman as a possible vodouizan.

Incredibly, Belair depicted the initial slave revolts of the Haitian Revolution, which have been identified by contemporaries and since by scholars as at least being inspired by African cosmologies that later congealed into vodou, as the righteous restoration of Christianity against French reprobates. Thus, he also rewrote his own history, having been a part of the initial revolts, and revised the foundational motivations of Jean-François, Biassou, and others. Of course, the influence of what we know as vodou, was unquestionable among the black auxiliaries. Belair certainly knew his audience, as this interpretation of French depravity as having incited the revolution and their common spiritual cause with

26 Belair, Santo Domingo, n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

the black auxiliaries further cemented Spanish narratives. Furthermore, he knew that by so prostrating himself before Spain and their deity that this spirituality would yield material benefits. While his words and actions may have been cynical, taken with the profusion of Catholic practices, consultations with priests and the archbishop, assistance to the Spanish spiritual Reconquista of Saint-Domingue, and other demonstrations of their Christian inclinations, it is more likely that this letter revealed the black auxiliaries cosmological flexibility, and their melding of Catholic belief as a binding social practice and geopolitical vernacular into their extant African-derived spiritualties.28

Belair explained that following the death of Boukman he had joined Biassou and never ceased fighting for those same motives. He professed that Biassou had been most dedicated to Spain and to the war, and although every measure had been used to seduce him to the Republic, his resolve and valor were immutable. Biassou had rejected those proposals, always intending, Belair wrote, to give his last drop of blood for faith and the King of Spain, and had proven so by fighting exhaustively for two years in the worst of conditions. Belair explained, “We have preferred death more than to offend our Holy Religion, and finally retired on a mountain with no space, [where] we have offered our faithful prayers

28 Belair, Santo Domingo, n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
to God Almighty with the firm resolution that it would be better to die than to lose our Holy Religion that is the only base of our existence.”29 This statement might have been metaphor, but was not hyperbole. Over the preceding two years these black troops had burned so many bridges with the French. Most still saw as their former masters of enslavement despite innovative republican niceties, and they were deeply tied to the Spanish Catholic military and bureaucratic machine.

Belair continued, tying this cosmological orientation into his royalist convictions, saying, “We find ourselves overwhelmed by the loss of our monarch, and full of the greatest grief,” in reference to the regicide of King Louis XVI. As shaky and sometimes suicidal as the Republic appeared to be, and having grown up with the centuries-old durability of royal institutions of African and European derivation, the black troops’ sentimentality and appeals to monarchs was quite understandable. He thanked García for supporting their fight, praised his generous spirit, and appreciated their attraction to the party of the King of Spain “the most pious in the land” who had given those who asked “all the benefits of a generous father for his children.” Not only did Belair play into Spain’s righteous sensibilities, he played up their sense of paternal benevolence over the black auxiliaries. Belair deeply desired for the Catholic cause to triumph, and in order

29 Belair, Santo Domingo, n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
to withstand the “satanic temptations” he requested more ministers to stay in their camps to help their soldiers understand that God was on their side. In conclusion, he affirmed, in quite lofty language, that the black auxiliaries were deeply grateful and loyal to Spain.\textsuperscript{30}

Belair challenged the now-famous “pact with the devil” narrative that has since pervaded Western lore on the Haitian Revolution, and it subsequent birth of the Haitian nation through a vodou ceremony and crafted a Catholic and royalist image of the initial revolt to advance their rights, resources, and retribution. More significantly, he and his colleagues played upon Spanish perceptions of French irreligion and slaveholding excesses that Spanish officials believed had caused the revolts. He also echoed Spanish ideals that piety would function as a social mediator, as a means of racial improvement, and as common cause for defeating French republicanism. In their praises of Spain, the black auxiliaries supported this confirmation bias by echoing these same interpretations.\textsuperscript{31}

On 31 January 1794 Governor García stopped in Dajabon on his tour of the northern borderlands and was impressed with the reception he received from the locals, regional officials, and some facilities. More importantly, in Dajabon he

\textsuperscript{30} Belair, Santo Domingo, n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

\textsuperscript{31} Geggus, \textit{Haitian}, 179. In Cuba, as planters there salivated at the possibility to increase sugar production, and also slavery, to fill a market void opened by the destruction of Saint-Domingue, the bishop there warned that emulating cruelty and irreligion might also result in their own, self-induced social revolution as happened in Saint-Domingue. See: Childs, \textit{Aponte}, 35.
finally met Jean-François in person. The black general made a very strong first impression, as did the ever-present Father Vázquez. Jean-François made great displays of his obedience and gratitude to García, who thought that, “one finds this black adorned with some uncommon qualities among those of his color.” For example, Jean-François always immediately executed orders and always conferred with Vázquez, who spoke with great confidence in the black general. García elaborated that, “This priest has worked and works with such determination and love with the blacks that it is necessary to [see it in person] to understand his zeal, efficacy, and loyalty to our monarch.” Vázquez earned high praise from all colonial officials, and from the black auxiliaries alike. García elaborated that, “Jean-François, Benjamin, Vatable, Bernardin, and other blacks that always accompany him with such subordination to his precepts that none of them stopped treating him like their oracle.”

Vázquez was irreplaceable to the cultural and spiritual life of Spanish operations. His constant contact with the black generals’ battle plans kept Spanish officials apprised of military operations, and his entwinement with on-the-ground action meant his spiritual counsel extended to all the rank and file troops he met daily, and unaffiliated blacks in recently-

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32 García to Pedro Acuña, Fort Dauphin, 5 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
incorporated territories. Vázquez was the implementer of spiritual reconquest in Saint-Domingue.

After the negotiations with the French, in early February, García sent copies of the official capitulation of Fort Dauphin to the Consejo de Indias in Spain. Soon the Spanish flag flew above that critical port and transit point. Aristizabal sent the French flags surrendered to his forces at Fort Dauphin as a token of respect to metropolitan officials. The day after the surrender, García and Aristizabal began sending in supplies and allowing ships to dock and sell goods to the population of Fort Dauphin that had been decimated by the siege. That same day García complained bitterly about the dire financial state and increasing costs of operations, and specifically blamed the economic drain that many French royalist émigrés had on their budget.

33 García to Diego de Gardoqui, Fort Dauphin, 5 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.436.
34 García to Diego de Gardoqui, Fort Dauphin, 5 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.437.
35 Gabriel Aristizabal to Diego de Gardoqui, Fort Dauphin, 5 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
36 García to Diego de Gardoqui, Fort Dauphin, 6 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.438.
37 García to Diego de Gardoqui, Fort Dauphin, 6 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.444. Only in February 1794 did the Consejo de Estado learn about events late 1793. They were appalled at the destruction of Cap-Français, the racial divisions there, and the actions of Sonthonax. They praised Spanish taking of Dondon and were very pleased about the loyalty of the blacks in the face of French offers. The Consejo was alarmed about British movement into the west of the island, and acknowledged the concerns of Portillo and Vázquez about García’s pace and handling of the conquests, but understood with the governor’s reasons for not overextending resources. See: Consejo de Estado, 14 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Consejo de Estado, Aranjuez, 20 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
Despite the exorbitant cost, García continued to welcome and sponsor French families into royalist asylum with spiraling expenses. García said that 44 people had arrived from the parish of Jacquezy – a tiny coastal village between Cap-Français and Fort-Dauphin – for protection, and pledged vassalage to the King of Spain. The next day, 150 additional refugees arrived by ship from the same area. They had all reportedly been persecuted by “Jefe Villatte” – that is, Romaine Villatte, a regional mulatto commander who worked for the French republican commissioners. There were also “some gentlemen” from nearby in Saint-Louis who also sought refuge. Another major friction that only continued to inflame the Spanish operations were the costs of maintaining both the black auxiliaries and often sumptuous white refugees. Furthermore, these two groups despised each other given the slaveholding past of many of these French whites over portions of the black troops.

In mid-February 1794 García then began to organize a “patrimonial state,” as he called it, for Fort Dauphin from which Spanish officials could administer governance. As occupiers the Spanish had to arbitrate claims to titles, buildings, lands, cafeterias and ingenios, and to settle accounts, sometimes with conflicting

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38 Alange to Diego de Gardoqui, Aranjuez, 14 May 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
39 García to Diego de Gardoqui, Fort Dauphin, 21 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.442.
information, pertaining to the King, National Convention, and Republic. Further complicating their occupation was the overwhelming amount of prisoners. Governor las Casas of Cuba begged that no more black prisoners be sent to his island so that he could avoid altercations on Cuban haciendas around Cuba where he feared prisoners were “communicating to them their pernicious maxims and the spirit of insurrection and desolation that possessed them,” that is, he feared that they might spread sedition among Cuban populations of color. Their interaction with the local population, which sometimes lobbied for the release of certain French prisoners with sugar planting or processing experiences, perturbed officials in Cuba.

These gains in North offered only short-lived satisfaction. In February 1794 the Spanish officials learned that brigadier “Petit Tomás” and other black officers Barthélemy and Louis had been enticed by the commissioners into joining the French, in part due to the recent abolition decree. They and their forces then entered Port Margot, committing atrocities in the name of the Republic. At least Barthélemy and Thomas had fought under Jean-François, and Barthélemy had actually been one of the alleged co-conspirators of Boukman at the outset of the

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40 García to Diego de Gardoqui, Fort Dauphin, 19 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.441.
41 Casas to Manuel Godoy, Havana, 19 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.138.
42 Ferrer, Freedom’s Mirror, 137-138.
43 García to Manuel Godoy, Fort Dauphin, 24 February 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.66.
revolution. This was a huge symbolic loss that depleted the leadership of the black auxiliaries while simultaneously bolstering their enemy’s capabilities.

Throughout that month García remained on the frontier, and reported at the thronging “multitude of prisoners,” refugees, and slaves who transited into Santo Domingo. Ships were regularly departing for Puerto Rico with this mix of passengers. Some slaves whose fare could not be paid were sold to cover costs for others in their group, and some prisoners’ human property was confiscated and sold by Spanish officials. North American ships arrived frequently with supplies, and also stopped at Monte Cristi. Spanish forces gravely needed supplies and cash to finally take Cap-Français. Mildly positive news arrived from elsewhere in Saint-Domingue, including that the British, who had tried to maintain their western cordon from Mole Saint Nicolas to Saint-Marc, were routed by black rebels who ransacked the area. Also, further south along the border the Marques d’Espenville, a royalist ally, had seized the homes of forty Frenchmen who were partisans to the Republic and who had been under the orders of “the Mulatto Bauvais.”

The Consejo de Estado had received a great deal of pushback from Venezuela about the prisoners that they being made to house, and officials there suggested sending more to the prisons of Havana instead. They complained that

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44 Fick, *Making Haiti*,

45 José Urízar to Consejo de Indias, 25 February 1794, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
even many of the voluntary émigrés were irreligious. One intriguing suggestion that they made was to negotiate an exchange of prisoners through the island of Guadeloupe in return for an equal number of Spaniards, or at least royalists. 46 This was yet another extraordinary economic and political cost to the empire. García mentioned that many new white subjects had an ailment he described as "dislocation of organization in their heads" after having lost their homes, families, and commerce to revolution. He faulted whites whose, "lack of reflection, loyalty, and related conduct" made them think they could turn "our blacks, for whom without revolutionary heads" had sought out careers under Spanish rule. At that time García estimated that Jean-François commanded 6,097 troops. In just a few months his army had spent about 16,000 pesos, and the war was ruining the colony’s finances. 47 Nevertheless, money and troops continued to pour in from neighboring colonies, such as Puerto Rico 48

Besides mounting defections, other hardships persisted for the black auxiliaries. In April 1794 two black officers under the command of Jean-François – Acul, who ran the encampment at Loisa, and also Joseph Lafond – professed their enduring loyalty all the while they recounted their dire need of clothes for

46 Manuel Godoy to Eugenio Llaguno, Aranjuez, 2 March 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
47 García to Consejo de Indias, Fort Dauphin, 10 April 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.446.
48 Creagh to Diego de Gardoqui, Puerto Rico, 28 April 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.112.
themselves and their troops, many of whom they said were basically naked. Part of this lack was due to the sumptuous expenditures that the leading black generals lavished upon themselves. This was one of the primary reasons that Candi and his men had defected to the French. Lack of resources, coupled with infighting and rivalry among the black troops, would continue to bog down the Spanish war efforts in Saint-Domingue.

PINNACLE OF POPULAR PIETY & OMENS OF DECLINE: SUMMER 1794

In May 1794 Father Pedro Cabellos wrote to Portillo explaining that the border town of San Rafael was in “major calamity and discomfort.” Only the Thursday before García had been there with his retinue. Now the locals were either entrenched, or had fled to the interior due to nearby fighting and rumors of impending violence. The French émigrés, white and mulatto alike, feared another assault by black troops as had recently happened in Gonaïves, where when the Spanish troops retired the black auxiliaries had retributively murdered white Frenchmen, sacked the town, and raised their flag. Father Cabellos strove for tranquility, saying, “I am interested in calming the blacks” with whom he thought he had some respect. The massacre at Gonaïves had, apparently, been

49 García to Consejo de Indias, Fort Dauphin, 10 April 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.446.
50 Pedro Cabellos to Fernando Portillo y Torres, San Rafael, 10 May 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
perpetrated by restive black troops under Toussaint, and while this event has never been definitely tied to his ensuing defection to the Republic, it certainly portended his and his troops’ growing discontent under Spanish management.\footnote{Geggus, \textit{Haitian}, 120-123.}

In response to Portillo’s requests to support Spanish frontier evangelization and assimilation, in May 1794 the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo confirmed that he would send six well-qualified and esteemed priests from the court of France who were exiled to Spain. On the island he intended that they would travel into the conquered lands to minister to newly-annexed French residents.\footnote{Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo to Eugenio Llaguno, 17 May 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.} Roughly six months earlier the Consejo de Estado had conceded Portillo this request to send refractory priests to the conquered lands of Saint-Domingue.\footnote{Consejo de Estado, Aranjuez, 12 May 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.}

As part of his proactive embrace of the newly-annexed frontier communities and the broader \textit{Reconquista}, the archbishop wrote to the “much loved children of Christ,” priests who remained in Saint Marc, Petite-Rivière, Grande-Rivière, Verrettes, Gonaïves, Sainte Suzanne, Marmelade, and other parishes that practice the sacraments. Portillo stated that, “The submission of your towns already in effect has filled us with joy,” and he sent the blessings of King

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Carlos IV. He was pleased that these parishes had been added to his archdiocesan overview, and he wanted to restore pre-revolutionary religious practices. He stated that on the other side of the Atlantic, “the French nation offered, in the view of all Europe, the project of new government, which has contained, and will contain, the mere terms for the political and temporal,” while for the Spanish, “our principality is not of this world.” The Republic had neglected the divine, and new laws and ideas could not change the “intimate connection to the spiritual” no matter how stridently the French tried.\(^\text{54}\) Portillo’s reminders were that Hispanic principles traced to eighteen-hundred years of Christian tradition. The battle for souls was eternal, an impressive juxtaposition to the seemingly ephemeral novelty of French revolutionary politics that assaulted his congregants in Santo Domingo.

Portillo sharpened his critique, saying that, “Furthermore on this unfortunate sum, this new project of governing kingdoms elevates itself against the science of God, subjecting pure ecclesiastical practice to these laws, practices inseparable from the power of the Church...public divine worship, evangelical doctrine...all the Church hierarchy.” He continued, saying that the French had taken it upon themselves, “to extinguish the most flourishing monarchy of Europe, [and] Christianity, oppressing their teachers, despising and ridiculing its beliefs,

\(^{54}\text{Fernando Portillo y Torres to Fray Gaspar Arcanio, n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1031.}\)
maxims, mysteries, laws, and rites.” This, Portillo said, had scandalized the “the whole Catholic world...” In hopes of kindling their sentiments of deference to Rome, Portillo also referenced the papal breve of 13 April 1791, in which Pope Pius VI lamented the secular civil order emerging in France and encouraged clergy to resist its spiritual implications. He encouraged them to consider the support of Juan Sanchez Valverde on the frontier in Hincha. Portillo said that they should have no doubt of the Spanish to ably manage their churches, and promised to reintroduce Catholic practices and appoint clergy as needed. He hoped to gain loyal, spiritually recharged clergy who would assist the Spanish Reconquista with their special skills of language and local connections, both of which most of Portillo’s priests lacked.

In May 1794 Archbishop Portillo wrote to the Spanish consul to the Vatican, to whom he argued that the priests and churches on the French side should no longer rely upon the French apostolic hierarchy, especially given the Spanish command of that territory and proximity of his archdiocese. Now that the colony was returning to its “legitimate Spanish sovereign” and that a revolutionary situation gripped France, he wondered how religious authorities there could answer to a hostile French Republic that sought to destroy spiritual

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55 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Fray Gaspar Arcanio, n. D., AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
tradition and the Spanish state. Portillo also criticized British claims to spiritually oversee the territory that they occupied, primarily given their state Protestantism, and sought permission to make a pastoral visit to the faithful in conquered lands as many French priests had simply abandoned their churches. This, of course, would have served to amplify his and Spanish geopolitical power as well. He also cited the same 1791 papal breve in the letter as final justification for undercutting secular governance of his spiritual jurisdiction.56

In June 1794, as part of this wider Hispanic cultural movement, the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo confirmed that the King supported the use of French priests on the frontier region. The six priests selected ranged in ages from 35 to 52, and had worked in the archdiocese of Bordeaux, Nantes, Rennes, Toulouse, and two in Tours.57 These priest were sent by the metropolitan church with the blessing of the king’s advisers expressly to work under Portillo as spiritual operatives to ostensible francophone reprobates.58 In July 1794 these six priests waited in Cádiz to depart, and 30-40 days later would arrive in the Caribbean.59 Portillo inched closer to the cultural and clerical control of the island that he sought.

56 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Azara, Santo Domingo, 12 May 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
57 Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo to Eugenio Llaguno, Toledo, 4 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
58 Diego de Gardoqui to Eugenio Llaguno, Aranjuez, 20 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
59 Manuel Gonzalez Guiza to Eugenio Llaguno, Cádiz, 25 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.48.
A major part of this evangelization effort centered on the continuing effort to stabilize the maroon resettlement at Naranjo and, thus in part, the southern border and its local populace of color. Eventually he even hoped to send some of the French refractory priests to the mission. That June, despite poor health, advanced age, revolutionary warfare and a grueling journey on horseback, Archbishop Portillo, visited the remote mountains of Baoruco in the center of the island close to the border between the Spanish colony Santo Domingo and the French colony Saint-Domingue. His purpose was to assess recent evangelization initiatives. He identified, “the administration of sacraments, serious and severe practices of divine services, and [Spanish] language,” as vital components of this project. This defined the components to España­lizar, or Hispanicize, various newly-annexed peoples, mostly Francophones, and many of African descent. The archbishop particularly wanted to visit Naranjo, a village of neophytes who had reluctantly forfeited their status as “savage” maroons. The attention that the archbishop gave them on his arduous trip and in numerous letters and documents signals their disproportionate importance to Spain’s colonialist cultural politics at this moment. Their geopolitical centrality demanded it.60

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60 Fernando Portillo y Torres to José Urízar, 6 June 1794, AGI-SD, 1014; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, 20 October 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Thomas Connelly, A New Dictionary of the Spanish and English Languages, vol.1, Madrid, 1798, 911.
To complicate matters, marauding traffickers on foreign ships moored nearby at Barahona seized upon dislocations in Spanish power to kidnap both free and enslaved local blacks, migrants fleeing war-torn Saint-Domingue, and even maroons. Illicit slaving proved so dire that some of those captured committed suicide in despair rather than face bondage and displacement. Though the Spanish commander in Baoruco formed patrols to impede the bandits, Bobadilla distrusted some officers and suspected their troops of complicity. He also promised to relay to the archbishop inside information gathered from locals, a parallel church communication network that shadowed, and counterbalanced, Spanish military foibles. Despite the church being perhaps the sturdiest pillar of colonialism in Santo Domingo, the maroons’ fears and opportunities simultaneously grew, compounding the strain on Spanish aspirations.

In mid-1794, Archbishop Portillo travelled personally to assess the maroons’ progress at Naranjo, where there were then fifty homes. Despite revolution being fought all around them, the population grew yearly, as resettlement proceeded to the rhythm of Christian instruction and sacraments. However, priests complained about teaching *bozales* (unassimilated Africans) how to manage their *bohios* (huts) and dress, local landowners hesitated to allot farmland to their new neighbors, and some resettled maroons threatened to
complain to the governor about Naranjo’s bad food. More pressingly, the archbishop documented illicit slaving, stories of “horrific, frequent attacks by men without conscience, loyalty, nor appreciation of the law.” Some attackers bound several captives together by their throats and pulled them away by horses, then sold them to “pirates” who roved the coast with impunity. Local blacks were fearful to go outside at night, or to venture far for water, food or wood.

After administering the sacrament of confirmation to some children at Naranjo, the archbishop transcribed the tragic story of their father Manuel. Close to town some maroons had been cutting timber. Two Dutch ships moored nearby, whose captains ‘Francisco Franco and Juan N.’ were from Curaçao. Interestingly, Naranjo residents identified these pan-Caribbean crews by name and origin, which suggests previous interactions, probably in contraband trade. The marauders kidnapped those assembled near the beach, including Manuel and three other maroons. As Manuel sought to defend the others, the raiders killed him with a single bullet. Separately, three Curaçao ships moored off Barahona, and the sailors robbed and beat another maroon near Naranjo. Fortunately, neighbors intervened as he was being dragged away. The archbishop wrote, “I

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61 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Real Fiscal, 20 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.35; Lorenzo Nuñéz to Joaquin García, 25 February 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Antonio Ventura de Faranaco to Audiencia de Santo Domingo, 23 March 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.39; Joaquín García to Antonio Porlier, 25 April 1791, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.34; Juan Bobadilla to Fernando Portillo y Torres, 8 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
have seen the unhappy, swollen, purple side of his face from the blows he suffered, and the pitiful marks around his neck from the cord that bound him.”

The Spanish, already struggling to fend off French and British seditions, were poorly equipped to deter buccaneers and build their Christian community at Naranjo.

Bobadilla wrote that “This has put the blacks reduced to Naranjo in such fear, that already three families have retired to Maniel, taking with them the slaves they had acquired in battle.” In other words, some maroons actually fought for Spain, seized black prisoners of war from Saint-Domingue and brought them to Naranjo. Spanish officials even praised the maroons of Maniel for their proficiency in capturing slaves. Maniel had absorbed captured people before, including their leader Santiago who had been taken from a plantation as a child five decades earlier. Moreover, the practice of taking slaves from Saint-Domingue was common for Spanish troops. It is doubtful that the maroons saw captives as chattel, yet their willingness to take black captives demonstrated the limits of their broader feelings of racial solidarity and egalitarianism. In any case, the

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62 Fernando Portillo y Torres to José Urizar, 6 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014; Sánchez, Idea del valor, xvi and 87; Linda M. Rupert, Creolization and Contraband: Curacao in the Early Modern Atlantic World, Athens, 2012, 120–211.

63 Juan Bobadilla to Fernando Portillo y Torres, 8 January 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

64 Antonio Barba, Santo Domingo, 8 December 1793, Archivo General Militar de Madrid (AGMM)-Colección General (CM), 65, 5-4-10-5.

65 Partie française, Tome II, 497–502; Madiou, Histoire d’Haïti, 333–5; Geggus, Haitian Revolutionary Studies, 125–9 and 267 n.50.
revolutionary era had revived threats similar to those they had negotiated to avoid in the 1780s. Structural instabilities replenished alternative avenues to maroon autonomy that their preoccupied Spanish collaborators could not prevent.

Archbishop Portillo further studied Naranjo in a “prolix description because without details it is impossible to form a complete picture of this work.” Upon arrival he was fascinated by maroon displays of Christian religiosity, which allayed misgivings over their religious progress. The youths especially amused him, as much as his clerical attire and miter hat amused them. He absolved residents of “their enormous offences,” toured homes, inspected crops, performed baptisms, and exhorted converts. Seated at a table, he observed neatly dressed women and half-naked juveniles sporadically playing and sitting around him, all contributing boisterous noise, cries and conversation. He praised “the religious piety of the King that liberated such criminals in this world,” saying that the maroons were “apparently in love with the King of Spain,” and that the maroon children devotion to King and Cross inspired him to continue his evangelical project. The archbishop sensed that some Naranjo residents had conformed sincerely to Catholic norms and were becoming model subjects. They were prized, hard-won first fruits of ongoing españolización.

Certain cultural matters troubled Portillo, especially that the maroons spoke “guineo” (African languages) and French. He requested more Spanish
language instruction, demanded that Africans take Spanish surnames, and
admonished their continued “superstitious” observances. At his farewell, Naranjo
residents sent him off with a flourish; cacophonous volleys of gunfire and the
rhythms of log drums.66 The former was an ominous symbol of the maroons’
growing armed power. The latter was perhaps more profound, as to many
Christian observers African musicality formed an auditory perimeter between the
sacred and profane and displayed the persistence of African culture and spiritual
practice.67 The maroons’ performance of piety, and their grafting of Christianity
onto African-derived cosmologies, belied the unmitigated conversion desired by
Spain.68

The “atrocious gestures and looks” by those “most expansively pardoned
and forgiven” aggrieved Archbishop Portillo, especially since many maroons were
“well bound with two shotguns, or big pistols, and machetes hanging in the front
of a leather belt... Insolently mocking our weak garrison... They also rob and kill
Spaniards in our roads.” He perceived in the maroons a cruel, bloodthirsty mood.

66 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, 6 August And 20 October 1794, AGI-SD, leg.
1031; Deive, Cimarrones, 71–2; James C. Scott, Decoding Subaltern Politics: Ideology, Disguise, and

67 Kate Ramsey, The Spirits and the Law: Vodou and Power in Haiti, Chicago, 2011, 1–53; Martha Ellen
Davis, Voces del purgatorio: Estudio de la salve dominicana, Santo Domingo, 1981; Matthias Röhrig
Assunção, ‘Stanzas and Sticks: Poetic and Physical Challenges in the Afro-Brazilian Culture of the

68 Carlos Esteban Deive, Vodú y magia en Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, 1979, 113–7; Sweet,
On his way to Naranjo the archbishop had already been threatened by what he called “black thieves.” Armed blacks also confronted his entourage after his departure from Naranjo. Though accounts are opaque on these assailants’ identities, allegiances and motives, for Spanish officials such encounters demonstrated growing social ferment alongside their fading control. The archbishop closed his correspondence by referring to a recent massacre and alleged thefts from churches overseen by a black general and Spanish ally, Jean-François. Indications of perfidy by ostensibly loyal collaborators elicited from the archbishop a dramatized contemplation of his own martyrdom.69

To prevent “treacherous domestic enemies” from emerging, in 1793 Governor García forbade interactions between Spanish subjects and anyone from Saint-Domingue. Those consorting with republicans would be labelled traitors and “in the same spot as the act suffer the penalty of death by the gallows, without distinction.”70 This decree was of little concern to maroons who regularly moved across the border. Further complicating the maroons’ multi-polar possibilities was the arrival in early June 1794 of, “the black Tusen (very distinct from the general [Toussaint Louverture] who militates in the colony) with a company of 140 men.”

69 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, 6 August 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Fernando Portillo y Torres to José Urizar, 6 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014; Geggus, Haitian Revolutionary Studies, 19 and 180.

70 Joaquín García, 4 June 1793, AGN-ARH, 22, exp.50.(The underscoring is original.)
This Tusen was probably a small-scale leader who had operated in the nearby Cul-de-Sac region of Saint-Domingue. Toussaint Louverture, the most powerful revolutionary leader, who had also worked for Spain, was further north at this time. Tusen had suffered serious losses and approached Naranjo hoping to procure supplies and recruits, forsaking his tenuous alliance with Spanish forces who then, “publicly left on horseback to pursue Tusen and the rest of his company, who travelled with those from Naranjo.”

That same week a ship from France arrived in nearby Jacmel, Saint-Domingue, with news of the Republic’s confirmation of emancipation, which bolstered the commissioners’ earlier decree. The archbishop wrote, “It must be pondered how much this news will influence the increase in desertions of our blacks.” Thereafter the French received a wave of defectors, which the Spanish thought included those won over by Tusen’s combative recruitment at Naranjo. Spanish officials were further jolted when Toussaint Louverture actually joined the Republic in mid-1794. Fearing an “internal uprising,” officials “awaited news of further disasters” and rightly assumed that eastward movements by French and

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71 Fernando Portillo y Torres to José Urízar, 6 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Real Fiscal, 11 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, sub. No.35
British forces would further loosen Spain’s grip on the maroons and their resettlement.⁷²

Amid the chaotic mid-1790s, the revised objective of securing black allies stumbled. While some at Naranjo perhaps sincerely embraced Catholic piety and Spanish subjecthood, it seems many more expediently performed these roles while continuing illicit trade and contact with Maniel. Simultaneously the maroons became positioned within increasingly momentous French and British geopolitical designs. This proliferation of imperial conflicts provided them a range of choices to maximize wellbeing and regain autonomy away from state guarantees.⁷³

As Portillo manufactured the Spanish cultural conquests, and his priests managed it in Spanish-held territory, García and the military forces continued striving for geopolitical gains. The governor lauded the arms raised on 8 May by the “citizens that are in Trou, the camp of Santa Susana…and the brave spirt with which there were rejected with many losses by the commander Carlos Gabriel Lesec, mulatto of our auxiliary troops.” Despite the resounding bravery of this newly-prominent black officer, García was dismayed by the “disunion that reigns

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⁷² Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, 6 August1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Geggus, Haitian Revolutionary Studies, 18, 119–136, and 268 n.70; Lienhard, Disidentes, 107–9; Fick, Making of Haiti, 161–82; Pierre-Victor Malouet, 12 March 1795, The National Archives at Kew, United Kingdom (TNA), Public Record Office (PRO), War Office (WO), 1/61, 123–30.

⁷³ ‘Complément aux mémoire d’un vieux officeur française sur la guerre dans l’isle de St. Domingue’, 14 October1797, TNA, PRO, WO, 1/66, 577–88; September1796, TNA, PRO, WO, 1/65, 267–322.
between the black chiefs Biassou and Toussaint.” That conflict would explode into all-out war in the coming weeks following Toussaint’s open defection to the French. With the extent of territorial conquests in Saint-Domingue, the numbers and skill of the black auxiliaries, the full articulation of a counterrevolutionary Catholic and monarchist project, and the retreat of the French Republic all made 1794 the high water mark for the Spanish counterrevolution.

Spanish administrators aggressively recalibrated their strategy amid rapidly deteriorating conditions, with a new focus on spiritual solutions. After begging metropolitan officials to continue funding Santo Domingo’s seminary and “civilizing those blacks” at Naranjo, they unfurled a more ambitious plan to assign to the Hispaniola frontier French royalist priests who were exiled in Spain after the execution of Louis XVI. These priests were uniquely positioned to dissuade francophones, including many maroons, from the vices of republicanism and secularism while exhorting them toward Catholic virtue embodied by Spanish monarchism. Pope Pius VI extended Archbishop Portillo’s archdiocesan authority to cover French territory on Hispaniola. The Vatican also absolved additional delinquent French priests there, and across the French Republic, some of whom the archbishop also tried to recruit to serve in the Spanish Bourbon counter-

74 García to Eugenio Llaguno, Fort Dauphin, 23 May 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.69.
revolution. Naranjo was the key link in the chain of frontier assimilation, territorial reconquest, and pious counter-revolution, as visions of linguistic, religious and cultural assimilation broadened from españolización of maroons to assimilating heterogeneous others and potential revolutionaries into Spain’s colonialist mission.

This seemingly desperate spiritual aspect of geopolitics underscored growing insecurities and Spain’s weaknesses. The archbishop himself lamented that the maroons, though new Spanish vassals, were so threatened that they might have had better “protection through the most imperfect and maimed laws of the most barbarous kings on the coast of Africa.” Despite this Naranjo expanded slightly into 1795, though the maroons increasingly fortified themselves against outsiders and at the same time retreated to Maniel.

In this period distrust of the state explains their distancing and duplicitous performances: from the maroons’ preliminary detachment from Maniel to their resettlement, acceptance of initiation at Naranjo, and reversion to marronage.

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75 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, 20 October 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; José Azara to Eugenio Llaguno, 3 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1007; Real Hacienda de Neiba, 10 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1008, n.3; ‘Despacho’, Joaquin García, 7 April 1792, AGN-ARH, 23, exp.9; Cardinal Casoni to Cardinal Zelada, 16 January 1796, Archivum Secretum Vaticanum (ASV)-Nunziatura di Madrid (NM) 196, 355–9.

76 Antonio Ventura de Faranaco to Audiencia de Santo Domingo, 23 March 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1102, no.39; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Juan Bobadilla, 5 June 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1102; Fernando Portillo y Torres to José Urizar, 6 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014; Weber, Bárbaros, 103–5.
Their break with Spanish offers for subjecthood and counter-revolutionary upward mobility, and their simultaneous ambivalent response to French propositions of liberté, égalité, fraternité were parts of this complex choreography of approach and avoidance. The maroons’ choices are most intelligible as maximizations of situational security that expediently allowed them to avoid structural impositions. Their secessionist tendencies prevailed when imperial fissures abetted their return to maroon status, where they eluded the perilous conditions entailed by proximity to competing states.

In June 1794 Father Cibot wrote to Portillo regarding his apprehensions of his possible return to Saint-Domingue from exile in the United States. He claimed to want to see an evangelical zeal restored in the clergy. Cibot, a Capuchin and the Vice Prefect of North, had previously lived in North for about 25 years. He had arrived in Baltimore from Cap-Français in August 1793, and there was welcomed by the well-heeled conservative refugees that fled Saint-Domingue. Upon arrival he gave a rousing sermon drawn from the book of Job, comparing the plight of this faithful servant of God to the wealthy ex-slaveowners from Saint-Domingue, and emphasizing the famed scriptures, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done.” He implored the French

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77 Cibot to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Fort Dauphin, 11 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.
refugees to have the patience and fortitude specifically like Job who had once
controlled vast wealth before being afflicted with illness, the loss of his property,
and death of his family. He told that refugees that they had been “proprietors of
invaluable Lands, and “sovereigns, of a race of people” as “fortune seemed to have
exhausted her bounty in your favor.” However, like a biblical trial the planters
had their, “property laid waste...your slaves armed against you...your experience,
as Job, [shows] how little solidity there is in riches.” Cibot then beseeched the
refugees to, “Recognize in your present misfortunes the hand of an offended
God...you have provoked the wrath of Heaven by your crimes...and increasing
infidelity.”  

In no uncertain terms Cibot scorned their excessive lifestyle and implicitly
their unholy treatment of slaves as root causes for the revolution, and which their
divinity was justly punishing. He softened his tone only to say that his message
was surely difficult to hear. While he asked Baltimoreans to extend a friendly hand
to the refugees, he also asked Americans to learn from the hard lessons of Saint-
Domingue. Sometime thereafter Cibot took over pastoral responsibilities in a

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congregation in rural eastern Maryland.\textsuperscript{80} Later he took charge of a congregation near Wilmington, Delaware.\textsuperscript{81} While his rhetoric actually paralleled much of Portillo’s own fire and brimstone interpretations of French devastations, Portillo saw Cibot as soft, and negligent of his clerical duties.

He claimed that his evacuation from the island had been forced by the “horrible French Revolution” and, though Portillo thought he was clerically derelict, Cibot wanted to renew his ministry there. Cibot painted the danger of sacrilege, combat, humiliation, immorality, and impiety that he and his fellow priests had felt. Cibot depicted himself as having been courageous in trying to reconcile the spiritual and political, and asked for a place in Santo Domingo on his transit.\textsuperscript{82} Shortly thereafter Portillo learned that Father Cibot preferred to remain in North America instead of tending his flock in Saint-Domingue, a decision that greatly annoyed Portillo. The archbishop requested that García ban Cibot from any attempts to visit or collect aid from the Spanish side or Puerto Rico.\textsuperscript{83}


\textsuperscript{82} Adrien Cibot to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Fort Dauphin, 11 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.

\textsuperscript{83} Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, San Juan de la Maguana, 12 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014. Cibot did return to the island. See Chapter Seven.
On 12 July 1794 Archbishop Portillo wrote from San Juan de la Maguana on the frontier. He was there to review evangelization, but also to uplift the spirits of border priests. He encouraged these priests to promote the “vestiges of religion…that the majority of the French erased,” and hoped they could sway the remaining people of color in conquered and adjacent lands to the Spanish side. Portillo hoped that their evangelical outreach would further deprive the French commissioners of their troops and men. More specifically, in Neiba he had encountered many Frenchmen from Grand Bois, a mountainous area near Mirebalais. Many had preserved their wealth, and some their “true religion.” When they discovered that the archbishop was nearby they wanted to see him to plead for their own church where they could receive the sacraments in their home community. As a sign of goodwill several prominent residents of Grand Bois contributed donations for a church building. Portillo pondered how to find a priest to serve them. He promised them a French priest, a virtuous man who he had supported in Santo Domingo, who had once been sentenced to death by the commissioners, who fled to Jamaica, and then Santo Domingo, and he agreed to founding a parish there that would be funded by wealthy locals.84

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84 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, San Juan de la Maguana, 12 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014; Geggus, Slavery, War, and Revolution, 165.
Portillo worried about Father Loizeau, the priest of Petite-Rivière in Artibonite, with whom Portillo had communicated at length in prior times. Portillo suspected that Loizeau had sided with the rebel blacks who had recently driven the Spanish out of Petite-Rivière.\footnote{Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, San Juan de la Maguana, 12 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.} This loss of the town was at least partly tied to Toussaint’s recent defection.\footnote{Geggus, \textit{Haitian}, 133-134.} Portillo also relayed information on Spanish cultural, political, and military operations to the French, which caused him to further hope that the Vatican would place the whole colony under his ecclesiastical jurisdiction.\footnote{Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, San Juan de la Maguana, 12 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.}

In late April 1794 a skirmish between black auxiliaries under Toussaint and Spanish troops in Gonaïves precipitated yet another invitation from the French for Toussaint to join the Republic. Likely in early May he did defect, and his troops again defeated Spanish troops at San Rafael. However, he stayed in touch with Spanish officials for nearly two additional months, and left them unclear on his new status. Above all else, Toussaint was ambitious and disgusted with the inefficient interpersonal rivalry of Jean-François and Biassou. General abolition had given the French a greater base of popular support, but it took

\footnote{José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.}
Toussaint about eight months from the emancipation by Polverel and Sonthonax, and almost two months since news of the French assembly’s emancipation arrived. Ever cautious, deliberate, and practical, Toussaint was in no ideological rush to stand beside French promises of equality and freedom for blacks. The at least three thousand troops who defected with him, and his trusted officers Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henri Christophe, would change the course of the island.88

Toussaint, now a traitor to Spain, began a steep decline in Spanish and Dominican perception from his hero status. Born into slavery as the first-born son of an Arada prince and Catholic convert, Toussaint once himself held slaves. Freed long before the revolution, he also had bided his time to join the insurgency against France. He was unequivocally brilliant politically, unrivalled in military tactics, and unwaveringly calculating in positioning himself at major social fractures throughout his era. He constantly championed Catholic virtues and piety, and even repressed vodou.89 Nevertheless, despite no change to his professions of faith, his breaking of the oath made to the Catholic King and Christian deity irreversibly relegated Toussaint into blackness, radicalism, and heresy in Spanish perceptions. By extension, his troops and adherents similarly fell from grace. Only at this point

88 Geggus, Haitian, 122-136; Fick, Making Haiti, 183-185.
89 Dubois, Avengers, 171-176.
did the Spanish counterrevolution that had vehemently opposed French-styled radicalism fully attack the revolution of racial rights as a primary concern.

Once Spanish officials definitively learned of Toussaint’s defection it demoralized their ranks and severely compromised their war efforts in the frontier region. Beyond this, efforts along the frontier were in shambles due to overstretched resources, among other factors. García, who had visited and overseen military operations in the region, was in Fort Dauphin and in very poor health, likely with some type of tropical fever.90

Almost certainly unrelated to the defection of Toussaint, though compounding contextual negativity, troops under Jean-François committed an indiscriminate massacre of white and French-affiliated residents of Fort Dauphin, which Spanish officials deemed “horrendous conduct” and immediately condemned.91 Eye-witness survivors of this massacre fled in numerous, some reaching British-held territory or even the United States, and whose dramatic accounts appeared in local newspapers. At eleven in the morning on 7 July Father Vázquez arrived in the town center of Fort Dauphin with a small escort of six men. He assured residents of their safety. Around noon Jean-François, perhaps adorned with his gold medal from King Carlos IV, and Benjamin entered the city with about

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90 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 21 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.21.
91 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.7.
600 black soldiers. When the French whites saw the black troops enter they chose a representative to discuss their fears with the Spanish officers, who promised them protection. Most of the French whites fled into their homes, as they were disarmed. Only fifty French mulattoes who had lived in Dajabon and knew the Spanish were armed. Many of them were planters or their families who had returned to the area due to Spanish proclamations promising them the return of their plantations and properties. The French whites understood that the blacks were unhappy with this deal, aside from the black troops’ disdain for their old masters. At the approach of the black troops, slaves already in Fort Dauphin began running through the streets shouting, “Long live the King of Spain: let us kill the French people and spare the Spaniards.” When the black troops reached the market area about half an hour after arriving, sporadic killings began in different parts of the city.92

The Spanish officers tried to call off the black troops through mediation with Jean-François, directed by Vázquez. Survivors said that, “The priest Vasquez (sic), a mulatto, has a great influence on the minds of the Negroes, for Jean-

François humbly kissed his hand when he came near.”  

Gathered in the city were the black troops in an array of mismatched and tattered men’s and women’s dress clothes from previous raids. This conference failed, as Jean-François may have then whistled, calling on an all-out massacre until the black troops could find no more victims. However, Jean-François much later blamed the arrival of unruly troops of Biassou’s for antagonizing the whites and inciting the violence.

The white residents panicked and fled to the sea where they tried to board docked vessels, but the majority were massacred at the waterside. Bodies remained around the wharves for days. During the massacre the black auxiliaries yelled, “Long live the king!” Killings continued across the city until six or 7 in the evening. From an interaction with Dupinous, who was identified as Jean-François’ secretary, the count of 742 dead emerged. Jean-François estimated 771 dead himself. Many of the 800 Spanish regular troops who remained in the city seemed indifferent to the French whites’ deaths and sufferings, and apparently repeated in loud voices that that was what the French deserved, and may have even drawn bayonets to drive victims back to the melee. Some Spanish officers intervened by

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93 “Before the Council of Cape Nicholas Mole,” 15 July 1794, TNA, PRO, CO, 137/94, 236-238.
95 “Before the Council of Cape Nicholas Mole,” 15 July 1794, TNA, PRO, CO, 137/94, 236-238.
96 Landers, Atlantic Creoles, 76-77.
saving a few residents who they esteemed by collecting and defending them in a park, and saved other French residents by dressing them in Spanish clothing. The next day several French royalists who had lived in Dajabon for a few years had their homes plundered by locals in a possibly related anti-French outburst. One group of five French survivors, having made it as far as Cape Hatteras of North Carolina, drowned with seven of their slaves.97

One of the other factors that allowed this massacre to occur was the health of García, who had been present in Fort Dauphin until he evacuated due to illness. Also, Jean-François’ wife had also recently departed. The former was not there to stop the violence, and the latter was there to not suffer collateral damage from it, and the black troops knew that.98 The cause of the massacre remains in question among scholars. Perhaps the black troops were irritated by the return of their old masters.99 The French whites did take resources from Spain that they needed for themselves, and with all the existing friction of how the French royalists had treated them. Perhaps Jean-François did suspect a republican plot from within the


98 “Before the Council of Cape Nicholas Môle,” 15 July 1794, TNA, PRO, CO 137/94, 236-238; José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 21 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.21.

99 Dubois, Avengers, 180.
residents of Fort Dauphin. Pro-Republic forces, including defected black forces under Toussaint, certainly had staged urban ambushes. Perhaps the black troops were indignant at the proclamation from Spain that assured them of keeping their property and slavery, and rank-and-file black soldiers may have misunderstood this deal as an effort to reestablish slavery with them included. Or, perhaps there indignations were stoked at the enduring state of enslavement against people who they knew from plantations where they had themselves worked under masters who may have been in Fort Dauphin that day. Perhaps the slaves themselves in Fort Dauphin who ran through the streets shouting, “Long live the King of Spain: let us kill the French people” triggered the massacre in revenge. With the inspiration of the approaching black troops they may have hoped that their actions might be protected. Most likely, none of these explanations are mutually exclusive. Out of a force of 600 black troops of various ranks and life experiences reentering a place and context of relationships provoked a range of preoccupations and emotions. After all, these ostensible “allies” of French royalist whites were the very same people that the black auxiliaries had rebelled against and overthrown

100 Ferrer, Freedom’s Mirror, 120-124.
101 “Before the Council of Cape Nicholas Mole,” 15 July 1794, TNA, PRO, CO, 137/94, 236-238.
at the outset of the revolution. One of the most difficult aspects to explain is Jean-François’ role in the massacre. Whether he was overtaken by a frenzy among his troops, permitted or participated in the killings, or ordered them directly, remains unclear, and all we do know is that such excessive violence against civilians was out of his character.

Undoubtedly, Spanish officials were appalled at the apparently unnecessary violence. Urízar lamented the understandable impact of the “catastrophe” of the massacre at Fort-Dauphin involving Jean-François. He claimed that the black general was admired there, where his forces visited the town unleashed a “bloody furor” and “such cruel boldness” that caused great shock among Spanish officials. However, Urízar complained of these French colonists’ obstinacy to assist Spanish forces as they struggled.103 Given this recent massacre of unarmed French whites other royalist colonists were reasonably hesitant to affiliate with Spain and their black proxies, a windfall for the British occupation.

Throughout the summer of 1794 Spanish officials Urízar despaired at the recent turn of fortunes on the frontier, particularly regarding black auxiliary defections.104 A new threat emerged in late July 1794. Military personnel on the

103 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
104 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
southern frontier also reported once again of the, “theft of blacks that various individuals perpetrate to sell them to foreign ships on the coasts of Petit Trou and Barahona.” This despicable trade, related to that which had terrorized Maniel and Naranjo, involved the capture of, “French blacks and even some of the neighbors at a vile price to foreign ships.” Spanish officers collected substantial testimony against these illicit traders and sought to capture and send the criminals to the capital for trial, especially any potential Dominican collaborators.105 However, that summer as other “blacks slave prisoners of war” were sent by Spanish forces across the border and they were shipped in four voyages to Puerto Rico, as many others had been, “to strengthen in this manner our interior security.” Of course, those prisoners were likely sold as slaves in Puerto Rico. This differed little compared to the illicit slave trading that Spanish officers complained about, only that it transpired under the auspices of Spanish governance.106

For example, in June 1794, as in the many months before, Spanish forces sent yet more prisoners to Puerto Rico. It cost six pesos per person for this freight of both white and black prisoners, plus the cost of troops who had to escort them. And, as in the preceding months, the sale of the black prisoners as slaves

105 José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.
contributed to covering these expenses. This served the dire needs for funds in Santo Domingo, as repeated by the Viceroy of New Spain who covered many costs himself.\textsuperscript{107} Again, in late July 1794 as limited supplies arrived from Puerto Rico, Spanish officials sent more prisoners the opposite direction, perhaps even as indirect compensation.\textsuperscript{108}

At the end of July 1794, José Nicolas de Azara wrote from Rome regarding the requests that Portillo had made in May. He reported that the papacy had absolved several French ecclesiastics of “censures and irregularities” from when they “had taken the oath and adopted the maxims of the national convention.” This cleared the way for additional francophone priests to be integrated into Spanish operations both in Europe and the Caribbean, building upon earlier imperial and ecclesiastical conversations among Spanish officials. On authority from the Vatican Azara also told Portillo that he would be allowed to extend his archdiocesan presence across the entire territory occupied by Spanish forces. However, Azara relayed that, “The British, always attentive to exclude all foreign influence in their overseas possessions, have established a general point that the spiritual governance of all the Catholics that exist in their establishments in the

\textsuperscript{107} José Urizar to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 12 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.

\textsuperscript{108} José Urízar to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 20 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
world depends exclusively on the Catholic bishop of London.” Thus, regardless of the state-sponsored Protestantism of the United Kingdom, Portillo could not exert any evangelical influence over the substantial territory controlled by the British in Saint-Domingue. The British of course wanted to block the geopolitical implications of Spanish Catholic outreach, while the spiritual provisions of the domestically-marginalized British Catholic establishment had a similarly marginal presence on Hispaniola.

In August 1794 Father Pedro Cabellos wrote to Portillo from San Rafael with news that Jean-François had routed the enemy Noel Antó, who fled to refuge at Trou, where he intended to pursue him. Jean-François then arrested many of his officers, seized his artillery, and killed many of his soldiers. At the convergence of their territorial interests the Spanish, French, and British all separately attacked the independent rebels of the strategically-important Grand Cahos – mountains east of Gonaïves – caused many blacks to descend upon the town Hermita, near San Rafael, which caused many families to flee. Throughout the late summer of 1794 British forces crept closer and closer to the border with Santo Domingo. Spanish officials kept the Vatican aware of their military and geopolitical actions,

109 José Nicolas de Azara to Eugenio Llaguno, Rome, 30 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
110 Pedro Cabellos to Fernando Portillo y Torres, San Rafael, 11 August 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
and even called their troops “true Christian soldiers” while comparing them to the legendary Jewish warrior Judah Maccabee.112

After a “disgraced attack” at Jacquezy, likely by French-allied black forces, officials in Santo Domingo concluded that, “the enemy has learned that their force is superior, and after all the blacks have declared for the Republicans, fanaticism has been made general, and we should consider all of them our enemies.” With this suspicion of general and spreading radicalism among blacks, and the precedent of several high profile recent defections – most notably Toussaint – Spanish officials increasingly mistrusted all black operatives, and expected more to abandon the counterrevolutionary cause. They only hoped that the horrendous violence in Saint-Domingue would contrast with the comparative Dominican tranquility to entice undecided French colonists toward allegiance to the King of Spain.113

Further compounding these setbacks, Spanish forces evacuating from Jacquezy had been afflicted by an “epidemic of fevers” and had reasoned that they would have a better chance to preserve the majority of their conquests by selectively retreating to recover and regroup. García also reviewed Spanish-held

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112 This was not a specific reference to troops on Hispaniola, only generally to Spanish soldiers who fought France. To Cardinal Casoni, Madrid, January 1795, ASV-NM, 196, 34-36; Diego Gardoqui to Cardinal Casoni, 17 August 1794, ASV-NM, 196, 29-30.

113 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
territory in West as part of a broader interest among officials to dispense the magnanimity of Spanish rule into these lands and peoples, as they framed it. “The black general Tuzaint (sic) and his army,” had committed, “the most bastard offenses in the part of the West,” against the Royal Treasury. In fact, Urízar warned commanders understood that they should now watch the black allies with suspicion, so as to avoid another Toussaint-like defection. Urízar was left managing these relationships as García was still seriously ill and debilitated as he travelled through Santiago toward Santo Domingo. As a response to advances by both armed black enemies and British forces, Spanish officials sought to maintain “domestic peace” and repel any attacks on Santo Domingo by commissioning officer Antonio Boville to form a home guard militia to protect Dominicans from the neighboring conflagration. The British were, “more than maintaining the conquered ports,” but also, “making some progress in the interior,” particularly with the assistance of French royalists in their camp. With Spanish fortunes in an apparent downward spiral, one consolation was the apparent faithfulness of the Dominican people.\footnote{José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032; Antonio Boville to Conde del Campo de Alange, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1795, AGS-SGU, leg. 7165.} Ensuing events would further shake this fragile Dominican loyalty.
MARRIAGE OF BIASSOU: CATHOLIC CULTURAL CAPITAL, MID-1794

In mid-September 1794 Archbishop Portillo recounted military setbacks for the British at Port-au-Prince and Saint-Marc, largely due to the tact of Toussaint Louverture. However, he also told of rumors regarding a great massacre of Toussaint’s supporters of color, which likely referred to the *affranchis* revolt and massacre in Saint-Marc. He thought that Spanish forces had dispersed thousands of rebels in the central border region, and he specifically felt confident that roadways around Mirebalais were safe enough for him to visit there. His main concerns were that British forces lurked along the frontiers, who were rigorously trying to defeat black French troops, and that rebels might launch ambushes along the roadways. Portillo opined that, “…the whole colony [of Saint-Domingue] is today in the possession of the British or [black] brigands, without the Spanish possessing more than Fort Dauphin and Mirebalais.” He was right, in that over the preceding months, and particularly with the notable defections of black generals, Spanish military might had waned. Portillo was also concerned about the safety of the “poor priests of the South,” due to the increasing violence, including British intimidation.\(^{115}\) Also on the southern frontier Father Francisco Cubillan wrote from Cahobas that he was fleeing eastward with holy relics due to

\(^{115}\) Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Banica, 14 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
the fighting and attacks by the blacks.\textsuperscript{116} Although its projects had stalled, the entwined cosmological symbolism of Hispanic monarchism and popular religiosity remained socially vibrant for many of the black auxiliaries and French whites who fought with Spain, and, at least for the time being, actively competed with French republicanism and also British moderation for adherents.

