

AFRICAN DIASPORA COLLECTIVE ACTION:
RITUALS, RUNAWAYS, AND THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION

By

Crystal Nicole Eddins

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ABSTRACT

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The project is an interdisciplinary case study that couples an African Diaspora theoretical paradigm with concepts from social movements scholarship to explain the influence of Africa-inspired sacred rituals on oppositional consciousness and patterns of escape from enslavement – mawonaj – leading up to the Revolution. My data emerges from archival and secondary source research in France, the United States, and Haiti. I bring focus to the study of collective consciousness in two fields, African American & African Studies and Sociology, with attention to how consciousness was shaped by material conditions, was reinforced in spheres of interaction, and guided social action among early modern members of the African Diaspora in colonial Haiti (Saint Domingue).

The first paper hypothesizes that in addition to being sacred events, ritual gatherings were simultaneously free spaces wherein rebels enhanced oppositional consciousness and solidarity by campaigning for liberation and seeking new mobilization recruits. Findings suggested that during African-Saint Dominguans' gatherings at burial sites, in churches, and at nighttime calenda assemblies, they re-produced aspects of their religious cultures away from the observation of whites. Ritual free spaces allowed participants to reclaim personal and collective power by using sacred material artifacts; and to communicate seditious speech concerning freedom, independence, and the injustice of slavery.

The second paper examines how oppositional consciousness, solidarity, and collective identity influenced mawonaj through content analysis of over 10,000 runaway advertisements printed in the newspaper *Les Affiches Américaines*. I focused on how runaways' gender and birth origins, in Atlantic

colonies or the African continent, shaped their social ties and resources they used to escaped. Other indicators of oppositional consciousness that facilitated escape were *intra*-racial/ethnic group escapes, which indicated the importance of collective identity, and *inter*-racial/ethnic group escapes that indicated racial solidarity; self-assertive behaviors such as claiming to be free or forging passes, bearing arms, or stealing money; and longer durations of reported escape.

The third paper investigates how and why patterns of mawonaj at the micro-level changed over time using data from primary and secondary sources. I contextualized statistically significant findings from analysis of runaway ads within the *longue-durée* of mawonaj and rebellion in Saint Domingue. I provide a narrative of structural and environmental factors to see if African-Saint Dominguans' decisions to escape enslavement were strategic responses to Africa-inspired ritual events, or structural and environmental windows of opportunity. Two significant factors that contributed to incursions by established fugitive bands and shifting yearly frequencies of runaways were international conflicts and the population growth of enslaved people due to the influx of newly imported Africans.

The dissertation informs African Diaspora and sociological scholarship and the ways in which dispersed populations maintain and adapt ties, cultural and religious practices, and historical memory to shape their identities, independent social formations, and modes of survival. African-Saint Dominguans represent a strong example of how forced migrants can transmit homeland-based political consciousness, historical memory, and cultural knowledge to their second- and third-generation counterparts, influencing emergent forms of resistance and mobilization – which directly impacted the Haitian Revolution, which transformed one of the wealthiest, most racially stratified, repressive, and deadly slave colonies into an independent nation.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE

In addition to being the modern era's most successful rebellion of enslaved people and most radical political event during the Age of Revolutions (Blackburn 2006), the Haitian Revolution and its causes were, and largely remain, an enigma of historic proportions. It is often assumed that prior to the Haitian Revolution, enslaved Africans and their descendants had no sense of political consciousness or ambitions, and that they *could not* think about the possibility of revolution. For example, one scholar notes: "the slaves did not have at the outset any political or economic plans. With few exceptions, they could not envisage any social upheaval (Cauna 1996: 322)." This position seems to represent a continuation of past attempts, as Haitian anthropologist Michel Rolph-Trouillot argued, to de-politicize the Revolution itself and any preceding acts of defiance deemed impossibilities because of Africans' supposed inferior intellectual capabilities (1995: 82-83). Secondly, such an assertion ignores African Diasporans' retained consciousness about and historical memory of polities, economies, and social structures that existed on the African continent – which in fact was rife with political and religious coups, wars, and upheavals that were directly and indirectly connected to the European slave trade.

Advances in Black/African Diaspora studies, particularly histories of enslavement in the Atlantic world, have pushed scholars to new understandings about the ways in which enslaved Africans struggled to re-create themselves and re-create home in the Americas. Africans relied on their knowledge bases – composed of diverse identities, cultures, histories, and religious practices that were rooted in their homelands to make sense of their circumstances, build relationships, and organize resistance (Lovejoy 1997). This perspective is particularly relevant when thinking about Saint Domingue as it violently transformed into Haiti because of the overwhelming volume of Africa-born captives, many of whom were victims or veterans of civil wars and inter-state military conflicts (Thornton 2000). Therefore, as Caribbean historian Sir Hilary Beckles argues,

“It can no longer be generally accepted, then, that slaves existed in an atheoretical world which was devoid of ideas, political concepts and an alternative socio-political vision. Their tradition of anti-slavery activity impacted upon the social culture and polity of the Caribbean world in more fundamental ways than anti-slavery lobbyists ever did in metropolitan societies (1988: 16)”

This dissertation follows Sir Beckles’ instruction to insert the perspective of a population otherwise silenced by their social position and the subsequent writing of history by systematically investigating the ways in which African Diasporans consistently transgressed Saint Domingue’s power structure through their pre-Revolution collective actions.

Collective action is any activity that brings people together for a common purpose, usually to solve some sort of social problem (Oliver 2013). Consciousness is a foundational aspect of collective action, because it heightens understanding of the reasons for taking part in protest activities. Shared consciousness requires both comprehension of injustices and inequalities within a material context, and having common interests with others who share positionality. Through interactive processes, social movement actors raise consciousness and construct forms of resistance befitting their context or situation (Snow and Lessor 2013). Some collective actions can be spontaneous and sporadic, while others can become a lasting part of a groups’ resistance repertoire of contention. Repertoires of contention are distinctive combinations of sustained, organically developed actions and resistance tactics that endure if proven successful (Traugott 1995; Taylor and Van Dyke 2004; Tilly 2006; della Porta 2013). Oppressive conditions notwithstanding, African-Saint Domingans in bondage found ways to be continuous initiators of politicized actions through everyday challenges to the enslavement system, such as work tool sabotage, feigning illness, suicide, or temporary escapes. These individualized tactics were also met with collective, group-based behaviors that reflected collective consciousness and shared rejection of enslavement.

Collective consciousness is an intangible aspect of a group’s psyche that can be difficult to identify and measure, particularly if that group – such as the masses of enslaved African-Saint

Dominguans – did not leave behind cultural artifacts of their own production. Rather than rely on discourse analysis of primary source materials (such as in Hall 1990; Kane 1991; Steinberg 1999), I will attempt to unearth evidence of African-Saint Dominguans’ intentionality through the meticulous study of their individualized and collective social actions over time. An aggregate treatment of micro-level ruptures can reveal Africans Diasporans’ denied counter-hegemonic political consciousness that existed before the Haitian Revolution began. I focus on the relationship between shared consciousness and two components of the pre-revolutionary repertoire of contention among Africans and their descendants in Saint Domingue: Africa-inspired rituals and *grand mawonaj* – the Kreyol term for small groups’ and individuals’ permanent escape from enslavement. I use ‘Africa-inspired rituals’ as an umbrella term to comprehend and describe the range of sacred beliefs and practices that were brought to Saint Domingue by African captives that survived the Middle Passage. These rituals occurred with regularity and represented ruptures to French colonial code, which strictly outlawed any non-Christian practices. Mawonaj, derived from the French *marronnage* and the Spanish *cimarrón*, was a constant nuisance to plantation owners who lost property in the form of runaways and other valuables when mawon bands attacked nearby plantations.

This dissertation argues that Africa-inspired rituals and mawonaj were mechanisms that spread the collective consciousness that was fundamentally opposed to enslavement and fed the beginnings of the Haitian Revolution. It is with this perspective that I choose to grapple with common perceptions that the driving ideologies of Haitian Revolution were indigenized versions of French ‘Republicanism’ or ‘royalism’. Such perceptions might be thought of as teleological arguments that define the causes of a phenomenon by its future outcomes (Sewell 1996b). While early and post-Haitian Revolution leadership did embrace both republican and monarchical forms of government, the notion that these political ideologies “trickled down” from the French Revolution cannot fully account for the masses of African and African descendants and their earliest actions directed toward

liberation. Though the events in France provided many windows of opportunity for the Haitian Revolution's success, I do not take for granted that Saint Domingue's half million African Diasporans immediately attached themselves to Enlightenment-era political philosophies because they had none of their own. In fact, some Haitian revolutionaries' invocation of royalism reflected their commitment to the Kongo Kingdom, a portion of West Central Africa where a substantial number of the enslaved originated (Thornton 1993). As such, I attempt to understand the worldviews of the women and men forced to labored on sugar, coffee, indigo, and cotton plantations; and how those worldviews shaped their forms of resistance and ultimately urged Haitian Revolution leaders Georges Biassou, Jean-Francois Papillon, Toussaint Louverture, and Jean-Jacques Dessalines to continually push the envelope for general emancipation and Haitian independence.

This dissertation draws on several bodies of theoretical literature in the Black/African Diaspora Studies disciplinary field,¹ and the Historical Sociology and Social Movements arenas of sociology. Though the Haitian Revolution, and its phases and leaders, have been the subject of research by leading Atlantic world historians, few of these have conscientiously employed an Africa-centered, interdisciplinary approach that is a hallmark of Black/African Diaspora Studies. Conversely, the fact that few self-identified Black/African Diaspora Studies scholars have taken up study of Saint Domingue and the Revolution is a curiosity, but probably reflects the nascence of the academic field. Secondly, few sociologists have studied the Haitian Revolution or the African Diaspora writ large, missing their wider implications and contributions to the development of and disruptions to

¹ Shifting monikers for this field – Black Studies, Africana Studies, Africology, Pan-African Studies, African-American Studies, African & African American Studies, and African Diaspora Studies – reflects an intellectual expansion in response to an infusion of Pan-African political ideals, globalization, and growing academic interest in diasporas and transnationalism (Drake 1984; Hall 1999; Hanchard 2004). I choose Black/African Diaspora Studies to acknowledge the field's original name as well as its current trajectory.

European capital accumulation in the early modern era (Magubane 2005; Martin 2005). Further, social movement scholars also have missed the Haitian Revolution, in part since study of collective actions of the past that cannot be neatly defined as ‘social movements’, such as enslaved people’s rebellions, tend not to be as popular (McAdam, Tilly, and Tarrow 1996; Gould 2005; Peterson 2013). Social movements scholarship does, however, attempt to identify the socio-historical and cultural roots of “new social movements” of the past and present that are organized around shared identity, culture, or ideology (Morris and Mueller 1992; Calhoun 1995; Ward 2015). This provides an inroad to deeper engagement with forced migrant diasporans’ mobilization potential – particularly African Diasporans in the Americas – using a paradigm that can account for race, stratification, and oppression (Bracey 2016) in the early modern period.

CONSCIOUSNESS IN SOCIOLOGY AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

I employ sociologist Ruth Hamilton’s (2007) framework for studying the African Diaspora, in which she argues that systems of domination, or oppressive social forces, do not preclude African Diasporans from being social agents and drawing on their oppositional consciousness to use networks, cultural practices, and ideological tools toward liberation. Oppositional consciousness is a concept that comes from scholarship in the social movements field, and is the basis of oppressed groups collective efforts to liberate themselves (Morris 1992). This idea is particularly relevant for explaining how diaspora consciousness, which forced migrants transport with them during dispersal, becomes politicized in hostile host societies. Like other groups who experienced involuntary diaspora, such as the Greeks, Jews, or Armenians, the forcible transport of Africans to Saint Domingue did not erase their knowledge of themselves as human beings whose true homeland was not the Caribbean (Cohen 1992; Cohen 2008). Africans brought with them their own social, cultural, and political ideas about the nature of the world. Enslavement did not completely eradicate these sentiments, and through interactional processes, Africans in diaspora used their consciousness to

inform their social relations, cultural and religious practices, collective identity formations, and counter-hegemonic political allegiances (Mintz and Price 1976; Vertovec 1997; Shuval 2005; Brubaker 2005; Dufoix 2008; Sheffer 2012).

To trace the translation of diaspora consciousness into a liberation consciousness, the three papers of this dissertation connect the interplay between structures, social action, and historical change – particularly concerning how consciousness 1) is shaped by history, culture, and other social forces; 2) is reinforced by social conditions, common experiences, and processes of interaction; and 3) informs and guides collective action. Collective consciousness has been the subject of sociological study since the earliest theorists examined the impact of industrialism and modernity on patterns of relations in human communities. Emile Durkheim (1912) argued that shared ritual behavior enhanced a shared sense of effervescent emotions among participants. Marx and Engels (2001) defined shared consciousness as a world of ideas and conceptions that emerged from and was conditioned by proletarian workers' common relation to capitalist modes of production. With greater inequality, class consciousness would heighten and eventually lead the working class to overthrow the bourgeoisie in a social revolution. E. P. Thompson (1980) extended Marx's definition to show how class consciousness not only arises from interactive processes of tension between groups of opposed interests, but also is embedded in workers' traditions, values, and institutions.

Recent sociologists integrate Marxist and Durkheimian perspectives of consciousness by grounding its inception in material conditions, its expansion through cultural processes, and its expression through collective action. They argue that groups' cultural productions are one way to understand how human groups make sense of their experiences and circumstances using their cultural "toolkits" (Swidler 1986; Hall 1990; Kane 2000) and characterize their distinct forms of resistance (Steinberg 1999). Politicized consciousness also can be expressed through dynamics of collective action, solidarity work, organization, institutional arrangements, and the values and

attitudes that emerge from within those formations (Fantasia 1988). While any group that shares material conditions can develop a political consciousness that advances their interests, systemic oppression produces consciousness that specifically addresses the unequal nature of their social conditions. Micromobilization theorist Aldon Morris (1992) attempts to contextualize and qualify the nature of the structural conditions in which mobilizers are located. He argues that individuals' and groups' identities are lodged within the racial, gendered, and economic structures of their historical moment. These systems of domination, "a constellation of institutions, ideas, and practices that successfully enables on group to achieve and maintain power and privilege through the control and exploitation of another group (Morris 1992: 362-3)" shape the social, economic, and politic realities that marginalize certain groups over others. Awareness of this marginalization creates a counterhegemonic consciousness which transforms *political* consciousness to one that is *oppositional* to oppressive social forces. As such, oppositional consciousness constitutes the foundation from which oppressed groups attempt to resist and dismantle systems of domination.

Given these sociological insights, any study of oppositional consciousness leading to the Haitian Revolution also must begin with theorizing the ways in which racial and economically exploitative social structures shaped the conditions for Africans and African descendants' collective action during dawn of the modern era. According to Howard Winant, "race has been a constitutive element, an organizational principle ... that has constructed and reconstructed world society since the emergence of modernity, the enormous historical shift represented by the rise of Europe ... [and] the onset of African enslavement (2001: 19)." Early sociologists excluded the African Diaspora from their analyses, and their theoretical works were often influenced by contemporaneous intellectual thought that upheld colonialism and racial segregation (Bhambra 2014). The undergirding principles of what it meant to be 'modern' – civilized, free, rational, scientist/positivist, industrial/capitalist stemmed from Columbian-era European contact with and conquest of non-

white, non-Christian peoples perceived to be the antithesis of modern – uncivilized, enslaved/peasantry, irrational, and incapable of intellectual thought or advancement (Long 1986). Further, inside of the classical theorists’ thinking were implications that social relations outside the economic realm would eventually become irrelevant with industrial and capitalist development.

The omission and intentional suppression of considerations of race in early sociological work would set the stage for later silencing of Africans and African descendants’ collective consciousness and agency. Despite these omissions, late 19th and early 20th century scholars of African descent – and white scholars curious about the black experience – set the foundation for understanding members of the African Diaspora, and the interrelationship between their sense of agency and material conditions. W. E. B. DuBois, Charles S. Johnson, E. Franklin Frazier and other social scientists like C. L. R. James (1938), Eric Williams (1944), and St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton (1945) initiated an alternate historical sociology wherein race was a central factor in the making of the modern world (Winant 2001; Magubane 2005). These social scientists’ ideas expanded and corrected conventional sociological concepts such as equality and emancipation (Bhambra 2014), and how the activities of African descendants contributed to and were impacted by global capitalism. The scholarship of early 20th century black social scientists also showed that African descendants, out of necessity for survival and because of legal segregation, developed their own consciousness, social institutions, and bases for mobilization (Morris 2007). These findings led those like DuBois to conclude that agency indeed existed within communities of African descendants despite and in opposition to oppression.

Saint Domingue represented the height of racial oppression and exploitation as what can be described as a slave society: one in which many if not all social institutions are shaped by the deliberate denial of enslaved people to be self-determining (Stinchcombe 1995). Political, economic, and social relations in Saint Domingue established and maintained powerlessness among enslaved

Africans and African descendants as the status quo. The enslaved were regarded as non-human chattel and were forced to work for little to no compensation. Social structures of the wider Atlantic world organized skin color, phenotypes and national birth origin into near impenetrable racial hierarchies with white Europeans representing the pinnacle of humanity and ownership and black Africans associated with slave status. The *Code Noir* of 1685 outlined racial boundaries for French colonies including Saint Domingue, and in effect produced a stratified society where color, race, and ethnicity were inextricably linked to social class, status, citizenship, freedom, and power.² The masses of the enslaved populations were black people born on the African continent and their progeny; while many – though not all – members of the small mixed-race population were free, amassed wealth, and attained social prominence. My work locates the impetus for the Haitian revolutionary insurgency with enslaved Africans and African descendants, in contrast to those works that give primary importance to the attempts of mixed-race individuals to achieve French citizenship. These distinctions present the need to re-think Marxist analysis of class consciousness and formation to differentiate African enslaved laborers as a separate category from the European industrial wage earners or agrarian peasants that are so often considered the vanguard in studies of revolution (James [1938] 1989; Robinson 1983).³

African descendants' agency continues to be a subject of study in the Black/African Diaspora Studies disciplinary field; enslaved people's rebellion is an area where issues of consciousness and agency are most salient. Some 13 years before C. L. R. James' (1938) seminal text *The Black Jacobins*, Anna Julia Cooper (1925) defended her doctoral dissertation *L'attitude de la France à l'égard l'esclavage pendant la révolution* [*Slavery and the French Revolutionists*], arguing that attitudes about race, enslavement in Saint Domingue, and the Haitian Revolution impacted conceptualizations of rights and freedom

² For evidence, see: Trouillot 1983; Garrigus 1993; Stewart 2001; Garrigus 2006; and Midy 2006

³ See Sidney W. Mintz (1978) and Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker (1990) for works that offer alternative conceptualizations of the relationship between enslaved Africans and proletariat workers.

in France. Herbert Aptheker, a white Marxist and close collaborator with DuBois, argued that insurrections were a natural human response to oppression. They were in part influenced by external political changes and were tied to a tradition of radical political activity that extended into the 20th century (1943). Conversely, Eugene Genovese, similarly a white Marxist historian, argued that prior to the French and Haitian Revolutions, insurrections were ideologically ‘backward-looking’ to Africa for inspiration, and that after the Age of Revolutions rebellions took a more radical, transformative stance (1979).

More recently, African Diaspora Studies scholars seem to have synthesized Genovese’s and Aptheker’s theses and explored aspects of collective rebellions that are more aligned with both of their sentiments. Cedric Robinson’s (1983) *Black Marxism* locates the foundation of African Diasporans’ agency not in enslavement, but in a tradition of African Diaspora consciousness that predated the Age of Revolutions.⁴ This is especially true in enslaved peoples’ rebellions during the early modern era; evidence suggests that either African ethnicities or emerging racial identity, and cultural and religious affiliations were often at the core of solidarity in runaway slave community formations and rebellions (Schuler 1970; Reis 1993; Gomez 1998; Rucker 2001; Smith 2001; Thompson 2006; Borucki 2015; Rucker 2015). This oppositional diaspora consciousness inspired interconnected waves of revolts that countered world capitalism and was the source of African descendants’ 19th and 20th century protest tradition (Robinson 1983; Martin 2005; Santiago-Valles 2005). These assertions of agency have implications for studying African Diasporans’ historical experiences across time and space, in both African and the Americas (Hamilton 2007). The alternate historical sociology tradition initiated by black, and by whites inclined toward progressive politics, social scientists is a guidepost for me to understand African Diasporans, such as those bonded in

⁴ For example, Rudolph Ware’s (2014) work posits the 1776 Islamic anti-slavery revolution in Senegambia as the first abolition movement the Atlantic world.

colonial Haiti before the Revolution, from the vantage point of not only oppressed people, but a human group who had a collective intentionality for the construction of their social world.

HISTORIOGRAPHY, METHODOLOGY & OUTLINE OF STUDY

Part of the difficulty of writing about Haiti, the Haitian Revolution, and the country's colonial history involves the political nature of the writing of history itself. Even as the Revolution was unfolding, white Saint Domingans seemed to disregard its occurrence, evidenced by the fact that the August 21st-22nd, 1791 revolt in the north was not mentioned in the *Gazette de Saint Domingue* newspaper until almost two weeks later.⁵ Since that time, the Haitian Revolution has haunted social and political thought (Buck-Morss 2009) but has not been given full treatment in several areas of scholarship. Besides Carolyn Fick's *The Making of Haiti* (1990), few historians have re-constructed a narrative about the masses of enslaved people who participated in the Haitian Revolution. Part of this difficulty is due to a lack of primary source data left behind by the insurgents themselves.⁶ This dearth of information has motivated others to attempt to identify forms of pre-revolutionary resistance (Girard 2013a). The effort to uncover a tradition of rebellion in Saint Domingue proves difficult for two reasons. First, ongoing open revolts seem to not have been as common in Saint Domingue as they were in other Caribbean locations (Turner 2011). Secondly, historical evidence offers little indication of formal organizations such as *confrères*, Catholic brotherhoods and sisterhoods that were often the centers of diasporic Africans' collective actions and identity formation in Spanish and Portuguese colonies of the Americas (Berlin 1996; Peabody 2002; Dewulf 2015). Therefore, historians have probed the significance of Africa-inspired rituals and *mawonaj* as

⁵ Source: John Carter Brown Library

⁶ The excludes military correspondences and declarations made during the Haitian Revolution by leaders such as Toussaint Louverture, Jean-Francois Papillon, Georges Biassou, and Jean-Jacques Dessalines.

contributing factors to the emergence of the Haitian Revolution, with some new advances in comprehension of consciousness.

A most recent theoretical treatise argues for conceptualizing *mawonaj* as a fundamentally anti-slavery action (Roberts 2015). This commitment to freedom is detailed in a recent historical analysis of the Maniel, a community of runaways from Saint Domingue who maintained an independent community in the Baoruco Mountains throughout the 18th century (Yingling 2015). These works come several years after debate on the role, or lack thereof, of runaway bands in the Haitian Revolution reached a stalemate. As some (Manigat 1977; Manigat 2007; Daniels 2012; Joseph 2012; Girard 2013a) observe, the intellectual conflict tends to fall along national lines. Members of the Haitian school view *mawonaj* as an ongoing socio-political movement directly linked to the revolution (Fouchard 1972; LaGuerre 1989). In the French school, others (Debien 1973; Geggus 1986) argue that *mawonaj* was a passive form of resistance devoid of any collective consciousness toward freedom.

Manigat (1977; 2007) affirms an independence-oriented, “ethno-nationalist” consciousness and calls for a nuanced micro- and macro-level approach to *mawonaj*. Arguably, the propensity of some runaways, particularly women, to temporarily leave and return to the plantation repeatedly (*petit mawonaj*) may have been a tactic to develop relationships and create an informal, loosely organized mobilization structure of enslaved individuals and self-liberated communities (*grand mawonaj*) who shared and circulated ideas, resources, and strategies for escape and overthrowing enslavement. Cauna (1996) also argues that *mawonaj* and Africa-inspired rituals provided the organizational tools to develop a growing consciousness of resistance that preceded the Haitian Revolution; yet, Cauna denies that the enslaved population held any ideas of liberty or revolution. Geggus (1991; 2002) attempts to debunk the notion that a liberation ethos intrinsically infused Africa-inspired rituals, though he rarely acknowledges those lower-ranking revolutionary leaders named by Cauna who were

ritualists and/or accumulated a following while *en mawonaj*. Further, Geggus' sentiments do not reflect the principles of African worldview and cultural belief systems in which boundaries between the sacred and political spheres were not recognized.

The issues of lacking primary sources, a contentious historiography, and Haitian cultural imagination – rather its historical memory embedded in oral history, religious, cultural, and literary traditions – have signaled the challenges to historical paradigms and methodology that face scholars of Saint-Domingue-Haiti (Dayan 1995). However, these questions of history are not isolated to colonial Saint Domingue, especially when attempting to understand such histories from the perspective of people who were deliberately written out of history such as captured Africans dispersed across the Atlantic Ocean. Reconstructing narratives of their lives is an arduous task that requires knowledge of the African continent itself, the European slave trade, and colonial contexts of the Americas into which captives were imported (Lovejoy 1997; Mann 2001). A critical issue in linking Africa to its diaspora is attempting to identify captives from a multitude of ethnic, religious, political, or geographic groups whose true self-designations were either unknown or misrepresented in European slave trading and plantation records (Morgan 1997).

Scholars have rightly pointed out that in doing such research it is important not to treat the African continent as a monolithic place frozen in its pre-colonial time (Palmer 2000; Butler 2010). Transformations in African histories, politics, economies, and cultures shaped social structures locally and globally, and influenced the progress and outcomes of the European slave trade (Thornton 1992). Therefore, framing the African continent as not just a historically stagnant source of captives *to* the Americas, but as a stream of ongoing history happening *in* the Americas is a critical challenge of this work and any other focused on African descendant peoples during enslavement. In addition to the work of early 20th century social scientists, the Africa-centered methodological approach to diaspora history owes debt to Molefi Asante's *The Afrocentric Idea* (1987), which explicitly

argues that any work on African peoples must begin with an epistemological shift wherein ideals from Africa and Africans are placed at the center of study.

The Africa-centered focus as well as interdisciplinarity are the touchstone principles of Black/African Diaspora Studies because of the racial chauvinism deeply embedded in mainstream knowledge production arenas – despite claims of apolitical, ‘objective’ approaches to science (Ladner 1973; Daniel 1980; Alkalimat 1986; Drake 1987; Karenga 1988; Spurlock 2007). Traditional disciplines were deemed inapplicable to Africans and African descendants, needing to be replaced or redefined by an approach grounded in historical realities of structural conditions, social relations and change (Turner 1984). This type of approach would not be sufficed with a singular disciplinary perspective, but a multi- or interdisciplinary integration of concepts, theory and methods appropriate for understanding that “... the position of black people in the social structure ... offers peculiar insights [and] a specific meaning about social truth (Ibid.: 79; Asante 1987).”

Interdisciplinarity can generally be thought of as a “conscious and focused integration that creates a holistic view or common understanding of a complex issue, question or problem (Klein 2007: 37).” Within Black/African Diaspora Studies, any exploration of African descendants’ lives must begin with consulting history as a foundational aspect of an interdisciplinary methodology (Turner 1984). This dissertation is an interdisciplinary case study that draws on theoretical concepts and perspectives from historical sociology and social movements scholarship, and uses comparative and statistical methods of analysis to identify collective consciousness in ways that highlight agency and self-determination. Though the voices of the masses of enslaved have yet to be unearthed, an aggregate quantitative study of their micro-level social mawonaj actions might reveal temporal and geographic patterns that indicate a liberation orientation before the Haitian Revolution began. This goal is aligned with historian Vincent Brown’s (2016) idea of “going against the grain” of using quantitative work in slavery studies during the age of databases. Rather than reduce human

processes to a “numbers game,” Brown points out that quantitative analysis can be used to support the socio-cultural interpretive tradition of Black/African Diaspora Studies and explain intentionality in ways the sources were never meant to convey.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The first paper of this dissertation begins with understanding of African histories as the headspring of cultural and political expressions in Saint Domingue, with the hopes of uncovering Africans and African descendants’ epistemological and ontological core. I draw on sociological literature on rituals, consciousness, and social movement culture and identity as a basis for comprehending the archival and secondary source data on Africa-inspired ritual activity. The research question in this paper is: what was the role of Africa-inspired rituals in collective consciousness? Key primary sources by late 18th century writers such as Moreau de St. Mery and Michel Descourtilz portrayed Africa-inspired rituals as dangerous because of the perceived association with rebelliousness. Ritualists were perceived as haughty, unruly, and having undue influence over other enslaved people who adhered to African belief systems,⁷ took part in ritual gatherings, and used or carried sacred objects to demonstrate allegiance with leadership and non-human sources of power. The most well-known case of a ritualist operating as a campaigner for rebellion is “Zamba” Boukman Dutty, who, in August 1791, steered both the Bwa Kayman ceremony and the mass uprisings in northern Saint Domingue.⁸ During pre-dissertation qualitative field research near Cap-Haïtien, Haiti in July-August 2015, respondents indicated that Boukman deliberately employed various African religious symbols to rally recruits from different ethnic

⁷ This may also include pre-18th century interpretations and forms of Christianity based on Kongolesse lifeways.

⁸ Fick 1990. There is some scholarly debate on the validity of the Bwa Kayman ceremony as a historical fact, in addition to some confusion about its actual date and location. While few have argued that the ceremony did not happen, early accounts and oral histories lend to a consensus that this significant ritual ceremony did take place soon before the Haitian Revolution began (Geggus 2002: 81-92; Beauvoir-Dominique 2010).

backgrounds for the uprising. This evidence suggests that in addition to being sacred events, ritual gatherings were simultaneously free space mobilizing structures wherein rebels strengthened oppositional consciousness by campaigning for liberation and seeking new mobilization recruits.

After attempting to reconstruct African-Saint Dominguan's worldview, the second paper asks: how did oppositional consciousness influence *grand mawonaj* from enslavement? I investigate empirical indicators of oppositional consciousness as expressed through mawonaj: group escapes, social ties and destinations, self-assertive behaviors, and duration of escape. These indicators derive mainly from historical studies of runaway advertisements (Fouchard 1972; Gomez 1998; Camp 2004) and social movement emphasis on networks (Gould 1995; Clemens and Hughes 2002; Diani 2003). To conduct social movement research on historical topics, particularly in instances of limited primary source data, Elisabeth Clemens and Martin Hughes suggest employing an inductive approach to detect evidence of "movement-like" elements (2002: 201-219). Clemens and Hughes' technique involves looking specifically for activities that indicated categories of mobilization such as networks, significant protest events, key individuals, and cultural artifacts. Since diaspora communities tend to create networks based on some shared identity in their host societies, I draw on diaspora studies and social movements studies by quantitatively analyzing runaway slave advertisement data from the *Les Affiches Americaines* colonial newspaper. Additionally, preliminary research using a sample of ads showed collective mawonaj of two or more people was a statistically significant aspect of escape, demonstrating the importance of group escapes. Africa-born and colony-born 'creole' runaways used group escape and destination-based social ties in different ways in their responses to repression.⁹ Another indicator of oppositional consciousness was self-assertive behaviors such as claiming to be free or forging passes, bearing arms, or stealing money. These

⁹ Eddins 2014: 25, 27-28

actions were against the constraining behavioral codes for enslaved people (Hall 1971), and therefore reflected a sense of counter-hegemonic militancy.

The third chapter investigates how and why patterns of mawonaj changed over time and space before the Haitian Revolution. I attempt to locate rituals and runaway patterns within structural contexts, especially as they were shaped by political developments, plantation production, and natural environment. I suggest that runaways' decisions to escape were 1) guided by oppositional consciousness gained in ritual activities and 2) were strategically acted on given structural and environmental windows of opportunity, e.g. natural disasters, legal modifications, and geographic proximity to isolated zones. Preliminary findings demonstrated an increase in group mawonaj after a major earthquake in 1770 and a 1784 Royal Ordinance that restricted punishments for escape.¹⁰ Planters consistently worried about the presence of runaways in the mountains as well as those who crossed the border into Spanish territory, and the colony's local topography contained several cave systems that provided spaces for runaways and enslaved people to establish linkages and plan rebellion (Beauvoir-Dominique 2009). Therefore, I situate escape dates and locations within a *longue-durée* historical contextual to see if windows of opportunity may have influenced escape patterns. Further, growing oppositional consciousness over time is likely to have led runaways to escape for longer durations, leading to escalating grand mawonaj before the Haitian Revolution. Rates of 'successful' mawonaj for six months or more increased in the years prior to the Revolution.¹¹ Thus I seek to uncover what factors may have accounted for the increase. I begin with a background on mawonaj in Ayiti/Española, framing it as a lasting part of African Diasporans' repertoire of contention. Repertoires of contention are organic forms of resistance tactics that are sustained over time, yet adapted for new contextual circumstances (Traugott 1995; Taylor and Van Dyke 2004; Tilly

¹⁰ Fouchard 1972: 329; Eddins 2014: 24, 28

¹¹ Eddins 2014: 30

2006; della Porta 2013). Literature on this conceptual area will inform the third paper as it unfolds in a timeline fashion. Finally, the concluding chapter will attempt to trace the continuation of oppositional consciousness into the revolutionary period and early 19th century forms of contentious politics.