On the first day of September 1794, Juan Sanchez Valverde recorded the Catholic marriage ceremony the black general Georges Biassou to his fiancée Romana in the town of Banica. He was listed as having been born in “Guarico,” and Romana was described as a native of “Cartie Morien” or, mostly likely Quartier-Morin, an area just a few miles southeast of Cap-Français. Sánchez Valverde (family of outspoken priest Antonio Sánchez Valverde) said that the couple were living in Hincha. As legally free people of color both were permitted to consent to marriage after the bride’s mother had been consulted. Antonio la Sala, the mayor of Banica, served as the distinguished witness, as did Manuel Valverde.\textsuperscript{117} This was, in many senses, the cultural apex of the Spanish and Dominican counterrevolutionary movement.

Portillo, who actually facilitated this accrual of pro-Spanish cultural capital, recorded that, “The black general Biassou came here with a great escort to

\begin{footnotes}
\item[116] Francisco Cubillan to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Cahobas, 10 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
\item[117] Juan Sanchez Valverde to José Nolasco Mañon, Banica, 1 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
\end{footnotes}
visit me. I strained my poverty to make him a decent gift, which will prepare his mode for confirming his loyalty to the King, which he swore to me and promised with the most solemn expressions. In consequence I made all the possible courtesies.” After their displays of pleasantries and ostentations, Biassou asked for edification from the archbishop, who appreciated the black commander’s spirit and affection for Catholicism and Spain. This was a much-needed personal alliance between two of the most powerful Spanish operatives on the island. However, “when, after a few days, he asked me for sacraments of confirmation and matrimony, I changed tone,” at which time Portillo said he chastised the indispensable Biassou. During his time on the frontier the archbishop had learned that Biassou, “cohabited with seven women” and made it clear to the black general that “until he would have satisfied God, and me, with a noticeable correction” Portillo could not offer him the sacraments that Biassou requested.118

The archbishop tried to make the situation a teaching moment for piety and greater righteousness. Portillo explained that after “such a serious reply, and to other grave but sweet reflections that I made to him,” that Biassou then, “retired to his home without responding to me, nor speaking a word. He closed himself morosely in a chamber.” Biassou was clearly insulted, and had sulked away.

118 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Banica, 14 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
When Portillo realized the potential geopolitical and military damage he had caused, he sent the “vicar of Hincha to console and encourage him.” At the black general’s residence Biassou, “received him saying that he would like to save himself, and that the Archbishop was an ambassador from God who had shown him a glimpse of the Gates of Hell.” Biassou may have experienced serious spiritual conviction. He may have also realized that his performance of piety to maintain the goodwill of Spain and their deity – and therefore continue receiving their material blessings, support for his career, and cooperation in his geopolitical aims – required an outwardly-visible lifestyle change. Perhaps Biassou felt both. In any case, the black general, who was so used to directing others and expecting obedience, told the priest that, “nobody had spoken to him nor dismayed him that way.” His renewed espousal of Spanish Catholic norms momentarily solidified a shaky colonial order, cultural reconquest, and military project that had reeled from high-level defections among the black auxiliaries, a path Biassou could have easily taken for himself.119

Biassou agreed to change his amorous ways for which Portillo had scolded him, and, “for love of his fiancé he had separated from the other women, whom he confessed had been scandalous loves.” The priest from Hincha who Portillo

119 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Banica, 14 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
had sent further counseled Biassou on this major matrimonial decision. Soon thereafter Portillo presided over the ceremony, saying, “The day that I married them…in a home distant from mine, [there was] a great gathering of all the principal people of the town of both sexes.” The local attendees of the ceremony further facilitated the royalist tone of the occasion, and brought to the ceremony, “the portrait of their King, which the groom took on his chest.” Biassou’s use of the image of the King of Spain displayed an imagined line of spiritual alliance that spanned the Atlantic, yet further divided the island.

After the ceremony Portillo said that he, “only excused myself from the party…to leave the couple a decent liberty in the marriage bed.” The elderly celibate archbishop dutifully recused himself from the conjugal atmosphere. Portillo described the raucous festivities, saying, “They made everything to my satisfaction. The table was large and abundant… Nor did they lack their dance,” and the party lasted until one in the morning, with Biassou always at the center of attention. The priest José Nolasco Mañon helped pay for the whole event, and the attention to detail and Biassou’s fulfilment demonstrate how aware Portillo was

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120 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Banica, 14 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
121 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Banica, 14 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
that this event further tied the frontier community and the black auxiliaries into
the Spanish counterrevolutionary project on the island.¹²²

Like the marriage of Jean-François a year before, the ceremony was an
apex of Catholic cultural capital. The black auxiliaries possessed not only martial,
but also marital tact. Portillo glibly recounted that all races and ranks attended
the raucous festivity. This wedding bound a core of talented and ambitious black
leaders even more deeply into a marriage with Catholic practice and Spanish
culture. Rituals, and in this case particularly marriage, offer a window into
partisanship, and a metaphor for new social pacts. For the black troops, Catholic
belief was a social practice at a convergence of utility, sincerity, and partisanship.
One of the likely participating black officers theretofore more tied to Spanish
power was Pablo Alí, a devoted aid to Biassou who, over the many years of his
career on the island, proved to be a remarkably adept political operative within
these cosmological and geopolitical contexts on Hispaniola.

LEADERSHIP DEFICIT & TERRITORIAL LOSSES: LATE 1794

Portillo reported from the frontier on the British victories at Petite-Rivière
and Verrettes against Toussaint’s forces, and that after hiding for a few days

¹²² Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Banica, 14 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
Toussaint attacked quickly and surprised the British with an “excess multitude of blacks.” Toussaint had regained significant lost ground, issuing the British great losses in the process. The Spanish commander at Hincha had made “arrogant threats” about surrendering the town, which he thought had encouraged black rebels to have “repeated their insults” on the border, causing the priest of Cahobas to flee further inland with the holy vessels.123

At the beginning of September 1794 many more prisoners were sent to Puerto Rico, likely including many black captives who were to be sold back into slavery. Fighting stayed near the border and far from the core of the Dominican colony around the capital and Santiago. This, and due in part to the continued shipments of dissenting prisoners, the capital remained calm. However, García remained “gravely ill” in Santiago. After attention from local physicians, he improved, and wanted to promptly return to the capital. In his absence, though, Urízar suggested the prudence in employing a wise and seasoned military leader to substitute for García while he was in critical condition and the war continued.124

Into late September 1794 Urízar continued to receive updates from medical personnel who treated García. García appeared to be improving beyond expectations, but Urízar still thought that it was unlikely that the governor could

123 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Banica, 14 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
124 José Urízar, Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
retake command and again suggested selecting an experienced substitute. Urízar cited imperial codes that provided for such change of leadership or the formation of a provisional military council could ease Spanish operations through a turbulent moment of illness and defeat.\textsuperscript{125} If defections, military defeats, and disease were not enough, the impairment of the Spanish governmental and military leader of the colony further withered counterrevolutionary gains.

In October 1794 Urízar confirmed that four ships sailed for Caracas with an additional 431 French prisoners, emigrants, and blacks.\textsuperscript{126} Apparently, 234 of the black passengers were self-liberated slaves who had been captured with “weapons in hand” and were being sent for the Intendant of Caracas to sell for the benefit of the royal accounts. The 188 white prisoners of war would meet different futures. This was one of the only – very insidious and hypocritical – ways in which Spanish operations could sustain funding support. Urízar fretted over the growing number of “suspicious French” who could with their “flattering mode of thought” try to subvert Santo Domingo, or stoke Dominicans’ aspirations for liberty. Funding for Spanish forces was very weak, and because of that he also asked [once again] for more money from Mexico.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{125} José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 September 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
\textsuperscript{126} José Urízar to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 17 June 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.25.
\textsuperscript{127} García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1793, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.418.
arrived that French military officials and troops had been resettled in Trinidad from Hispaniola were a major problem. One officer in particular, Colonel Fresineaux, was very troublesome for administrators due to his shrill demands for respect and better treatment. These republican prisoners were generally “restless, rebellious, and dangerous,” generally, and distinguished themselves as the “murderers of Louis XVI” to Spanish officials, all the while potentially spreading their political radicalism and discontent to a general population.\textsuperscript{128} While nearby colonies handled these prisoners, they also continued to disproportionately fund Spanish operations, often to their domestic distress.\textsuperscript{129} In general, neighboring Caribbean colonies bore a heavy weight for the warfare in Hispaniola. They did sell off black captives for a profit, but could not treat white French prisoners similarly, and thus inventories of radicalized and angry white republican captives collected in Spanish colonial port cities throughout the Caribbean.

In mid-October 1794 Portillo also reported that he had been ill with fevers again. He feared that the sudden loss of some of the conquered towns would delay the employment of the six exiled refractory French priests that metropolitan officials had enlisted to his cause. He speculated that these new priests could stay at the seminary in Santo Domingo until they gathered enough money to employ

\textsuperscript{128} Junta Superior de la Real Hacienda de Caracas, 11 December 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.

\textsuperscript{129} García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 16 December 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032, no.464.
them on the frontier, and mentioned how useful they might be at the new maroon settlement at Naranjo.\footnote{Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 20 October 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031. There were, in various places across Spain and the Spanish empire, at least many hundreds of exiled French priests who were underemployed and quite unhappy with the Republic. See: AHN-Estado, legajos 4033 ad 4034.} At the end of October García finally arrived back in the capital having been literally carried by others at times along his journey, as he was unable to ride a horse or walk. Urízar again suggested that it was prudent to appoint a wise military leader to substitute in case García worsened, died, or simply did not improve. Spanish officers remained haunted by their failings at San Rafael and San Miguel and the casualties and territorial losses incurred as every passing day their frontier defenses deteriorated in condition where they had lost two critical towns due to malfeasance by officers. To tend his own health from his exhausting visit to the borderlands the archbishop had travelled away from the capital to take baths in Baní, though he never flagged in his focus on deploying religious personnel into newly-conquered French territories.\footnote{José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.} Not only were territorial losses mounting, but the hierarchy of Spanish power on the island was reeling with García and Portillo severely incapacitated in the midst of some of the most decisive points in the conflict.

Officials estimated that a successful continuation of their military campaign would consume millions of pesos in addition to the millions of pesos
already spent. In late November 1794 and additional 354,000 pesos arrived along with 4,000 barrels of wheat to support troops in Fort Dauphin, San Rafael, San Miguel, and Las Cahobas. Nevertheless, García begged for support from the Viceroy of Mexico due to their dire needs. Further compounding the situation was that in late November 1794 the fiscal of Santo Domingo, Andrés Alvarez Calderón, began to investigate the disappearance of funds that had occurred among Spanish forces on the northern frontier. About 48,000 pesos went missing and remained unaccounted. Juan Sánchez, who had been in charge of the budget, conveniently faulted the black auxiliaries under Jean-François who had operated around Fort Dauphin. No concrete proof tied this absent cash to the black troops, but the accusations and mystery of the situation further deteriorated Spanish confidence in their allies.

Yet before that aid could even benefit Spanish border positions, by mid-November both San Rafael and Hincha were captured by French-affiliated forces. By this point Portillo and García – the Spanish colonial brain trust on the island who were barely healthy – were at odds with each other. Portillo was generally

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132 José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
133 García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 20 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032, no.461.
134 García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 20 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032, no.462.
135 Antonio Segovia, 25 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1035, no.2. Most of legajo 1035 deals with this graft of money and the subsequent investigation.
displeased with García’s decisiveness and pace, and said that many complaints had been raised about the oversight of an officer named Lleonart who had been responsible for the disastrous surrenders at San Rafael and Atalaya to French forces. Besides this malfeasance, at the end of November many troops from Havana departed from Cuba for the capital city of Santo Domingo, forces that might have otherwise bolster the colony’s weakened frontier defenses.

Toussaint had engineered these victories for France at San Rafael, along with his subsequent victory at San Miguel. The commander of San Rafael had surrendered and retreated to Hincha early in the attack, abandoning the town and its residents to the enemies without significant resistance. San Rafael had been garrisoned with almost 700 Spanish troops, all of whom panicked and fled when confronted by the “mob” of the black soldiers under Toussaint, despite those forces not using any artillery. Complicating matters, Spanish troops had abandoned their own artillery and all of their supplies during their hasty retreat. Only about 300 troops defended San Miguel, and these forces actually repelled the enemy, at least temporarily, and then retreated with all of their arms and supplies. A steady column of colonists from this region clamored for the ports. Tensions

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136 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Francisco Xavier de Herrera, Santo Domingo, 20 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

137 José Pablo Valiente to Diego de Gardoqui, Havana, 22 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1031, no.375.
were quite high as forces regrouped in Hincha under the fear of imminent attacks by the black French forces, a defense that was complicated by their commander being away in Banica.\textsuperscript{138} The suspicious decisions of Juan Lleonart, and the other officer Matias Armona, in this disaster soon consumed two years of legal investigations into the nature of this major Spanish strategic defeat on the frontier of the island.\textsuperscript{139}

García had tried to rally forces to the defense following these debacles, and Spanish officials hoped that if confronted their ramshackle troops would defeat Toussaint. He had written to d’Espenville, who was in Mirebalais with 400 well-armed and mounted French royalists. This force had maintained the stability and loyalty of Mirebalais. Commander d’Espenville was a partisan of the French House of Bourbon, but was inclined to Spanish allegiance due to their shared enemies and common worldview, and he had directly supported their operations on the frontier previously. However, with the recent setbacks, his forces had retired to Mirebalais to protect their own properties there. Chappotin, commander of Grand Bois, had returned with some French allies to the capital and according to Urízar seemed to be a “most recommendable young man…” He hoped he could

\textsuperscript{138} José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 November 1794, AGI-SD-1031.

\textsuperscript{139} AGS-SGU, leg.6855, exp.54. See also: Ferrer, \textit{Freedom’s Mirror}, Chapter 3.
easily unite with d’Espenville. However, it was increasingly clear that the few, fractious, and feeble forces of these white French royalists allied to Spain were wholly insufficient against the strategic brilliance of Toussaint and his larger, more motivated forces under the Republic.

Under extreme duress from Toussaint’s forces, and from the British, several Dominican frontier towns had written about their own struggles against the enemy, and furthermore their attempts to “sustain the honor of their ancestors” and “guard the altars, the lives of their children and women.” These particular Dominicans on the borderland clearly invoked the language of Hispanic belonging to contrast with the radicalism, irreverence, and blackness increasingly assigned to their neighbors. Urízar summarized this collective sentiment by saying that, “During the time of the political war I tried to imprint upon them, and achieved imprinting upon the hearts of the French that every Spaniard was a Lion.” The Hispanic, religious nationalistic rhetoric had, at least in these tumultuous areas, taken hold among a domestic population that extended beyond combatants and partisans. This momentum of defining differences in Santo Domingo against their neighbors to the west expanded in direct correlation to the revolutionary antagonisms that penetrated the colony. Toward the end of 1794

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140 José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 November 1794, AGI-SD-1031.
141 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 November 1794, AGI-SD-1031.
Portillo received permission to aid Grand Bois in view of his letter from that summer about the Catholic enthusiasm of the “principal residents” who desired to reestablish Catholic practices there and offered to support the expenses of a priest and church. He was told to proceed with mindfulness of the priest at Petite-Rivière and Father Cibot, the Vice Prefect for France. This was, though, a fight against the greater tide of French advances and Spanish defeats both culturally and militarily.

Throughout November 1794 border towns expressed their dire situation amid the intertwined persistent military advance and political rise of Toussaint. The local council of Azua, quite a distance from the border, wrote with alarm at the losses at San Rafael and San Miguel at the hands of the “General of the Party of Blacks named Tusen (sic),” along with the retreat of troops to Banica. They thought Hincha had fallen and were very concerned for the stability of Las Cahobas and Neiba. Multitudes of families filed into Azua from San Rafael, San Miguel, and Hincha, many of whom were in poor health and on foot. Azua residents resolved themselves for the “defense of the religion and our monarch and country.”

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142 “Al Arzobispo de Santo Domingo se le concede permiso para que los habitantes del Gran Bois...,” San Lorenzo, 17 December 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1014.

143 Ygnacio Batista, Juan Ximenes, Francisco Gomes, Manuel Ortis, Bartholome Vasallo, 3 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
the face of threats to sustain their religion and honor.\textsuperscript{144} The Real Audiencia noted that after the towns of Azua and San Juan had learned that San Rafael and San Miguel had been abandoned and troops had retreated to Hincha, and Banica, they felt terror for their sense of abandonment, but continued wanting to repulse the enemy, “making themselves worthy to occupy an honorable place in history.”\textsuperscript{145}

With the retreat of Spanish colonialism militarily and politically more and more Dominicans would feel this same panic at the prospect of entanglements to the west, and a related panic and demand for self-reliance at the neglect of the Spanish empire for their concerns. The outward-looking mobilization of conquest became an internally-focused fight for preserving Hispanic values among the Dominican populace that in the mid-1790s increasingly deepened its exposure to republican institutions, revolutionary ideas, and social mobility for people of color amid radical political engagement.

**CONCLUSION**

Similar anti-Haitian discourses born in the 1790s have regularly reemerged to dominate Dominican policy and racism. In 1790s public faith resonated with many Dominicans, especially elites, in the face of French radicalism

\textsuperscript{144} José Urizar, Toncerrada, Bravo, 5 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.

\textsuperscript{145} José Urízar, Bravo, and Toncerradas, Santo Domingo, 25 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
that threatened their understanding of their place in the universe. Fears of rampant African heresy and French anti-clericalism contributed to a hegemonic Dominican discourse of difference from Haiti. Within this Euronormative civility and piety a person of color could attain Hispanic inclusion with sufficient participation in the Catholic supernatural idiom. Even if France and later Haiti offered greater liberties, not all people of color wanted to trade their cosmological identity for the de jure distinctions. Rituals such as prayer and marriage offer us a window into partisanship, power relations, and social networks.

Public displays of devotion or perceptions of irreverence mediated inclusion for people of color and distinguish Spanish subjects from revolutionaries during the identity crises surrounding the birth of Haiti. In a Dominican body politic with a majority of color, allied black troops from Saint-Domingue contributed to an ideal of national inclusion predicated upon the rejection of the French Republic based upon the conflation of heresy and violence with blackness which was increasingly mapped on the local population. Vodou was unquestionably influential with Spain’s black auxiliaries, yet Catholicism was the hegemonic supernatural idiom of their allies in Santo Domingo. For Catholic observers, the black auxiliaries’ success and upward mobility appeared as blessings for their faithful service. For the black auxiliaries, Catholic belief was a social practice at a convergence of utility, sincerity, and partisanship. It offered
material function with weapons and cash, and metaphysical flexibility to mask or blend with extant African cosmologies.\textsuperscript{146} The inverse of this process came when Dominicans embraced secular ideals and, in Spanish and Dominican eyes, and passed toward being more French, more black, or, years in the future, more Haitian.

By the end of 1794 Dominicans were not only terrified at the prospects of French attack and republicanism, and of the unholy black masses, but by the weakness of Spanish imperial aid, all of which combined in the ensuing years to local sense of Dominican belonging and common grievances, particularly among the free populations. Spanish religious and cultural discourses, and military and political actions could not permanently patch together disparate actors, from black auxiliaries, to white French royalists, and residents of all variety in the territory of Saint-Domingue that their over-extended forces occupied. By 1794 the counterrevolution had stalled, and this reversal began on the borders of Hispaniola as Santo Domingo became more directly immersed in the Age of Revolutions.

CHAPTER 5
ENEMIES WITHIN & THE FRENCH ASCENT, 1795-1796

By August 1795 Archbishop Portillo was highly distressed at continuing news of French anticlerical persecutions and institutionalized impiety. He had become quite paranoid that pro-French blacks had been monitoring his own travels. Whether his tirade came due to a fit of paranoia or not, it did follow mounting losses by Spanish forces along the frontier. Portillo predicted widespread retributive murders if Santo Domingo was lost, including his own, which he counted as, “glorious circumstances to sacrifice life in honor of the religion and the monarchy...as they are very indifferent to the religion I profess, equal in their estimation as that of a Mohammedan or idolater.”¹ Whatever the mesh of African and republican traits that he perceived, his fear of social and religious tumult at the hands of their neighbors became a common and lasting fear for Dominicans who watched the Haitian Revolution from across the island, particularly after Santo Domingo was in fact surrendered by treaty to the French

¹ Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 August 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
Republic, which islanders learned of in the latter stages of 1795. Portillo and Spanish officials had been enthusiastic to embrace black troops who espoused a mix of royalism and Catholicism, and to overlook these troops’ overtly African cultural practices while they co-labored for social and geopolitical gain. As the tide of the Spanish reconquest turned it became harder for Spanish officials and for many Dominicans to absorb these black troops within their body politic when peace with France broke out unexpectedly.

When news of the cession of Santo Domingo by treaty to France reached the colonial capital in October 1795 sentiments of doom and betrayal surged among many Dominicans. Spanish officials feared open sedition from Dominicans who loyal to Spain and might ignore the treaty and fight the French occupation on their own. Outrage coursed across the streets in Santo Domingo, with many Dominicans becoming desperate or despondent at the publication of the treaty. Archbishop Portillo even said that a woman in the street saw the treaty and then died after exclaiming, “My island, my homeland!” Dominicans were especially concerned about the lack of legal provisions for religion for those who chose to remain. Elite colonists were also quite troubled over the status of their human property, and how downtrodden Dominicans of color might react to the combination of weakened Spanish power and surging rights discourses. Others simply could not believe the reversal of fortunes, from the Spanish having been so
close to taking the entire French side of the island, to the royal court so readily surrendering the entire Dominican side despite their fervent loyalty and the absence of threat for a French takeover.² Though French officials soon wrote to express their adamant support for religious freedom, many Dominicans and Spaniards remained dubious about their Catholic future, and resisted removal from their Hispanic heritage.³ At news of the treaty Vatican officials reacted in terror at what prospects of peace with secularizing and revolutionary France held. They feared what destructions awaited Catholicism with their spiritual bastion of Spain on the wane and on a likely collision course with Britain.⁴ While certainly many people of color welcomed French annexation as a chance to realize greater liberties, many feared the same trials of faith and social turmoil that engulfed Saint-Domingue and perplexed Dominican elites.

Further exacerbating the situation, in late 1795 the newly-empowered French Executive Directory issued instructions to its transitional commissioner in Santo Domingo asking him to win over “old Spaniards, today our co-citizens,” and attract them to love and respect the dignity of the French people. French

² Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 October 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
³ Étienne Laveaux to Joaquín García, Port-de-Paix, 4 Frimaire an IV / 25 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
⁴ Cardinal Casoni, 28 July 1795, ASV-NM, 196, 143-152; Cardinal Casoni, 1 September 1795, ASV-NM, 196, 222-224.
provisional commissioners espoused their aims to “completely Frenchify” (francesisar completamente) the colony, but also tried to impress upon the archbishop and parishioners that the practice of religion was not incompatible with free republics. Uncluttering this apparent cognitive dissonance was French republicans’ Sisyphean task given what devout Dominicans had read about the French Revolution, heard from refractory French priests, and witnessed in the ongoing Haitian Revolution next door.\(^5\)

Thus, by 1795 all Dominicans became directly engulfed by the fundamental antagonisms of the Age of Revolutions which, to that point, had been largely a second-hand, proxy conflict confined to big ideas and the borderlands. Most importantly, the Spanish peace treaty with France demanded the cession of Santo Domingo to the French Republic, which cause a cascade of turbulence to sweep the colony. Weakening Spanish colonial order coupled with exposure to French ideals due to the new presence of republican officials and citizens did spark an uptick in internal dissent by Dominicans of color. This, along with the gradual decline of Spanish power, inspired a mass exodus of white Dominicans and Spaniards from the colony, which remade the racial equilibrium of the colony toward an even larger majority of color. Many Dominicans who were unhappy

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with the transfer to the French could not leave. Also, while the leading black auxiliary generals Jean-François and Georges Biassou accepted exile from the island, the vast majority of their staunchly anti-French troops were left behind with the prospect of French takeover.

Throughout 1795 this trend regressed, rapidly eroding Dominicans’ political and spiritual locations. By 1796, due to a combination of religious, cultural, political, and economic reasons (including maintaining slavery, for some) thousands of Dominicans felt so abandoned by Spain and fearful of a French future that the option of British rule developed as a popular third way for Santo Domingo. Thus, in April 1796 political undercurrents pushed the Archbishop of Santo Domingo to voice grave concerns over festering tensions in the colony, saying “Every day the risk of sedition grows, dividing the people into two factions, one for the British, and the other the French.”

Dominican society and politics fragmented among Spanish loyalism and traditional conservatism, French radicalism, and later the British third way.

This chapter presents how Spanish decline, pro-French sedition, and black Dominican revolts forced Dominicans to rethink their Spanish cultural and political heritage, examine the results of French rights discourses, and explore

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crises of sovereignty, local distinctions, and questions of collective belonging. With the surge of French republican power Dominicans further engrained virulent Catholicism and political moderation into their cultural politics, distinguished their society from perceptions of their proto-Haitian neighbors, and entwined radicalism and impiety with blackness and republicanism, ideas that shaped middle sector Dominican ideas about Haiti into the independence era and far beyond it. The issue of Catholic spirituality during the intensity of Spanish reconquest from 1792-1794 became a test for the internal population. Images of black civility and piety set by the Spanish black auxiliaries became standards for Dominican populations of color, and those who defied Hispanic Catholic norms fell from grace, just as Toussaint had, and passed toward being more French, and possibly more African in the process.

With these events the Haitian Revolution finally spilled across the border to directly unsettle the social order and future of Dominican neighbors. In April 1796 Archbishop Portillo reported that French republican ideals of equality and

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citizenship had rapidly won popularity among Dominicans of color. Dominicans of color harnessed revolutionary ideas and exploited imperial vulnerabilities across the 1790s to remake Dominican cultural politics and realize their social ambitions. This chapter also proposes that from this Spanish colonialism was driven from an optimism about assimilating insurgent blacks into useful subjects in the early-1790s toward conflating African descent with radical sympathies and racial degeneracy by the end of that decade. Santo Domingo was also a conduit for French royalist refugees who stoked paranoias with dire rumors. As a French occupation loomed and race relations destabilized in the late-1790s this riptide of white flight swept hundreds of elite families from Santo Domingo, which cemented a permanent Dominican majority of African descent. This period reconfigured Santo Domingo's demographics, politics, and discourses on heritage, governance, and collectivity that subsequently provided the founding ideas of Dominican national identity. Newly-empowered people of color – including slaves, peasants, maroons, troops, and clergy – drove these changes.

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8 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 25 April 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.10.

Throughout this period Dominicans were forced to reconsider their place within the Spanish empire, directly confront French radicalism, and eventually British promises of moderation. Only in hindsight have historians accepted this surge of Spanish power in Hispaniola as anachronistic to the growth of rights discourses and popular sovereignty. On the eve of the treaty the Spanish Empire had surged in the amount of land they claimed in the Americas. They had gained Louisiana shortly before, and then expanded their territory during the Haitian Revolution with conquests in Saint-Domingue. It was a high water mark in the fight for monarchist, Catholic, and counterrevolutionary interests. It was a highly ambitious power play by Spain to take the most land in the Americas acre by acre. It was also a high water mark of Spanish power and imperial order in the Americas. The inward turn of turmoil prompted a collective pondering of the Dominican past, belonging, and a future political order, while terribly unresolved in this era nevertheless enhanced a growing sense of local distinctions. These were seeds of national difference. As Saint-Domingue stumbled toward horizons beyond France, Santo Domingo fell into a future without Spain after almost exactly three-hundred years of colonial rule.

Besides internal Dominican affairs, the Treaty of Basel inadvertently punctuated two points in the equilibrium of Caribbean colonialism. First, it closed the era in which Spanish-affiliated black troops had engineered the revolution and
exemplified black power in Saint-Domingue, particularly before the National Assembly in Paris confirmed abolition in 1794. Without Spanish support – guns, uniforms, money, and strategic support – the first iteration of the Haitian Revolution would not have pushed the French to the desperate measures of abolition, nor would the military and leadership talent that accrued to the Republic and later forged independence – Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe – have gained their experience, their prominence, and their hardened troops with such practiced military and political abilities. Spanish ambitions had been to mediate the plantation and governmental systems with spirituality and restraint, since they believed that French excesses in brutality toward slaves, and fractious and impious politics, had caused the revolutionary turmoil. Spain failed. The talent that is helped to developed turned back upon them in full force as the revolutionary bona fides swept to the Republic with their embrace of natural rights’ full universalism.

Secondly, the “Second Spanish Empire” of the ever faithful island colonies of Cuba and especially Puerto Rico – the Spanish colony most closely tied to revolutionary-era Santo Domingo – could not have happened without this counterrevolutionary experience. Their troops and resources flowed into take Saint-Domingue alongside Dominican actors. With the revolts French émigrés flowed outward to those islands, followed by well-off Dominicans after the treaty.
These colonies became the bastions of monarchism, Catholicism, and anti-revolutionary fervor abounded in this wartime and paranoid atmosphere. The slave regimes and plantation economies surged with new emigrant expertise and capital in the market void left by Saint-Domingue. The treaty of 1795, followed by the eventual French occupation from 1802-1809, were absolutely essential points of divergence for Dominicans from their formerly closely-tied Puerto Rican and Cuban neighbors of the Hispanic Caribbean.

**COURSE OF CONFLICT THROUGH 1795**

Spain began 1795 with great reserves of optimism for their operations in Saint-Domingue despite losses along the border.\(^{10}\) Toussaint’s defection roughly six months prior had definitely caused a reversal of fortunes.\(^ {11}\) In his act of duplicity, and in his looming threat, Toussaint caused Spanish subjects to turn town defending Dominican traditions and faith from the encroaching tempest of revolution rather than spreading those worldviews as they had in early years of the conflict.\(^ {12}\) Nevertheless, the start of the year found peace in the vast interior of

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\(^{10}\) Ygnacio Batista, Juan Ximenes, Francisco Gomes, Manuel Ortis, Bartholome Vasallo, 3 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.

\(^{11}\) José Urízar, Toncerrada, Bravo, 5 November 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.

\(^{12}\) Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 August 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
Santo Domingo, where Dominicans – “good vassals” – worked and dutifully passed their daily lives without few ties to the war.¹³

For the substantial portions of North and West that the Spanish did hold, Archbishop Portillo was pleased and optimistic about the absolution of French priests to aid the counterrevolution and about his new powers over the island, but was quite perturbed about the British efforts to oversee spirituality in their own occupied territories.¹⁴ Aside from hating the idea of British Catholic control in their regions, he worried about how this exemption might help them conquer the island, as the Spanish church did not hold out solitary appeal to disaffected Catholics. He also wanted to lessen the influence of priests who were hostile to Spain in conquered territories, and did not think that most of the conquered towns were peaceful enough to receive his intended pastoral visit.¹⁵ The sacking of San Rafael and Hincha by “black and mulatto enemies” further soured his view of military effectiveness which he seemed to think never kept pace with his evangelization, and urged caution for Havana, especially after recent

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¹³ José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 January 1795; José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 February 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.

¹⁴ Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 January 1795 (1), AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

¹⁵ Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 March 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.
revolutionary conspiracies in Mexico and Bogotá. In March fighting erupted on the borders with setbacks at San Rafael and San Miguel, which forced Spanish troops to regroup at San Juan de la Maguana and Azua, much further into Dominican territory. By June, Portillo thought the situation was so unstable that he asked the priests of San Rafael, Atalaya, Dondon, Hincha, and surrounding regions to take inventory and send their “sacred vessels, vestments, and jewelry” and silver, gold, and chalices to the treasury for safeguarding during the war. This was unquestionably a strategic retreat, one of the most significant that the spiritual movement had yet to endure.

Spain had to better fortify their frontiers against the reenergized French forces under Toussaint. For the time being Spain conserved their conquered possessions, and were particularly focused on the incorporation and security of Grand Bois and Mirebalais. Marques d’Espenville was the primary ‘caudillo’ responsible for placing Mirebalais under Spanish control, as was Chappotin in Grand Bois. They had, instead of fleeing to Jamaica or North America, gone to Santo Domingo looking for support when conditions went awry in their

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16 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 January 1795 (2), AGI-SD, leg. 1031. The Bishop of Havana had asked Fernando Portillo y Torres to visit there, but he decided to stay in Santo Domingo due to the dire situation in the colony and his own bad health.

17 Manuel Godoy to José Urizar, 21 March, 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.

18 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
hometowns. Spanish officials believed that their interventions had pleased both towns, especially Mirebalais. He would try to, “un-imprint from them whatever annoyance or equivocation from which the volubility of their nation is easily inclined.” These challenging efforts to maintain Mirebalais and Gran-Bois at least kept the frontlines far to the west, and Santo Domingo remained largely peaceful. Spanish officials’ other concern was how sincere and durable the loyalty of d’Espenville and Chappotin was, given their former interest in leaving the island for Jamaica or North America. Despite mounting setbacks through June 1795, the capital remained tranquil and in good order without any of the commotions of the frontier.

A few sparks had jumped the border before the treaty in 1795. One significant episode occurred in May 1795 when reports arrived in the capital from the eastern port city of Samaná detailing an elaborate anti-Spanish conspiracy. Several local blacks, some of them apparently slaves, and three French republican agents were captured along with a large stash of arms. Apparently the French republican instigators and their weapons had been smuggled onto the remote coast nearby, likely by a French naval vessel from Saint-Domingue. Geopolitically,

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19 José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.

20 José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033. It is possible that he was related to the Chapotin family in North where the slave François had prematurely set fire to the plantation in 1791 and almost scuttled the revolution’s launch.
the French coveted Samaná for its ideal position on a large, protected bay. With subversive operatives and ideas infiltrating the colony on multiple fronts, Governor García rushed troops to Samaná. With a similar pro-French revolt that had recently transpired in Hincha, García had decided to send the prisoners to Santo Domingo to make “an exemplary lesson” of them toward reinforcing colonial order and intimidating other Dominicans with revolutionary sympathies.²¹

García also wrote that, “blacks are [now] in the majority: exhaustive surveillance alone outmatches them,”²² and complained that any widespread future Spanish counterinsurgency would have neither concrete objectives, nor clear enemies other than Dominicans of color who he feared might rise up at any moment to massacre whites.²³ García explained that, “This diversity of attention on such an...extensive...island has me like an Argos,”²⁴ in reference to the panoptical monster of classical Greek mythology.²⁵ Nevertheless, these revolts

²¹ Joaquín García to Conde del Campo Alange, Santo Domingo, 17 May 1795, AGS-SGU, leg.7165, exp.25, no.624.

²² Joaquín García to Conde del Campo Alange, Santo Domingo, 17 May 1795, AGS-SGU, leg.7160, exp.18, fol.126.


²⁴ Joaquín García to Conde del Campo Alange, Santo Domingo, 17 May 1795, AGS-SGU, leg.7165, exp.25, no.624.

were sporadic and unconnected, and Santo Domingo persisted in relative tranquility compared to Saint-Domingue.

Spanish generals in North were also negotiating a prisoner exchange with General Étienne Maynard Bizefranc de Laveaux, a top French commander on the island. Not only were they in need of manpower, but the costs and risks of maintaining republican prisoners burdened Spanish officials. Unable to wait, a great number of French prisoners instead embarked for Philadelphia to also relieve pressure on neighboring colonies who had already taken in so many. In April, García sent Venezuela a shipment of “French slaves” along with white prisoners. Presumably these 187 “slaves” were black prisoners of war who would be sold for profit when they disembarked at Puerto Cabello.

The Spanish were increasingly pinned in by French ideas as much as by their military forces, particularly after the unprecedented citizenship for all blacks. Urízar analyzed that the, “ravages of the neighboring French colony that, the doctrine beginning in its metropolis, ran to these parts with an incredible impetus and celerity.” Keeping pace with previous Spanish accusations, he said that, “The whites began this evil, the mulattoes and free blacks followed their example, and

26 Marques de Casa Calvo to Eugenio Llaguno, Fort Dauphin, 11 January 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
27 José Pablo Valiente to Diego de Gardoqui, Havana, 10 January 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
28 Antonio Lopez Quintana, 25 April 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032, no.22; José Reyna, Joaquín Sonodo, La Guira, 1 May 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032, no.16.
they extended it without much delay to the black slaves,” again diminishing the separate political motivations of black combatants, many of whom fought with Spain. In practice, they broke, “all respects and ties, divine and human, have filled these lamentable possessions with horror and blood, converting the major part of them and its beauties into corpses and ashes.” He wondered how Spanish officials could stop the ideas of slaves from Saint-Domingue spreading to Santo Domingo when he wrote, “As greater in number, and having lost the fear of iron, fire, and blood, in them lies the greatest strength…because men accustomed to maintaining themselves in leisure…need many and very effective means of containing them, and reducing them to just limits, and moreover with France having proclaimed their general liberty.” Not only did he see unallied blacks as lost in frivolity, but that French abolition and their experience under arms would be quite difficult to contain after the war.29

More immediately, Urízar worried at how black troops had become, “exemplars of general liberty, and callings to our slaves…with the passing of time could perhaps produce some unhappy sensation.” Prophetically, as Spanish military attempts to stave off political dissent collapsed, radical sentiments soon inundated Santo Domingo. With all of these considerations Urízar submitted a

29 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
proposal tentatively titled *Modification and Limits of Slavery*, which he hoped would reconcile imperial geopolitics, black power, and slaveholders’ rights to dissipate the looming social storm for Santo Domingo and its extension into Saint-Domingue. He hoped that his, “pious and generous King,” would side with him to implement this “blissful course...[and] memorable example to other Nations, as that of liberator and restorer of these miserable Africans.”

One of the liberatory tenets still espoused by Spain was that of spiritual empowerment against French radicalism. However, the empire was losing ground, financially desolate, and regardless of whatever reforms these depleted institutions could muster the tide of revolution would soon sweep the Dominican polity. Soon enough, plans for integrating occupied French territory would no longer be a concern.

In mid-July 1795 as British forces pressed up to the southern Dominican border, formal diplomatic relations with Britain became increasingly thorny. Marquis Bute, British ambassador to Spain, demanded that the Spanish “refund the blacks and cattle that the insurgent slaves had sold in Spanish territory” that were taken from planters in Saint-Domingue. Those same planters had joined the British and demanded this recompense as part of their terms of alliance with the United Kingdom. Bute voiced the expected niceties of friendship, conciliation, and

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30 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 June 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1032.
good understanding, “which His Majesty so sincerely desires to always see reigning between their respective governments in that part of the world.”

Aside from demanding the return of illegally sold slaves, securing their borders, and establishing a claims process operated by newfound Anglophile Monsieur Malouet, Bute recommended joint operations to prevent slave rebellions. However, any observer on Hispaniola would have noted the open friction between Spanish and British interests, soldiers, and subjects, particularly along the Dominican border. The Anglo-Spanish alliance against France was barely believable by mid-1795. Furthermore, British agents likely had already gathered intelligence of high-level negotiations between French and Spanish officials, an omen of peace and, by logical extension, possible open warfare between His Britannic Majesty and the surviving Bourbons of Iberia. The British likely took their aggressive stances for compensation for their new adherents in

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31 Marquis Bute to Manuel Godoy, 12 July 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2. Born John Stuart in 1744, the 1st Marquis of Bute, or 4th Earl of Bute, was from Scottish nobility. He was himself a Member of Parliament from 1766 to 1776, and was the son of a former short-lived Prime Minister during the Seven Years’ War who was also a tutor, advisor, and confidante of King George III. In 1783 was appointed as ambassador to Spain. He was recalled to the United Kingdom in 1792 following his father’s death, but in the midst of imperial crises he was called upon to return to Madrid in May 1795. Thus, he had both expansive experience and connections in London and Madrid. See: William Anderson, *The Scottish Nation: Or, The Surnames, Families, Literature, Honours, and Biographical History of the People of Scotland, Part 1* (Edinburgh: Fullarton, 1863): 515-518; William Nester, *The First Global War: Britain, France, and the Fate of North America, 1756-1775* (Westport: Greenwood, 2000): 212-244.
Saint-Domingue to settle these scores and secure critical local support in their occupied territories before such a war.\textsuperscript{32}

In August 1795 the Committee of Public Safety naval minister wrote to General Laveaux in Saint-Domingue to announce the terms of the peace treaty, which ended the war between Spain and France, and specifically the highly-unanticipated Spanish cession of Santo Domingo. The report from France mentioned the expectation that Spanish forces should immediately put down their arms, and that, “Harmony and friendship should reign between the French and Spanish of Santo Domingo as it exists between them in Europe.”\textsuperscript{33} Given the years of warfare, and century of rivalry, such optimistic outcomes were improbable.

In Paris, the Committee of Public Safety’s colonial administrators sent the commissioners in Saint-Domingue new laws to apply regarding implementation of the peace treaty and to maintain the valor and energy of soldiers, and enlivening the zeal, ardor, and activity of the cultivateurs (the term, “cultivator,” used by French republicans to signify ex-slave laborers). Of note, with the cessation of hostilities their new task was to “conquer new siblings” – implicitly Dominicans – through “gentility, benevolence, purity of our customs that will unite them to us.”

\textsuperscript{32} Marquis Bute to Manuel Godoy, 12 July 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

\textsuperscript{33} Committee of Public Safety Office of the Navy to Laveaux, Paris, 1 Fructidor an III / 18 August 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
French officials implored colonial administrators to exemplify the character and generosity of the Republic. The Committee of Public Safety was busily planning for the defense and administration of this new colony, and would soon send instructions for its supposed takeover, but commanded French generals to act with patriotism and wisdom toward the Spanish.\textsuperscript{34} Republicans in the colony quickly diverted from this idealized course.

In late August 1795 Archbishop Portillo, wholly unaware of the peace treaty, had only heard from the metropole that the French had detained an Archbishop there as prisoner of state, a previously unconscionable act, and that French radicals more aggressively slandered the church in pamphlets and newspapers. He lambasted all of these acts as acrimony against divine laws, all of which would make ensuing peace and partnership with the Republic so unwieldy. Portillo implored Dominicans to “defend [the nation] with our persons, lives, blood, moreover when it is so personal an injustice,” spurring the populace onward against the Republic.\textsuperscript{35}

Portillo also critiqued the more progressive black power that the Republic had come to embrace, which had outflanked the exceptional Spanish inclusiveness

\textsuperscript{34} Committee of Public Safety Secretary of Colonial Administration to Citizens, Governor, and Administrators of Saint-Domingue, Paris, 4 Fructidor an III / 21 August 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

\textsuperscript{35} Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 August 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
of the early revolutionary years. In this more robust refutation of racial hierarchies, not only were blacks free and armed, but had, “sent the black deputies to Paris to procure themselves liberty of the Republic.” Portillo also had two anonymous informants who assured him that, “some thousands of blacks observed my travels” when he visited the frontier, when he returned to the capital, but even when he passed in or out of the city walls of Santo Domingo. Considering French metropolitan treatment of archbishops, he feared his own safety, and predicted widespread retributive murders at the hands of the republican blacks if they ever took Santo Domingo, including his own martyrdom, which were, “glorious circumstances to sacrifice life in honor of the religion and the monarchy.” Soon enough, these fears of French rule would become quite real. He further hardened cosmological divides across the island, saying that French blacks were, “very indifferent to the religion I profess, equal in their estimation as that of a Mohammedan or idolater.”36 Their republican affiliation and embrace of rights discourses further distinguished them from Spanish-affiliated black auxiliaries, whose faith professions formed an opposing category of black piety.

36 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 August 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033. Portillo, who claimed he had completely exhausted himself with his spiritual reconquests, was already planning his post-Hispaniola career, though he had yet to learn of the peace treaty, and lamented that his poverty and lack of powerful connections had prohibited him from gaining one of the vacant Archdiocesan seats in Andalucía.
At the end of August 1795 Santo Domingo was still mostly peaceful, despite Spanish setbacks that increasingly included French royalists who fought under Spanish flags were ungrateful for the generous support, honors, and commissions that Spain had bestowed them. Spanish officials worried over which allies had, “joined themselves with the black general Tusen, who previously was ours and committed similar vileness,” given successful attacks against Mirebalais by, “this caudillo’s army of blacks.” This included recent republican victories at Las Cahobas which forced Spanish troops to withdraw to Banica. The precedent of betrayal had spread eastward from, “the sensitive news proceeding from the infidelity of the parishes of Mirebalais and Gran Bois,” through newly-absorbed French colonists who, “feigned to be the most submissive, content, and grateful.” Specifically, “The two [royalist] legions that were in Mirebalais and Gran Bois, one with the name Carlos IV and the other with the name of Queen Luisa, composed of émigrés and other French, both left at the same instant and in the explosion of Mirebalais and Gran Bois went with the enemies.” 37 Confronted by black republican power, Spanish officials were also equally perplexed by the white French royalists in whom they had invested so much cash and trust. Their

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37 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
capability, and durability, proved far less than the black auxiliaries who remained loyal to the Spanish cause.

The Republic symbolically desecrated Spanish bastions of spirituality and civility, as they did “not guard the Divine nor human…nor respect the sacred churches that they horrify with sacking.” Spanish officials prayed for retributive punishments of biblical proportions – specifically, for plagues to afflict the hostile republicans black and white, whose civil actions subverted sacred duties reserved for only priests. French attacks against the religious principles appalled many Dominicans, and Spanish officials wondered if this “libertinage” and vacillation of allies would start to influence Dominican sectors of color who might embrace republican maxims. As if French incursions were not enough, rumors had even spread that the British had arrived in Gran Bois and raised the Union Jack there with some local support, territories that were quite recently Spanish. Even before they knew of the peace with France, Spanish officials wondered what type of preventive rapport they should strike with British officers in the area.\(^\text{38}\) Their ostensible allies had decided to withhold assistance against republican attacks and, once French forces drove out the Spanish, then attack the French and occupy the territory, thus indirectly pushing Spanish forces back toward Santo Domingo.

\(^\text{38}\) José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
The loss of Banica deep in the interior had even become a concern, so Spanish officials routed several hundred veteran troops and black auxiliaries of Biassou’s to fortify the town. If Banica and then San Juan de la Maguana fell, enemy forces could easily march to the capital, and thus depleted Spanish forces had to also protect the connecting road through Azua. Each of these new defensive needs drew critical forces away from the battlefront, and underscored the growing threat of pro-British subversion in Spanish lands.

In fact, Adam Williamson, governor of British-occupied Saint-Domingue, after having taken Gran-Bois and Mirebalais, reasoned to Spanish officials that the British would only attack towns where the tricolore republican flag flew as a military obligation. Gran-Bois was in the jurisdiction of the British-occupied Croix-des-Bouquets, Williamson had argued, which the pro-British French royalist officer Montalembert had sought to unify the territory otherwise under British control. This new, more audacious British policy was the expedient policy by which the British would eventually make themselves rulers of Santo Domingo, which they understood as a newfound British target attached to their machinations for Saint-Domingue. At this moment of compounding crises, in one beleaguered frontier town Spanish Colonel Villanueva asked a local priest sing a

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39 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
Te Deum over his troops and local residents. The priest exhorted locals to unify in defense of their religion, king, and patria. The colonel and priest, like the religious and military collaboration throughout the frontier, exhorted Spanish subjects to behave honorably in the face of fear rather than cower. Despite Spanish insistence in their reconquest values, and despite the attempts to reanimate the project from recent inertia, the treaty terms crossing the Atlantic would force Dominicans into French contact, first as awkward allies, and seven years later as occupiers, while the pro-British movement simmer to a boil over the following year.

CHARLES LESEC & ADDITIONAL DEFECTIONS

Not only had Toussaint’s volte face to the Republic and other defections jaded Spanish officials in 1794, these treasons increased even before the peace treaty, all of which further scared Dominican society from the trustworthiness of the black auxiliaries. In April 1794, on the cusp the dynamic Toussaint Louverture's defection, Spain's black auxiliaries had notched a key defeat against French forces on the northern frontier. The “valiant commander” Charles Lesec,

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40 José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033; Anonymous to “Tabares”, Môle Saint Nicolas, 28 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

who oversaw this victory, earned commendations for his “brave spirit” and the disarray he exacted against the French.\footnote{Carlos Lesec to Joaquín García, Santa Susana, 9 April 1794, AGS-SGU, leg.7159, exp.33, fol.152-153; Joaquín García to Eugenio Llaguno Amirola, Bahiajá, 12 April 1794, AGS-SGU, leg.7159, exp.33, fol.150-151.}

On 12 April 1794 a report was forwarded from colonial government officials in Santo Domingo to Spanish military brass regarding the defeat of French forces by Spanish auxiliaries during the former's attack upon the frontier town of Santa Susana close to Fort Dauphin. The “valiant commander” directing the Spanish forces during the victory only a few days prior, on 8 April, was Carlos Gabriel Lesec (or, Charles Lesec in French sources). He was identified as a mulatto officer of the black auxiliaries, was named as the commander of Santa Susana, and held rank immediately under the authority of the African-born ex-slave from Saint-Domingue, Jean-François, who was working in the service of the Spanish crown. On 8 April at four o’clock in the morning Lesec’s troops had been attacked by French forces. With a “brave spirit” they proceeded to inflict disorder and confusion on their enemies. After the fight Lesec had to enact swift justice against a Captain Mamba for not entering combat, demonstrating his lack of tolerance for disobedience to him and the Spanish cause. The Spanish forces under Lesec achieved “complete satisfaction” in this battle.\footnote{General Headquarters of Fort Dauphin, April 12, 1794, AGS-SGU, leg.7159, exp.33, fol.150-151.}
Lesec's account describes how four columns of “our enemies, the citizens” tried to attack and burn their encampments. The French forces tried to take the auxiliaries’ fort, but within minutes were repulsed, with enemy soldiers throwing their weapons and hats down and fleeing. The auxiliaries took sixty guns and their enemies’ drums. By eleven o’clock they had counted fifty bodies of whites, mulattoes, and blacks around the battle site. The Spanish auxiliaries only lost five men, with three injured. During the day Lesec himself received numerous cuts on his face by splinters from a nearby bullet ricochet.\textsuperscript{44} A black woman visited the auxiliaries and assured them that the republican General Villatte had been wounded, as well.\textsuperscript{45} At that time Lesec’s conduct was again heralded and endorsed by the Captain General of Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{46} Thus, into late 1794 Carlos Gabriel Lesec was considered a hero in the service of the Spanish crown fighting the French forces along the border region with Saint-Domingue. He was a bright spot of loyalty and accomplishment for Spanish officials wanting for optimism in the wake of advances made by the French and defections of other black generals, such as Toussaint Louverture.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{44} Carlos Gabriel Lesec, April 9, 1794, AGS-SGU, leg.7159, exp.33, fol.152.

\textsuperscript{45} General Headquarters of Fort Dauphin, September 22, 1794, AGS-SGU, leg.7159, exp.60, fol.301-302.

\textsuperscript{46} Captain General of Santo Domingo, September 23, 1794, AGS-SGU, leg.7159, exp.60, fol.305.