The next section of this introductory essay will take the reader to the late 15th century, when the Spanish and Africans encountered the Caribbean island Ayiti and its indigenous population, then proceed to examine the island's transformation into the most valuable slave colony in Americas.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT



Figure 1.0: Map of Ayiti/Española including demarcations of Taíno kingdoms. “Hispaniola Soos het door Kolumbus Ontdekt,” 1707. *John Carter Brown Library*.

Ayiti

Autochthonous Taíno AmerIndians of the Arawak family first inhabited the Caribbean set of islands of the Western Hemisphere, including the island then known as *Quisqueya* meaning ‘vast country’, or *Ayiti*, ‘land of the mountains.’ The latter moniker derived from the fact that mountain ranges cover approximately three-fourths of the island’s 10,714 square mile western portion, including the northern ranges, the Cahos, Montagnes Noires, the mountains of Selle, the Matheux,

and the Baoruco.¹² There are two mountain chains that exceed 1,000 meters in height above sea-level, including one in the southern peninsula that juts westward. The other 1,000-plus meter mountain range occupies the island's south-central region, sitting between what became the coastal ports of Port-au-Prince and Saint Marc.¹³ In addition to extensive mountain chains, the region is characterized by a complicated landscape including semiarid savannas, lush rainforests, and karst topography marked by sinkholes and caves.

Moreau de St. Mery estimated that there were between one and three million inhabitants on the island prior to Spanish arrival.¹⁴ These indigenous populations were divided into five kingdoms, each headed by a cacique. Cacique Guarionex led the Kingdom of Magua, which began at the north-central shore and extended east. The Marien Kingdom, governed by Guacanario, occupied what later became the north department of Saint Domingue. A third kingdom, Higüey, was in the south-east portions of Spanish Santo Domingo. The island's south-central zone was held by the Kingdom of Maguana, whose Cacique was a Carib named Caonabo. Lastly, the Xaragua Kingdom under the Cacique Behechio was based in the island's southwestern peninsula, extending east toward what the French later dubbed the Cul-de-Sac plain.¹⁵

Ayiti is the second largest island of the Greater Antilles, situated between the Atlantic Ocean to its north and the Caribbean Sea to its south and Puerto Rico and Cuba to its east and west, respectively. When Christopher Columbus and European *conquistadors* arrived in 1492, they claimed the island from the indigenous people and renamed it Española. After his initial arrival, Columbus returned to the Americas on three occasions and visited Española, Cuba, the Bahamas, and South and Central American coasts in search of gold before his death in 1506.¹⁶ By the first years of the

¹² Heintz Jr. and Heintz 1978: 11; Wilson 1990: 59; Bellegarde-Smith 2004: 14

¹³ McClellan III 1992: 25

¹⁴ St. Mery 1798c: 42

¹⁵ St. Mery 1798c: 33-34

¹⁶ Monzote 2011: 88

16th century, other Spanish conquistadors had invaded Española and enslaved the Taínos to work in gold mining, agriculture, and later sugar cane cultivation. However the Taíno population was swiftly devastated by slaughter in combat, starvation, and infectious disease that stemmed from contact with Europeans.¹⁷ To replenish their supply of cheap labor force, the Spanish began importing Africans to Española during the last years of the 15th century.¹⁸ The earliest of these Africans were free *ladinos* who were assimilated Catholics from the Iberian coast of Spain; and later African continent-born *bozales* were brought through legal and illegal channels of the slave trade.¹⁹ In 1560, there were roughly 30,000 enslaved Africans, 2,000 Spaniards, and an obscure number of remaining Taíno.

Expansion of the French imperial system largely began in the seventeenth century and spread to several colonies in North America and Caribbean. This proliferation of capital and colonization included few settlers compared to the number of enslaved Africans and indigenous populations, therefore making the slave-holding Caribbean colonies more important and economically productive. The earliest French slave trading activity in the seventeenth century was largely clandestine and/or illegal, and thus much evidence for this period is lacking. Still, it is known that several trading companies were established and began staking claim to various locations within the Caribbean, including Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Saint Domingue. However, the development of the *Compagnie des Indes Occidentales* [West Indies Company] in 1664 expanded and elevated slave trading and commercialism for the French Crown to grand proportions.²⁰

Spanish settlers maintained a base on eastern locations of Española while the western portions essentially were abandoned and left vulnerable to numerous raids from French, British and Dutch

¹⁷ Wilson 1990: ch. 3

¹⁸ Guitar 2006: 43-45; Pons 2007: 7

¹⁹ Guitar 2006: 45; Landers 2009; Sued-Badillo 2011: 107-109; Wheat 2016

²⁰ Munford 1991: vii; Stein 1979: 4

pirates operating in the Caribbean.²¹ By 1659, the French were settling on the island's western region in stronger numbers. After decades of conflict between the French and Spanish, the Spanish officially ceded the contested territory with the signing of the 1697 Treaty of Ryswick.²² The Treaty formally recognized French presence on the island space, then named Saint Domingue, and marked the increased cultivation of cocoa, indigo, coffee, tobacco, and especially sugar. These crops had been cultivated on smaller Caribbean islands of Martinique, Guadeloupe, and St. Christopher since 1664 when the French entered the slave trade.

With the founding of the English Royal African Company in 1672, captive Africans became the foremost form of capital and the international slave trade in exploded. The need for enslaved labor in the Caribbean islands was deemed an “absolute necessity” so “in the France of Louis XIV a government bounty was paid on every African slave exported to the Americas.”²³ As profits from the Caribbean colonies, specifically Martinique, grew, centralized government policies under the French crown began implementing mandates directed toward dictating the trade and the people who were moved along travel routes. In 1685, the Code Noir was issued to attempt to regulate the lives and treatment of enslaved Africans throughout the French colonial empire.

Africans in the EuroAmerican Slave Trade

The 18th century can be thought of as the height of the European slave trade. Capital accumulation grew increasingly dependent on Africans' exploited labor on crop-producing plantations in the Americas. It is estimated that in the 18th century, the French exported between 1.1 and 1.25 million captive Africans, bound for port cities of the Americas. Of those captured, at least 800,000 were taken to Saint Domingue.²⁴ Cap Français was a main port site for the French trade,

²¹ Heintz Jr. and Heintz 1978: 17; Knight 1990: 48-54

²² Knight 1990: 54; Pons 2007: 93

²³ Polanyi 1966: 18; Law 1991: 126; Munford 1991: 505-522; Boucher 2011: 218-219

²⁴ Geggus 2001a: 121; Estimates 2009; Dubois 2009: 139; Dubois 2011a: 442

receiving over 9,000 ships in 1790 alone. In 1728 there were 50,000 enslaved Africans in Saint Domingue; in 1754 that figure was increased to 172,000.²⁵ The French settled a trading base at Ouidah, a city on the Bight of Benin coast that became a forerunning port of the slave trade due to its convenient geography and low prices for captives.²⁶ In the early parts of the 18th century, the Dahomey slave trading polity came to dominate the Bight of Benin region. Dahomey was located 60 miles north of the coast; and as its power and resources from European merchants increased, the kingdom moved south to conquer Allada in 1724 and Ouidah in 1727. With direct Dahomean presence on the coast, there was a steady supply of captives for the trade that is shown in Table 1. Ethnic groups that were subsumed under the Dahomean Kingdom included the Aja, Fon, Nago/Yorubas, Ewe and Aradas.

Intra-European, intra-African, and European-African conflict over control of the slave trade destabilized many coastal and interior societies and affected the regional outflows of Africa ethnic groups over time. In addition to the Slave Coast, the French held slave posts in the Senegambia region (present-day Senegal) at Dakar and Saint Louis. Given its geographic proximity to Europe, Senegambia was the first sub-Saharan region to establish direct commercial contact with Europe in the 15th century, and was one of the first important sources of captives to the Americas.²⁷ From Table 1.0, Senegambian captives were the third largest regional group brought to Saint Domingue in the early 18th century. Islam had been present in the Senegambia and Sierra Leone regions for centuries and was associated with trade, commercial activity, and political allegiances. An alliance between Muslim Fulbe and Jallonke resulted in jihad that as early as the 1720s, and reaching its height in the 1760s-80s, violently pushed Sierra Leoneans into the slave trade with increasing

²⁵ Geggus 2001: 126

²⁶ Polanyi 1966: 21; Law 1991; Monroe 2014

²⁷ Gomez 1998: 45

Table 1.0: Embarked Captives to Saint Domingue by African Regions, 1700-1750

	Senegambia	Sierra Leone	Windward Coast	Gold Coast	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra	WC Africa & St. Helena	SE Africa & Indian Ocean	Other	Total
1706-10	160	0	0	0	1,408	0	0	0	0	1,568
1711-15	2,096	0	80	0	4,899	370	840	0	314	8,599
1716-20	2,431	0	0	149	8,059	1,027	2,875	0	0	14,541
1721-25	2,063	0	0	273	8,577	0	2,993	386	131	14,423
1726-30	1,221	0	0	0	10,970	0	593	0	396	13,180
1731-35	3,805	0	0	1,102	6,149	0	3,172	386	120	14,734
1736-40	5,168	177	922	5,354	15,453	320	10,809	0	946	39,149
1741-45	4,835	220	2,164	8,699	9,371	484	13,693	0	480	39,946
1746-50	768	0	395	1,116	3,665	0	8,956	0	0	14,900
Totals	22,547	397	3,561	16,693	68,551	2,201	43,931	772	2,387	161,040

Table 1.1: Embarked Captives to Saint Domingue by African Regions, 1751-1800

	Senegambia	Sierra Leone	Windward Coast	Gold Coast	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra	WC Africa & St. Helena	SE Africa & Indian Ocean	Other	Total
1751-55	3,788	1,301	772	1,006	21,446	1,676	20,893	0	538	51,420
1756-60	0	263	0	230	577	626	2,673	0	0	4,369
1761-65	1,237	1,991	333	109	5,757	2,117	14,306	0	2,160	28,010
1766-70	2,190	4,404	456	1,377	12,543	4,234	48,013	0	8,441	81,658
1771-75	2,306	255	241	929	18,423	1,686	44,105	333	5,067	73,345
1776-80	1,961	1,698	196	630	18,224	5,179	27,890	2,189	4,719	62,686
1781-85	2,046	3,601	0	2,145	7,926	2,934	36,692	2,513	5,242	63,099
1786-90	7,459	6,676	2,010	8,147	30,593	13,263	75,018	19,473	17,212	179,851
1791-95	837	1,664	206	431	3,772	4,535	15,506	4,901	1,983	33,835
1796-	0	0	0	0	0	0	540	0	0	540
Totals	21,824	21,853	4,214	15,004	119,261	36,250	285,636	29,409	45,362	578,813

Political issues in Senegambia in part led the French to move to other coastal locales for commercial activity. Ouidah was the most utilized port for the French for several centuries, and this continued with conflicts between the Oyo and Dahomey between the 1760s and 1780s contributing consistently large numbers of captives from the Bight of Benin. However, increasing aggression from other European traders in the Western coastal regions pushed French activity south. While the Portuguese controlled southern Angolan ports Luanda and Benguela, the French took hold of areas along the Loango Coast surrounding the Congo River. At the commence of the 18th century, the West Central Africa zone already constituted a secondary destination for French ships as indicated by the numbers in Table 1.0. As Saint Domingue surpassed Cuba and Brazil as the world's leading sugar producer in the 1750s, the necessity for enslaved Africans increased and the Loango coast ascended as French traders' primary source of captives.³⁰ The coast was dominated by the Loango Kingdom, which, formerly as part of the Kongo Kingdom, had established trading ivory, copper, rubber, and wood with the Portuguese as early as the late 15th century.³¹ Traders acquired most captives through the Loango Bay from deep into the interior, facilitated by the Bobangi.³² To the south, Kongo Kingdom civil wars also provided captives to the Vili traders, who then transported them north to Loango.³³

Loango coast ports used by the French were Cabinda controlled by the Kingdom of Ngoyo and Malemba in the Kingdom of KaKongo.³⁴ As Table 1.1 shows, approximately 285,636 captives were taken from West Central African ports after 1750; this number is more than double the number of captives from the Bight of Benin. West Central African captives, though representing different polities, cultures, and religious identities, were connected by the KiKongo language. By the mid-18th

³⁰ Stein 1979: 79; Geggus 2001: 123

³¹ Sommerdyck 2012: 42; Mobley 2015: 170

³² Stein 1979: 79; Richardson 1989: 14-15; Gomez 1998: 143; Geggus 2001a: 123

³³ Thornton 2000: 60

³⁴ Miller 1989; Richardson 1999; Miller 2002; Sommerdyck 2012; de Silva 2013; Mobley 2015

century, KiKongo-speakers clearly represented a group majority throughout Saint Domingue, but they were particularly dominant on coffee plantations of the mountainous northern region. Of these, Kongolese in north Saint Domingue were approximately 64% of the total laborers on coffee and indigo plantations, and roughly 40-44% of sugar laborers.³⁵ In addition to slave trade and plantation evidence, a sample of runaway 757 ads from *Les Affiches Americaines* database also show ‘Congos’ represented an ethnic majority.³⁶

Slave trade data also shows a clear dominance of African men over women during the height of the French trade to Saint Domingue, consistent with findings from other European nations’ trading activity more generally. Between 1750 and 1791, the most gender parity existed among captives from the Bight of Biafra, where 53.9% were male and the remaining 46.1% women and children. Children made a sizable proportion in French slaving records, nearly 27% of captives. Lower sex ratios were often due to raiding and kidnapping, of which women and children were commonly the victims such as in the Bights of Biafra and Benin areas. Higher levels of gender imbalance were between captives from the West Central and Southeastern African regions. This imbalance especially among the BaKongo can be attributed to women’s value as agricultural laborers and therefore were kept from the trade in higher numbers. Other reasons for the low presence of women in the French trade relate to local needs for slave women in matrilineal societies and the hardships of the journey from the interior to the coasts, which made women and children less desirable.³⁷

³⁵ Geggus 1993: 80-81; Vanhee 2002: 246; Dubois 2004: 42

³⁶ Eddins 2014: 18

³⁷ Geggus 1989a: 25-26, 28, 37



Figure 1.2: A French slave ship, La Marie-Séraphique, seen from Cap Français, 1773. *slaveryimages.org*

On the eve of the Haitian Revolution in 1789, the enslaved population of Saint Domingue was nearly 500,000, two-thirds of which had been born and raised in Africa.³⁸ Approximately one-third of these newly arrived Africans arrived in the northern port city Cap Français and other ports such as Port-au-Prince and Jérémie were used to a lesser extent. In the colony, living conditions for the enslaved were so deadly that the Africans did not sustain and reproduce themselves, which led plantation owners to continually replace that pool of laborers with new, Africa-born captives.³⁹ Table 1.3 shows the population distribution of enslaved Africans and African descendants in the northern, southern, and western provinces. The guidelines for treatment of enslaved people were outlined in the Code Noir of 1685, which – at least on paper – provided protection for the enslaved.

³⁸ Munford and Zeuske 1988: 13-14; Dubois 2009: 140; Dubois 2011a: 442

³⁹ Fick 1990: 26

It also left open a loophole which European men used to bequeath their wealth to their mixed-race progeny, creating a growing class of *gens du couleur* whose education levels, financial capital, and plantation ownership rivaled that of rich, white Saint Domingans.

Race in Saint Domingue

In addition to the enslaved African population, there was a significant population that occupied a more precarious position in the continuum of enslavement and freedom. Forced and consensual interracial relationships between European men and African and African descended women produced a small mixed-race population whose social mobility and status was relatively fluid, the *gens du couleur* – or men of color.⁴⁰ Racial categorization of those who were not ‘purely’ white was an obsession of sorts in Saint Domingue – so much so that writer Moreau de St. Mery developed an elaborate schema describing several dozen combinations of black, white, and AmerIndian or sub-continent Indian mixtures, describing “classes” of skin tones, facial features, and hair types (Garraway 2005a). The resulting categories included *mulatre*, half-white half-black; *quarteron*, one-quarter black; and *griffe*, three-quarters black, etc. (St. Mery 1797a: 71-74).

Some mixed-race African descendants remained enslaved, though most inherited manumission from their white fathers, educational opportunities in France, prosperous estates, numbers of slaves, and other forms of capital accrurement.⁴¹ The free people of color numbered over 27, 000 and comprised 47% of the entire free population, accounting for a little over 5% of the colony. They found success in the coffee and increasingly the indigo niche markets, which required less start-up funds and smaller workforces making them safer investments than sugar plantations.⁴² Free women of color were especially entrepreneurial in Saint Domingue’s urban centers. Their economic activities in domestic work allowed them to accumulate capital in the buying and selling of slaves, real estate,

⁴⁰ Hall 1972; Garrigus 2006

⁴¹ Hall 1972; Garrigus 2006

⁴² Garrigus 1993

and luxury goods distribution.⁴³ During the late eighteenth century, French laws increasingly excluded free people of color from certain occupations and prevented them from accessing full political representation in France. Despite their small numbers, the frustrations of this wealthy and powerful group triggered them to start a campaign for citizenship led by *quaterons* Vincent Oge and Julian Raimond, who challenged the French national assembly in 1790.⁴⁴

In addition to the gens du couleur, some enslaved Africans and creoles in urban areas with skilled trades could purchase their freedom or be manumitted by a family member. These former slaves – *affranchis* – were a modestly wealthy group that often maintained connections to the enslaved population through family, ethnic identity bonds, and work relations. For example, Toussaint Louverture was an *affranchi* before the Haitian Revolution, and his innermost circle was mostly comprised of free and enslaved Fon-speakers of the Allada/Adja nations.⁴⁵ In 1789, there were some 1,000 free women and men of color living in Le Cap, many of whom owned homes, business, and enslaved Africans.⁴⁶ Cooks, carpenters, hairdressers, tailors and other such workers from the Kongo and Bight of Benin bought their liberty. Enslaved seamstresses occupied the higher echelon of the bonded labor force. They trained in France to learn the latest fashion trends and were leased to other slave owners, allowing them to freely travel to markets or to see their clients. These women then used their geographic mobility and earned income to manumit themselves.⁴⁷

⁴³ Rogers and King 2012

⁴⁴ Dubois 2004: ch. 3; Garrigus 2006: ch. 8; Garrigus 2010

⁴⁵ Girard and Donnadieu 2013: 50

⁴⁶ Geggus 2013: 103

⁴⁷ Weaver 2012



Figure 1.3: “Carte de l’Isle de St. Domingue,” 1760. *John Carter Brown Library*.

Social Conditions and Division of Labor

The major city of Saint Domingue, and the wealthiest of all the French colonies, was Cap Français, usually referred to as Le Cap, a port along the northern coast. Known generally as the North plain, the districts surrounding and including Le Cap were the most affluent and opulent in the colony.⁴⁸ The city was home to a mixture of people – poor and wealthy whites, enslaved people who leased themselves out for contracted work, the gens du couleur, and affranchi artisans. Its social life was vibrant and included masonic lodges, philosophical and scientific societies, cafes, dance halls and theaters, rum shops, and churches. The city was also an attraction for visitors and runaway slaves, who often sought refuge there by passing as free. In the American Revolutionary War years, Some 200 runaways were found renting rooms in houses owned by free people of color during a sweep of the Petite Guinee neighborhood on the west side of Le Cap.⁴⁹ The city hosted the *Marché des Negres*, negro market, where especially on Sundays enslaved people from rural districts would

⁴⁸ Geggus 1999

⁴⁹ Geggus 2013: 103-107, 115

bring foodstuffs to buy and sell. The enslaved population for this region was about 170,000; and Table 1.3 shows the population distribution of Cap's surrounding parishes as well as those outside Port-au-Prince, the colonial capital and next most populace city.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Geggus 1991b

Table 1.2: Distribution of African Ethnicities across Saint Domingue Ports, 1750-1800

	Senegambia	Sierra Leone	Windward Coast	Gold Coast	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra	WC Africa	SE Africa	Other	Total
Arcahaye	0	204	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	204
Cap Français	8,034	7,007	824	7,356	36,898	6,949	155,771	13,340	23,384	259,563
Les Cayes	730	3,733	1,430	1,182	3,673	7,490	19,518	1,700	3,317	42,773
Fort Dauphin	416	0	0	0	0	0	432	0	0	848
Jacmel	131	143	0	0	0	132	1,616	0	223	2,245
Jérémie	0	0	0	107	0	557	382	0	270	1,316
Léogane	2,597	244	0	2,274	13,091	1,082	28,254	894	3,229	51,665
Petit Goâve	0	0	0	0	313	168	201	0	0	682
Port-au-Prince	5,608	5,700	853	644	31,320	8,252	39,912	2,213	15,485	109,987
Port-de-Paix	0	204	0	0	626	0	1930	0	382	3,142
Saint-Marc	1,352	972	624	1,062	17,228	2,911	10,196	2,166	5,964	42,475
Port Unspecified	1,009	386	0	516	2,029	154	5,074	843	2,919	12,930
Total	19,877	18,593	3,731	13,141	105,178	27,695	265,286	21,156	55,173	527,830

Table 1.3: Population Distribution of Enslaved African Diasporans, 1789⁵¹

Province	Region	Parishes	Number of African Diasporans
North	Le Cap	Le Cap and its dependences	21,613
		Petite Anse and Plain of Le Cap	11,122
		L'Acul, Limonade and St. Susan	19,876
		Quartier Morin and Grand Rivière	18,554
		Dondon and Marmelade	17,376
		Limbé and Port Margot	15,978
		Plaisance and Le Borgne	15,018
	Fort Dauphin	Fort Dauphin	10,004
		Ouanaminthe and Vallière	9,987
		Terrier Rouge and Le Trou	15,476
	Port de Paix	Port de Paix, St. Louis, Jean Rabel, etc.	29,540
	Mole St. Nicholas	Mole and Bombarde	3,183
West	Port-au-Prince	Port au Prince	42,848
		Arcahayé	18,553
		Mirebalais	10,902
	Léogane	Léogane	14,896
	St. Marc	St. Marc, Petite Rivière, Verettes, and Gonaïves	57,216
	Petit Goâve	Petit Goâve, Grand Goâve, Le Fond des Nègres	18,829
		L'Anse a Vaux, le Petit Trou	13,229
	Jérémie	Jérémie and Cape Dame Marie	20,774
South	The Cayes	The Cayes and Torbuk/Torbeck	30,937
	Tiburon	Cape Tiburon and Les Côteaux	8,153
	St. Louis	St. Louis, Cavaillon, and Aquin	18,785
	Jacmel	Jacmel, Les Cayes, and Baynet	21,151
Total			464,000

By 1789, Saint Domingue held over 7,800 plantations: over 3,000 in indigo; 3,000 coffee producers; nearly 800 cotton; and nearly 800 sugar, which was the key to the colonial economy. Enslaved women, men, and children in this plantation economy lived within distinctly oppressive conditions. They were considered chattel that were commodities and forms of capital, typically counted alongside furniture and animals; they received no wages, nor did they have any political or

⁵¹ Reproduced from Rainsford [1805] 2013, Appendix xviii, p. 270

legal rights or representation.⁵² The Code Noir was the official royal policy regarding the treatment of slaves in the French colonies, yet it was largely disregarded as plantation life provided insufficient clothing, food, shelter, and little to no medical assistance. Only after the Code Noir was reinforced in 1784 were plantation owners required to provide the enslaved with land plots for provisions. Newly arrived Africans were given a transition period of six to twelve months of “seasoning,” which was a process of structured care to acclimate the captives to the new environment. Despite these efforts, newly arrived Africans died at rapid rates to the extent that death rates exceeded birth rates throughout the eighteenth century.⁵³ African women’s fertility and overall health was particularly vulnerable to deterioration due to the trauma and violence of capture, the Middle Passage, and the relentless labor regimes on sugar and coffee plantations.⁵⁴

Death was ubiquitous in Saint Domingue, and was particularly unkind to the enslaved population. Diseases such as small pox, typhoid and yellow fevers, dysentery, syphilis, scurvy, scabies were widespread in the Atlantic zone and prevalent on slave ships due to lack of nourishment, supplies, and sanitation.⁵⁵ Early sources claimed that between one-third and one-half of Africans brought to the colony perished in a short time frame.⁵⁶ In addition to lacking subsistence, near unending work schedules, illness and hunger, brutality toward the slaves was commonplace. Sexual exploitation of women occurred with regularity, as was sexual humiliation of men in the form of castration. One planter in Trou named Poncet was killed by a group of house slaves, including his sons, whom he castrated, and a daughter with whom he’d committed incest and impregnated. Sannite, the pregnant quateron, was sentenced to a public hanging after her delivery of

⁵² McClellan III 1992: 64

⁵³ Munford and Zeuske 1988: 17; Fick 1990: 26

⁵⁴ Walton 2012: 65

⁵⁵ McClellan III 1992: 29-30; Weaver 1999: 58

⁵⁶ Fick 1990: 26

what was presumed to be Poncet's child. Punishments for indiscretions of any kind were also met with violence and torturous acts, some of which were described by Baron de Vastey.

Writing in 1814, de Vastey relayed horrific stories of planters' treatment of enslaved people, which occurred frequently and usually with impunity. Bordering on sadism, planters buried slaves alive, used their blood to clarify sugar, mutilated their genitals, and cut off their limbs.⁵⁷ Figure 1.4 shows bloodhounds being trained to hunt and capture enslaved runaways. Enslaved people escaped for a myriad of reasons, one of which included torturous plantation owners. At the Dame de l'Isle Adam property in Plaine du Nord, a former runaway named Thomas was interviewed about his experiences and the reasons he escape. Thomas was a creole commandeur who fled before All Saint's Day in early November 1774 then returned in early January 1775. He fled because he feared retribution from M. Chapuzet, the plantation agent who had a penchant for murdering enslaved people suspected of harming animals.⁵⁸



Figure 1.4: “The Mode of Training Bloodhounds in St. Domingo, and of exercising them by Chasseurs.” Marcus Rainsford, 1805. *John Carter Brown Library*.

⁵⁷ de Vastey [1814] 2014: 109-111

⁵⁸ “Interrogation d’un negre de l’habitation de la Dame de l’Isle Adam du janvier 1775” ANOM F3 90: 160; Ghachem 2012: 141-143

Depending on crop growth and geographic location, plantations had as many as 250 enslaved African and African descended women and men who performed a range of tasks that were organized in a hierarchal fashion. Men typically outnumbered women on plantations due to preferences for men during the early phases of the Atlantic trade, though the sex ratio came into balance in the years approaching the Haitian Revolution.⁵⁹ Despite the apparent dominance of male presence, the division of labor between enslaved men and women had little variance. Women occupied the domestic arena labor force that had responsibilities for cooking, cleaning, laundry, and healthcare. Conversely, there were other specialized areas that were specifically occupied by enslaved men, such as drivers, sugar boilers, watchmen or valets. However, these positions were rarely afforded to women compared to those who performed arduous ‘field hand’ labor. On sugar plantations, it was quite regular for women and men to cut cane side-by-side as well as other tasks in the distilling and refining processes.⁶⁰ Enslaved creole men could occupy elite positions while women and Africans made up most the field hands. Specific divisions of labor, ethnic and gender compositions were largely dependent on crop growth, therefore what will follow is a description of plantation life, focusing on Saint Domingue’s major commodities: sugar, coffee, and indigo.

Indigo

Saint Domingue began cultivating indigo in the early 1700s, though it was not wildly profitable due to increased attention to coffee and sugar. Indigo was initially thought of as an entryway to begin sugar and coffee production. However, since the start-up costs for indigo production were lower, Saint Domingue’s free people of color gained wealth in indigo development in the latter three decades of the 18th century. While most sugar plantations had as many as 250 enslaved workers, indigo plantations were smaller (less than 30) but growing (almost 80) in the 1780s. The work load

⁵⁹ Geggus 1996: 260; Moitt 2001: ch. 2; Walton 2012: 18

⁶⁰ Moitt 1995: 157; Moitt 2001: ch. 3

was relatively less arduous than on sugar plantations. There was constant planting and weeding of the indigo shrubs, which were uprooted and re-planted several times beginning at the start of the annual rainy season. Men used hoes to dig the holes while women followed, placing the seeds and covering them. As bundles of the plant were collected, they were placed into a basin of water and allowed to ferment until the liquid dye emerged and the men drained the basin.

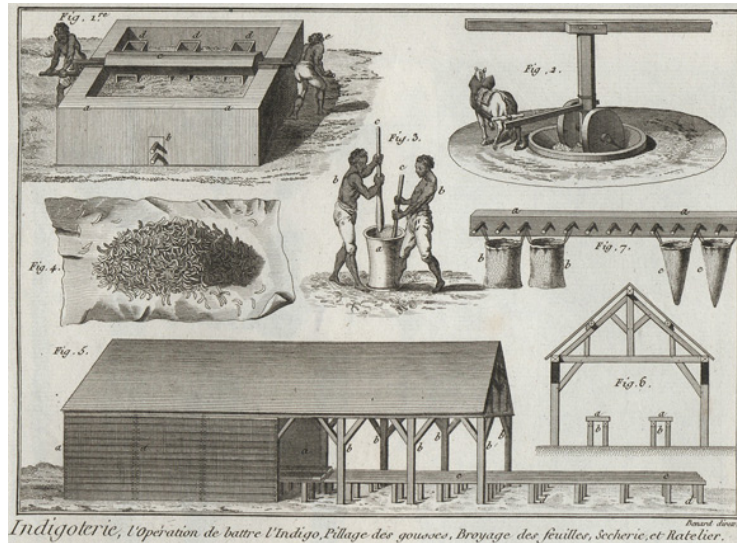


Figure 1.5: Indigo production at the Lemoine-Drouet plantation in the southern parish Torbeck, 1784. *Archives de la Haute-Garonne*.

In the north, indigo plantations had mostly (64%) Central Africans, few from the Slave Coast/Bight of Benin (16%) and even less from the Bight of Biafra (1%). In the west, there was near parity of Central Africans and those from Benin; while in the south there was no clear majority: 33% Central Africans, 19% Biafrans, 18% from Benin.⁶¹ The sale of an indigo plantation in Torbeck, located in the South, in 1784 included 72 enslaved people. The size of this plantation corroborates Geggus' assessments that indigo estates were growing after the Seven Years War. The Torbeck plantation, owned by Lemoine-Drouet, included: 33 men, 22 women, 12 boys and 5 girls. 21 of the adults were colony-born creoles and the others were African-born: 21 Congos, 4 Cangas, 4

⁶¹ Geggus 1998: 204

Mandigues, 2 Minas, 2 Thiambas/Quiambas, and 1 Senegalaise.⁶² Among them were one creole commandeur Gerome, aged 28; an 18-year-old wig-maker named Philippe; two creole servants named Jeannette (45) and Sanitte (age unclear); and Marie Jeanne, a creole hospitaliere aged 45.

Coffee

Coffee was rapidly becoming a leading crop in Saint Domingue after the Seven Year's War and prior to the Haitian Revolution. It grew to rival sugar production between 1767 and 1789, during which time coffee export profits boomed six-fold and served to loosen France's grip on the colony. Table 1.4 shows that the increase in imported Africans corresponded with the growth of coffee sales between the years 1783 and 1788. Whereas sugar required large plots of flat lands, Saint Domingue's heavy rainfall and cool temperatures in the mountainous highlands supported coffee cultivation on smaller plots. For example, in Port Margot had 24 coffee plantations, *caf  teries*, at the top of the mountain, 15 on the slope, and none at the base.⁶³ The favorable climate and topography made it considerably easier to start a *caf  terie* with less initial capital than one would need for a sugar plantation. Smaller labor forces allowed coffee production to be a low-cost investment.

The numbers of enslaved workers were much lower than the labor force on sugar plantations, which typically were over 200. Coffee plantations tended to be larger in the west, averaging 76 people, than the north or south, averaging 43 and 38 respectively. In the west, coffee originated from L  ogane and spread to Grand-Go  ve and sections of Port-au-Prince. Northern parishes that surrounded the Le Cap plains were coffee dominant, for example Marmelade had 7,000 enslaved on 160 *caf  teries* and several provision grounds, while Dondon had 9,000 on 219 *caf  teries*. This coffee frontier originated in Terrier-Rouge and eventually spread southwestward toward l'Acul and

⁶² Bayle, Mme Jeanne. 2008. "Vente d'une Plantation    Saint-Domingue en 1784." *Petite Biblioth  que* 161: 1-16. Les Amis des Archives de la Haute-Garonne

⁶³ Trouillot 1982: 344

Plaisance. In the southern peninsula region of Grand Anse, the Jérémie parish contributed a substantial amount of coffee in the 1770s and 1780s.⁶⁴

In comparison to sugar plantations, coffee tended to have more enslaved Africans and less creoles. More specifically, they included strong numbers of those *nations* (African ethnic groups) deemed undesirable by sugar producers, such as the Congo, Bibi, Mondongue, or Igbo. Stereotypes were based on perceptions of Africans' health and diet, physical strength, agricultural experience, and overall disposition. P. J. Laborie's *The Coffee Planter of Saint Domingo* (1798) served as an instruction manual for British planters planning coffee cultivation in Jamaica and provided insights into common practices on Saint Dominguan *caf  teries*. Per Laborie, Kongos, Aradas, and Thiambas were most desirable; Kongos were thought of as especially docile. Laborie made other suggestions, such as organizing work gangs by nation, ensuring that they receive warm baths to help them adjust to the climate, and baptizing the newly arrived with the planter, rather than other Africans, serving as godparent to dissuade non-Christan "superstitious" rituals. Interestingly, he notes that women were not cooperative because they were accustomed to working for men in Africa, perhaps referring to the fact that women performed agricultural labor roles on the African continent.⁶⁵

Table 1.4: Captive African Imports and Coffee Sales⁶⁶

Year	Africans Imported & Sold	Product of Sales	Cafes Sold	Prices in the Colony
1783	9,370	15,650,000	44,573,000	33,429,750
1784	25,025	43,602,000	52,885,000	44,951,250
1785	21,762	43,634,000	57,885, 000	57,368,000
1786	27,648	54,420,000	52, 180,000	57,398,000
1787	30,839	60,563,000	70,003,000	91,003,900
1788	29,506	61,936,000	68,151,000	92,003,850

⁶⁴ "Extrait du Tableau des Population et Culture de St. Domingue en 1784" 27AP/12 Francois Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN; Trouillot 1982: 344-347; Geggus 1993: 78; Manuel 2005

⁶⁵ Laborie 1798: 162-163

⁶⁶ M  moire de Assembl  e Nationale 18 Juin 1790: 70, No. 4 *Nouvelles de Saint Domingue: Extrait du no. 66 des Affiches Americaines du 19 aout 1790*, John Carter Brown Library.

Sugar

If coffee and indigo growth stimulated the raw wealth for capital accumulation throughout the French empire, sugar was its cash cow. Sugar slowly gained popularity among Europeans, beginning as a delicacy for the upper classes to becoming a dietary staple for members of European societies. French traders and merchants established plantations in the lesser Antilles islands beginning in the late 17th century outfitted primarily for sugar cane cultivation. Sugar production was an intensive, - multi-step process, and necessary technology had not developed sufficiently to make the sugar trade significant on a world scale. However, over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries as cultivation processes became more refined, and exportation of sugar from the Americas to Europe multiplied exponentially.⁶⁷ Though other French and English colonies were also substantial contributors to the sugar trade, Saint Domingue ascended to the top of the export chain by out-producing them all combine by the end of the 18th century. Saint Domingue became known as Louis XV and XVI's "Pearl of the Antilles" by exporting 100 million pounds of sugar in 1765, and by 1788 sugar exports reached 200 million pounds.⁶⁸

There were nearly 800 sugar plantations in Saint Domingue by 1789. While this may not seem like a large number compared to coffee, but sugar plantations were larger, more intensive operations that included a diversified labor force. Sugar plantations dominated the north, an area that spanned approximately 75 kilometers from east to west and 25 km from north to south of the bustling port city Cap Français.⁶⁹ The plantations averaged between 150 and 200 enslaved people, and were the largest in the north but slightly smaller in the west.⁷⁰ For example, the five Galliffet plantations, some of the most industrious in the colony, held a combined total of over 1,000 enslaved people.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Mintz 1985

⁶⁸ Dupuy 1989: 21; Munford and Zeuske 1988: 13

⁶⁹ Geggus 1999: 33-36

⁷⁰ Geggus 1993: 74

⁷¹ Galliffet inventory 107AP/127, dossier 6, AN

The industrialization of sugar was supported by heavy investments from a wealthy class of planters known as *grand blancs*, or the big whites. Many of these grand blancs were funded by French merchants who used their capital to develop and run large sugar plantations. These merchants also controlled international trade by dictating prices for products such as food and commodities, as well as the prices for enslaved Africans.⁷² *Petite blancs*, or small whites were overseers, artisans, shopkeepers, managers, or small-scale plantation owners.

Sugar estates were akin to compounds with several buildings including the main house for the plantation owner, several housing units (shacks) for the bondspeople, animal quarters, an infirmary, and sugar-processing buildings – all covering up to 750 acres. At the height of cultivation season, enslaved people worked, in shifts, full 24 hour days, receiving as little as four hours of sleep per night and a small window for lunch that allowed them time to cultivate their own gardens. During work hours, sugar cultivation required all hands to plant, fertilize, weed, and cut sugar cane stalks. Field hands were overseen by *commandeurs*, or drivers, enslaved people who carried a whip and machete. The cane stalks were then fed into the mill by women under the supervision of a *maître sucrier* – sugar boiler monitors, where juice was extracted that was then boiled over several times until it hardened and was prepared for shipping.⁷³ This was a dangerous process, and it was not uncommon for enslaved laborers to endure accidents such as having limbs cut by machetes or a body part trapped in the sugar grinder. In addition to sugar cane cutting and boiling, estates included farming and ranching, hospital workers, midwives, clothes washers, and other artisanal jobs. While coffee planters tended to favor captives from the Kongolands, Bight of Benin Africans were more prevalent on sugar plantations, especially in Saint Domingue’s west and the south regions. Planters regarded them as physically stronger than other ethnic groups, and more capable of agricultural

⁷² Dupuy 1985

⁷³ Stein 1988: 43, 60; Fick 1990: 28-29

work. The occupational diversity of sugar estates allowed for more social mobility than on coffee plantations, although creole men were preferred for most specialized work.⁷⁴

While BaKongos and Bight of Benin Africans were the ethnic majorities, there still was a plurality of Africans from Senegambia, the Bight of Biafra, the Windward Coast, Sierra Leone, and Southeast Africa. Africans generally gravitated to others from their same geographic region, but they also intermarried, lived and worked together, participated in each other's sacred rituals, and resisted enslavement through *mawonaj*. Though enslaved Africans and African descendants acted collectively on their own behalf, which will be discussed in subsequent chapters, acts of resistance were perpetrated by individuals daily. Suicide was a common response to the trauma of the Middle Passage and enslavement; Ibos were particularly noted for taking their own lives.⁷⁵ Several midwives were accused, at times perhaps justifiably, of killing newborns to keep them from enduring life as an enslaved person.⁷⁶ These individualized efforts to manage the trauma of the chattel slavery experience could only go so far in presenting any legitimate challenge to plantations and the wider colonial order. To build broader units of resistance, relationships had to be forged across racial and ethnic lines. The following chapters of this dissertation retraces the steps of Africans' and African descendants' micro-level mobilization processes as the Haitian Revolution approached.

⁷⁴ Geggus 1993: 80, 84-86; Geggus 1999: 39

⁷⁵ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 30-31; Gomez 1998: 128-130

⁷⁶ Weaver 2004

CHAPTER TWO: AFRICA-INSPIRED RITUALS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on Africa-inspired rituals and their role in cultivating an oppositional consciousness among enslaved people of late 18th century Saint Domingue. The central argument is that by participating in ritual actions, Africans and African descendants were reminded of the cultural heritage(s) that they brought to Saint Domingue with them as captives in the EuroAmerican slave trade. Though the enslaved population was culturally and geographically diverse, they interacted with each other and exchanged sacred forms of power, developing social relationships in ritual gatherings where their collective consciousness was enhanced and politicized. The gatherings and related activities were tools to affirm humanity and re-connect with spirit beings that could influence everyday life situations. Rebels used these opportunities to recruit potential insurgents and to preach for liberation. As such, ritual spaces functioned as zones that fostered opposition to the enslavement that was foundational to the social order. The François Mackandal affair was a watershed event that established precedent for forms of resistance that would later contribute to the beginnings of the Haitian Revolution.

Members of the various African ethnic groups, along with creole African descendants born in the colony, formed ritual persuasions that were distinct from each other yet shared common worldviews. These groups were described as “nations,” and were distinguished by dances, songs, association with spirit forces, and the use of flora and fauna that facilitated healing, divination, and protection. Among others, the *Calenda*, *Chica*, *Wangua*, and the Dahomean *Vaudox* and Kongolese *Petwo* rites were the predecessors to what would become the Haitian vodou religion.⁷⁷ Initiation processes and vows of secrecy characterized several of these rites. Sacred practices often occurred

⁷⁷ Cauna 1996: 335; Fick 2000: 40-45; Vanhee 2002: 246-250, 254; Dubois 2004: 49

when Africans and African descendants gathered in wooded areas after dark, in unused churches or burial processions, as these were protected places away from plantation drivers (Fick 1990: 40-45; Ramsey 2011: 35-36). These assemblies were not merely spiritual in nature, but were protected spaces for Africans and African descendants to express their intentionality for liberation.

In tandem with spiritual gatherings, individuals used ritual artifact technologies in their daily lives to mediate conflicts, to bring about good fortune, to heal sickness, or for protection from negative spirits. Ritual leaders who created these artifacts held privilege within the enslaved community, but lived and worked alongside other laborers and/or runaways. Their esteem within the community was based on their efficacy in using spiritual power to make things happen in the natural realm. In the case that leaders or their respective spirits were not efficacious, followers would shift their allegiance to rites that were more powerful. This would have been particularly true for newly arrived Africans whose traditions included the veneration of familial ancestors in sacred spaces such as burials or shrines. These Africans would not have had access to their familial spirits due to their forced migration to Saint Domingue; therefore, they would have gravitated to spirits that were associated with universal forces, for example the Yoruba *orisha*. Given the ethnic pluralism of the colony, we can assume there was a rapidly changing spiritual landscape of shifting loyalties between competing sects and shared symbols between cooperative sects, all of which contributed to the forging of a collective consciousness and a cultural repository of ideas, histories, and practices.⁷⁸

THEORY & LITERATURE: DIASPORA, FREE SPACES, AND RITUALS

The African Diaspora is generally understood as the forced mass dispersals of Africans from their original homelands associated with the rise of the EuroAmerican Slave Trade and conquest of the Americas between the 15th and 19th centuries. Africans were not able to fully retain cohesive religious structures due to the trauma of separation from their homes and the Middle Passage; but

⁷⁸ Sosis 1971: ch 10; conversation with John Thornton

they re-created elements of those rituals and transmitted them through gatherings in Saint Domingue. Prior to the colonial situation, African captives began bonding around coping with the horrifying conditions of the Middle Passage. The long voyages on foot or in small river boats from African hinterlands to coastal ports cities and the waiting period in slave castles at the ports could take some months to a year. Then, slave ship voyages across the Atlantic Ocean also took up to three to four months. Captives were tightly packed into ships, usually head-to-foot to fit as many people as possible into the ship's belly. Food was meager and the sanitary conditions were loathsome. The Middle Passage was a harrowing experience where physical abuse, disease, and death; psychological disorientation; and sexual exploitation were ubiquitous. Captives commonly attempted suicide, and at times collectively revolted on the ships (Richardson 2001; Smallwood 2008; Mustakeem 2016). Interactions between "shipmates" on the way to the ports and on the slave ships were the only sources of humanity affirmation, and the beginnings of the social ties that would spawn collective identity formation and cultural production after disembarkation (Mintz and Price 1976; Borucki 2015).

This type of violent extraction created in slave trade victims an affinity for their real (rather than mythical) homelands that was the basis of their attempts to actively preserve, re-formulate, or construct oppositional consciousness, identities, network relationships, and cultural and religious practices to maintain self-understanding and integrity in host societies that were hostile to their presence (Vertovec 1997; Shuval 2000; Butler 2001; Brubaker 2005; Hamilton 2007; Dufoix 2008). As such, maintaining sense of self and creating community relationships, behaviors, norms, and ideologies to affirm the collective was essential to African Diasporans' survival and acts of resistance against enslavement (Hamilton 2007: 29-31). African ethnic or "New World" identities that were linked to specific cultural, religious, and racial formations influenced several collective action rebellions throughout the Americas. These include but are not limited to the Antigua revolt in 1732;

Tacky's Revolt in 1760 Jamaica; the Denmark Vesey conspiracy of 1822; the revolt led by Nat Turner in 1832 Virginia; the Muslim revolt in 1835 Brazil; and the 1804 Haitian Revolution (Schuler 1970; Suttles Jr. 1971; Stuckey 1988; Reis 1993; Gomez 1998; Rucker 2001).

As a social formation, the African Diaspora was produced by global political and economic forces that created an order in which African descendants were deliberately precluded from power and other institutional resources to create change in their respective locations. European colonies of the Americas, particularly those that were wholly dependent on slave labor, actively prevented African descendants from having full participation in or access to decision-making liberties within spheres of political representation, education, and social or economic development (Stinchcombe 1995). Despite their apparent powerlessness within the colonial contact zone hierarchy (Pratt 1992), members of the African Diaspora did not lose their inherent understandings of themselves or the social and symbolic world(s). As they grappled with new geographic locations, new societal structures, and unfamiliar human groups (i.e. Europeans, AmerIndians, and other African ethnic groups), diasporic Africans constructed new and distinct identities and cultural formations that were largely rooted in their homelands (Mintz and Price 1992; Gomez 1998).

Writings from Saint Domingue observed that enslaved people, when out of sight from plantation personnel, displayed unseen facets of their personalities through laughter and joking, satirical song, gossip, and storytelling.⁷⁹ Additionally, some plantation workers employed a communal style of hoeing, by timing their strokes to African rhythms. Food preparation and eating styles, close emotional bonds to children and reverence for the elderly, and cultural expressions through song, dance, and death rites were all attributed to non-Christian beliefs.⁸⁰ While Saint Domingue had no formal educational opportunities for the enslaved population and Africans' were

⁷⁹ Geggus 2014: 17

⁸⁰ Desmangles 1992: 25

generally assumed to be intellectually inferior, it was indicated that they exemplified intelligence and that many were indeed literate in their native languages including Arabic.⁸¹ African descendants brought to Saint Domingue from other colonies were familiar with European languages spoken within the Atlantic world. Advertisements placed in the *Les Affiches Americaines* newspaper commonly made note of runaways' French, Spanish, English, Portuguese, or Dutch reading and writing skills as a form of human capital that could help the person pass for free. These types of interactions signify enslaved Africans and African descendants had a 'public face' in their contact with whites, but also shared an inner symbolic universe to which whites were not privy (Berger and Luckmann 1969; Gomez 1998).

The social world of enslaved African Diasporans in Saint Domingue has not been fully explored, probably because they were considered "socially dead" – *personae non-grata* – in most social, economic, and political terms (Patterson 1982).⁸² Their everyday movements and activities were restricted by the Code Noir, the hierarchy of *commandeurs* and plantation managers, and a readiness to use torture as punishment was designed to preclude any type of rebellious behaviors. However, allowances for Africans to have one free day per week and the population imbalance between blacks and whites inadvertently created social environments that were under the direction and control of blacks themselves, wherein they shared space and time without European surveillance. Locations such as housing quarters, nighttime and weekend gatherings, churches, and runaway communities were unmonitored and thus, I argue, functioned as free spaces. Free spaces, or other monikers like safe havens, sequestered sites, or spatial reserves, are "small-scale settings within a community or movement that are removed from the direct control of dominant groups, are voluntarily participated

⁸¹ Malenfant 1814: 212-213; Fouchard 1988: 15-19; Diouf 1998: ch. 4; Gomez 2005: 81-90

⁸² An exception to this would be the *affranchis* – formerly enslaved women and men who purchased their freedom through skilled labor or were emancipated via family/kinship ties.

in, and generate the cultural challenge that precedes or accompanies political mobilization (Polletta 1999: 1).”

These liberated sites would have allowed African descendants to transform existing social institutions into sites for collective struggle and social change (Fantasia and Hirsch 1995), where they could freely articulate their understandings of self and cultivate shared oppositional consciousness, collective identities, cultural formations, and political agendas (Evans and Boyte 1986; Couto 1993; Morris and Braine 2001). The free space concept is particularly helpful for studying African Diaspora communities who widely experience overlapping forms of systemic oppression, economic exploitation, and marginalization such as physical and social segregation (Hamilton 2007). Various manifestations of African Diaspora communities’ free spaces have been crucibles for participants to assert declarations of freedom and liberty (Evans and Boyte 1986); heighten awareness of unequal social conditions and invoke historical memory of past resistance strategies (Covin 1997); stake political claims for racial justice (Hayes 2008); and take part in civic activism, mutual aid, and community uplift (Hounmenou 2012).

Africa-inspired rituals flourished in Saint Dominguan free spaces over the course of two centuries, despite consistent repression from French Caribbean planters and failed attempts to Christianize newly arrived Africans (Peabody 2002). Africa-inspired rituals were therefore based on individuals’ understandings of their respective cultural and religious homeland practices and part of their survival strategy. Sociologist Emile Durkheim (1912) argued that rituals produce and are the products of identity construction and collective consciousness. They are an often-repeated pattern of behavior set apart from other ways of acting in such a way that aligns one with ultimate sources of power (Sewell 1996b: 252; Kane 2011: 10-12). Participants are aware that the focus of the activities concern ultimate power, and therefore feel solidarity through mutual connection to the power source and its symbolic representation. Symbolic meanings involve pre-existing concepts in

the mind that are communicated via historical memory, images, and materials objects. They are historically constituted and transformed through intergenerational usage (Kane 2011: 10-12) – or in the case of Saint Domingue, through the constant replenishing of the Africa-born population through the EuroAmerican slave trade. Though rituals are largely everyday occurrences, they can also punctuate historical events (Sewell 1996b). In a non-sacred sense, rituals can be the hubs of forging political and cultural alliances that function as counterhegemonic structures. Through micro-level struggles common in colonial contact zones, disparate identity groups come together through identification with shared symbols, ideas, or goals that have wider appeal to facilitate coordination, exchange, commitment, and new identities (Pratt 1992; Ansell 1997; Kane 2011).

In cultural activities, such as rituals, the use of material artifacts and participation in performed symbolic representations also give actors access to shared knowledge, values, and power, and enhance solidarity and mutual connection (Johnston 2009; Kane 2011: 10-12). Sacred symbols can also be used to frame political goals (Harris 2001). Africa-inspired ritual gatherings in Saint Domingue may have been strictly coordinated on ethnic lines in the early 18th century,⁸³ but there was more than likely inter-ethnic collaboration and exchange occurring over time. Africans and African descendants from varying backgrounds or statuses were aware of free space ritual gatherings and sought to participate in them to connect to something culturally familiar that affirmed their humanity. Though outlawed by the Code Noir, secret nighttime dances, burials, and all-black church services were largely ignored by planters and thus happened frequently. These were opportunities for people perform the sacred rites associated with their religious and cultural background, encounter and network with other enslaved people from nearby parishes, buy and sell ritual artifacts, and be audience to lay-preachers, priests, and prophets to further comprehend the state of their collective existence and ways of seeking retribution. Therefore, I argue that participation in free

⁸³ Labat ([1722] 1724 (Vol. 2): 53

space ritual gatherings and/or using individualized sacred technologies developed within those spaces not only helped mediate everyday issues, provided healing, facilitated relationships with spirit beings, but cultivated a growing oppositional consciousness aimed toward resisting enslavement and enacting collective rebellion.



Figure 2.0: An engraving portraying the chica dance at “Port de Nippes,” in southern Saint Domingue. Moreau de Saint Mery, 1791. *Recueil de Vues des Lieux Principaux de la Colonie Française de Saint Domingue*. Paris: A.P.D.R. Original bound image at the *Archive Nationale d’Outre-Mer*, Aix-en-Provence, France.

DATA AND METHODS

The data for this paper comes from analysis of archival materials and secondary source documentary review. Primary source data from the *Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* is quite helpful in identifying and tracing the influxes of various Africans from continental zones over time. Another digital archive that has proven useful in identifying Africa-inspired ritual incidents is the *Les Affiches Américaines (LAA)* enslaved runaway advertisements. Not only do these ads provide a sample of the enslaved population’s racial, ethnic, and gendered composition, which will be discussed in Chapter Three, at times the ads contain descriptions that implicate the runaways taking part in ritual-related activities. These pieces of evidence strengthen the case that there was some linkage between ritual activity and a self-liberation consciousness. Additional primary source data comes from physical

archives in the United States and France, including containing plantation inventory-related materials, interrogations of enslaved people accused of using Africa-inspired rituals or distributing ritual materials, and traveler's accounts. These sources contain meso-level information about the colony's historical development, physical landscape, and structural organization, including its oppressive and repressive dimensions.

Reputable early sources, particularly printed manuscripts by naturalist Michel Descourtilz, Pere Jean Baptiste Labat, and lawyer M. L. E. Moreau de St. Mery provide the most detailed information about Africa-inspired rituals. Moreau de St. Mery's archival papers are held in the F3 series at the Archives Nationale, Section d'Outre-Mer (ANOM) in Aix-en-Provence. This series contains summaries of suspected poisonings by enslaved people, especially notable runaway and ritualist François Mackandal, and descriptions of *calenda* ritual gatherings. The C9A and C9B series at ANOM included materials from the criminal investigation of enslaved people associated with the Mackandal conspiracy. Also at ANOM, are the papers of Paroy de Gentile, a planter based in Limonade, which deal with a freeman accused of poison. The François de Neufchâteau papers at the Archives Nationale (AN) in the Parisian suburb Pierrefitte-Stains contain criminal prosecutions of suspected ritual practitioners such as Marie Catherine Kingué and the Marmelade calenda organizers.

Unfortunately, none of these written data sources include primary documents written by the enslaved themselves. Therefore, Africa-inspired rituals were likely mistaken by being collapsed into a singular practice based on observers' ignorance and/or bigotry. For example, some ritual practices that were attributed to 'magic' or French mesmerism were more than likely to have derived from the African continent (Debien 1972). To make sense of the spiritual practices that were misunderstood and maligned by French colonists and deliberately concealed by the practitioners themselves, I draw on archaeologist Chris Fennell's (2003) comparative method of ethnographic analogy – using existing ethnohistorical data to re-construct their beliefs and practices based on their origins on the

African continent. I use writings about pre-colonial Africa, specifically the Bight of Benin and Loango coasts since those were the dominant groups in Saint Domingue, with focus on their sacred life. The aim is to understand their worldviews and practices, and how they may shed light on descriptions of African Diasporans' ritual performance in Saint Domingue. I consulted several books, chapters, and journal articles that discuss 18th century Saint Domingue and the social life of enslaved African Diasporans. This included revisiting historiography of the Haitian Revolution and pre-revolutionary forms of resistance. Twentieth century ethnographic writings provide retrospective insights about the colonial-era origins of Haitian vodou, and the ways in which African ethnic identities played a central role in the tradition's early formation processes. When combined with accounts of pre-colonial African spiritual practices, anthropological studies of vodou can help clarify meanings and significances of rituals in French Saint Domingue that were perhaps misunderstood or incompletely reported. Further, I've supplemented these written texts with oral history interviews I conducted in Haiti in late summer of 2015 and analysis of previous interviews by Benjamin Hebblethwaite and Claire Peyton housed in the University of Florida at Gainesville digital library collection, the *Vodou Archive*.

While historical record is not able to capture the fullest scope of African Diasporans' ritual activities due to their mostly clandestine nature, the constant imposition of regulatory policies was either an exaggerated panic over impending revolt, or a legitimate reaction to regularly occurring ritual gatherings that cultivated a growing sense of indignation among enslaved African Diasporans. William Sewell's conception of narrative event analysis helps me to foreground Africa-inspired ritual events as significant to the structural context of Saint Domingue, and to situate minor or individual occurrences within those shifts. Three criteria for a significant 'historical event' will guide my analysis of the data: "(1) a ramified sequence of occurrences that (2) is recognized as notable by contemporaries, and that (3) results in a durable transformation of structures (Sewell 1996a: 844)."

Based on this definition, there are likely to be cases that do not qualify an event because of biases in contemporary accounts. However, narrative analysis of the findings within their temporal context may reveal “ruptures,” departures from the regular actions of everyday life that initiated a chain of antecedent happenings and triggered a major event (Ibid.: 843-844) such as the Haitian Revolution.

AFRICAN WORLDVIEWS AND SACRED RITUALS IN SAINT DOMINGUE

Analysis of enslaved populations’ lifeways, particularly religious practices, in the Americas must begin with historical study of Africa (Lovejoy 1997). Re-tracing these historical steps is a difficult and complex task because of geo-political processes on the African continent and gaps in slave trade data (Morgan 1997). Africa was and continues to be extremely diverse, with thousands of languages and cultural groups. However, many of these distinct cultural expressions and identities were mutually intelligible through geographic proximity, political allegiance, and trade relations. African ethnic groups were not randomly distributed through the slave trade, but were imported in homogeneous clusters (Hall 2005). Further, they shared undergirding worldview principles that informed their behaviors and practices (Herskovits 1958; Mbiti 1990). Christian G. A. Oldendorp was a Moravian missionary in 18th century Danish St. Croix who documented findings from his observations, interactions, and conversations with enslaved Africans about their identities, homelands, cultures, and religious beliefs. While he acknowledged variance in the Africans’ beliefs and practices there were several areas of overlapping spiritual tenets including: 1) one supreme, benevolent deity; 2) lesser gods associated with forces of nature, territories, and family that mediate between humans and the supreme god; 3) the use of material objects imbued with sacrality; 4) performance of prayers and sacrificial offerings to the supreme and lesser gods; 5) ritual leaders, male or female, who also operated as community healers and diviners; and 6) the transmigration of spirits post-mortem (Oldendorp [1770] 1987: 187-202).

This historical overview of African worldview and emergent cultural connections will focus primarily (though not exclusively) on the Bight of Benin and the Loango Coast. At the beginning of the 18th century, the Ouidah port on the Bight of Benin coast provided the largest number of slaves to Saint Domingue. The *vandox* – derived from the Fon term *vodun* – was the most well-known ritual in the colony, and the term was probably liberally applied to rituals and practitioners that may have been performing rites from another region. Due to the dominance of West African cultural and religious continuations in historical and contemporary accounts of Haitian vodou, scholars argue that Bight of Benin groups (Arada, Fon, Nago/Yoruba) established the mold for religiosity among the enslaved in Saint Domingue into which later-arriving groups would be incorporated (Hebblethwaite 2014). After the 1750s, ports along the Loango coast were most used in the French slave trade, and the broadly defined ‘Kongolese’ became the majority ethnic group in the prosperous colony. Recent research has focused on the cultural influence of the Kongolese (Thornton 1993b; Thornton 2000; Vanhee 2002; Mobley 2015), and sheds new light on how their activities may have reflected a sense of militancy, particularly given the contentious history of the Kongo and its surrounding kingdoms in the late 18th century.

The Bight of Benin

In the early part of the 18th century, a significant proportion of African captives brought to Saint Domingue originated from the region known as the Bight of Benin. The Dahomean Kingdom originated in the 16th century in a small, geographically dismal area 60 miles from the coast. Its capital was Abomey, but the land had little to no natural resources and the climate of the area was not conducive to habitation. The nation’s dependence on the slave trade to obtain guns pushed them towards the coast, dominating other cultural groups such as the Fon, Nago/Yoruba, and

Arada along the way.⁸⁴ By 1727, Dahomey had emerged on the Guinea Coast, after having conquered Allada, Ouidah, the major port of the slave trade, and Porto Novo.⁸⁵

The Dahomean religious system revolved around relationship to the *vodun*, or spirits. The thousands of vodun can be generally categorized into two groups: those who are associated with family networks, including ancestors, founders of clans, and members of the royal dynasty; and those that are associated with the forces of nature. Other groups from the Bight of Benin and the wider Slave Coast included Dahomeans' neighbors the Aja, Ewe, Fon, and Nagos/Yorubas of the Oyo Empire.⁸⁶ Certain Yoruba nature spirits, the *orisha*, such as Ogou, Eshu-Elegba, Olorun, and Oshun were incorporated into the vodun due to expansion, trade, demographic shifts, and conflict between Dahomey and the Yoruba peoples.⁸⁷

The Dahomean monarchy's role in shaping religious life was aided by the *Nesuhwe*, the royal pantheon of vodun. 'Customs' or *Hwetanu* were ceremonies held by the monarchy for human dedication to edify and redouble the vodun of the royal ancestral lineage and the *kpojito* queen mother. These ceremonies included festivities and economic, military, and political programs. The customs, held at the beginning of dynastic cycles, were final funerals for deceased kings; they were especially consequential because his ancestors were elevated to vodun. Customs represented the transition from one king to the next, and the incumbent king's authority was formally recognized at these events. Members of the royal family were strictly prohibited from participating in worship of vodun outside of the king's ancestral lineage. However, 'commoner' clans – those groups of royal subjects – could associate with and worship the monarch's ancestral vodun.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Polanyi 1966: 8

⁸⁵ Law 2003: ch. 2

⁸⁶ Law 1991: ch. 1

⁸⁷ Gomez 1998: 56-57

⁸⁸ Bay 1995; Arglye 1996: 111

Human devotees had complex yet reciprocal relationships with the vodun, primarily maintained by ritual prayers, food offerings and sacrifice, divination, and dances.⁸⁹ The interplay between the spiritual and the material worlds is especially significant, because each could have considerable impact and influence the other. However, human dedication was the determining factor in correspondence with the vodun, as the vodun could harm or assist, bless, or condemn individuals or an entire kingdom in response to human activity. This complementary relationship became evident when the *kpojito* queen mother, a political and symbolic position held by a woman of biological or marital relation to the Dahomean king, Hwanjile introduced several vodun to the kingdom, including the creator couple Mawu and Lisa. Hwanjile's implementation of several voduns, specifically the creator pair, in Abomey was highly instrumental in aiding King Tegbesu gain power in 1740 and reinforced the ideological message "that power and authority derive from a male and female pair who represent respectively the royal and commoner lineages."⁹⁰

While most vodun were based in local communities, powerful vodun attracted followers from other locales. The oldest vodun that had long-standing roots in one community received the most reverence. The snake spirit, Dangbe, was considered part of the royal pantheon from the kingdom at Ouidah. People presented Dangbe with gifts such as silk, food and drink, and foreign commodities with hopes he would provide protection to the society from outside forces. As we saw in Table 1.0 of the dissertation introduction, the yearly number of captives from the Bight of Benin to Saint Domingue increased from 8,577 to 10,970 between 1721 and 1730, corresponding to the conquer of Ouidah by Dahomey in 1727. Although Ouidah had suffered defeat, signaling to some the spiritual inferiority of Ouidah's vodun, members of the conquered Fon/Gbe-speaking peoples who were exported to Saint Domingue maintained a close relationship with the snake spirit. This would have

⁸⁹ Sweet 2011: 17

⁹⁰ Bay 1997: 3, 15, 31

been especially true since ritual leaders were targeted for the slave trade by King Agaja at the onset of the Dahomean conflict with Oyo in 1728, likely resulting in an influx of Dangbe devotees in Saint Domingue.⁹¹

Vaudox

Bight of Benin Africans were the most numerous group brought to Saint Domingue in the early 18th century, and their cultural and religious influence seems to have set the mold for spiritual life in the colony. The most direct correlation between religion in the Bight of Benin and Saint Domingue is the transfer of vodun spirits that appear on the other side of the Atlantic as the Haitian *lwa* spirits such as Legba, Mawu-Lihsah, Azli, and several others.⁹² The *vaudox* refers to the most well-known and earliest documented ritual dance in Saint Domingue; the term derives from a shorthand description of the dance of the vodun.⁹³ The vaudox gatherings were highly secretive and guarded by levels of oaths and initiations, and presided over by a king and queen, reflecting the male-female leadership tradition of the Fon/Gbe-speaking region.⁹⁴ The snake spirit Dangbe/Danbala was the central deity of the vaudox and was thought of as an all-knowing god. The priest and priestess administered the ritual oaths of secrecy within the group, and represented Danbala as members made appeals for money, healing from sickness, love, or influence over their owners. During the ceremony, the female leader would stand on a box containing a snake, and become mounted by the spirit. The woman would issue directives and orders for the adherents to follow, or they risked misfortune or peril. After the spirit embodiment, offerings ensued enhanced by dancing, a poultry-based meal, and drinking of alcohol. Moreau de St. Mery considered these events to be relatively

⁹¹ Law 1991: 282-287; Sweet 2011: 17-18, 24-25

⁹² Rigaud 1958: 141-156; Hebblethwaite 2014: 6

⁹³ Herskovits 1937: 25; Métraux 1959: 27; Pluchon 1987: 55; Desmangles 1992: xx

⁹⁴ Sweet 2011: 25

benign, yet having a subversive potential because of the willingness of adherents to assign ultimate power to the priest and priestess and the spirits they served.⁹⁵

It was believed that the vaudox was wildly popular in the colony, however observers likely mistook other ethnic groups' ritual activities for the vaudox. For example, a ritual by Mozambiquans in Cayes Saint-Louis in the southern department was described as vaudox because it also involved "convulsions" of the spirit.⁹⁶ The presence of captives from Mozambique increased after the Seven Year's War when the French lost their Senegambian posts to the British. The French began to venture south of Angola, a longstanding trade region of the Portuguese, along the East African shores and significantly increased trade volume between 1769 and 1776.⁹⁷ Between the years 1750 and 1800, 3,713 Mozambiquans disembarked at Saint Domingue's western department ports Les Cayes, Léogane, and Port-au-Prince.⁹⁸ It is plausible that the increased visibility of Mozambiquan's non-Islamic indigenous ritual practice involved similar elements like spirit reverence, possession, and herbalism that European observers were unable to distinguish.