\textsuperscript{47} Geggus, \textit{Haitian Revolutionary Studies}, 119-135.
Besides earning the trust of Governor García, King Carlos IV praised Lesec.\(^{48}\) Throughout 1794 this largely overlooked figure was a hero and a glimmer of loyalty and skill for Spanish officials reeling from desertions.\(^{49}\) Into early 1795 Lesec approached the power that Toussaint once had with Spain, and was only clearly surpassed by Jean-François and Biassou. He commanded at least 1,000 of the remaining few thousand black auxiliaries. While the traitor Toussaint routed Jean-François and Biassou, Lesec alone held his ground. To a degree he had replaced Toussaint for the Spanish.\(^{50}\)

Lesec's fall from grace was swift and precipitous, as in April 1795, exactly a year after his esteemed victory at Santa Susana, he was accused of treason and was killed during a pursuit. Interestingly, in the official Spanish documents that describe Lesec's betrayal he was immediately identified by officials as a *gefe negro*, or black leader, whereas in all previous documents enumerating his successes he was identified as a mulatto. According to Jean-François, the "black" officer Lesec had been reported to have undertaken some indulgences of conduct that varied from the "love" he had previously demonstrated for the Spanish, wisdom, and submission. Jean-François went to Santa Susana to confirm this, restore order, and

\(^{48}\) Manuel Godoy to Joaquín García, San Ildefonso, 23 September 1794, AGS-SGU, leg.7159, exp.60, fol.305.


make accord. Outside of Santa Susana he was stopped by one Benjamin Dubison from entering the camp. Apparently Lesec had given orders that when Jean-François and his retinue arrived they should be fired upon from the fort, causing them to retreat and so that they could be pursued and fought. It was an ambush intent upon assassinating the top black auxiliary general. Jean-François decided to order Lesec’s immediate capture, and sought to question him regarding the meanings and reasons for his actions. Dubison created an ambush to trap Lesec, instead. During the initial encounter Lesec realized what was transpiring and fled on horseback. Though Dubison’s men could not pursue him, as they had no horses, they shot at him, with one hastily-fired bullet striking Lesec, killing him immediately. Jean-François said that Lesec paid for his treasonous attempt to join with the French republicans with his life, and fortunately was unable to deliver all of the camps and forts of Santa Susana to the “commandante del Guarico,” or the commander of French republican forces around Cap-Français, who was at that time was General Villatte, the same high-ranking officer that Lesec and his troops had been commended for nearly killing roughly one year before.⁵¹

After this confrontation had transpired, a republic legislator from Trou, a nearby town, arrived at the scene. Surmising that he was there to support Lesec,

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⁵¹ Joaquín García, April 23, 1795, AGS-SGU, leg.7151, exp.97, fol.513.
Jean-François explained simply that “our blacks killed him.” Two other local republicans also showed up at the site, and were instead apprehended. The Spanish auxiliaries found them to be carrying letters and cockades intended for Lesec, the cockade being a “signal of his patriotism, and the union of his soul with his brothers the French.” It was determined, though, that Lesec acted alone in conspiring with Villatte and the republicans to surrender to the French the territory under Spanish control.52

Joaquín García, Governor of Santo Domingo, authored this report based on accumulated information and testimony he had received from the battlefront. García, after reading the letters exchanged between Lesec and Villatte, and other republicans, reacted with shock at the premeditated treachery by a man that, “in another time had won himself the general opinion for his loyalty and for his brave spirit.” For their service and continued allegiance, and to motivate them to greater achievement, García awarded some of the black officers of the Spanish auxiliaries in that area the prize of a silver medal. He commended Jean-François for his actions, excellent service, and vigilance in the face of growing advantages asserted by the French republicans each day.53

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52 Joaquín García, April 23, 1795, AGS-SGU, leg.7151, exp.97, fol.513.
53 Joaquín García, April 23, 1795, AGS-SGU, leg.7151, exp.97, fol.513.
At this moment, though, it seems that the Spanish colonial officials began to see the black auxiliaries more than ever as a force to be contained rather than as optimal allies. At times depending on the writer, or depending on the skin tone of the individual in question, *mulatos* could be called *negros* in Spanish documents. However, the shift in calling Lesec “*mulato*” to “*negro*” may also signify an intriguing raciality legible within the shifting paradigms of Hispaniola. Two interpretations are possible, and may even be coterminous. Whatever Lesec's phenotype was, the pinnacle of his success as a Spanish officer may have had a whitening effect of acceptance, inclusion, or domestication amongst Spanish officials. Lesec's identification as black in 1795 may be attributable to the full abolition and formal racial equality of the French Republic, a turn that may have signified a radical blackness, a designation as “*negro*” that may have signified a posthumous decline in on the scale racial hierarchy for Lesec, whose treason relegated him to a less worthy social rung.

**TUMULTUOUS TREATY**

As if Dominican society was not already distraught by infringing revolutionary and military conflicts, by October 1795 news had arrived in the capital that Santo Domingo had been ceded by treaty to the French Republic. Dramatically following this stunning reversal of imperial importance for Santo
Domingo, by the end of 1795 both Jean-François and Biassou were to be unceremoniously exiled from the island as stipulated by the treaty. Before anybody in the capital even knew of the treaty, Vázquez informed the black auxiliaries after learning of the treaty from a ship that arrived at Monte Cristi. Jean-François still commanded 7,500 troops, and had just retaken Dondon, starting a new and thus far successful offensive near Cap-Français. Immediately both Vázquez and Jean-François were distraught and almost panicked for their futures.54 “The famous boss of the blacks” as Vatican officials called Jean-François would soon be gone.55 Before long, they commented on the “truly deplorable situation of Catholicism on the island of S. Domingo.”56

When Spanish officials more thoroughly explained the outcome of their war, and of their own fate of forced relocation, the black auxiliaries were crestfallen and absolutely furious. Urízar suggested sending Jean-François to the Isle of Pines off of Cuba where his retinue could become bucolic farmers, and thought that Father Vázquez would like follow them. While specifics of their exile emerged, the black auxiliaries remained armed, angry, newly-underemployed in the service of a terminal cause. Urízar worried that the black auxiliaries could, “cause us

54 García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.17; José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 22 December 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
55 Cardinal Casoni to Cardinal Zelada, 29 March 1796, ASV-NM, 196, 405-406.
56 Cardinal Casoni, 12 April 1796, ASV-NM, 196, 416-417.
much damage, and even impede our...delivery of our possessions to France."\(^{57}\)

Some certainly would try just that, and immediately explored other options, especially with the British.

Due to the logistical impossibility of wholesale evacuation, thousands of black auxiliaries were forced to stay in Santo Domingo. Some married Spanish subjects and continued their Catholic devotion, and thousands of these suddenly-underemployed black troops never considered siding with the French making them unlike, "Tontsaint (sic), Blanc-Casanave, Noel Arto, and other volatile tempers." Some left behind, including officers of Jean-François', and especially Biassou before he entered exile, began serious conversations with the British about defecting to continue their war against the despised French. Indeed, the activity of British agents all along the border had increased dramatically since the treaty, and targeted the loyalties of not only the black auxiliaries but the general Dominican populace.\(^{58}\)

Motivated more out of gratitude than the fear of Urízar, García advocated to metropolitan officials to treat their “multitude” of black auxiliaries with grace due to their dedicated service. The black auxiliaries had allegedly told García that

\(^{57}\) José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 3 November 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033; Manuel Godoy to Joaquín García, Sevilla, 24 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

\(^{58}\) García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 17 December 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.32.
they would, “prefer Spanish slavery to French liberty,” such was their hatred for the Republic.\textsuperscript{59} By January 1796 Jean-François had been sent to Cuba along with 400 of his closest followers, just as 4,000 prominent colonists had fled to Havana, Caracas, and San Juan.\textsuperscript{60} Other well-off colonists from the Cibao began to flee to Trinidad.\textsuperscript{61} Georges Biassou and his retinue soon followed, departing Azua and eventually arriving at the small outpost of San Agustín in Florida.\textsuperscript{62} Instructions from Godoy to Spanish officials in these colonies followed these black auxiliaries, including to break any contact they might make with the British.\textsuperscript{63} The Spanish colonial order hemorrhaged human resources with the promise of French encroachment.

Immediately after the treaty, Laveaux in Saint-Domingue constantly agitated for the immediate exile of the black auxiliaries, who he knew would never work for the French. Intriguingly, the mulatto general Jean-Louis Villatte who fought for the Republic continued sending the black generals letters of enticement,

\textsuperscript{59} García to Casa Calvo, Santo Domingo, 9 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2. García also advocated the Isle of Pines as an ideal destination.

\textsuperscript{60} José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 8 January 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033; José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 23 January 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.

\textsuperscript{61} Manuel Godoy to Joaquín García, 27 January 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.

\textsuperscript{62} Valiente to Diego de Gardoqui, Havana, 13 January 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033, no.522; Jane Landers, \textit{Black Society in Spanish Florida}, 91-97, 128-133, and 209-220.

\textsuperscript{63} Manuel Godoy to José Chacon, 24 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; Manuel Godoy to Marques de Casa Calvo, Sevilla, 24 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
at least in part due to his hope that their support would turn his own prospects against his rival Laveaux. Vázquez again dutifully collected these letters and forwarded them to Spanish officials. The priest also sent the somewhat alarming message that Jean-François desperately wanted to continue the fight against the French as “defender of the cause of the Kings.” Jean-François was, apparently, considering the formation of a purely royalist party to autonomously fight the Republic.64 Such were his and his troops’ political and cosmological convictions.

Soon, Portillo had to write his priests on the border and in Spanish-occupied Saint-Domingue to explain the treaty and the cessation of his cultural and spiritual reconquest project.65 The priests were inclined to continue on in their work, even though some thought that eventual arrival of French troops would unleash havoc against Christian values in Santo Domingo.66 Other spiritually dedicated Dominicans were concerned about the lack of religious protections under the treaty for those who might remain under French rule, and hoped to, “avoid the guillotine” while keeping the faith. Elite Dominicans were also worried
over the question of their enslaved human capital. Aside from the revolutionary violence to their west, Dominicans knew well of Robespierre’s Reign of Terror in France. Apprehensions only escalated when the Republic soon sent a transitional emissary to Santo Domingo with instructions to win over “old Spaniards...[into] co-citizens,” and “completely Frenchify” the colony. This bombastic mission further antagonized startled Dominicans.

Remaining French royalist allies also evacuated. In December 1795 François Chappotin wrote from Neiba to brag of his service to Spain in hopes of favorable relocation to Havana after the treaty. He lamented that his work in capturing border towns had been ruined by the encroaching British occupation in those regions, and claimed that he had declined British offers due to his loyalty to the Spanish. Of course, other French royalists had already taken such offers. With permission, Chappotin briefly passed to Spanish-held Trinidad with some loyal slaves from Saint-Domingue. Spain acquiesced, and the generational

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67 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 October 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.


70 Francois Chappotin to Joaquín García, Neiba, 7 December 1795, AGI-Estado, 5B, no.90.

71 Real Audiencia de Cuba, Havana, 27 April 1796, AGS-SD, 7161, no.22.
benefits of wealth and power that accrued to this family stood in extreme contrast to the treatment of black auxiliaries who, soon after the treaty, the Spanish began to simply ignore as a hindrance of an overly-ambitious geopolitical project gone awry.\textsuperscript{72}

**FRACTIOUS FRENCH DELEGATIONS**

Before having received detailed instruction from France, the embattled Laveaux selected three delegates to enter Santo Domingo and implement his own interpretation of the treaty with hopes of securing personal political advantages.\textsuperscript{73} Laveaux had his own significant opposition to deal with in Saint-Domingue, and thus sought to pivot Dominican resources, including the potential of new dedicated Dominican troops of color, for his own domestic purposes. At the end of December 1795, García had received intelligence from the border region that the powerful mulatto general Jean-Louis Villatte was preparing a coup to secure

\textsuperscript{72} Sometime after the British took Trinidad he did travel to Cuba and owned a plantation near Havana called La Ascensión. See: Consejo de Indias, 12 December 1815, AGI-Ultramar (U), 329, n.11. In 1827 he was given the honor of membership in the Orden de Isabel la Católica due to a recommendation from Cuban officials for his outstanding service against “rebels” in the Americas. See: “Nombramiento,” September 1827, AHN-Estado,6318, no.50. In fact, he made quite a career as a suppressor of maroons in Cuba, specifically. See: Alain Yacou, *La longue guerre des nègres marrons de Cuba* (Paris: Karthala, 2009). Chappotin, and many other white refugees from other empires, bolstered the social stratification of the Spanish empire, and he was greatly rewarded with land, commissions, and the continuance of his slaveholding.

\textsuperscript{73} Laveaux, Manlau, Grandet, Baubert, Pierre-Paul, Noel Leveitte, and Laratett, *Cap-Français, 30 Vendémiaire an IV / 22 October 1795*, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
power for radical *gens de couleur* against Laveaux and white French republicans. While Laveaux may have wanted to use Santo Domingo to his advantage, the turmoil caused by the Villatte conspiracy further disabled French forces and further delayed their prospects of actually absorbing the Spanish colony.74

Laveaux wanted to occupy Santo Domingo under his command as soon as possible. He named not only gaining commerce and thus much-needed material resources as an imperative, but also the regaining of control in Ouanaminthe and Maribaroux after forcing Jean-François out, areas that remained constant thorns in the Republic’s side.75 Near the end of 1795 Laveaux sent these three “commissioners or parliamentarians” to speak with Spanish officials about first relinquishing Fort Dauphin and other Spanish-controlled territory in Saint-Domingue. These carefully-selected tricolore officials – one white, one mulatto, and one black – represented not only racial egalitarianism, but the bleue, blanche, et rouge of the new French flag. The commission had fascinating backgrounds besides their symbolism. The white official may have been a comedian or performer in Saint-Marc. The mulatto official was a distinguished revolutionary figure. The black official had been a slave of “Lacayo,” owned by some planter of

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75 Laveaux, 17 Brumaire an IV / 8 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
notoriety. The commission grated Urízar’s nerves, who said they, “suppose themselves...as owners in our towns,” and without any notice to Spanish officials circulated all sorts of printed papers and tried to abolish slavery along their route to the capital. One of the primary sticking points of their discussions was that the French, who could not possibly effectively occupy and absorb all of Santo Domingo, sought a piecemeal delivery of certain Dominican locations that they viewed as strategically important. Spanish officials thought that this would serve to both destabilize more territory and also allow the British opportunities to take more territory, primarily because the British would not attack Spanish-held positions, but would take them as soon as the French forces appeared. This was exactly the policy that the British professed. Thus, to protect Spanish interests during the withdrawal of Spanish forces, despite the considerable costs, would continue to protect Dominican space and property from the British, from internal unrest, and from a potentially disorderly takeover with possible retribution from French black troops.

76 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 23 November 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033; Gabriel Aristizabal to García, Ocoa, 15 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

77 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.

78 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 23 November 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033; García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 19 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.23.
These considerations of territorial surrender and abolition drew immediate conflict, not only due to ideological, military and social contentions, but because the vague legal language in the Treaty of Basel regarding how and when these transitions would transpire. As soon as he learned of this impasse, Laveaux scrawled out a tart letter to García, saying that the French recognized “humans” and not slaves, which the Spanish wanted to claim as property covered under their one year to withdraw. Laveaux also condescendingly “forgave” García for formerly opposing the Republic. Spanish officials contended that their law prevailed until they actually transferred Santo Domingo formally to the French. García argued that as slaves were owned by people, and not the state, that the Republic had no claim on Spanish subjects’ property, human capital included, which the treaty seemed to protect. And, since French law did not yet apply in Santo Domingo, neither did their claims. Laveaux’s unilateral action and attempt to enforce his own interpretation prompted a flurry of furious letters with García, who firmly asserted Spanish claims to enslaved property. No easy solution existed for this standoff. Spanish slavery continued as Spanish officials

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79 Laveaux to García, Port-de-Paix, 4 Frimaire an IV / 25 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
80 García to Sonthonax, Santo Domingo, 19 December 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
81 García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 20 December 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.35.
continued to manage day-to-day operations in much of Santo Domingo for many years. This was itself an unforeseen complication, as was the treaty violation by which the French were too feeble to effectively absorb the colony, all of which incurred great cost to Spain. This new Hispano-French partnership between old enemies existed only in *de jure* terms, and was barely intelligible even in that realm.\(^82\)

When a group of concerned Dominicans from northern Santo Domingo visited Laveaux asking him to make a proclamation that would calm the populace in Santo Domingo and reassure them of France’s peaceful intentions, Laveaux instead decided to pedantically instruct them on republican virtues, and insisted that abolition would immediately ensue across Santo Domingo. This French official “made them to know” his expectations that they would adopt the “customs, practices, friendship, and fraternity” of the Republic, apparently whether they cared to or not. He did promise them freedom of religion, but to Dominicans this offered seemed dissonant with the cajoled adoption of French republican values, which to them appeared to include clear, institutionalized anti-church actions.\(^83\) Laveaux said that García’s defiance had continued to cause

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\(^82\) García to Laveaux, Santo Domingo, 19 December 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.

\(^83\) Laveaux to García, Port-de-Paix, 4 Frimaire an IV / 25 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
“incalculable damages for the Republic.” Whatever those damages may have been, Laveaux had also damaged openness and offended trust that many Dominicans may have attempted to have with the Republic.

Amidst this flux of power the visiting tricolore French officials also triggered local events of upheaval in Santo Domingo. Spanish officials concluded that their presence was simply a pretext to sow sedition among Dominicans of color, as these emissaries began telling Dominican slaves that they were already legally free due to French abolition and the impending republican takeover. This caused “infinitos cimarrones” (innumerable runaways) to flee their owners. When the delegation reached the Dominican border region their presence caused serious disturbances among local slaves, which Spanish officials counteracted to prevent them from starting to “escape and incinerate the canefields” like French slaves. Up to that point Dominican slaves had remained largely unresponsive, at least in outward action, to weakening Spanish positions and circulating French rights discourses that had already extended into Santo Domingo.

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84 Laveaux to García, Port-de-Paix, 7 Frimaire an IV / 28 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
85 Arzibispo Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 24 January 1796, AGI-Estado, 11B, n.44.
86 García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 7 December 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.30.
87 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 3 November 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
Spanish officials quickly expelled these three French representatives to the great ire of Laveaux.\(^88\) By and large, despite a temporary spike in marronage, the Dominican slave regime and daily social order had changed little with the new treaty, despite Laveaux’s aims.\(^89\) García wrote to Godoy for advisement on his constant conflicts with Laveaux. Soon, Godoy complained to the French ambassador in Spain, Emmanuel-Louis-Joseph d’Hermand, about this arbitrary delegation sent by Laveaux in the name of the Republic. The French ambassador, unbeknownst to Godoy, was trying to form an actual Paris-sponsored, conciliatory provisional commission to Santo Domingo. Godoy reiterated the protections of Article IX for Dominican planters and their property, and threatened that such haphazard actions might abrogate the treaty.\(^90\) Shortly thereafter, d’Hermand took an apologetic and conciliatory position regarding the rash actions of Laveaux, and did not try to dissuade Spanish officials from their understanding of protections for slaveholders.\(^91\)

While Laveaux acted unilaterally, d’Hermand, admitted that France was in no position to begin occupying Dominican territory and decided to send a

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\(^88\) José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno Amirola, Santo Domingo, 8 January 1796, AGI-Estado, 13, n.19.

\(^89\) José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 12 December 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.

\(^90\) Manuel Godoy to d’Hermand, 17 January 1796, Mérida, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.

\(^91\) d’Hermand to Manuel Godoy, Madrid, 2 Pluviôse an IV / 22 January 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
distinguished provisional envoy who, he hoped, would soothe the fears of the Dominican populace and skillfully navigate political, social, and military hurdles in preparation for the eventual takeover. Ambassador d’Hermand informed Godoy that the French National Commission had selected one Philippe-Rose Roume for this role due to his services in Spanish Trinidad, his roots in Grenada, and his experience under the Republic in Saint-Domingue as a commissioner at the start of the revolution. Without much warning, Roume soon arrived in Madrid to meet officials and with expectations for immediate departure as a safeguard against British ambitions for Santo Domingo. Godoy hated this plan, and said that since the treaty was still secret that any such appointment of a provisional envoy would provoke a British response. He also noted that this response, and other French actions, were irregular measures that already risked voiding the treaty. Godoy moved to postpone the Roume trip pending further review.

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92 d’Hermand (Charge des Affaires de la Republique Francaise) to Manuel Godoy, Escorial, 7 Frimaire an IV / 28 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1. Emmanuel-Louis-Joseph d’Hermand in Paris in 1755, he was twelve years the senior of Manuel Godoy but was quite his professional junior. In the 1770s he would as a bureaucrat for the French navy. For over a decade d’Hermand had helmed the French consulates in Lisbon, Tenerife, and Cadiz before becoming general ambassador to Spain under the Republic. He had actually written a well-received general study of the Canary Islands and a book on the indigenous Guanches of those islands during his service there. He was sent to Cadiz in 1794, and was only named to the Chargé des Affaires of the Republic in Madrid on 28 September 1795. See: Antoine-Vincent Arnault, Biographie nouvelle des contemporains, Vol. IX (Paris: Ledentu, 1827): 475-476; David Bailie Warden, On the Origin, Nature, Progress, and Influence of Consular Establishments (Paris: Smith, 1813): 316-317; Anne Mézin, Les consuls de France au siècle des lumières (Paris: Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, 1998): 349-350.

93 Manuel Godoy to d’Hermand, San Lorenzo, 10 December 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
In less than two weeks Roume arrived, though his conciliatory disposition lagged. He met Godoy and King Carlos IV to present a list of supposedly modest aims for his provisional commission. Godoy startled the republican guest by suggesting that he had wanted Domingo Yriarte, who directed Spanish negotiations of the treaty, to cede Louisiana to the French rather than Santo Domingo, yet his ideal offer had been confounded by Yriarte’s sudden illness and death. Godoy asked to make that trade. Roume thought his idea was horrible, likely to some extent given his own personal investment on the island, and d’Hermand referred it to Paris. Then, Roume took offense to the suggestion that he sail on a courier ship instead of a more official vessel. Finally, Godoy asked Roume about his experiences in Trinidad, where Roume had briefly been a prominent planter under Spanish rule. Roume criticized Spanish policy there, and complained that he had not been compensated for his efforts. His first interactions with Spanish officials probably could have gone better. \(^{94}\) Later, after Roume had spent six months in Santo Domingo he again returned to his request for compensation, including for his brief, more than decade-old written report on

Trinidad that he submitted to aid Spanish colonization there.⁹⁵ Roume continued to pester Spain about compensation for this report through 1800, even after he became the primary commissioner in Saint-Domingue. Godoy continued to ignore his requests, particularly after his “difficult” demeanor as an agent in Santo Domingo.⁹⁶

With Laveaux’s *tricolore* commission, and Roume’s uneasy presence in Madrid, these awkward, disjointed interactions both started and were metaphors for the next six years of Spanish rule with French provisional observation in Santo Domingo. These envoys had already made the colony a new stage for revolutionary political competition. Years later, Godoy himself observed that, “The acquisition of this part of the island of Santo Domingo was so insignificant that the Republic neglected to take possession of it... Even then it was not an act of the Republic.”⁹⁷ Republicans busied themselves with plans as to how Santo Domingo might suit their own geopolitical or ideological designs often with limited comprehension of Dominican realities, little tact toward Dominicans, and less concern for Dominican futures. Even French operatives who acted on sincere

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⁹⁵ Perignon to Manuel Godoy, Madrid, 6 Vendémiaire an V / 17 September 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp.2; Philippe Roume, “De l’Isle et-du golphe de la Trinite; avantages quel’Espagne...,” 23 September 1783, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395.


⁹⁷ Manuel Godoy, *Memoirs*, 412. He continued, saying it was only an act “of Toussaint Louverture, who accelerated the measure, without awaiting the orders of the French government, to who the commissioner Roume had a report on the subject.
convictions for admirable aims of emancipation or equality appeared pathologically incapable of communicating to Dominicans without customary condescension. Years of this approach gave way to republican racism and hypocrisy of later Napoléonic rule in the colony after their formal occupation began in 1802.

Roume’s instructions from the new Executive Directory in Paris included “forestalling” and “counteracting” any British influence, negotiating strategic handovers of forts to French forces, and enticing Dominicans to “love” the Republic, all formidable tasks. This presiding body in the French Republic had inherited the treaty, and Santo Domingo, from the fallen Committee of Public Safety, and prudently realized that Santo Domingo would be more valuable without becoming a new Vendée on Hispaniola. The last point, they thought, was predicated upon dispelling many supposed misconceptions spread by enemies of the Republic, particularly including criticisms by conservative priests who held influence in Santo Domingo. Such priests were “rebels,” not “martyrs” worthy of canonization. Instructing Dominicans on “eternal truths” was part of the “tutelary muse of the French people” that extended “its wings over both hemispheres.” Roume would start to “completely Frenchify” the colony. With clever public relations to Dominican elites, the French instructions noted Santo Domingo as the first European colony, and flattered them for their milder form of slavery, but said...
that Spain had terribly neglected the colony, leading to fertile territory that was severely underproductive. Dominican slaves, once liberated, would become dedicated like “recognized children” and help the colony flourish. One of the initial goals was to develop timber for naval uses. The instructions asked for Spanish officials to stay on in “full exercise of their respective functions” until the French could eventually take the territory, which might take a great deal of time. Roume planned to entice the archbishop to submit to the French constitution, and the Republic expected that if the British took Dominican territory they would take it as an act of war and fight, even if “bad priests” had encouraged British sympathies.98 Not only was Godoy less than thrilled with this prospect, Vatican officials who were already dismayed about sacrificing Santo Domingo in the treaty were unsettled with the presence of Roume as an agent of the Republic.99

Because of his experience Roume was uniquely suited for this role. He had many experiences in trans-imperial relations in the Caribbean, having been born and raised under French rule in Grenada, marrying into and English family


and learning English under British rule in Grenada, and moving his entire family to Spanish domains where he practiced Catholicism and learned Spanish in Trinidad. On his first stay in Trinidad in 1777, he purchased a large amount of land just northwest of Port of Spain as a show of good faith and commitment to prosperity. He had once even travelled across the Lesser Antilles trying to drum up interest from French and British planters to settle Spanish Trinidad. He actually surveyed the island and wrote an extensive report back to the British governor of Grenada about the suitability of the island for settlers. Roume attracted a wave of settlers with descriptions of fertile lands for cotton, coffee, cacao, and cane. In subsequent years he visited Caracas and even Madrid to persuade Spanish authorities to welcome thousands of emigrants (enslaved and free) and their capital (financial and human) into Trinidad. The Spanish also offered each family the potential for hundreds of free acres, especially if they brought slaves, and subsidized livestock, food, and agricultural supplies for settlers.  

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101 A. John Meredith, *The Plantation Slaves of Trinidad, 1783-1816* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988): 13-15. In 1776 Trinidad featured only a few thousand residents and woeful export economy. To enhance settlement and production Spanish officials enticed disaffected French colonists from nearby islands, and particularly from Grenada, which had recently fallen into the hands of the British Empire. Roume, who had been born in Grenada, was one of the first and most important figures to accept this relocation offer (he did this in 1777). In 1783 the Spanish issued a new decree, saying that settlers had to be Catholic and from friendly nations, of which Roume was both at the time. Settlers with five years’ residence could even apply for citizenship.
As the new Provisional Agent Roume wanted to draw out the “virtues and talents” of “Dominican siblings.” Besides this, in paranoia Roume thought that “counterrevolutionaries” and “evil French priests” had impeded his departure from Spain, supported by the “worthless Pitt,” an unlikely level of sophisticated subversion. He did fear what ideas preceded him about the religious policies of the Republic, and realized that among the “African population” itself there might be doubts regarding abolition, given violence in the west. He followed the Republic’s talking point that abolition would increase the tenacity and vigor of black labor. Despite all of his political differences, he believed he would become good friends with Archbishop Portillo and Governor García, who he presumed would come to love him. He thought he and Portillo together could convince creole priests that republican values were in fact better for Christianity than “aristocratic despotism.”

Roume was certainly ambitious.

Roume traveled onward to Sevilla where he awaited his voyage to Santo Domingo from Cádiz. Godoy remained furious at d’Hermand’s refusal to address his concerns about Roume and his presence in Santo Domingo, and thus

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103 d’Hermand to Manuel Godoy, Madrid, 1 Pluviôse an IV / 21 January 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Juan Ignacio de Bejarano y Frias to Manuel Godoy, Madrid, 16 January 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp.3; Juan Ignacio de Bejarano y Frias to Manuel Godoy, Madrid, 28 January 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp.3; Juan Langarra to Manuel Godoy, Ysla de Leon, 26 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
delayed his departure pending resolution. During his stay in Sevilla he dined with three French citizens and a Mexican, who Roume asked to help him procure a portrait of Moctezuma and a copy of the writings of Bartolomé de las Casas. During their meal a refractory French priest in exile, Father Antoine Drull, entered the inn to accost the French citizens, apparently also having brought along a constable who waited outside in case violence ensued. The French were appalled by his tirade and accusations, and their Mexican companion took them straight to the mayor’s office to complain. The mayor initially sided with the “minister of the Almighty,” infuriating the republican entourage. Roume speculated that the priest wanted to insult them, draw a reaction, and then have a riot against the Frenchmen in defense of religion. Unsatisfied, Roume complained directly to Godoy, who he expected to punish the priest and threatened tattle to the Executive Directory. Roume had yet to hit his conciliatory stride before reaching Santo Domingo.

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104 d’Hermand to Manuel Godoy, 1 Pluviôse an 4, 26 January 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Manuel Godoy to d’Hermand, Badajoz, 26 January 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.

105 Manuel Godoy, February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp.2; Manuel Candido Moreno to Manuel Godoy, Sevilla, 26 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp.2; Juan Ignacio de Bejarano y Frias to Manuel Godoy, Madrid, 16 January 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395; "Relativo a los procedimientos judiciales hechos en Sevilla al Vice Consul Frances," AHN-Estado, leg. 3918, exp. 22. Other exiled French priests in Sevilla wrote directly to the Vatican begging for ways to serve: Felix Fabre, Sevilla, 26 August 1795, ASV-NM, 196, 228-229.
When Roume finally did depart, Godoy placated García by saying that the provisional agent promised to help soothe Dominicans apprehensions regarding a French occupation, especially after the damaging delegation sent by Laveaux. Godoy also prepared García for the possibility that due to French involvement in the revolution and lack of resources it might be a long time before the Republic could actually occupy Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{106} Roume sailed in early March aboard the \textit{Juno} with four assistants and arrived in Santo Domingo on 8 April 1796.\textsuperscript{107} During his first days in Santo Domingo the new Provisional Agent Roume visited churches and express interest in spiritual matters. The church administration in Santo Domingo, unimpressed with republican overtures, continued evacuating its property from the colony. Spanish officials recoiled at the idea that they were paying millions of pesos to continue managing and protecting a territory while a French envoy pulled away its subjects through disdainful maxims of equality, all the while staving off British advances, who continued making significant gains in West and South in Saint-Domingue. Abandoned by their own king, appalled by the French, Dominicans in the interior gravitated toward British moderation and monarchism. Seemingly uninterested in addressing these issues, Roume instead

\textsuperscript{106} Manuel Godoy to Joaquín García, Sevilla, 24 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.

\textsuperscript{107} Manuel Godoy, 26 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Socorro to Manuel Godoy, 12 March 1796, Bay of Cádiz, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Marques del Socorro to Manuel Godoy, 7 June 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 12 April 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.59.
tried to make new friends by espousing his hope to “seduce” Dominicans to the Republic. Roume also requested the return of French blacks captured and sent into slavery in Santo Domingo, unaware that a great many had already been sent off the island to bondage in other Spanish colonies.\textsuperscript{108} Much like his first days in Madrid, Roume’s arrival in Santo Domingo was lackluster.

With Roume’s interventions by mid-1796 the Spanish began to hand over a few strategic positions to the French. With his republican presence more Dominicans began to move out of Santo Domingo for other Spanish colonies.\textsuperscript{109} This included the handing over of Fort Dauphin in July, after which 1,600 Spanish troops withdrew to Havana against García’s wishes considering the daunting British threat.\textsuperscript{110} As military defenses evaporated, the British encroached, and occupying black French troops loomed, the war cut deeper into Santo Domingo. More profoundly, the aggressive provisional agent of the Republic sat in the heart of the capital of Santo Domingo stirring the political pot in the colony in hopes of enticing Dominicans to revolutionary virtue. While some joined his cause, by and large social polarization simply increased, including due to the fact that the

\textsuperscript{108} José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo 16 April 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

\textsuperscript{109} José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 May 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033; Esteban Fernandez de Leon to Diego de Gardoqui, Caracas, 8 June 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.

\textsuperscript{110} Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 13 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.73.
previously externally-focused evangelical mission of Spain become an inward-focused defense of religion and Hispanic identity.

**STRAINS OF SEDITION, AND THE ACTITUD DE LOS NEGROS**

Unlike the calming of tensions and friendship promised, Philippe Roume accelerated cultural ferment in Santo Domingo. Republicans, many of color and many from Saint-Domingue, began to move into the capital during this period of peace in expectation of full French rule. Like they had in Saint-Domingue, they literally commandeered churches and preached a gospel of equality and liberty from local pulpits, scandalizing many Dominicans.

Pulpits elsewhere in the colony also became rostrums for revolutionary rhetoric. Juan Valerio Quiñones, a mulatto priest from Monte Cristi, had disparaged and derided the authority of Portillo and tried to unilaterally cede his parish to the French Republic on his own volition. In an attempt to win the priest of Santiago over to his perspective he had even called the king a tyrant. This priest earned the nickname “the Incendiary,” perhaps because of his revolutionary actions, and perhaps because he had burnt some church records – it is unclear whether this was accidental or not. He was so convinced by republicanism that he tried to cede his parish to the French. In attempt to sway other priests he defamed the archbishop and called the king a tyrant. Spanish officials noted that he read
“blasphemous” texts, and that “Frenchness” had begun to affect his manners and pronunciations. This priest even confronted the archbishop in Santo Domingo with a *tricolore* cockade in his hat. After this he was welcomed at Commissioner Roume’s residence where he professed his loyalty to the republic. French officials in Santo Domingo bestowed him citizenship with “Liberty, Equality, French Republic” emblazoned on his papers. Furthermore, amidst the ongoing abolition conflict this incendiary priest stoked the cultural conflagration by marrying a Dominican slave girl who was half his age under French civil law. A slave owner had confirmed that a “good-looking” eighteen year-old mulatto girl that he owned had drawn the attention of this “bad priest,” and that apparently before his republican epiphany many people had seen the two spending the night together. This was the same priest who, allegedly, had refused to give a parishioner their last rites because he wanted to finish playing a good hand of cards. In any case, after their republican nuptials, these newly-secular newlyweds then dined with French officials as guests of honor. Again, none of these events

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111 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 4 August 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.2.
112 Philippe-Rose Roume to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 26 July 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.2.
113 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 4 August 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.2; Philippe-Rose Roume to Joaquin García, Santo Domingo, 26 July 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.2.
114 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 4 August 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.2.
soothed Dominicans’ fears about the role of religiosity under eventual rule of the Republic. This case exemplifies the aggression of French cultural politics well beyond their formal role in Santo Domingo, as they further emboldened Dominicans to flaunt Spanish colonialism if they so chose. Such actions scandalized the devout.

Only weeks after French Commissioner Roume officiated this marriage he asked Archbishop Portillo for a divorce from his own wife of thirty years, explaining that his worldview had dramatically changed during the revolution, yet his wife’s had not. His wife was from an English family, as well, and she had never embraced his revolutionary furor. Roume, who insisted he was a serious Catholic, told Portillo that he hoped the practice of politically-motivated divorce would become more common, and hoped that the archbishop would accept his request. Roume said he wanted an egalitarian marriage to a younger woman whose principles aligned with his own and who might stand with “our brothers the Haitians.” Roume soon married his mistress, a mulata, with whom he would have a child. In these two cases the supposed permanence of priestly and marital vows suffered disunion by radical fervor. The French republicans were fully

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115 Philippe-Rose Roume to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Santo Domingo, 16 Brumaire an V / 6 November 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp.2.

aware of their actions of religious warfare, and these ritual repudiations of Catholic norms, on top of the misappropriation of churches, repulsed devout Dominicans.

After the treaty a wave of anti-colonial conspiracies also jolted Santo Domingo. Scattered uprisings by black rebels proliferated near La Vega, Baní, and Cotuí, locations that were both distant from one another, and quite far from the border with revolutionary Saint-Domingue. Very little documentation remains one these instances of unrest, but Spanish feebleness and French radicalism may have certainly contributed influence to whatever local or personal grievances the insurgents held. In any case, with increasing frequency the revolution and its ideals spread in Santo Domingo. Spanish officials quite readily blamed the new French republican residents. Whatever the cause, Dominicans became more paranoid about social disintegration and violence. White flight escalated, destabilizing French emissaries arrived in the capital, and opened structural spaces for marginalized people of color to actualize their own ambitions for

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117 José del Orbe to Joaquín García, La Vega, 8 November 1795, AGI-Estado, 5A, n.50; Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 21 November 1795, AGI-Estado, 5A, n.50.

118 Carlos Esteban Deive, Los guerrilleros negros: Esclavos fugitivos y cimarrones (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1997), 191-201 and 235-245; Laurent Dubois, Avengers, 52; Fick, Making of Haiti, 51-52.
Dominican society. Later in 1796 the archbishop excoriated Dominicans’ lack of loyalty to the crown, and predicted that disunity would foster more chaos.

With mounting anticlericalism, Fernando Portillo, Archbishop of Santo Domingo, wrote of armed black republican opportunists near the frontier who apparently sacked churches, despite the peace. A priest recounted that their leader, “talked to me... In a miserable state” and took “holy vessels” from the church to use for amusement, including wearing various church items as ornaments. Many towns in Santo Domingo felt so abandoned by the king that they no longer bothered to obey Spanish directives. Amidst these attacks on Hispanic heritage, as part of the Spanish retreat and the evacuation of families and goods to Cuba, and this included the removal of the tomb of the ‘First Discoverer of the New World’ from the Santo Domingo cathedral with all military pomp. They moved the tomb of Christopher Columbus, Colón’s bones from a deteriorated old box into a new one of lead, encased in a new wooden box, draped

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119 Moya Pons, *Dominican Republic*, 99-100.

120 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 4 August 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.2.

121 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 24 January 1796, AGI-Estado, 11B, n.44; Fray Gregorio Ramos to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Santiago, 11 January 1796, AGI-Estado, 11B, n.44.

122 Juan Caballero to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Santiago, 8 January 1796, AGI-Estado, 11B, n.44; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Conde del Campo Alange, Santo Domingo, 24 January 1796, AGI-Estado, 11B, n.44.

123 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 25 April 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.10.
with black velvet and gold trim. It was escorted by a guard on naval ships to Havana. Cut from the vine of Spanish power that had sustained it for 300 years, Hispanic symbols of Santo Domingo’s position as the empire’s first fruit in the Americas withered. Many Dominicans, who reveled in their colony’s status as a first Christian bastion of the Americas in the city that Colón had founded, reeled from such a major emblematic loss.

Archbishop Portillo slammed Spanish inability to silence the “seditious libel” circulating, which he thought induced hate, defamation of the king, and insurrection. He felt that this threat required “severe censure or armed prohibition” against open political dissent, and sarcastically snapped that, “the government is [not] sleeping, but... Is already dead.” He thus awaited “the anarchy from [Saint-Domingue] in our populations.” Simultaneously, French officials became more active in enticing Spain’s “best blacks” to stay on the island with promises of lucrative positions in attempts to stave off British recruitment.

Intriguingly, the French also asked Archbishop Portillo to remain in Santo Domingo as the Bishop of Ayti, which they said was “the name that the native

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124 José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 22 December 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033; José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 8 January 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.

125 See also: Ferrer, Freedom’s Mirror, 137 and 322.

126 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 8 June 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, no.11.
Indians gave this island, which I think they will restore after the handover.”

Some colloquially referenced this name on occasion, however, this is the earliest known usage of “Ayti” by a French republican officials who not only implied that they wanted restore the name, but hoped to use it across the island and also integrate remaining Spanish Catholic institutions into the project. Portillo was less than enthused about the idea, perhaps because in this same letter Roume lambasted the Inquisition, proposed making priests accountable to the Republic and not church hierarchies, discussed ideas of limiting church property holdings, and excoriated hypocritical “Jews and libertines” in Madrid who he said misled Spanish interests.

Philippe Roume and other French citizens in Santo Domingo continued their cultural subversion. They very publicly and enthusiastically celebrated Bastille Day in 1796 in Santo Domingo, and with raucous applause they heralded what Spanish officials called the “horrible and frightening successes [of their revolution] that continue to this unhappy day.” The “cleverly tricky” French

127 Philippe-Rose Roume to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Santo Domingo, 22 May 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.2.

128 The statement by Roume mentioned here in which he refers to adopting the name of Ayti for the entire island came in May 1796. The previously earliest-known mention of possibly using this name was by Roume in July 1796, and perhaps only referred to the French side of the island. See: Geggus, Haitian Revolutionary Studies, 212-216.

129 Philippe-Rose Roume to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Santo Domingo, 22 May 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.2.
officials also mingled directly with the general Dominican populace, which accelerated political fermentation. French citizens migrated into the city constantly, many of whom were of color. They threatened to exceed the already diminished local population, and did not bother to abide by Spanish racial conventions.\textsuperscript{130} They took homes, opened cafés, and held disruptive funerals with republican motifs with Roume preaching the gospel of equality and liberty from the pulpit. As Spanish colonialism unraveled Dominicans had to reconsider their own best interests and local sense of collective belonging in the face of a new, unsettling option. The shift from optimistic inclusivity to the divisive imbrication of blackness with republicanism, impiety, and turbulence was nearly complete for the Spanish, whose rule and colonial elites retreated in the face of Dominican popular power.

BOCA NIGUA

Until October 1796 the colony of Santo Domingo had evaded large-scale plantation rebellions, over five years after the French slave regime exploded into violence. The Boca Nigua slave revolt of that month seemed to seize upon rumors of abolition and waning colonial control, and incarnated the worst fears of elite

\textsuperscript{130} José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 22 July 1796, AGI-Estado, 13, no.26.
Dominicans. Though this specific type of resistance was atypical in the colony, its similarity to the most violent events of the Haitian Revolution further cauterized racial boundaries and intensified Spanish paranoia and reaction. Governor García opined that, “As this capital has numerous blacks, mostly French, that famously hate against the white colonists, I [suggest] precise orders of caution” to prevent further armed unrest. He also lamented the thriving influence of “French” blacks on the local populace. Amidst this siege mentality García warned all Spaniards in the colony to take up arms and protect themselves at the first sign of unrest. Most initial reactions faulted the French and the revolutionary fervor as contributing factors. However, upon further investigation of the revolt, Spanish investigators found a much more complex explanation. Spanish officials were happy to blame the French for the Boca Nigua slave revolt at first. However, as contextually plausible as this influence may have been, correlation did not equal causation. Spanish officials soon discovered this fact for themselves.


132 Joaquín García to Conde de Santa Clara, Santo Domingo, 20 November 1796, AGS-SGU, leg.6858, exp.5, fol.16.

Figure 5.1: Central region of Santo Domingo, showing major towns and the Boca Nigua plantation.

on the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo. In one of his more picturesque scenes of Santo Domingo he described a small river backgrounded by gentle slopes that lead to a plateau which branched the river in two a few miles inland from the sea, where it emptied amidst a large, sandy beach. Moreau de Saint-Méry noted that Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, the noted Spanish chronicler of the mid-sixteenth century who also operated sugar plantations in Santo Domingo and held colonial positions, had praised the utility of this land. There, over two centuries prior to Moreau de Saint-Méry’s portrayal, Oviedo had surveyed large ingenios, or cane processing factories, and “beautiful” sugar. This productive plantation set near the mouth of this river, from which it derived its name – Boca Nigua.134

The area surrounding the Nigua valley was one of the most fertile and, in earlier times, lucrative areas of the colony, described as “gold” of the headwaters. Surrounding plantations produced cacao, indigo, and other produce along with sugar. In the sixteenth century this fecund region generated roughly a tenth of the wealth that Santo Domingo produced in the eighteenth century. On the eve of the Saint-Domingue Revolution in the neighboring French colony it was estimated

that about 2,500 people lived around the banks of the Nigua, the vast majority of which were blacks, free and enslaved. It was also noted in the 1780s that plantations in the wider region had, “a proportional number of blacks as to what the French have.”\textsuperscript{135} The specific plantation of Boca Nigua, in fact, was likely the most profitable in the entire colony of Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{136}

On 1 November 1796 Governor García contacted the metropole to, “Give account of the sudden novelty of insurrection of the blacks on Spanish haciendas,” by those who he thought were the best treated and provisioned slaves of the whole colony.\textsuperscript{137} He lamented the, “fatal consequences that…demonstrate an obstinate

\textsuperscript{135} Antonio Sánchez Valverde, \textit{Idea del valor de la isla Española} (Madrid: Imprenta de Don Pedro Marín, 1785), 22-24 and 121. Moreau de Saint-Méry cites some of this book’s account of Nigua in his own work.

\textsuperscript{136} Boca Nigua was owned at that time by the absentee Marqués de Iranda and operated by Juan Bautista Oyarzábal. In 1793, perhaps when Iranda purchased the hacienda, it cost 28,825 pesos, and was valued at a higher price than any neighboring properties. See: Ministerio de la Gobernación de España, “Continúa la venta de las fincas,” \textit{Gaceta de Madrid} 1, no.18 (February 11, 1817), 172. Ministerio de la Gobernación de España, “Continúa la venta de las fincas,” \textit{Gaceta de Madrid} 1, no.29, (March 8, 1817), 272; Geggus, “Slave Resistance in the Spanish Caribbean,” in Gaspar and Geggus, eds., \textit{A Turbulent Time}, 141.

\textsuperscript{137} These black insurgents from the Boca Nigua plantation were absolutely still Spanish slaves, and had not somehow been selectively freed nor invisibly emancipated. See: Nessler, “A Failed Emancipation?,” 107-110. In correspondence, French republicans sometimes referred to slaves in Santo Domingo as \textit{cultivateurs}, a reflection of their nomenclature for free black laborers in Saint-Domingue, and a projection of their hopes for future abolition and similar work systems in Santo Domingo. They used such terms before, and after, Boca Nigua. See: Committee of Public Safety Secretary of Colonial Administration to Citizens, Governor, and Administrators of Saint-Domingue, Paris, 4 Fructidor an III / 21 August 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; Philippe-Rose Roume to Joaquín García, Cap-Français, 7 Floréal an VIII / 27 April 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp.2. The Spanish called the Boca Nigua slaves because they were legally so under Spanish law, which still prevailed in Santo Domingo. They made clear distinctions between slaves and free blacks in the many records on this event. Spanish officials also continued to regularly adjudicate slave sales in the colony from 1796 to 1799, when such transactions apparently subsided. See, for
effort for winning liberty with sacrifice of all of the white class” in Santo Domingo, ominous parallels, he implied to French Saint-Domingue five years prior. García explained that the night before last, on 30 October, the revolt of blacks had manifest within the jurisdiction of the capital on a well-known hacienda called Boca Nigua. The revolt emerged among what he called the “most odious slaves” but seemed to have been less vehemently pursued by others outside of a small leadership cadre. The uprising was, García analyzed, “of the contagion,” from the other side of the island, the “theatre of horrors,” and a “black propensity of forgetting or misunderstanding that which has passed in the French part.” On superficial analysis, at least, the governor and others thought that the revolution in Saint-Domingue and French promises of liberty had been an inspiring force for the revolt.

This uprising started at the hacienda of Marques de Iranda who had it administered by Juan de Oyarzábal. The intent of the blacks in revolt was known – they wanted to kill the whites, burn the cane fields, fortify themselves in buildings, and claim their liberty. And with the cession, evacuations, and multiplicity of French citizens attracted to Commissioner Roume being in the capital, the connection to rising republican power seemed obvious. The slaves in

example: AGN-ARB, leg.1, exp.58, and leg.3, exp 38, and leg.4, exp 54, and leg.49, exp.25; AGN-ARH, leg.37, exps.77 and 85 and 95, and leg.39R, exps.28 and 36 and 64 and 65 and 69 and 73.
revolt apparently wanted to extend their uprising to capture the forts at Jayna, and they seemed to target all of slavery. At the time of the revolt Juan de Oyarzábal, the primary overseer on the plantation, had just enough time to evaluate the situation and react while initially confined in a house with other armed men. This ultimately preserved his life, and after repulsing three separate attacks he managed to flee the hacienda house and then take a route of retreat to alert all of the neighboring plantations. Not only had his slaves at Boca Nigua revolted, but of the at least 200 slaves in total who had taken arms many from hailed from other plantations in the area. Oyarzábal tried to raise an immediate armed response, and offered gratuities for any assistance along the way. He arrived in the capital late the next day overwhelmed by fatigue and desperate to restore order to his plantation and the colony.¹³⁸

At dawn the next day the seasoned Spanish officer Antonio Barba arrived to learn of the situation first hand, which he still only vaguely understood. Officials dispatched “three pickets of grenadiers” and medical supplies under the command of Joaquín Cabrera, and they quickly ascertained that neither cavalry nor conventional infantry tactics would suffice. They could only deploy the few troops that the garrison could offer, as the top priority was to guard the major

¹³⁸ García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 1 November 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.89.
settlements. The revolt further delayed the preparations for evacuation, as García scrambled to organize a military response, and he wrote to the governor of Cuba begging for 800 to 1,000 good soldiers to protect the colony. García soon learned of a second attack, and did not yet know the number of wounded soldiers, and fretted that this revolt would start an “interminable war” like that of Saint-Domingue which had become controlled by blacks, including recent massacres against the whites of Les Cayes. Per this and other constant violence refugees only continued to flee into Santo Domingo.139

García understood what this major slave revolt meant to the remnant Hispanic society that he had tried to maintain in the colony, saying, “The community is dismayed. Now they will all emigrate and would themselves take with utility the uninfected blacks.” Only the troops would likely remain because they had no choice, and even they would soon lack food without laborers to produce it. Evacuation, and not conservation or future, dominated Dominican life. García continued, saying, “I could not believe how close this explosion was. Our well-treated slaves, and none better than Oyarzábal, seemed to live happily under our government, laws, and economy. I did not know the harshness, and they

139 García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 1 November 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.89. Spanish officials responding to the Boca Nigua slave revolt also had smaller, lesser-known recent revolts in Hincha and Samaná in mind. See: Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
Thus, in the immediate wake the revolt, the long-standing Spanish notions of their more benevolent treatment of slaves as a barrier to revolt, all in comparison to French precedents to the west, were shattered.

He called blacks, “a machine that yields to whatever movement or impression,” and blamed the presence of free French blacks, their growing status and power on the island, and the “arrival of the agent,” and other flaws that delayed delivery of the colony to the French. He continued, saying, “They have abandoned the part that they possess to the black, and [we] resist the delivery of this part to conserve it unharmed. Since their project failed, everything would be left to run the same fate.” García may have identified core threats to traditional Dominican society imbricated in the gradual French takeover, and though he fully understood the context of slave revolt, he prematurely diagnosed the precise communal causes of the Boca Nigua episode.

However, after Spanish troops contained the rebel slaves, Manuel Bravo investigated Boca Nigua and wrote a detailed account of the causes and proceedings of the revolt on the night of 30 October and thereafter. Bravo had first been called into service by Urízar and Barba on the morning of 31 October after

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140 García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 1 November 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.89.

141 García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 1 November 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.89.
they had informed him of the revolt as conveyed by Oyarzábal. Captain Antonio de la Torre of the Cantabria regiment had already led twenty-seven soldiers into the area. Another twenty-seven soldiers of the granaderos battalion of Cantabria under José Villasante went forth, and Pablo Yrigoyen their surgeon. José María Rodríguez, José María Garos, and Simon Jaureguí assisted Bravo in preparations for combat. Bravo collected intelligence on the two slaves who first affronted Antonio Collar, the mayordomo who worked under Oyarzábal (his brother Gabriel Collar, had also previously worked there). Antonio Collar explained to Bravo that when the revolt erupted he had moved toward the river at Jayna to get detailed news of what was happening. Oyarzábal, the physician Pedro Anglade, Simon Yriarte, and Pedro Abadía had all been spared, the latter having passed to the sugar mill and aguardiente distillery, respectively. These survivors had benefited from the cover of darkness and some free blacks who assisted them on their flight. Antonio ran to warn his brother, Gabriel, who was once also an employee of Oyarzábal’s but now had his own ingenio at nearby San Cristóbal. They also warned all other “planters and honorable neighbors.”