Alternatively, Africans from other regions may have felt an affinity for the vaudox and attempted to join their ceremonies. For example, Michel Descourtilz witnessed an enslaved Ibo man who tried to take part in an Arada ceremony in Artibonite by offering a rum, money, and a few chickens for sacrifice, but the man was refused entry.⁹⁹ The vaudox gatherings were clandestine, and its participants were sworn to secrecy. Additionally, the Aradas and other Bight of Benin Africans were numerous enough in Saint Domingue that they may not have felt inclined to welcome others to their assemblies. On the other hand, this account simultaneously supports and disproves claims

⁹⁵ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 46-51; Geggus 2014: 20-22

⁹⁶ Pluchon 1987: 107; Vanhee 2002: 247

⁹⁷ Alpers 1970: 105

⁹⁸ www.slavevoyages.org

⁹⁹ Descourtilz 1809 (Vol. 3): 196; Fick 1990: 41

that the African ethnic groups self-segregated and held no regard for one another's gods.¹⁰⁰ African religions generally were not organized around a structured orthodoxy, allowing them to be welcoming of beliefs and practices that were compatible with their own worldview.¹⁰¹

The fact that an Ibo was even willing to approach the Aradas and made an offering so his request would be taken more seriously shows that ethnic and/or racial differences probably did not preclude varying groups from interacting with each other in ritual spaces. Ibos were not strongly represented in Saint Domingue, so this Ibo man probably gravitated to Arada practices due to the reputation of vaudox in the colony as having efficaciousness. Further, Ibos' spirituality was directly connected to reverence for their ancestral lands; therefore, alienation from their Bight of Biafra origins was especially disorienting resulting in a reputation for suicidal tendencies. Ibos believed in the transmigration of spirits and that death would return them to their homeland.¹⁰² Participation in a vaudox ceremony may have presented an opportunity to communicate with spirit beings who could provide insight into why the Ibo man had been expelled from his home, and how he could remedy his predicament. The vaudox was the primary religious and cultural influence in the colony due to their numerous presence at the beginning of the 18th century. To understand the other regional group dominant in Saint Domingue, West Central Africans, we must again turn our attention to the continent, focusing on the Loango Coast especially.

The Loango Coast

By the 1750s, the Loango Coast ports of Malemba and Cabinda were the primary French slave trading posts. Captives from those areas quickly became the most numerous Africans in the colony for the next several decades. Significant increases to the BaKongo population were due to ongoing civil wars at the Loango Coast and Kingdom of Kongo. Data from the French slave trade,

¹⁰⁰ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 38; Fick 1990: 41

¹⁰¹ Thornton 1992: 246

¹⁰² St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 30-31; Gomez 1998: 128-130

plantation records, and runaway slave advertisements identify BaKongo peoples as comprising well over one-third of Saint Domingue's Africa-born population.¹⁰³ Although 20th century scholarship tended to focus on the dominance of Fon-speaking peoples in the development of Haitian vodou, 18th century ritual life in Saint Domingue seems to have been equally influenced from the Loango Coast, who often infused political messages into their sacred work.

The Loango Coast basin was an ecologically diverse region containing rivers, swamps, forests, and savannahs, and was full of diverse cultural groups and languages that shared a relationship to an abundance of water and the Bantu language system, especially the KiKongo language. The various groups of this language system are collectively known as BaKongo peoples, although their political and religious systems differed. The major polities of this region were the Loango Kingdom/Vili peoples at Loango Bay; the Kakongo Kingdom/Kotchi peoples who controlled the Malemba port; and Ngoyo Kingdom/Woyo peoples at Cabinda, all of whom were part of the Bantu language family.¹⁰⁴ Most captives brought to Saint Domingue came from these areas north of the Congo River, such as the Mondongues, Montequets or "Tekes", Mayombes, and Mousombes; while others from the southern Kongo Kingdom, referred to in slave trade data as "Franc-Congos" were captured by Vili traders and taken northward to the Loango coast outposts.¹⁰⁵

Through most of West Central Africa, there was belief in *Nzambi* or *Nzambi a Mpungu*, the creator of the earth and first human couple. In Loango beliefs, important categories of spirits were universal or regional spirits and the recently dead, who were reincarnated or went to some type of afterlife where they could possibly influence the living. Nzambi and other regionally-based spirits were worshipped at shrines, which in 17th century Loango were described as *nkisis*. The spirits were

¹⁰³ Debien 2000: ch. 2; Geggus 1993: 81; Geggus 1999: 39; Geggus 2001a: 131, 138; Daniels 2012: 142-143; Eddins 2014: 18

¹⁰⁴ Sommerdyck 2012: 141

¹⁰⁵ Thornton 1993b: 184; Thornton 2000: 60; Miller 2002: 56-57; Mobley 2015: 168-184

consulted at nkisi shrines to ensure good health and abundant harvest and hunting. Nkisis were not just physical spaces, but were used in other parts of Loango as charms imbued with sacred power from ancestors, territorial spirits, and other non-human entities. They could be worn as pouches around the neck or other body parts, or could be as large as pot containers. Any type of spiritually-charged actions or objects could be used for positive or negative means, depending on the user's intentions.¹⁰⁶



Figure 2.1: “Culte des negres,” Location unknown, 1751 to 1785. *African women, men, children worship and contribute offerings to a public shrine, including baskets of food, musical instruments such as drums and flute or pipe, and domestic animals.* John Carter Brown Library.

West Central African societies defined ‘witchcraft’ broadly, to include actions that indicated selfishness and abuse of power – even by royal political authorities. Several societies in the coastal zone generally did not acknowledge boundaries between the sacred and political world, and religion played a significant role in the political contestations such as in the Kongo Kingdom.¹⁰⁷ North of the Congo River, Loango kings were held to a high moral standard of ruling with fairness, and were typically seen as spiritual leaders bestowed with supernatural abilities by the *bunzi* priest who ruled

¹⁰⁶ Thornton 2002: 74-75, 77-80

¹⁰⁷ See several works by John K. Thornton 1983; 1998; 2000; 2002; 2006

earth and nature spirits. The kings' sacred power needed to be protected from the outside world through isolation public and operating primarily at night.¹⁰⁸ In the 17th century, a Loango king acted as the national nganga by administering a poison ordeal to rid the country of malevolent actors.¹⁰⁹ The emphasis on healing and fairness was shared by the Lemba society, which began in Loango and eventually reached regions southwest of the Malebo Pool.¹¹⁰ The Lemba believed that the slave trade was destroying society, differing from surrounding states/kingdoms because of their approaches to justice, use of force, structure of economic resources. The Lemba specialized in trade on a decentralized, "horizontal" basis and encouraged locally produced and traded goods. They maintained peace in the marketplace through priests and conflict resolution. Any conflict or material, social, economic, and political ills were attributed to spiritual imbalances that required a spiritual response using *minkisi* and *nkisi* medicinal bundles.¹¹¹

Kongo Catholicism and Burial Rites

Some Africans from the Angolan coasts south of the Congo River and already were familiar with Christianity, and had been combining their local traditions with Catholicism while still on the continent.¹¹² Other Africans seem to have passively accepted baptism and participated in church services, but maintained their fundamental beliefs and practices. Catholic priests were responsible for baptizing newly arrived Africans, though they often found themselves understaffed and unprepared for the booming population increases. The Jesuit order bore the responsibility of reaching and converting the enslaved population, however the priests' efforts often appeared to colonial authorities as collusion with the slaves' maintenance of African practices and rebellious activity. In February 1761, there was statement from the Council of Le Cap against the "abuses" of

¹⁰⁸ Mobley 2015: 42

¹⁰⁹ Thornton 2002: 81-82

¹¹⁰ Mobley 2015: 200

¹¹¹ Janzen 1972; MacGaffey 1986; Daniels 2013

¹¹² Thornton 1988

religion by free and enslaved people who conducted unsupervised and unauthorized church services. Blacks were using churches for afternoon and night meetings, with choir leaders, prayer, and lay preachers who often promoted faith in the surrounding areas of Le Cap.¹¹³

In 1764, the Jesuits were expelled from the colony. Among other things such as financial crimes, they were viewed as being compliant with rebellion by providing harbor for runaways and discouraging an enslaved woman, Assam, from divulging the names of people involved in the Mackandal poison conspiracy.¹¹⁴ Though the Capuchin order took over Jesuit responsibilities, the volume of Africans brought to Saint Domingue overwhelmed Catholic priests. The Kongolese routinely embraced healers and mediums to access spirits,¹¹⁵ therefore as enslaved people in Saint Domingue they turned to priests for spiritual help and to perform rites. Catholic priests represented such a medium capable of reaching saints, who Africans would have interpreted as spirits local to either Central Africa or the Saint Domingue context.¹¹⁶ In the early 1770s, a priest revealed that enslaved Catholics, probably either those from the Kongo Kingdom or the recently baptized, would approach him to cast spells and to communicate with spirits. In the same decade, another priest claimed to have been walking with an elderly black Catholic woman who spotted a man carrying a staff with a garter snake. The woman immediately attacked the man, then knelt before the snake and prayed that Jesus and Mary protect it. The source describes the snake was a symbol of the Dahomean Dangbe ritual sect present in Le Cap, of which the man with the staff may have been a member.¹¹⁷

Another area where enslaved people expressed their African practices through Christian mediums were during funerals. Enslaved people died rapidly and there were several burial sites in

¹¹³ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 352; Peabody 2002: 82; Geggus 2013: 118

¹¹⁴ Peabody 2002: 79

¹¹⁵ Kananoja 2010: 448

¹¹⁶ Thornton 1988; Thornton 2016

¹¹⁷ Sosis 1971: 285-286

Saint Domingue, although they were not well tended. The law stated that the enslaved were required to be buried aligned with the Catholic faith, but blacks often appropriated these rituals in their own styling and held funerals at night. Whites eventually abandoned the cemeteries, leaving Africans and African descendants to freely practice their sacred traditions for the dead. In a funeral procession in the southern Aquin, people carried with them *garde-corps*, or small figurine “bodyguards.” Women followed the body singing and clapping their hands while men came behind playing a slow drum. Afterward, family, friends, and members of the same ethnic group gathered for a repast. For several days after the funeral, mourners wore all-white with handkerchiefs on their heads.¹¹⁸ In 1765, Pere Monnereau admitted to performing a funeral and described a ritual that culminated with a unique practice. Family and friends of the deceased invited associates to a Sunday ceremony to which everyone was required to bring something to share, either food, rum, or another alcoholic beverage. As each person arrived, they paid respects and compliments to the dead then formed a circle at the door opposite to where the corpse lay to collectively celebrate the person’s life with drink. Participants then knelt and recited prayers one after the other, then laid down to kiss the ground. After another drink, they danced in pairs until dinner at which time they consumed a sacrificed pig.

Michel Descourtilz also observed a funeral that involved the *calenda*. A creole woman named Ursule had lost her friend François, and approached Descourtilz begging for a sheep, saying they already had the *banza* guitar and *bamboula* drums prepared for the dancing portion of François’ burial ceremony. Ursule sang and wept for her friend: “François, he has gone! Poor François! Poor man who has died!” She suddenly began to dance the *chica*, which Moreau de St. Mery identified as having Kongolese origin, saying “let me dance for him, let me dance for him.”¹¹⁹ After the funeral proceedings, loved ones carefully cleaned and tended to corpses in preparation to send them to

¹¹⁸ St. Mery 1798a: 67; Fick 1990: 44; Dubois 2004: 42

¹¹⁹ St. Mery [1796] 1975: 64-65; Descourtilz 1809 (Vol. 3): 197

burial sites. At times children led the procession in front of the coffin, carrying a large wooden cross to the feast and calenda dance.

Peyrac family plantation papers from Croix-de-Bouquet, recovered by Gabriel Debien,¹²⁰ describe an interesting burial ritual wherein observers thought the ceremony was a spectacle or a game rather than a final farewell. The deceased was held in her or his coffin, which four men carried on their shoulders and walked around

“with a frightful spell, all at once running in zigzags, sometimes right, sometimes left, pretending that the spirit of the dead did not want to go through this or that road. The women uttered frightful cries, they wept, and conjured the evil spirit not to torment the soul of the deceased. Sometimes the carriers stopped, saying that the dead man did not want to go any further. Soon they resumed their contortions and pretended to let the coffin fall on the ground, but after a thousand exercises of address[ing the community], the body was restored to equilibrium and...deposit[ed] in its last abode. In reality, this strange race, corpse on the shoulder, [is to] ‘disorient the dead one to prevent him [from] find[ing] the way of his house’.”¹²¹

This funerary practice of allowing the dead person’s spirit to visit members of the community before final departure remarkably mirrors burial rites recorded in Jamaica, where Bight of Biafran Ibos and Gold Coast Coromantees were most culturally influential. Processions for the dead on the Anglophone island had a social function of shaping values in the slave community by affirming the social status of the deceased, or by admonishing evil spirits and wrongdoers who were still alive. Some Africans in Jamaica believed that evil spirits could lure the newly dead into haunting the living, and that it was the responsibility of loved ones to ensure a proper burial so the spirit could peacefully transition to the other world.¹²² Gold Coast Amins in Saint Croix reported to Oldendorp that only those who “belonged to God” could receive a proper burial and that opposing forces would prevent the bearers from carrying the corpse forward.¹²³ These beliefs would help explain why

¹²⁰ Debien 2000: 27, 223

¹²¹ Quoted from Pluchon 1987: 77-78

¹²² Brown 2008: 63-71

¹²³ Oldendorp [1770] 1987: 183

the women and pallbearers in the ceremony at the Peyrac plantation in Croix-de-Bouquet allowed the spirit of the deceased to maneuver its way around evil spirits toward its final resting place.

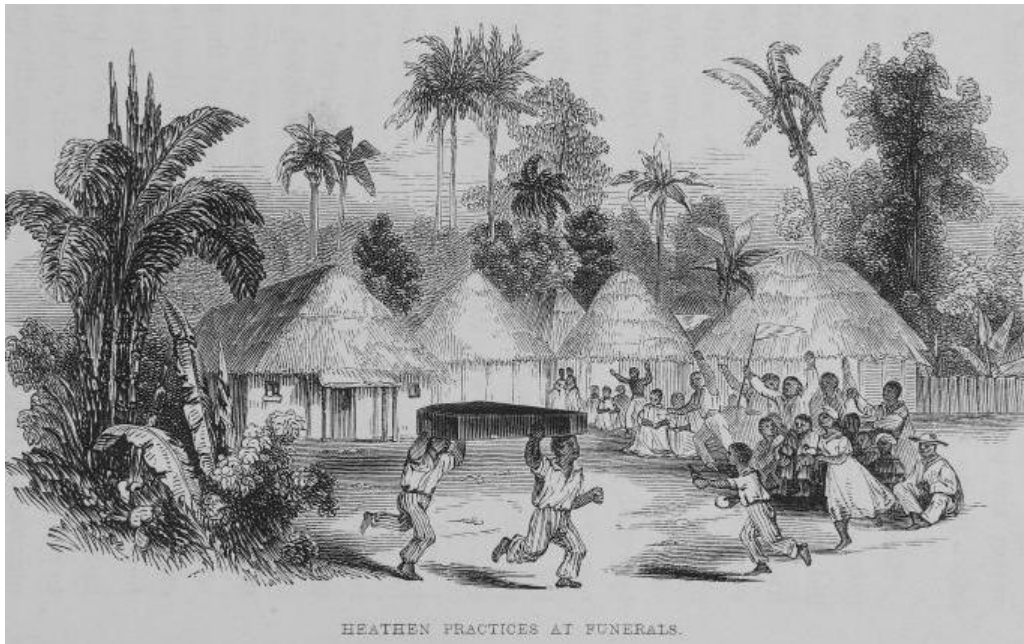


Figure 2.2: "Heathen Practices at Funerals," James M. Phillippo, 1843. *An engraving depicting a funeral tradition in Jamaica, which similarly occurred in Saint Domingue, of allowing the spirit to visit members of the community post-mortem. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture Digital Collection.*



Figure 2.3: A gathering at the Fossette burial ground. “Vue du Cap de la Fossette,” 18th century, unknown artist.

In northern Saint Domingue, funerals were held at a burial mound portrayed above called *Croix bossale* at Fossette in the south end of Le Cap. Fossette was a heavily used cemetery, averaging almost two burials per day and completely turning over the cemetery grounds every three years.¹²⁴ Fossette, along with the public square in Le Cap, were gathering spaces for African-Saint Dominguans to hold services that were often infused with Africa-inspired and Catholic practices. In accounts from 1777, Fossette was a center of dance and musical activity on Sunday nights and holidays.¹²⁵ An observer’s descriptions indicate that the burial processions were organized; leaders were ranked as kings and queens with

“sashes of different colors with different types of gold and silver braid that they wear on their jackets, and the women wear around their waist. They pay a subscription of several *portugaises* and burial fees which the others inflate as they feel like it. These funerals give rise to big processions, at which the sashes are worn.”¹²⁶

There was an informal system of inheritance, where a person’s belongings were distributed in a hierarchal fashion to her or his children first, other family members second, then to other blacks

¹²⁴ McClellan 1992: 88

¹²⁵ Dubois 2004: 12; Munro 2010: 28

¹²⁶ Quoted from Geggus 2013: 118

who also had children.¹²⁷ This large parade, mutual aid effort, and uniform costumes are indicators of a lay brotherhood/sisterhood organization for and by black Catholics, as was the case in Afro-Iberian-influenced places like Brazil, Cuba, Rio de la Plata, and even New York and New England. These confraternities held ritual celebrations on Sundays and major holidays; ensured a proper burial for the dead; served as informal banks for enslaved blacks to purchase their freedom; and often were the nexus of identity formation and rebellion organization.¹²⁸

Due to overwork, starvation, and torture, death was an inescapable reality in Saint Domingue; therefore, commemorating it, preventing it, and at times inflicting death were core components of African-Saint Domingueans ritual life. Naturally, the preoccupation with death was accompanied by supernatural powers that enslaved people drew upon to not only address personal concerns, but to critique and rectify the societal imbalances created by racialized enslavement. The François Mackandal affair and subsequent ritual events stand as examples of spiritual activities intersecting with seditious notions of freedom and liberation. However, participants of these rituals came from various African ethnic backgrounds and statuses in the slave community, suggesting solidarity was beginning to form a collective identity around blackness and anti-slavery sentiments.

Everyday Life in Saint Domingue

Due to the rigors of the plantation workday, it was not easy for enslaved Africans and African descendants to find time to engage in their sacred rituals. Field hands especially, who were overwhelmingly women and African, spent long days performing arduous labor under the strict supervision of the *commandeur* plantation driver. The *commandeur*, though usually an enslaved person, held a place of authority and was responsible for keeping order among the workgangs and doling out punishments with a whip. His authority in the fields at often translated to authority in

¹²⁷ St. Mery 1798a: 67

¹²⁸ Childs 2006; Borucki 2015; Dewulf 2015

marronnage (hereafter *manwong*), which will be further explored in the next two chapters. The work day generally ended at sun down, although sugar plantations ran in 24-hour shifts, so there were only pockets of time when laborers were not heavily monitored: in their shared housing quarters, during assigned errands, or at the weekly Sunday market at the urban centers Cap Français and Port-au-Prince. Skilled laborers, mostly males and creoles, such as carpenters, shoemakers, and hairdressers had more flexibility to traverse the colony as part of their quotidian work duties. These everyday forms of mobility, along with slaves' escapes, allowed enslaved people to foster and maintain relationships to surreptitiously exchange sacred objects and organize ritual gatherings.

POISON

Ritual as Retribution: The Mackandal Affair

Compared to British colonies like Jamaica where planters grew fearful of Africans' sacred practices after Tacky's Revolt of 1760, French colonial planters were much more likely to describe similar practices as poison.¹²⁹ These fears reached an apex in northern Saint Domingue with the François Mackandal poison conspiracy that was said to be an attempt to eliminate the entire white population. Mackandal and his network of followers have been the subject of several studies of recent, debating his African cultural roots and the conspiracy's overall impact – or lack thereof. Scholarship has increasingly ascribed a Kongolese identity (Vanhee 2002; Mobley 2015; Burnard and Garrigus 2016) onto Mackandal based on the content of his ritual technologies, despite that fact that early sources state that he was a Muslim from 'Guinea,' or the Senegambia region (Fick 1990; Diouf 1998; Gomez 2005). Pierre Pluchon (1987: 169) has pointed out that most of the supposed 6,000 poison victims were not white at all, but other enslaved blacks and animals. Hein Vanhee (2002: 151) suggests witchcraft hunts using poison to test the guilt or innocence of the accused were commonplace in Central Africa, which may account for attempts to either adjudicate everyday intra-

¹²⁹ Paton 2012

racial conflicts or to silence those who may have been suspected of revealing the wider conspiracy to authorities.

Burnard and Garrigus (2016) attribute the large number of deaths not to the poisoning powers of a vast network of runaways, slaves, and free blacks, but to a trail of spoiled food brought to the colony under the Seven Year's War blockade. These authors present an interesting argument considering the poisonings seem to have been contained to northern Saint Domingue, and enslaved people were more physically vulnerable than whites due to starvation, disease, and overwork. As we will see below, other prominent poison cases emerged in the early 1780s when Saint Domingue faced similar conditions of blockade-induced food shortages during the Usonian¹³⁰ War of Independence. However, poisoning allegations did occur in other French Caribbean colonies,¹³¹ and in Saint Domingue,¹³² well before and immediately after François Mackandal. As early as 1723, a runaway leader named Colas Jambes Coupées and his accomplices were arrested in Limonade and executed as 'sorcerers' who poisoned other blacks, terrorized white planters, and conspired to abolish the colony.¹³³ Colas Jambes Coupées was a predecessor to François Mackandal and other fugitive ritualists who were part of the *longue durée* mawonaj resistance tactic, which will be the subject of Chapters Three and Four. As much as I'd like to avoid a redundant discussion of the Mackandal case, I believe there are important aspects of it that lend to better understanding inter-ethnic solidarity and collective identity processes via African-Saint Dominguans' ritual life, and the transformation of colonial structures in response to resistance.

Mackandal was formerly enslaved on a northern plantation owned by Sieur Tellier and often worked for Lenormand de Mezy in the Limbé district. An account from 1787, *Extrait du Mercure de*

¹³⁰ of or relating to the United States

¹³¹ Pluchon 1987: 154-162

¹³² Déclaration concernant la punition des accusés de crime d'empoisonnement dans la colonie de Saint-Domingue, 30 décembre 1746, ANOM A4: 269

¹³³ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 48-49; Hall 1968: 46; Pluchon 1987: 152-153

France: Makandal, Histoire Véroitable, explains that Mackandal was brought to the colony at age 12 from the Upper Guinea region of Africa, and that he was a Muslim who had at least some Arabic linguistic competency. He was a distinctive character, with acquired skills and gifts in music, painting, sculpting, and herbal medicine. He attempted escape from enslavement several times before his final retreat into the mountains after losing a hand in a sugar mill and later tending to animals. Mackandal's eighteen-year escape into the Limbé mountains is where he developed a strong following as a charismatic leader. He was considered a prophet, and was alleged to secretly traverse plantations spanning the northern plain, from Fort Dauphin to Port-de-Paix, to speak during nighttime assemblies. Early descriptions claim that Mackandal foretold the overthrow of enslavement, using different colored scarves as a metaphor stating that the island once belonged to the "yellow" indigenous Americans, was under domination by white Europeans, but would soon be under the control of black Africans. Legend states that he aimed to rid the colony of whites by producing and distributing packets of poisonous mixtures that slaves could use to kill their owners.¹³⁴

Rather than an indication of his birth origin, it is likely that 'Mackandal' was a nickname given to François by his Kongolese associates Mayombe and Teyselelo¹³⁵ because of his ritual practice with *macandal* packets, which were in use prior to the conspiracy.¹³⁶ The word 'macandal' translates to *makunda* or *makwanda* meaning amulet or charm in the Mayombe language of the Loango zone, suggesting Kongolese religious culture. The packets were also referred to as *gris-gris* in the "langue mennade" – a direct reference to the Mende language origins of gris-gris amulets produced by Islamic marabouts in the Upper Guinea region. These amulets were leather pouches that contained

¹³⁴ "Relation d'une Conspiration Tramée par les Negres, dans l'Isle de S. Domingue" 1758; *Extrait du Mercure de France: Makandal, Histoire véritable* 1787; Fouchard 1972: 317-320; Fick 1990: 62; Diouf 1998: 150-152; Gomez 2005: 81-89; Ramsey 2011: 33-35

¹³⁵ Vanhee 2002: 251; Mobley 2015: 220

¹³⁶ Ramsey 2011: 34

written scriptures from the Qur'an for protective purposes. Clients ported gris-gris underneath head wraps; around their necks, arms, waists, ankles or knees; they hang over doors or are placed under beds.¹³⁷ In François' case, he wore his gris-gris or macandal under a hat. He combined other artifacts and prayed over the materials with what seemed to be an Islamic incantation of "Alla[h], Alla[h]," which he claimed invoked the power and blessings of Jesus. These sacks were composed of human bones, nails, roots, communion bread, and incense that were bound together in holy-water soaked cloth and twine.¹³⁸

Other Christian elements such as small crucifixes were incorporated into Macandal's collection of artifacts, which would have appealed to Africans from the Kongo Kingdom who were already baptized before their arrival Saint Domingue and to those who embraced Christianity after being imported. Additionally, these crucifixes made it easier to disguise the macandals as Christian paraphernalia. The macandals could be used for strength, to attract love, protect a person from a slave owners whip for mawonaj, or to make the slave owner confused or the target of misfortune. After granting supplicants' request, the macandals had to be 're-charged' with a food left for it to eat, an antecedent to the ways that contemporary Haitians sacrificially "feed" the *lwa*, or spirits, in the Dahomean tradition. Each macandal was named after an individual who occupied a rank, which was delineated by knowing secret phrases or names of macandal producers. Those who gave the name of Charlot were of the first order. There was a song they sang, "ouaïe, ouaïe, Mayangangué, zamis mourir, moi aller mourir, [... my friends are dying, I will die ...] ouaïe, ouaïe, Mayangangué," with

¹³⁷ Diouf 1998: 128-130

¹³⁸ These ingredients also match descriptions of 'mandinga' pouches found during 18th century Kongolese inquisitions (Kananoja 2010: 453).

‘ouaïe’ being a secret word.¹³⁹ ‘Ouaïe’ was a common utterance said during KiKongo prayers,¹⁴⁰ but there is not yet clarity on the meaning or origins of ‘Mayangangué.’

Given the dire circumstances of enslavement, François Mackandal collaborated with Africans of different ethnicities whose fundamental worldview was not incompatible with his own, particularly since Africans generally did not restrict their religious beliefs to fixed orthodoxies.¹⁴¹ It is likely that the historical descriptions of Mackandal’s Islamic incantations and descriptions of gris-gris were correct – he was probably a Mende-speaker from the widespread Guinea region as early sources have suggested, and was at least familiar with Islam.¹⁴² When we direct our attention to early 18th century events on the African continent regarding the involvement of Muslims in the slave trade, a new perspective on François Mackandal’s origins emerges. If he were approximately 12 years old when captured,¹⁴³ lived and worked on the Mezy plantation, then reached adolescence or early adulthood¹⁴⁴ before escaping for nearly 18 years, by the time of his capture in 1758 he would have been between 30 and 40 years old. That would mean he was brought to Saint Domingue, presumably Cap François, between 1730 and 1740. This period coincides with the rise of the Futa Jallon jihad that began with the Muslim Fulbe-Jallonke alliance in the 1720s. Non-Muslim Fulbe and Jallonke were the most numerous victims of this alliance. The jihad would become the primary cause

¹³⁹ Courtin 1758, “Memoire Sommaire sur les pretendues pratiques magiques est empoisonnements...” ANOM F3 88: 240; Pluchon 1987: 165-182, 201; Gomez 2005: 89; Ramsey 2011: 34; Mobley 2015: 311-313; Burnard and Garrigus 2016: 109

¹⁴⁰ Personal correspondence with John K. Thornton. David Geggus (1991a: 33) previously identified ‘ouaïe’ as a KiKongo term for slavery, but James Sweet (2017) has recently asserted that ‘vika’ was the terminology with which KiKongo-speaking Saint Domingans described enslavement.

¹⁴¹ Thornton 1992: ch. 9

¹⁴² Diouf (1998) argues that Mackandal was Muslim. Gomez (2005: 87-90) also suggests Senegambian or Sierra Leonean origin, but he and Khan (2012) leave room for interpreting Mackandal’s religiosity as one of synthesis.

¹⁴³ Children were approximately 27% of the French slave trade captives; 25% of those from Senegambia and 35% of Sierra Leoneans (Geggus 1989a: 28).

¹⁴⁴ It was not uncommon for children to attempt escape by themselves, and many adolescents appear in the *Les Affiches* ads as will be discussed in the next chapter.

for slave exportations from the Sierra Leone region, especially in the late 18th century.¹⁴⁵ Mackandal may have been a non-Muslim Mende-speaker taken captive and exported through Senegambia¹⁴⁶ on one of the several ships that arrived to Le Cap between 1730 and 1740. It would make sense that Mackandal would have come from this group who were socially approximate to Muslims and may have incorporated some of their behaviors and beliefs. Non-Muslims in the Guinea region were familiar with Islamic practice since *marabout* clerics made amulets for Muslims and non-Muslims alike, divined the future, incorporated the herbalist practices common to the region's non-Muslims, and at times were opposed to the slave trade.¹⁴⁷ This would explain Mackandal's knowledge of Arabic, albeit perhaps minimal, and subsequently being mistaken as a "Mahommed."

Other evidence regarding Mende cosmology seems to fit Mackandal's profile. Within the Mende were decentralized structures, including societies based on ritual knowledge and principles of justice, retribution, and secrecy. The leaders held the power of life and death and inflicted punishments on intruders or those who committed offenses against individuals or the whole community.¹⁴⁸ Though it would not have been possible to fully recreate the Mende societies, Mackandal infiltrated plantation systems by recruiting an underground network of people who were willing to transport and packets of poisons, potions, or remedies. The goal of this campaign, as he communicated at the evening religious gatherings, was to overthrow enslavement by poisoning the white colonials. Three free people of color were among the 140 arrested in connection with the Mackandal conspiracy, but his main transporters were enslaved women who worked within the domestic sphere.¹⁴⁹ Women were indispensable in the Mende societies, even those that were male dominated, and were needed

¹⁴⁵ Gomez 1998: 91 Gomez 2005: 50-51

¹⁴⁶ Lovejoy 2012: 59

¹⁴⁷ Diouf 1998: 150-153; Gomez 1998: 66-67; Ware 2015: ch. 3

¹⁴⁸ Gomez 1998: 94-98

¹⁴⁹ Fouchard 1972: 317-320; Fick 1990: 62-72; Ramsey 2011: 33-35; Burnard and Garrigus 2016: 101-122

to mediate the human and spirit realm.¹⁵⁰ Although there was no shortage of men in Saint Domingue, the stark societal imbalances of the colonial situation may have deepened the need for women's spiritual power. This suggests that Mackandal's recruitment of women into his network was not merely for his sexual pleasure as typically implied, but because he regarded them as necessary participants in organizing efforts.