Spanish military forces worked to seal off the area the next day. They began marching toward Jayna near midday. They united with additional forces

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142 Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
and went toward Nigua, arriving at nightfall. Gabriel and Antonio Collar recruited residents and other troops along the way to help, including “mi hijo” Bernardo Bravo, a sublieutenant with the Cantabria regiment. The heat and distance of 18 miles exhausted the troops. They encountered a “sick and fatuous” black nearby whom they suspected of being a spy, and once in a fortified position near the plantation, Bravo began collecting operational intelligence himself.¹⁴³

The rebels had seized rifles, knives, spears, and two cannons that the managers had purchased to fend off raiding corsairs. Though the Spanish troops were unsure at first, the rebels numbered around 120 in total. On their approach around 9PM Spanish troops could hear the rebels’ festivities in the plantation buildings that they occupied. Troops met cannon fire and burnt cane fields as they began to battle the “poison ivy” of the rebels. Spanish troops tried to persuade the support of residents and local slaves. Instead of continuing the attack the officers instructed their troops to wait until the morning light.¹⁴⁴

Gabriel and Antonio Collar assisted the troops in navigating the land to surprise or confuse the rebels. By three in the morning there were three rough divisions of troops present, commanded by Antonio de la Torre, José Villasante, and Bernardo Bravo. A fourth approached in reinforcement. They captured the

¹⁴³ Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.

¹⁴⁴ Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
river crossing, but were too exposed to rebel fire and had to retreat. Bernardo Bravo was injured while trying to secure a position at the Nigua heights above the riverbanks. Then, rebel blacks swarmed around them in the cover of the nearby woods in an attempt to outflank the troops. The adversaries exchanged fire for thirty minutes, after which the rebels retreated behind their line of cannons. Bravo reasoned that the slaves had other lines of defense or fortified buildings from which to fight. Forty more troops arrived under the command of Manuel Miedes and Gregorio Ugarte, by which time Spanish troops and volunteers outnumbered the rebels. He sent updates and requests to the commanders at Baní and Azua, and to local residents. 145

Likely sensing their predicament, rebels began fleeing to the cover of the mountains and forest nearby, running through the cover of cane that had not been burnt. The Spanish troops advanced to the doctor’s house and look for bandages, stitches, and medicines for their wounded. They then searched the cane for hidden, injured, and dead rebels. They collected “ravaged and somber bodies,” including those of Simon, Marcos, Mecú, Quatro, and Diamant, the first two near the hacienda, the other three near Baní. Only three days later, and only due to the stench, did they find the body of the rebel Elias in one of the fields. The troops also

145 Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
began gathering the injured and prisoners who surrendered or were captured and started sending them to either the hospital or prison in the capital. They pursued the fugitives, only three of whom they did not find and arrest immediately – two were later found around Azua, another eventually was arrested and sent separately to Santo Domingo. One wounded rebel, Esteban the blacksmith, later died from his wounds. On the plantation grounds Cabrera gathered prisoners and divided them by age and sex and began interrogations. The rebel leaders included, “a black of appalling customs, Tomás Congo, a slave of the [nearby] Buenavista plantation.” Oyarzábal was most interested in Tomás Congo, whom he already disliked, as well as the primary overseer Francisco Sopó, who he had greatly favored. There were also three ex-soldiers of “Jan Fransua,” (Jean-François) who lived and worked on the neighboring San Juan plantation and were entwined in the plot.¹⁴⁶ Fascinatingly, the slaves plotting a revolt at Boca Nigua apparently never turned to French republican ideas or precedents for guidance. They did, however, seek out former black auxiliaries who had embodied the early years of the revolution for concrete advice as to how to subvert a plantation regime.

From the ninety-six testimonies that Bravo and others gathered he concluded in the immediate months before the insurrection two deaths prompted

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¹⁴⁶ Manual Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
rage among the enslaved at Boca Nigua. One slave named Francisco became ill and was treated but died, and some slaves suspected that the doctor had poisoned him. More dramatically, a slaved called Benito had been caught with aguardiente that he had taken secretly. Pedro Abadía, the distiller, severely punished him for it. Benito felt that he had lost his esteem and honor, and became depressed. He wanted to return home to his native soil, which was not miserable like Boca Nigua. Benito thus made a noose and committed suicide in his residence.\textsuperscript{147} He was likely an African bozal, and likely Kongoolese, and probably believed that his soul would return to his homeland and family. Generally, many Africans enslaved in the Americas conceptualized the afterlife, or land of the dead, as lying beyond the Atlantic Ocean in their homelands.\textsuperscript{148} Specifically, some slave populations believed that certain Kongoolese groups were particularly apt to fly home in death, including by suicide.\textsuperscript{149} His inner circle of friends and their response unveil a cross-plantation network of likely Kongoolese kinship that mitigated the social

\textsuperscript{147} Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.


dislocations from their natal homes and isolation from their families, as transpired in parallel [situations] throughout enslaved populations.¹⁵⁰

“Captain” Francisco Sopó adored both men, and he decided to exact revenge upon Pedro Abadía by taking his life. Sopó communicated this plan to Antonio Carretero, with whom he lived. They agreed to also murder Simon Yriarte, the overseer for sugar processing. Their plan quickly grew to target Oyarzábal as well, then any whites at Boca Nigua, and finally they hoped to spread the rebellion to neighboring plantations. To this end, and to learn of how such revolts succeeded against the French, they solicited the friendship of three former black auxiliaries under the cover of night at their nearby plantation and through other pretexts.¹⁵¹ These newfound allies had been royalists, had fought against the Republic, and had likely gained some modicum of a better life from their affiliation with Spain.

Together these five were “of a same nation” and therefore called each other parientes, or kin. Francisco and Tomás made displays of trust and gave gifts such as molasses and aguardiente to build confidence. They discussed visiting Saint-Domingue, but the ex-soldiers dissuaded them, saying that it was too


¹⁵¹ Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
dangerous, and also supposedly cautioned them on the use of violence against a reputedly decent master. Undeterred, Francisco and Antonio continued their designs, including trying to attract other parientes of their nation at Boca Nigua, and thereafter to others on neighboring estates who wanted to fight. On about 1 October during the Fiestas del Rosario they explained their plan to Ana María, the spouse of Antonio. Eight days before the actual revolt began she argued with Sopó, trying to convince him to cancel the plot and confess to Oyarzábal, but he deterred her. When 30 October arrived they signaled the former black auxiliaries at the San Juan plantation who, far from participating had, they claimed, gone to Santo Domingo to warn Spanish officials only to be turned away by Spanish soldiers at the city walls. At this time, “Tomás Congo of Buenavista” was enthused to start the uprising, and with the black Simon led the slaves to take up rifles, shotguns, pistols, swords, machetes, spears, sickles, knives, and spikes to attack Yriarte and Collar, who they had seen leave the plantation.152

At dusk the rebels gathered, rested, passed out plantains to eat, and then bearing arms closed in around the main house. Cristóbal César began lighting fires, trying to pin down Oyarzábal who they thought might still prevent the rebellion with his aides. Apparently, Sopó had a late change of heart and notified

152 Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
Pedro Abadía of the plot at six o’clock of the preceding Friday, and Oyarzábal at four o’clock that Sunday of the revolt. Sopó, who spent all day among the plotters and affirming Tomás Congo, then betrayed other conspirators by staying with Oyarzábal to help him flee the plantation via secret paths through hills as the rebellion broke out with the flames from cañaverales (canefields) lit by Tomás Congo and others who tried to flush out any whites who might have hidden in the fields.\footnote{Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.}

The following morning the rebels reunited at the main house, then abandoned, and broke open all the boxes, doors, and chests to which they had no key, a few of which Ana María had access to as a house slave. They smashed up the house and took anything that they liked, including clothes and additional weapons, such as the cannons. In the main house Ana María, Antonio’s partner, directed the pillage and consumption. The rebels feasted upon whatever stores they liked. They held a grand dance. Ana María sat upon a fine seat under a drape, a makeshift throne of sorts, from which she received treatment as a queen.\footnote{Manuel Bravo to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.} Her pretensions of royalty were absent any French-inspired rights discourse, and hearkened more firmly to the establishment of a fugitive African polity. These
facets of banqueting, lavish dress, and promoting royal attributes was common among slave rebellions across the Caribbean.\textsuperscript{155}

With the absence of Sopó they elected Antonio Carretero as their new leader, leaving a rather dejected Tomás Congo as the second in command. The rebels then separated into combat groups, set up the artillery, and divvied up control of parts of the plantation and entrances. Papa Pier led the rifles and Piti Juan led the dragoons. The following day, after a huge celebratory meal, the rebels moved on to the ingenio of San Cristóbal to set it on fire and incorporate its slaves into their rebellion. They then hoped to return to Boca Nigua and travel onward to Jayna where they wanted to surprise and seize the fortifications there, and after restocking and gaining fighters eventually attack the fort at San Geronimo near the capital city. Through signals and countersignals they then approached neighbors who might become co-conspirators, some of whom might have been related to Antonio. Antonio told them that those who fought would be free, and those who did not would be their slaves, a decidedly un-egalitarian, un-republican stance.\textsuperscript{156}


\textsuperscript{156} Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
A week after Spanish forces had suppressed the revolt key witnesses were deposed by Spanish officials, and through the testimony officials concluded that the blacks of Boca Nigua had a well-formed conspiracy to kill their immediate masters and whites in the area, and due to much more complicated factors than a meddling French Republic. The slaves had sought to make themselves rulers of the *ingenio*, proclaim their own liberty, attract slaves of other plantations, and continue the violence. Court records depicted valiant whites who defended that night as the cane burned, as slave smashed in the doors, and as rebels looted the property. The next day, armed with weapons seized from the whites, the slaves offered stiff resistance, including cannons to meet the troops. This fight resulted in the death of soldier Eleutario del Rosario German. The physician Dr. Pedro Pablo Yrigo treated six wounded soldiers and two injured slaves. Spanish troops captured four slaves, and sent ten additional injured combatants onward to the capital.\footnote{“Testimonio de la sentencia pronunciada contra los negros de la hacienda de Boca Nigua....” José Urizar, Pedro Catani, Manuel Bravo, and José Francisco Hidalgo, Santo Domingo, 28 November 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.}

García and other officials had vigorously extinguished the “combustion” and “contagion” that threatened the colony. In particular, Salvador Corrales commander of the dragoons at Baní, acted heroically in this effort. When he had heard that an insurrection erupted he rallied dozens of loyal subjects without
prompting and deployed to contain the rebels. Joaquín Cabrera also earned praise for his actions that limited destruction from the “ferocious, scandalous, and detestable crimes.” Officials also, “applauded conducts by the very faithful Spanish blacks” in stemming the revolt, likely in specific reference to creolized Dominican slaves or freed people around Boca Nigua.158 With a predominance of African bozales and creolized slaves from the French side in the leadership cadre of the revolt this was a critical distinction.

The condemned slaves included the commander Francisco Sopó, Antonio the carter known as the “King”, his partner Ana María called “Queen”, Pedro Viejo, alias Papa Pier (likely “Pierre”) who often spoke ill of his owner, and accomplice Tomás Aguirre, alias Buenavista. These “authors, chiefs, and principal heads” of the rebellion were to be hanged, decapitated, quartered, and displayed on the major roads of the capital. Piti Juan (likely “Petit Jean”) who led troops and Cristóbal César, who was the first to begin burning the cane, were also to be hanged and decapitated, with their heads placed similarly. The slaves Simón, Elias, Marcos, Joséf Mecú, Raymundo Diaman, y Placido Quatro had already died from injuries. Esteban, who was injured and treated, died in the hospital, but his

158 “Testimonio de la sentencia pronunciada contra los negros de la hacienda de Boca Nigua...,” José Urizar, Pedro Catani, Manuel Bravo, and José Francisco Hidalgo, Santo Domingo, 28 November 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
body was nevertheless to be put on the gallows and then quartered and put on show in the city. The Spanish clearly wanted to teach a lesson.  

The names of other conspirators appeared in the record along with their punishments, which largely included fifty to one-hundred lashes, witnessing the executions, many years in prison, and long sentences to wearing fetters, collars, and chains. One slave, José Antonio, received twenty-five lashes and was sent to Panama for four years of confinement. Some younger accomplices received fifty lashes, six years with chains and fetters same as the others, but did not have to observe the gallows executions. Those under seventeen years of age received twenty-five lashes in jail, two years of chains. Joséf, Juan, and Juan Pedro were sent for eight years in prison in Cartagena, Veracruz, and Havana, in that order with the time split, after which they would be expelled from Spanish domains. Another prisoner, Sebastian Sese, was to remain incarcerated. Santiago, the slave of Francisco Espaillat, was made to watch the punishments.

Intriguingly, the Espaillat family, French migrants who had settled in the Cibao region from Saint-Domingue and who were implicated in the Gerard

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159 “Testimonio de la sentencia pronunciada contra los negros de la hacienda de Boca Nigua...,” José Urízar, Pedro Catani, Manuel Bravo, and José Francisco Hidalgo, Santo Domingo, 28 November 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.

160 “Testimonio de la sentencia pronunciada contra los negros de la hacienda de Boca Nigua...,” José Urízar, Pedro Catani, Manuel Bravo, and José Francisco Hidalgo, Santo Domingo, 28 November 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
scandal of 1792, had also previously purchased slaves from Gerard. Of all the things that Santiago may have been, he could have hailed from Saint-Domingue or at least have spoken French, though how he got to Boca Nigua remains unclear. Later, sons of the family, Ulises Francisco and Santiago, became national leaders in the independence era and Ulises served as president, all after the family returned from the later self-imposed exile during the French occupation of 1802-1809.161

Some accused slaves were actually freed. The suspects Chata and José Criollo, alias Viasu, were found not guilty and released, as were others.162 Records identified this particular José as “creole” and, furthermore, the man had taken “Viasu” as a nickname, likely out of admiration for the general Georges Biassou, a glimpse into the complex and diverse cultural politics and aspirations of the enslaved at Boca Nigua. Would be slave insurgents were inspired by the black auxiliaries who had started the revolution in Saint-Domingue and fought for Spain. They were the ones who the Boca Nigua plotters looked to for advice and inspiration, not any figures associated with the French Republic. The other names

161 Papeles de Espaillat: para la historia de las ideas políticas en Santo Domingo page 474
162 “Testimonio de la sentencia pronunciada contra los negros de la hacienda de Boca Nigua...” José Urizar, Pedro Catani, Manuel Bravo, and José Francisco Hidalgo, Santo Domingo, 28 November 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
on the full roster of convicts from Boca Nigua tells a fuller story of who the slaves themselves were, particularly regarding the African ethnic backgrounds.

Tomás Congo and the kin of his nation with whom he organized the insurrection signify that the leadership was likely Kongoese. “Sopo” in the Ngombe language spoken between the Mongala and Lopori Rivers, respectively northern and southern tributaries of the Congo River about 500 miles from the coast, means “abdomen” or “belly,” and could have been a nickname. Other rebel slaves like Lorenzo Congo and Pedro Mondongo were almost certainly from the Congo River region, and Ambrosio Cita, Ventura Besé, Lorenzo Senegui, Basilio Sengui, Benito Matundo, and Melchor Buey were all possibly Kongoese. Additionally, the practice of naming a “king” and “queen” were African practices, and given the commanding roles of Antonio and Ana María they may have been part of this kinship group.

The fact that many rebels were African is likely, though outside the leadership many were likely not Kongoese. In fact, many names seemed to come from the Guinea coast. Fermin Yará shares a name with many captives from the Guinea and Sierra Leone regions. Lorenzo Cubé shared closest name matches with Limba-speaking captives form the Rio Pongo in Guinea, though similar

names also appeared at Lagos. Hipolito Paná and Vicente Pana were possibly Mende from Guinea or Sierra Leone. Valerio Menguí was likely Temne or Limba from the Guinea region. Quintin Sará, Anselmo Cobele, and Bernardo Quiná were also likely from the Guinea region. Andrés Yrá and Estanislao Faré shared names with some who passed through Bissau. Ygnacio Caná and Cayetano Boy may have been from a variety of places along the Windward coast. Ciprian Lanzeni might have been Mandinka from far West Africa.

The diversity among the slaves was significant. Mecú was a name of possible Islamic heritage, with many captives of this name having passed through the Bight of Benin, as was the case with Bernabé Yaurú and Pastor Yaurú. Damien Ofori may have come from the Gen language group and passed through the Bight of Benin, too. Justo Munda was likely Igbo, and many similar names resembled those that passed through Calabar in the Bight of Biafra. Martin Yoan shared a similar name to many who passed through Bimbia at the Bight of Biafra. Placido Eipú may have been of the Duala language group in the Bight of Biafra.164

Others, such as Pio Mompa, Sabian Sama, and Copa Bozal were likely African names, though their origins are harder to trace. Creolized slaves Antonio, Francisco, and Andrés were all convicted and whipped, too. Other intriguing

164 www.african-origins.org; www.slavevoyages.org
names, likely of creole slaves, were Chata (meaning, flat nose), José Yngles (meaning, English), Faustino Guagua (a Taíno borrow word for transport), and Copa Francés (literally, French Cup). Piti Juan (Petit Jean), Papa Pier (Pierre), and Diamant (literally, diamond), were all linked to French names. In the end, of the 103 suspects of the roughly 200 slaves at Boca Nigua, ten were women, and only four suspects were released entirely (three men, one woman).

In some ways, the Boca Nigua revolt held similarities to earlier revolts on sugar plantations in Saint-Domingue. There were distinctly African ethnic cliques, but scaled organization was fundamentally multiethnic. The revolt started on one of the largest and most prosperous plantations in Santo Domingo amid the particular brutalities of sugar production. The revolt involved deliberate, lengthy planning, and cross-plantation ties. It even sought advice on how Saint-Domingue rebels succeeded against the French, and was perhaps an extension of African warfare. However, outside of Boca Nigua and the few neighboring sugar plantations Santo Domingo was still very different from Saint-Domingue at the start of the Haitian Revolution. There were far fewer slaves, fewer African bozales in the population, far fewer sugar plantations and smaller plantations in general. This Boca Nigua episode was more driven by vengeance than an obvious

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165 Barcia, West African Warfare in Bahia and Cuba.
cosmological imperative as the Bois-Caïman, and although some historians have connected this revolt to French republican intrigues ultimately the Spanish who were always so ready to blame French presence for unrest, the slaves themselves, gave different explanations. Spanish weakness and growing discussions of abolition could have certainly provided contextual facilitation, but they did not trigger the Boca Nigua uprising.

Several weeks after Boca Nigua Archbishop Portillo – who had protested the “Incendiary” priest’s firmly denied Roume’s revolutionary divorce request – engaged in his own conjugal politics. Portillo openly speculated that the Boca Nigua revolt’s impetus was due to the anger of an enslaved man, likely Sopó, whose same-sex partner had been severely punished and committed suicide, in reference to Benito. In this heteronormative context he deliberately miscast the kinship solidarity of a Kongo-organized revolt to discredit slave politics as a manifestation of unholy passions and African depravity.¹⁶⁶ This apparently imaginative distortion certainly had spiritual and cultural currency in discussing

blackness, but deferred significance from French influence in this particular event.\footnote{167}

Boca Nigua, unlike the majority of Santo Domingo, was a sugar plantation with greater economic similarities to Saint-Domingue, and also greater similarities around management brutality that provoked the revolt. The revolt was organized through a cross-plantation network, like in early Saint-Domingue revolts. The revolt also featured specific African ethnic influences, in this case clearly from Kongoese derivations. The French republican influences of ideology and abolition were almost completely unimportant in any of the collected testimony, and beyond contextual destabilizers, were not motivating factors. The direct link to revolution that the rebels sought was through the former troops of Jean-François who, unlike Roume or any other French newcomers, had actual experience as revolutionaries against a planation regime. Because of the uniqueness of Boca Nigua as a plantation in Santo Domingo, and the distinct factors fueling this particular revolt, it was unlikely that similar, Saint-Domingue styled revolts would occur in Santo Domingo. In fact, they did not.

CONCLUSION

\footnote{167 “Testimonio de la sentencia pronunciada contra los negros de la hacienda de Boca Nigua...,” José Urizar, Pedro Catani, Manuel Bravo, and José Francisco Hidalgo, Santo Domingo, 28 November 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.}
On Christmas Eve 1796 Godoy wrote to García with news that the French planned to send Rochambeau to Santo Domingo with appropriate troops, and that the problem of evacuation now sat with the lack of boats and time. García said that he would continue managing the colony given the circumstances, and expected him to exhibit courtesy and consideration. García on New Year’s Eve 1796 wrote Godoy to ask specifically about the threat of war with the United Kingdom, and also of military alliance with France beyond the peace treaty. British forces loomed as the next great threat to Dominican society. García had received news of the potential French military alliance and British war on 27 October, just days before the Boca Nigua revolt, which of course diverted their attention. He was dismayed at the French captures of “Anglo-Americano” ships that constantly visited British ports on the island, trying to cut their trade routes.

While Dominicans came to terms with French republican presence, the British threat was still wholly unresolved, and only mounting.

Although the war with France had technically ended, Spanish management that lasted until French takeover cost a great deal of money. Funds continued to pour in from Cuba, Mexico and other colonies, both to support the

168 Manuel Godoy to Joaquín García, San Lorenzo, 24 December 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
169 Joaquín García to Laveaux, Santo Domingo, 28 December 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
170 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 31 December 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.92.
evacuation and continuing military and official presence. García on New Year’s Eve 1796 wrote Godoy to ask specifically about the threat of war with the United Kingdom, and also of military alliance with France beyond the peace treaty. They had no instructions, relief, nor means to govern the colony in such new circumstances, especially considering the concerns of evacuation and likelihood of not delivering the island at the one-year mark. García had received news of the potential French military alliance and British war on 27 October, just days before the Boca Nigua revolt, which took their attention.

In the mid-1790s public faith resonated with many Dominicans, especially elites, in the face of French radicalism that threatened their understanding of their place in the universe. Fears of rampant African heresy and French anti-clericalism contributed to a hegemonic Dominican discourse of difference from Haiti. Even if France and later Haiti offered greater liberties, not all people of color wanted to trade their supernatural situation for de jure distinctions of equality. Within this Euronormative civility and piety a person of color could attain Hispanic inclusion with sufficient participation in the Catholic supernatural idiom. Rituals such as prayer and marriage offer us a window into partisanship, power relations, and

171 José Pablo Valiente to Diego de Gardoqui, Havana, 16 September 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033, no.615; Branciforte to Diego de Gardoqui, Mexico, 27 March 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033, no.621; Esteban Fernandez de Leon to Diego de Gardoqui, Caracas, 1 November 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033, no.880.

172 García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 31 December 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.92.
social networks. In these practices at the confluence of utility, sincerity, and partisanship, people of color left their material mark on the Haitian Revolution and contributed to an anti-Haitian Dominican religious nationalism that has endured from the 1790s to the present.

Amidst Spanish decline, some instances of pro-French sedition, and black Dominican revolts at least obliquely associated with these contextual factors forced Dominicans to rethink their Spanish cultural and political heritage, examine the results of French rights discourses, and explore crises of sovereignty, local distinctions, and questions of collective belonging. With this episode Dominicans further engrained virulent Catholicism and political moderation into their cultural politics, distinguished their society from perceptions of their proto-Haitian neighbors, and entwined radicalism and impiety with blackness and republicanism, ideas that shaped middle sector Dominican ideas about Haiti into the independence era and far beyond it. Overt spirituality during the intense days of Spanish reconquest from 1792-1794 became a litmus test for the trustworthiness of the internal population. Images of black civility and piety set by the Spanish black auxiliaries became standards for Dominican populations of color, and those who defied Hispanic Catholic norms fell from grace, just as Toussaint had, and

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passed toward being more French, and possibly more African as well, in the process.

Throughout this period Dominicans were forced to reconsider their place within the Spanish empire, directly confront French radicalism and eventually British promises of moderation. This inward plunge of conflict prompted a reflexive pivot toward considering the Dominican past, presence, and future. While unresolved in this era, this turmoil enhanced a growing sense of uniquely local grievances and differences as seeds of proto-national belonging. As Saint-Domingue stumbled toward horizons beyond France, Santo Domingo fell into a future without Spain after almost exactly three-hundred years of colonial rule. Boca Nigua proved to be only one form of dissent with the status quo. Alienated from France, disappointed in Spain, the next chapter of Dominican ferment came from a new, as of yet poorly-understood direction – Britain and Jamaica.
CHAPTER 6

AN ANGLOPHILIC APEX, 1796-1798

By August 1796, roughly a year after the treaty, Archbishop Portillo marveled at the political tempest that had beset Santo Domingo. Aside from the aforementioned social dislocations, Portillo grew more concerned with an influence that had advanced aggressively from the margins of Dominican cultural politics, writing that through, “concealed maneuvers of stealthy spies and agents” a “positive foundation in voice and common opinion” had formed in favor of the United Kingdom.1 In fact, thousands of people in Santo Domingo, including soldiers, farmers, merchants, and even whole towns had been “seduced” into supporting a British takeover.2 On this, Governor Joaquín García simply blamed British officials’ “flattering promises and alluring cash,” indicating Spain’s gross underestimation for the myriad motivations of Dominican Anglophilia.3 Over the ensuing years Dominicans, jaded by Spanish reaction and ineptitude, and French radicalism and arrogance, instead explored the more moderate, third way of

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1 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, 4 August 1796, AGI-Estado, 11A, n.2.
2 José Urizar to Manuel Godoy, 29 April 1797, AGI-Estado, 13, n.42.
3 Joaquín García to Conde Campo de Alange, 7 January 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1091, no.796.
British power that courted their loyalties. By the end of 1796 the royal treasurer of Santo Domingo had been arrested on suspicion of British sympathies, several key Dominican border towns had raised the Union Jack, thousands of Spain’s former black auxiliaries fought for King George III, British spies operated throughout the colony trying to subvert the population, and the capital of Santo Domingo barely dodged a major conspiracy that would have secured the colony for British rule.

This British effort attracted wealthy and disenchanted planters in Saint-Domingue whose favorable dispositions toward royalism, slavery, and the status quo precluded their support of the French Republic. British commercial and military protections yielded new subjects and territorial gains when Spain ceded Santo Domingo to the French Republic. Stalwart Spanish supporters, most of whom were white, fled the island and remade the colony’s demographics. The prolonged Spanish evacuation began by the end of 1795. This flight, Spanish weakness, and incapable French oversight produced a vacuum of sovereignty. Furthermore, newspapers in Saint-Domingue reported on the San Blas conspiracy of early 1795, in which disaffected intellectuals and merchants in Madrid attempted oust the monarchy and install a republic, further presented Spanish

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5 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 4 January 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2., no.38; Joaquín García to Diego de Gardoqui, Santo Domingo, 7 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.
feebleness across Hispaniola. In this void the British middle path appealed to some Dominicans, some of whom were of color, who sought to retain their Catholicism and property, and rejected racial solidarity and French radicalism.

As the instructions from Paris specified, Philippe Roume was still only a Provisional Agent of the Republic. He had no executive power. In fact, aside from advising the Spanish government on republican initiatives in Saint-Domingue, easing the transfer of key forts to the French, and trying to cultivate of cult of republican fervor, he had no power. They were present at the permission of Godoy. Spain still ruled much of the colony Santo Domingo and the capital itself in the spheres quotidian governance, military affairs, and official spirituality. This misunderstanding over imperial management has produced more consequential misinterpretations of civil society in Santo Domingo from the Treaty of Basel in 1795 through the formal and final French occupation of the colony in 1802. Emancipation was “invisible” because it did not happen in 1795. This inaccuracy has produced confusion from accounts predominantly from French sources in

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7 Nessler, “A Failed Emancipation?,” 20 and 107-156; Dubois, Avengers, 217. Laveaux’s tricolore commission attempted to abolish slavery in Santo Domingo in 1795. They were quickly expelled by Spanish officials, but not after some slaves did try to flee bondage. French authorities, such as Ambassador d’Hermand, recognized Spanish claims that this was a violation of the Treaty of Basel, and apologized for this action. When Roume arrived in Santo Domingo he denounced slavery, but he had no actual power, nor imperative in his provisional role as an observer for republican interests to abolish slavery.
which historians have reiterated these provisional officials’ own iterations of their ideals, goals, or revolutionary lexicon as fact, eliding the reality of notarial records that show how Spanish officials continued to adjudicate transactions of slaves,\(^8\) how Spanish military forces responded to revolts,\(^9\) arrested suspects under suspected violations of the Spanish law that still prevailed,\(^10\) and how Spanish jurists continued to try cases under the aforementioned Spanish law.\(^11\) Spanish officials were thus responsible for fending off major British advances and their retinue of highly-motivated Dominican sympathizers.

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\(^8\) For example, from 1796 to 1799, see: AGN-ARB, leg.1, exp.58, and leg.3, exp.38, and leg.4, exp.54, and leg.49, exp.25; AGN-ARH, leg.37, exps.77 and 85 and 95, and leg.39R, exps.28 and 36 and 64 and 65 and 69 and 73.

\(^9\) For example, see: José del Orbe to Joaquín García, La Vega, 8 November 1795, AGI-Estado, 5A, n.50; Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 21 November 1795, AGI-Estado, 5A, n.50; Manuel Bravo to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033

\(^10\) For example, see: Casa Calvo to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 23 February 1796, AHN-Estado, exp.2, no.8; Joaquin García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 15 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

\(^11\) For example, see: “Testimonio del recurso hecho por John Hodge capitan de la fragata americana nombrada Sedgeley reclamando la jurisdiccion de este gobierno espanol, y declinando la de la Francia…,” Santo Domingo, 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1; Joaquin García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 26 February 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.120; Joaquin García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 27 February 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2., no.121; “Testimonio de las diligencias practicadas por James Philips Capn. del Bergantin americano del Fiero para que este gobierno interponga sus oficios con el representatne de la nacion francesa a fin de que sin demora se termine la causa de su apresamiento para los danos que se le siguen,” AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; Joaquin García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 27 February 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.122; “Testimonio de las diligencias practicadas por Joséf Wachs capitan de la goleta americana la Carmelita, implorando la proteccion de este gobierno, para con el representatne de la nacion francesa, para que sin dilacion determine, y juzque sobre la causa de su apresamiento por los perjuicios que siente,” AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; “Testimonio del Exped.te sobre lo convenido entre el Sr. Presidente Gob.r y Capitan Gral. de esta Ysla con el Sr. Agente de la Republica, aconseguencia de lo acordado por el Superior Tribunal de la Real Audiencia,” Santo Domingo, 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1.
Like their Spanish counterparts, British officials were also stunned by fervent and often unsolicited Dominican support, yet metropolitan politicians such as Prime Minister William Pitt and War Secretary Henry Dundas reacted quickly with secret plans for the annexation of Santo Domingo. Hispniola as a whole would have been the trophy acquisition in this final major stage of British Caribbean expansion, an arena that gained priority in the two decades following the loss of thirteen North American colonies which also featured the opportunistic sugar land grabs of Martinique and Trinidad. Compared to the Saint-Domingue intervention, British strategy in Santo Domingo relied upon new sectors of potential adherents. Underemployed black soldiers who had fought for Spain and Dominican farmers, the vast majority of whom had African descent, were pivotal British partisans. Not only did they subversively fly the Union Jack and pledge fealty to King George III, I have uncovered an elaborate pro-British coup by those who craved religion, commerce, and stable constitutional monarchy.

These events, despite their intrigue, are almost entirely unknown in Dominican, Haitian revolutionary, and British Caribbean historiographies. This case therefore expands upon extant scholarship to show alternative debates over monarchy, political economy, and rights that portended contentions of the

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12 TNA, PRO, WO, 1/63, 293-304.
ensuing Latin American wars of independence.\textsuperscript{13} This evolution toward widespread British sympathies reveals a broader array of moderate cultural politics that are obscured by a focus on paths toward revolution.\textsuperscript{14}

**BRITISH ALTERNATIVES TO DOMINICAN DISCONTENT**

Since nearly the outset of unrest in Saint-Domingue the Spanish had worried about a direct confrontation with Great Britain. Both empires opportunistically positioned themselves in Saint-Domingue, and the probability of conflict only escalated as the zones of British expanded eastward after their landing 1793.\textsuperscript{15} Through a series of victories against their mutual enemies the French, the military forces of the United Kingdom stood at the Dominican border by 1795.\textsuperscript{16} In July 1795 Spanish concerns heightened when British officials protested plans to surrender Santo Domingo to the French.\textsuperscript{17} Following the Treaty


\textsuperscript{15} Fernando Portillo y Torres to Pedro Acuña, Santo Domingo, 25 October 1793, AGI-SD, 1110; Geggus, Slavery, War, and Revolution.

\textsuperscript{16} Marques del Campo to Duque Alcudia, London, 23 January 1795, AHN-Estado, 4247.

\textsuperscript{17} Marques del Campo to Duque Alcudia, London, 3 July 1795, AHN-Estado, 4247.
of Basel they pledged to hinder the transfer process.\textsuperscript{18} Almost immediately thereafter propaganda from British Saint-Domingue began circulating into Dominican hands.\textsuperscript{19} A month later, British ships lurked around the colony and coordinated local spies who enticed Dominicans.\textsuperscript{20} In October 1795 military service concluded for Jean-François and Georges Biassou, the two leading black generals fighting for Spain. British agents cajoled these officers, who then showed reciprocal interest. To prevent defections like the devastating departure of Toussaint Louverture to the French Republic in 1794,\textsuperscript{21} the Spanish relocated them to other colonies specify where.\textsuperscript{22} Following the treaty, the newly-established Directory of the French Republic sent detailed instructions to their emissary in Santo Domingo on how to \textit{francesizar} (Frenchify) the Dominican populace into “co-

\textsuperscript{18} Marques del Campo to Duque Alcudia, London, 18 August 1795, AHN-Estado, 4247. Their land operations were bolstered by allied royalist planters from Saint-Domingue.

\textsuperscript{19} Marques del Campo to Duque Alcudia, London, 10 July 1795, AHN-Estado, 4247.

\textsuperscript{20} Vicente Matos to Joaquín García, Monte Cristi, 16 August 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407. A massive expeditionary waited in British ports, destined to augment their Caribbean campaign. Marques del Campo to Duque Alcudia, London, 18 September 1795, AHN-Estado, 4247; 8 March 1796, ASV-NM, 196, 386.

\textsuperscript{21} Manuel Godoy to José Chacon, Sevilla, 24 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.

\textsuperscript{22} Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 17 December 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, n.32.
citizens.” By January 1796 many Dominicans were alienated by French condescension, Spanish evacuation, and began to listen to British offers.

The British hoped to entice the military labor of thousands of Spain’s former black auxiliaries who remained on the island campaign under fragile Spanish promises of pensions and transfers. A notable threat was that Bernardin, who had once so impressed García, would side with the British. One remarkable defection threatened to exponentially increase pro-British positions. The top French general Étienne Laveaux was incredulous that Titus – a fiery young black officer who had fought under Jean-François and Biassou – would continue fighting the French even after general emancipation, and feared that Titus might rally disaffected French cultivateurs to the British as well. In February 1796 Titus dined with British officers aboard a navy ship docked somewhere near Monte Cristi. Soon thereafter he tried to take up the title “Chief of the Blacks,” a name previously only claimed by Jean-François, Biassou, and Toussaint. Titus had orchestrated covert encounters at the mouth of the Rio Masacre near Dajabon, where through a


24 José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 8 January 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.


26 Luis de las Casas to Manuel Godoy, Havana, 25 January 1796, AGI-Estado, 5A, no. 28. Bernardin was exiled, and lived with Jean-François in Cádiz. See: Geggus, Haitian, 198.


28 Étienne Laveaux to Casa Calvo, Guarico, 20 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, no.3.
series of gunshots and flag signaling a British ship would arrive to ferry munitions ashore and the black officers on board. García acknowledged that Titus was now a British combatant and Spanish enemy, and revoked the medal that he had also been given from King Carlos IV.

Titus began accepting arms, munitions, uniforms, and money from the British, with whom he began to fight almost immediately, amassed troops along the border, and coordinated operations against Fort Dauphin, Mirebalais, and Valliere, as Spain prepared their defenses for this threat from their former ally. Laveaux begged Spain to send out spies, likely former black auxiliaries, who might learn of Titus’ plans, while Laveaux tried to corral his rival Villatte to surprise the British. Some of this information came from a British spy who had been arrested while in disguise. This spy had operated in Monte Cristi for six weeks, and worked with Titus, who would coordinate with the British navy. Many Dominicans were turning to the British side. The British operatives played up

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29 Francisco, Rio Masacre near Dajabon, 18 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
30 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 23 February 1796, AHN-Estado, exp.2.
31 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, 23 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
33 Laveaux to Casa Calvo, Guarico, 20 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, n.3.
34 “Declaration,” Jacque Decamps, 18 February 1796, AHN-Estado, exp.2.
peace and prosperity, and paid good prices for staple foods, livestock, and weapons with Dominicans along the northern coast.35

The Spanish soon arrested other pro-British conspirators.36 While Titus rallied an estimated five thousand of the remaining black auxiliaries, spies near Santiago far from the border reported the surprising news that thousands of Dominican civilians eagerly supported a British takeover.37 Drive by desperation and a sense of threat and betrayal, Spanish officials arranged for the assassination of Titus a few weeks later.38 García, though, blamed the French for his death.39 Nevertheless, throughout the colony Dominican contact with British power only increased.40 British forces continued trading with Dominicans and winning them over, built barracks in deserted areas of the northern coast, and continued courting

35 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 26 February 1796, AHN-Estado, exp.2.
36 Casa Calvo to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 23 February 1796, AHN-Estado, exp.2, no.8.
37 Laveaux to Casa Calvo, Guarico, 20 February 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, n.2; Gordon Forbes to Henry Dundas, Isabella Bay, 9 February 1796, TNA, PRO, WO, 1/65, 47-48.
38 Gordon Forbes to Henry Dundas, Port-au-Prince, 11 March 1796, TNA, PRO, WO, 1/65, 127-133.
39 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 3 March 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.48.
40 José Urizar to Manuel Godoy, 16 April 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407; Anonymous to Charles Rousselot (Aide de Camp, General Forbes), Môle Saint Nicolas, 26 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
the black auxiliaries who were left behind by Jean-François and Biassou.\textsuperscript{41} Even after the death of Titus, this remained a primary concern for British forces.\textsuperscript{42}

The French knew the British now had the momentum across the island. An unidentified officer of the Republic admitted that their only hope was with the newer plan of arming “Africans” who were former slaves and had given them recent gains, though their absence from the fields caused a great lack in foodstuffs, saying, “One has made soldiers more easily than one will make these same soldiers into farmers again.” If the British sent additional troops they might achieve a \textit{coup de grâce} over the French. French command understood that Santo Domingo was the new weak link, in that the British could win over Dominicans and stage a military landing there, neither of which the French could prevent, and regretted not having taken Louisiana or Florida in the treaty instead. This officer also admitted that the Spaniards under the treaty were allowed to maintain slavery and even transport their slaves off the island with them, which would only further devalue the weak economy in Santo Domingo, and prophesied that these emigrants would combine weak colonies to make one powerful colony – Cuba.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{41} Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 3 March 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.48.

\textsuperscript{42} Anonymous to Monsieur Rousselot (Aide de Camp, General Forbes), Môle Saint Nicolas, 24 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

\textsuperscript{43} Anonymous French Officer, “Note concernant les Antilles française et en particulier la partie espagnole cédée de St. Domingue,” 8 Ventôse an IV / 27 February 1796, Rosemonde E. And Emile
On 12 July 1796 British General Gordon Forbes issued a mass print proclamation in Spanish to the Dominican people.\textsuperscript{44} This came after incremental advances in Dominican popular support.\textsuperscript{45} He empathized with the plight of Spanish betrayal and French aggression, and implored Dominicans to consider fair and stable governance and religious devotion as common objectives with the British. He argued that many Dominicans were already familiar with British prosperity from visiting their nearby ports and invited “brave” Dominicans to become British subjects under moderate constitutional monarchy, and that they should fear Roume and French designs given their track record in Saint-Domingue. Forbes especially highlighted the “traitorous” religious policies of the Republic, and called Dominican “loyal supporters of the true worship of God.”\textsuperscript{46}

A personalized copy of this proclamation entered Banica, with the handwritten introductory note that British forces would take the town with peaceful intentions.\textsuperscript{47} This was just a month after the Republic had taken Banica to much fanfare by having Toussaint, who many Dominicans despised, deliver the news, and in fact personally take over Banica, Las Cahobas, and Hincha and raise

\textsuperscript{44} “Proclamación,” General Forbes, 12 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.

\textsuperscript{45} “Our Affairs in St. Domingo,” The Times (London), 12 September 1796, 2-3.

\textsuperscript{46} “Proclamación,” General Forbes, 12 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.

\textsuperscript{47} Anonymous to Count de Ogorman, 6 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
the *tricolore*. As García put it, border residents were now stuck with the French and their “blacks without talent or education,” which eased the British advance.

In response, the French next circulated a proclamation in Santo Domingo. It demanded allegiance to the republic, opposition to countervailing forces, and deference to French representatives who wanted to bring them “love and equality.” It promised amazing prosperity under eventual emancipation, and castigated them to abandon ideas contrary to the Republic. It said almost nothing about religion or belief. However, perhaps none of this mattered anyway, because unlike the British, the French did not bother translating this proclamation into Spanish. With this turmoil the evacuation of local elites crescendoed. In these efforts to flip Dominican support, General Forbes relied upon French royalists from the island who best knew Dominican culture, and provided the content of

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48 “Décret,” Giraud, Le Blanc, Sonthonax, and Raymond, 17 Messidor an IV / 5 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Sonthonax to Laveaux, 27 Messidor an IV / 15 July 1796, AHN-Estado, 340, exp.1; Sonthonax to Laveaux, 28 Messidor an IV / 16 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Laveaux to Toussaint Louverture, 29 Messidor an IV / 17 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Toussaint Louverture, 13 Thermidor an IV / 31 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; “Entrega,” Esteban Palomares and Toussaint Louverture, Banica, 31 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Esteban Palomares to Joaquín García, 31 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.

49 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 8 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.76; Gregorio Ugarte to Joaquín García, Cahobas, 22 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.

50 Joaquín de Zubillaga to Manuel Godoy, Caracas, 23 August 1796, AGI-Estado, 65, n.54.

51 “Aux Habitans de la partie de Saint-Domingue, cedee a la France par le Traite de Paix,” LeBlanc, Guarico, 6 Fructidor an IV / 23 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

52 “Evacuación de Santo Domingo,” 1795/1796, AGS-SGU, leg.7152, exp.37, fol.128-159; “Evacuación de la isla: Peticiones,” 1795/1796, AGS-SGU, leg.7152, exp.59, fol.332-357.
his religious appeals. They also dealt with the pseudonymous “Mr. Tabares” from Santo Domingo, who had read the British proclamation, and wrote with questions about British rule.⁵³ All the while, British forces captured strongholds near Cap-Français⁵⁴

Tabares praised the decree, and passed along information on the French to the British, who responded by explaining that they wanted to stop the French occupation of Santo Domingo and would quickly take any position over which the tricolore flew. The unidentified British officer argued that French actions were, “so tragic as to be comical. All the works of Republican agents have the same object, this is to insurrect and electrify all of the blacks, [which is] today the most loved race because it is the strongest.” This was certainly not what Dominicans wanted, he contended, especially since the infighting between Sonthonax, Laveaux, and Rochambeau left only “African troops” to occupy Santo Domingo, which he suspected they would pillage.⁵⁵ Roume largely denied any rough conduct by Toussaint, much to Spanish chagrin.⁵⁶ News of pillaging and theft by Toussaint’s forces preceded them in all of these Dominican border towns, which further

⁵³ Anonymous to Monsieur Duranton, Môle Saint Nicolas, 28 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
⁵⁴ 29 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 4244, no. 193.
⁵⁵ Anonymous to “Tabares”, Môle Saint Nicolas, 28 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
⁵⁶ Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 26 September 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.86.
panicked Dominican locals who already mistrusted them. He would not let Toussaint take San Juan de la Maguana, or Matas de Farfan, without the residents having thoroughly secured their properties. The only reprieve might come from the former black auxiliary Gañet (Gagnette) who had joined the British, and might strike Toussaint a decisive blow in West.57

With such a reputation preceding Toussaint, the British officer and French royalist Viscount de Bruges, who was a key agent in the recruitment of the black auxiliaries, rode into Las Cahobas with British troops, gave a speech, and enticed the Spanish subjects to raise the Union Jack, which they did. He received a friendly welcome after the residents there had received several copies of the proclamation. Toussaint, who had yet to see the proclamation, was furious at Spanish officials for not preventing this outcome.58 Dominicans in Banica conspired against the French, including ex-Spanish officials and “black Spaniards,” and began actively fighting the French.59 Roume threw a fit to García about this British influence and their continued recruitment of black auxiliaries,60 while García protested to the

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57 Palomares to Joaquín García, Punta de Cañas, 3 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
58 Toussaint to Palomares, Banica, 13 Thermidor an IV / 31 July 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; José Urizar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 29 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1; Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, n. D., AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.79.
59 LeBlanc to Joaquín García, Guarico, 7 Fructidor an IV / 24 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
60 Joaquín García to Palomares, Santo Domingo, 5 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
French commissioners about the violence, theft, and disorder perpetrated by Toussaint’s troops which violated their terms under the treaty and asked them to send other, white regular troops to handle the exchanges.61

This trend played out across the border region. As Toussaint approached, hundreds and perhaps thousands of Dominicans either fled, or joined the British.62 British officials used this panic to contact noteworthy Dominicans who might sway their neighbors, including Father Juan Bobadilla in Neiba, who seemed to at least entertain their presentation and after such contact locals, who reported that they “all prefer the British dominion.”63 When a dutiful Spanish officer notified Roume of this dissent against the Republic, Roume initially did not respond. When he did, it was only to voice disbelief at disinterest in the Republic and without actionable advice.64 French ideological conceit and chronic myopia toward Dominican cultural politics disabled their comprehension of myriad reasons why many in Santo Domingo was unsettled by their approach. Similarly, French presumptions of moral high ground regarding their newfound emancipationist strategies prevented their comprehension of diversity of thought among black actors on the island, many of whom continued to prefer Spanish or

61 Joaquín García to French Colonial Directorate, 6 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
62 José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 9 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
63 Antonio Chinchilla to Joaquin García, Neiba, 14 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
64 José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 29 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.
British affiliations to the nation that so recently enslaved and brutalized them, an interpretive distortion adopted by some historians to the present.

Given these complications with French takeovers, and British support, the Republic suspended taking Monte Cristi and Dajabon, both areas with heightened British activities. When these handovers loomed, a delegation of Dominicans and French royalist allies furtively visited the British to warn that the Republic would take Monte Cristi and Dajabon, and begged for British protection. French officials had even spoken with one delegate, Juan del Monte, about serving the Republic. He had others ideas, as did the physician Adrien who, while French, had fled the Republic into Santo Domingo. Two British ships stayed nearby Monte Cristi at Manzanillo and made signals all night. These signals went to British operatives or to Dominican sympathizers. A local fisherman told of seeing rockets sent as communication. The delegation had read the proclamation, and sailed all the way from Monte Cristi to Môle Saint Nicolas. This British sympathy, coupled with the anti-Republic uprising of blacks at Grande-Rivière, were major setbacks.

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65 Roume to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 16 Fructidor an IV / 2 September 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.1.

66 Grandet to Citizen Commission Delegates of Santo Domingo, Fort Liberte, 21 Fructidor an IV / 7 September 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; LeBlanc to Joaquín García, Guarico, 7 Fructidor an IV / 24 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; Vicente Matos to García, Monte Cristi, 16 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

67 José María de la Torre to Laveaux, Monte Cristi, 9 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
for French operations. The townspeople of Puerto Plata and La Vega may have also had similar contact with the British.

The black uprising at Grande-Rivière came directly from former black auxiliaries of Jean-François and Biassou, with many still wearing the Spanish cockade. Likely some of these troops had sided with Titus, and their present attacks in August 1796 could have been enticed by British agents. The blacks of the mountains near Grande-Rivière were about 3,000 strong, and completely rejected the Republic. They had some conversations with the British, and many of the troops preferred this option, so that when their own commander Gañet took up the tricolore cockade they killed him. García identified this same battle of styles between British and French as the fundamental question confronting Dominicans. In response, French commanders in Cap-Français sent out a decree against unsupervised travel or commerce involving the Dominican town of Dajabon, which the Republic saw as a hotbed of royalist activity and supplying

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68 LeBlanc to Joaquín García, Guarico, 7 Fructidor an IV / 24 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

69 Portillo y Torres to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 14 September 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

70 LeBlanc to Joaquín García, Guarico, 7 Fructidor an IV / 24 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

71 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 12 September 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.84.
and coordinating with the black insurgents at Grande-Rivière. Soon enough, a French patrol decided to enter Santo Domingo unannounced to hunt down black royalists, and Spanish troops unaware of their identity almost attacked them. This region around Dajabon was not under French control, and the patrol was expelled.

These were autonomous, diverse actors in the thousands who disdained the idea of a French hegemony on the island. French officials lazily dismissed this discontent as “traitors and treacherous men” who were “taking advantage of their simplicity and ignorance,” rather than attempting to address Dominican dismay. Dominican concerns did not dissipate when news of the massacre of whites at Les Cayes directed by mulattoes under Rigaud and with black republican troops. Spanish officials understood that Pinchinat and Franc were involved, who would not yield to the new General Desfournaux. One captain who hid aboard his ship during “the furies” sailed straight to Santo Domingo, where he said that for three days the massacres raged, starting with rifles, then swords.

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72 “PROCLAMATION,” Raimond, LeBlanc, Sonthonax, and Pascal, Guarico, 7 Brumaire an V / 28 October 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

73 Augustin Lasala to Jean-Pierre Levellies, Dajabon, 4 November 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

74 LeBlanc to Joaquín García, Guarico, 7 Fructidor an IV / 24 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

75 Pascal to Philippe-Rose Roume, Cap-Français, 9 Fructidor an IV / 26 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.6.
and finally drownings. None of this made Dominicans trust French troops of color any more.

Since most well-off white colonists had fled to neighboring Spanish colonies the British backgrounded the importance of maintaining slavery compared to their earlier materialist appeals in Saint-Domingue. Those who received the proclamation were largely free Dominicans of color who could not afford to leave and wanted to protect their homes and livelihoods. As Catholics dependent upon small market engagements, and without racial solidarity with the sometimes pillaging and violent ex-slave armies aligned with France, they gravitated toward British offers. In contrast to pro-British partisans in Saint-Domingue, Dominican sympathizers were less prosperous, more appalled by French anti-clericalism, and more interested in constitutional monarchy which seemed far more stable than the constant rotation of governors in Saint-Domingue and revolutionary leadership in Paris, of which rose at the end of a gun and fell under the guillotine. More commonly though, Dominican small producers or peasants, many of whom were of color, appear to have been nonplussed with

76 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 29 September 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.87.


78 Palomares to Joaquín García, Punta de Cañas, 3 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
Saint-Domingue’s revolution and French rights discourses, and their ambivalence echoes in their notable absence from much of the documentary record on this era.

British observers were so certain of their eventual success that in September 1796 The Times of London published a lengthy article about whole towns in Spanish Santo Domingo clamoring for British subjecthood. Specifically, a council from Monte Cristi, a key northern port city, had directly petitioned British forces to protect them from French irreligion, anarchy, plunder, and massacre.79 Another such plea from Santiago, a major city 50 miles inland and hundreds of miles from British lines, claimed to represent an entire pro-British region.80 By August 1796 the British were circulating more specialized texts promoting their lucrative trade.81 Dominicans continued defecting,82 as pro-British gens de couleur from Saint-Domingue detailed their positive experiences to Dominicans.83 By late 1796 Spanish officials felt increasingly trapped by people of color who dabbled in British intrigues “without talent or education.”84 British officers refused, though, to occupy towns unless they flew the Republican

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81 Joaquín García to Palomares, Santo Domingo, 5 August 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
82 José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 9 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407; Antonio Chinchilla to Joaquín García, Neiba, 14 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
83 José María de la Torre to Laveaux, Monte Cristi, 9 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
84 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 8 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, n.76.
The British would then simply attack these new French positions, unfurling the Union Jack over more Dominican territory. In contrast to pro-French forces, British officers treated rural Dominicans with maximum dignity and paid “superabundantly” for their produce. Many Dominicans concluded that under the British they could return to carrying agricultural tools instead of weapons, and carrying out transactions rather than warfare.