François Mackandal's wife Brigitte, though rarely discussed, seems to have been his main courier and knowledgeable in the ritual process involved in creating macandals, stating "God knows what I do, God gives eyes to those who ask for eyes." Brigitte allegedly transported macandals between François and Marianne, a woman who was described as the "chief of the poisoners of Le Cap." Others accused of being somehow connected to Mackandal represented various ethnic origins, suggesting his prophesy of black-rule was not merely rhetoric, but based on a lived experience of building a diverse network of Africans and creoles who collaborated on racial terms. A Poulard woman named Assam, a domestic on the LaPlaine plantation in Acul, admitted to witnessing a man named Jean, a Bambara, transport poison between several plantations using other women as couriers. The two women, Marie-Jeanne and Madeleine were Niamba and Nago, respectively. In Petit Anse, a Yoruba man named Hauron was accused of giving poison to other slaves. Assam's testimony, combined with a spontaneous confession by a slave named Medor in Fort Dauphin, were what eventually led to François Mackandal's arrest in November 1757. Two women who had competed for Mackandal's affections were the Senegambian Zami and a Kongolese woman named Samba, further suggesting his acquaintances extended beyond enslaved Kongolese people. Several others arrested were free people of color, who were alleged to be in support of slaves gaining manumission by providing them arsenic to poison their white owners.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Gomez 1998: 94-98

¹⁵¹ *Extrait du Mercure de France: Makandal, Histoire véritable* 1787; Fick 1990: 64, 251-252, 258-259; Burnard and Garrigus 2016: 118

The anonymous letter *Relation* estimates that as many as 30-40 whites, including women and children, and about 200-300 other enslaved people and animals were killed in the conspiracy. A man named l'Éveill   agreed to poison his first owner, an upholsterer named Labadie, the wife of a slave owner, and a surgeon from Limonade. In Le Cap, a merchant named Mongoubert and Mme. Lespes were both poisoned by black women who were convicted and condemned to death. Several other cases emerged: Marianne, the “chief poisoner” at Le Cap who was connected to Mackandal through his wife Brigitte, Jolicoeur, and Michel poisoned a hairdresser, Vatin, because he would not allow them to partake in Sabbath dinner in his kitchen. The wife of Rodet was poisoned by a woman who previously lived with Jolicoeur, who also wanted to kill his master Millet. Henriette was accused and convicted of poisoning her mistress Faveroles. Another named Cupidon was accused of poisoning another black man named Apollon, as well as two Decourt women, and the master himself. The following were also suspected of poison: Black men and women belonging to M. Hiert, M. de la Cassaigne, Lady Paparet, Sieur Delan, and M. le Prieur. Th  l  maque was condemned for poisoning with “vert-de-gris,” or the green leaf that was the container for poison and synonymous with macandals,¹⁵² that he put in the sprouts resulting in nearly all the houseguests becoming sick.¹⁵³ On April 8th, three people, Samba, Colas, and Lafleur, were sentenced to death for their part in the poisonings that occurred in the northern department,¹⁵⁴ and six slaves on a Limb   plantation were executed as punishment for allegations of poison.¹⁵⁵ Mackandal, and others in his network of varying backgrounds, would have been open to participating in rituals they deemed efficacious and incorporated those symbols into their own practices. We might then think of Fran  ois Mackandal as an African-Atlantic “creole” of Sierra Leonean origin whose early childhood exposure to Islam in

¹⁵² Mobley 2015: 218-219

¹⁵³ Courtin 1758, “Memoire Sommaire sur les pretendues pratiques magiques est empoisonnements...” ANOM F3 88: 240; Pluchon 1987: 175

¹⁵⁴ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 229-230

¹⁵⁵ Fick 1990: 73

Africa and later to Loango coast practices in Saint Domingue provided him with socio-cultural and linguistic flexibility (Landers 2010) to interact with Africans of varying backgrounds and assert a racially-themed prophesy of impending upheaval.

This conspiracy was eventually discovered when Mackandal was arrested in January 1758 at a calenda a ritual, originating from the Loango-Angolan coasts, dance gathering at the Dufresne plantation in Limbé. After his initial capture, Mackandal again escaped then was seized and burned at the stake in Cap Français on January 20th, 1758. Witnesses claimed that Mackandal's body evaporated before being engulfed by flames and converted him into a mosquito, a plague of which he had earlier prophesied would bring destruction to the whites. Several African belief systems include notions of an afterlife, the transmigration of spirits from one physical entity to another, or the elevation of a human into a pantheon of revered spirits.¹⁵⁶ Symbolically, Mackandal is remembered based on the Dahomean principle of exalting significant figures to the position of *lwa*; contemporarily he is included as a *Petwo* rite spirit.¹⁵⁷ African Diasporans' belief in Mackandal's immortality after his death was not merely a sense of mourning and reverence, but one that connected private emotions with wider concerns about enslavement and freedom. Mackandal's message regarding racial stratification, power, and control over land and resources infused into Africa-inspired rituals a politicized awareness of and oppositional attitude toward the oppressive colonial situation.

This melding of the sacred and material worlds would not have been foreign to the bondpeople of Saint Domingue, especially those of African origin from places like the Bight of Benin or the Loango Coast where religion informed political economic shifts and vice versa. The enslaved population would likely have welcomed such an articulation to facilitate comprehension of the new

¹⁵⁶ Gomez 1998: 49, 94, 111-112, 130; Thornton 2002: 74

¹⁵⁷ Rigaud 1953: 62

world into which they had been violently thrust, and as such revered Mackandal and his legacy. Therefore, I argue that African-Saint Dominguans' reaction to Mackandal's death was part of a larger mortuary politic, the "profound social meaning from the beliefs and practices associated with death ... employed ... [and] charged with cosmic importance – in struggles toward particular ends (Brown 2008: 5)." Death was ubiquitous in Saint Domingue – nearly half of incoming Africans perished within five years¹⁵⁸ – as were attempts to prevent it, symbolize and commemorate it, or inflict it. Ritual spaces, activities, and practitioners dedicated to African-based healing practices, spiritual protection, burial rites, poison, and convening with sacred beings were infused with a liberation ethos that extended into the revolutionary period, creating an organic component of the pre-revolution repertoire of contention (Traugott 1995) that culminated in the Bwa Kayman ceremony of 1791.

Mackandal's case inspired fear among the colonists and therefore was a watershed event that altered the structures of the colonial order (Sewell 2005). In the coming years, ordinances were passed and divisions of police were established against the assembly of blacks, and to prevent free of enslaved blacks from selling and distributing medicinal items or from assembling under any pretense. After the execution, Mackandal's name would become synonymous with certain religious leaders, dances, medicinal blend, or poison most specifically.¹⁵⁹ On April 7th, 1758, the Council of Cap Français issued an announcement regarding the policing of enslaved people developed in response to the Mackandal affair. Articles banned *affranchis* and enslaved people from making, selling, or distributing garde-corps or macandals. Article V issued a fine of 300 livres for any planter who allowed drumming or night gatherings on their property. Slaves were restricted from being in the towns and cities after ten in the evening without being accompanied by a free person or without

¹⁵⁸ Fick 1990: 26

¹⁵⁹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 222

a letter from their owner. Article VIII went against slaves going to the market or vendors to sell sugar, syrups, rum, indigo, coffee, cotton, cocoa, or manufacturing tools; and article XV kept slaves from selling goods on the behalf of their owner. Slaves also could not ride horses or mules without written permission.¹⁶⁰ It is interesting that these new laws focused on the market, where enslaved people met with people from other plantations. Yet, these codes were not fully enforced and therefore did not stop people from using Africa-inspired technologies to empower themselves to solve personal and public problems associated with their oppression.

Poison post-Mackandal: 1760s-1780s

Poisoning allegations continued in the wake of the François Mackandal affair, especially in northern Saint Domingue, setting off heightened repression of Africans and African descendants' social and religious activities that were not explicitly Christian, such as using herbal blends as poison and the calenda gatherings. Both enslaved and free blacks were banned from practicing medicine in April 1764, which indicated a fear that free blacks with skills in medicinal practice and access to materials like arsenic used it to distribute to the enslaved and facilitate poisoning whites.¹⁶¹ Still, data suggests that this repression did not hinder Africans and African descendants from partaking in sacred ritual artifacts or attending ritual gatherings. However, rather than hand over poisoners to the courts as in the Mackandal case, political authorities relinquished responsibilities for punishing poisoners to slave owners themselves. As poisoning accusations continued in the 1760s and 1780s, slave owners increasingly used torturous means to obtain confessions while the colonial government abdicated its protection of slaves.¹⁶²

The *Les Affiches Américaines* runaway advertisements contain several people who we can induce were somehow implicated as poisoners, especially in northern Saint Domingue. On April 2, 1766, a

¹⁶⁰ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 225-228

¹⁶¹ d'Auberteuil 1776: 137-138; Ramsey 2011: 38

¹⁶² Burnard and Garrigus 2016: 120

Kongolese man named Eustache was reported missing from Mr. Boyveau's plantation in Dondon.¹⁶³ Not only had Eustache escaped, he had begun to assume the name 'Makandal' in recent years, which can potentially be attributed to a sense of connection, solidarity, or shared identity the former felt toward François Mackandal. Perhaps Eustache 'Makandal' had been initiated in François Mackandal's network and was given his name before he escaped the Dondon plantation. Even if Eustache was not an initiate, he was more than likely aware of François Mackandal's life and influence given the proximity of Dondon to Limbé, less than 50 km, where Mackandal was formerly enslaved. Additionally, this example demonstrates the connection between macandals as a form of Kongolese ritual technology.

The 1770s continued to see cases of accusations of attempted poisonings. In May 1771, a group of enslaved people went to Cap Français to complain that their owner was torturing accused poisoners, burning five women and men alive and killing two of them.¹⁶⁴ In 1774, a young man was arrested and arsenic was found in his bag. A black pharmacist was implicated in the statement but he was dead at the time of the judgment.¹⁶⁵ The manager at the Fleuriau plantation in Cul-de-Sac was poisoned by three enslaved domestics in 1776. A young boy warned the manager that his soup was poisoned, so they gave the soup to a dog and it died immediately. The three perpetrators admitted their actions and that they poisoned M. Rasseteau, a former attorney, and were imprisoned and later burned alive.¹⁶⁶ In 1777 near Cul-de-Sac, a man named Jacques was arrested and burned alive for poisoning one hundred of his owner Corbieres' animals with arsenic over an eight-month span.¹⁶⁷ That same year in 1777, another police ruling was issued prohibiting enslaved people from meeting during the day or at night under the pretense of weddings or funerals. Drumming and singing were

¹⁶³ *LAA* April 2, 1766, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=91>

¹⁶⁴ Moitt 2001: 106; Burnard and Garrigus 2016: 121

¹⁶⁵ d'Auberteuil 1776: 138

¹⁶⁶ Cauna 1996: 329

¹⁶⁷ Fick 1990: 73; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 805

also expressly forbidden; and in 1780, African descendants were again banned from making or selling any medicinal substances.¹⁶⁸ Colonists saw a connection between the ritual gatherings and poison, since these packets were often sold and distributed at the assemblies.

The early 1780s saw a continuation of the African-Saint Dominguan mortuary politic inspired by Mackandal. However, it seems that the use of poison as a resistance tactic may have slowed. Despite the 1780 ban on selling medicinal substances, a black apothecary was arrested in 1781 for selling a lethal drug to an enslaved person who used it to commit suicide¹⁶⁹ – a common individualized response to the trauma of enslavement. An overseer at Cul-de-Sac caught a washerwoman attempting to dump a poisonous powder into his water in 1782.¹⁷⁰ In 1784 when a woman named Elizabeth “Zabeau” attempted to poison her owner with substances in his food and drink.¹⁷¹ On May 8th, 1781, an advertisement was placed for a ‘griffe’ creole named Jean-Baptiste born in Ouanaminthe. Fifteen days before the ad was placed, Jean-Baptiste escaped a plantation owned by M. Lejeune in Plaisance, a parish near Limbé, and was reported as a ‘thief’ and a *macandal*.¹⁷² In contrast to Eustache, the 1766 absconder who deliberately took the surname “Makandal,” Jean-Baptiste was described as a *macandal* by Lejeune to indicate the more general crime of poisoning. Perhaps Jean-Baptiste had or attempted to kill someone on the Lejeune plantation, then escaped to avoid inevitable punishment. The advertisement details could have indicated the beginning of a real conspiracy, because two enslaved people on Lejeune’s property allegedly killed his nephew later in 1783.¹⁷³ Alternatively, the ad could imply a long-standing paranoia about poison on the Lejeune property. Jean-Baptiste likely escaped from the same coffee plantation that became the center of

¹⁶⁸ Fick 1990: 73; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 6): 75-78; Desmangles 1992: 26; Munro 2010: 27

¹⁶⁹ Fick 1990: 73; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 6): 257-58

¹⁷⁰ Moitt 2001: 143

¹⁷¹ Fick 1990: 73; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 6): 429

¹⁷² *LAA* May 8, 1781, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=5958>

¹⁷³ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 6): 370; Fick 1990: 295 n. 132

controversy in March 1788, when two enslaved women named Zabeth and Marie Rose were tortured nearly to death and four others were executed by the plantation owner's son, Nicolas Lejeune. Lejeune accused the victims of poisoning nearly 500 bondspeople on the Plaisance plantation over the course of 25 years. The two women were so brutally tortured that 14 other Africans strategically used provisions of the Code Noir from 1784 to successfully file charges against Lejeune in Le Cap.¹⁷⁴

In the early 1780s, another alleged poisoner from Limonade was questioned and jailed in Le Cap. In the interrogation on June 30th, 1780, the accused identified himself as 33-year old Marc Antoine Avalue, but the case notes assigned him a nickname "Kangal." Among other vices, Antoine and his accomplices Bayome, Palidore, and Pierre were accused of poisoning 25 blacks and 49 animals, including mules, cattle, and horses in 1776, and were imprisoned in Le Cap. His mother Lizette, a free woman of color paid 3,000 livres to free Antoine, but his freedom was declared null by the Council of Le Cap on September 27th, 1779. In November, the court decided that Paroy had to reimburse Lizette for the money she paid.¹⁷⁵

While poison became a scarcer occurrence in the late 1780s, African-Saint Domingans appeared to have become emboldened to participate and organize mass ritual gatherings, described as vaudox and calenda dances, particularly as numbers of imported Africans exploded after an English blockade. When the North American colonies declared independence from the British

¹⁷⁴ Fick 1990: 37; Vanhee 2002: 250; for in-depth discussion of this intriguing case, see Ghachem 2011

¹⁷⁵ "Procédure relative à l'affaire d'Antoine dit Kengal et de sa mère Lizette contre Avalue, régisseur des biens du marquis de Paroy à Saint Domingue (1776/1780)" ANOM Archives privées, Le Gentil de Paroy; Arrêt qui casse et annule celui du Conseil Supérieur du Cap du 5 février 1779, obtenu par la négresse Lizette, contre Guy Le Gentil, marquis de Paroy, et qui évoque au Conseil du Roi les contestations sur lesquelles l'arrêt est intervenu; l'arrêt stipule que le marquis de Paroy remboursera à la négresse Lizette les 3 000 livres qu'il a reçues d'elle pour l'affranchissement du nègre Antoine, son fils, et autorise le marquis de Paroy à faire arrêter ledit Antoine, soupçonné d'empoisonnement (27 novembre 1779), ANOM A17: 214

crown in 1776, in part to protect their rights to maintain slavery,¹⁷⁶ Britain waged war on North American allies including the French. In February 1778, the British navy parked in Saint Domingue's ports and the French slave trade was effectively blocked. Between 1779 and 1782, only six French ships arrived to Saint Domingue,¹⁷⁷ a far cry from the hundreds in the years before and after. Once the newly formed United States defeated Britain in 1783, the French slave trade resumed to full swing and new Africans were brought to Saint Domingue in unprecedented numbers. By far the largest of these came from the Loango coast, and the influence of these groups, especially the *petwo* sect from this region seem to have flourished in the 1780s.

REBELLIOUS SECTS

“Dom Pedro”

The Kongo civil wars had their roots in the mid-17th century, but peace was brought to the kingdom for several decades after two warring factions agreed to share and alternate leadership. The peace was broken in 1763 when Dom Pedro V was crowned, and Queen Violante of Wandu sieged São Salvador to defend Pedro V from his rival Alvaro XI. The reinforcements were unsuccessful as Pedro V was driven out of the capital in 1764 when Alvaro was crowned king, and Queen Violante was finally defeated by the Portuguese in 1765.¹⁷⁸ Alvaro XI vied for the throne out of belief that a Kimpanzu rather than a Kinlanza, the two family-based factions, should be king. Contestations over the encroaching slave trade were at their height during Dona Beatrice Kimpa Vita's St. Anthony movement in 1706 to restore the Kongo Kingdom from civil war, but the issue of slavery remained a significant aspect of the kingdom's political milieu. Alvaro XI was especially beholden to powerful provincial lords – rather than the local, freeborn population – who had large slave armies and

¹⁷⁶ Horne 2014

¹⁷⁷ slavevoyages.org

¹⁷⁸ Raimondo da Dicomano, *O Reino do Congo: A decadência final do Reino do Congo*; Raphael de Castello de Vide, *Viagem do Congo do Missionário*; Thornton 2000: 60

considerable influence over the king selection process. Conflicts within the kingdom increasingly led to Kongolese citizens being subject to enslavement, which previously was reserved for foreigners in the kingdom.¹⁷⁹

The conflict between Pedro V, along with Queen Violante's forces, and Alvaro XI resulted in an upsurge of Kongolese captives being exported to Saint Domingue, some or many of whom were possibly members of Pedro V's failed succession.¹⁸⁰ As shown in Table 1.1 of the dissertation introduction, captives carried on French ships from West Central Africa and St. Helena island to Saint Domingue's ports increased by 1,700 per cent – from 2,673 to 48,013 – between the late 1750s to the late 1760s, overlapping with the years of Alvaro's coup against Pedro. While Cap Français received the overwhelming majority of these captives, 18,384 were brought to Les Cayes, Léogane, Petit-Goâve, and Port-au-Prince.¹⁸¹ A possible hint at the presence of Pedro V's followers landing in the French colony soon after the 1760s uprising is the appearance of Pierre "Dom Pedro," a Kongolese runaway from Petit Goâve who declared himself free and became the originator of Haitian Vodou's *petwo* dance and pantheon of "hot" spirits.¹⁸²

Pierre Dom Pedro made a splash with the blacks living in and around Petit-Goâve by introducing them to a new dance, one that was like the established vaudox dance but to a faster and more intense drum beat. Participants added crushed gunpowder to their rum to induce a highly intoxicated, frenzied state (this concoction was said to have killed some who drank it). The followers of Pedro quickly gained the reputation as the most powerful and dangerous ritual community in the colony; members had the ability to see beyond the physical and use herbalism, poison, and secrecy to exact revenge on whites, uninitiated blacks, and animals. An account from an initiate described a

¹⁷⁹ Thornton 1998; Heywood 2009: 19

¹⁸⁰ Thornton 1993b: 183; Thornton 2000: 60

¹⁸¹ slavevoyages.org

¹⁸² Herskovits 1937: 150; Métraux 1959: 39-40

series of tests he had to undergo to prove loyalty to the group. Of importance was his ability to demonstrate strength under torture, discretion in keeping secrets, and willingness to do such oppositional acts as lying, stealing, or inflicting harm on humans or animals.¹⁸³ Another member was asked to hold in his hand a piece of hot coal, seemingly to test if his spirit was capable of absorbing rage, symbolized by the heat, until an appropriate time for it to be released.¹⁸⁴

It was previously believed that Pierre had taken the name *Don* Pedro, indicating he was a runaway from Spanish Santo Domingo, but recently discovered documents name him as *Dom* Pedro, a more common name from the Portuguese-influenced Kongo Kingdom. Between 1768 and 1769, Dom Pedro was investigated by judge Joseph Ferrand de Beaudiere for traveling to several plantations in Petit Goâve, Jacmel, and Léogane and spreading messages of freedom, rebellion, and independence from slave owners. Pedro's ritual performances, thought of as crude tricks by investigators, would have denoted spiritual efficacy that contributed to his growing following. This source indicates a small uprising of sorts, wherein Pedro subverted plantation power structures by assuring the enslaved that they would soon be free and having commandeurs whipped. He instructed them to no longer whip other enslaved people under their supervision and that there would be no punishment from their owners. In exchange for this protection, Pedro imposed financial charges to his initiates. Forty-two people, including some mulatres and women, were arrested in connection with the Dom Pedro campaign. By 1773, several of them were still imprisoned in the jails of Petit Goâve, although it is possible some escaped after the earthquake on June 3rd, 1770 destroyed much of the town and Port-au-Prince. In his wake, *Dom Pedro* became a title

¹⁸³ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 51; Sosis 1971: 275; Geggus 2014: 22

¹⁸⁴ Descourtilz 1809 (Vol. 3): 181; Mobley 2015: 325-326

applied to any person who was known as a ritual leader that used sorcery to inflict harm and often carried a large stick and a whip.¹⁸⁵

Pierre Dom Pedro, and his followers, would have understood enslavement in their new context within the realm of greed, evil, and witchcraft¹⁸⁶ – issues that needed to be rectified with both spiritual and material actions. His Kongolese understandings of slavery could not abide the unjust practices that were so regular in Saint Domingue. Dom Pedro's repudiation of the whip was both a literal instruction about the non-ethical use of violence in slavery, but probably also served as metaphor to encourage and prophesy the reclamation of power against those who sought to maintain slavery. Further, Pierre Dom Pedro's declarations of himself as 'free' were probably not just in relation to slavery in Saint Domingue, but he may have been a freeborn Kongolese who, in keeping with local custom, should have been protected from the slave trade. Indeed, in Portuguese Angola the honorific title 'Dom,' usually reserved for the political elite, was also used for freeborn commoners to indicate their status.¹⁸⁷ Pierre Dom Pedro's stance against slavery may indicate an association with longstanding Kongolese efforts to protect the local population from the encroaching EuroAmerican slave trade and balanced practices related to enslaved laborers. These contributions were important antecedents to the early Haitian Revolution negotiations, when rebels sought more humane work conditions such as the abolition of the whip and modified work schedules.¹⁸⁸

The Dom Pedro sect arrived in Saint Domingue not long after the King of Kongo Pedro V failed to maintain power and his supporters were likely enslaved. Though his political and

¹⁸⁵ Ferrand de Beaudiere, Joseph Alexandre, juge de la juridiction et de l'amirauté du Petit-Goave, à Saint Domingue 1765/1785, ANOM Series E: 112; Sosis 1971: 273; Pluchon 1987: 111; Geggus 2014: 24-25

¹⁸⁶ Thornton 2003: 293

¹⁸⁷ Thornton 1993a: 735

¹⁸⁸ Fick 1990: 114, 141; Sweet 2017: 93

philosophical stances on the slave trade are not yet clear, further evidence from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean might shed light on the political implications of Pedro V's short reign. The actions of Pierre Dom Pedro and his followers critiqued the nature of enslavement and advocated for others to overturn the power imbalances embedded in everyday colonial life. These enslaved rebels could no longer alter social, economic, or political realities in their homelands; but attempted to affect change in Saint Domingue by enacting their own brand of justice against the French colonial plantocracy through poison, theft, spiritual prophesy of impending revolt, and retributive violence. The Dom Pedro campaign might give us a small window to understanding the nature of the Kongo civil wars, as well as a new way to understand how African events and consciousness shaped anti-slavery positions and activities in the Atlantic world.

Fighting for the throne resumed in 1779 when Pedro V's remaining allies again seized São Salvador but were driven out again in September 1781 by Jose I de Agua Rosada, continuing to feed the slave trade.¹⁸⁹ In December 1781, another 'Dom Pedro' surfaced and gained the attention of local authorities, Sim dit Dompete. Sim's name may indicate association with the Kongolese 'simbi' nature spirits that controlled rain and fertility and are contemporarily recognized as part of the Haitian *petwo* rite. In West Central Africa, the simbi spirits protected rocks, rivers, pools, and waterfalls, and were ruled by the mother spirit Bunzi. The Bunzi priest was critically responsible for the spiritual installation of the King of Loango.¹⁹⁰ Sim Dompete was a runaway from Cayes and an alleged animal poisoner, perhaps using his ritual knowledge to enact poison ordeals. He was so well-known in Nippes, south of Port-au-Prince, that members the marechaussée targeted him for capture as they were eager to demonstrate prove their disdain for Africans and African-based culture. During the expedition, the free mulatres hid in the woods for days until they saw Sim pass by

¹⁸⁹ Raimondo da Dicomano, *O Reino do Congo: A decadência final do Reino do Congo*; Raphael de Castello de Vide, *Viagem do Congo do Missionário*; Thornton 2000: 60

¹⁹⁰ MacGaffey 2002; Mobley 2015: 42

carrying a sword, a white hat under his arm, and a sack called a macoute. The *makute* was made of palm raphia cloth about the size of a large handkerchief; these were traded as currency along the Loango coastlands and often used for ritual healing purposes.¹⁹¹ As he appeared, the hunters attacked and they all fought for hours while Sim attempted to reach into the macoute to open its contents. The hunters believed he had a gun, and eventually shot and beheaded Sim then took his sword and bag. The macoute contained several small packets covered with red, blue, and white cloths or animal skins, with feathers, bones, and glass sticking from the bags. There also were black tree seeds and a small piece of white wax.¹⁹² These contents match the description of the garde-corps, or “body guards,” that were created and distributed by Mackandal and later by ritualists in Marmelade.¹⁹³

Around May 24th or 25th, 1786, four recently arrived Africans – Ajax, Vulcain, Cupidon, and Mars – escaped from the parish Anse-a-Veau, southwest of Léogane. They were described as wearing similar white and blue outfits and had “macoutes de ginga ou de mauvaise toile blanche”: bags of ginga (imported European fabric) or bad white cloths.¹⁹⁴ The reference to macoutes and “bad cloths” could imply that these materials were used to carry poisonings as Sim dit Dompète’s petwo macoutes in the same area five years earlier. But, macoutes may not necessarily have been used for negative purposes as assumed by the colored militia officers. Contemporarily, *makout* is a type Haitian Vodou that entails healing for the sick and religious ceremonies for families and communities – the same purpose for which makutes were used along the Loango coast.¹⁹⁵ During the Haitian Revolution, Colonel Charles Malenfant reported discovering macoute bags on the bodies

¹⁹¹ Baudry 1803 (Vol. 2): 83; Janzen 1972: 33; Martin 1986; Sweet 2017: 95

¹⁹² Garrigus 2006: 202-203; Vanhee 2002: 248

¹⁹³ Vanhee 2002: 248-253; Mobley 2015: 311-312

¹⁹⁴ *LA* June 3, 1786, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=805>; St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 59; Moitt 2001: 74

¹⁹⁵ Hebblethwaite 2014: 2

of the few blacks he killed. The sacks contained writings in Arabic, which were probably Qur'anic prayers used in protective *gris-gris* amulets.¹⁹⁶

Here again we have examples of enslaved people using ritual work, including poison, to bring about change in their immediate social world. Macoutes, used by 'Dom Pedros,' were a tool to protect self from the unjustifiable punishments or other forms of day to day violence that occurred within Saint Domingue's plantation-based society. The routine abusive practices perpetrated by plantation personnel would have been interpreted as witchcraft, and lacking legitimacy for how a slave owner was supposed to behave toward bondpeople. Pouches of poison and other spiritual assemblages aided enslaved people, no matter their ethnicity of origin, in redressing power differentials in their everyday lives. Sacred objects were exchanged clandestinely while people performed their work-related tasks, such as the female domestic laborers who delivered macandals in the 1750s. These objects were also distributed at mass ritual gatherings, which the slaves diminished as simple dances, using mawonaj as a path the cultivate networks of participants.

Calendas

Writing in the early 18th century, the priest Jean Baptiste Labat described the calenda as a dance gathering that had the potential to inspire rebellion because it brought blacks together in a state of 'collective effervescence' induced by alcohol and the joy of time away from forced labor. The dance movements were regulated by two drums: the three to four-foot long *grand tambour* made from hallowed out wood and a shorter drum called the *bamboula*, which was made from bamboo. One drum was played rhythmically while the other slower; these sounds were complemented by calabashes filled with small stones or grains of corn and the *banza*, a four-string violin that was plucked. Women and men danced in a counterclockwise circle, to symbolize the life-cycle

¹⁹⁶ Malenfant 1814: 212; Diouf 1998: 131; Gomez 2005: 87

represented in the BaKongo cosmograms,¹⁹⁷ clapping their hands and improvising songs in a call and response fashion. These materials and behavioral elements, when viewed from a wider Atlantic perspective, match descriptions of nganga-led *kilundu* gatherings in 17th century Angola and *calundu* ceremonies in Brazil. A man or woman stood in the center of a group, including musicians and others who sang and shouted to call on a spirit being to occupy the body of the centered individual. The mounted person convulsed and spoke in the metaphoric language of the deceased spirit. Members of the group then begin to consult with the spirit about topics pertaining to the natural realm.¹⁹⁸

The gatherings in Saint Domingue also centered around healing rituals to cure physical and spiritual ills through removal of malevolent spirits.¹⁹⁹ Participants did not have access to the shrines that typically housed ancestral and territorial spirits, however they captured spiritual power associated with respective spirits by carrying them in nkisi objects.²⁰⁰ People could purchase these nkisis at *calendas*, which also were free spaces that enhanced oppositional consciousness. The participation of multiple ethnic groups in these gatherings may suggest that they were becoming “generically African”²⁰¹ and contributed to the growth of solidarity around race and the most powerful spirit beings. Though we can’t necessarily track each *calenda* occurrence, since they were held secret, we can induce through primary and secondary sources that they were regularly occurring events despite suppression attempts.²⁰² Additionally, accounts about François Mackandal and *calendas* held in 1786 indicate that oppositional consciousness was spread at these events through the propagation of liberation and preparation for revolt.

¹⁹⁷ Labat [1722] 1724 (Vol. 2): 52-53; Thompson 1983: 108-109; MacGaffey 1986: 43-46; Fennel 2003: 6

¹⁹⁸ Sweet 2006: 65

¹⁹⁹ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 44; Sweet 2006: 64-65, 73

²⁰⁰ Thornton 2002: 79-80

²⁰¹ Sweet 2006: 70-71

²⁰² Labat [1722] 1724 (Vol. 2): 53

In April 1758, a police ruling prohibited slaves from meeting during day or night under pretense of weddings or funerals as a response to the fact that François Mackandal had been arrested at a calenda. Additionally, drum playing and singing were forbidden, as these were necessary components of ritual performances.²⁰³ This was perhaps in response to calendas that were held in the north, especially around the dates of Catholic celebrations. On August 5th, 1758, a plantation manager in Bois l'Anse, a section of Limonade, was fined 300 livres for allowing a calenda to take place at Habitation Carbon on July 23rd.²⁰⁴ This calenda was held three days before the Catholic recognition of Sainte Anne in Limonade,²⁰⁵ and Saint James the Greater on July 25th-26th, which corresponds to a contemporary popular pilgrimage for Sèn Jak (Saint James), the Haitian Vodou-Catholic manifestation of Ogou Feray in Plaine du Nord, located east of Limonade and Le Cap. While Ogou is the Yoruba god of war and iron, Saint James was the de facto patron saint of the Kongo Kingdom. Observations of Saint James celebrations in 16th century Kongo included offerings and petitions to the saints, dancing and spirit embodiment, and decoration of the pilgrimage space. Ritual martial art performances were also witnessed in 18th century Central Africa, and often were held to initiate newcomers, on the Saint James feast day, or prior to war.²⁰⁶ We might then presume that these activities occurred at this 1758 calenda and was connected to earlier and present-day celebrations wherein participants trace their baths and baptisms to the Kongolese *simbi* water spirits.²⁰⁷

In 1765, a special division of rural police was established with specific orders to eradicate mawonaj and calendas,²⁰⁸ indicating authorities had some sense that the two forms of African

²⁰³ Desmangles 1992: 26; Munro 2010: 27; Ramsey 2011: 34

²⁰⁴ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 234; Ramsey 2011: 36

²⁰⁵ *Almanach historique et chronologique de Saint-Domingue, pour l'année bissextile 1788*, John Carter Brown Library

²⁰⁶ Desch-Obi 2002: 359; Thornton 2002: 85

²⁰⁷ Rey 2005

²⁰⁸ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 829; Munro 2010: 27

Diasporans' agency were interrelated. Yet the implementation of this structural constraint on ritual life did not stymie their activities. Several calenda attendees, dancers, and musicians began to appear in the *Les Affiches Americaines (LAA)* runaway advertisements, exemplifying an intersection between ritualism and efforts to self-liberate. In April 1766 in Trou, a 25-year-old mulatto who claimed to be free had been witnessed going from plantation to plantation under the pretense of being invited to (or inviting people to) a calenda.²⁰⁹ While many of Saint Domingue's mixed-race population were part of the landed gens du couleur, some were indeed enslaved but used skin color to attempt to elevate their status in society. Conversely, this runaway used his skin color to pass as free, not to advance the political and economic interests of the gens du couleur but to attempt to organize the bondspeople in his immediate vicinity.

On September 16th, 1767, an ad appeared for a 20-22-year-old Nago male named Auguste with the branding 'Lebon.' Auguste was described as a merchant from Le Cap who enjoyed calendas, and obviously used his ability to travel as a merchant to his advantage in escape.²¹⁰ Nagos originated from the Bight of Benin region, so this example counters accounts by early writers that African ethnic groups intentionally segregated themselves and antagonized each other. A Kongo man named Jolicoeur was featured in a June 1768 ad for escaping Cassaigne Lanusse's plantation in Limbé. He was described as a good enough drummer, possibly meaning he was a key musician in ritual gatherings.²¹¹ Another musician named Pompée, who played the *banza* very well, escaped in November 1772 from Fort Dauphin and was seen near Ouanaminthe claiming to be free.²¹²

²⁰⁹ *LAA* April 30, 1766, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=70>

²¹⁰ *LAA* September 16, 1767, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2031>

²¹¹ *LAA* June 20, 1768, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2195>. Another possibility is that Jolicoeur was a drummer for the military (King 2001: 55)

²¹² *LAA* November 14, 1772, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3464>

In April 1782, an unnamed commandeur was accused of holding nighttime assemblies and spreading superstition, for which he was condemned to a public whipping then returned to his owner.