By mid-August the pro-British seditions had spread all the way to the halls of Spanish power in Santo Domingo. Based on a tip from French intelligence, Spanish officials arrested Francisco Gascue, a prominent urbanite, brother-in-law of the mayor of Santiago, and treasurer and accountant in the employ of the Audiencia and Real Hacienda. Roume, who passed García some evidence, had once called Gascue “citizen” and offered lofty ideas to Gascue of what he hoped Santo Domingo might become, just as he had to many others in the colony. Of course, that did not make his hopes reality, just as it did not make Gascue a French

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85 José Urizar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 September 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1030.
86 José Urizar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 29 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
87 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 12 September 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, n.84. Ganet, a key officer of this force, was murdered by his own men when he dared to flirt with the tricolore of the French.
88 Joaquín García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 15 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; Fernando Portillo y Torres to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 4 May 1796, AGI-Estado, leg.11A.; AGI-Estado; García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 28 August 1796, AGI-Estado, leg.5A. See also: AGI-SD, leg.1069. This was most likely the same Gascue (or sometimes, even in colonial records, spelled “Gazcue”) for whom the well-known barrio in Santo Domingo is named. See: Andrés Blanco Díaz, “Gascue se escribe con ‘s’,” Listín Diario, Santo Domingo, 18 Jun 2011.
citizen. When Roume actually arrived, Gascue informed him that he worked for Spain, not the Republic or Roume, and that whatever instructions he brought were provisional and subservient to Spanish governance pending a formal transfer. Allegedly, Gascue had not only received the Forbes proclamation, but had passed it along and explained British intentions among his social circle. In response, García tightened codes against British papers, not only criminalizing the documents but legally compelling residents to immediately surrender them to officials and explain their origins. Spanish officials were skeptical of what this situation actually meant, given the strong reputation of Gascue, and that Roume had a difficult time proving he was a British agent guilty of high treason.

García, likely upset over whatever Gascue had actually done, was even more irritated at Roume’s theatrics. He called the latter a “hothead” with many “bad satellites who orbit him” referring to a few opportunistic, or perhaps sincere Dominicans who followed Roume around seeing an anti-Republic slight at every corner. The trouble ensued after Gascue mentioned the proclamation to a member of this entourage of “bad satellites,” one of whom was a priest who wore his holy

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90 Francisco Gascue to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 6 April 1796, AGI-Estado, leg.5A, no.2.
91 Joaquín García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 15 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 29 August 1796, AGI-Estado, leg.13.
garb with the *tricolore* cockade. Given his four decades of service to the empire, Gascue’s professions of innocence had currency with Spanish investigators, and when Spanish jurists dismissed the case García had to remind Roume, again, that Santo Domingo was still Spanish and that he was still only a provisional agent. García testified to having received the British proclamation and also seditious French texts, but not having known exactly what to do with them.

**UNREALIZED PROMISES**

In December 1796 Forbes issued a second, lengthier mass print proclamation. It played more heavily upon religious fears, warning of the destruction that the French Republic had perpetrated against Catholicism in continental Europe and asking for martyrs to take arms against irreligious radicalism. It argued that the French could only provide burnt churches, an unbefitting outcome for Dominicans, who they called “the successors of the first missionaries” in the Americas.
The British also eroded Spain’s role as champion of righteous counterrevolution. Numerous Spanish priests in key border towns also defected to the British side.\textsuperscript{95} For example, Father Marquez, a particularly popular priest in the west, had recently been reassigned by Archbishop Portillo due to scandalous affairs with married women. In his next parish he quickly found a new love interest. When confronted, Marquez simply crossed the border and accepted a raise to become chaplain of British Catholic troops, including recent defectors from Spain’s forces who were accustomed to campaigning with priestly advice as they had under Spain.\textsuperscript{96} This was possible because in the mid-1790s the British Catholic hierarchy, despite being a disempowered religious minority at home, outmaneuvered Spanish interests within the Vatican. To support British imperial exploits on Hispaniola they won jurisdictional autonomy from the top church official on the island, Archbishop Portillo of Santo Domingo, much to his personal and geopolitical chagrin.\textsuperscript{97}

In mid-1794 King George III realized the value not only of blocking Portillo’s influence, but of borrowing Spanish ideas of using exiled French clerics in their own territory. He moved to deploy the Bishop of Comminges, who had

\textsuperscript{95} José Urízar to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 25 August 1795, AGI-Estado, 1033.

\textsuperscript{96} Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 15 October 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1110 and AGI-SD, leg. 1015.

\textsuperscript{97} José Azara to Fernando Portillo y Torres, Rome, 3 July 1794, AGI-SD, leg. 1007.
served the city of Toulouse in France and was exiled in Britain, as the Catholic spiritual leader for British Saint-Domingue. This idea passed to the Vatican, who did not object to British plans. Amid Spanish decline, perhaps the Vatican saw the British at least as a more pious option than secular French rule. Indeed, Vatican officials hoped that, with British conquest, Santo Domingo would remain as fervently Catholic as Quebec had in British Canada. These British religious incursions augmented their presence in the Dominican borderlands.

The next pro-British phase moved from the border and coasts to directly strike the capital. First, officials found that a well-connected government accountant and respected resident of 41 years, Francisco Gascue, owned a copy of the Forbes proclamation, and had apparently explained its content and spoken persuasively about British rule to several people. Spanish officials were scandalized, but this was a modest prelude to a bout of major dissent.

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100 Cardinal Zelada to Cardinal Casoni, Rome, 10 February 1796, ASV-NM, 200, f.123-124.


102 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 March 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1031.

103 José Urízar to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 29 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
In December 1796 Spanish officials uncovered a coalition of petty officials, black soldiers, merchants who, in coordination with dissidents in the interior, were plotting a coup and British invasion of the city of Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{104} The informant who revealed the coup to Spanish officials, and who later emerged as a suspected co-conspirator, was Domingo Assereto. He had been a military commander in Louisiana and later Cuba, and while he had served Spain for many years he was originally from Italy.\textsuperscript{105}

His colleague, Juan Angulo, was a thirty-eight-year-old merchant from Havana, where the two had originally met. Angulo, who had arrived in Santo Domingo after having passed through Port-au-Prince and Neiba, claimed to have been trading wood in Jérémie and Gonaïves and had been on the island about seven months. He was arrested in possession of cryptic letters signed by a British general that derided the French and Spanish and exalted British stability to important religious officials, including the directors of the seminary and a monastery. Angulo carried two British passports, a copy of the Forbes proclamation to Dominicans, and many additional letters for certain residents and

\textsuperscript{104} “Testimonio de la Causa Criminal Seguida de oficio contra Dn Juan Antonio Angulo y los morenos Pablo Aly y Agustín por seductores a favor de la nacion ynglesa,” Santo Domingo, 8 December 1796 and 28 October 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 1-24 and 232-235.

\textsuperscript{105} 29 September 1795, San Yldefonso, ASG-SGU, 6854, exp.49; “Pasaporte para regresarse a la Havana,” San Lorenzo, 29 December 1795, AGS-SGU, 6854, exp.82.
black officers. He may have even burned other secret papers prior to his capture.106 Alleged co-conspirators who were absolutely essential to the networking, staging, and execution of the plot were two black officers who had formerly served in prominence under Biassou – Pablo (Paul) Alí and Agustín. Both had, Assereto alleged, been promised commissions with the British by Assereto. Both black officers had access to the content of these pro-British papers, and both had lost salary, social prestige, and career opportunities since the peace treaty. Spanish officials questioned all of these suspected conspirators over a few weeks. Their depositions unveiled a sizeable and well-developed pro-British faction plotting an urban uprising. As soon as Assereto revealed this plot he begged to leave for Cuba.107 He made it to Cuba by mid-January 1797, but remained under suspicion.108

Angulo, who Spanish officials considered to be the chief spy running this ring of pro-British sympathizers, remained locked in a private tower. Not only had he carried British letters and the proclamation on his person, in his luggage they found other commercial papers in English or detailing sales involving British subjects. Besides his claims to trading in woods, he also apparently dealt in

107 “Tesimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 8 December 1796 and 28 October 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 1-24 and 232-235.
108 “Tesimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 20 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 357.
creams, soaps, toothpastes and fabrics. Angulo had tried to portray himself as hailing from a modestly well-off background but with a life of distress, including deaths in his family and loss of property. He had only been in Santo Domingo for seven days and said his business there was to seek governmental redress for hardships in commerce, hassle from corsairs, and the loss of money at the hands of the French in the west of the island. Angulo did file a series of documented complaints against French treatment in Léogâne, Gonaïves, and off the coast of Port-au-Prince. The Baron de Montalembert, a high-ranking British officer of French royalist background, had issued him a passport, after which he spent a few days in Neiba, passed through Azua, and arrived in the capital. Montalembert had asked him to look for cattle and horses that the Dominicans might sell them. He said he had not handed out letters that he carried from British-occupied Port-au-Prince, that he did not know their content, and that he had learned of the war building between Spain and Britain and did not want to incite trouble. He had taken these letters directly from a "gentleman" named Villat who he had on the suggestion of a contact in Les Cayes because he said Villat had a son in Cuba. His answers as to why he carried the Forbes proclamation were vague and shifty, and

110 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 17 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 7-12.
111 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 17 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 19-21.
112 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 7 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 214-230.
said the extra blank passports from Montalembert were only in case he found livestock to send back.\footnote{Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 17 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 21-27.} He said he knew nobody in Santo Domingo, but hoped to find family connections, and ended up seeing Assereto, who he had met before, and stayed in his home briefly before hoping to relocate to a monastery. He and Assereto had discussed seeking permission to travel about the island to find friends, family, or commerce in Les Cayes, Azua, Santiago, and possibly Dajabon.\footnote{Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 17 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 27-31.}

Assereto, who had told Spanish officials about the whole alleged conspiracy, had also become a suspect. In his questioning he said he only knew Angulo casually, and that they talked about indifferent matters. He had let Angulo stay with him as a courtesy to Cuban officers that were their mutual friends. Assereto alleged that Angulo made favorable insinuations about the British, who he suggested might give better treatment to Dominicans than the “perfidious” French. After all, he allegedly noted, the British enjoyed greater prosperity might offer better pay and promotions to Spanish troops, just as they had with many French royalists. Assereto thought Angulo generally understood the letters and his mission, and tried to deliver them to the seminary and religious leaders, and that he had gone along with his conversations to learn of his plans...
and betray them to Spain and prevent a coup. Assereto said he also went along with recruiting the two black officers, and that Angulo implied that former black auxiliaries had received correspondence from British officials that preceded his arrival. From his interactions he learned that the black recruits were to help secure a landing spot at Jayna for a British fleet that would land, take the fort, and move on to Santo Domingo, perhaps with the support of Dominicans from various parts of the interior who sympathized with the British. This was all to prevent the impending French takeover of the colony, and to strike the new Spanish enemies while they were weak.\textsuperscript{115}

Agustín was the first black officer with whom Assereto met, a thirty years old and originally from Grande-Rivière in North. Assereto apparently gave him a nice blue jacket, epaulets, and a golden shoulder braid to try to earn trust and sway him toward the British. Agustín may have also received letters from British officers.\textsuperscript{116} He said that these black officers were securing others in their community to participate, and perhaps Dominicans of color, though he was not sure of that. Assereto thought that Angulo had brought other letters for figures such as the mayor Nicolas Guridi, and perhaps additional correspondence with

\textsuperscript{115} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 19 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 31-36.

\textsuperscript{116} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 19 December 1796 and 20 April 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 36-38 and 326-327.
Montalembert, but that Angulo had burned some of his papers, and that he had spoken lengthily with the university rector. Angulo had allegedly told him of several co-conspirators lying in wait around Azua, Neiba, and even the capital, though he gave no names. Possible suspects included a British subject, another man possibly named Despineaux, and possibly a Spanish subject, all of whom stayed in either the Pellon and Pons homes. He insisted that “many subjects” had become British partisans. Again, Assereto claimed that his actions were a ruse to crack the conspiracy, which also involved a convoluted, poorly-conceived decoy of a feigned trip to Cuba.

When Pablo Alí testified he indicated that most of his dealings were also with Assereto, who he trusted due to his captain’s uniform of the Spanish army. Alí said that he was thirty-eight years old and a native of Saint-Rose, likely the parish at Grande-Rivière in North. He said when he visited the house Angulo sat in a hammock and kept his distance. He did not know either man by name, however. He insisted that neither he nor Agustín had received British letters, but had heard of such letters in Azua. He said Assereto spoke favorably of the British, but also, confusingly, spoke well of the French. Assereto also mentioned the

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117 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 19 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 36-38.
118 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 19 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 39-43.
119 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 19 December 1796 and 20 April 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 42-48 and 316-318.
looming open war with Britain, and said that soon the British would come to Santo Domingo. He did not think that Agustín and Assereto had any pact, did not know if Agustín had taken money from Angulo as Assereto had implied, but that Agustín had received a blue British-style jacket from Assereto. He also knew that Agustín had recently travelled for five or six days and visited San Juan and Jayna with the company of another black soldier named Pierre.¹²⁰

Agustín, aged forty, also said he did not know Assereto by name, but only as a Spanish officer who had once lived with the Englishman named Joseph Sterling (known as José Sterlin in Santo Domingo). He only knew Angulo as a tall white man living with Assereto. Assereto had first asked Agustín to travel with him to Azua to help find his brother. Angulo, with whom he had never spoken, was to accompany them, and Agustín was to rendezvous with them at Jayna. He had met with Assereto in his home twice, accompanied by Alí both times. Agustín did accept a blue coat from Assereto, but only because he lacked official-looking clothes, and only offered him money as compensation for the trip. Assereto offered for him and his wife to move into his home, alongside Angulo, which the black officer refused due to his many children. He also asked Agustín many

questions about how the black auxiliaries supported themselves, how they were treated, how dispersed they were on the island, and what they did since the peace. He said Assereto never talked much about the British with him, only mentioning the looming war and to ask him if he was afraid of the British, to which Agustín said no. During one of these conversations he thought that Alí had said that the last time he had been in Banica that a British agent had offered him a hefty sum to join and double salary. One colleague in Azua had received a letter from Montalembert. One of their colleagues in Santo Domingo, Gabat, had also traveled to the frontier town of San Juan supposedly to take care of money matters, but had disappeared without notice not even two weeks before. That night, with mounting suspicion, Alí, Agustín, and their companion Pierre were all jailed incommunicado.121

The day following his and Agustín’s first statements Pablo Alí had a change of heart. He wanted to amend his testimony and was taken directly to see Governor Joaquín García. Alí then confessed that there was, in fact, a British “surprise” planned against Santo Domingo. Assereto, he claimed, was conspiring with Angulo, that he had spoken to him about a commission and payment if he helped, and had showed him and explained several secretive papers. These papers

121 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 19 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 49-54.
included the Forbes proclamation of 12 July and a letter dated 25 November from Montalembert to Angulo. Alí claimed that he thought, due to Assereto’s rank and insinuations that the Archbishop was in accord with the plot, that the plan was legitimate. Alí was supposed to accompany Agustín and the two white men to Azua to take care of some affair. If they were successful there, they would continue, if not, they could return to the capital. Eventually, Alí begged out of this portion of the plan and found reasons to stay in the capital. He maintained that Angulo interacted little only because he spoke little French, but clearly concurred with the whole undertaking. Alí understood that the blue jacket, epaulets, and braids that Assereto gave to Agustín were not just a gift, but actually for Agustín to make a strong impression with British officers he was to meet during their trip. Later, the stableman who rented out the horses for this journey testified about Assereto’s behavior. Assereto first rented one horse, then the next day requested two more, and said he was only going to Azua. He visited the stableman’s home four times in total, and asked about how many days it would take to get from Azua to San Juan, then from San Juan to Banica, then from Banica to Hincha, and other locations, but only because Assereto said he was “just curious.” Apparently while the stableman handled the harnesses Assereto

122 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 20 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 54-59.
rambled to him about British and French military operations, and that the French would not overtake the British as the latter had stronger forces, and that the British were better people than the French anyway.\textsuperscript{123} Banica, a recurring location in testimony among the suspects, had already been in British hands by mid-1796, and was where hundreds of Dominicans pledged fealty to King George III that year. Some still-concealed British agent there had been quite effective, and had also reached out to the black auxiliaries.\textsuperscript{124}

Agustín soon confirmed the grimmest of Ali’s assertions with minor clarifications, and added that their trip was part of sorting of money and scouting locations. Even Assereto confessed to his complicity in these details.\textsuperscript{125} This changed the Spanish approach to the case entirely. It had been a sensational, scattered set of accusations by a down-and-out Italian serving Spain and his out-of-place comrade the Cuban soap and toothpaste salesman. It quickly became a major investigation into an imminent military threat to Santo Domingo.

When Pierre was brought forth for questioning, wholly unaware of the testimony already implicating him, he told the Spanish officials that they simply had the wrong Pierre, and that it must have been some other black soldier who

\textsuperscript{123} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 6 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 187-191.

\textsuperscript{124} Geggus, Slavery, 200-202.

\textsuperscript{125} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 22 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 61-66.
accompanied Agustín. After Alí and Agustín both again confirmed his identity, Pierre relented and said it was, in fact, he who had gone to Jayna with Agustín. Agustín had also visited San Juan to handle some financial issues. This was, of course, the same place from whence their comrade Gabat had suspiciously vanished, while Pierre went to see his children near Banica. He claimed to know nothing about Agustín crossing the British lines, only that a white man who would travel with them. Their trip ended early, apparently with some sense of disappointment.126

Confronted with mounting testimonies, Angulo tried to defend himself. He claimed to have only praised the British in comparison to the French, and only because he had been harassed by the French, whereas he was always treated very well by the British, and only that Dominicans would be happier under British rule than French republicanism. Although all of his companions knew of the looming war with Britain, he said he had no idea of such things. He was not treasonous, he insisted, and was not helping plot a coup. He said he had no idea of Assereto’s conversations with the black officers, that he had no idea that his secret papers were hidden in a chair cushion nor that the black officers saw them, and that his interest in visiting Azua was solely to explore commercial opportunities.127 He was
denied permission to go, though he had also considered visiting Jacmel and Les Cayes with permission from Provisional Agent Roume.\textsuperscript{128}

With the core conspirators identified and confined, and the broad details of the threat outlined, Spanish officials began to broaden their investigation. Songui, a minor French emissary with Roume, and Pedro Logroño, a prominent resident of Santo Domingo, both had unusual encounters with the white conspirators asking about the details of the Spanish and French treaty, and circulating documents. Angulo was perhaps even trafficking “gazettes” with the Englishman named Sterling at the Pellon house the day of his arrest. Angulo said he was only handling packages for the chaplain of the Cuba regiment in Neiba, and that whatever papers Sterling had was his problem.\textsuperscript{129} In fact, Angulo had delivered many letters from Neiba and Azua in Santo Domingo, including one from Father Juan Bobadilla.\textsuperscript{130} Bobadilla, a distinguished and respected priest, including from his work with Maniel and Naranjo, had fallen under suspicion of Spanish officers in Neiba when they knew he had been receiving letters from British contacts in August 1796, as did other residents, but did not disclose this nor alerted Spanish officials to their content.\textsuperscript{131} Spanish investigators began to collect

\textsuperscript{128} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 28 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 68-71.

\textsuperscript{129} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 28 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 71-83.

\textsuperscript{130} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 30 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 111-117.

\textsuperscript{131} Antonio Chinchilla to Joaquín García, Neiba, 14 August 1796, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
and review all documents circulated by Angulo in the capital. Angulo continued, insisting that any inflammatory documents that he brought from the British was an unwitting act. Spanish officials began to chip away the façade of Angulo’s ostensible need to meet with Spanish officials about his trade problems with the French. His efforts to meet multiple religious leaders and the university rector, especially when he only had letters for three of them, was less explainable. He had also hired a black woman to deliver items.

Assereto, who insisted upon his innocence and stressed that he had done the Spanish a great service, continued trying to leave for Cuba. However, as evidence and testimony collected, Spanish officials had just as much reason to believe that Assereto was a British agent along with Angulo. Spanish officials also discovered that Angulo had been visiting a black woman who had found a way to get to his cell. She had been circulating messages from Angulo to the outside. Her name was Monica de la Cruz Cornejo, a free black woman from Santo Domingo who may have been the one circulating his messages before his arrest, and she now became a suspect for observation and investigation.

132 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 31 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 128.
133 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 28 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 71-83.
134 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 21 and 30 December 1796, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 109.
Angulo insisted that he could not stand Assereto, and that was why he tried to move to the monastery to avoid this “man of impertinent and inconsequential conversations.”\textsuperscript{136} He also said he tried to dissuade Assereto from his trip inland, and doubted Assereto’s credentials and real motives for being in Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{137} Angulo also promised he could not speak French, and therefore could not conspire with the black officers, and that his contacts in Neiba and Azua would vouch for his loyalty to Spain.\textsuperscript{138} However, the black officers said that Angulo did confer with Assereto in Spanish during their meetings, though Agustín had never heard him say anything directly against Spain.\textsuperscript{139}

Spanish officials brought forth other contacts of Angulo’s, who said they had visited him in Assereto’s house where they said a negrito francés was coming. The black man was known as a barber, and had lived in Santo Domingo for several years. Assereto mixed in their conversations about Cuba, and said he thought Spain would soon make him “governor” of four parts of that island. They did see two black men who had fought with Biassou and who spoke in private with

\textsuperscript{136} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 31 December 1796 and 23 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 117-124 and 156-158.

\textsuperscript{137} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 3 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 123-128.

\textsuperscript{138} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 31 December 1796 and 23 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 117-124 and 156-158.

\textsuperscript{139} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 3 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 123-128.
Assereto. They heard nothing about the British from Angulo, though the Cuban did say he could not stand Assereto and would move to a room at the monastery.\footnote{140 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 4 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 128-133.}

Making the story only more complex, a new Dominican witness said that he had learned of the Assereto case through Roume, because Assereto had denounced the coup to the French emissaries when he did so to Spain. Assereto had apparently stated to Roume that he was a natural republican, as he was from Genoa, and wanted to serve the French Republic. This witness said, though, that Assereto had also mentioned his furtive trip to Azua to a woman street vendor, and was seen with a soldier of Biassou’s, but never mentioned the British.\footnote{141 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 12 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 133-136.} The vendor, Dominga Tapia, said she sold Assereto sausages and chickens as the captain told her of his trip to Azua on business of the governor.\footnote{142 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 6 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 191-192.}

Logroño testified, saying that the day of Angulo’s arrest he had been given a packet by an Englishman in the street, perhaps with newspapers, and that upon his arrest Angulo muttered that he was suspected as a British spy.\footnote{143 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 13 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 139-141.} If Angulo was actually innocent and unaware of why he had been arrested as he had claimed, then his statement during his arrest certainly raises questions as to how he so quickly and specifically knew of what he was suspected. Witnesses from the
border regions said that Angulo had met with many prominent residents and officials on his route to the capital, accompanied by a black woman, who was apparently his cook.\footnote{144 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 13 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 141-143.} An old Cuban contact, Herrezuelo, said he never heard Angulo say anything against Spain, but certainly had heard Assereto say contrary words about Spain, apparently due to some faults with judicial decisions in New Orleans, and he complained bitterly about Luis de las Casas, governor of Cuba, and Baron de Carondelet of Louisiana.\footnote{145 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 13 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 143-146.}

Isabel Pérez, the landlady for Assereto, said that he was “insufferable” company, and that his personality was revolting, overbearing, and immoderate, and that he frequently complained about Dominicans and was generally disagreeable. She had heard no pro-British talk from the men, but had heard Angulo speak badly of the French.\footnote{146 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 17 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 147-149.} Gabriel Pavillost, a French resident of the capital, said he had seen somebody who looked very much like Angulo in Les Cayes weeks before he arrived in Santo Domingo, who had mentioned his trade problems.\footnote{147 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 17 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 148-151.}

Joseph Sterling, the Englishman, said he knew where Assereto lived, but did not know anything about his meetings with black officers. He said he did not
know Angulo, and had only heard Assereto say pro-French things, not pro-British. Joaquín Pellon, with whom Sterling lived, said he never knew Angulo, but that he had eaten at his home once without knowing it, and had heard Assereto claim he was a British agent just before he left. James Blare, also British and a resident of the Pellon house, said he did not know Angulo well, but knew he was younger, rather tall, and had come from Neiba. His acquaintance Juan Estaffot had met Angulo there, and sent Angulo British newspapers in concealment. In conversation, Angulo praised Britain and criticized Spain.

When Monica de la Cruz Cornejo, aged thirty, testified she admitted to cooking for Angulo and also passing letters for him to military and civil officials. She had taken the letters from his cell, though she thought Assereto had intercepted the letter to the mayor. When she visited him there Angulo had asked what people were saying about why he was imprisoned and his ties to Assereto. He said that all they could pin on him was that he had criticized the way the French had treated and praised the British for their treatment of him. He asked her if she had heard anything about a conspiracy against Spain and France. She said during the time that Angulo lived with Assereto the two men would speak privately in

149 "Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 3 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 183-185.
150 "Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 3 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 185-187.
the street. Angulo had asked her if she knew any black soldiers, and she did – Osuna and Juan Fulgencio. Angulo asked her to approach them on his behalf, but only if they were dependable men. She suspected his intentions at that point, and also hesitated to do so, but also hesitated to talk to officials. Monica likely feared repercussions whether she reported her concerns or not. Furthermore, it seems that Angulo spoke most openly with her than others, perhaps because he regarded her as less powerful due to her racial and gender status, and thus Angulo gave her key pieces of evidence held against him.

Monica confided in her friend, another black woman named Isabel Ramirez, who discouraged her from engaging this request. Monica was also the one who actually arranged the room at the monastery for Angulo. She also identified the negrito francés barber who was in the suspects’ home as Pierre, married to Yrene, the slave of Joseph Sterling. Another Dominican slave, Isabel Ramírez, confirmed everything that Monica had relayed. At the least it is intriguing that slaves of Sterling worked with Assereto and Angulo, and was likely not a pure coincidence.

151 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 23 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 156-162.
152 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 23 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 156-162.
153 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 23 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 164-166.
Pierre Echalas, aged forty-five, the barber and also slave of Sterling, next testified. He tended Assereto’s hair and quickly left, and though he cut other white men’s hair there, he insisted he never overheard any conversations about seditious topics.\textsuperscript{154} When deposed the black soldiers Osuna and Fulgencio, who were likely Dominican and \textit{not} black auxiliaries, they denied knowing Angulo, Assereto, or anything about sedition or secret letters.\textsuperscript{155}

Ali and Agustín wrote the governor, asking respectfully for release after one month of imprisonment. They said they had been duped by Assereto, and had only agreed to travel with him, thinking his actions were not against the King, and that Assereto had convinced them that the Archbishop was in accord. They said that, unlike the “major turbulences of the blacks,” likely a reference to the defections, that they had remained faithful. They claimed that when they had been solicited by the British generals in Azua, they told Spanish officials about the offer and gave them the letters voluntarily.\textsuperscript{156}

García became suspicious of what religious officials knew, and realized that the British understood that to win over the Dominican populace that had to convince their spiritual leaders first, and that religious leaders would have the

\textsuperscript{154} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 23 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 162-164.

\textsuperscript{155} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 24 and 25 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 166-169.

\textsuperscript{156} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 19 January 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 169-171.
greatest grievances and fears regarding the anti-clerical and impious French. That is why Assereto lied to Alí and Agustín about his actions being in accord with the Archbishop. García then demanded that religious leaders from the monasteries, seminary, and churches come forth to explain what they knew, and that they should be in attendance to see the unopened letters in case they wanted to explain themselves if the letters contained damning details.157

Religious figures under suspicion flatly denied their involvement or any firsthand knowledge of pro-British sentiments. Fray Mateo de Espinosa said that any letter from Port-au-Prince for him was likely just, “one of those fatuous, or errant fires... burning material susceptible to combustion that it might encounter on its course,” and that if he were under suspicion he wanted to refute such “political slander...with the ardor of his heart.” He promised self-sacrifice for the patria, and promised García to “be an enemy of your enemies.”158

Once the letters were opened or tracked down they seemed innocuous enough. One did speak of Angulo’s dislike for revolution on the island.159 Another requested news from the capital.160 Bobadilla’s letter, which Angulo delivered to his nephew, was unclear in its intent, only saying that Angulo needed assistance

159 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 6 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 194-197.
160 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 7 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 197-199.
since he knew nobody in Santo Domingo, but not why or what his purpose for being there was. When Bobadilla’s nephew went to find Angulo to inquire, he found out about the arrest. Another priest at Neiba wrote his father in the capital a similarly vague letter delivered by Angulo. A letter to the mayor, Guridi, even mentioned that Angulo would need to return to Azua soon and that he might travel to Santiago, too. Angulo also delivered a letter of support all the way from Gonaïves, from man who had served in Dondon and was friends with a Spanish officer in Santo Domingo. A letter of support from Francisco Camilo Riofrio of Azua, with whom Angulo had stayed, was more suspicious of Angulo. He said Angulo asked many questions about where French naval forces were located, and that the military lines between the British and Spanish were peaceful. James Blare, the Englishman in the Pellon house, delivered a letter for Angulo intended for an “English American” named Nathaniel Preston who also lived in Santo Domingo in the Pons house. The letter was a recommendation for Angulo from the same Juan Estaffot who had sent British newspapers. Preston had

162 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 7 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 203.
163 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 7 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 211-213.
164 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 6 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 194-197.
165 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 31 December 1796 and February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 124-127 and 206-211.
subsequently vanished. In sum, Angulo received a suspicious over-abundance of recommendation letters from well-placed people across the west and center of the island, intended to connect him with other well-placed individuals in the capital.

James Blare tried to respond to this intriguing Juan Estaffot. Estaffot, who lived in a French-held city that the British wanted to capture had sent British newspapers and letters to two of the only native English speakers living in Santo Domingo, which was all highly suspicious. He had done this through a Cuban who claimed to have just happened to meet Montalembert and carry letters and a proclamation for him. This all seemed dubious. In his response, Blare told Estaffot of the recent Boca Nigua uprising, and implied that there were interesting details about the uprising that he could not yet impart. He cryptically said that, “Our dear friend Mr. Preston is, as accustomed, very busy and always progressing in the entertaining art of speaking alone,” and hoped that Estaffot would be able to visit Santo Domingo soon.

As mounting evidence made Angulo look even guiltier, García also requested that Roume reveal whatever dealings he had with Assereto. The

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French provisional emissaries in the capital provided a letter that they had received from Assereto only a few days after Angulo had been arrested. In it he complained that the Spanish did not take him or the concern seriously enough, and presented himself as such a worthy servant of Spain. He criticized Spanish officials for allowing a black woman to visit Angulo, who he thought was helping to continue organizing the plot. The reports that emerged from the French side not only discredited Assereto’s official story, but completely muddied the true nature of his involvement in the Angulo case.

Roume explained the first time he met Assereto, which was actually in Spain at the home of the Duque de Crillon at the end of 1795 just before he departed for Hispaniola. Assereto was then wearing the same uniform he had on in Santo Domingo. Assereto entertained them with an incredible story of departing the prime minister’s quarters at El Escorial and being ambushed by a gang of men who roughed him up and tied him up in a tree. Though he told his audience that he knew who had done this to him, he said that his enemies were far too powerful to reveal. When he left, the duke told Roume that he thought Assereto was a “schemer” and “liar” and that he did not believe a word of his story. Roume saw Assereto when he came to Santo Domingo and reminded him

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of the story, but Assereto said that Roume must have mistaken him for somebody else. In Santo Domingo the provisional French commission invited the new arrival to dinner, though Roume could not participate. During dinner Assereto talked about all sorts of indecent things, including offering his wife or daughter sexually to Father Quiñones who was also a guest, and bashed Spain.\footnote{\textit{Testimonio…,} Santo Domingo, 7 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 230-266.}

The French emissaries wanted nothing to do with him thereafter, yet Assereto continued to visit them uninvited and make anti-Spanish remarks. Assereto finally asked Roume to become the French commander at Santiago when the Republic eventually took that city and wanted to accompany Roume on a trip to that city. Roume told him no to both. When Roume returned to Santo Domingo the uncouth Assereto had revealed the Angulo conspiracy to the Spanish. Assereto told Roume directly that the case would implicate high-ranking officials, particularly in the religious community. Given their history, Roume doubted Assereto. Roume speculated that Assereto had overheard a specific conversation at the Pellon house in which discussion turned to rumors of British spies being in the colony. Looking for new professional horizons, Roume wondered if the soldier of fortune Assereto had this possibility in mind when he met Angulo, who had just arrived from Port-au-Prince. Roume wondered if he criticized the Spanish
and French in front of Angulo to gain his trust, and, considering his captain’s uniform and service to Spain, Angulo may have confided in Assereto. Angulo may have thought he found a perfect co-conspirator, while Assereto had accidentally found an actual British spy.\footnote{171 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 7 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 230-266.}

Angulo, Roume speculated, was charged with recruiting black soldiers left behind by Jean-François and Georges Biassou, and that is what Assereto did to “help” him and to learn more about the plot. That was when Angulo may have written a strong recommendation to the British in favor of Assereto receiving just the kind of promotion he sought – brigadier. The plan was for the British to take Jayna, then San Geronimo, and then Santo Domingo, with the support of the former black auxiliaries and pro-British Dominicans lying in wait, all of whom would eliminate the French. Roume was sure that their trip to the interior was a pretext to visit the British. Roume thought the uniform that Assereto gave Agustín was one of his old ones, and was not actually British. After denouncing the plan, Assereto had still not turned over documents that he claimed implicated high-level officials and residents, people he either wanted protection from, wanted to extort, or documents that did not exist. Assereto had initially wanted to allow the plan to begin so that Spain and France could see all the major players in hiding. He
suggested secretly detaining Angulo, writing a fake letter telling the British to launch the assault, and then leading troops himself. Assereto had told much of his plan to Urízar, who liked the idea, but García had decided to be cautious. Roume thought Assereto was unhinged, and could not believe his sudden ardor for Spain and the French, given what he had said to various people, and that his credibility was soft. He even recalled conversations in which Assereto celebrated the Boca Nigua revolt because Spanish soldiers would be killed in it.172

After all this complexity, Assereto again asked Roume for a position with the Republic, and Roume again refused. Nevertheless, after considering the evidence Roume believed that there definitely was a pro-British coup in the capital and across the colony and had been planned for quite some time. He believed that the British had a considerable number of accomplices, too, and perhaps Assereto cracked and revealed the plot because he was paranoid and thought that somebody might soon reveal him. He offered to bring in undercover French agents to root out British sympathizers, He requested a copy of the proceedings in case the Executive Directory wanted to know about the case.173 Under oath, eight separate French visitors to the city verified different parts of Roume’s account.174

172 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 7 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 230-266.
173 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 7 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 230-266.
174 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 8-11 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 267-284.
One of the corroborating French witnesses was none other than Charles Gérard, who years before had been arrested and placed on trial by Spanish officials due to his leadership of the *gens de couleur* at Ouanaminthe.\(^{175}\)

Finally, on 22 February the Spanish opened the secret letters from Montalembert with Angulo and various religious authorities present, since they were the addressees. All were written in Port-au-Prince in November 1796.\(^{176}\) The letters implored the religious leaders to consider the fortunes and futures of Spanish government in Santo Domingo, and mentioned the positive promises of the Forbes proclamation. The British general of French royalist extraction, Montalembert, said that the “disgraced Spanish Haytians” – that is, Dominicans – could be assured of protection under the peaceful and generous rule of His Britannic Majesty, including religious freedoms that the French would not permit. The coming war was the Republic’s fault, and that Dominicans should not see the British as enemies, and that they should consider British rule in Las Cahobas and Banica as proof of their goodwill. Montalembert called Dominicans virtuous and pious, and knew that the religious leaders would stand against their sacrilegious enemies, and recommended Angulo as a man of honesty and discretion who was there to assist the colony in a time of conflict. Montalembert referenced the

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\(^{175}\) “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 9 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 276-278.

\(^{176}\) “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 22 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 284-287.
gracious British occupations of Dominican towns, and said that it they wanted free
religion, respect of worship, and wise rule, the British were their choice.177

After this, Spanish officials interviewed even more of the contacts that
Angulo had made in his time in Santo Domingo, trying to uncover who among
them might be British sympathizers.178 Spanish officials questioned Alí again in
April 1797, when he insisted that he did not know the plan was a British coup, and
that he had trusted Assereto due to his captain status, experience and his Spanish
cockade, and claimed that he tried to speak about his misgivings with Joaquín
Cabrera, who he knew from their service together during the war in North, but the
general was asleep when he visited. Alí said he believed Assereto, who told him
that the Archbishop and Governor knew of the plans. He promised that he had
been loyal to Spain since he swore vassalage in San Miguel in front of Colonel
Nicolas Montenegro years before. Alí said he knew his error was serious, but that
he did not mean to commit it, and had surrendered other British offers before.179
Agustín, who was also re-interrogated the same day, said almost exactly the same
as Alí, but added that Alí was more suspicious of Assereto because he was more
“intelligent in the French language and about white Europeans.” Agustín said he

177 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 22 February 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 291-298.
178 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 25 February and 4, 15, 21 March 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27,
302-316.
179 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 20 April 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 316-326.
only spoke “language of the creoles,” and that Alí always had to clarify to him what Assereto wanted. He trusted Assereto for the same reasons, who even told the black officers that someday he might become the governor of Trinidad. He also claimed loyalty to Spain since his pledge to Joaquín Cabrera in San Miguel years before. He said he knew he broke his oath to Spain and his faith, but did not intend to do so. For their actual defense, Alí and Agustín were assigned a lawyer for the poor, rather like a public defender, a talented young man named José Nuñez de Cáceres. He and a defense team tried to quickly sift through 300 pages of evidence to free the black officers from jail and prevent them from being whipped.

In their defense, Nuñez de Cáceres assembled a series of glowing letters from Spanish commanders commending their “Dear Alí” who he thought was so trustworthy, prudent, modest, sober and honest as a colonel under Biassou, having served Spain with distinction since 1792 (a year before the black auxiliaries were formally formed, and likely an honest accident that remarked on his service to Spain that year, too). His loyalty was proven when he rejected offers from the British through Montalembert, and offer from France through Toussaint

180 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 20 April 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 326-333.
181 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 28 April 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 356.
182 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 26 May 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 402-406.
Louverture, a rejection confirmed by his brother Hippolite Louverture. Alí made
decisive decisions that saved lives and Spanish positions, and once led his troops
to carry cannons and munitions by hand over treacherous terrain. Even when Alí’s
close fellow officer Gabat disappeared, and when Alí was left behind when
Biassou went to Florida, he stayed tied to Spain. Witnesses called to testify for
Alí in person were a who’s who of Spanish military officials. Nuñez de Cáceres
said that Alí had been so valorous for Spain that he deserved esteem, not prison,
not only for his “heroic loyalty,” not only for his rejection of the British, but also
for his rejection of former friend and close colleague Toussaint. In spoken
testimony each witness gave their personal, eyewitness accounts of the gritty
determination, intelligence, constancy, fluorescence, and bravery that Alí
especially had given to Spain. After these witnesses, Nuñez de Cáceres and the
defense requested a great deal of contextualizing material on Assereto, whose
character they clearly wanted to assassinate. Some of the same character
witnesses later reappeared to defined Alí and Agustín, saying they might have

183 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 7 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 407-416. Multiple
documents or testimony in this portion of the trial mentioned 1792 as the beginning of Alí’s career
with Spain.

184 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 7 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 417.

185 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 9 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 417-423.

186 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 9-12 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 423-463. Here the
numbering of the trial record pages seems to inexplicably skip ahead.

187 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 12 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 462-466.
easily believed Assereto’s claims and rank.\textsuperscript{188} Almost heartbreakingly, one witness said that Alí constantly talked about finding a way to go to Florida to be with Biassou, and that a gentleman in the city, who was likely Assereto, might have had the connections to make that happen.\textsuperscript{189}

Nuñez de Cáceres demanded that Alí and Agustín were innocent and should enjoy their liberty. He asked the court to consider the criminality of premeditated treason to help a foreign nation attack, and then consider his defendants’ records, and quoted Roman rhetorician Valerius Maximus to say, that their imprisonment, “causes as much harm to the human race as good faith brings welfare.” He claimed no proof that the two officers had actually raised their troops for an insurrection, and that they had only been duped. Nuñez de Cáceres firmly placed the blame on Angulo and Assereto, and asked, somewhat sarcastically, if some “clumsy Africans could probe the refined malice of an astute European?” They had followed orders, just as they had been praised for during the war. Alí had been called a “friend” by a Spanish general, and had a “strong heart” and was an “African hero” for Spain, Nuñez de Cáceres said.\textsuperscript{190}

\textsuperscript{188} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 12 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 466-470.

\textsuperscript{189} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 14 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 470-472.

\textsuperscript{190} “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 14 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27,472-489..
Over three days Spanish officials reviewed all of the evidence against Angulo and asked him to confess that he was in fact a British spy, but he repeatedly refused and insisted upon his innocence. In his defense, which began 31 May 1797, Adrian Campuzano, an attorney for the Audiencia, gained access to all the transcripts and evidence. Angulo still steadfastly refuted all the accusations against him. Campuzano called several more witnesses who said that Angulo was never seditious, including Juan Bobadilla. Campuzano tried to devalue the very detailed testimony of Monica de la Cruz Cornejo, the free black woman who worked for Angulo, because he said that she had frequently slept with Assereto, and thus her words were blemished and biased. Isabel Pérez, Assereto’s landlady, confirmed their relationship, saying that once Monica had confronted Assereto and fought, with Monica saying that he was, “the black, and I am the white...you have raised my skirts...what I have in my belly is of your favor,” inferring that she was pregnant with his child. The defense hoped this would also cast extra doubt on Assereto.

192 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 31 May 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 385-388.
193 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 2, 3, and 5 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 388-400.
194 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 10 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 400-401.
195 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 12 June 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 401-402.
On 15 July 1797 Governor Joaquín García, having judiciously reviewed the evidence, acquitted Alí and Agustín and endorsed their relocation to Florida. The young Nuñez de Cáceres had very capably managed their defense, although Alí never would make it there to be with his beloved General Biassou. On the other hand, Angulo received eight years in the presidio in Havana. He was fortunate to have escaped execution for high treason. Assereto would only receive more questioning, and remained under suspicion as a bombastic, narcissistic, untrustworthy opportunist with a growing reputation of toxicity.196

In sum, this fascinating series of arrests and testimonies revealed what seems to have been an advanced network of British spies, pro-British sympathizers, and a plan for the British military to take over the entire colony of Santo Domingo, bolstered by the support many Dominicans who were panicked over republican influences and distressed with the prospect of a looming French takeover. Assereto, the rather deranged soldier of fortune that he was, likely did discover this plot by complete accident, although he did already have unusual ties to several possible co-conspirators and Britons before Angulo even arrived. He likely also went along with it in hopes of gaining a British commission only to decide that his probabilities of glory were somehow higher by selling out the

196 “Testimonio…,” Santo Domingo, 15 July 1797, AGI-Estado, 1, no.27, 505. On the black auxiliaries in Florida: AGS-SGU, leg. 7246, exp. 14
conspiracy to Spain and their French allies, thereby saving himself, appearing to be a hero, and perhaps gaining a new commission instead in the eventual French takeover. He was motivated by selfish delusions of grandeur, and may have single-handedly foiled what would have almost certainly unfolded as a major pro-British uprising and formal British military offensive. Assereto’s ideological assertions vascillated so greatly that he did not likely really care about those prospects.

It is almost certain that Angulo was indeed a British agent. He had commercial ties to Jamaica and British-occupied ports in Saint-Domingue. Angulo had meetings with top British generals, and carried of suspicious letters that hinted at a British takeover to key figures in Santo Domingo. He had connections to a loose network of (albeit unproven) pro-British Dominicans, none of whom he seemed to know directly. Angulo made regular anti-French comments, and discussed his paranoia of being labeled a British spy to Monica de la Cruz Cornejo although he ostensibly did not know with what he had been charged. He facilitated plotting in the city with other possible agents, Assereto, and the black auxiliaries. All of these factors suggest that Angulo was duly convicted under Spanish law. Other people in various important offices in Santo Domingo had certainly been contacted by the British before Angulo’s arrival, and it seems some
may have actually also been British agents. This murky network also raises doubts about what Gascue had actually known or done in the months before the plot.

Given the defections of Titus and Gañet, and the previous attempts at recruiting Alí as well, it is highly unlikely the extremely clever and astute Pablo Alí did not understand what was afoot. His love for Spain, which seems to have been quite real, did not necessarily preclude his disappointment with Spanish decline, with being left behind by Biassou, or with the looming handover of Santo Domingo to the French, who he despised. He could have easily been hedging his bets just in case the British did prevail, and allowed the less adept Agustín to front his and his troops’ connection to the plot and to the British. Alí was simply the savviest player in this affair, and adroitly used Spanish underestimation of his tact and intelligence, and the extreme goodwill of General Cabrera in particular, to build his defense with the young and driven attorney Nuñez de Cáceres (whose assignment to his case otherwise seems to have been a compelling coincidence. From this relationship forged in a prison and courtroom Alí and Nuñez de Cáceres remained tied to each other in equally-unexpected ways during future pivot points in the history of the island.

The former black auxiliaries, now in and around the capital, had continued to be critical components of the major events in Santo Domingo proper, including their Kongolese collaborations in the Boca Nigua revolt that preceded
the Angulo conspiracy by not even three months, in the defection of Titus and Gañet and the continued insurgency against the French at Grande-Rivière which had ties to anti-republican Dominicans through Dajabon, and in this major conspiracy in the capital that, at least the British thought, would feature the critical military muscle of Ali’s black troops to facilitate the landing of British regular forces. Their integration and standing among Dominicans of color grafted multipolar examples of black upward mobility and politics into a population that continued to debate the merits of French radicalism, not the least of which was how the eventual republican takeover might restrict their religious expressions. This uprising and attack almost happened, and it might have actually succeeded. The city of Santo Domingo nearly came under British rule. These events in the capital were neither isolated, nor uninformed, nor simply anti-French, nor spasmodic, nor exclusively elite. There were varied reasons for adherents to consider the British, and there were a diverse range of sympathizers across the entire colony. With the actions of the Monte Cristi commission headed by Juan del Monte, and the other towns that actually raised the Union Jack, at least thousands of Dominicans favored British rule to the looming French occupation. The prospect of a British takeover also did not entirely end with the foiled Angulo conspiracy. The geopolitical trajectory of Hispaniola remained as unresolved as ever.
SPURNED DOMINICANS, SPANISH DECAY THROUGH 1797

As the trials involving the British plot in the capital trudged along, by January 1797 Spanish officials in Santo Domingo had learned of the formal state of war with the United Kingdom. That January the newest Forbes proclamation had circulated through the capital coinciding with the tensions surrounding the Angulo conspiracy and trials. García reiterated that the French still had no appropriate forces for a transfer, and that Saint-Domingue was only operated by blacks directed by Toussaint, and he and many Dominicans wanted nothing to do with a possible occupation by Toussaint and his black troops. The rapid loss of Trinidad and British attacks against Spanish shipping suggested not only continued difficulties for the Spanish evacuation, but the loss of Santo Domingo might be imminent despite having cracked the Angulo conspiracy. British harassment of maritime trade confirmed this new war, and Spanish officials had a very difficult time even receiving or sending mail to coordinate with the empire.197

Soon, news arrived that the British were also poised to invade Puerto Rico with a

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197 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 26 January 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, n.95; Del Campo to Manuel Godoy, Paris, 17 January 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
considerable army estimated from 6,000-8,000 troops. Britain moved for a widespread Spanish Caribbean land grab.

On 12 February 1797 Charles-François Delacroix, French minister of foreign affairs, admitted that, “The Executive Directory can only watch...attempts of Britain against the erstwhile Spanish Santo Domingo and the ways of seduction that they employed with the inhabitants of Neiba,” and acknowledged deficiencies in Roume’s temperament toward political situations in Santo Domingo. News of Dominican towns annexing to the British had even begun to trouble French national politicians. In March 1797, following the war declaration, hundreds of Spain’s former black allies now serving King George III attacked Dominican border towns and arrested local officials who were uncooperative with British operations. By the end of April 1797 six more major Dominican towns had entered British rule. The whole colony teetered on the verge of outright British annexation.

198 Ramon Castro to Joaquín García, Puerto Rico, 23 April 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1.
199 Charles-François Delacroix to Del Campo, Paris, 24 Pluviôse an V / 12 February 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
200 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 3 March 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, n.96.
201 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 25 April 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, no.100; Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 30 April 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
202 Joaquín García to Comision Delegada del Gobierno Francés del Guarico, Santo Domingo, 4 July 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394.
Collapses along the frontier occurred throughout early 1797. García observed that the “confusion” and “bloody scenes that occurred in the French part” rendering republican responses to the British, who “attracted the Spanish residents, offering them complete freedom of worship, security of their property and slaves which they cannot hope for from the French Republic,” nearly impossible. The French could neither defend their own colony from the British, let alone absorb twice as much new territory in Santo Domingo. He knew well of the French lack of forces on the island and their decision to halt the transfer after the disasters at Banica and Las Cahobas, which nearly transpired also at Monte Cristi and Dajabon, and desperately hoped to avoid republican massacres of whites such as that at Les Cayes massacre. García, increasingly strapped for resources from Spain, pondered pooling his forces around one centralized and fortified location at the capital, where they could defend the greatest number of people while simply abandoning all other territory since he could no longer afford protecting a government presence there and since the French commissioners were unable to take possession.203

Given British successes with their decrees to Dominicans, they would likely occupy open territory. In February Neiba had been harassed by black troops

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203 Manuel Godoy to Joaquín García, Aranjuez, 22 February 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
under Mamsel and Jean Pineau, who were at least nominally allied with the French then. Soon, British regular troops approached and also had a “ship across the lagoon.” The forces offered Dominicans in Neiba a semblance of greater stability. The commander, cabildo, and priests of Neiba, realized they could only muster one-fifth of the British force for a defense in a town with a growing pro-British sentiment, decided to surrender. Notably, one of the alcaldes who had promised immediately defected to the British lines instead of withdrawing with Spanish loyalists to Azua after the council made their resolution. The British entered Neiba and immediately detained Juan Bobadilla, who was taken to meet with the British officers, who successfully convinced him to cooperate and stay with other priests in his parish. García, despite having only 1,100 troops left, could not simply abandon loyal Dominicans, but was incapable of offering any defense beyond the walls of Santo Domingo.204 Spanish government in Santo Domingo was broke and completely insolvent. They could barely pay employees, and desperately waited for support from neighboring colonies.205

204 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 3 March 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.96. “Mamsel” (also known as Mamzelle, or even MadeMoïselle, was a man who may have been a former maroon. See: Geggus, Slavery, 313; Geggus, Haitian, 117; Dubois, Avengers, 183. On Pineau and Mamsel, see: Fick, Making Haiti, 157 and 324n.1.

205 Joaquín García to José Pablo Valiente, Santo Domingo, 24 March 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1.
Throughout March 1797 British squadrons cruised off the northern coast, and specifically around Manzanillo. Between Saona and La Romana along the distant southeastern coast they maintained another squadron, which had even been seen lurking near Santo Domingo. Conditions in the interior had worsened, where “the contagion of the British spirit had progressed from town to town” with great enthusiasm. Spanish troops had to abandon San Juan de la Maguana due to these tensions there. The detachment at La Seiba (near San Juan) also fell to British troops. These towns then chose new, pro-British officials. Azua was animated by diverse sentiments, including a possible pro-British commander. However, Neiba soon, “had entered repentance” because many British troops stationed there had retired to defend Port-au-Prince, and they were again vulnerable to attack, and decided to reclaim their status as Spaniards and acted contrite, which García thought was manipulative. Bobadilla, a frequent emissary from Neiba who had collaborated in some capacity with the British, took the lead in mediation with Spanish officials, just in case Neiba needed the protection. Each geopolitical turn, each attack, each failed imperial safeguard further disenchanted Dominicans from exogenous solutions, and over time increased their sense of local needs and

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206 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 24 March 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.97.
markers of collective belonging that were distinct from Spanish, British, or French paradigms.