Declaration of the Council of Le Cap, confirming a Sentence of the Criminal Judge of the same Town, declaring a Negro, Commander, duly accomplished and convicted of having held nocturnal assemblies, and of having used superstitions and prestige to abuse the credulity of the other negroes, and to try to draw from them money; For the reparation of which he would have been condemned to the whip on the Place du Marche of Clugny; Then handed over to his master.

Commandeurs were responsible for maintaining productivity and order among the *atelier* work gangs. They also at times had to bear the weight of executing punishments for transgressions, which would have put him or her in a position of status above the enslaved laborers. The announcement described the meetings as indulgent of the superstitions of the blacks, and a way for this commandeur to use his position to swindle money from believers.²¹³ However, this is just one of several examples of commandeurs and other privileged slaves operating in collusion with members of the field worker class. Commandeurs like the one above had two faces, one for whites and one for blacks, and likely used his relative privilege among the enslaved worker class to invite people from different plantations and organize these *calendas*.

On November 6th, 1782, an ad was placed for a 22 to 24-year old Kongo male named Almonzor. He was at times seen in the Petite Anse parish, or near the home of a black man named M. Bertin near the Le Cap plain. Almonzor was considered a great dancer in the custom of his country, and probably was a central dancer at the *calendas*.²¹⁴ In March 1783, a creole named Jean-Louis and a Mondongue named Lindor escaped from Madame Chailieu's plantation in Plaisance. The ad states that despite having visual impairment and a missing right thumb, Jean-Louis was a

²¹³ Fick 295 n. 139; St. Mery 1784 (Vol 6): 252

²¹⁴ *LAA* November 6, 1782, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=6584>

superior drummer.²¹⁵ Though describe as a creole, Jean-Louis perhaps had parentage from the Loango coast, which accounts for his familiarity with drumming and his decision to escape with the KiKongo-speaking Mondongue Lindor.

In December 1784, an ad was placed for an escaped coachman, who may have been a calenda organizer:

Cahouet, Mesurade, coachman, age 24 to 26 years, height 5 feet 1 inch, fat face, stocky and hunched, great player of the bansa, singer, and coxer of the blacks, always at each of the dances on the plantations belonging to M. Roquefort. Those who have knowledge give notice to M. Linas of Le Cap, to whom [the runaway] belongs, or to M. Phillippe. There is one portugaise for compensation.²¹⁶

This case has some interesting implications. First, the position of coachman was often reserved for colony-born creoles rather than continent-born Africans, so Cahouet's worldview as an African would have remained prominent. Like the unnamed commandeur who held nighttime gatherings in 1782, Cahouet used his role as a coachman to contact people on several plantations and disseminate the word about the calendas. But since Cahouet had relative privilege in the slave community, why would he feel the need to then escape? Perhaps he felt he could be a more effective organizer if he were "underground" or off the plantation; or his rank in the labor hierarchy didn't protect him from the typical ravages of slavery, and Cahouet sought freedom from for the same reasons as other absconders. Lastly, being a Mesurade did not preclude Cahouet from taking part and having a leadership role in calendas.

The evidence of Africa-inspired rituals persisted despite the May 1772 banning free people of color from holding calendas,²¹⁷ and the reiteration of this ordinance in March 1785.²¹⁸ In December

²¹⁵ *LAA* March 19, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11106>

²¹⁶ *LAA* December 15, 1784, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=7199>

²¹⁷ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 384; Desch-Obi 2008: 273; Ramsey 2011: 38

²¹⁸ "Ordonnance du Roi, qui attribué aux Commandants & Officiers des Etats-Majors, danses des Gens de couleur & celle des Spectacles. Du 11 Mars 1785" ANOM C9B 36; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 6): 727

1789, an ad placed for a Kongolese cook named Zamore, who escaped the previous July and was described as a full-time drummer for the dances since he was last seen in Port-de-Paix.²¹⁹ In an ad placed June 1790, a mulatto Jean-Pierre who was a drummer ran away from his owner the previous May.²²⁰ Jean-Pierre also was a shoemaker in Le Cap, where he used his French skills to pass as a free person of color. These examples demonstrate that African descendants of varying statuses (free or enslaved), race (mulatto or creole), occupations within the slave hierarchy (merchants, commandeurs, cooks, and coachmen) and African ethnicities (Nago, Mesurade, Kongo, Mondongue) participated in what were labeled as *calendas*, which were West Central African in origin. Further, calenda participants and often the leaders of those gatherings embodied a liberation ethos by liberating themselves from enslavement. The runaway ads indicate that *calendas* and other Africa-inspired ritual gatherings were a constant presence in the colony. The ads also provide piecemeal data that demonstrate ritualists were among the many who escaped enslavement and acted as micromobilizers, linking enslaved people from various plantations to calenda ritual gatherings. We do not have a fully accurate account of how many *calendas* took place in Saint Domingue, their exact locations, exactly how many people participated, or their identities. However, accounts of *calendas* in the few years leading to the Haitian Revolution might be a window through which we can understand ritual gatherings as politicized free spaces.

In northern Saint Domingue and other French Caribbean colonies, *kalendas* also referred to African martial art-styled stick fighting gatherings. Stick and machete fighting traditions existed in societies of the Bight of Biafra, West Central Africa, and the Bight of Benin, and they were used as mechanisms for warfare training, rites of passage, and in the case of Dahomey, to train the ‘Amazon’ women fighters.²²¹ Knowledge and skills transfers across the Atlantic resulted in similar practices

²¹⁹ *LAA* December 16, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=10036>

²²⁰ *LAA* June 12, 1790, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=10385>

²²¹ Desch-Obi 2010: 246-250

emerging in pre-revolutionary Saint Domingue. The fighting sticks, called *mayombo*, were filled with a limestone-based powder *maman-bila* and were sold along with red and black seeds called *poto*. Nails were often inserted into the blunt end of the sticks for additional force and to indicate leadership within the network. These materials match the description of elements used in West Central African *nkisi* bags, and were used to imbue the sticks with sacred power that would protect users (mostly men) against opponents who were not similarly armed.²²² In addition to mayombo sticks, other weapons such as machetes and blunt metal-headed clubs were used during the calenda gatherings. The assemblies were not merely performance activities; there is evidence to suggest that expertise in hand-to-hand combat and non-firearm weaponry gleaned from calendas was a significant contribution to successes during the early phases of the Haitian Revolution uprisings.²²³

Moreau de St. Mery described stick-fighting as serious conflicts, usually occurring over jealousy or an offense to one's sense of honor, self-image, or self-worth. It was not uncommon for combatants to strike each other with head blows that drew blood. St. Mery observed that the fights began with a salute and an oath, wherein both participants wet their fingers with saliva then touched the ground, bringing their fingers back to their mouths, then pounding his chest while looking toward the skies. He was both impressed with and entertained by the dexterity with which fighters handled their "murderous sticks," likening the fighting contest to fencing. Each delivered their blows quickly, using their sticks to defend against the other's and to issue offensive strikes. While St. Mery described these events as legitimate fights, he simultaneously dismissed them as a form of play associated with slave dances, void of any previous training or potential usefulness in military combat.²²⁴

²²² Debien 1972; Geggus 1991: 32-34; Vanhee 2002: 252; Weaver 2006: 103-111; Desch-Obi 2008: 143-151; Ramsey 2011: 38-39

²²³ Thornton 2000; Desch-Obi 2008: 145-151

²²⁴ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 53-54; Ogle 2013: 243-244

A 1785 report in the Chamber of Agriculture described the calenda and mayombo sticks as a pervasive problem that encouraged the growing hostility among the enslaved population. Cap Français was deemed to be a troublesome environment where blacks openly displayed acts of insubordination and outright animosity toward whites:

“many negroes in Le Cap never go out without a large stick, and on holidays you find 2,000 of them gathered at La Providence, La Fossette, and Petit Carénage all armed with sticks, drinking rum, and doing the kalinda. The police do nothing to prevent these parties and they never end without quarrels and fighting.”

That same source made several claims of acts of aggression – a group of blacks blocked a white couple from the sidewalk along Rue Espagnole, telling them “Motherfucker, if it was one hour later, you wouldn’t dare say anything. You’d step aside yourself.” Another man chastised a group of blacks for making too much noise in front of his home and was met with the response that “the streets belonged to the king” accompanied by a large rock being thrown at him, barely missing his face.²²⁵ This account indicates the open contempt toward whites by enslaved blacks in Le Cap seems to have stemmed from a sense that the city belonged to them, especially at night and on the weekends when enslaved people from throughout the northern plain descended there for celebrations and to trade food at the weekly market. The diverse population of Le Cap, including the growing community of well-to-do affranchis, gens du couleur, as well as runaways from other parishes, may have signified to the enslaved that freedom, status, and power were fluid categories that could and did change at a moment’s notice. The ability to congregate amongst themselves somewhat freely provided space to enhance oppositional consciousness and act on that consciousness in ways that countered common mores, behavioral expectations, and power structures.

²²⁵ Geggus 2013: 119-120

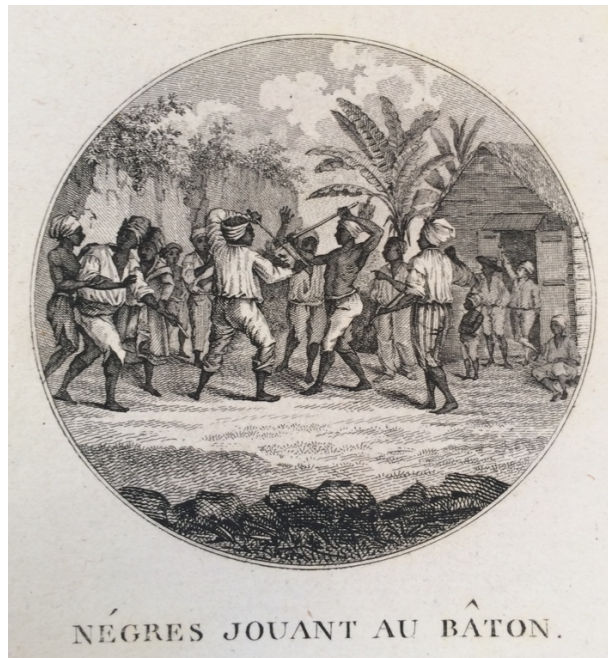


Figure 2.4: “Nègres Jouant au Bâton,” a stick-fighting match at a calenda gathering. Moreau de Saint Mery, 1791. *Recueil de Vues des Lieux Principaux de la Colonie Française de Saint Domingue*. Paris: A.P.D.R. Original bound image at the *Archive Nationale d’Outre-Mer*, Aix-en-Provence, France.

Colonists’ fears that antagonist sentiments among blacks would spread from the cities into the rural areas came to fruition in 1786. On June 3rd, the Superior Council of Cap Français issued a ban on blacks and free people of color from participating in mesmerism, a pseudo-scientific trend that had taken hold in Saint Domingue. This ban was in response to several reports of calendas occurring in banana groves of the Tremais plantation in Marmelade, a northern district dominated by enslaved Kongolesse Africans on newly formed coffee plantations. Four men: Jérôme dit Pôteau and Télémaque from M. Bellier’s plantation at l’Ilet-à-Corne near Marmelade; Jean Lodot of Sieur Mollié’s Souffriere plantation in Marmelade; and Julien, a Kongolesse of the Lalanne plantation also in Marmelade, were charged with orchestrating many secret assemblies that frequently drew as many as 200 participants. In addition to facing charges for organizing the outlawed gatherings, several

witness testimonies asserted that the men were known for selling nkisis and performing other sacred rituals at meetings insiders called *mayombo* or *bila*.²²⁶

Jean Lodot was known as a runaway who frequented the workgangs of Marmelade and Souffriere and carried a small sack with a crucifix, pepper, garlic, gunpowder, and pebbles. He was seen leading at least two ceremonies, one where an overseer saw him in his hut amongst a small gathering kneeling in front of a table that was covered with a cloth and held two candles. Jean held up “fetishes,” or unspecified ritual objects in front of the table, which likely was an altar. On the ground in front of Jean were two machetes crossing over each other. In a second meeting, participants drank a rum concoction with pepper and garlic that induced a sedative state from which Jean would raise them with the flat end of a machete, symbolizing participants’ death and rebirth, and connected machetes to Africans and African descendants’ sacred world. Finally, a third witness, an enslaved man named Scipion, stated that Jean and his followers would put gun powder in their hands and lit it, covering themselves with cane liquor.²²⁷

Witnesses testified that Jérôme and Jean were close associates and were often seen together hosting these gatherings. On several instances, Jean disappeared from Molliers’ plantation and sometimes he stayed on the land of Belier, who owned Jérôme. Along with Jean, Jérôme Pôteau, a man of mixed racial descent, was responsible for selling the mayombo sticks containing maman-bila and the poto seeds, which were likely a source from where he assumed his surname Pôteau. It seems that he performed demonstrations for audiences, and sold sacred objects based on demand. In his small sacks, Jérôme carried little stones, rum, a horn full of gunpowder, pieces of iron, and pieces of paper. Like the methods of Pierre Dom Pedro, Jérôme added gunpowder to the rum to stimulate

²²⁶ “Arrêt de la Cour, Qui défend aux Gens de couleur l’Exercice du Magnétisme, & renouvelle les défenses des Attroupements illicites, du 16 Mai 1786,” 27AP/12 Francois Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN

²²⁷ Debien 1972; Desch-Obi 2008: 147

participants to an excited state. For healing purposes, pepper and a white powder were mixed with the rum to treat people with fevers. The red and black poto seeds were used if one wanted to identify macandal poisoners and thieves.

Jérôme and Télémaque were also close associates; they had been in bondage on the same plantation from which they both eventually escaped. Belier's neighbor, Deplas, testified that numerous assemblies were held on his property – one of which caused such alarm that Deplas went to disrupt the meeting. He stated that Télémaque was leading a ritual assembly and upon dispersal of that gathering, he threatened the witness' servant saying, "you think you're still in Gonaïves, but you will soon know the negroes of l'Ilet-à-Corne!" The witness stated that the servant mysteriously died the next day as the result of a violent colic, insinuating that Télémaque's supernatural abilities were responsible for the mortality. Télémaque and Jérôme were also accused of preaching liberation and independence at the gatherings, attempting to instigate rebellion among the enslaved. The mass revolt would indeed occur five years later, but without any known contribution from the four men. In November, Jean was charged with disturbing the public and having been armed, during his mawonaj, with a hunting knife, an iron stick, and a false passport so he could pass for free. His execution took place at the public market of Marmelade; he was strangled until death ensued and his body remained exposed for 24 hours, then a small tree was planted by the executioner in place of where the body lay. Julien was forced to be present for and assist with Jean's execution, since the two had been arrested together in October, then was returned to his owner. Télémaque and Jérôme were never captured but ultimately hung in effigy.²²⁸

²²⁸ "Arrêt de la Cour, Qui condamne à être pendus les Moteurs des Attroupements nocturnes & Assemblées prétendues Magnétiques d'Esclaves, du quartier de la Marmelade. Du 23 Novembre 1786." 27AP/12 Francois Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN; Debien 1972; Fick 1990: 74; Weaver 2006: 103-111; Ramsey 2011: 40

The calenda gatherings held in the 1760s and 1780s were likely the product of fresh West Central Africans brought to Saint Domingue's ports, which jumped from 36,692 to 75,018 between 1781 and 1790 (Table 1.1). This influx was the result of resumed fighting in the Kongo Kingdom between Pedro V, who attempted a coup in the early 1760s, and forces supporting his opponent Alvaro XI. Prisoners of war were sold by the Vili traders south toward Ambriz, and north through the Loango ports that were most used by the French. These former soldiers would have been trained in the sacred martial art tradition using the mayombo sticks that were described in *Cap Français* in 1785 and in *Marmelade* in 1786. Kongolese fighters often preferred these types of personal weapons to larger bayonets for closer combat, which stood in contrast to European fighting styles. Calendas might then be viewed as training grounds that reinforced spiritual and military organizational knowledge that former Kongo civil war soldiers brought with them to Saint Domingue.²²⁹ Participants in the calendas imbued material culture artifacts with spiritual power to enhance their effectiveness as self-protective armaments. Further, the training in combat action combined with declarations of liberation and the power of Africans and African descendants indicated their anticipation of and preparation for events that would eventually lead to the dismantling of the enslavement system.

Women and Midwifery

The French slave trade brought mostly male captives to Saint Domingue, and the gender ratio between West Central African men to women was roughly 166 (men to 100 women).²³⁰ Women of the Kongolands were more highly valued on the continent as wives, concubines, and laborers and therefore represented a minority of captives taken to the Americas.²³¹ However, women were increasingly targeted in the years leading to the Haitian Revolution. West Central African men were

²²⁹ Thornton 2000: 61

²³⁰ Geggus 1989a: 32

²³¹ Broadhead 1983: 167

65.9 per cent of French slave ship captives to Saint Domingue in 1789, down from 74.9 per cent in 1775.²³² Compared to creoles, and compared to men, Africa-born women were more likely to work in field gangs and did not have many opportunities for upward mobility. Mixed-race women especially were favored for domestic labor and other specialized positions.²³³ Given these conditions, it is most interesting that an Africa-born woman, Marie Catherine *dit*, or “the so-called,” Kingué, came to be revered and feared as a powerful, dangerous threat in Saint Domingue’s northern department.

The case of Marie Catherine Kingué is found in the papers of François Neufchateau, the attorney general of Cap Français in the late 1780s.²³⁴ Kingué was a midwife, healer, diviner, herbalist, and supposedly a vaudox queen. She was 36 to 40 years of age and was identified in the case file as Kongolese, also having two to three marks of her homeland on her cheek below her eye. She was known to claim to be free, also signified by her use of an African name, which suggests that she renounced the forced naming practice that was part of the enslavement process. Her assumed name, Kingué, might also indicate that she was from Kinguélé, the seat of the KaKongo Kingdom 35-40 miles inland from the Malemba port.²³⁵ This renaming represented a self-fashioning of identity and a reclamation of personal power in a society where most African women were relegated to the lowest statuses;²³⁶ it also made her African origins – and the spirits with whom she was associated – recognizable to those who would become part of her following. Inhabitants of the area north of the Congo River were not Christianized in as previously believed, so it is likely that Kingué was a victim

²³² slavevoyages.org

²³³ Moitt 1991: 39-40, 59; Geggus 1996: 261; Walton 2012: 21

²³⁴ 27AP/12, François Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN; Pluchon 1987: 223-23; Weaver 2006: ch. 7

²³⁵ Sommerdyck 2012: 142; Mobley 2015: 75; ‘Kingué’ also was the word for ‘Tuesday’ in KiKongo (conversation with John K. Thornton).

²³⁶ Weaver 2006: 115

of judicial enslavement that targeted witchcraft or fetisheurs.²³⁷ When in Saint Domingue, it is also possible that Marie Catherine attempted escape once, in December 1774 an ad was placed by the Mesnier brothers in Le Cap for a nouveau African named Moinsa, bearing a Maltese cross on his stomach, and a woman named 'Keingue'.²³⁸ We do not yet have concrete evidence linking the runaway Keingue with the midwife Marie Catherine, still the possibility is compelling.

Nevertheless, by 1785 Marie Catherine Kingué was enslaved on a plantation of Sieur Caillon Belhumeur in Port Margot, near Le Cap, and was known throughout Limbé and Plaisance for selling gards-corps, or nkisis. Kingue had live-in partner and lieutenant named Polidor, also Kongolese, from the Labauche plantation in Pilate, Plaisance. Her following amassed quickly and to the extent that whites, including Belhumeur himself, were part of her clientele. Local planters sharply disparaged her in a racialized and sexualized manner, describing her as a monster and a hussy, and those who followed her as weak-minded imbeciles. Several planters in Plaisance, writing to Neufchateau in 1785, had complained to Belhumeur about Marie's activities, even going to the high courts at Le Cap. They requested a special brigade to seize her, stating that the marechaussée, the militia of free men of color responsible for chasing runaways in the colony, and the whites could not be trusted because of their reverence toward her. Named in the letter were the Chailleaus; Mr. Marsan; Mr. Vazou; Saumice; Jean and Bernard Cherisse and Pironneau – three mulatre planters of Plaisance; a surgeon named Pudemaine; as well as trusted enslaved commandeurs to express concern about her "vagrancy, superstition, charlatanism, and other criminal and dangerous acts." Belhumeur promised to reprimand her, but planters bemoaned "il n'en a rien fait" – he did nothing. Apparently, he was paying her a monthly fee for her services.²³⁹

²³⁷ Thornton 2002; Sommerdyck 2012: 142; Mobley 2015: 159-160, 231

²³⁸ *LAA* December 31, 1774, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=4239>

²³⁹ 27AP/12, Francois Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN: Letter 2

From as early as 1784, Marie Catherine had established the reputation for being able to identify and cure the effects of macandal poisonings, a valuable skill for any planter worried about his or her unpaid workforce dying from poison. In accounts from his neighbors, Belhumeur had overworked his slaves causing a few to die. Rather than accept the cause of death, he consulted Kingué to find out if the slaves had been poisoned and to locate the perpetrators. She “did a certain sleight of hand,” or performed a ritual in front of Belhumeur and told him of an alleged conspiracy in his house. Documents also allege that Belhumeur proceeded to torture and kill the accused poisoners without a trial.²⁴⁰ In another instance, Kingué was called to assist a pregnant woman who was sick and possibly had been poisoned; but upon birthing a dead snake emerged instead of a baby.²⁴¹ In the most practical sense, it’s possible that the woman passed a tapeworm during delivery.

In any case, letters indicate that Africans revered Kingué as a god who had the power to kill and resurrect, and to heal all kinds of diseases. In addition to earning money by selling garde-corps nkisis for ten to twelve gourdes, Kingué was amassing spiritual power and notoriety in the neighborhoods of Plaisance. One letter expressed anxiety that, “everyone wanted to consult her experience ... the fanaticism ... became to a point that the greatest disorder would arise in the work gangs.”²⁴² The fourth letter of Neufchateau’s file, written anonymously and dated October 7th, 1785, seems to suggest that Marie gathered one hundred men from a work gang and incited them to get ready to revolt against their owner. Apparently, when Marie performed rituals on the Marsan plantation, Jean and Bernand Cherice and Pironneau were her initiates but later decided not to be part of her operation and were threatened from testifying against her. The letter writer claimed that there was

²⁴⁰ 27AP/12, Francois Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN: Letter 4

²⁴¹ 27AP/12, Francois Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN: Letter 1; Pluchon 1987: 223-23; Weaver 2006: ch. 7

²⁴² 27AP/12, Francois Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN; Pluchon 1987: 223-23

another woman who was witness to Kingué, but was tormented before she could speak out. On the Chailleau plantation, she had accused the first commandeur of being a poisoner.²⁴³

It seems that Marie's actions of helping Belhumeur identify poisoners served to maintain plantation systems just as much as her spiritual assistance to enslaved people aimed to provide stability and health. If she was known for preventing poisonings, why then wouldn't planters view her as an asset rather than a menace? Belhumeur's neighbors perceived, perhaps correctly, her actions as attempts to gain prominence in the slave community. If their accounts were true, Marie Kingué seems to have been either a Kongolese nganga, a kitomi of the Mbumba tradition, or part of the Mpemba midwifery movement originated by a woman with special techniques/powers.²⁴⁴ One wonders what larger spiritual significance the snake would have for Kingué's Kongolese followers, since the snake spirit Mbumba was associated with Jesus Christ and "decentralized and democratized power."²⁴⁵ The symbolism of these events hints at why Kingue was seen as a god who facilitated the birth of a Christ-like spirit which, to her followers, may have represented the coming of a new polity. Planters felt that any form of power exhibited by an enslaved person, especially a woman, would override white male authority and potentially lead to a revolt against the hierarchal nature of society.

Midwives were seen as necessary evils, required to help creole women reach their fullest reproductive capacities. They had some flexibility in the slave hierarchy but were often accused of infanticide by using herbs to spread *mal de mâchoire*, a tetanus-like disease that locked a child's jaw and affected their ability to ingest.²⁴⁶ The hysteria may or may not have been validated given that infanticide was a gendered form of resistance throughout the Americas – some women would have

²⁴³ 27AP/12, Francois Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN: Letter 4

²⁴⁴ Janzen 1972: 56

²⁴⁵ Thornton 1993b: 194

²⁴⁶ Weaver 2004

preferred not to see another child brought into the harrows of enslavement and therefore took matters into their own hands.²⁴⁷ A midwife named Arada on the Fleuriau plantation in Cul-de-Sac where poisonings occurred in 1776, was put in a rope collar with 70 knots representing the number of children she'd been accused of killing. In 1786, a midwife owned by Madame Dumoranay was suspected to have been the source of high infant mortality, yet no concrete evidence against her was presented.²⁴⁸

Whether the midwives were deliberately causing *mal de mâchoire* as a way of protesting increased slave breeding (particularly after 1760)²⁴⁹ or it was a result of unsanitary conditions, they undoubtedly relied on African-based technologies and often gave counsel to European doctors. Midwives' role in the plantation hierarchy made them valuable and privileged, but racial and gendered oppression (undoubtedly including sexual exploitation) made them a target. Several midwives escaped enslavement altogether, including a 55-year-old creole midwife named Zabeth who escaped from the Duconge plantation in Port-de-Paix. Zabeth fled on January 10th after having been accused of causing over thirty infant deaths, and eleven more illnesses. Allegedly, each child suffered the same disease and were treated by the same midwife.²⁵⁰ In October 1778, a mulatresse named Manon was announced to have escaped six weeks before. It was suspected that she left the Limonade plantation for Le Cap to the house of Dame Couttin, who trained her in midwifery.²⁵¹ A Kongolese woman named Lise was the midwife for her plantation owner in Le Cap and escaped in 1784.²⁵² Though not a midwife, another Kongo woman escaped from Saint Marc. In the colony, she was known as Diane, but her African name was Ougan-daga,²⁵³ which may be connected to the term

²⁴⁷ Morrissey 1989: 115-116

²⁴⁸ Moitt 2001: 63

²⁴⁹ Weaver 2004: 98

²⁵⁰ *LAA* March 1, 1786, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=659>

²⁵¹ *LAA* October 20, 1778, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=5210>

²⁵² *LAA* April 28, 1784, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=6823>

²⁵³ *LAA* June 19, 1788, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8769>

ouanga, which were charms categorically close to nkisis that were discovered in the Mackandal trial and became outlawed in post-revolution Haiti,²⁵⁴ indicating Diane was proficient in Kongolese ritual technologies. As the gender imbalance came to parity approaching the Haitian Revolution, we begin to see women more prominently in gendered roles such as midwives and ritualists. The most well-known ritual gathering was the Bwa Kayman ceremony, presided over by a mambo named Cécile Fatiman. While these examples are interesting, there still needs to be further investigation of the ways in which women actively contributed to the Revolution.

BREAKING POINT: 1791

Bwa Kayman & “Zamba” Boukman Dutty

It is difficult to know how long the masses of northern Saint Domingue had been planning the revolt that began August 22nd, 1791, and who was involved in the organizing. It is understood that Georges Biassou, Jean-François Papillion, and Zamba Boukman Dutty were the central emerging leaders, while Toussaint Louverture was likely part of the planning but waited until fall to leave the Breda plantation and join the rebel ranks. What is known from oral histories is that at least one Africa-inspired sacred ritual gathering was a significant vehicle for mobilizing the enslaved population in the northern plain. The Bois Caiman (hereafter Bwa Kayman) ceremony is known as an exemplary case within the African Diaspora of ritual influence on impending revolt against enslavement. Less than seven days prior to the August 22nd, 1791 mass insurgency on Saint Domingue’s northern plain two gatherings occurred near the Lenormand de Mezy plantation in Morne Rouge.

It is believed that the first gathering was a meeting of creole coachmen, commandeurs, and high ranking slaves on August 14th to outline the strategy for the revolt, and the other was held on August

²⁵⁴ Peabody 2002: 77; Gomez 2005: 89; Ramsey 2011: 58-59; Mobley 2015: 308

21st to summon spirits for protection and sacralize the revolt.²⁵⁵ However, we lack clarity about the actual date of the ceremony; although the August 14th meeting may have been an organizing meeting, it coincides with present-day celebrations for *lwa* Ezili Kawoulo and was the feast day for the Notre Dame de l'Assomption, patron saint of the colony. This would have been particularly important to free people of color and enslaved Kongo Catholics who followed the cult of the Virgin. Also, August 15th is the date for honoring Kongo *lwa* in Gonaïves, not far from northern plain.²⁵⁶

No matter on which date the ceremony occurred, evidence suggests that the Bwa Kayman spiritual gathering was the culmination of ritual collaboration between the varying African ethnic groups. A pig was sacrificed – which in contemporary Haitian society signifies a militaristic undercurrent of the petwo rite – and participants drank its blood, indicating a Dahomean oath of secrecy done in conjunction with the spirit Ogou.²⁵⁷ Spirits from the Nago-Rada pantheon held more spiritual capital because Bight of Benin Africans were the first ethnic majority in the colony. These spirits were then paired with and/or transferred to the Kongolese rite.²⁵⁸ Therefore, we might surmise that a manifestation of the maternal water spirit Ezili, often depicted as the Catholic Virgin Mary, and the spirit of war and iron Ogou, appearing as Saint James, were the main forces called upon at Bwa Kayman. This ethnographic evidence is supported with historical evidence from the Catholic tradition in the Kongolands, where petitions to the Virgin and Saint James and spirit embodiment were common practices in the 17th and 18th centuries.²⁵⁹ Ezili and Ogou from the Bight of Benin were merged with Mary and Saint James from the Kongo to reinforce the shared bond of the ritual between the two ethnic clusters.

²⁵⁵ Geggus 2002: ch. 6

²⁵⁶ Rey 2005: 5

²⁵⁷ Sosis 1971: 404-405, n. 48; Pluchon 1987: 74-77; Law 1999

²⁵⁸ Hebblethwaite 2012: 7

²⁵⁹ Rey 2005: 3-4

Early sources described a woman who performed significant rituals during the Bwa Kayman ceremony; then in the 1950s the grandson of a mixed-race woman named Cécile Fatiman and former Haitian President Jean-Louis Pierrot confirmed to historian Etienne Charlier that Cécile had been the main presider.²⁶⁰ Along with Fatiman, “Zamba” Boukman Dutty is credited with orchestrating the ceremony, and steered the initial attacks on the northern plantations from August until his death in November 1791. During the ceremony, he delivered an appeal to the masses that while the god of the whites calls for evil, the god of the blacks ordered revenge.

Boukman was illegally brought from Jamaica and eventually came to be owned by a lawyer in Limbe named Leclerc. Boukman was known as a “bad slave” whose frequent mawonaj resulted in one night being caught, shot, then sold to the Clement plantation in Acul, where he was for some reason promoted to either commandeur or coachman.²⁶¹ He was reportedly a leader of the ceremony and in Haitian historical memory was a boko(r), someone who does “mystical work through his own strength” rather than through learned rituals.²⁶² Further, present-day Haitian respondents suggest that Boukman was adept to languages and symbols belonging to various ethnic groups, and deliberately incorporated those symbols and rites into his ritual practice to rally as many mobilizers as possible.²⁶³ If Boukman was indeed brought from Jamaica as is typically noted, it is possible that he was an African-Atlantic “creole.” Diouf suggests that among English speakers, Boukman or its Anglicized version “Book-man,” referred to “men of the book” – African Muslims. She argues that Boukman Dutty was a Muslim who had a Qur’an and was a trusted priest with considerable privilege within the slave hierarchy.²⁶⁴ With this evidence, Boukman may have been a marabout cleric

²⁶⁰ Dalmas 1814: 116-127; Metral 1818: 15-20; Charlier 1954: 49; Fick 1990: 93-94; Geggus 2002: 82; Dubois 2004: 99-100

²⁶¹ Sosis 1971: 405 n. 49; Fouchard 1972: 339; Benot 2009: 102

²⁶² Deren 1953: 63; Hebblethwaite and Payton interview with Sevite Dorsainville Estime, Nov 1, 2012, *The Vodou Archive*, UF Digital Collections

²⁶³ Eddins field research interview with Maurice Etienne at Lakou Lakay, Milot, Haiti, July 26, 2015

²⁶⁴ Diouf 1998: 152-153

captured in Senegambia and exported for the slave trade because of his anti-slavery stance.²⁶⁵ In support of Diouf's postulation, Boukman was also known to his followers as "Zamba,"²⁶⁶ which may be a version of "Samba," a name that means "second son" in the Pulaar language of the Fulbe.²⁶⁷ This lends further credence to the argument that Boukman was Muslim brought from Senegambia to Jamaica then to Saint Domingue. This transit would have exposed him to native English and French speakers as well as the range of African ethnic groups in Jamaica,²⁶⁸ which held many more Gold Coast and Biafran Africans than did Saint Domingue.²⁶⁹ Further, his experience in an English colony may have contributed to an understanding of inter-imperial geopolitics, providing a basis for knowledge about how to exploit conflicts between the French, English, and Spanish.

If he had been brought from Jamaica by a trader going against an English blockade against the French, Boukman would have arrived either during the Seven Years War (1754-1763) or during the Usonian War of Independence (1776-1783). In either case, Boukman probably would have been aware of the Akan-led Tacky's Revolt in 1760 and subsequent Coromantee wars. Additionally, Boukman would have understood the power of African-based sacred practices in bringing together mobilizers. Tacky's Revolt was organized by obeahmen who hid the conspiracy using loyalty oaths and employed ritual packets as protective armaments. However, in the aftermath of the revolt, the Jamaican colonial government increased repression against ritualists which "threw the direct competition among different forms of sacred authority into stark relief."²⁷⁰ Tacky was eventually betrayed by maroons who were allied with Anglo-Jamaican planters. Given the conflicts between the African ritualists and maroons in Jamaica, Boukman perhaps had a keen understanding of the

²⁶⁵ Ware 2014 ch. 3

²⁶⁶ Fick 1990: 92

²⁶⁷ Forbes 1993: 236; Gomez 2005: 24

²⁶⁸ Eddins field research interview with Maurice Etienne at Lakou Lakay, Milot, Haiti, July 26, 2015

²⁶⁹ Hall 2005: 110; Chambers 2007: 296-297

²⁷⁰ Schuler 1970; Brown 2008: 148-149

importance of pan-African alliances and employed these lessons as he organized the August 1791 insurrection. Based on available evidence, Boukman seems to have been a Wolof Muslim taken from Senegambia to Jamaica, where Biafrans and Gold Coast Africans were most prominent in organizing revolt; then he was smuggled to Saint Domingue where the Kongolese were the most numerous and Bight of Benin Africans had the longest standing presence. Kongolese fighters may have felt an affinity for Boukman, since the nickname “Zamba” translates from KiKongo to “elephant,” a nod to Boukman’s large physical stature.²⁷¹ It therefore should come as no surprise that accounts of the Bwa Kayman ceremony show indications of symbols and practices from multiple ethnic backgrounds. Further biographical research is needed to identify when Boukman was taken from Senegambia to Jamaica, then brought to Saint Domingue. If indeed he was brought after the Coromantee Wars, any connection between these events in Jamaica and the beginnings of the Haitian Revolution would prove compelling.

Boukman Dutty was not the only rebel leader who recruited sacred power to enhance their efficacy to command thousands of insurrectionists. Georges Biassou was a key leadership figure in the early days of the revolution who, along with Boukman Dutty, Jeanot Bullet, Jean-François Papillon and many others, was present at the organizing meeting on August 14th, 1791. Biassou was originally was enslaved person from the hills surrounding Cap Français. His mother was a nurse in a Jesuit hospital where Toussaint L’Overture may have also been employed. L’Overture and Biassou had familiarity with one another from their early years, and L’Overture would later become the doctor for Biassou’s rebel camp. Georges Biassou was considered one of the more colorful revolutionary leaders, particularly because of his open dedication to African based practices. His war tent was known to include sacred items and animals. At night, he held ceremonies featuring African dances

²⁷¹ Thornton 1993b: 185-186

and chants. Additionally, his military cadre included several religious specialists whom he regularly sought for advice.²⁷²

Amethyste & the Amazons

We do not know much about specific women who actively fought during the Haitian Revolution, except that they often served as couriers, spies, or nurses.²⁷³ There were military wives Sanite Belair, Marie Jeanne Lamartinière, Claire Heureuse, and Dedee Bazile known also as Défilée, women's spiritual role seems to have been consistent. In February 1792, Colonel Charles Malenfant led a military excursion against a camp in Fonds-Parisien at Cul-de-Sac when he witnessed a vaudox ceremony led by a priestess who had placed ritual artifacts along the road to the encampment to block foreign entry. Black and white chickens were speared on large stakes trailing the road leading to a set of 8-10 large eggs, which created an entryway to an encampment covered in vines. There, over 200 women, some of whom were from the Gouraud plantation, and a few men were found singing and dancing, and the militiamen chased them toward the Santo Domingo border, killing 20 women en route. The leader was described as a finely dressed woman from the Boynes plantation, but she was executed by Malefant's troops without due process. Malenfant was particularly peeved by her premature killing because he was no longer able to obtain information about the nearby rebels. Malenfant discovered another vaudox queen in the Sainte Suzanne mountains of Limonade. She was an Arada woman, probably a recently arrived African since she spoke no creole, and initiates claimed that she was all-powerful. She was questioned in Cap Français and showed interrogators a secret handshake akin to those of the Freemasons, but she never divulged other secrets that would lead to identifying members of the sect thereby protecting rebels' information.²⁷⁴

²⁷² Fouchard 1972: 346-347; Fick 1990: 113; Landers 2010: ch. 2

²⁷³ Moitt 2001: ch. 7; Girard 2009: 68-72

²⁷⁴ Malenfant 1814: 217-219; Sosis 1971: 263; Fouchard 1972: 344-345

Despite the paucity of information about female revolutionaries, there are interesting accounts of women rebels from the early days of the uprising that deserve some re-examination. In the weeks after Bwa Kayman, Boukman went on to lead an insurgency of tens of thousands of slaves in systematically pillaging and burning dozens of sugar plantations throughout the northern plain. In an 1889 compilation of accounts from nuns of the Communauté des Religieuses Filles de Notre-Dame du Cap-Français, an expensive boarding school for black and white girls,²⁷⁵ rebel slave band leader Boukman Dutty was witnessed attempting to capture Cap Français days after Bwa Kayman. In their letters describing the insurgency's destruction, the nuns describe a former student known as "Princess" Amethyste, a young mixed-race woman who had been initiated into the Arada tradition of Gioux or Vaudox and had persuaded other students to follow her lead. This group was referred to as 'Amazons,' to imply that they were female insurgents that actively assisted Boukman in sacking Le Cap and were members of his spiritual sect.²⁷⁶

Another letter writer claimed that Princess Amethyste had been seen with the daughter of Henri Christophe,²⁷⁷ a rebel fighter who later became king of northern Haiti post-revolution. The student Amethyste may have been described later as a "princess" as an insinuation that she also was Christophe's daughter, since he and his wife Queen Marie-Louise Coisdavid did have two girls: Frances-Améthiste and Ann-Athénaire. However, given the girls' age at the time of their father's death in the 1820s – twenty-two and twenty, respectively²⁷⁸ – it is impossible that they were part of Boukman's 1791 uprising. The nuns' post-revolution imagining of the girls as Henri Christophe's daughters and their followers as 'Amazons' may reflect the voracity with which the women accompanying Boukman fought; it is also a reference to Christophe's installation of the Royal

²⁷⁵ Geggus 2013: 107

²⁷⁶ Fouchard 1988: 39-40; Fick 1990: 104, 265-266; Vanhee 2002: 248-249

²⁷⁷ Cabon 1949: 417-419

²⁷⁸ Vandercook 1928: 195

Dahomets, a private army composed of several thousand soldiers imported from Dahomey.²⁷⁹

Christophe's wife requested that he constitute an all-female Society of Amazons to accompany them during their processions,²⁸⁰ suggesting that Dahomean women fighters were also brought into Christophe's royal governance.

'Amazons' were an all-female army of Dahomey, known locally as *abosi*, that dated to the mid-late 17th century. While Dahomean society was highly patriarchal, women held significant spiritual and military positions within the royal sphere. Oral historians trace the lineage of amazons to a group of women who hunted elephants for King Wegbaja in the mid-17th century, and later were elevated to guard the king's palace. By the early 19th century, the amazons were reorganized and institutionalized as a decorated women's military force. They were widely regarded by the king and European travelers, including 18th century French traders based in Ouidah, as the most superior brigade who were highly proficient in fighting and handling weaponry.²⁸¹ Given their elite ranking, it is likely that some of these women were fighters in Dahomean wars with neighboring states between the 1760s and 1780s,²⁸² and were captured and exported as prisoners of war then enslaved in Saint Domingue.²⁸³ In addition to being the women's wing of Christophe's post-revolution army, it is possible that vaudox-initiated women from the Bight of Benin were the 'amazon' fighters witnessed by the nuns, who employed their military knowledge during the first Haitian Revolution uprisings.

²⁷⁹ Christophe [1767-1820] 1952: 50

²⁸⁰ Dubois 2012: 62

²⁸¹ Law 1991: 276; Alpern 1998a: 15-20; Bay 1998: 201-208

²⁸² Alpern 1998b: 21

²⁸³ Thornton 2000: 61-63



Figure 2.5: “Female Soldier (Amazon), Dahomey, 1849-1850,” Frederick E. Forbes.
www.slaveryimages.org.

The nuns’ letter indicates the young women stole from the convent at night wearing red and black to engage in ceremonial dances and chants. One chant in specific was recorded, and had been mentioned in earlier writings on vaudox from Moreau de Saint-Mery and other accounts of the revolution:

Eh! Eh! Bomba, hen! hen!
 Canga bafio té
 Canga moune dé lé
 Canga doki la
 Canga li²⁸⁴

This chant is confirmed to be KiKongo language and refers to summoning *Mbumba*, the rainbow serpent spirit of Kongo to ‘tie up’ or stop the ‘whites’, the ‘blacks,’ and the ‘witches’.²⁸⁵ The

²⁸⁴ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 49

²⁸⁵ Janzen 1982; Geggus 1991a; Thornton 1993b; Fick 2000; Vanhee 2002; Pettinger 2012

invocation of Mbumba indicated that this chant was political, since witchcraft was associated with greed, abuse of power, and injustice.²⁸⁶

The nuns described the king of the vaudox sect – presumably Boukman – as having declared war on the settlers wearing a crown on his head, and being accompanied by the queen who wore a red scarf, waving bells and carrying a box that contained a snake as they marched to attack the city. The rest of the account claims to witness, from the heights of Cap, activities in the countryside where naked women danced to tambourines and conch shells while white victims were sacrificed. Throughout the chaos, Zamba Boukman encouraged the women to attack the barracks and the convent where many white settlers lived. He again reminded them, like his prayer at Bwa Kayman, that whites were cursed by God because they were oppressors of blacks and ended his words with the phrase “Coute la liberté li pale cœur nous tous” – “listen to liberty which speaks in the hearts of us all.”²⁸⁷ In November, Boukman was killed in battle while defending his post after several attempts to sack Cap Français, his body decapitated and burned. Insurgents in his band held a three-day calenda was to commemorate his death.²⁸⁸

The account of Boukman’s march on Le Cap and the description of the snake seem to fit with the theme of the chant – the snake god Mbumba would help the insurgents bind the whites and end their evil reign. The snake may also have embodied Danbala Wedo, the Haitian vodou creator spirit that originated in Dahomey, which may explain why the female Arada initiates gravitated to its usage during the uprising. The role of Amethyste and the “Amazon” fighters, while singing a KiKongo chant, also attests to the forging of a singular ritual tradition that incorporated individuals, symbols, and rites from the varying ethnicities represented in Saint Domingue. These events not only signify the origins of what would become the Rada and Petwo rites of Haitian vodou; they indicate that the

²⁸⁶ Thornton 1993b: 212-213; Thornton 2002: 82

²⁸⁷ Fouchard 1988: 39-40; Fick 1990: 104, 265-266

²⁸⁸ Garrigus and Dubois 2004: 123; Munro 2010: 29

coming together of the two most culturally significant groups occurred in solidarity against the EuroAmerican plantocracy and the enslavement they imposed was an ongoing process during the colonial era.

CONCLUSION

African-Saint Dominguans' ritual gatherings at burial sites, in churches, and at nighttime calenda assemblies served as free spaces where they could re-produce aspects of their religious cultures away from the observation of whites. In addition to cultivating an environment for cultural expression, ritual free spaces allowed participants to reclaim personal and collective power by using sacred material artifacts; enhance oppositional consciousness through seditious speech; and build racial solidarity between African ethnic groups, and enslaved and free blacks by binding each other to secrecy. It is important to note that women figured prominently in African-Saint Dominguans' free space ritual practices as sacred authorities. The gendered and racial class hierarchy relegated black women, especially those that were Africa-born, to the most labor-intensive work in the slavery-based political economy. Therefore, black women have been marginally represented in spaces of formally recognized power in pre-revolutionary Saint Domingue. However, ideas from African Diaspora Studies, Sociology, and Anthropology help frame black women's positionality as the springboard for 'bridge' leadership activism that is most potent in culturally-driven free spaces, such as ritual gatherings, that connects rank-and-file grassroots efforts to larger movement organizing (Terborg-Penn 1996; Robnett 1997; Kuumba 2002; Kuumba 2006; Perry 2009; Hounmenou 2012). In keeping with gender roles that were normative on the African continent, enslaved women served as vaudox queens, poison courriers, protectors of sacred knowledge and secrets held by rebels, and mobilizers during the early Haitian Revolution insurgency. We see this most clearly with Brigitte, Marianne, and the other women implicated in the François Mackandal affair; Cécile Fatiman as she led the sacralizing ceremony for the August 1791 mass revolt; "Princess" Amethyste who galvanized

women fighters under the symbolism of vaudoux to help Boukman Dutty attack Le Cap; and the vaudoux queens discovered by Colonel Malenfant who refused to identify their male rebel counterparts. Through the lens of black women's bridge leadership, we might think of Africa-inspired sacred rituals as a collection of localized idioms and practices that formed cultural resistance against the imposition of Western Christian values (Kuumba and Ajanaku 1998), and was a vehicle for organizing mobilization networks.

In their free spaces, blacks produced ritual artifacts to arm and empower themselves against the everyday forms of violence embedded in the slave society. Gris-gris, macandals, ouangas, and macoutes were all small sacks containing varying materials that were prayed over and charged with comporting the spirits of non-human entities to grant the user's requests. These requests usually entailed alter slave owners' behavior – most commonly to prevent punishment for mawonaj and for owners to grant emancipation after death from poison. Mayombo sticks empowered carriers, mostly men, to fight with enhanced spiritual power. Higher ranking calenda fighters and organizers held more sacred power and were most associated with insubordination. The sacred packets, sticks, and garde-corps were “popular” culture artifacts that represented the “raw materials” for free space ritual performances. Used by most enslaved people in the colony,²⁸⁹ sacred artifacts and those who produced them derived meaning from their African origins to shaped individuals' responses to the colonial situation and guide social actions (Harris 2001; Johnston 2009). Songs such as those sung by François Mackandal “ouaïe, ouaïe, Mayangangué” and the KiKongo “Eh! Eh! Bomba, hen! hen!” chant were other forms of cultural artifacts that operated as discourses of contention, or ways of communicating collective understandings and visions for social transformation through dialogue (Hall 1990; Steinberg 1999; Kane 2000). The song and chant helped built solidarity by encoding

²⁸⁹ Dubois 2004: 42

information about the power of spirits to end slavery, and were part of the unfolding of the revolutionary process itself (Johnston 2009).

Seditious speech to incite or inspire rebellion against Domingue's racial conditions occurred within free spaces, and served as another discourse of contention that enhanced oppositional consciousness. Oppositional consciousness arises from a group's experiences with systems of domination, overlapping institutions, values, and ideas that support the exploitation and powerlessness of one group in favor of another (Morris 1992; Morris and Braine 2001). Oppressed groups gain critical comprehension about the social conditions they face, and develop the tools to combat those conditions while taking part in free space activities. West Central Africans and those who took part in their ritual technologies were keenly averse to exploitative, abusive practices, which would have been viewed as witchcraft. François Mackandal, Pierre "Dom Pedro," and Télémaque and Jérôme dit Pôteau communicated to their followers the injustice of enslavement and promoted ideas about freedom and independence. Mackandal's speeches about restoring racial justice to the colony was particularly important in cultivating a sense of solidarity among enslaved Africans of varying backgrounds around the concept of race, which was in some ways fluid in Saint Domingue but increasingly restrictive (Garrigus 2006).

Collective action micromobilization is dependent on consciousness, solidarity, and collective identity. Solidarity can be thought of as a sense of loyalty, shared interest, and identification with a collectivity that enhances cohesion and advances the idea that the well-being of a collectivity is of such a great importance that it will yield widespread participation in collective action (Fantasia 1988; Gamson 1992; Taylor and Whittier 1992; Hunt and Benford 2004). People associated with ritual performances came from several ethnic backgrounds, including the Yoruba, Igbo, Kongolesse, Mesurade, Mondongue, and Nago. Other participants associated with ritual gatherings or poisonings were mulattres or free people of color. Ritual work built racial solidarity through identification with

several African symbols that were expressions of several cultural identities. Combined with the racial boundaries of the colonial structures, Africa-inspired ritual participation and other forms of collective action like mawonaj, a collective racial identity began to emerge. The next chapter of the dissertation will explore the influence of oppositional consciousness on patterns of mawonaj, through analysis of race, ethnicity, and other demographics as indicators of solidarity and identity in runaway slave advertisements placed in *Les Affiches Americaines* from 1766 to 1791.

CHAPTER THREE: RUNAWAYS

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter demonstrated that African Diasporans' re-creation of rituals was rooted in their sacred understandings of the world, and they included participants and leaders from varying backgrounds and statuses: Africa-born, colony-born creole, mixed-race, free, enslaved, and runaways. Further, the Africa-inspired sacred ritual practitioners incorporated symbols, performances, and artifacts from different cultural groups to cultivate shared meanings, solidarity, and oppositional consciousness. For example, herbalist and poisoner François Mackandal used calendas to invoke the history of racial domination in Saint Domingue, and to prophesy the formation of a future black-led state. Boukman Dutty employed religious symbols from various ethnic groups in organizing the Bwa Kayman ceremony in the days before leading the August 1791 insurrection. Other ritualists escaped enslavement, used herbal packets as poison and for healing purposes, organized underground networks and cultivated large followings, and advocated for rebellion and independence. Over time, African Diasporans collective consciousness became increasingly politicized and hostile toward their social conditions.

It is difficult to accurately measure the influence of consciousness, particularly in the absence of primary sources narratives from the enslaved themselves. However, I seek to connect diaspora consciousness with oppositional social movement consciousness through analysis of enslaved people's micro-level collective action – marronage – over time. *Marronage* was the French terminology describing the phenomenon of enslaved runaways. The etymology of marronage derives from the Spanish *cimarrón*, meaning wild beast – the assumption being that Africans' natural place was in bondage and that escapees were somehow uncontrollable.²⁹⁰ The Kreyol term *mawonaj* is used

²⁹⁰ In English-speaking regions, the terminology is 'maroon.' For a comprehensive look at marronage in the Atlantic world, see Price [1973] 1996 and Moomou 2015

to invoke Haitians' linguistic and historical intentionality and understanding of the phenomenon. African Diasporans who perpetually escaped and returned shortly thereafter engaged in *petit* (little) mawonaj, while indefinite self-liberation was described as *grand* (big) mawonaj. This project focuses primarily on the latter. Though it is not currently possible to identify exact members of the mobilization structures that took part in the Haitian Revolution, I consider mawonaj as a type of micromobilization practice that helped spread oppositional consciousness that fed into the Revolution through group-based interactions and other assertive behaviors. Some evidence suggests that several Revolution leaders were runaways themselves and may have cultivated their following through mawonaj; this will be discussed in the following chapter.

I use content analysis of over 10,000 runaway advertisements to examine patterns that indicate micromobilization patterns through shared liberation consciousness, identity work, and solidarity building before the Revolution began. The advertisements contain qualitative information that can lend to some wider understandings of how enslaved runaways exhibited oppositional consciousness, and conceptualized and enacted freedom on their terms. I identified several behaviors described in the ads that might give insight to the runaway's mindset – of course bearing in mind that these ads were written by plantation owners or managers and therefore reflect their point of view. However, because enslaved people themselves were the singularly important form of capital in Saint Domingue, slave owners had financial incentive to provide as much accurate detail as possible to aid in identifying, locating, and recovering absconders who were seen as valuable 'lost property.' Thus, the speculative information provided in the advertisements about the runaways and their actions can carry some legitimacy despite planters' implicit and explicit biases. Though the original intent of these ads was to surveil, track, and to re-enslave black people, I aim to subvert the text by discerning the ways in which runaways created or used previously existing social ties, and forms of their African-Atlantic human capital to facilitate their escape and respond to structural conditions. I use

quantitative models to test how those patterns changed over time and give us a sense of African Diasporic oppositional consciousness.

THEORY & LITERATURE: MICROMOBILIZATION NETWORKS

Social movement theory suggests that individuals who share structural positions have similar likelihoods of deciding to take part in collective action. However, the resource mobilization and political process models that dominated the social movements field did not fully theorize the structural conditions that create the inequalities that people experience to varying degrees (Taylor and Whittier 1992). The ‘rational choice actor’ did not appear from a social vacuum, void of an identity, culture, race, gender, or social status. Therefore, the concept ‘micromobilization’ was developed to help locate micro-level social action, such as organizing, planning, or recruiting, within macro-level realities (Morris and Mueller 1992). Here is where insights from diaspora studies help contextualize the influence of oppositional consciousness in individuals’ decisions to participate in collective action – in this case, mawonaj. Diaspora populations survive hostile host environments, maintain collective identity, and recreate cultural and religious practices through their maintenance and creation of social ties (Sheffer 2012). Additionally, groups involuntarily dispersed removed from their homelands then face oppressive host societies, at times can contribute to social movement activity and destabilizing of oppressive and exploitative structures (Basch, Schiller, and Blanc 1994). It then follows that diasporic identities and relationships can serve as important connections to identifying opportunities to join collective action and for what reasons, in keeping with conceptualizations of how micromobilization functions.

Solidarity and identity are two indicators of consciousness in micromobilization as these can influence an individual’s decision to participate in collective action or not, the reasons for participation and with whom, and the nature and extent of that participation (Fantasia 1988; McAdam 1988; Gamson 1992; Hunt and Benford 2004; Ward 2015; Ward 2016). In looking at the

African Diaspora, we see this most clearly in slave rebellions. Relationship ties built on slave ships, on plantations, or during cultural activities were often based on shared language, ethnicity or region of birth; and these were the networks that would form the bases of organizing revolts. Some Africans from similar regions shared linguistic, religious, or political commonalities, for example Bambaras and Poulards from Senegambia, Nagos and Aradas from the Bight of Benin, or Mondongues and Mayombes from West Central Africa, making it likely that these groups would have mobilized members of their regional background. But, Africans such as Senegambians and Kongolese, for example, would not have come into contact on the continent because of the distance between the regions, thus their only commonality was their shared status of being enslaved in Saint Domingue. Given the sheer size of the Africa-born population in the colony – approximately two-thirds of the enslaved – it is fair to assume that most creoles had direct parentage or other kinship ties to an African, despite claims from early sources that Africans and colony-born creoles were largely foreign to each other. As these groups endured colonial structures in the Americas that categorized and exploited people because of their *blackness* rather than their ethnic, religious, or political origins, inter-ethnic solidarity between enslaved Africans and African descendants became increasingly important (Gomez 1998; Borucki 2015). Social conditions at times prompted both Africans from geographically disparate regions and creoles to escape together, which would indicate they understood their positionality based on their race and social status.

This process did not occur instantaneously, but developed as Africans interacted with each other and learned to communicate in the Kreyol language within spheres of labor, housing arrangements and family units, and ritual practice. Another way they grappled with learning to trust each other was through mawonaj. The idea of ‘submerged networks’ is appropriate for understanding mawonaj patterns because of the emphasis on the interactive processes within permanent and semi-permanent ties that bind social movement challengers and construct mobilization. Submerged networks are

systems of small groups where information and people circulate freely within the network; they are largely out of public view and are transitory, as members may have multiple memberships with limited or temporary involvement. Moreover, submerged networks create a collective identity through tensions that exist between individuals and groups as they contend with one another, everyday life, and the processes of mobilization (Melucci 1985; Melucci 1989; Mueller 1994). The submerged network concept brings a new perspective to understanding how the varied patterns of escape and relationships in mawonaj created a web of individuals and small groups who shared and circulated ideas, resources, and strategies for achieving freedom – however defined. Therefore, we might think of runaways who escaped in small groups, used external social ties like family or skilled labor occupations to facilitate escape, and/or became members of established runaway communities as a collection of small networks that operated independently or in collaboration with others as changing situations necessitated. Further, considering runaways as part of submerged networks brings to light the importance of individuals' and groups' shielding of themselves from the dominating societal forces to maneuver with flexibility.

Submerged networks foster understandings of social circumstances as well as strategies and tactics for collective action. Potential runaways learned valuable information on how and when to escape, where to go, and the tools to use from those still enslaved on plantations or from those who had already escaped but maintained contact with plantations. Advertisements typically describe the amount of time a runaway had been missing from a plantation, so it is plausible to surmise that fugitives who had escaped for longer periods of time were more successful at evading capture and oftentimes did so with the helping hand of others. Unlucky runaways discovered and captured by the *marechaussée* were returned to their original owners, or were bought by new owners in city

centers after the previous owner failed to reclaim them from jail.²⁹¹ Re-circulated fugitives likely shared their knowledge of successful and unsuccessful strategies of escape. In some cases, runaways may have returned to plantations to recruit others to escape – some examples of this will be discussed in the next chapter.

An important part of the knowledge shared among the submerged networks of runaways were where one could hide once leaving the plantation. Sunday markets in the major towns like Cap Français were opportunities for blacks – free, enslaved, and runaways alike – to converge and interact, buying and selling food, exchanging services, and sharing information about issues pertinent to their lives, such as achieving freedom. Planters' advertisements often speculated about where the runaway was going based on the enslaved person's known familial ties or places they were known to frequent to give further alert to other whites in the areas where a runaway might be hiding. Other presumed social ties or runaway destinations would include labor or a skill related occupation that allowed the man or woman to traverse the colony; a plantation where the fugitive was seeking to be reclaimed by a previous more 'benevolent' owner, or where they were being harbored by other enslaved people; the eastward Spanish territory Santo Domingo; or if they were meeting with other runaways or free people of color. These types of location based relationship ties from formal and informal social spheres like neighborhoods, work, or family are an important factor in cultivating collective action participation (McAdam 1986; Gould 1995; Diani 2003).

Runaways would have learned important tactics and strategies of escape that indicated oppositional consciousness and were represented by certain behaviors described in the ads. Colonial codes barred enslaved people, and free people of color in many cases, from carrying weapons in

²⁹¹ "Arrêt qui casse l'ordonnance rendue le 23 mars 1764 par Jean Étienne de Clugny de Nuits, intendant de Saint-Domingue, et l'arrêt du Conseil supérieur du Cap du 4 avril dernier, au sujet de la suppression de la vente des nègres marrons comme épaves, en raison des pouvoirs insuffisants de l'intendant et du conseil pour légiférer en cette matière, 18 novembre 1767" ANOM COL A11: 414; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 717-718; Moitt 2004: 62

public, riding horses, or walking on the roads after dark.²⁹² These strict policies were designed to constrain black people's everyday behaviors and movements, with the assumption that too much latitude and the ability to bear arms would contribute to rebellion. When enslaved people escaped, they knew that insodoing they risked their own lives and those of loved ones, and needed protection and resources to enhance the probability of a successful escape. To do this, they had to violate the colony's hegemonic policies and assume certain behaviors to ensure their survival. Thus, I argue that over time runaways would have increased militancy indicated by self-assertive behaviors like claiming to be free or forging a 'free pass' letter from their owner; bearing arms; or stealing money, clothes, boats, or horses; or repeatedly escaping. Social movement scholarship helps frame runaways' group escapes, social ties and destinations, self-assertive behaviors, and lengths of escape, as previously underexplored aspects of micromobilization networks, which I examined using quantitative methods.

DATA AND METHODS

This paper uses content analysis (Mayring 2000) of archival sources wherein categorical themes emerged from the data and were then analyzed with quantitative tools. I conducted content analyses of primary sources to quantify, code, and geographically map mawonaj patterns using individual runaways as the unit of observation. Social movement scholars interested in repertoires, or distinctive collections of resistance tactics, use Protest Event Analysis (PEA) to map contentious events. PEA is content analysis of newspaper sources to chart, analyze, and clarify the rate and nature of numerous protests (Traugott 1995; Koopmans and Rucht 2002; Fillieule and Jimenez 2003; Soule 2013; Hutter 2014). However, rather than quantify the presence of each advertisement as an organized protest event, I use as units of observation the individuals and small groups of runaways described in the ads whose escapes represented micro-level protests.

²⁹² St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 225-228

The data came from runaway slave advertisements, primarily those placed in the colonial newspaper *Les Affiches Americaines* (*LAA*). The paper was published in Cap Français (Le Cap) and Port-au-Prince beginning in 1766, two years after the printing press was introduced to Saint Domingue, until 1791, the year the Haitian Revolution uprisings began. In the weekly papers, planters could advertise sales or rentals of their goods, land, animals, as well as enslaved women and men. Separate listings of advertisements were placed for runaways who escaped enslavement, some for as short as three days, others for over 10 years. Plantation owners and managers frequently used these advertisements as a device by to reclaim their ‘property’ – women and men who chose to liberate themselves from enslavement. The *LAA* runaway advertisements are digitally archived in the *Marronnage in Saint Domingue* (La Glaunec and Robichaud 2009) online database, which holds over 11,000 ads. Other colonial era newspapers not included in the database are the *Gazette de Saint Domingue* (*GSD*) and the *Courrier Nationale de Saint Domingue* (*CNSD*), a few issues of which I found at the John Carter Brown Library in Providence, Rhode Island. These periodicals included 217 additional runaway advertisements that ran until fall 1791, after the northern revolt, which I added to the existing *Les Affiches* dataset. I subtracted each ad that ran more than once; and since many of these advertisements contain notices for more than one person, the final research sample size for these data sources was 12,857 runaways.

The advertisements are a strong source for demographic representations of the escapee population. Planters’ vested financial interest in identifying and relocating their slaves meant they had good reason for providing as much accurate information as possible when placing an advertisement. The example below, Figure 3.0, is an example of the advertisements’ standardized format. The ads present general information including the escapees’ name, age, gender, and birth origin. It was also important for the planter, or plantation lawyer or manager, to identify themselves and provide contact information for where they could be reached and the amount of money they

were willing to pay as a reward for capture. Typically, they include distinctive characteristics such as bodily scarring, the owner's brand and other physical traits, personality disposition, or labor skills as a means of locating the escapee. Frequently, the ads contain an indication of the duration of time the self-liberated person had been missing, the area from which they had escaped and with whom, and where or with whom they were suspected to be hiding. These and other emergent variables such as linguistic skills or reported stolen property were helpful for studying the role of race/ethnicity, gender, social ties, self-assertions, and geographic destinations in mawonaj.

Quatre Nègres Congos , au pays
depuis un an , nommés l'Éveillé , Pom-
pée , la Fortune & Samson , ce dernier
ayant eu une main brulée , tous quatre
étampés CHABOT , font marons. M.
Chabot , tenant la Boulangerie du Roi
au Cap , à qui ils appartiennent , prie
ceux qui les reconnoîtront de les faire
arrêter & de lui en donner avis.

Figure 3.0: An example of a runaway advertisement from *Les Affiches Americaines*: “four black Kongos, in the country for a year, named l’Eveille, Pompee, La Fortune & Samson, the last having a broken hand, the four are branded CHABOT, have fled from M. Chabot, breadmaker of the King at Le Cap, to whom they belong, those who have seen them stop them and give notice.”²⁹³

One limitation is that the ads do not include individuals who were born and socialized in self-liberated encampments, and therefore they do not fully include the number of independently freed people. The ads also do not reflect the much larger number of runaways who were captured, jailed, and subsequently returned to plantation owners before an advertisement could be posted.²⁹⁴ Parish jails kept track of detainees and published their names and information in local newspapers. While the separate lists of jailed absconders are more extensive than the *Les Affiches* ads, the jail lists also contain individuals who were captured for other offenses, as a 1765 ordinance from Le Cap ordered

²⁹³ *LAA* July 16, 1766, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=34>

²⁹⁴ Geggus 1986; Daniels 2012

that even those brought to jail without a reason were to be described as mawons.²⁹⁵ Therefore, the runaway advertisements describe the portion of ‘grand mawons,’ or permanent runaways, who were actually fleeing bondage and were relatively more successful in escape than those described in the prison lists.²⁹⁶

Gender imbalance is another weakness of the advertisements. Females were generally the minority in the early French colonies, though sex ratios in the years leading up to the Revolution were almost even.²⁹⁷ Still, there are a disproportionately low number of women reflected in the ads, with women representing only 14.45% of the reported runaways. Some suggest that women’s parenting roles precluded many of them from taking the risk involved with escape on a permanent basis, or that women were more likely to commit petit, or temporary mawonaj, and planters did not report these missing cases. Others (Fick 1990; Moitt 2001; Thompson 2006; Blackburn 2011) postulate that women’s roles in petite mawonaj were to act as bridges between plantations and communities of escaped people, creating the mobilization structures necessary for organizing the Revolution. Unfortunately, substantial data on this form of mawonaj has yet to be unearthed.