In April Bobadilla, who still served in Neiba, received a twelve-day passport from the British there to visit Azua, and then tried to dispel Archbishop Portillo’s concerns about his loyalties and management of church interests on the frontier under British influence. He expressed his foremost commitment to his pastoral duties, and somehow convinced García to intercede with British officers about protecting Dominicans and Neiba.\(^{207}\)

With the Republic incapable of mustering a coherent defense, Toussaint rallied his ex-slave army. In an offensive in April 1794 Toussaint led republicans to capture the towns of Mirebalais, Grand-Bois, Banica, Las Cahobas, San Juan, and Neiba from the British all in quick succession, which had all been under British domination. Toussaint achieved this while also pressuring British defenses at Port-au-Prince and Saint-Marc. Short-lived British rule in these towns had brought few of the promised benefits of commerce and stability. Toussaint had sent the British reeling, and García’s intelligence said that the black republican general would soon march on Saint-Marc with 15,000 troops while continuing to dislodge the British from around Port-au-Prince. Azua had been near British

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\(^{207}\) Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 14 April 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.98.
operations, and was divided politically with a significant portion of pro-British sympathizers, yet with mounting British defeats such enthusiasm waned. In Dominican areas hostile to the British, the Royal Navy simply began taking livestock instead of trading for it.\textsuperscript{208}

French commissioners informed García that the British were attempting to take territory in Santo Domingo by sea forces, but again, no French forces could easily unite with Spanish troops to defend the colony. After British losses in the interior, Spanish fears were that the British would now target Puerto Plata, Monte Cristi, and Dajabón.\textsuperscript{209} Rumors even circulated that they might land black troops, which might have been West India units from Jamaica.\textsuperscript{210} García sent preventive orders to Dajabón, and Santiago after British attacks at Monte Cristi, and at Puerto Plata, where in late June the British navy entered the port and shelled the city for three hours. There were barely any troops there, and the defenses were paltry, and ineffective against the intrusion. He knew the same was true at Azua, La Vega and Cotuí only had local militias. He thought that the British had turned an

\textsuperscript{208} Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 25 April 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.100.

\textsuperscript{209} Joaquín García to the Commission Delegated of the French Government in Guarico, Santo Domingo, 4 July 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1.

\textsuperscript{210} Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 25 April 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.100.
unidentified resident of Santiago as a spy. In November 1797 British ships even approached Santo Domingo harbor.

British operations continued for the time being, and continued to pique Spanish administrators’ fears. This invasion never happened, though. The British military feats had ground to a halt and the popularity for British rule in Santo Domingo declined. However, the British Hispaniola campaign stagnated in late 1797 partly due to the skill of Toussaint and his forces, and perhaps more so due to staggering casualties, many of which came simply from disease. Discontented Dominican Anglophiles then had to make amends with both their neighbors and French partisans. However, British interests in the island continued, and simply pivoted away from open warfare to leverage open commerce against all Spanish Caribbean colonies. New British proposals to the Dominican people welcomed their ships to British ports, with special terms for trade in nearby Jamaica and the Bahamas.

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211 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 10 July 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.103.
212 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 2 November 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.113.
213 Geggus, Slavery, War, and Revolution, 373-391; McNeill, Mosquito Empires.
214 Duke of Portland, Palace of St. James, 20 November 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407; Joaquín García to Secretaria de Estado, 25 September 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, no.134.
215 Joaquín García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 14 September 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407.
With the threats against the north, García encouraged the transfer of Dajabon and Monte Cristi to the French in the summer of 1797. The French sent, apparently, regular troops who were acceptable to Dominican residents. Puerto Plata and Santiago would soon be reinforced with collaborative French support. However, García had become concerned about this process due to the news that Sonthonax had embarked on a ship for France in late August, which itself was an act of power consolidation by the politically brilliant Toussaint. The only French officials who remained on Hispaniola for García to deal with beside Toussaint were “Citizen Raimond, a pardo man” and Roume, who he knew for better or worse.216 As a further complication throughout the remainder of 1797 Roume quibbled with other French officials regarding the protracted process of republican absorption of Santo Domingo. This had included the use of Spanish government facilities and private property without compensation or legal process, which further handicapped García’s finances for the Spanish management.217 In the process, in July 1797 the Audiencia of Santo Domingo began relocating to Cuba bit

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217 Joaquín García to Consejo de Castilla, Santo Domingo, 31 October 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; “Testimonio sobre la reclamacion que hace el Sr Agente de la Republica Francesa Roume de las Haciendas propias de su magestad.” AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2; “Testimonio de las diligencias obradas en precaucion de los bienes pertenecientes al Ramo de Temporalidades: Reclamacion de los propios bienes hechas por el Sr Agente de la Republica Francesa, e instancia de Dn Nicolas de Guridi, sobre debolucion de las haciendas,” AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
by bit, with a litany of logistical problems. The plan was to send the Audiencia to Guantanamo Bay and then further inland toward Havana, and it would become provisionally known as “the Audiencia that has resided in Santo Domingo.”

In December 1797 the French also sent a consul to Havana, Citizen Rondineau, who had bickered with Sonthonax at times and sided with the people of color, and confirmed the ultimatums that Toussaint had made to Sonthonax prior his departure from the island. Rondineau’s presence in Cuba raised fears that like in Saint-Domingue a vast majority of people of color and blacks could overtake a tiny minority of whites.

**BRITISH WITHDRAWAL TOWARD REPUBLICAN RESIGNATION, 1798**

In mid-January 1798 the provisional agent Roume had learned from the provisional agent based in Santiago that the mulatto Commissioner Raimond, now one of the most powerful figures on the island, was intent upon fully occupying

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218 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 14 July 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.104.

219 José Fuentes to Manuel Godoy, Havana, 1 December 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.396. Sonthonax, though gone, had left a powerful legacy, and now that his “protector” Philippe-Antoine Merlin de Douai was appointed to the Executive Directory he pondered how these policies and ideals would mark French efforts. More interesting was Rondineau’s apparent critique of Sonthonax’s language abilities, or lack thereof. In conversations his words were simple, lively, with short and unconnected phrases, and repeated expressions, like, “Eh-Bien” and “Bon Bon” for example, which obscured his intentions, which might have been to take Cuba, but also for independence, and at least the riddance of Raimond and Toussaint. Fuentes, at least, thought that Sonthonax was very interested in Cuba. He thought he was then hated by all in Saint-Domingue – white, color, black.
Santiago and the vicinity. This raised great concern over how the transfer would transpire, given the presence of regular French troops and the fact that Raimond wanted to adapt resources in the Cibao for his own strategic purposes. Roume had already told Raimond and Toussaint to delay any further encroachments into Santo Domingo until regular French troops arrived from Europe. To the extent possible, García tried to prevent Santo Domingo from becoming a new theater for internecine rivalries among French republican factions.²²⁰

At the same time, the British blockaded those parts of the island that they did not directly control, which made any arrivals of French troops impossible. Reinforcements of Azua, Ocoa, and Jayna were needed to avoid similar disturbances, and with the naval warfare evacuations were nearly impossible. Spanish troops had been attacked by Neiba residents and British troops, about 140 in number, around Algapat, not far from Neiba. The French government was, they thought, in the hands of the people of color. He was afraid that the eventual French occupation of Santiago, Puerto Plata, La Vega, and Cotuí would come at the hands of black troops, as Toussaint had 6,000 soldiers awaiting his orders in Fort Dauphin. There were regular raids from British skiffs along the coast, and their naval power still operated from Môle-Saint-Nicolas. They were busily

²²⁰ Philippe-Rose Roume to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 22 Nivôse an VI / 11 January 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1.
capturing French ships that venture near Monte Cristi. In Puerto Plata the British entered the port and took a frigate loaded with ‘negros bozales’ of newly-arrived African captives who had rebelled on the open sea in the Middle Passage and killed all the white crew, sparing only one white boy. The self-liberated captives had sailed at the whims of winds and currents until they neared Puerto Plata. After being sighted, they resisted being brought into port, and their ship ran aground. They had nothing to eat, were certainly weakened, and clearly could not pilot the ship. Some escaped on land. However, many of the African captives were towed into the port of Puerto Plata, but Spanish and French officials were dispersed when the British arrived and captured the captives as the decision awaited as to how, and which empire, would process their case.221

On 27 March 1798 three French warships arrived in Santo Domingo carrying General Hedouville, who with the title of “Particular Agent of the Directory” had come to manage Saint-Domingue and obliquely deal with the delivery of the colony. He planned to march overland to Saint-Domingue at an opportune time. The transfer of the colony was still logistically difficult, and Hedouville’s major interest was governing the French side in the absence of

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221 Joaquin García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 18 January 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.114. Also, about 200 Cuban troops were at Azua, and could be reinforced by the Santo Domingo and Cantabria regiments who were defending the frontier near towns that had flipped to the British in hopes to stave off further defections.
Sonthonax and with the upsurge of Toussaint’s power, as Saint-Domingue was, as García said, “in the hands of the blacks.” Some forty officials accompanied him, along with only a small detachment of troops for their protection, and they all apparently passed onward to Saint-Domingue, having landed under the security of Spanish troops who continued to protect the capital from British interference despite their lack of pay. Hedouville, who seemed to be wholly unaware of the Dominican situation, wanted to simply take over the city without the necessary protocols established by the treaty, which García considered given the complications and financial trouble of Spanish governance, but declined due to his obligation to continue protecting local interests.222 With that, Hedouville and his retinue travelled northward through La Vega and then Santiago en route to Cap-Français, promising to explain García’s numerous challenges to the Executive Directory.223 García was sure that this would now allow Hedouville to concern himself more with civil affairs. He was convinced that Hedouville, unlike all the preceding French officials with whom he had worked, was the right person for harmonious politics. He hoped that soon enough with dissipating British threats

222 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 2 April 1798, AHN-Estadío, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.128.

223 Hedouville to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 24 Germinal an VI / 13 April 1798, AHN-Estadío, leg. 3394, exp.1; Joaquín García to Hedouville, Santo Domingo, 1 May 1798, AHN-Estadío, leg. 3394, exp.1.
and new French administration that he and his administration could leave Santo
Domingo.224

In April 1798 Portillo decided on his own volition to board a ship bound
for Havana, with his “luggage transported of his account in an American ship to
avail himself of the security of the neutral flag.” Upon leaving he decided to simply
leave Francisco Xavier de Herrera who worked in the cathedral in control of the
Dominican diocesan affairs. García, who was shocked at Portillo’s flight, said that
all in the colony drew upon his wisdom, and that “this flock needs the presence
and counsel of his pastoral care,” including the troops, the Audiencia, and
Dominican community.225 This came less than a year after Archbishop Portillo had
been basically told to not leave his post in Santo Domingo.226 With that impromptu
departure, Spanish colonialism in Santo Domingo lost the critical political player
who managed the spiritual compass of colonial Christians. Despite the Republic’s
offer for him to become the “Bishop of Ayti” the absence of his anti-radical cultural
pull served French interests.

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224 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 20 June 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.132.

225 Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 15 April 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2, no.129; 10 and 17 May 1798, ASV-NM, 196, 452-456.

226 José Urizar, Catani, Bravo, and Toncerrada to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 14 June 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1.
By June 1798 Governor Balcarres in British Jamaica began opening free ports to Spanish merchants.\textsuperscript{227} This became a British bridge to the resources of Hispaniola, and a commercial attack against the Spanish and French who they could never permanently dislodge, which was a parting shot on their withdrawal from the island, which they began in 1798. The British had begun retreating from their strongholds in Saint-Domingue. Their evacuations included leaving the cities of Port-au-Prince, Saint-Marc, Arcahaye, Croix-des-Bouquets, Jeremias, and were preparing to depart the impenetrable stronghold of Môle-Saint-Nicolas. García had received British broadsides that announced their decision.\textsuperscript{228} Not only had the British sustained enormous casualties through combat and disease and had suffered major setbacks in their positions on the interior of Saint-Domingue due to the skill of Toussaint. When the British withdrew they signed a secret peace accord not with French officials, but with Toussaint himself. In exchange for their withdrawal Toussaint would not export revolution to British colonies, and Britain would trade with Toussaint giving them access to goods and him access to war materiel.\textsuperscript{229}

\textsuperscript{227} Balcarres, Spanish Town, 8 June 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

\textsuperscript{228} Joaquín García to Manuel Godoy, Santo Domingo, 20 June 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1, no.132.

However, while direct British military threats evaporated, the British also began circulating new papers with promises of commercial engagements intended to not destabilize specific colonies, but the entire Spanish empire in the Caribbean basin. García noted that, “there have been Spaniards that ambition and interest has dragged him to commit a crime so contrary to the loyalty of his nation,” and what once took the form of treason had morphed into contraband. Opening and welcoming smuggling from Spanish subjects was the newest “atrocious and scandalous invention” of British “perfidy” and “base conduct of the proud British government,” said García.\footnote{Joaquín García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 14 September 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.}

At the end of 1797, after their dreams of Hispaniola conquests had turned to nightmares, the British began instructing their naval commanders to attract Spanish inhabitants to make commerce regardless of imperial warfare in the free ports of Jamaica and the Bahamas, as long as the Spanish subjects would conform to British licenses, rules, and needs for merchandise.\footnote{Philippe-Rose Roume to Joaquín García, Santo Domingo, 25 Fructidor an VI / 11 September 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2. Roume advised Joaquín García of this, and wanted governors in Puerto Rico, Havana, Caracas, and Bogota to know of this “extraordinary” “scandalous” and “perfidious” document and “invention” of the British. Spanish subjects had been using these commercial enticements and protections under the British for many months apparently without detection. By complete chance a French official in Curaçao discovered a packet of papers with this British invitation and circulated it through various channels to the Governor of Santo Domingo for consideration regarding the interdiction of contraband.} García informed metropolitan officials of this new British commercial strategy to undercut Spanish
power. Among these invitations the British specified a clear list of merchandise that they most desired to procure, including: wool, cotton, indigo, cochineal, medicines, cocoa, tobacco, logwood, dyer’s mulberry, tint dyewoods, leathers, hides. Spanish merchants could transact in all specie of money, or silver and gold, diamonds, or even precious stones, brought from such parts. The British offered their own exports from Jamaica in particular, including rum and legally-owned slaves, but banned the export of any shipbuilding materials or tobacco. King George III expressly ordered the Royal Navy to not harass these ships. These policies and ports in Jamaica and the Bahamas, in such extreme proximity to Santo Domingo (and Puerto Rico and Cuba), were severe blows to the rickety commodity export mercantilism of the Spanish empire that would damage its resources and tax base while bolstering the already-robust British prosperity, and policing such actions would become nearly impossible with the aggressing commercial empire welcome such contraband trade. This was a central policy through which the British continued chipping away at Spanish rule and prosperity.

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233 Duke of Portland, St. James Palace, 27 November 1797, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.
in Latin America toward eventually supporting outright independence movements.\(^{234}\)

It took only until October 1798 before news filtered through the republican provisional agent in Santiago, Kerversau, about the political troubles afflicting the new Hedouville administration in Cap-Français. Saint-Domingue had completely fallen into the hands of the people of color, who had fallings out with the Executive Directory. Toussaint had seized power, and flirted with declaring independence from France. Hedouville had become cornered by Toussaint and his many allies. Moïse, powerful lieutenant to Toussaint and his adopted nephew, was in Fort Dauphin allegedly trying to cull and kill citizens there who opposed him. Hedouville sent out an official with orders to arrest Moïse. Moïse then complained to Toussaint, his beloved uncle, after which point Hedouville’s actions became ineffectual. Rumors swirled that Toussaint was angling for independence and no longer followed laws of the metropole. Louverture and his army entered Cap-Français, where many whites thought their lives were at stake.\(^{235}\) Hedouville would not be in Saint-Domingue for long.


\(^{235}\) Joaquín García to Francisco Saavedra, Santo Domingo, 7 November 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, no.135; Letter from Cap-Français, 25 October 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp.1.
Soon, García received a French official named Vincent, director of fortifications in Cap-Français, who had arrived in Santo Domingo with an accompanying black republican official, both who carried commissions from Toussaint, not a French official sent by the metropole. They were to meet with Roume following the rapid fall and departure of Hedouville. These visitors sought to draw Roume to Cap-Français to serve as the lead commissioner there. Simultaneously, white French messengers arrived in the capital with news for Roume from Les Cayes, Jacmel, and Cap-Français, some of which simply confirmed Toussaint’s consolidation of power. Overall, their messages greatly concerned García who fretted about the spread of black republican civil strife to Spanish towns. They were not only fearful of the spread of the Saint-Domingue violence into Santo Domingo, and not only of the power of Toussaint, but of the violence of his nephew General Moïse who was a ruthless operator and was stationed near the Spanish frontier. They were concerned that any perception of dissent from the Republic would yield retribution from Toussaint or Moïse, who they already feared. García worried incessantly that the transfer of the colony could happen, he thought, only with promises of safe conduct for those who remained, and perhaps if the French paid off armed locals to defend their territory.
against any unrest. As the British era on Hispaniola passed, so did the presence of Provisional Agent Roume, who responded to Toussaint’s overtures to become the lead French commissioner in Saint-Domingue. With his absence, and the absence of British threats, Santo Domingo became more directly tied to power jockeying in the west, and came more firmly within the gravitation pull of the true political heavyweight on the island – their former black auxiliary General Toussaint.

CONCLUSION

When news of the cession of Santo Domingo by treaty to France reached Santo Domingo in October 1795, sentiments of doom and betrayal surged among many Dominicans who began searching out alternative futures. Spanish officials feared open sedition from Dominicans who were patriotic loyalists to Spain and who might ignore the treaty and try to fight a French occupation on their own. Outrage coursed across the streets in Santo Domingo, with Dominicans being especially concerned about the lack of legal and religious provisions for those who chose to remain. Elite colonists were also quite troubled over the status of their human property, and how downtrodden Dominicans of color might react to the

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236 Joaquín García to Francisco Saavedra, Santo Domingo, 29 November 1798, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, no.136.
combination of weakened Spanish power and surging rights discourses. Others simply could not believe the reversal of fortunes, from the Spanish having been so close to taking the entire French side of the island, to the royal court so readily surrendering the entire Dominican side despite their fervent loyalty and the absence of threat for a French takeover. Though French officials soon wrote to express their adamant support for religious freedom, many Dominicans and Spaniards remained dubious about their Catholic future, and resisted removal from Hispanic heritage.

When thousands of people in Santo Domingo, including soldiers, farmers, merchants, and even whole towns had been “seduced” into supporting a British takeover, Governor Joaquín García simplistically blamed British officials’ “flattering promises and alluring cash.” This was an extreme underestimation of the angst toward French radicalism, the disappointment in Spanish colonialist responses that had sputtered out, and the appeal of a middle path embodied by Britain. The British third way offered a constitutional monarchy that was more stable than the Republic but less rigid than Spanish Bourbon rule. Britons offered

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237 Fernando Portillo y Torres to Eugenio Llaguno, Santo Domingo, 24 October 1795, AGI-SD, leg. 1033.

238 Laveaux to Joaquín García, Port-de-Paix, 4 Frimaire an IV / 25 November 1795, AHN-Estado, leg. 3407, exp.2.

239 José Urizar to Manuel Godoy, 29 April 1797, AGI-Estado, 13, n.42.

240 Joaquín García to Conde Campo de Alange, 7 January 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1091, no.796.
greater prosperity than the stagnant centuries of Spanish management or the self-immolation of Saint-Domingue under French rule. Britons also promised freedom of religion and retention of Hispanic culture, which Spain was too feeble to defend and which the French seemed intent on eradicating. This attracted many people of color beyond the privileged circles to whom the economic incentives mostly appealed, including the black auxiliaries who continued to hold powerful political sway over the Dominican body politic. With a diffused and well-positioned network of pro-British sympathizers, the entire colony of Santo Domingo teetered on the brink of becoming a colony of King George III.

Dominican Anglophilia from 1795 to 1798 was a crucial stage of popular political mobilization, rejections of metropolitan legacy, and debate over sovereignty. As the conspiratorial network of Angulo, Assereto, Agustín, and Alí illustrates, the pro-British sympathies were deeply disseminated in Santo Domingo and appealed across a broad swath of Dominican society. Also, the alternative strategies of political destabilization by trade that emerged from failures on Hispaniola were a preview of later British strategies to bolster breakaway Spanish colonies into the national era.²⁴¹ British collaboration with people of color in Santo Domingo forced Dominican society to rethink its Spanish

²⁴¹ Rory Miller, Britain and Latin America in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, London, 1993, 1-93.
cultural and political heritage, question the results of French rights discourses, and explore collectivity and sovereignty. It molded a critical middle sector of cultural politics that defined Dominicans as more Catholic and moderate than their Haitian neighbors, yet more economically and politically progressive than the waning Spanish Empire, while tying violence and impiety to categories of republicanism and blackness. These notions evolved in ensuing decades to shape nascent ideas of Dominican national belonging, including ideas about Haiti into the independence era and far beyond it.
CHAPTER 7

RESIGNED TO A FADING REPUBLIC & CONFRONTED BY INDEPENDENCE, 1799-1806

In April 1799 the new top commissioner in Saint-Domingue, none other than Philippe Roume who had recently served as the French Provisional Agent in Santo Domingo, unveiled a new vision for unifying spirituality on Hispaniola during the Festivals of Youth and Spouses in Cap-Français. The commissioner implored citizens to “Gather around the Altar of the Homeland,” rather than a church altar. He applauded citizens who had weathered tempests on their revolutionary voyage with an “invisible hand that guides and leads them to the port after all hope was lost.” He implored islanders to thank the “beneficent Divinity who protected them…the Pilot who never left the helm of the ship.” Roume identified this divine presence who captained their ship as something other than the Catholic deity that he followed and discussed with Archbishop Portillo during his three years in Santo Domingo. Roume instead asked citizens in Saint-Domingue to “pay tribute to the Supreme Being” whose “power is visible
in all that surrounds us,” who created earth, and whose “intelligence…governs the universe and each component.”

In a moment of already heightened tensions in Santo Domingo regarding the French takeover of the colony, this cosmological innovation confirmed suspicions of many Spanish subjects that the Republic would repudiate their religious convictions. It made Roume look like a liar for all of his own professions of Christianity and the role of Catholicism in the Republic that he had once used to assuaged Dominicans’ fears of French radicalism. Roume’s measured counter-narrative to Catholic theology came five years after the height of the Cult of the Supreme Being flourished during the Reign of Terror in 1794 with the rule of Maximilien Robespierre through the Committee of Public Safety. Its influence was brief, and largely limited to France. Robespierre, who almost entirely crafted and implemented the idea, used it to round off more avowedly atheist de-Christianization policies and merge loyalties of citizens’ who longed for a divinity with noncommittal deism compatible with republican natural rights discourses and ideas of public virtue and civic duty. In France, the innovative deistic

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1 Roume, “Discours...a la celebration des fêtes reunites de la Juennesse et des Epoux,” 10 Floréal an VII / 29 April 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
abstraction of a Supreme Being was guillotined along with Robespierre in July 1794.²

Incredibly, Roume seems to have revived the Supreme Being in the Caribbean as big tent under which normally conflicting cosmologies on Hispaniola could coexist. Roume’s attempted unification of republican, Catholic, and African beliefs were quite distinct from earlier French variants and came at a critical moment in which French rule needed to ideologically and socially unify disparate factions. Roume argued that humans’ perceptions of this divinity evinced their soul, which distinguished them from other animals, and that originally humans’ “first religion was Deism, and it was to the Supreme Being that they addressed their first worship” by marking changes of tides, seasons, and the stars. However, his most radical departure from Catholic theology was his placement of the heroics of Toussaint Louverture as a historically significant figure on par with Moses, Socrates, Mohammed, and even Jesus. Roume pointed to Freemasonry and “Vaudou” (vodou) as the primary pillars for republican virtue and observances of the Supreme Being in Saint-Domingue.³


In the colony to the east that Roume had just departed Dominicans unhappy with the eventuality of French rule had little recourse to resist the Republic or to seek British protection as many notable conspirators had. Santo Domingo, now absent the presence of the firebrand Archbishop Portillo, with additional priests evacuating, and without the possibility of a British rule with religious tolerance, awaited a flood of vodou, freemasonry, and this new iteration of the deistic Supreme Being to wash out its religiosity. The ideas of leadership that espoused such societal and spiritual values terrified many in Santo Domingo. Interestingly though, social unrest within Santo Domingo dissipated in 1799 and 1800 although direct engagement with internecine strife in Saint-Domingue grew across the colony, including the capital. This included the brewing civil war between Toussaint and his ex-slave army in the North and West, and Andre Rigaud, a powerful mulatto commander with a separate base of support among the gens de couleur of the South. This War of the South, as the conflict has come to be known, which was more of a regionalist and personalist struggle for colonial power than a race war between ex-slaves and the gens de couleur as it is sometimes depicted. The war erupted in June 1799. Both jockeying parties of color in Saint-Domingue not only superseded white French control, but infiltrated Santo Domingo in attempts to secure new lines of support and supplies. Those mostly well-off Dominicans capable of fleeing with capital to conserve – including
property in people – did so in the thousands. The majority who remained did so with lingering fears of what direct French rule would mean for their lives, both earthly and eternal.4

Dominicans now had no recourse against French attempts to “frenchify” them, nor to stop the occupation by an ex-slave army led by a traitor to the Spanish cause in Toussaint. Though details were not clear at the time, astute observers in Santo Domingo realized that black power in Saint-Domingue was pushing the colony increasingly closer to independence from France. Furthermore, with the ascension of Napoléon Bonaparte to near-dictatorial powers in France in 1799, the revolution had clearly taken two keys turns that cooled radicalism in France and steered Saint-Domingue’s local black leadership into direct, open warfare with their colonizer. This culminated in Napoléon’s attempts to reinstate slavery and his reinstatement of whites to colonial power in Saint-Domingue which undercut much of the reasons that some Dominicans of color favored French rule in the first place. When the French finally did occupy Santo Domingo at the outset of the nineteenth century, their officials closed churches and sold church properties, all to the great disaffection of new Dominican “citizens” of a Republic drifting into the dictatorial clutch of Napoléon.5

4 Dubois, Avengers, 232-236; Deive, Emigraciones; Geggus, Haitian, 21-22.
5 García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 12 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 3; “Instrucción que debe servir de regla al Agente Interino del Gov.no Francés destinado a parte
All of this transpired before black French forces under Toussaint marched onto Santo Domingo to launch an irregular invasion of the Spanish side in 1801 to serve Toussaint’s own strategic military priorities. Even then, official French management of Santo Domingo did not formally commence until the arrival of a republican agent there in 1802, approaching seven years since the Treaty of Basel. The prospect of black invasion that terrified many elites in Santo Domingo came to fruition, though Toussaint’s presence did not inspire mass slave uprisings, nor result in absent labor from the few plantations as they had feared. Toussaint needed the labor too, as did ensuing French governors, much to the disillusionment of locals of color who expected a more robust abolition Roume and Sonthonax had promised them once upon a time.6

This chapter analyzes how Dominican society began to resign itself to rule by a French Republic in metropolitan transition and colonial chaos. Unlike the conquest projects of the early 1790s, or the reactionary defensiveness of the mid-1790s, as the nineteenth century commenced Dominicans were faced with a choice of what of their Spanish heritage to preserve (religion, monarchism, and racial restrictions), where to preserve it (on Hispaniola and in exile), and how to do so in

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a new Caribbean with an unparalleled and increasingly international example of black power. The astonishing independence of Haiti that arrived in January 1804 ushered in a new era of uncertainty, more so because Santo Domingo was then the last bastion of the waning French presence in the Greater Antilles. This chapter also shows how this resignation to the Republic, followed by Haitian invasion, not only remade a more robust majority of color in Santo Domingo through migration, but also precipitated a widespread rejection of French rule from many sectors of Dominican society, not just a white elite.

SAINT-DOMINGUE IN CIVIL WAR

Philippe Roume, the ex-Provisional Agent and faux-friend of Dominicans everywhere, published a new philosophical pamphlet on 4 February 1799 that marked the fifth anniversary of the French assembly’s emancipation decree, “one of the most glorious without contradiction…which we celebrate…around the Tree of Liberty.” Roume attributed this accomplishment to Paris in 1794, and not the gradual abolitions by Sonthonax and Polverel in 1793, as one of the “miracles of the Revolution” that had “avenged Africa from European greed…[and] Machiavellianism of the French monarchy.” He heralded Toussaint and his troops as the power that actualized this ideals, which he said equaled any republican victory in the Rhine, the Alps, Spain, Italy, Vienna, or Egypt. This black French
army deserved laurels and admiration, and now as free people would revitalize the cultivation and commerce of Saint-Domingue, which would be “reborn from its ashes.” Not long after this possible peak of anti-slavery realization in Saint-Domingue the French sent General Leclerc to return these black liberators to bondage. Chronologically, Saint-Domingue was closer to the French regression to re-enslavement and racism than it was to the optimistic outset of emancipation, liberty that had been delayed for enslaved Dominicans as part of the lengthy delay of the Republic’s occupation of Santo Domingo. It was imperative that the newly-arrived Roume ingratiate himself with Toussaint, who held the great political cachet in the colony.

Toussaint responded to Roume’s public statements with platitudes for Roume and the Republic for this “dawn of happiness” from Nord and Ouest to Sud under Rigaud, his major rival. Nevertheless, at this moment Toussaint extolled his union with Roume, Rigaud, and other rivals in the South such as Bauvais and Laplume, as with his own generals, namely Dessalines, Moïse, Clervaux, and Agé. However, these notable revolutionary figures would soon

8 Girard, Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon, 5-6, 37-39, and 57-60.
9 Toussaint Louverture, “Respuesta del General en Gefe al discurso pronunciado en el Puerto Republicano por el Agente del Gobierno el 16 Pluviôse del an 7,” Pluviôse an VII / February 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1; García to Francisco Saavedra, Santo Domingo, 15 March 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, no. 139.
bear arms openly against each other as Toussaint and Rigaud, pugilists in the sectionalized Saint-Domingue, accused each other of overstepping their limited legal prerogatives.

As a strategy to better unify these warriors of Saint-Domingue Roume announced his embrace of the Supreme Being as a bridge toward Christians, freemasons, and vodouizan. In the same pronouncement that scandalized Dominicans in April 1799, Roume went on that divergences in belief muddied earlier, innocent deism across Greece, Egypt, Ethiopia, Persia, India, and elsewhere, forging beliefs intelligible only to initiates familiar with specific “vulgar fables and absurdities.” These bastard religious creeds were “made famous by the magical mechanism of poetry” in holy texts, and into which believers had to be indoctrinated from childhood into “monstrosities admitted as religious principles” that obscured “true principles of science and morality.” These words hit devout Dominicans rather hard, though perhaps not as hard as the ensuing statements. Roume then point to two “ancient initiations…of major utility.” One tradition, preserved in Europe, was Freemasonry.10 The French Revolution was thematically and ideologically marked with masonic legacies of liberty, equality, and fraternity, and many of the most important metropolitan figures of the

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Republic were freemasons.\footnote{Margaret C. Jacob, \textit{Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991): 203-224.} It is certainly plausible that Roume was a freemason, as were Sonthonax and Polverel who preceded him.\footnote{During the British blockade of Port-au-Prince in 1793 two British officers swam into the harbor, swords in teeth, to entreat the French to surrender. Republican troops shot at them in the water, arrested them on shore, and took them before Sonthonax, who threatened to execute them immediately despite their protests of peaceful intentions. Only then did one of the British officers notice an emblem of freemasonry with Sonthonax and began making secret masonic grips of distress. Sonthonax immediately changed his disposition, and allowed the British officers to feast with him before releasing them. See: Robert Rollo Gillespie, \textit{A Memoir of Major-General Sir R. R. Gillespie} (London: T. Egerton, 1816): 24-30. On Polverel, see: Dubois, \textit{Avengers}, 142-143.}

Roume asserted that the other tradition was “named Vaudou, present still in African countries,” which he described as vestiges of the “mysteries taught by the sages of Ethiopia.” Roume argued that there had always been a tension between reason and fanaticism. For example, he said that Moses had to guide the monotheist Jews out of bondage in Egypt. Powerful figures such as Socrates and Jesus had been forced to their deaths for their principles. Mohammed had to restore commitment to a single “Infinite Being.” Humans often abandoned their original, simple, deistic virtue, as “gentle, modest, good men were subjected to the force or trickery of the wicked...under the titles of kings and masters who commanded subjects and slaves.”\footnote{Roume, “Discours...a la celebration des fêtes reunites de la Juenesse et des Epoux,” 10 Floréal an VII / 29 April 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.} This was a drastic reversal of republican policy toward \textit{vodou}. In 1796 Sonthonax had issued sweeping laws against the practice of African-derived spirituality, as he and other French officials viewed “le
vaudou” as a separate allegiance for blacks that could undercut republican loyalties and undermine black discipline or labor.¹⁴

Roume argued that, “the Supreme Being...judged with impenetrable wisdom that it was time to start the seventh epoch of nature,” and entrusted this spiritual quest to the French. As part of other noble legacies of cosmological renewal Roume said “the French Revolution is but the first act of the total regeneration of the human species.” In this new spiritual era and journey he said that Saint-Domingue had to marvel in the leadership of “this phenomenon, one of the most astonishing of the Revolution...TOUSSAINT LOUVERTURE.” Roume praised Toussaint’s closest officers almost as disciples, including Villatte, Moïse, Agé, Dessalines, Henry Christophe, and also Rigaud, Bauvais, Chanlatte, and Laplume in the South.¹⁵ Governor García saw such commemorations in the Republic as “despicable” and great “moral risks” for the Spanish people, their traditions, and their religion.¹⁶ Just over 1,000 soldiers remained in Santo

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¹⁵ Roume, “Discours...a la celebration des fêtes reunites de la Juenesse et des Epoux,” 10 Floréal an VII / 29 April 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

¹⁶ García to Mariano Luis Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 21 May 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 140; García to Mariano Luis Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 8 August 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 144.
Domingo, with many who hailed from Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Cuba, and Spain, but they would be no match for Toussaint if he suddenly looked eastward.\textsuperscript{17}

Vague references to the “Supreme Being” had appeared within Toussaint’s public professions of his brand of Christianity.\textsuperscript{18} This republican deistic neologism may have comported with extant syncretism of the \textit{Bon Dieu} (the Catholic “Good Lord”) and Nzambi (the all-creating, all-knowing deity broadly observed by Kongolesse peoples).\textsuperscript{19} However, when he eventually became the primary political power on the island Toussaint also initiated his own persecutions of \textit{vodou} as part of his attempts to revitalize agricultural production on the island by forcing ex-slaves back to work. This eliminated dissent from ideologies beyond his manipulation that had also inspired black resistance in years past. Also, when Saint-Domingue was in his grasp, Toussaint did look eastward to take Santo Domingo without French or Spanish permission. To legitimate his own rule to the French metropole, to secret British trade partners, and to assuage devoutly Catholic Dominicans, his move toward formally distancing his rule from \textit{vodou} also served broader geopolitical aims.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{17} Gregorio Ugarte, “Estado que manifiesta la fuerza efectiva…,” Santo Domingo, 4 July 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
\textsuperscript{18} Dubois, \textit{Avengers}, 203. At one time black insurgents in the West referred to Sonthonax himself as \textit{Bon Dieu}. See: Madiou, \textit{Histoire d’Haïti}, Vol. I, 181.
\textsuperscript{19} Fick, \textit{Making Haiti}, 105 and 264.
\textsuperscript{20} Ramsey, \textit{The Spirits and the Law}, 48-51.
Soon these factions were either at civil war with each other or were banished from the island. As García reported in July 1799, “The blacks and the mulattoes of the French part have already commenced their factions, and harass each other between the parties of the North and West against those of the South, whose heads are the black general Toussaint and the mulatto general Rigaud, the latter who had taken the two parishes of Petit- and Grand-Goâve,” and cut supplies to a North column around Port-au-Prince. That summer as civil warfare spread in Saint-Domingue, Rigaud began sending printed manifestos into Santo Domingo trying to find a new base of support and resources to wield against the potent Toussaint. Roume had very little influence on this civil war. His power, in fact, quickly eroded, and eventually when Toussaint had no use for him Roume was imprisoned and eventually banished. Just like Roume had failed in easing Dominicans into an occupation by the French Republic, he also quickly failed at gluing together the broken republican pieces of Saint-Domingue where the overpowering talent of Toussaint in the West and North had sidelined white politicians and left the South as a holdout region of gens de couleur dissent. One of

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21 García to Mariano Luis Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 19 July 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 142; Fick, Making Haiti, 202.

22 García to Mariano Luis Urquijo, Santo Domingo 21 August 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 145.

23 Dubois, Avengers, 232-238.
the reasons that printed papers said the split had occurred was that Roume had taken favor of Toussaint over Rigaud.  

García also received letters detailing major setbacks for the Dutch. On the surface complications for a neighboring empire seemed unrelated to his own concerns, but with closer investigation García realized the Dominican interest in collaborating with the governor of Curaçao to share information on how their two colonies were mutually mired in the internationalization of Saint-Domingue’s civil war. Almost immediately, and as a corollary to internal fighting in Saint-Domingue, a major Roume-orchestrated republican conspiracy swept Curaçao. Governor Johann Rudolf Lauffer of this Dutch island appealed to García, who of course had no means of assistance.  

Just as Santo Domingo had for years been a site of French radical experimentation and British ploys for commercial dominance

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24 García to Mariano Luis Urquijo, Santo Domingo 21 August 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 145.

25 Johann Rudolph Cádiz to García, Curaçao, 23 September 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1. Also, in August 1799 the British, having been thoroughly rebuffed on Hispaniola, seized Suriname. It was a vision of what could have happened to Santo Domingo had pro-British sympathizers and their plot not been foiled. The British sailed into port with 22 warships and rapidly landed troops. Without firing a shot the British commander negotiated a surrender with the Dutch governor and officers over four days, who could not really resist with only 450 Walloon royal guards defending the city. The colony’s transfer was sweetened with a large cash sum. Before the British arrived papers had circulated promising that colonists of Suriname would happily thrive under British rule. All of the local Dutch magnates seemed to agree with the deal, the Dutch troops and colonists were almost suspiciously peaceful with the transition, and thus British governance swept in without resistance. This was almost exactly like the pro-British conspiracy that had swept Santo Domingo just years before. See: Jose de Liano y Bustamante, “Declaración,” Santo Domingo, 18 September 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1; García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 28 September 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 147.
in the Caribbean, so did weaker Dutch colonies become new theatres for proxy partisanship and potential new bases of support. In these intrigues Spanish officials played an awkward mediating role, especially given the internationalization of factions from within Saint-Domingue in which Dominicans were contextually caught.

In a manner similar to previous French meddling in Santo Domingo, Roume had sent two agents into Curaçao to organize a revolt that would install republican principles favorable to his sphere of influence in Saint-Domingue, while shutting off trade with Rigaud’s ports in Sud. This was perhaps part of a wider strategy to export revolution across the Caribbean not only on principle, but to also expand his own base of influence and support. Rigaud himself apprised Lauffer of the plot. Also, Roume attempted to send his own agents to subvert the slave population of Jamaica into revolt, only to have his plans secretly quashed by none other than Toussaint, whose furtive accords with the British secured him their promise of non-intervention.26 Roume had in fact sent agents to Jamaica, Cuba, and Mexico, and possibly other Spanish dominions.27


27 “Copia de una carta escrita en Santiago de los Caballeros...,” Santiago, 27 December 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1; Edward Stevens to Timothy Pickering, Cap-Français, 30 September 1799,
García absolutely saw this conflict in Dutch Curaçao as a settling of scores between the jockeying Rigaud and Toussaint factions. Furthermore, he had heard rumors that Toussaint was musing a strategy of taking Santo Domingo, with British aid perhaps, as a way to further undercut Rigaud geopolitically and economically. He thought that Toussaint was surrounded by people who adulated him and would not contradict his strategies. His ambition and name were simply hated by proprietarios in Santo Domingo, who were sure that Toussaint’s stance against slavery and dislike of certain powerful Dominicans, would drive him to conquer Santo Domingo without formal French permission. The Directory could not directly stop this, nor the civil war between “personalities, colors, parties, passions, pride, and ambition,” between Rigaud and Toussaint, the one of the only matters delaying the transfer of the Dominican side. García also could not prevent the factionalizing of Dominicans between these two sides. With time and infiltration from Saint-Domingue, white and mulatto sectors of Santo Domingo began to side more with Rigaud, who was not only closer geographically, but whose background was more similar to their own social class

_American Historical Review_ 16, no. 1 (October 1910): 82-85 (AHR 1910). For more on Edward Stevens and the United States’ diplomatic relations with Toussaint, see: Ronald Angelo Johnson, _Diplomacy in Black and White: John Adams, Toussaint Louverture, and Their Atlantic World Alliance_ (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014): 68-86. Those in Jamaica were named Dubuisson and Sasportas. The former had confessed about the full plans, and was thus spared his life and sent to London. A “maritime agent” named “Andro” had been sent to Santiago de Cuba, possibly with the company of Thevenau, who had served in similar capacities previously under Sonthonax.
and ideals of European civility. Those less advantaged in Dominican society, particularly the enslaved, grew to see Toussaint more favorably. These factions became more consequential the harder that Toussaint pushed to annex Santo Domingo on his own accord.\(^\text{28}\) However, one of the most divisive policies of Toussaint’s ascent in Saint-Domingue was that of enforcing renewed plantation productivity of the juridically liberated *cultivateurs*, through the creation of a forced labor regime that reminded ex-slaves of bondage, all to the detriment of French rule.\(^\text{29}\)

**NEW AGENT, NEW INSTABILITY**

Throughout 1799 the civil war slogged along between Rigaud and Toussaint, who had just regained Môle-Saint-Nicolas. Grand- and Petit-Goâve both remained under Rigaud’s control. They were in the command of his lieutenant Bellegarde, who had revolted against Toussaint and initially taken Môle-Saint-Nicolas. Bauvais, who was a powerful officer and close friend Rigaud though he had never fully backed him during the civil war, had commanded Jacmel. At Toussaint’s approach Bauvais fled for France via Curaçao, leaving the

\(^{28}\) García to Urquijo, Santo Domiongo, 30 September 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

town vulnerable to Rigaud’s foes, and soon drowned in an accident at sea.\textsuperscript{30} With the bitter civil war and its high casualty rate, Roume began regrouping all available officers, including General François-Marie Kerversau who had briefly replaced him as Provisional Agent in Santo Domingo. Roume selected General Antoine Chanlatte as Kerversau’s replacement. Chanlatte’s poor health prevented him from full combat deployment.\textsuperscript{31} Roume instructed Chanlatte to pursue political stability and commercial possibilities, both of which the French direly needed amidst their civil war to the west. So strained were French finances on the island that they could barely pay Chanlatte.\textsuperscript{32}

Most importantly, Roume stressed the need for Chanlatte to prevent any support for Rigaud in Santo Domingo, and to remain vigilant, and recommended that he speak with the local Oyarzábal (of Boca Nigua) who had been amenable to French concerns and could offer advice on local cultural politics.\textsuperscript{33} Roume then

\textsuperscript{30} García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 30 September 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1; Dubois, \textit{Avengers}, 235-236. Bellegarde later sided with the French during the struggle for Haitian independence, though in the 1810s he returned to Hispaniola and under a unified Haitian rule of the whole island served as a commander on the Dominican side. See: Charles Mackenzie, \textit{Notes on Haiti: Made During a Residence in that Republic}, Vol. 1 (London: Colburn and Bentley, 1830): 300-306.

\textsuperscript{31} Roume, “Extrait du registre des délibérations…,” Cap-Français, 12 Vendémiaire an VIII / 4 October 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, (A).

\textsuperscript{32} Philippe-Rose Roume to Antoine Chanlatte Cap-Français, 12 Vendémiaire an VIII / 4 October 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, (B).

\textsuperscript{33} Philippe-Rose Roume to Chanlatte Cap-Français, 12 Vendémiaire an VIII / 4 October 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, (B).
begged Spanish officials to honor Chanlatte and his mission. García was quick to remind Roume that such a Provisional Agent was still unnecessary, since Spanish officials had paid for and handled day-to-day colonial administration in good faith during all the years in which the treaty had not been enacted. To García, this position had no, “diplomatic sphere or business that merits sustaining this job,” and asked Roume why the Republic bothered to send him when he had neither purpose nor money. However, political observers in Saint-Domingue – such as the American consul appointed by President Adams who worked closely with Toussaint – suspected that Chanlatte’s appointment in fact was a maneuver to neutralize Toussaint’s influence in Santo Domingo and, perhaps, later annex the Spanish side without the influence of Toussaint, as much as it was about preventing Rigaud from collecting Dominican support. García, on the other hand, simply wanted to avoid all of the complications of French radicals interfering in the local populace, as Roume so notably had.

34 Philippe-Rose Roume to García, Cap-Français, 12 Vendémiaire an VIII / 4 October 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, (C).
35 García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 23 October 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1 (D).
36 Edward Stevens to Timothy Pickering, Cap-Français, 26 October 1799, AHR 1910. Chanlatte actually sailed into Santo Domingo with an American passport and on an American ship due to concerns over neutrality and potentially being intercepted en route. See: Edward Stevens to Timothy Pickering, Cap-Français, 3 December 1799, AHR 1910.
In any case, Chanlatte arrived at the end of October 1799 with overt loyalties to Roume. All the while, García seemed to prefer the politics and manners of Rigaud in South, and critiqued the “pretexts” of Toussaint’s war against him. He politely doubted that Roume was up to the task of pacifying and unifying Saint-Domingue, let alone controlling Toussaint. At least García appreciated the “European education, intelligence, and appreciable customs” of Kerversau. At first, these attributes seemed to contrast starkly with “General Chanlatte, one of those of mixed bloods, natural of this island.” who García doubted he could trust him, as he assumed the Chanlatte was also a puppet of Toussaint. Soon enough, García would learn of his shared interests with Chanlatte. To García’s great irritation, Spanish personnel were still the ones preventing this internecine turmoil from spreading to the Dominican population, and feared what might come if Toussaint moved toward independence as rumors suggest he might. He also thought that a mulatto general was an affront and potentially provocative given the context of racial warfare, which had yet to fully overtake Santo Domingo. While this new French agent was a local embodiment of the Directory, Chanlatte still had no legal power.37 In this state, the Audiencia withdrew more of its archives.

37 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 26 October 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 150.
and functions to Cuba despite any permanent resolution in the capital, but was ordered to stay in management of Santo Domingo until a formal transfer.\textsuperscript{38}

Speculation about independence in Saint-Domingue, and perhaps the entire island, swelled in Santo Domingo when a well-known \textit{citoyen} of Saint-Domingue wrote to a Dominican friend inquiring about rumors of British and American designs to support an autonomous government of Toussaint. The author doubted that the British with their slave islands, and the United States with their “southern provinces” with slavery would want to deal with black power on Hispaniola. He was less sure of the black leaders’ intentions, whose “incendiary system” contrasted to the “peaceful and fortunate Spanish territory.” However, the \textit{citoyen} continued, “But my friend! Yesterday some mail arrived in this city from the black general Toussaint Louverture with letters for Agent Roume in which he communicated [his] resolution to take possession of the Spanish part of the island” after taking Jacmel. He implored his Dominican friend to flee the colony if possible, as Toussaint had allegedly threatened to bring “blood and fire” to the Dominican side should the Spanish resist his impromptu takeover.\textsuperscript{39}

Whatever the unlikely prospects of independence at that time were, the growing

\textsuperscript{38} García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 10 November 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 151; García to Mariano Luis Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 12 November 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 152.

\textsuperscript{39} “Traducción literal de una carta francesa escrita por un sujeto visible en el Guarico a un vecino de Santo Domingo español,” Cap-Français, 13 December 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
likelihood of a unilateral invasion by Toussaint terrified Dominicans more than anything.

Given these omens, by the end of 1799 García was livid with the French for their inertia regarding Santo Domingo and incompetence in dealing with Toussaint. He railed against the Republic’s negligence to use ciphers in their most sensitive political letters for French agents, including instructions from Paris on plans to subdue the rebellious blacks. This had tipped off black powerbrokers to long-term French plans, and thus scuttled the slim possibilities of peace under the Republic. Toussaint in Gonaïves learned the content of these letters while they were en route to Roume. García speculated that Toussaint had been pondering independence since that discovery, along with “the destruction of all white individuals.” He already knew that Toussaint had, “solicited from the British and United States arms and munitions, and all types of support,” and in turn allowed ships from both nations to enter ports under his control. In these regards, perhaps García had a more realistic appraisal of Toussaint’s power and autonomy than many French officials. Such external support aided Toussaint in the civil war, and would likely support his absorption of the Spanish side in the near future, García reasoned.40

40 “Copia de una carta escrita en Santiago de los Caballeros...,” Santiago, 27 December 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
Toussaint had already dispatched Colonel Vincent to Paris to retrieve his two children, a sign García took as a prelude to independence, accompanied by Toussaint’s provocative messages to the Directory that blamed the Republic’s commissioners in the colony for its ruin. García knew this was a ploy to centralize his own power within the Republic should Toussaint choose to keep his allegiance. Some whispers of Toussaint’s machinations swirled without attribution, but García had a specific, secretive source that passed along this sensitive information. That source may have been some close associate of Toussaint’s who had, like the black general, also served Spain with the black auxiliaries and never entirely severed sympathies toward the Catholic king. Also, the tips that García received from Governor Lauffer of Curaçao and news of agents French arrested in Jamaica heightened his alarm for imminent threats to Santo Domingo. Thus, García warned the governors of Cuba and Cartagena to be on

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41 “Copia de una carta escrita en Santiago de los Caballeros…,” Santiago, 27 December 1799, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
alert for similar French plots. That option of resistance now foreclosed, those Dominicans with means simply fled the island.

With mounting speculation over Toussaint’s plans to rule the entire island, in April 1800 pro-Toussaint French officials in Saint-Domingue undertook one of the few meaningful actions regarding Santo Domingo during Chanlatte’s brief sojourn there. The Republic registered complaints against the “abuses” of “transporting cultivateurs and other citizens from the old French park to the new of Santo Domingo.” Specifically, the complaint dealt with the old Spanish practice of selling off black prisoners (or, sometimes, simply captured or illicitly trafficked slaves) from the warzones to other Spanish colonies. By extension, a more contentious complaint became the outmigration of Dominicans with their slaves in the few years subsequent the as of yet ineffectual Treaty of Basel. As part of this

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42 Garcia to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 10 January 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 153. In less than a year Curacao was under British control, a preventive measure taken by Dutch elites to ward off French machinations, a fate many elites in Santo Domingo had once contemplated. In November 1800 news arrived through a Danish vessel that Curacao had fallen to the British. The Stadtholder party, opposed to the French and loosely allied with Garcia through Governor Cadiz, had sought the support of nearby British ships against republican intrigues. This British takeover was a similar to the conspiracies in Santo Domingo of 1796-1797. Tellingly, Governor Cadiz retained office under the British. Garcia to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 6 November 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 166. See also: Gert Oostindie, “Dutch Atlantic Decline During the ‘Age of Revolutions’,” in Dutch Atlantic Connections, 1680-1800: Linking Empires, Bridging Borders, Gert Oostindie and Jessica V. Roitman, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2014): 327-329. The occupation of Santo Domingo remained, if nothing else, a strategic necessity to defend against British machinations on the island. Thus, the continued day-to-day Spanish management of the colony was a necessity to the French war effort in Saint-Domingue. See: Georges Henri Victor Collot, Mémoire sur la réorganisation de la colonie de Saint Domingue: Précédé de quelques vues générales sur un système de colonisation (Paris: n.p., 1800): 18-20.

43 Deive, Emigraciones.
renewed, strategic concern for Dominican slaves, coupled with French officials’
hints at how Toussaint might otherwise approach Santo Domingo, they asked
García to welcome the arrival of General Agé with a detachment of white troops
to take over the colony. In his lengthy instructions, Agé was specifically told to
tolerate Dominican religiosity and the public role of priests in Santo Domingo
while encouraging them to comply with republican policy. To formalize this
process (and obviate public surprise) the French officials had already circulated
printed proclamations into Santo Domingo that explained Agé’s presence and
intentions.44

TOUSSAINT, *TRIOMPHANT*

Agé was a successful general who had served loyally and closely under
Toussaint during the civil war. Just as rumors had indicated, Toussaint sent Agé
directly after his forces captured Jacmel and secured the probable fall of Rigaud.
However, observers in Saint-Domingue more or less expected a fight, either from
Dominicans, from remaining pro-Rigaud partisans, or from both. Toussaint only
undertook this after he had overpowered and imprisoned Roume for protesting

44 Philippe-Rose Roume to García, Cap-Français, 7 Floréal an VIII / 27 April 1800, AHN-Estado, leg.
3395, exp. 2.
His aggressive plans for Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{45} His ostensible colleague Chanlatte was a fairly open opponent of Toussaint and favored Rigaud, who was from the well-off \textit{gens de couleur} background as he was. Surprisingly, García had actually found himself an ally in delaying Toussaint’s plans for Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{46} To dissipate the tension in this situation Toussaint wrote to García as soon as Agé departed for Santo Domingo. He informed García of his intention to complete the treaty and made it clear that Agé would respect local property, keep black Dominicans on plantations, and respect priests and religious practice. Toussaint elected to not send any black, ex-slave troops, a condition upon which García had always insisted.\textsuperscript{47}

In mid-May 1800 García acknowledged French concerns pertaining to the sale of \textit{cultivateurs} from the French side both to and through the Spanish side. He denied any firsthand knowledge of such “sins,” though he promised judicious punishment for actual offenders. García had issued a declaration in January against this practice with the concurrence of Chanlatte, and had prosecuted Tomás Regalado and Antonio Croue for having trafficked the black French citizen

\textsuperscript{45} Edward Stevens to Timothy Pickering, Cap-Français, 27 April 1800, \textit{AHR} 1910, 97-98.

\textsuperscript{46} Antoine Chanlatte to García, Santo Domingo, 30 Floréal an VIII / 20 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 13.

García to Antoine Chanlatte, Santo Domingo, 20 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 12.

\textsuperscript{47} Toussaint to García, Guarico, 7 Floréal an VIII / 27 April 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 4; Edward Stevens to Timothy Pickering, Cap-Français, 27 April 1800, \textit{AHR} 1910, 97-98.
Felicitas in Santiago. García was also quick to point out the many French promises and failed attempts at transferring the colony, such as when Rochambeau arrived, and that their substantial delay was already a breach of the treaty. He lashed out at Roume for French condescension and inconsideration, all the while he tried to protect Santo Domingo and remaining Spanish interests. Meanwhile, they could not evacuate due to the lack of ships and also being surrounded by the British navy. He also pointed out to Roume that the whole situation had consternated the Dominican populace, and that ambitions of the Republic to *francesizar* (Frenchify) the Dominican populace would take a great deal of time.\(^{48}\) Like previous attempts to win over Dominicans, or to occupy Santo Domingo, the most recent French attempts would soon be frustrated.\(^{49}\)

Agé had arrived the day before on 13 May 1800, and he told Toussaint that he doubted that circumstances would permit Agé to fulfill his commission. García said he enjoyed the meeting with Agé, but reiterated that Dominicans’ needs for religion, tranquility, a more formal transfer process, and more time and resources to evacuate.\(^{50}\) Two days later over 200 local signatories, who represented a total of

\(^{48}\) García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 12 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 3.

\(^{49}\) Jean Sulaure, Silvestre Ferbos, Quilleron, Diace, and F. Barthelemy, Cap-Français, 7 Floréal an VIII / 27 April 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2.

\(^{50}\) García to Toussaint, Santo Domingo, 14 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, no. 5.
1,300 Dominicans, delivered an appeal to the Cabildo and begged Spanish colonial officials to suspend the delivery to France until sufficient they could safely depart the colony. They confessed their great fear of being governed by French principles and the “wisdom of their dictators” and expected the transfer to cause an “abyss of confusions.” Their “indispensable civil expectation” was, simply, to not be overcome by “a multitude of blacks rebelling en masse” as in Saint-Domingue where it had spread “amazing disorganization, misfortunes, fires, knives, [that] ravaged its residents.” They could not abide the ascendance of people of color and blacks, and doubted the colonial effectiveness of “First Consul Buonaparte” that is, Napoléon Bonaparte.\footnote{Vecinos de Santo Domingo to Cabildo de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, 16 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395. They referenced the original Corsican spelling of his name, Napoleone di Buonaparte.}

The powerful French general had indeed asserted himself directly into imperial politics, and would play a major role on island affairs over the coming years.\footnote{Dubois, Avengers, 236-241.} Local officials wrote their own specific complaints, as similar letters poured in from other Dominican towns.\footnote{Ysidro Mota, Vicente Pérez, Juan Díaz, Fernando Abreu, Pablo Pérez, and Antonio Abad de Mena to Cabildo de Santo Domingo, San Carlos, 18 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, no. 8; Pedro Francisco de Prado, Francisco Vicente González, and Francisco Xavier de Herrera, Santo Domingo, 19 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 9.} Some appeals claimed to represent the “100,000 souls” on the Spanish side, and even clamored directly to Bonaparte for
sympathy with their plight to suspend the colony’s transfer.\textsuperscript{54} Other appeals directly accused Agé of destabilization.\textsuperscript{55} Of course, the orders for the French occupation had come not from Bonaparte, nor anyone in Paris, but from the First Consul’s newfound colonial rival – Toussaint.\textsuperscript{56} This entire situation put Chanlatte in a difficult situation, caught among Toussaint, Rigaud, Roume, García, and Dominican dissenters.\textsuperscript{57}

Chanlatte told García that the appeals helped him understand Dominican fears. However, despite clergy, officials, and citizens’ concerns, he thought they were exaggerated, and insisted that his orders for the time were to yield Santo Domingo to the Republic.\textsuperscript{58} García then begged Roume, Agé, and Chanlatte to delay the delivery in lieu of new direct orders from Madrid and Paris. Five years had already passed since, and García could not abide the sudden, hasty rush. Thus, he announced that, “I have resolved...unanimously the suspension of the

\textsuperscript{54} Antonio Davila Coca, Manuel de Miedes, and Francisco Labastida to García, 19 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 10.

\textsuperscript{55} Vecinos de Santo Domingo to Ayuntamiento de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, 24 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 15.

\textsuperscript{56} Toussaint to García, Guarico, 7 Floréal an VIII / 27 April 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 4; Edward Stevens to Timothy Pickering, Cap-Français, 27 April 1800, AHR 1910, 97-98.

\textsuperscript{57} García to Antoine Chanlatte, Santo Domingo, 20 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 12.

\textsuperscript{58} Antoine Chanlatte to García, Santo Domingo, 30 Floréal an VIII / 20 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 13.
delivery,” and asked Agé to return to Saint-Domingue.⁵⁹ Even the Cabildo of Santo Domingo wrote that there were threats against General Agé’s life from deeply distraught Dominicans who were panicked that Toussaint, the “enemy of the white race” and “perturbor of the tranquility” might hold their city. With news that Toussaint was sending additional troops, a movement grew to drive out Agé, and stated that he basically had six hours to leave the capital.⁶⁰

García called a conference in his home with Agé and Chanlatte. He explained the impossibility of evacuation at that point, and begged them to wait for a formal commission from Paris, or at least a better planned operation from Saint-Domingue, instead of rushing the transfer. García had also heard the whispers that Roume was outraged with the blacks’ demand for the delivery of Santo Domingo, and that his orders were truly only from Toussaint and not Roume (who was under arrest by Toussaint at that time, though he did not yet know that for certain). García convinced Agé to leave with an honor guard instead of being expelled. He felt completely justified in avoiding the “brigandage of Toussaint and his blacks” who did not follow laws. To better protect the capital, 400 city residents travelled to Azua to set up defenses, just in case of hostilities.


⁶⁰ Antonio Davila Coca, Manuel de Miedes, and Francisco Labastida to García, Santo Domingo, 25 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 2, no. 16.
from Toussaint. The actual garrison then had only 1,165 men, not including the militia.\textsuperscript{61} Later lore recounted that Agé had been abused, or even attacked by Dominicans. More accurately, he had been intimidated into leaving by those who wanted nothing to do with Toussaint, and who were emboldened by the pro-Rigaud presence of Chanlatte. This exaggeration played well as an enhanced justification for Toussaint to intervene, though.\textsuperscript{62} García would do just that at any moment.\textsuperscript{63} Across Santo Domingo towns prepared arms for such an impromptu takeover directed by Toussaint.\textsuperscript{64}

In the midst of this frantic situation Rigaud sent an envoy and letters to Chanlatte and García in mid-June 1800. In this offer Rigaud provoked García to stand against Toussaint, who he called “a genius exterminator and inhuman destroyer.”\textsuperscript{65} In his letter, Rigaud called Toussaint treasonous, and said that what he could not do in conquering the South he wanted to do against Santo Domingo. All this only fueled Dominican fears and steeled their resolve. Rigaud told García that it was “of the highest importance to persecute in concert this plague of nature and humanity, and destroy it, or at least put it in absolute impotence in pursuing

\textsuperscript{61} García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 28 May 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 155.
\textsuperscript{63} García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 8 June 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 157.
\textsuperscript{64} García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 13 June 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 159.
\textsuperscript{65} García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 14 June 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 160.
their black projects.” He complimented “the character of the Spanish nation” and offered to work in conjunction with García to contain Toussaint.66 No wonder that Rigaud offered such encouragement and terms. He had just learned that Napoléon had, in effect, sided with Toussaint, whose forces were already winning the civil war.67 Rigaud was more than likely looking for a territorial base, and supporting population, from which to continue his fight.

As much as García might have agreed with Rigaud, and as unpopular as Toussaint was, he was conflicted by the fact that any partisanship toward Rigaud’s interests also far overstepped his governmental charge. However, García did entertain the possibility of transferring the colony to Chanlatte in an emergency, which would leave Rigaud in de facto control. Chanlatte had won over his and the colonists’ trust, and knew better how to manage the risks of a sacking by the black armies. This would have of course put Santo Domingo in the sphere of Rigaud, the “russet” colored leader who he suspected was also more favored by France.68 However, García responded to Rigaud by praising his sensibilities, but said that he could not choose one side or another in their civil war, and despite his criticisms of Toussaint he could not risk spreading the war to Santo Domingo.69

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66 Rigaud to García, Les Cayes. 17 Prairial an VIII / 6 June 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
67 Dubois, Avengers, 235-238.
68 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 14 June 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 160.
69 García to Rigaud, Santo Domingo, 22 August 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
Rigaud may have also contacted several other distressed Dominican towns in the southern and western stretches of the colony. The lack of communication from Roume continued to make García quite uneasy. Roume, though, was at Toussaint’s mercy. He was arrested, in fact, and would soon be on a ship bound for France, leaving the black general even more potent across Hispaniola.

Dominicans outside of the capital hoped to find peace under France eventually, but more realistically viewed vying French partisans as, “a Bloody Lion that by keeping us in its claws threatens us day by day with our fatal end.” As far as they could tell, the fight in Saint-Domingue was no longer even about principles. Dominican towns were unable to defend themselves against any sudden attacks from the west, and felt that they were without father and mother, and lamented the eventual tyranny of the Republic over those Dominicans abandoned by Spain. Their new republican neighbors had recently demanded hundreds of heads of cattle to support their war effort, and promised to pay for

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70 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 8 August 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 164.
71 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 20 June 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
72 Dubois, Avengers, 236-238.
73 Isidoro de los Santos, Manuel Aquino, Facundo Aquino, Pedro Herrera, Ciriaco de los Santos, Manuel Segura, Manuel Contrera, Juan Rafael de Herrera, Juan Antonio de Herrera, Juan Ximenez, Manuel Ximenez, Andrés Nolasco, Manuel de los Santos, Manuel Herrera, Damian Herrera, Domingo Rosado, Jose Segura, Salvador Segura, Juan Antonio de Herrera, Juan Cailla, Manuel de Herrera, Jose Damian de Herrera, Luis Segura, Buenaventura Segura, Florentino de Herrera, Diego Fernandez, Manuel Alcantar, Jose Galvan, Dionision Hernandez, and Gregorio Ramon to García, San Juan de la Maguana, 22 July 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
them. When the pay arrived it was only for a quarter of the needed amount. The same had happened with dozens of horses. Some towns closer to the border that French troops already occupied were forced to pay for their French occupiers’ presence, a very unpopular levy that the republicans enforced through threats. At times they did not even bother to pay for supplies, but instead raided for supplies and basic foodstuffs. Dominicans considered this theft. The French did not care what they considered it. Some planters noted they had been disarmed, and their weapons given to local blacks, some of whom whispered their plans to kill Dominican whites. These colonists begged Spain to intervene in some fashion.\footnote{Isidoro de los Santos, Manuel Aquino, Facundo Aquino, Pedro Herrera, Ciriaco de los Santos, Manuel Segura, Manuel Contrera, Juan Rafael de Herrera, Juan Antonio de Herrera, Juan Ximenez, Manuel Ximenez, Andrés Nolasco, Manuel de los Santos, Manuel Herrera, Damian Herrera, Domingo Rosado, Jose Segura, Salvador Segura, Juan Antonio de Herrera, Juan Cailla, Manuel de Herrera, Jose Damian de Herrera, Luis Segura, Buenaventura Segura, Florentino de Herrera, Diego Fernandez, Manuel Alcantar, Jose Galvan, Dionision Hernandez, and Gregorio Ramon to Garcia, San Juan de la Maguana, 22 July 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.} Spain would not, because they could not.

By August 1800 Rigaud had already lost the civil war to Toussaint, and evacuated from the South of Saint-Domingue. Toussaint swooped in to occupy the southern peninsula of Saint-Domingue and cease hostilities there between the mulattoes and blacks. Dominicans wondered what level of retribution Toussaint would exact, and how long he would wait before turning his attentions toward Santo Domingo. Nobody knew exactly where Rigaud had gone, or what would
happen with Roume, who was still a captive of Toussaint’s. A detachment of French troops had recently visited Neiba asking for a meeting with Bobadilla, who was apparently in Azua at the time. The officers LaFortune, Gay, and Diego Felix wanted to draw the blacks of Maniel into the Republic. LaFortune, who was likely the same spokesman from the Maniel maroons during the 1780s and early 1790s negotiations with Spain, threatened consequences for any delay to his meeting with Bobadilla, and also had a Spaniard at San Juan de la Maguana arrested on suspicion of being a spy.75 LaFortune, the ex-maroon leader, had risen to a leading officer affiliated with Rigaud and was a rival of Toussaint for black loyalties in the South and portions of West. In the wake of Rigaud’s capitulation it is unclear exactly what he and his retinue intended for Neiba, Bobadilla, and the maroons.76 The majority of maroons never allied with France, and they only half-heartedly acquiesced to Spanish designs in their mission at Naranjo. This resettlement project faded throughout the late 1790s as maroons moved back into the mountains to elude violence and imperial constraints.77

75 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 22 August 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 165; Julien Raimond, "Memoire sur la colonie de saint-domingue…," 1799, BHFIC, H-5a7i.

76 Girard, Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon, 84, 124, and 196; Geggus, Haitian, 117.

In November 1800 García learned that certain republicans, no doubt in Toussaint’s camp, were considering punishment against Santo Domingo for their rejection and treatment of General Agé. Concerning one of Agé’s central concerns during his brief visit to Santo Domingo – the plight of black French citizens enslaved in Santo Domingo – García also learned of new, specific complaints. The Republic’s General Pageot and General Michel had, during transit through the Dominican side, arrested some slaves fleeing a local hacendado. These people were arrested. Upon investigation the slaves told the generals that they were in fact French, and had been kidnapped and sent to the Spanish side. García dismissed these claims, and obliquely referenced how such a story would benefit both runaway Dominican slaves and French politicians, and asserted that Dominican planters still were within their rights to procure or recapture slaves. García later found out that the three men and one woman who were slaves that General Pageot had mentioned as the prisoners, and he said he was sure they had fled from the plantation of Antonio Mañon and were Dominican creole slaves. García demanded more concrete proof of any other infractions. In any case, the French

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78 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 20 November 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 167.

79 García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 22 November 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

80 García to Philippe-Rose Roume, Santo Domingo, 24 November 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
used these accusations to justify placing new commissioners in Santiago and Azua. To García, this was but another new pretext to gaining Santo Domingo on their own terms and without metropolitan sanction and toward collecting support from Dominicans of color.  

By the close of 1800 García finally understood that Roume had been ousted and sent to Dondon, and that throughout the colony Toussaint presided after having declared himself the Republic’s chief agent on the island. The black general’s massive forces soon reiterated their plans for taking possession of Santo Domingo. García thought that the only hope for continued tranquility in Santo Domingo was either an unlikely, rapid peace or new fighting among mulattoes and blacks in the South. Those possibilities were quite slim, and he had learned also that the new imperative to send black soldiers back to work on plantations as *cultivateurs* had been received by ex-slaves in Saint-Domingue with great acrimony. In retribution to the South for siding with Rigaud, blood ran in Jérémie and other towns, while Dessalines and Laplume consolidated military positions.  

With Saint-Domingue increasingly in the firm grasp of Toussaint, Santo Domingo and the vast eastern stretches of the island were soon in Toussaint’s ambitious gaze.

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81 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 9 December 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 168.
82 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 9 December 1800, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 169
TOUSSAINT TO SANTO DOMINGO

Toussaint wasted little time in asserting his dominance over the remnants of Spanish colonialism in Santo Domingo. In the first week of January 1801 the black general began issuing proclamations to the Dominican side. He reminded them that, “General Agé, sent by me to take possession of the Spanish part in name of the Republic, had been ignominiously rejected, without respect to his character.” Toussaint insisted that he had sent Agé in peace, and without an overwhelming force of troops, to enforce the treaty. He was irate. In response, Toussaint announced that, “In consequence, I prevent you the outcome of insulting the Republic a second time; I have dispatched the armed forces, and I will come myself.” This was the outcome that García and many Dominicans had most feared. In an attempt to preempt panic and resistance, Toussaint promised, “security, protection of property, and respect for proprietors,” to those Dominicans who would stay. He said that he understood “a considerable number of Spaniards have been deceived, but I exhort them to revert from their error,” and explained that the Republic did not want to confiscate their goods, but instead “only asks for your hearts.” Toussaint proposed that he was compelled by “religion and humanity” to offer Dominicans only a “culture of commerce” in
“peace and the happiest tranquility.”

His problems would be convincing Dominicans of his sincerity.

García immediately responded to Toussaint, pleading with him to not act out of vengeance. One the one hand, García appreciated the proclamations that he had circulated declaring his peaceful intentions, but suspected that sending a large army of ex-slaves with a violent reputation were more the actions of an enemy. Perhaps even more provocatively, he questioned Toussaint about his religious motivations, implying that such appeals to Dominicans exemplified crude pandering.

Roughly when Toussaint received García’s reply, Santo Domingo received news from Baní that as many as 12,000 troops in total, had entered the colony from Saint-Domingue, with an additional five regiments en route to Santiago. Rumors also circulated that British frigates carried an additional 5,000 troops for Toussaint, all flying the neutral American flag. If the city did not surrender the suspicion was that these troops would be disembarked at Boca Nigua plantation due to the favorable terrain and friendly relationship that Oyarzábal had with the French. Toussaint would be in Azua by 9 January, leading an army that marched with little

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83 Toussaint Louverture, “A todos los habitantes de la partida antes española,” San Juan de la Maguana, 14 Nivôse an IX / 4 January 1801, AGMM-Ultramar (U), leg. 5650, exp. 2; and, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

84 García to Toussaint Louverture, Santo Domingo, 6 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
discipline and complete confidence. Baní, Ocoa, and Azua all panicked as Toussaint’s army approached, in no small part due to their understanding that if they did not fully cooperate with Toussaint’s orders then their homes would be razed.\textsuperscript{85} Toussaint used his upper hand in these towns as leverage against the Spanish government in Santo Domingo, who might precipitate the destruction of Dominican interests by Toussaint if they did not acquiesce to his demands. Thus, Toussaint made a piecemeal and peaceable absorption of Santo Domingo.

At Azua Toussaint decided to pause, and sent residents Nicolas Gonzalez and Geronimo Diaz with special messages to the residents of Baní. He simply wanted to avoid any misunderstandings. He reiterated his lack of interest in seizing Dominican goods, and made it known that he hoped to deal peacefully with García. Toussaint was less than pleased when local \textit{cabildos} referred to promises from Roume and Paris that the delivery of Santo Domingo would wait until new troops arrived from France. Perturbed, Toussaint again insisted that he was within his rights to take the colony and was not beholden to other deals.\textsuperscript{86} He sent out similar manifestos of peace to La Vega and Cotuí, two key towns near Santiago in the Cibao region. His method of selecting two locals to transmit his

\textsuperscript{85} Agustín Franco to Commander of Baní, Las Charcas, 8 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

\textsuperscript{86} Toussaint Louverture to the Cabildo de Santo Domingo, Azua, 20 Nivôse an IX / 10 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
messages for him to the next town on the two routes to the capital produced results, as these towns did capitulate, just as Azua and Baní eventually did. These towns had little choice but to comply. He promised to spare property and lives, and, intriguingly, made no mention at all of slavery.\textsuperscript{87} He even sent messengers onward to Monte Plata and Bayaguana north and east beyond Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{88}

García was well-informed of these capitulations, and knew that the occupation by Toussaint he so dreaded was nigh.\textsuperscript{89} When Toussaint claimed to have not received a reply from García, or perhaps when he did not like the reply that he had received, Toussaint then decided to deal with the \textit{cabildo} of Santo Domingo. They had also received Toussaint’s messengers from Azua and Baní, but reiterated their commitment to the Spanish transfer process and disputed that they had somehow insulted Agé. They blamed the partisanship of Chanlatte among Dominicans in the city for any bother against Agé.\textsuperscript{90} Toussaint continued to slowly tighten his grip on Santo Domingo throughout January, which included

\textsuperscript{87} Toussaint Louverture, “A los habitantes de Baní,” Azua, 21 Nivôse an IX / 11 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1; Aillard, “Permiso…,” 24 Nivôse an IX / 14 January 1801, AGMM-U, leg. 5650, exp. 2; Agustín Franco to Francisco Pérez, Baní, 13 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

\textsuperscript{88} Agustín Franco to Pedro Garrico, Baní, 13 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

\textsuperscript{89} Adrian Campuzano, Rodrigo de la Rocha, and Francisco Labastida to García, 15 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

\textsuperscript{90} Adrian Campuzano, Andrés de Angulo, Rodrigo de la Rocha, Francisco de Tapia y Castro, Luis Franco, Manuel de Herédia, Manuel de Miedes, Pedro Fernandez de Castro to Toussaint Louverture, 17 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
the skillful deployment of Moïse and his forces to Santiago and his southward push through the Cibao toward the capital. Out of options, García moved to deliver Santo Domingo to General Toussaint on 26 January 1801, though not without substantial local resistance and turmoil. All along the way the black army promoted proclamations, exhortations, securities, and benefits for the public, though spurts of violence for noncompliance conflicted with their messages of peace.91

After taking Baní Toussaint sent black troops forward to plantations in the vicinity of the capital with hopes of winning over local black Dominican support and of obtaining food provisions for the army. They encircled the capital with the help of Moïse from the north. However, just past Baní at the mouth of the Nizao River a force of about 1,000 Spanish subjects decided to stage last ditch resistance effort against Toussaint and his army, which resulted in deaths on both sides. This final act of defense was actually directed by the French Provisional Agent Antoine Chanlatte, who had no future under Toussaint given his pro-Rigaud leanings. This fight occurred, apparently, without the approval of García who did not want to further provoke Toussaint. Those militiamen returned to the capital in great distress and immediately boarded a ship to flee, just as other Spanish regular

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91 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 4 February 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 171.
forces did. Soon thereafter Chanlatte and Kerversau arrived in Caracas with this retinue of troops and exiles who had fled the wrath of Toussaint. Once in Venezuela, Chanlatte and Kerversau issued a decree that qualified Toussaint’s actions as treasonous and antagonistic to the Republic.

García decided to send from the capital a delegation of Leonardo del Monte, Joseph Sterling (the Briton), and Joaquín Colás of the Cantabria regiment to stop the violence and entreat with Toussaint. Moïse also closed in on towns just north of Santo Domingo with thousands of troops. He had been given some armed resistance in Santiago, where the uncooperative Captain Cayetano Rozon was killed by Moïse’s troops. After that the towns of La Vega and Cotuí organized more orderly surrenders. The arrival of the delegation from the capital halted the violence, and Toussaint ordered Moïse to suspend his march, which was already at Hato San Pedro about forty miles north of the capital. Negotiations then began on the formal surrender of the colony to Toussaint. The transfer officially began at Jayna on 25 January, and then Castillo San Geronimo the next morning, followed by the capital Santo Domingo in the afternoon of 26 January.

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92 García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 4 February 1801, AHN-Esto, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 171.

93 Manuel Vasconcelos to Mariano Urquijo, Caracas, 25 February 1801, AGI-Esto, leg. 61.

Chanlatte and Kerversau immediately began writing to France and Spain with accounts of their own actions and those of Toussaint: Manuel Vasconcelos, Caracas, May 1801, AGI-Esto, leg. 61.

94 Chanlatte and Kerversau, Caracas, 20 Pluviôse an IX / 8 February 1801, AGI-Esto, leg. 61, no. 12, fol.1.
Spaniards and Dominicans crowded the docks but still could not embark. Spanish officials understood that Toussaint had taken the colony with significant British support. Besides Toussaint’s own corsairs that blockaded the area, the British had many ships present as well, and Toussaint vaguely threatened British harassment of fleeing vessels that did not comply with his prerogatives. To conciliate the locals, the British allowed ships with women passengers to leave port, including a neutral Danish ship with families of the Cantabria regiment.⁹⁵

The city now had to reckon with an occupation by “hungry, naked, licentious, and rapacious” black soldiers who Spanish officials could not deal with on typical bureaucratic grounds given their “strange language and nasty character.” That was quite a harsh, racist appraisal, but the invading troops’ hostility and hunger were certainly probable. With these “petulant” new occupiers, García himself prepared to leave. Many elite families fled without their slaves, with some even signing formal freedom papers before departing (which calls into question exactly what orders of emancipation Toussaint had, or had not, given upon his arrival). In fact, Toussaint made no clear declarations regarding mass liberation of slaves upon his arrival. He prevented them from leaving with emigrants, but certainly attempted to keep black labor on the land. Regarding

⁹⁵ García to Urquijo, Santo Domingo, 4 February 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 171.
departures, for some reason Toussaint turned a blind eye to wetnursing slaves who left with young white families. Violence had ceased, though Dominicans were on edge that any slight provocation might trigger open conflict. For one, Toussaint’s thousands of troops were famished. Moïse, who García thought was quite arrogant, plotted the sacking of the Spanish royal treasury as he had already taken the keys of the storekeeper and raided the provisions for Spanish troops.96

Toussaint told García of his desire to keep Dominicans in the colony, but that whether they stayed or fled “they could not have, without wanting the annihilation of this country…the extraction of the people devoted to the work of cultivation.” That is, Toussaint demanded that all slaves stay in the colony, rather than be evacuated with their masters. Toussaint was upset enough that “not only have an infinity of Spanish families left this country...contrary to the true spirit of the Treaty, they have taken with them their slaves.” He asserted that these captives, “for the most part were blacks robbed from the French part and sold in this one.” He was convinced that the practice was ongoing, and stressed to García his irrevocable demand to prevent all evacuations of enslaved humans that resulted in the “stealing from agriculture the arms devoted to it” which he thought

had sent three-thousand *cultivateurs* to other Spanish colonies. Oyarzábal had offered Toussaint a “shocking example” of this, as some blacks under his management had been shipped away, and the “most beautiful habitation of the Spanish part is going to fall in ruin and turn itself into forest.”

If the Boca Nigua plantation had purchased slaves illicitly from Saint-Domingue, then Oyarzábal was implicating himself in this trade given his management. Such a practice could explain the several francophone names in the court records pertaining to the revolt on that *hacienda*. More likely, Oyarzábal was simply referring to slaves that were, under enduring Spanish law, still legally in bondage, who also in republican terminology still fell under the indiscriminate *cultivateur* nomenclature. Toussaint was outraged by the flight of all capable labor, regardless of their former, present, or future legal status of liberty, simply due to his extreme necessity of revitalizing agricultural production for local consumption and external exchange for direly needed war materiel. Many of these evacuated slaves had left the island with Pedro Abadía, the employee whose heavy-

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97 Toussaint Louverture to García, Santo Domingo, 8 Pluviôse an IX / 28 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

98 Toussaint Louverture to García, Santo Domingo, 8 Pluviôse an IX / 28 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
handedness in punishments at Boca Nigua had sparked the revolt there in 1796 as recounted by slaves themselves, as analyzed in Chapter Five.99

Toussaint demanded the cessation of any black outmigration. He told García, “I am instructed that the frigate that at this moment is anchored in this port and is ready to depart has an infinity of blacks on board that have been embarked by force.” Slavery was not recognized by France, and with his presence he demanded their release from the ship. He specifically asked for any Boca Nigua blacks to be returned Oyarzábal, so that his plantation would not be annihilated.100 Insisting that France did not recognize slavery was also quite different than abolishing Dominican slavery, as seen in Toussaint’s imperative to redirect labor back to producing from the land, just as he had in Saint-Domingue.

Given that Oyarzábal managed that plantation for an absentee owner, and that he was one of several white employees, it seems more likely that he misrepresented exactly how slaves from Boca Nigua came to leave the island, or be placed on a ship. Spanish officials tried mightily to protect colonists’ desires to

99 Manuel Bravo to García, Santo Domingo, 14 December 1796, AGI-SD, leg. 1033; Abadía had taken them to Puerto Rico, as many other Dominicans had done with slaves. It is unclear how many slaves he took with him, but records in Puerto Rico indicate that he established himself in the Moca region with reportedly only a few slaves at first. Of those slaves identified as non-creoles only one was from Saint-Domingue (Ouanaminthe, to be precise). Another was identified as Kongoese. Abadía later came to have over fifty slaves before passing away in Moca in 1828. See: Antonio Nieves Méndez, Historia de un pueblo: Moca, 1772-2000 (Aguada: Editorial Aymaco, 2008): 119, 144, 359, and 362.

100 Toussaint Louverture to García, Santo Domingo, 8 Pluviôse an IX / 28 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
take human property from the colony, but did not force colonists who wanted to stay to surrender their slaves for coerced export. If the Marques de Iranda had asked for the slaves to be sent away, then under Spanish law, and within the distended legal protections of the Treaty of Basel, nothing illicit had likely transpired. Oyarzábal’s strategic placation of French officials after the Boca Nigua revolt was likely more an indication of his inclination to protect profits and productivity under French rule than out of any political conviction. His accommodationist strategy with Toussaint helped secure better treatment of the property with which he was entrusted.  

García complied, and ordered the blacks disembarked from the ships. But, he asked that those who were not *cultivateurs* to be allowed to go with the Spanish. He promised to negotiate the return of Oyarzábal’s blacks, though in practice he likely knew that such an outcome was likely impossible. García insisted that those planters leaving did not put their estates in intentional disrepair as Toussaint had alleged, and that many might return once they saw good governance in Santo Domingo from Toussaint and the Republic. García protested the figure of three-thousand evacuated slaves, since he claimed the capital area

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101 García to Toussaint Louverture, Santo Domingo, 28 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
never had that many enslaved agricultural laborers anyway. At the end of January García tried to allow emigrating families to take their “domestics” who did not work in the fields, but Toussaint again refused. García again pleaded with Toussaint to respect Spanish understandings of Article 9 of the treaty that allowed colonists to withdraw their property. He reiterated, as he had for years, that “No doubt that the word goods is understood as slaves in conformity to Spanish laws.” He argued that the original time windows of the treaty simply did not apply, given the failures of both sides due to the geopolitical situations, and asked Toussaint to consider this due to his “known virtue and religion,” a sarcastic reference back to Toussaint’s own promises to treat Dominicans fairly due to his Christian convictions. Nevertheless, certain planters shipped fifteen black captives in early February only to be intercepted by the British Royal Navy just after departure. This enraged Toussaint. The inexplicable release of the slaves, though, seemed to indicate that Toussaint was working in coordination to thwart the evacuations of Santo Domingo. García denied any complicity in aiding the

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102 García to Toussaint Louverture, Santo Domingo, 28 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

103 Toussaint Louverture to García, Santo Domingo, 13 Pluviôse an IX / 2 February 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.

104 Toussaint Louverture to García, Santo Domingo, 13 Pluviôse an IX / 2 February 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
departure of human property.\textsuperscript{105} Many black Dominicans had supported Toussaint. However, with this unrealized promise of complete freedom their fervor for France became jeopardized.\textsuperscript{106}

As pressure mounted, and without a clear mandate of governance, García left Santo Domingo and arrived in Maracaibo, Venezuela on 22 February. Other Spanish officials had evacuated to Puerto Rico and Cuba around the same time. The governor of Venezuela had few resources to support Dominican evacuees.\textsuperscript{107} García moved on to Havana where only at the end of September 1801 did he receive formal permission from Spanish imperial officials to proceed with the transfer to qualified French officials. He lamented this decrepit delay, and that Dominicans had to suffer the irregular takeover and occupation by the “brusque character” Toussaint, and as of yet Santo Domingo still had no formal French official to govern the colony by the rule of law.\textsuperscript{108}

Even in Cuba García continued to pursue the claims of Dominicans against French aggressions, which greatly impressed officials there.\textsuperscript{109} Throughout 1802, as the Haitian Revolution reached a pivot point of a break with the Republic,
García and Dominicans exiles kept highly engaged with news from the island, including the arrival of a massive expedition at Cap-Français in February 1802. Their collective hope was that this massive French force would better regularize the occupation by Toussaint. Spanish imperial officials had taken up García’s reports as evidence of reckless and harmful conduct by the French, and the Spanish ambassador in Paris lodged formal complaints against the Republic to accept financial and political responsibility for the damages caused by their representative Toussaint at that time. One of the irreconcilable legal quibbles regarded the demand of Dominican slaveholders to claim and export human property against French wishes. García himself had left behind five slaves in Santo Domingo, who he had bought from slave ships himself and trained in domestic tasks. The subtext to his grievances of losing his own domestic slaves was a loss of paternalist symbolism and social status more than capital loss, compounded by his loss of political clout. Eventually García, rejected in his

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110 Marques de Someruelos to Joaquín García, Havana, 10 May 1802, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
111 Ceballos to Someruelos, Aranjuez, 20 May 1802, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.
112 Ceballos to García, Aranjuez, 23 June 1802, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.
113 Godoy, Azara, Ceballos, and Urquijo to Joaquín García, Madrid, July 1802, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
114 García to Urquijo, Maracaibo, 8 March 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1, no. 175.
attempts to reclaim both personal property and the colony that he governed for well over a decade, made his way to Madrid in 1803.\textsuperscript{115}

Whatever force Toussaint had actually used in taking Santo Domingo, and whatever damages his forces actually caused, he could have been much more violent and could easily have wrecked the entire colony. Ever the calculating pragmatic, Toussaint knew that he needed no new additional enemies. He needed laborers, ports, and productive properties to fund his own regime. He needed a buffer of territorial security from an unanticipated French expeditionary force. He needed no other guise than the unfulfilled Treaty of Basel, regardless of what Roume, Madrid, or Paris said on the matter. In fact, Roume’s health had worsened, and as Toussaint did not want to be known for his death in 1801 he shipped Roume back to France where the failed agent regaled Napoléon with tales of the black general’s excesses. That summer, having permanently ousted Roume and with control of the whole island Toussaint promulgated a new constitution under which he assumed the governorship for life within a more autonomous imperial relationship with France. Napoléon was outraged with these unilateral actions of power accumulation.\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{115} Joaquín García to José Antonio Caballero, Madrid, 22 October 1803, AGMM-U, leg. 5650, exp. 4.
FRENCH OCCUPATION IN SANTO DOMINGO

On some matters Toussaint pursued a policy of conciliation toward Santo Domingo and local cultural politics. He had told locals of his interest in visiting the chapel for Nuestra Señora de Altagracia, the shrine to the patron saint of Santo Domingo in Higüey, to pay his respects.\textsuperscript{117} He repeatedly avowed his own Christianity, and promised to keep the churches open and clergy active.\textsuperscript{118} Toussaint did try to install Guillaume Mauviel, the new bishop in the South of Saint-Domingue, as the new prelate for Santo Domingo. This may have been a way to extend religious rites to Dominicans in the absence of Archbishop Portillo, who had disreputably absented himself. It also may have extended his and the Republic’s ideological influence over Dominican society. Mauviel was from Brittany, and had served as a priest around Paris before his appointment to Saint-Domingue. Santo Domingo actually rejected Mauviel, while Santiago was more open to his spiritual oversight.\textsuperscript{119} Toussaint seemed to advance Mauviel, whereas, at least later, Dessalines opposed him.\textsuperscript{120} The protracted course of ecclesiastical

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{117} Joaquín García to José Antonio Caballero, Madrid, 22 October 1803, AGMM-U, leg. 5650, exp. 4, fol. 7.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Toussaint Louverture, “A todos los habitantes de la partida antes española,” San Juan de la Maguana, 14 Nivôse an IX / 4 January 1801, AHN-Estado, leg. 3394, exp. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Abate Berault-Bercastel, \textit{Historia general de la iglesia}, Tomo VIII (Barcelona: Pons, 1855): 537-538.
\item \textsuperscript{120} Deborah Jenson, \textit{Beyond the Slave Narrative: Politics, Sex, and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution} (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012): 99-100.
\end{itemize}
shuffling deeply concerned the Vatican, which feared that French rule would disrupt Catholicism in a formerly devout colony.121

Toussaint did organize some semblance of payment to Dominicans whose crops he confiscated, and left his brother Paul to manage this affair and eventually to govern the whole capital region. He tried to moderate public relations with a Dominican populace that was uneasy at the least. However, he did convince – or, coerce – some troops and officers who he had known from his own service with Spain to stay on in his army, and shut down the flight of migrants to the best of his abilities. He also broadened enlistment of Dominicans for defense forces into a quasi-draft, and while he made promises of pay, few believed he could realize them.122 Toussaint’s regime in Santo Domingo had barely formed when a new powerplayer arrived on Hispaniola.

On 29 January 1802, barely a year since Toussaint had taken Santo Domingo, the black general and governor of the colony stood at the coast of the Samaná peninsula in northeastern Santo Domingo due to intelligence that he had received of a possible French expedition to curtail his authority. He was met with the sight of the approaching sails of some fifty ships, carrying what would total an

121 Cardinal Consalvi, Rome, 10 October 1802, ASV-NM, 202, 915.
122 Joaquín García to José Antonio Caballero, Madrid, 22 October 1803, AGMM-U, leg. 5650, exp. 4, fol. 8-13.
expeditionary force that eventually surpassed 40,000 of Napoléon’s finest troops, commanded by none other than his own brother-in-law, General Charles Leclerc. Most of these troops would never return home to France, part of the more than 70,000 troops that perished fighting for France to first protect slavery, then to secure liberty for all, and finally to reinstall slavery and reverse black power. General Leclerc would be one of these casualties, dying of disease in November 1802 after ten months on the island.\textsuperscript{123}

Nevertheless, in the interim Leclerc very effectively outflanked and outgunned Toussaint’s forces. Soon enough, Kerversau, who had very briefly served as an agent for the Republic in Santo Domingo, took the capital from Paul Louverture, Toussaint’s own brother. Paul then flipped to Leclerc’s side, much to Toussaint’s outrage. Kerversau then took Santiago without a fight and with the aid of Mauviel’s cajoling. And with that military action, the first formal representative of France assumed day-to-day management under the military rule of Leclerc.\textsuperscript{124} When Leclerc was preparing to depart France with his expeditionary force Napoléon had clarified to Spanish officials his intentions or rectifying and regularizing whatever disorders Toussaint had enacted upon Dominicans, and

\textsuperscript{123} Girard, \textit{Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon}, 1-5 and 224; Geggus, \textit{Haitian}, 25-27. King Carlos IV wrote directly to Napoléon to offer condolences for the loss of his brother-in-law Leclerc. Napoléon Bonaparte and Charles Maurice de Talleyrand to King Carlos IV, Paris, 23 Pluviôse an XI / 12 February 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 1626, exp. 33.

promised to properly complete the Treaty of Basel with a formal French administration. Neither France nor Spain acknowledged the completion of the treaty and transfer of the colony until the Leclerc expedition had undertaken its own governance of Santo Domingo.

During Kerversau’s forgettable year governing Santo Domingo, one of his least favorable acts of his year as governor was the punitive closing of Dominican churches because locals were still loathe to accept a new bishop of the Republic – that is, Mauviel. For Mauviel, the appearance of Leclerc, and Kerversau, was another opportunity to establish himself as a bishop in Santo Domingo. As conditions deteriorated in Saint-Domingue, Mauviel evacuated his post in the South, as did Adrien Cibot, who had served as the prelate in the North after returning from years of exile in North America. The Vatican was soon disappointed that Mauviel’s presence did little to stabilize the status of Dominican devotion.

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125 Charles Maurice de Talleyrand to Pedro Ceballos, Paris, 9 Brumaire an X / 9 November 1801, AHN-Estat, leg. 3391, exp. 8.

126 Lucien Bonaparte to Pedro Ceballos, Madrid, 6 Vendémiaire an X / 28 September 1801, AHN-Estat, leg. 3391, exp. 8; Manuel Godoy to Pedro Ceballos, Aranjuez, 9 May 1802, AHN-Estat, leg. 3391, exp. 8; Lucien Bonaparte to Pedro Ceballos, Aranjuez, 6 Germinal an IX / 27 March 1801, AHN-Estat, leg. 3391, exp. 8;


128 Berault-Bercastel, Historia general de la iglesia, Tomo VIII, 537-538.

129 Cardinal Consalvi, Rome, 15 November 1802, ASV-NM, 202, 1018.
The increased presence of French bureaucrats presented an opportunity for Dominican and Spanish parties to pursue legal issues. The paper trail of legal claims, account settlements, and criminal cases stemming from the roughly ten years of direct Spanish involvement in the Haitian Revolution stretched on for years after the French occupation of Santo Domingo, which itself led to an entirely new and separate round of inter-imperial proceedings. One such continued to be the 1794 theft of the royal treasury during the Spanish occupation of Fort Dauphin.\textsuperscript{130} The Atlantic scattering of exiles related to these cases made pursuing them even more difficult. One of the final political appearances of Jean-François, one of the major figures of the entire revolution, came from his exile in Cádiz and only arose due to his need to testify in one such court issue.\textsuperscript{131} This, one of his final governmental statements was a continuance of his concern for the integrity of his troops, who he claimed were not responsible for the loss of the royal treasury at Fort Dauphin, and were always loyal to Spain.\textsuperscript{132}

Biassou had already died in poverty in Florida. Jean-François’ reward for his remarkable service and dedication to Spain was a similar, albeit lengthier and

\textsuperscript{130} Pedro Xavier de Vera to Consejo de Estado, Madrid, 24 February 1803, AGI-SD, leg. 1035, no. 21.

\textsuperscript{131} Tomás de Monla to Miguel Cayatano Soler, Cádiz, 16 January 1801, AGI-SD, leg. 1035, no. 16. On the black auxiliaries’ migration to Cádiz: AGS-SGU, leg. 6973, exp. 43; AGI-SG, leg. 7161, exps. 32-33; AGI-Estado, leg. 3, exp. 10; AGS-SGU, leg. 7161, exp. 24; AGI-Estado, leg. 5B, exp. 176; AHN-Estado, leg. 3391, exp. 10.

\textsuperscript{132} Jean-François to Tomás de Monla, Cádiz, 16 January 1801, AGI-SD, leg. 1035.
depressing demise in Andalucía. Back across the Atlantic the former primary spiritual and political advisor of Jean-Francois was rebuilding his career. Like many other Dominicans who fled French rule, Father Vázquez had emigrated from Santo Domingo to Cuba. Though the black general and priest had wanted to continue serving king and country together, their separation became permanent. Instead, by 1803 Father Vázquez had become treasurer of the cathedral in Santiago de Cuba where he ministered to the numerous devout Dominican exiles who congregated in that city and across Cuba, all watching Santo Domingo with interest at this distance.

SPANISH EYES ON SANTO DOMINGO

The Dominican exiles watched the unfolding horror in Saint-Domingue with particular interest, and some even held unrealistic hopes that Spain could recover Santo Domingo amidst the chaos next door. To proceed with claims particular to the island, Spanish officials sent a special agent, Francisco Arango, to entreat with French officials in Saint-Domingue. Arango became perhaps the

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133 Geggus, Haitian, 196-199; Landers, Black Society in Spanish Florida, 133.


135 Marqués de Someruelos to Pedro Ceballos, “…comisión con que tiene determinado pase al Guarico el oidor honorario D. Francisco de Arango,” Havana, 23 February 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.
leading architect of Cuba’s sugar boom, which launched the island as the major global producer for the next century and beyond. This trip was certainly consequential to his treatises on Cuban agriculture. Yet only one of the charges of his mission was to reconnoiter the fallout of French weaknesses and black power for the growing Cuban plantocracy. A major irregularity was that French ships had been illicitly selling blacks from Saint-Domingue to Cuban planters. The crackdown by Napoléon against black rights in Saint-Domingue, and the plans to re-enslave black republican soldiers, provided a new opportunity for unscrupulous profiteering more brazen than the allegations of illegal slave trading by French officials against Dominicans. Cuban planters and Spanish officials largely wanted to avoid purchasing slaves that had experienced freedom and knew of universal promises of political rights to avoid subverting their own slave regime.

Arango also requested hundreds of thousands of pesos for the damages associated with the irregular and forcible takeover of Santo Domingo by Toussaint. Dominicans wanted easier movement to the Dominican side of the island, and

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136 María Dolores González-Ripoll and Izaskun Álvarez Cuartero, eds., Francisco Arango y la invención de la Cuba azucarera (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2009); Julio Travieso Serrano, El pensamiento económico de Francisco Arango y Parreño (Havana:Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1978).

137 Someruelos to Ceballos, Havana, 2 June 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1; Childs, Aponte, 28-91; Ferrer, Freedom’s Mirror, 63-74 and 160-164.
Spanish ships wanted to trade in Dominican ports. Covertly, Arango was instructed to inventory the morale of Dominicans left behind by the Spanish, to survey the condition of properties, and to review the quality of French governance in Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{138} When Arango arrived in Saint-Domingue in March 1803 the final months of the Haitian struggle for independence were approaching a fever pitch.\textsuperscript{139} He returned two months later with quite intriguing results.\textsuperscript{140} French officials headed by General Rochambeau had actually signed an accord with Arango, and basically apologized and admitted fault for Toussaint’s handling of the occupation of Santo Domingo, and promised to make the Spanish whole for the funds lost, provisions taken, and damages sustain during the Toussaint takeover.\textsuperscript{141}

Arango negotiated with Du-Raims aboard the \textit{Duquesne} in the harbor of Cap-Français, and also Rochambeau, about the thorny issue of around 500 troops who had served Spain but were forced by Toussaint to stay on the island. These troops had been put into service with appeals at the time to Spain’s alliance and Toussaint’s own security needs and had been dispersed widely across the island, including under the command of General Sabès and a detachment under

\textsuperscript{138} Someruelos to Arango, Havana, 5 March 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.
\textsuperscript{139} Someruelos to Ceballos, Havana, 17 March 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.
\textsuperscript{140} Someruelos to Ceballos, Havana, 26 May 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.
\textsuperscript{141} Someruelos to Ceballos, Havana, 2 June 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.
Sauvignon in Jacmel. Apparently only 150 of these troops had survived the two years after the Spanish departure, and the Spanish sought their return. Arango had wanted to visit Santo Domingo, but the only way to do so was via Port-au-Prince by sea, as overland routes were unsafe due to deadly warfare and ports were the only areas that the whites still held. However, reports suggested that the rebels had not penetrated the old Spanish side of the island. Nevertheless, poverty in Santo Domingo was rampant and the “poor Dominicans” were forced to guard the borders for the French. From the news that he had heard Arango was certain that many other Dominicans would prefer to leave the island. Commerce and agriculture across the island had almost entirely halted. During his stay in Port-au-Prince he met many displaced Dominicans, most of whom wanted to leave for Spanish domains. Rochambeau mentioned that Kerversau, the new French governor of Santo Domingo, was in the process of organizing a defense force of 2,000 Dominicans.142

Arango could not accurately calculate the significant losses to Santo Domingo. He said, “The plume falls from my hands when I try to begin the sad painting,” of what had befallen the island, and particularly the French side. His numbers showed that in 1788 he said there were 38-40,000 whites, 28,000 free

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142 Arango to Someruelos, Havana, 17 June 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1. Fort Dauphin, Cap-Français, Puerto Espada, Tortuga, Mole San Nicolas, Saint-Marc, Guanaba, Port-au-Prince, Léogânes, Jérémie, and Les Cayes were all port cities still held by whites.
people of color, 452,000 slaves, 793 sugar plantations, 3107 coffee plantations, 3150 indigo plantations, and 799 cotton plantations. In 1803 commerce was almost nil, just like the white population. Only minor sugar production from the Cul-de-Sac and coffee from Grand-Bois and Jérémie remained. Most properties were burned out, and Leclerc had failed miserably in his brutal attempt to reanimate exports. Instead, the massive French army that he commanded had been simply decimated by disease and the black rebels. The massive clandestine trade that once flowed from Saint-Domingue to Spanish colonies had almost entirely been replaced by Jamaica.\footnote{Arango to Someruelos, Havana, 17 June 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.}

General Boyer and Commissioner Dontrans had departed for France on 17 April. Rochambeau wanted to introduce “new blacks” to the island to work instead of the \textit{cultivateurs} who refused to subordinate. Only 14,000 French troops left. Aside from two black companies that remained pro-French in the Cul-de-Sac, all other blacks, including even women and children, had become avowed, obstinate rebels to the death. General Sabès, a respected commander in Guarico, had been a prisoner among the black rebels for two months, and he was convinced of their pleasure in wiping out whites. Some said there were 80,000 rebels, but numbers varied. Sabès speculated that 5/6 of the black rebels had perished in the
course of the war. Some thought only 10,000-30,000 rebels were actually well-armed fighters. These and other numbers offered by officials in conversation caused Arango to conclude that the French had actually very little intelligence on the state of the black rebels. General Cluset said that in North the “Congos” among the black population were eliminating “creoles.” More broadly, Arango explained that, “The black De-Salines (sic) was recognized as successor of Toussaint when he made the last insurrection public and divided the command of the colony among the rest of his generals… De-Salines established his headquarters in Gonaïves, and there subsists well-fortified, and with a corps of troops of 3,000-4,000 men.” In the South it was said that the blacks were governed almost independently by a talented mulatto named Pétion, who had once been a colonel of engineers for the Republic.\(^{144}\)

Arango could not believe the “atrocious” ruthlessness of the French. They killed all black prisoners without exception, which had been Leclerc’s policy. Prisoners were shot, stabbed, thrown into the sea, or worse. He learned of a female black prisoner having been put to the dogs, and that this was a regular form of execution. Also, the leader of a group of twelve insurgents who were captured had his eyes pulled out. Arango believed that these practices were simply

\(^{144}\) Arango to Someruelos, Havana, 17 June 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.
counterproductive, and thought that, “this war is interminable if they take from the rebels the hope of capitulation or pardon.” One French citizen in Saint-Domingue suggested that the subjugation of the blacks was impossible, and the French should instead try for a “chimeric project of union and commerce with them.” Arango thought the colony’s old productivity was lost forever, as was the war.145

He was more concerned about the black insurgents’ example to Spanish slaves, wondering if “these warriors of twelve years, already respected and feared by the soldiers of Bonaparte...[might] pass someday to our colonies to make our slaves adopt their disastrous maxims.” He feared a new era of black “filibusters and buccaneers” infesting coasts of Spanish colonies. Arango recognized an encroaching tide of abolitionism, including “The philanthropy of the Quakers who in North America have pursued the abolition of slavery, would not avoid support for those in Saint-Domingue to conquer their freedom.” The British, he thought, were maturing toward a project of abolition in their colonies, a possibility bandied about prominently in parliament. The British also wanted most to extend their commerce across the Caribbean, a plausible task considering their superior navy and manufacturing. He further lamented the longstanding Spanish preference for

145 Arango to Someruelos, Havana, 17 June 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1.
extracting precious metals rather than developing major agricultural regimes to rival Jamaica and old Saint-Domingue. He suggested limiting the importation of African slaves to Spanish ships exclusively to further profit from the buildup in slave labor that he suggest was necessary. His greatest fear was that “Cuba repeats the catastrophe” of Saint-Domingue. Independence and recognition of black insurgents might make this possibility even worse. He suggested supporting the “Spanish Dominicans” of the eastern part of the island, without hesitation, who he thought were neglected by the French and were a buffer on the island, even if they were technically allies.146

THE SPECTER OF HAITIAN INDEPENDENCE

Exiles from Santo Domingo throughout the Atlantic watched as French rule in Saint-Domingue careened toward total collapse in 1803. A brief flicker of optimism for France had come and gone in mid-1802 when Leclerc arrived with

146 Arango to Someruelos, Havana, 17 June 1803, AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1. Governor Someruelos of Cuba thought very creatively about the problem of freedom-loving black insurgents on a nearby island. He pondered having Spain offer them liberty in exchange for their settlement of unpopulated areas of the Spanish empire where they would not influence Spanish slaves, and where Spain either needed buffers or where white settlers had not survived. He thought that the British treaties with maroons in Jamaica could provide a model. The Darien, Gulf of Honduras, Acapulco, and Mosquito Coast were all locations that he considered. He even wondered if the war-savvy black insurgents settled the Californias if they might provide a buffer of frontier defense against anti-Spanish Indians. Previous attempts to settle Canarians, Gallegos, and Asturians in various under-populated regions of the empire had not really succeeded because, he thought, they did poorly in those climates. See: Someruelos, n.d., AHN-Estado, leg. 3395, exp. 1. These ideas were similar to previous imperial plans to relocate the Spanish black auxiliaries.
his massive force, then arrested Toussaint, and successfully reintegrated many of his most powerful black officers and regiments into the French army.

In Cádiz the retired black general Jean-François, roughly eight years after his own departure, watched as a new exile arrived in Andalucía.\textsuperscript{147} The talented black general Laplume had fought in the South for Toussaint and had skillfully routed Rigaud during the civil war.\textsuperscript{148} At the arrival of Leclerc, though, Laplume’s staunch loyalty to France prevailed, and he quickly turned against Toussaint and achieved significant victories in the South for the Republic. During the later war for independence he remained an intractable thorn in the side of Dessalines, Christophe, and Pétion in the South.\textsuperscript{149} Despite his undying loyalty to France, Rochambeau decided to strip black officers of authority in the South in favor of white leadership. Laplume still did not defect to the independence cause, despite the fact that his exile in May 1803 further divided black opinion in the South against Bonaparte and the French.\textsuperscript{150}

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\textsuperscript{147} Tomás de Monla to Pedro Ceballos, Cadiz, 6 September 1803, AHN-Estado, 5240, exp. 69; LeRoy to Tomás de Monla, 19 Fructidor an XI / 6 September 1803, AHN-Estado, 5240, exp. 69.


\textsuperscript{149} Fick, \textit{Making Haiti}, 211-216; Dubois, \textit{Avengers}, 269.

\textsuperscript{150} Girard, \textit{Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon}, 251.
\end{flushleft}
Likely out of a desire to keep black power from French shores, Laplume instead was sent to Cádiz as another imposition on their Spanish allies perhaps due to the residence of other retired black officers like Jean-François. When Laplume died in September 1803 the French consul in Andalucía leaned heavily upon local Spanish officials to approve and assist in undertaking a military and state funeral for the newly-arrived black general. Laplume was buried with a hero’s pomp and commemoration on Spanish soil.\(^{151}\) His name, unlike any prominent pro-Spanish black auxiliaries who died in Cádiz, appears on the local cemetery registry.\(^{152}\) Another exiled black general who had commanded Laplume had also died in the French Alps alone and in prison – Toussaint Louverture would never see the outcome of the Haitian Revolution.\(^{153}\) Shortly thereafter, the black revolutionary directed by Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Toussaint’s right-hand man, defeated French forces once and for all in November 1803, Dessalines issued the Haitian proclamation of independence in Gonaïves on 1 January 1804.\(^{154}\)

Jean-François, still in Cádiz, watched on with scoffing incredulity as his former subordinates Dessalines and Christophe arose to founding figures of a bold

\(^{151}\) Tomás de Monla to Pedro Cevallo, Cádiz, 6 September 1803, AHN-Estado, 5240, exp. 69; LeRoy to Tomás de Monla, 19 Fructidor an XI / 6 September 1803, AHN-Estado, 5240, exp. 69.

\(^{152}\) Geggus, Haitian, 294n.103.

\(^{153}\) Dubois, Avengers, 296-297.

nation of ex-slaves in a slaveholding hemisphere. Despite their victories and audacity, the retired black general who had directly helped start the revolution and was its leading figure for at least three years, was quite unimpressed with the talent at the helm of new Haiti. Briefly Spain considered resurrecting his career and charisma by returning him to the island as a more favorable leadership alternative to imperial order in the Caribbean than his old officer Dessalines. This plan never came even close to fruition.\textsuperscript{155}

The metamorphosis of Saint-Domingue, bastion of white plantocracy power, into Haiti, the first independent state in the Americas based on universal liberty, had nevertheless changed the world. The exceptional anti-imperial, anti-racist defiance of Haiti radiated throughout the Caribbean and across the Atlantic regardless of its deep domestic imperfections. It was an example of successful slave resistance that inspired revolts across the Americas, and served to show an alternate pathway of citizenship and rights for people of color.\textsuperscript{156}

The society most impacted by the advent of Haiti, and closest to its outward-reaching growing pains, was of course Santo Domingo, which by January 1804 had seen only two years of lackluster formal French management in the three


\textsuperscript{156} Geggus, ed., \textit{The Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World}; Geggus and Fiering, eds., \textit{The World of the Haitian Revolution}. 
years since Toussaint had invaded. Since the announcement of the Treaty of Basel in 1795 perhaps as many as 40,000 Dominicans had fled the looming French occupation, though such figures are difficult to calculate. The majority of these emigrants were white Dominicans from across the colony, but especially the capital. All Spanish bureaucrats and military personnel evacuated the colony. Perhaps Toussaint overestimated the export of Dominican slaves, or perhaps García underestimated it, but certainly hundreds if not thousands of slaves were made to leave Santo Domingo. From the maximum of 14,000 slaves that Sánchez Valverde estimated in the 1780s, it is unlikely that natural increase or small numbers of captives illicitly traded from Saint-Domingue mitigated an overall decline due to forced emigration, natural deaths, and manumissions, the latter of which already perplexed Spanish officials before the war began in Saint-Domingue. This population decline drastically remade Dominican demographics, creating an even larger free majority of color, with likely fewer overall slaves. The backfill of this population decline came from the humiliated French troops routed by Dessalines, Christophe, and Pétion.157

157 Juan Bosch, Composición social dominicana: Historia e interpretación (Santo Domingo: Alfa & Omega, 1970): 189-204; Moya Pons, Dominican Republic, 116; Girard, Slaves Who Defeated Napoléon, 329-343; Carlos Esteban Deive, Las emigraciones dominicanas a Cuba (1795-1808) (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1989); Sánchez Valverde, Idea del valor, 149-151.
One of these embarrassed French officers had been General Jean-Louis Ferrand, who had failed in his responsibilities to defend French positions around the town of Monte Cristi and was driven out by Dessalines. He took refuge southward across the island in Santo Domingo. Upon arrival, he realized that he outranked the existing French administrator there, Kerversau, and thus rallied the support of troops for his removal. After the brief occupation by Toussaint’s forces in 1801, followed by the transitional rule of Kerversau in 1802, Ferrand’s arrival in 1803 introduced a more lasting French presence to Santo Domingo, which was accompanied by French troops that had evacuated Jacmel and the Cul-de-Sac. In further retribution against the uncooperative Dominican populace, and to simply raise much needed cash, French rulers initiated a fire sale of church properties in Santo Domingo, and even utilized a special property broker based in nearby Danish colonies.\textsuperscript{158}

These French troops left behind remaining whites in what soon became Haiti. They were subsequently eliminated by Dessalines as a finale to the war of extermination commenced by Leclerc and Rochambeau. Only shortly after the first anniversary of Haitian independence, Dessalines decided to look eastward as Toussaint once had, only on this occasion he sought to destroy the lingering French

presence on the island rather than to impose it upon Santo Domingo as Toussaint had. Thus, under the governance of France the colony of Santo Domingo was fully exposed to the anti-French violence foundational to the liberatory struggle of Haitian independence. This siege only lifted when Dessalines, having sighted French sails on the sea off of Santo Domingo. Fearing an all-out French invasion, he abandoned his Santo Domingo campaign and retreated westward to defend Haiti.159

Jean-François, the early engine of revolution, died in 1805 just as Dessalines became Emperor Jacques I of Haiti. However, by 1806 Dessalines had been assassinated, and the new state of Haiti disintegrated into divisions crudely congruous to the civil war between Toussaint and Rigaud, only with Christophe and Pétion claiming the North and South, respectively. While the projects of building black states that Christophe and Pétion attempted far exceeded any ambition of Jean-François, the promise of rights for all in an ex-slave society became mired in over a decade of heavy-handed personalist politics at the expense of a majority of Haitians.160


160 Geggus, Haitian, 199-200; Gaffield, Haitian Connections, 93-181. It was Jean-François, more so than Toussaint, Dessalines, or others, who lived on in the Spanish Caribbean as the emblem of slave insurrection and black empowerment. See: Childs, Aponte, 163-168.
CONCLUSION

Dominicans unhappy with the eventuality of French rule had little recourse to resist the Republic. When the War of the South erupted in June 1799, the jockeying parties of color headed by Toussaint and Rigaud in Saint-Domingue not only superseded white French control, but infiltrated Santo Domingo in attempts to secure new lines of support and supplies. Those mostly well-off Dominicans capable of fleeing did so in the thousands, and many took their slaves along with them. The majority who remained did so with lingering fears of what direct French rule would mean for their lives, both earthly and eternal.161

Dominicans now had no recourse against French attempts to “frenchify” them, nor to stop the occupation by an ex-slave army led by a traitor to the Spanish cause in Toussaint. Though specifics were murky at the time, astute observers in Santo Domingo realized that black power in Saint-Domingue was pushing the colony increasingly closer to independence from France. Furthermore, with the ascension of Napoléon Bonaparte to power in 1799, the revolution had clearly taken two keys turns that cooled radicalism in France and steered Saint-Domingue’s local black leadership into direct, open warfare with the empire. This culminated in Napoléon’s attempts to reinstate slavery and his reinstallation of

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whites to colonial power in Saint-Domingue, which undercut much of the reasons that some Dominicans of color favored French rule in the first place. When the French finally did occupy Santo Domingo at the outset of the nineteenth century their officials closed churches and sold church properties, all to the great disaffection of new Dominican “citizens” of a Republic drifting into the dictatorial clutch of Napoléon.¹⁶²

All of this transpired before black French forces under Toussaint marched onto Santo Domingo to force an irregular invasion of the Spanish side in 1801 due to Toussaint’s own strategic military concerns. Even then, official French management of Santo Domingo did not formally commence until the arrival of the French agent Kerversau there in 1802, approaching seven years since the Treaty of Basel. The prospect of black invasion that terrified many elites in Santo Domingo transpired, though Toussaint’s presence did not inspire mass slave uprisings, nor result in absent labor from plantations as they had feared. Toussaint needed the labor too, as did ensuing French governors, much to the disillusionment of locals

of color who expected the more robust abolition that Roume and Sonthonax had promised them in an earlier, more optimistic time.163

With Haitian independence, the presence of incompetent and antagonistic French rulers, and the siege of Dessalines to drive France off the island once and for all, Dominican society endured the occupation of a France in metropolitan transition and imperial morass. Dominicans were faced with a choice of what aspects of their Spanish heritage to preserve – religion, monarchism, and racial restrictions – where to preserve it – on Hispaniola and in exile – and how to do so in a new Caribbean epoch with an unparalleled and increasingly international example of black power. This era remade the colony with a more robust majority of color in Santo Domingo through migration. More dramatically, it also precipitated a widespread rejection of French rule from many sectors of Dominican society, not just a white elite, which would fester into open rebellion against France in the years to come.

EPILOGUE

FROM SANTO DOMINGO TO THE “SPANISH PART OF HAYTI”: DOMINICAN BELIEFS ON NATIONAL BELONGING

While French forces were able to endure the siege of Santo Domino by Dessalines and Christophe in 1805, the majority of the colony suffered as Haitian soldiers attacked French positions and wrought devastation upon Dominican towns. Several key cities, including Santiago, La Vega, Cotuí, and Moca were nearly destroyed by arson and hundreds died. The Haitian army intended to obliterate the last bastions of French influence on the island, not to destroy Dominicans. In any case, this invasion illuminated French deficiencies even further in Santo Domingo, and for the mostly elite families who collaborated with French forces to fight Haitian advances the Dessalines march on the capital was a clarion call to mistrusting Haiti. Yet, on the other hand, the massive Dominican cattle industry was still dependent upon sending livestock westward to Haitian markets, as it once had to supply Saint-Domingue. When Ferrand attempted to end this and all trade with Haiti, many rural producers beyond the small urban pockets of French power were livid. This population became exposed to violence due to French rule, to the enslaved who never experienced once-vaulted French
liberties, and to the free majority of color who fell under Napoleonic racism. Furthermore, some accused Ferrand himself of overseeing the kidnaping of free citizens of Haiti for enslaved labor in Santo Domingo, the same offense that Toussaint had accused Spanish officials of in 1801. For those who remained devout, the constant French antagonism against Catholicism continued to incite frustrations.

Finally, the 1808 invasion of Spain by Napoleon witnessed a massive backlash of anti-French demonstrations across the Spanish Caribbean, and including in Santo Domingo. The French forced King Carlos IV to abdicate, and his son the heir apparent, Fernando VII, effectively became a prisoner of in France under Napoleon. Juan Sánchez Ramírez, one of the many Dominicans who had fled to exile Puerto Rico, returned home to his family’s failing commerce in cattle. With support from Governor Toribio Montes of Puerto Rico and from the Dominican exile community there, the mulatto Sánchez traveled the colony covertly conjuring popular support to end the French occupation. In exchange, Sánchez promised to send sufficient supplies of mahogany to Puerto Rico to cover war expenditures. Simultaneously he sought munitions and geopolitical cover from the two relatively new rulers of a divided Haiti. At that time Alexander Pétion presided over a republic of the south based in Port-au-Prince, and Henri Christophe ruled over what became a kingdom in the north with its capital in the
former Cap-Français, which had been renamed Cap-Haïtien. Both were eager to supply guns and cash to rid the island of the French. The British also provided critical naval support during a siege of Santo Domingo that ultimately ousted French power from the capital, and did so in return for free trade across Santo Domingo and lax taxation on British imports.

In contrast, Spain had just become a Bonapartist outpost and anti-French, Bourbon loyalists could provide no tangible support to Sánchez and his cause. For the second time in not even four years, residents of the capital Santo Domingo were besieged because of their French occupiers. After they and the French troops tired of eating mules, rats, pigeons, and even leather, the city fell to the British in July 1809. The rallied Dominicans forces in the interior under Sánchez had already struck a pivotal military defeat against Ferrand and the French army at Palo Hincado in November 1808. After this defeat Ferrand committed suicide in disgrace.¹ This ouster by Sánchez ended the protracted French demise on Hispaniola. This unraveling of French colonialism began with slave revolts in fields of northern Saint-Domingue in 1791, and ended with Ferrand’s suicide seventeen years later in a field in eastern Santo Domingo amidst Dominican insurrection.

¹ Moya Pons, Dominican Republic, 110-116; Juan Sánchez Ramírez, Diario de la Reconquista (Santo Domingo: Editora Montalvo, 1957).
With other pivotal chronologies in mind, one of the final acts of the French government in Santo Domingo was to issue an 1809 almanac. It began by marking the thousands of years since the death of Abraham, the construction of Solomon’s Temple, and the birth of Christ. The first Olympiad had been held 2,584 years prior, the invention of gunpowder had occurred 471 years prior, the arrival of Columbus in the Americas had happened 317 years prior. It marked the more than three centuries of Santo Domingo’s existence as a Spanish colony, and the brief seven-year presence of French rule, only five of which had been formally under the Napoleonic empire. An anonymous but dutiful French official wrote marginalia on the Dominican uprising, French defeats, and French surrender. Ferrand’s suicide was one of the most notable events printed regarding the preceding year. Of note, one lieutenant named Emiglio Pezzi, an Italian-born officer in French service, was marked as a deserter among many other officers who were listed as dead, captured, or disappeared. He had, apparently, defected to the Dominican insurgents, as had many others. The almanac listed the long-departed Mauviel as the current archbishop appointed, though no Dominicans recognized him as such. Perhaps as few as a dozen priests remained in Santo Domingo under the French, and the religious orders had all also fled along with other clergy. The ecclesiastics staffing the cathedral were locals, with the exception of a priest exiled from Jacmel who conducted services in French. One prominent ex-Spanish
official, José Labastida, was listed as a judge for the French and a municipal administrator. After the French officials fled the island, the Dominican conquerors had to staff governmental positions for which many had no experience in the vacuum of Spanish power. Also, reintegrating Dominicans who collaborated with the French such as Labastida, absorbing French-influenced defectors such as Pezzi, re-inspiring Dominicans whose piety may have dwindled with the decline of Catholic hegemony across the colony, and managing a majority of color that had experienced the promises and failures of the revolutionary era all became major social challenges for this makeshift government.

SPANISH RECOLONIZATION, DOMINICAN DISSENT

With King Ferdinand VII off the throne in Madrid, the Spanish colonies including the newly-reconquered Santo Domingo, were loosely managed by the loyalist Junta in Sevilla. The colony was nevertheless financially insolvent, and the death of Sánchez only thrust the colony into greater instability. One major attempt at mediation was to re-evangelize the entire Dominican population that had lived under French imperial control. The French converted the abandoned Convent of San Francisco into an armed garrison. For both symbolic and strategic value, they

2 “Almanach Colonial de Santo Domingo, Pour l’Année 1809,” BHFIC, B-1a23.
had mounted a large artillery piece onto the chapel roof.\textsuperscript{3} At the first sign of the occupation ending, many monks petitioned to return to minister to the masses and restore Spanish spirituality. The successful revitalization of Spanish colonialism in Santo Domingo was predicated upon religious works of cultural reform. A group of Capuchins who had first worked in Louisiana prior to lengthy service in Santo Domingo wrote from exile in Jalapa, Mexico. In 1810 metropolitan officials expressly encouraged the reestablishment of the convents and seminaries and the recruitment of friars to Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{4} These Capuchins offered to spiritually reawaken Dominicans who, they feared, had succumbed to secularism and republicanism after seven year of impious French rule. These monks claimed that their earlier service in francophone Louisiana had equipped them to deal with French partisans who remained in Santo Domingo, and apparently their offer was accepted.\textsuperscript{5} By 1813 the Convent of San Francisco had again returned to the rhythm of the Franciscan order.\textsuperscript{6} Thereafter, the Poor Clares, a group of exiled nuns, wrote from exile in Havana asking to return as well.\textsuperscript{7} Cases like these, and subsequent responses to them, reveal the inextricable cultural and religious relationship

\textsuperscript{3} Juan Sánchez Ramírez, 17 July 1810, AGI-SD, leg. 1041, no. 18.
\textsuperscript{4} Consejo de Indias, Sevilla, 3 April 1810, AGI-SD, leg. 1041.
\textsuperscript{5} Fray Pedro Zamora, 24 September 1808, AGI-SD, leg. 1112.
\textsuperscript{6} Jose de Limontas, Cadiz, 31 March 1813, AGI-SD, leg. 1041.
\textsuperscript{7} September 1817, AGI-Ultramar, 132, no. 23.
between Spanish loyalty and Catholic piety, which had a long-lasting impact of
Dominican culture.

Such re-indoctrination could not come fast enough for the newly-formed
Spanish recolonization managed in effect by the Dominican insurgents.
Conspiracies and coups against the Spanish began almost immediately, and
almost always bore some link to the Haitian side of the island. Despite having
granted liberty to some Dominican slaves who fought against France, Sánchez and
his new pro-Spanish government continued to support slavery. Spanish
recolonization failed to soothe whatever seething anti-French sentiments stirred
Dominicans into actions. Disaffected, well-placed minor officials, such as the
deserter Pezzi, plotted an insurrection that would rely upon Haitian aid to oust
Spanish rule once again. Involved in this coup were several veterans of the
legendary black auxiliaries and, perhaps, even some maroons who may have been
from Maniel. The black officer Santiago Foló, who had once fought under Jean-
François and Biassou, was a key conspirator, as was the ever-present Pablo Alí.
Conspirators also included a local elite enraged by Sánchez, and Venezuelan-born
partisans influenced by independence discourses percolating from the Latin
American mainland. Ultimately, the coup failed and the key conspirators were
executed. Nevertheless, their murky preferences for Pétion and the southern
Haitian state illuminated an ally for Dominican dissent. Alí, who almost certainly
knew of the plot and never revealed it, acquitted himself yet again and continued to serve Spain.8

Over the ensuing years the Haitian model of black citizenship became more appealing to disaffected Dominicans of color, particularly after the new 1812 constitutional monarchy in Spain decreed by the Cortes de Cádiz, which technically governed Santo Domingo, extended full Spanish citizenship to colonial residents. This included those of indigenous descent, but not of African descent, and therefore the majority of Dominicans. White Dominicans celebrated this new constitution to popular consternation.9 Instead, a Dominican majority gradually came to associate the promise of freedom, rights, racial equality, and national belonging with being Haitian citizens. This evolution of cultural politics to a post-emancipation, post-colonial world was less abstract in Santo Domingo than for people of color elsewhere. The Dominican polity became a colorful palette of loyalties, visually manifested in racial divisions and national flags. This spectrum of sovereignty increasingly bypassed old metropolitan affiliations for more radical local configurations.

For example, in 1813 in the far eastern town of Higüey a minor official

8 Eller, “All Shall Be Equal.”
uncovered a plot of “French mulattoes” in the area who he said were attempting to oust Spain in a colony-wide uprising to align with Haiti.\textsuperscript{10} Allegedly a slave had revealed this secret in exchange for a shot of rum and a bit of cash, and this slave claimed that letters had circulated from Port-au-Prince around Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{11} The specific Dominican named in the warrant was Dusan Montas, who had facilitated conspiratorial meetings. “Dusan,” quite an atypical name in Spanish, was possibly a nickname fashioned after Toussaint Louverture.\textsuperscript{12} The investigation of this “seditious and revolutionary voice” tantalized the colony.\textsuperscript{13} Free Dominicans of color José Castro, Antonio Oviedo, and Casimiro Castillo all had prior knowledge of the alleged plot as their occupations and racial status gave them greater social proximity to accused Haitian mulattoes who were themselves small-scale merchants who traded across the island.\textsuperscript{14} Marie-Claire Moré, a middle-aged woman of color,\textsuperscript{15} had hosted itinerant merchants François LaPlen

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\textsuperscript{11} Bartolo Rijo, “Orden del Alcalde,” 9 February 1813, Archivo General de la Nación Dominicana (AGN)-Archivo Real Higüey (ARH), 4, leg. 26R, exp. 8. The town was Higüey.


\textsuperscript{13} José Garrido, “Averiguaciones,” 13 February 1813, AGN-ARH, 3, leg. 11A, exp 297.

\textsuperscript{14} Juan Pedro Estudillo, José de Castro, Casimiro del Castillo, and Antonio Oviedo, “Testigos,” 13 and 23 February and 29 March 1813, AGN-ARH, 3, leg. 11A, exp. 297.

\textsuperscript{15} Marie-Claire More, “Testigos,” 8 March 1813, AGN-ARH, 3, leg. 11A, exp. 297.
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and Jean Riche. These men had traveled with suspicious cargoes late at night.\textsuperscript{16} Moré then betrayed Philippe Jeriso, Fanin Pilie, and Jacques Tibney – “French mulattoes” – to the officials. They had once been soldiers in Spanish service, perhaps in the black auxiliaries. Their implication in the apparent plot stunned officials.\textsuperscript{17} They had all met at Moré’s residence, perhaps to draw less attention by using a woman’s home. There the Dominican free black Dusan Montas and other locals learned about Haiti and conspired to stage an uprising.\textsuperscript{18} Governor Urrutia, who had succeeded the recently-deceased Sanchez, evicted all “French mulattoes” from the region.\textsuperscript{19} Only weeks before the 1813 incident an arrest order circulated for Domingo Ramos, a twenty-year old Dominican slave who also spoke Spanish poorly, had braided hair, and was accused of organizing a revolt in the north.\textsuperscript{20} Pétion and Christophe had turned their ambitions eastward, and their agents competed for Dominican loyalties, an extension of Haitian civil divides.\textsuperscript{21} Dominicans had easy access to smuggled constitutions, speeches, and laws from

\textsuperscript{16}François LaPlen and Jean Riche, “Testigos,” 29 March 1813, AGN-ARH, 3, leg. 11A, exp. 297.
\textsuperscript{17}Philippe Jeriso, Jacques Tibney, Fanin Pilie, 29 March 1813, AGN-ARH, 3, leg. 11A, exp. 297.
\textsuperscript{19}José Nuñez de Cáceres, “Auto,” 14 February 1813, AGN-ARH, 3, leg. 11A, exp. 297.
\textsuperscript{20}Gregorio Morel de Portes, “Orden de Aprehension,” 20 November 1812, AGN-ARH, 4, leg. 26R, exp. 7.
\textsuperscript{21}Francisco Caballero to Secretario de Estado, 28 December 1811, AGI-SD, leg. 1042, exp. 7.
Haiti. In 1811 officials had also uncovered two other pro-Haitian plots. One was headed by Dominican José Leocadio, and a separate conspiracy emerged in Samaná. The intensity of pro-Haitian popular dissent only deepened in years to come.

Furthermore, given the chaos in Spain the government in Santo Domingo could not receive much imperial support, nor could they export cash crops for profit. Devastation and internal dislocation had further eroded economic activity. The strongest economic connection for Santo Domingo was actually Haitian markets, for which Spanish administrators made exceptions to formal attempts to exclude the divided black state of Pétion and Christophe. Particularly in the South, Pétion offered safe haven to a range of revolutionaries from South America who posed threats to Spanish imperial power in the Americas, such as Simón Bolívar. These agents of subversion also operated into Spanish Santo Domingo, which became a theatre of operations of independence struggles. With lack of protection from Spain, Dominican elites considered the possibilities of breaking with pain to

22 “Nota de los papeles que remita desde la bahía de Santo Domingo el comandante del bergantín Perignon, interceptados en la goleta danesa Luisa, Capitan Pierre Freer,” Madrid, 12 March 1817, AGI-Estado, leg. 4, n. 13; Carlos de Urrutia to Juan Antonio Aríban, 30 January 1817, AGN-José Gabriel García, 4, 12, c. 42, exp. 6, fol. 18; Sebastian Kindelan to Secretario de Estado, 26 March 1820, AGI-Estado, leg. 12, n.94.


24 José Nuñez de Cáceres to Consejo de Indias, 11 December 1811, AGI-SD, leg. 1017, exp. 8.
seek out their own security, not only to define the terms of separation from Spain and the postcolonial world, but to inoculate the Dominican body politic from the increasing encroachment of Haiti. Increasingly, Pétion not only sided with South American independence projects, he viewed Spain and officials in Santo Domingo as allies of Christophe, his rival. In 1816 Pétion supported the infiltration of one Fermin Nuñez of Caracas, a pro-Pétion and pro-Bolívar agent who attempted to conspire with disaffected Dominicans to stage an independence war. While this plot also failed, one of the residents that this agent tried to attract was yet again Pablo Ali, along with many other troops of color in the colony. Upon Pétion’s death in 1818, his acolytes framed his accolades to include him as the co-founder of Haiti with Dessalines, and also the co-liberator of Spanish America with Bolívar, who they claimed had himself compared the President of Haiti to George Washington. He never saw the liberation of Spanish America, but perhaps attempted to oversee it directly in Santo Domingo.

INTO INDEPENDENCE

His successor, Jean-Pierre Boyer, was able to unify Haiti in 1820 when

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26 “Testimonio de la causa seguida contra Fermin Nuñez por el delito de sublivacion,” 1817, AGI-SD, leg. 1001; Consejo de Indias, May-June 1818, AGI-SD, leg. 1001.

27 “A la plus grande gloire d’Alexandre Pétion,” 1818, BHFIC (manuscript copy).
Henri Christophe faced unpopularity among his subjects and officers, likely suffered a stroke, and killed himself. That unification was what his mentor could never accomplish, and now Boyer could ponder Pétion’s other dreams of anti-imperialism and island-wide solidarity. Boyer also learned of a new French plot to launch a recolonization project through Santo Domingo. He clearly understood Dominican security as a Haitian interest. From this premise Boyer also continued building popular Dominican support for Haiti by reminding his neighbors of the hardships of French rule, and stressed their common interests in commerce and co-fraternity, rather than conflict. Governor Kindelán, the new Spanish manager in Santo Domingo, was simply outmanned and outmatched. By this time the Dominican population was not only as low as perhaps 60,000, only a quarter of its residents were white. Lack of Spanish support, lack of Spanish competence, and lack of Spanish security all combined for autonomous thinking, although Iberian religiosity permeated popular culture. Those “rustic people” who Spanish officials appreciated for having ushered out the French began to consider ousting the Spanish in favor of Haiti.28

28 Gobernacion de Ultramar, 4 July 1821, AGI-SD, 970, no. 4; Palacio to Ultramar, Santo Domingo, 31 August 1821, AGI-SD, 970; Ministerio de la Guerra to Gobernacion de Ultramar, Madrid, 21 October 1821, AGI-SD, 970; Gobernacion de Ultramar to Ministerio de la Guerra, Madrid, 7 July 1821, AGI-SD, 970; “Estado de la poblacion de la parte española de Santo Domingo...,” Santo Domingo, 29 June 1820, AGI-SD, 970; Prophète Daniel, Ichar, and Monpoint to Sebastian Kindelan, 12 October 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 1.
Though Boyer denied his complicity, a Haitian colonel named Dezir Dalmassi even appeared in Dominican border towns at this time meeting with Dominicans interested in Haitian unification. Kindelán fully realized that the populace had largely turned against him. Boyer circulated texts throughout the colony. In the capital, a small, mostly white clique of professionals pondered Bolívar-style managed republicanism and independence from Spain and had founded “patriotic societies.” In response to both threats officials founded the *Telegrafo Constiticional Dominicano*, a pro-Spanish newspaper. Its first issue decried the need for better political policing. Kindelán even tried to explain the Spanish ideals of liberty and equality to the masses, and asked priests to do the same from pulpits. He tried heroically to explain away the exclusion from citizenship for people of African descent, and that strife between whites, mulattoes, and blacks was a social ill which could produce only revolts and unrest as in the recent past. Meanwhile, the governor pleaded with Haitian officials for friendship and

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29 Joaquin Auduase to Governacion de Ultramar, Santo Domingo, 6 April 1820, AGI-SD, 970; José Lasala to Kindelan, Las Matas de Farfán, 5 December 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 5; Kindelan to Lasala, Santo Domingo, 10 December 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 6; Pablo Baez to Kindelan, Azua, 8 December 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 7; Domingo Perez Guerra to Kindelan, Neiba, 9 December 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 11.

30 Gobernacion de Ultramar, Madrid, 6 November 1821, AGI-SD, 970.

31 Kindelan to Ultramar, Santo Domingo, 27 June 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 20.

32 Kindelan to Fidelisimos Naturales y Habitantes de La Española, Santo Domingo, 10 June 1820, AGI-SD, 970.
cooperation, and the foment of independence sentiments.  

This came to no avail. No longer were isolated conspirators leading this charge, but whole towns heeded Haitian calls. Others Haitian agents won over Dominican militia loyalties as early as November 1820, when Boyer promised that he preferred to send his constitution to Santo Domingo rather than his army. Azua, Las Matas de Farfan, Neiba, and San Juan de la Maguana began to tip toward Haitian annexation.34 Officials in Santo Domingo begged “Spanish Dominicans” for their loyalty, though many had started to consider themselves as something else.35 One of the major Dominican figures that these agents targeted was against Pablo Alí. They called him a natural Haitian, and promised him peace and prosperity for his allegiance. In addition, they proposed Dominicans could send their own locally-selected representatives to the Haitian national legislature.36 Dominicans of color were not the only people looking westward with optimism. Apparently dozens of Puerto Rican slaves had made canoes and paddled to Santo Domingo with the express hope of reaching freedom in Haiti.37

33 Kindelan to Prophète Daniel, Ichar, and Monpoint, Santo Domingo, 4 November 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 2.
34 Ysnardi to Pablo Baez, San Juan de la Maguana, 9 November 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 24. Agents also operated in Puerto Plata: Alejandro Infante to Kindelan, Santiago, 16 December 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 16; Kindelan to Infante, Santo Domingo, 24 December 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 17.
35 Kindelan to Ayuntamiento de Neiba, Santo Domingo, AGI-SD, 970, no. 14.
36 Ysnardi to Pablo Alí, San Juan de la Maguana, 9 November 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 25.
37 Kindelan to Ultramar, Santo Domingo, 17 May 1821, AGI-SD, 970.
As a demonstration of goodwill and efforts at piety, Haitian generals and Boyer asked the Dominican church to send priests to minister to the Haitian populace.\textsuperscript{38} This did not assuage officials in Santo Domingo, but perhaps the Dominican populace. They sent priests to the North of Haiti, perhaps where Boyer most wanted them to counteract the stronger influence of vodou in the region.\textsuperscript{39} By 1821 Boyer insisted he knew nothing of rumors about an invasion, all the while pro-Haitian Spanish speakers from the west mixed among the Dominican populace.\textsuperscript{40} Proclamations against Haitian influence stirred little loyalty to Spain.\textsuperscript{41} White Dominicans who had supported Spanish recolonization and governance were severely disappointed, and in the capital they increasingly voiced their qualms. A great deal of their angst was due to Spanish malfeasance in warding off Haitian intrigues.\textsuperscript{42} King Fernando VII, who had been restored to the throne in late 1813, feared the ambitions of Boyer. However, he was powerless to do anything about it, and was more occupied with major wars in Mexico and across

\textsuperscript{38} Pedro Varela to Kindelan, Santo Domingo, 8 December 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 3; Kindelan to Pedro Varela, Santo Domingo, 9 December 1820, AGI-SD, 970, no. 4.

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{El Duende}, no. 10, 24 June 1821, AGI-SD, 970; “Apologia,” Pedro Valera, Santo Domingo, 1821, AGI-SD, 970.

\textsuperscript{40} Domingo Perez Guerra to Sebastian Kindelan, Neiba, 1 January 1821, AGI-SD, 970, no. 22.

\textsuperscript{41} “Manifiesto de la correspondencia entre el gobierno de esta parte Española y el de la vecina de la Republica de Hayti sobre la verdadera o falsa mission del teniente coronel Dezir Dalmassi,” Sebastian Kindelán, 10 January 1821, AGI-SD, leg. 970.

\textsuperscript{42} Sebastian Kindelan, Felipe Davila, Jose Basera, Juan Uri, Antonio Pineda, Antonio Martinez de Valdes, and Francisco Brenes to Ultramar, Santo Domingo, 16 January 1821, AGI-SD, 970, no. 794.
Toward the end of 1821 this turmoil boiled over, as anonymous white independence sympathizers in the capital began to contact South American anti-imperialist leaders such as Bolívar. The appeal of linking with Venezuela and Gran Colombia came in no small part due to pamphlets sent by the “Caracas native to his Dominican compatriots,” which promised the integration of clergy into independence struggles. He promised them that the “Spanish part of Hayti” could thrive economically, and needed someone like “Tupac Amaru I” to expunge Iberian injustices, or “Washington in the north” to extoll civic virtue. This Venezuelan suggested that Haiti could help Dominican independence, and offer mutual defense, as part of a cooperative but separated island. This proactive step was, he suggested, the best way to avoid slave insurrection and black power in Santo Domingo. Some Dominicans read these thoughts quite intently. For example, at some point in 1821 the ambitious attorney José Nuñez de Cáceres, who in 1798 had successfully defended Pablo Alí from charges of treason, was demoted in the colonial hierarchy after decades of service. Nuñez de Cáceres became one

43 Gobernacion de Ultramar to Jefe Politico de Santo Domingo, Madrid, 25 January 1821, AGI-SD, 970.

44 Pascual Real to Ultramar, Santo Domingo, 15 November 1821, AGI-SD, 970, no. 4.

45 “Carta de un Caraqueño a Sus Compatriotas de Santo Domingo,” Puerto Rico, 19 April 1821, AGI-SD, 970.
of these critical anti-Spanish white conspirators in the capital.⁴⁶

Amid this ferment, pro-independence partisans near Monte Cristi and Dajabon asked for Haitian protection and hoped to rouse popular support for their project in November 1821. They failed.⁴⁷ Haitian sources believed that the leader of this opaque attempt, named Amarante, had raised the Haitian flag out of interest for joining the Republic.⁴⁸ With mounting mistrust of Spanish officials, Boyer’s own interest for Haiti came into conflict with South American revolutionaries that he and his predecessor Pétion had supported. However, before he could take action on 1 December 1821, Nuñez de Cáceres and a cadre of disaffected whites in the capital proclaimed the “Independent State of the Spanish Part of Hayti” and sought affiliation with Gran Colombia ruled by Bolivar. This group sought a treaty of mutual defense with Haiti, but not a federation. Their actions were as much to oust Spain as they were to secure the continuity of their control in an independent Dominican society, apart from the racial egalitarianism of their Haitian neighbors. Their constitution sanctified the role of the church, it also defined their own terms of liberty, but made no mention of slavery.⁴⁹

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⁴⁶ “Num. del Sec. 1003, el ministerio de gracia y justicia…,” Santo Domingo, 1821, AGI-SD, 970.
⁴⁷ Pascual Real, Gobernacion de Ultramar, Liverpool, 24 January 1822, AGI-SD, 970, no. 8; Pascual Real to Gobernacion de Ultramar, Santo Domingo, 23 November 1821, AGI-SD, 970.
⁴⁸ “La Concordia diario histórico político y literario: Gazeta del Gobierno de Hayti Francés,” Port-au-Prince, 23 December 1821, AGI-SD, 970, no. 33.
⁴⁹ “Acta Constitutiva del Gobierno Provisional del Estado Independiente de la Parte Española de
In 1821 Pablo Alí, by then an officer formally in Spanish service since 1793, applied for Spanish citizenship. He cataloged his illustrious service, dating from the Haitian Revolution through his work in subduing many of the conspiracies of the 1810s. Despite skill, bravery, and respect from white officials, the loyal Alí was denied citizenship. In 1821 the last pillars of Spanish power in Santo Domingo, such as Alí, collapsed. After his citizenship denial, he actively supported independence, albeit the version proposed by Nuñez de Cáceres and not Haiti. It is difficult to speculate as to why he supported Nuñez de Cáceres, but it could have stemmed from his appreciation for the attorney’s help in getting acquitted of treason years before, and/or because he also supported local rule and Spanish traditions. Alí may have been loyal to Spain up until Nuñez de Cáceres himself showed him the papers that denied his and his officers’ requests for citizenship. Perhaps he even suggested to the black troops that “Spanish Hayti” would address slavery. He and his troops then helped Nuñez de Cáceres expel Pascual Real, the governor at the time, to Great Britain at the point of bayonets. Though basically compelled to do so, the then-Archbishop of Santo Domingo, Pedro Valera, was

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50 Deive, La esclavitud del negro en Santo Domingo (1492-1844), Tomos I & II; García, Compendio de la historia de Santo Domingo, Tomo II. Santo Domingo: Imprenta García Hermanos, 1894; Geggus, Haitian Revolutionary Studies, 2002.

51 Pascual Real, Gobernacion de Ultramar, Liverpool, 24 January 1821, AGI-SD, 970, no. 8.

52 Jose Nunez de Caceres to Joaquin Morell, Santo Domingo, 6 December 1821, AGI-SD, 970.
loathe to swear fidelity to the new government. He nevertheless wanted to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, and did not want to make the clergy a target, so he cooperated. Many priests simply became quiet royalists.\textsuperscript{53} Alí got his citizenship, albeit in a state that barely lasted two months, and barely controlled just the capital city. Unflattering portrayals of Nuñez de Cáceres depicted him as insecure due to his modest family origins and constant agitation against peninsular Spaniards who were less intelligent than him, but more cultured and therefore favored by the government. Some reported that he had slipped into fanaticism, and for others he had suffered a nervous breakdown. As much for political reasons, his erratic behavior alienated him from the populace.\textsuperscript{54}

In December 1821, the same month in which the new state arose in Santo Domingo, the Haitian press commented on its peculiar association with Gran Colombia, which at a great distance, would be unable to assist the new state (which the Haitian newspaper called the Dominican Republic to distinguish “Spanish Hayti” from the Republic of Haiti). The newspaper asked Dominicans to, ““remember the support that the Haitians have sent them on other occasions to

\textsuperscript{53} Pedro Valera, Santo Domingo, 18 December 1821, AGI-SD, 970.

\textsuperscript{54} “2.a Parte, Expediente sobre la reclamacion de la parte española de la isla de Santo Domingo,” Felipe Castro to Primer Secretario del Despacho de Estado, 9 July 1824, AHN-Estado, 3394, exp. 4. Castro also said that Nuñez de Cáceres was very anxious and would take to hot springs in the countryside to recuperate. He also mentioned that Nuñez de Cáceres may have had a family history of mental illness. Manuel Marqués to Francisco Dionisio Vives, Havana, 4 March 1826, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4, no. 1.
help them in the liberty of their territory, when they found themselves occupied by the French forces.” They had no better or more natural ally than Haiti, it suggested. Metropolitan officials soon learned not only of the independence project by Nuñez de Cáceres, but that Boyer had perhaps as many as 30,000 troops prepared to unite the island. A newspaper in Port-au-Prince soon printed a plea to Boyer to unify the island from local leaders in Santiago who did not wish to support Nuñez de Cáceres, nor his “Spanish Hayti” in the capital. In a direct letter to Nuñez de Cáceres, Boyer patiently elaborated his own concerns regarding the instability of “Spanish Hayti,” declared his interest in unifying the whole island. Boyer claimed that already Dajabon, monte Cristi, Santiago, Puerto Plata, Las Cahobas, Las Matas de Farfan, San Juan de la Maguana, Neiba, Azua, La Vega, and other key towns already recognized Haitian governance. He professed to come as a pacifier and conciliator, not a conqueror, and hoped that soon all Dominicans would raise the flag for all Haitians.

As the leading Spanish general in the colony later noted, “The towns adjacent to the French part are dedicated to the government of Boyer, because their

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55 “La Concordia diario histórico político y literario: Gazeta del Gobierno de Hayti Francés,” Port-au-Prince, 23 December 1821, AGI-SD, 970, no. 33.
56 Nicolas Matos to Secretario de Estado y la Gobernación de Ultramar, Havana, 18 January 1822, AGI-SD, 970, no. 262.
57 Nicolas Malos to Ultramar, Havana, 5 March 1822, AGI-SD, 970, nos. 268 and 269.
58 Boyer to Nunez de Caceres, Port-au-Prince, 11 January 1822, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4.
population of the day consists for the most part of mulattoes and blacks.” He further concluded that they supported Haiti because of racial solidarity and offers of “liberty, prosperity, and dominance over whites.” With a change of mind, or perhaps simple recognition of the true demands of most locals, Nuñez de Cáceres announced to all “Loyal Dominicans” a stance of docility and peace toward Boyer because he came as a “father, friend, and brother” to blend the island under one constitution, which required that Dominicans “must all reciprocate with union.” He asked resistant Dominicans to “open your hearts” and “cover yourself firmly against hearing the echoes of old worries” about Haiti, because they would all soon benefit under the laws of one Republic. When President Boyer entered Santo Domingo on 9 February 1822, nobody tried to stop him from unifying the entire island. He was greeted by thronging crowds of Dominicans whose dreams of national belonging had been realized with Haitian citizenship. In Haiti, Dominicans gained a more stable and inclusive state than any other new American republics. As a constituent region Dominican identity persisted around religion, language, and Spanish cultural heritage. Emancipation was immediate, in contrast to the lingering of slavery in much of Latin America during the three decades after

59 Tomás Perez Guerra to Captain General of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, 31 June 1822, AGI-SD, 970.
60 Jose Nunez de Caceres to Loyal Dominicans and Beloved Compatriots, Santo Domingo, 19 January 1822, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4.
61 Moya Pons, Dominican Republic, 120-124.
independence. Unlike counterparts elsewhere in the Atlantic, Dominicans also
evaded the common racist curtailment of post-emancipation civil rights.

DOMINICAN BELIEFS OF NATIONAL BELONGING

Understanding this unification as the culmination of a lengthy, successful
collaboration contradicts the national incompatibility projected on the past by
much of the discourse on Dominican nationalism and historiographical writings
on the origins of Dominican identity. It was not an aggressive invasion and
unwarranted occupation. Who is the face of Dominican independence? Is it
Nuñez de Cáceres, or Boyer? Or, are there many faces of independence in Santo
Domingo, both Dominican and Haitian, and mostly of color? Dominicans attained
freedom, rights, equality, and state belonging as Haitian citizens in what was
perhaps the most resounding victory for popular ambitions in the Spanish
American independence conflicts. The particular dynamics of racial formation
and religiosity from the 1790s through 1822 made this one of the most unique the
contests over national belonging in the Age of Revolutions.

Many Spanish officers stayed on under Boyer, and some Haitian
commanders were beloved by locals. Even the steadfast Pablo Alí agreed to
Boyer’s terms and donned a fine new Haitian army uniform. In the early days of unification freed blacks mocked their former owners and eagerly assisted Boyer’s forces. However, Dominicans of color refrained from retributive violence against white Dominicans, in part due to the moderation counseled by Boyer. Even those who disagreed with Boyer respected his political tact and superior strategy to have gradually persuaded the Dominican populace to his side through covert agents and the circulation of texts.

However, one sticking point that emerged was on religion. Many Dominicans, even those of color, were affronted by lack of Catholic practice among Haitian citizens and soldiers. Not long after unification white Dominicans in Samaná and elsewhere began courting French and Spanish interests for reconquering Santo Domingo from Haiti. They had fortified Samaná as a royalist refuge and flew the Spanish flag there. Despite begging for assistance from Puerto Rico and Martinique, no aid arrived. Soon, white dissenters stirred against

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62 Tomás Perez Guerra to Captain General of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, 31 June 1822, AGI-SD, 970.
63 Geggus, Haitian, 201.
64 Francisco Brenes to Gefe Politico de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, 16 September 1822, AGI-SD, 970, no. 88; Ultramar, Madrid, 3 October 1822, AGI-SD, 970.
65 Ministerio de Guerra, 22 January 1823, AGI-SD, 970; Juan Nepomuceno de Cardenas to Nicolas Mahi, Puerto Rico, 4 March 1822, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4.
Boyer’s plans, and Haitian forces reacted with several executions and dozens of expulsions, both of which included priests.66 Boyer had anybody flying the Spanish flag shot in the head.67 Haitian officials were also sincerely surprised at the Catholic devotion of Dominicans of color, and particularly of ex-slaves.68

Boyer remained perplexed by the possibility of French or Spanish invasion, but his conscription of Dominicans and poor pay for soldiers eroded his popular support with time. Land redistribution of old plantations only benefited his officers, and not common Dominicans. In later conversations with Spanish envoys Boyer said he would not have invaded had a flimsy state not declared independence and jeopardized island-wide security. Perhaps this is true and he had hoped for a more gradual unification, but popular anti-imperialism had forced his hand. Boyer would have a difficult time truly integrating all Dominicans, who he called his “siblings of the same soil.”69

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66 “1.a Parte, Expediente sobre la reclamacion de la parte española de la isla de Santo Domingo,” Felipe Castro to Primer Secretario del Despacho de Estado, 6 July 1824, AHN-Estado, 3394, exp. 4; Manuel Marqués to Francisco Dionisio Vives, Havana, 4 March 1826, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4, no. 1. Juan Nepomuceno de Cardenas to Nicolas Mahi, Puerto Rico, 4 March 1822, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4

67 Manuel Marquez, Havana, 27 February 1826, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4.

68 “1.a Parte, Expediente sobre la reclamacion de la parte española de la isla de Santo Domingo,” Felipe Castro to Primer Secretario del Despacho de Estado, 6 July 1824, AHN-Estado, 3394, exp. 4; Manuel Marqués to Francisco Dionisio Vives, Havana, 4 March 1826, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4, no. 1. Juan Nepomuceno de Cardenas to Nicolas Mahi, Puerto Rico, 4 March 1822, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4

69 “1.a Parte, Expediente sobre la reclamacion de la parte española de la isla de Santo Domingo,” Felipe Castro to Primer Secretario del Despacho de Estado, 6 July 1824, AHN-Estado, 3394, exp. 4; Manuel Marqués to Francisco Dionisio Vives, Havana, 4 March 1826, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4,
Dominicans began closing their hearts to Haiti, listening to old worries, and perceiving not only in their innate differences from Haitian rooted in fears of decades past. Actual religious differences, and the perception of religious superiority propagated by elite Dominicans and the church all festered a belief that Haitians and Dominicans did not belong together, a belief in superiority of Iberian heritage, and a belief in Haitian depravity.

Sturdy independence, abolition, and republican rule had come to Santo Domingo through popular Dominican demand in coordination with a Boyer-led Haitian army. This was a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, egalitarian state project with nearly two decades of independence under the original Republic of Haiti. However, despite all the preceding anti-imperial attempts, and the pro-Haitian sentiments across Santo Domingo, the small and short-lived project by Nuñez de Cáceres is the first independence recognized by Dominican historiography and nationalism. This historical narrative that teleologically telescopes toward a separate nation-state omits the inconvenient fact that Nuñez de Cáceres quickly folded his attempt under the umbrella of Boyer’s Haiti, which already controlled much of Santo Domingo. Denying the peace of Boyer, denying the demands of the Dominican majority, and denying the much lengthier Dominican ties to the

no. 1. Juan Nepomuceno de Cardenas to Nicolas Mahi, Puerto Rico, 4 March 1822, AHN-Estado, 3395, exp. 4
Haitian Revolution have all constructed a selective national memory about the shared Dominican and Haitian paths of independence and collective unraveling of colonialism. This state of denial bolsters the Dominican state’s “historical” justification of the most corrosive manifestations of national belonging and racial exclusion to this day.

From 1791 to 1804 the Haitian Revolution transformed the wealthiest plantation colony in the Americas into the world’s first black republic through the largest and only successful slave revolt in history. After this infinitely complex, watershed event Haiti’s subsequent nation building spilled over the border into the Dominican side of Hispaniola and shaped anti-colonial aspirations, struggles for emancipation, and desires for civic participation. Their ambitions, manifested in plots and revolts, taxed Spanish power and spread debt, prisoners, and agitation to colonial neighbors. Competing paths of empowerment, including the heavy involvement of people of color in Spanish military forces, combined to form lasting legacies of irreversible popular mobilization. The self-empowerment of slaves in Saint-Domingue, and eventually oppressed Dominicans, pressed Spanish colonialism to offer upward mobility to these formerly excluded social sectors in exchange for much needed support. To secure loyalties and prevent enemies from arising within, Spain championed inclusive colonialism based around popular religion and populist royalism. The long-lasting legacies of Catholicism and
Spanish culture tied emergent Dominican identity to selective memories of Iberian heritage.

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From the Dominican split from Haiti in 1844, to the Haitian aid against
Spanish recolonization in the 1860s, to the 1937 massacre of tens of thousands of Haitians by a Dominican dictatorship, to Dominican assistance after Haiti’s ruinous 2010 earthquake, Haitians and Dominicans have long been entangled in layers of antagonism and amicability, hostility and harmony, conflict and cooperation. Anti-Haitian racism often fills Dominican policy, evinced by the Dominican revocation of citizenship from thousands of ethnic Haitians in 2013; followed by their tragic mass deportation in 2015. This most corrosive cases of Dominicans asserting their national difference draw directly upon a series of grievances against Haiti rooted in a particular national memory of the late colonial era. Ideas about this era have enormous contemporary consequence, as the historical pendulum of Dominican cultural politics swings to knock “othered” groups out of political, legal, economic, and civic arenas.

Dominican society was born into modernity in many ways as a fraternal twin to their Haitian neighbors. These societies – siblings of the same soil, as Boyer stated – were locked in cooperation or conflict, locked on admiration or admonishment, but always locked with what could be accurately described as fraternity at best, and a sibling rivalry at worst. When in 1785 the priest-intellectual Antonio Sánchez Valverde hoped for a better future for “creoles of Hayti” he could not have imagined that over five years later the island would be riven by revolution, nor that twenty years later the island would host the world’s
first black republic. Most unimaginable might have been that over three decades later a majority of Dominicans would strive for co-citizenship as “Haitians” in that same neighboring state. This choice and shared trajectory with Haiti are truths that dominant Dominican historical memory refuses to believe. This belief in belonging also excludes Dominicans from the shared interpretation of Taíno legacies on the island that they often unwillingly share – Hayti.

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70 Sánchez Valverde, Idea, vi, 9, 59, and 72.
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