Measures

A pilot study (Eddins 2014) allowed me to identify standard aspects of the advertisements that could become variables for research. The dependent variables are: 1) group escapes, 2) social ties and destinations, 3) counterhegemonic self-assertive behaviors, and 4) duration of escape. Group escapes are when an ad describes a group of two or more people who escaped together. I coded (a) *intra-race/ethnicity* group escapes, which would indicate each runaway in the ad was described in the same racial or ethnic terms, meaning a collective identity existed among the cohort; and (b) *inter-*

²⁹⁵“Ordonnance du juge du Cap qui enjoint au geôlier d’inscrire comme marrons tous les esclaves amenés à la geôle sans cause particulières, 7 mai 1765” ANOM F3 90: 124; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 853

²⁹⁶ Daniels 2012; Yales 2013

²⁹⁷ Moitt 1995: ch. 1-2; Geggus 1996: 260; Moitt 2001; Walton 2012: 17-18

race/ethnicity group escapes, or escapes among runaways from different racial or ethnic backgrounds, demonstrating racial solidarity between the runways. I coded five types of social ties and destinations: (a) familial ties were coded if the ad describes the runaway as having a family member in another location; (b) labor and skill-related destinations are if the runaway had access to individuals or spaces beyond the location of their captivity because of their specialized occupation; (c) runaways who were sold and taken elsewhere but sought the plantation or parish of their birth in order to re-connect with familiar social ties is a third destination; (d) the eastward Spanish territory was coded as a destination because it was home to long-standing independent communities, mostly composed of runaways from Saint Domingue; and (e) explicit mention of other runaways or free people of color.²⁹⁸

The next dependent variable is counterhegemonic self-assertive behaviors. These were individualized and/or embodied actions that were necessary for survival but defied colonial behavioral codes, and therefore indicated oppositional consciousness: (1) passing as free, (2) theft, (3) bearing arms, or (4) repeated escape. Before retreating from plantations, many runaways who could read or write in French or other European languages, a form of human capital not commonly afforded to enslaved people – often forged documents to declare themselves as free. Some found clothing or otherwise disguised themselves to be considered part of the gens du couleur or affranchi population. Many runaways stole horses or mules to reach their chosen hideout quickly or to sell at a market. This posed a substantial risk, since enslaved people were not allowed to ride horses without their owner's permission. Others stole money, food, clothing, and weapons as they prepared to endure the high-risk action of living in mawonaj. Any enslaved person carrying a sword or a machete could face three months in prison.²⁹⁹ Those who escaped repeatedly faced increasingly violent

²⁹⁸ Yingling 2015

²⁹⁹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 228

repercussions with each return, yet fear of brutal punishment was not enough to dissuade the most resolute fugitives.

To measure changes in mawonaj patterns over time, I categorized each individual runaway case by the week and year of the advertisement's publication. The process of coding by date also allowed me to determine runaways' relative success at absconding. Length of escape is a continuous scale dependent variable that measured the number of weeks that planters claimed the runaway had been missing without being captured and jailed then returned to the plantation. Part of the difficulty with the dependent variables is missing data. Some ads provided minimal information, particularly for recently arrived Africans who escaped directly from the ports and had not yet been sold to a planter or assigned a new name. Or for example, many runaways may not have had access to weapons or materials to forge free papers. However, the large sample size provided a reasonable number of observations for statistical analysis.

The independent variables are birth origin and gender. Birth origin indicates whether the escapee was a continent-born African, or was a "creole" African descendant born in Saint Domingue or another European colony in the Americas. In Saint Domingue, over half of the enslaved population were adults born in Africa representing over 100 'ethnicities'.³⁰⁰ These ethnic delineations were usually specified in the ads, but may not have been entirely historical accurate due to the imprecise nature of EuroAmerican slave trade documents. Some Africans captives were labelled based on the port from which they were shipped like the Capelaous, others based on the broad coastal regions like 'Congo'.³⁰¹ However inaccurate these labels are, they represent the closest identifiers available to understand African origins. Those born in the Americas were described based several racial delineations: *creole* or *nègre* (fully black), *mulâtre* (half-black), *griffe* (three-quarters black), and *quateron*

³⁰⁰ Only 47 of the most numerous ethnic groups are listed in the tables below, but a full listing of African ethnicities is included as Appendix Table A.1.

³⁰¹ Hall 2005: ch. 2

(one-quarter black).³⁰² Gender was generally included in the ads as pertinent information. In cases where gender is not explicitly stated, French subject-verb agreement helps determine the sex of the runaway.

Hypotheses and Tests

Chi-square tests of independence measured the relationships between gender, birth origin, and group escapes, social ties and destinations, and self-assertive behaviors. I hypothesized: (1) colony-born creoles were more likely to escape individually and to have had known social ties and/or a presumed destination because of their familial relationships and knowledge of the land; alternatively, (2) continent-born Africans were more likely to escape in groups because they were less familiar with the colony and needed to rely on others. Additionally, (3) women who ran away at times did so with their children, and therefore would have been more likely than men to escape in a group of two or more. I sought to find out if (4) group escapes would become more frequent over time by using Poisson regression to see if runaway groups would grow larger in size. The composition of those groups also is an important component of mawonaj, so I again used chi-square tests to analyze if (5) inter-race/ethnic group escapes would increase over time, indicating growing racial solidarity.

In the next phase of analysis, I hypothesized that runaways who escaped in groups, had familial, skill-based, or other defined destinations, and employed self-assertive behaviors used these forms of social and human capital to seek protection from plantation owners and police militia, and therefore could escape for longer durations of time. I used group escapes, social ties and destinations, and self-assertive behaviors as independent variables in Kruskal-Wallis one-way tests of variance to examine (6) if they they had measurable impact on fugitives' reported length of escape. I also suspected that (7) growing oppositional consciousness led runaways to escape for longer durations, leading to escalating grand mawonaj, or permanent escape, before the Haitian Revolution. To test this

³⁰² Garrigus 2006

hypothesis, a negative binomial regression model was used to examine the changes in length of escape over time.

To geographically map runaway patterns, I gathered three location categories from the ads: (1) the city where a lawyer, trader, or the plantation owner posted the ad in *Les Affiches*, either Cap Français, Port-au-Prince, or Saint Marc; (2) the plantation site; and (3) the escapee's presumed hiding place. I used a multinomial logistic regression to compare the number of runaways posted in each of these three cities over time. Saint Domingue was composed of three general provinces: the northern and southern peninsulas and the center region referred to as the west. Each province was comprised of parishes with several towns, including one town that shared the parish name. Frequency tests allow me to see which parishes experienced the most flight of runaways, and which parishes attracted the most runaways. Though a temporal analysis is not available for each towns, further explanations of fugitive hideouts and settled communities will be discussed at length in the next chapter, with insights gleaned from the runaway advertisements.

FINDINGS

Gender and Age

Men over the age of 16 were the overwhelming majority of runaways, accounting for 79.9% of the 12,857 individuals described in the newspaper ads as shown in Table 3.0. Men were the largest proportion of the early EuroAmerican slave trade and Saint Domingue's enslaved population, but leading up to the revolution, women were increasing in number. Still, men were slightly overrepresented in the distribution of the enslaved population, accounting for their high proportion among runaways. Men were also more likely to occupy skilled labor positions that allowed them a certain amount of latitude during the work day. As will be discussed below, coopers, carpenters, shoemakers, fishermen, and other artisans ran errands, apprenticed and were leased by their owner to other plantations, or hired themselves out to earn their own money. As such, men could take

advantage of quotidian labor-related tasks to escape without immediate detection. African men probably adapted to acquiring these proto-industrial work skills since in several African societies, particularly the Loango and Angola coast regions, women performed agricultural work. For example, male captives in Portuguese-controlled Angola rejected agriculture-based slavery, seeing it as demeaning to their masculinity and fled in response.³⁰³ Therefore, it is possible that African men who were field workers in Saint Domingue were more likely to escape as a masculinist rejection of what would have been deemed “women’s work.”

Conversely, enslaved women in Saint Domingue were overrepresented as field workers and performed the most physically taxing jobs. They would have been under strict surveillance throughout the work day, therefore they did not have as much flexibility to travel beyond the plantation.³⁰⁴ Gendered division of labor, combined with the overall population imbalance, can account for why women only represented 14.45% of runaways. The conventional ideas about women’s mawonaj is that they were less likely to escape because of their child-rearing responsibilities, therefore they committed petit, or temporary, mawonaj rather than risk the dangers of permanent escape. But, when we take women’s resistance seriously and look at their escape strategies, we might see that some women did commit grand mawonaj, and did so with their children in tow. Data from the advertisements show that some of the women who did take flight were either accompanied by young children or were themselves pregnant. A search of the *Marronnage in Saint Domingue* database using the French term ‘enceinte’ (pregnant) reveals 30 women escaped while with child.

³⁰³ Ferreira 2014: 72

³⁰⁴ Moitt 1995; Moitt 2001: ch. 3

Table 3.0: Frequency Distribution of Gender (N=12,857)

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Women	1,858	14.45%	14.45
Men	10,271	79.9%	94.35
Girls (16 and under)	216	1.68%	96.03
Boys (16 and under)	512	3.98%	100

We don't know much about the experience of childhood in Saint Domingue, however it is important to note that black children below the age of 16 were enslaved and escaped bondage, often with a parent or another adult but at times alone. Table 3.0 shows gender patterns in mawonaj among children generally mirrored those of adults. Male children escaped over twice as much as female children, 3.98% compared to 1.68% respectively. From plantation inventories, boys tended to begin work around age eight, tending animals, working as domestics, or working in the field. Girls worked as nurses, domestics, and in the fields.³⁰⁵ But, Moreau de St. Mery observed that creole girls tended to have children at an early age, as young as 11 or 13, which would have temporarily delayed their entry into the workforce until after their first childbirth.³⁰⁶



Figure 3.1: "Blood Hounds Hunting a Black Family in the Woods." Marcus Rainsford, 1805. *John Carter Brown Library*.

³⁰⁵ See Table A.9: "Habitation du Quartier Morin, Etat du Mobilier des Negres, Negrillons, Negresses et Negrittes avec leurs Noms, Age, Nations, au 31 December 1786, ANOM C9B 7

³⁰⁶ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 40-41; Geggus 1993: 93; Walton 2012: 57

In Table 3.1 below, we see that at a rate of 74.6% individual escapes, boys were more likely than girls and adults of both sexes to flee by themselves. Girls, on the other hand, ran away by themselves least often than anyone else at a 48.6% rate of individual escapes; conversely, they fled in groups at the highest rate. More specifically, girls escaped in an intra-race/ethnic group 6% more often than boys and 3% more often than adult women; and they fled in an inter-race/ethnic group at 33% of the time, which was more often than anyone else. Since African girls were the minority in the slave trade and the colony,³⁰⁷ they would have had a harder time finding someone of their similar background to join in absconding.

Men were more likely than women or children to escape in intra-race/ethnic groups, suggesting men had an easier time identifying and forging relationships with men of a similar background. This is probably because men were the majority in both the slave trade and the colony.³⁰⁸ My hypothesis that adult women were more likely to escape in groups was proven incorrect; Table 3.1 shows they escaped by themselves more than adult men. But, adult women were slightly more likely than men to run away in inter-racial/ethnic groups, 16.5% compared to 14.7% respectively, and this is probably because their children. When African women's children with African or creole men were born in the colony, the children would have been considered creole *negres*, or blacks; and creole women's children similarly were black. In the case an African or creole woman's child was a product of involuntary (or semi-voluntary) sexual encounters with white men, the children were born *mulatres*. If a creole black woman had a child with a mulatre, then the child was a *griffe*. Less common were *quarterons*, those who were one-quarter black. Therefore, when women reproduced, their children usually were described as a different race. For example, Genevieve, a mulatresse, who escaped with

³⁰⁷ Geggus 1989a: 37-40

³⁰⁸ Geggus 1989a: 37-40

her daughter Bonne, a quateronne in March 1786, were categorized differently based on phenotype and parentage.³⁰⁹

Table 3.1: Chi-square Test, Group Escapes by Gender (N=12,857)

	Individual escape	Intra-race/ethnic escape	Inter-race/ethnic escape	Total
Men	6,013 (58.5%)	2,751 (26.8%)	1,507 (14.7%)	10,271 (100%)
Women	1,273 (68.5%)	279 (15.0%)	306 (16.5%)	1,858 (100%)
Boys	382 (74.6%)	63 (12.3%)	67 (13.1%)	512 (100%)
Girls	105 (48.6%)	39 (18.1%)	72 (33.3%)	216 (100%)
Total	7,773 (60.5%)	3,132 (24.4%)	1,952 (15.2%)	12,857 (100%)

p = 0.000

Birth Origins

There were 3,122 black creoles in the sample so, according to Table 3.2, they comprised 24.3% of the runaway population. This is an underrepresentation with respect to their population among enslaved people, which was closer to 33% (one-third). Though a relatively rare occurrence, enslaved creoles, particularly men, could purchase manumission with their labor or they joined the military and marechaussée fugitive slave police. Duty in the armed forces was a way for colonial authorities to co-opt mawonaj, creating an option for legal freedom. Similarly, mixed-race people described as mulatres, griffes, and quaterons were few among runaways, since as a group they were more like to be free gens du couleur rather than enslaved. However, these findings nuance understandings about Saint Domingue's free population of color by demonstrating that mixed-race people were not singularly privileged by their white fathers' wealth. The sample was comprised of 4.2% mulatres, 1.1% griffes, and .3% quaterons, meaning over 5% of runaways had some degree of white admixture in their lineage. Several advertisements do not describe the runaway's race or ethnicity at all, but only include the person's name and the name of the planter. Though we can generally assume that the runaway was a person of African descent, it is not entirely possible to accurately

³⁰⁹ LAA April 8, 1786, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=723>

gauge the person's racial category – or their geographic origins in Africa – without this information. There also were AmerIndians and East Indians enslaved in Saint Domingue, making it additionally difficult to ascribe identity in instances of missing data, which accounts for 5% of the sample.

Fifty-three runaways were described as indigenous Caraïbes or 'Indiens.' These included Joseph, a Caraïbe with "black, straight hair, the face elongated, a fierce look" who escaped in December 1788; or Jean-Louis, a Caraïbe who escaped with two Nagos, Jean dit Grand Gozier and Venus, in July 1769.³¹⁰ An Indien named Andre, a 30-year-old cook who spoke many languages escaped Le Cap in July 1778; and another named Zephyr, aged 16 to 17, escaped the same area in late August or early September of 1780.³¹¹ Caraïbes were native to the Lesser Antilles, and perhaps were captured and enslaved in Saint Domingue as part of the inter-Caribbean trade.³¹² The origins of other 'Indiens,' however, is less straightforward. Scholars generally believe that the Taíno population had completely disappeared by the 18th century, but this may not be entirely true. Recent developments indicate the Spanish underestimated 16th century census data due to the numbers of Taíno who escaped, oftentimes with Africans, and those who were of mixed heritage.³¹³ However, Moreau de St. Mery used 'Indiens Occidentaux' or 'savages' to describe Caraïbes and other indigenous peoples brought from Canada, Louisiana, and Mississippi. He witnessed indigenous people's ritual ceremonies and saw their remains and artistic artifacts throughout the north. On the other hand, some of these 'Indiens' were black or dark-skinned sub-continental Asian Indians, or what St. Mery called 'Indiens Orientaux.'³¹⁴ For example, there was Zamor, a "negre indien ... creole of Bengale ... having freshly cut hair," who at age 25 escaped the Aubergiste plantation in Mirebalais in August

³¹⁰ *LAA* December 11, 1788, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9115>; *LAA* July 12, 1769, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2461>

³¹¹ *LAA* July 18, 1788, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=5108>; *LAA* October 24, 1780, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=5801>

³¹² Garraway 2005: ch. 1

³¹³ Guitar 2002

³¹⁴ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 74-75, 80-81

1783.³¹⁵ St. Mery distinguished two types of East Indians, one he perceived as similar to Europeans, with straighter hair and narrow noses. The other he likened to Africans, stating they had shorter, curlier hair and were closer in relation to blacks in Saint Domingue. Further research is needed on the enslavement of non-Africans in the French colonies, and the possible connections to the African presence in India and the Middle East.³¹⁶

Table 3.2: Frequency Distribution of Saint Domingue-born ‘Creoles’ (N=12,857)

Racial Category	Total	Percent
Negre	3,122	24.3%
Mulatre	540	4.2%
Griffe	136	1.1%
Quateron	43	.3%
Indien/Indigenous	53	.4%
Total	3,894	30.3%

Continent-born Africans were approximately 62% of the runaway population, and well over half of these were West Central Africans. The findings outlined in Table 3.3 corroborate other historical data that indicate West Central Africans were the majority regional group in late 18th century Saint Domingue. The most numerous of these were generally labelled as ‘Congo’ (hereafter Kongo) without further specification.³¹⁷ Most French slave trading in this region was at the ports of Malemba and Cabinda on the Loango Coast, while Kongolese captives from the Angolan-coast, where the Portuguese had long-standing relations and control, were filtered north by the Vili traders.³¹⁸ But, since the region was comprised of several independently operating kingdoms, such as Loango and KaKongo, there are yet unanswered questions as to the true origins of those described ‘Congo’ in Saint Domingue. Despite the mislabeling of most Kongos, there also were significant numbers of West Central Africans like the Mondongues, Mayombé, and Mossoundis from the

³¹⁵ LAA August 16, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11366>

³¹⁶ Harris 2003

³¹⁷ Hall 2005: 47

³¹⁸ Thornton 2000: 60; Hall 2005: 65; Mobley 2015

Loango coast interior. Only eight ‘Angoles’ and sixteen Congo-Francis were listed, both of which originated from the southern Angolan coast, indicating a small presence of Kongo Kingdom captives.³¹⁹

Although they were the ethnic majority of the enslaved population in the early 18th century, by mid-century Bight of Benin natives were a distant second-most populace African group in Saint Domingue, comprising 8.9% of runaways. Nagos and Aradas were groups conquered by the Dahomey Kingdom, which actively captured and traded slaves along what was referred to as the ‘Slave Coast.’ Though some members of the Dahomey Kingdom did become enslaved due to warfare, only three runaways were described with terminology specifically referencing the kingdom – Dahomet or Dahomey. Nagos, also referred to as Yorubas, were the largest number of Bight of Benin Africans with 432 people in the sample; and Aradas were the next largest group, accounting for 372 runaway persons. The Fon, usually assumed to be major cultural progenitors in the early 1700s, made up only 27 absconders in the sample. There were more Tiambas/Chambas than the Fon – 119 – making them an important but lesser considered component of the Slave Coast population.³²⁰ Natives of the Senegambian/Upper Guinea region were the third largest regional group, equaling 5.2% of reported runaways. The Mandingues were the highest number of Senegambians with 212 runaways, followed by 179 Bambaras and 143 Wolofs. Biafrans were 3.1% of the sample, and most of these were Ibos. The much smaller numbers of Bibi and Moco were Bantu language speakers who were exported from Biafran ports.³²¹ Most southeast Africans were from Mozambique, where the French had begun trading in the 1770s.³²²

³¹⁹ Mobley 2015: 168

³²⁰ Hall 2005: 123

³²¹ Hall 2005: 107

³²² Alpers 1970: 105

Africans from the Gold Coast, Windward Coast, and Sierra Leone were the least represented among runaways, even less than southeast Africans from Madagascar and Mozambique who were 1.3% of reported runaways. There were 153 Minas in the sample, making them the largest group of Gold Coast Africans. One hundred-two Cangas were in the sample, making them half of Windward Coast natives. Sierra Leoneans, a neighboring region to Senegambia, included Sosos, Mendes, and Timbous. Together, Sierra Leoneans made up .5% of the sample, the smallest number of runaways. Newly imported Africans whose ethnicity was not yet logged routinely escaped from ports or plantations before they underwent “seasoning.” Since they were not fully integrated into the plantation system, these runaways were simply referred to as “nouveau” in the ads. ‘Nouveau’ fugitives probably would have stood out like a sore thumb, just having disembarked a slave ship likely with chains still around their necks, feet, or wrists, and possibly naked. Still, they made up 3.1% of the runaway population, the same number of Biafrans represented in the sample.

Table 3.3: Frequency Distribution of Continent-born Africans (N=12,857)

Broad African Region	Ethnic Label	Total	Percent
West Central Africa & St. Helena	Congo, Kongo	4,026	
	Mondongue, Mondongo	435	
	Baliba, Bariba	7	
	Massangi, Mazangui	10	
	Moussondy, Mossondi, Mousombe	11	
	Missi-Congo	2	
	Montequet, Congo-Monteque	2	
	Congo-Franc	16	
	Mayombé, Mayembau	15	
	Mazonga-Congo	1	
	Gabonne	1	
	Angole	8	
	Baassa, Abaffa	8	
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>4,682</i>	
Senegambia	Bambara, Barba	179	
	Senegalaise, Wolof, YOLOF	143	
	Malez, Mâle	11	
	Poulard, Fulbe, Foule, Poule	38	
	Hausa, Aoussa, Haoussa, Aouffa	86	
	Mandingue, Mandingo	212	
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>669</i>	
Bight of Benin	Arada, Aja, Adja, Juda, Adia	372	
	Nago	432	
	Fon, Fond	27	
	Tiamba, Thiamba, Chamba, Quiamba	119	
	Taqua, Attapa, Tapa, Taquoua, Tapaye	31	
	Cotocoli, Cotocoly, Cocolouly	45	
	Agua, Yagua	24	
	Damba, Lamba	1	
	Gambery, Gamberi	5	
	Guinee	14	
	Miserable	43	
	Daomet, Dahomey	3	
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>1,116</i>	
			<i>8.9%</i>

Table 3.3 (cont'd)

Bight of Biafra	Ibo, Igbo	355	
	Bibi	39	
	Moco	4	
	Gimba	1	
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>399</i>	<i>3.1%</i>
Gold Coast	Cramenty, Caramenty	23	
	Mina, Mine, Amina, Amine	153	
	Bandia, Banguia	5	
	Cote d'Or	57	
	Quincy, Kissi, Quissi, Quicy	12	
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>250</i>	<i>1.9%</i>
Windward Coast	Canga, Kanga	102	
	Capelaou	44	
	Mesurade	52	
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>1.54%</i>
Sierra Leone	Soso, Sosso, Zozeau, Sofo	57	
	Timbou, Thimbou, Thimbo	10	
	Mende	1	
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>.5%</i>
Southeast African & Indian Ocean	Madagascar	5	
	Mozambique, Mozamby	164	
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>169</i>	<i>1.3%</i>
'Nouveau'		399	3.1%
Other		35	.27%
Total		7,985	62.1%

Enslaved people brought to Saint Domingue from the circum-Caribbean trade also had experiential knowledge and consciousness that they brought from their perspective locations. They spoke several languages, most commonly English, Spanish, Dutch (and the Dutch creole Papiamentu), and French, and some were reading and writing proficient. These 'creoles' had exposure to information that circulated the Atlantic world via news reporting and interactions at major ports. Not only would they have known of events related to Euro-Americans, they also would have known about enslaved people's rebellions that occurred throughout the Caribbean. The largest number of Atlantic-zone runaways were those brought from other French colonies, especially Martinique and Guadeloupe. This is closely followed by the 1.7% of escapees who were formerly enslaved in colonies under English rule, mostly Jamaica and some from Mississippi. At 1.1%, the

third largest Caribbean-born runaways were from Dutch-speaking locations, mainly Curaçao and a smaller number from Surinam.

Table 3.4: Frequency Distribution of ‘Atlantic Creoles’ (N=12,857)

Colony of Origin	Total	Percent
Anglais/English (Jamaica, Mississippi)	219	1.7%
Espagnol/Spanish (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo)	41	.3%
Hollandais/Dutch (Curaçao, Surinam)	139	1.1%
Portugais/Portuguese	26	.2%
Other French colony (Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Christopher)	274	2.1%
Total	699	5.4%

Group Escapes: Race and Ethnicity

Table 3.5 shows most escapees in the sample ran away by themselves accounting for 60.5% of runaways, while a total of nearly 40% escaped in a group of two or more people. Not only were these family units as previously discussed, they were shipmates bound together in chains, skilled laborers and members of the same work gangs who fled together, and perhaps strangers with a shared goal of freedom in mind. Cultural and linguistic similarities made it easier for people of similar African heritage to collaborate and escape together, thus intra-racial/ethnic group escape accounts for 24.4% of the sample. It was more difficult for groups comprised of different races and ethnicities to escape together because of cultural and linguistic differences. This accounts for why inter-racial/ethnic group escapes were less common, at 15.2%. However, with time spent in the colony and acquisition of the French-Kreyol language, and participation in shared rituals, African and creole runaways could form alliances around their shared blackness and status as enslaved.

Table 3.5: Frequency of Group Escapes (N=12,857)

	Total	Percent
Individual escape	7,773	60.5%
Intra-racial/ethnic group escape	3,132	24.4%
Inter-racial/ethnic group escape	1,952	15.2%
<i>Total group escapes</i>	<i>5,084</i>	<i>39.6%</i>
Total	12,857	100%

Saint Domingue-born African Descendants

Table 3.6 shows that Saint Domingue-born runaways, including those who were both black (*negre*) and mixed-race (*mulatre*, *quateron*, and *griffe*), escaped as individuals 20.4% of the time. Saint Domingue natives escaped in groups 9.9% of the time – 5.4% were intra-race/ethnic groups and 4.5% were inter-race/ethnic groups. Black creoles had the easiest time finding other creoles to escape with, since 21% of creoles' group escapes were intra-racial. In September 1775, a group of three creole women, Judith, Marie-Jeanne, and Nannette, and six creole men, Apollon, Jerome, Tony, Hercule, Achille, and Polydor, escaped the Fillion plantation at Boucan-Richard in Gros Morne.³²³ Sully, Thelemaque, Jean-Pierre, Manuel, and Therese were all creoles who left Haut du Cap in February 1786.³²⁴ Among Saint Domingue-born enslaved people, black creole runaways were most numerous, thus took advantage of those numbers and their cultural dexterity (if they were born to African parents) to escape with other creoles, Africans, or mixed race individuals.

Black creoles also absconded in inter-racial/ethnic groups more than other Saint Domingue born people at 15.3%. An example of an inter-racial/ethnic group escape of Saint-Domingue born runaways were three mulatres – Francois, Baptiste, and Catherine – and five creole counterparts: Haphie, Zabeth, and Cecile, all women, and Codio, Gracia, Hypolite.³²⁵ In a separate case, three young women, Marguerite aged 17, Barbe aged 15, and Marie-Jeanne aged 16 were all creoles who brought with them during their escape from Gros-Morne a four-month old griffe baby.³²⁶ Another group was composed of two mulatresses named Marinette and Labonne, two creole women Marie-Noel and Lalue, and a creole man S. Pierre, who escaped the Piis property in Dondon in November 1785.³²⁷ A fourth example in 1789 shows a group of 16 absconders was composed of creole women,

³²³ *LAA* September 23, 1775, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=4532>

³²⁴ *LAA* February 15, 1786, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=629>

³²⁵ *LAA* August 27, 1766, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=135>

³²⁶ *LAA* October 25, 1769, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2560>

³²⁷ *LAA* December 28, 1785, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=7909>

men, and children, and one Nago woman.³²⁸ Mulatres had the second lowest intra-racial/ethnic group escape rate, 3.9%, and the second highest inter-racial/ethnic group escape, 14.4%. This is likely because mulatre children were taken with their Africa-born or colony-born creole mothers, or other family members. Similarly, griffes probably had immediate family members of a different race, making their group escapes inherently multi-racial at a rate of 12.5%. Quarterons were not very numerous as enslaved people or as runaways, resulting in them escaping by themselves 79.1% and running away escape with others and among themselves in similar numbers. ‘West’ and ‘East’ Indians had the highest level of individual escape, 88.7%, and the lowest group escape rates, 11.3% altogether, due to their low population numbers.

Table 3.6: Chi-square Test, Group Escapes among Saint Domingue-born ‘Creoles’ (N=12,857)

	Individual escape	Intra-race/ethnic group escape	Inter-race/ethnic group escape	Total
Negre	1,989 (63.7%)	656 (21.0%)	477 (15.3%)	3,122 (100%)
Mulatre	441 (81.7%)	21 (3.9%)	78 (14.4%)	540 (100%)
Griffe	110 (80.8%)	9 (6.6%)	17 (12.5%)	136 (100%)
Quarteron	34 (79.1%)	5 (11.6%)	4 (9.3%)	43 (100%)
‘Indien’/Indigenous	47 (88.7%)	2 (3.8%)	4 (7.5%)	53 (100%)
Total	2,621 (20.4%)	693 (5.4%)	580 (4.5%)	3,894 (30.3%)

p = 0.000

My hypothesis that creoles were more likely to escape individually, while Africans would flee in groups more often, was seemingly correct. Saint Domingue-born and Atlantic creoles had higher levels of individual escape, averaging 78.8% and 81.98% respectively (see Tables 3.6 and 3.8). But, few African groups escaped individually at the same rates. Table 3.7 shows that only Miserables, Taquas, Capelaous, Cramenties, and Mesurades escaped by themselves over 75% of the time. Therefore, it follows that most African ethnicities had higher levels of group escapes than creoles. Africans were more likely to collaborate in mawonaj because they needed to work together to navigate the colony during their escapes.

³²⁸ *LA* 4 September 5, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9755>

Continent-born Africans

Table 3.7 displays the nature of group escapes regarding African ethnicities. Intra-racial/ethnic group escapes among Africans were more common than not. Intra-race/ethnicity escapes were significantly common among West Central Africans, especially those labelled with the generic 'Kongo' identity at 31.87%, since they were the largest African ethnic group in the colony. Other ethnicities similarly escaped with their kith and kin, probably because they were freshly arrived from the slave ports and were most familiar with each other. Hausas escaped with each other at a high rate as well, 33.72%. Nearly 39% of Cote d'Or, or Gold Coast, Africans escaped together. Sosos also escaped together at a rate of 29.8%; and 27.45% of Cangas group escapes were homogenous. This type of identity cohesion may have contributed to developing effective means for escaping, such as: six Nago men and three Nago women who escaped in 1786; six "new" Aradas – Hillas, Alexandre, Antoine, Content, Colas, and Tu Me Quitteras – fled on January 17th, 1776;³²⁹ eight "new" Mondongues who were reported missing for several months in October 1769; the seven Soso (Sierra Leone) runaways in 1787; or the five Ibo absconders in 1788.³³⁰

The label of "new" also was used in cases where the runaways' ethnicity was not yet known because the captives had not yet been fully integrated into the plantation system. The two women and six men described as "new" who escaped the Defontaine plantation at Gonaïves were not assigned names nor were their ethnicities detailed, however we can assume that they were from the same background.³³¹ Runaways whose ethnic identity was unknown because they were new to the colony were most likely above all to escape together, since they escaped immediately after arrival.

³²⁹ *LAA* December 2, 1786, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=1068>; *LAA* January 31, 1776, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=232>

³³⁰ *LAA* October 16, 1769, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2545>; *LAA* October 11, 1787, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8399>; *LAA* August 30, 1788, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8916>

³³¹ *LAA* September 22, 1787, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8378>

Sixty-seven per cent of group escapes among 'nouveau' Africans were with other 'nouveaux,' suggesting shipmate relationships were sustained beyond the ports.

Table 3.7: Chi-square Test, Group Escapes among Continent-born Africans (N=12,857)

Broad African Region	Ethnic Label	Individual Escape	Intra-race/ethnicity	Inter-race/ethnicity
West Central Africa & St. Helena	Congo, Kongo	2,236 (55.5%)	1,283 (31.87%)	507 (12.59)
	Mondongue, Mondongo	507 (51.49%)	110 (25.29%)	101 (23.22%)
	Baliba, Bariba	5 (71.43%)	2 (28.57%)	0 (0)
	Massangi, Mazangui	2 (20%)	7 (70%)	1 (10%)
	Moussondy, Mousombe	7 (63.64%)	2 (18.18%)	2 (18.18%)
	Missi-Congo	1 (50%)	0	1 (50%)
	Congo-Montequé	2 (100%)	0	0
	Congo-Franc	10 (62.5%)	5 (31.25%)	1 (6.25%)
	Mayombé, Mayembau	9 (60%)	5 (33.33%)	1 (6.67%)
	Mazonga-Congo	1 (100%)	0	0
	Gabonne	1 (100%)	0	0
	Angole	1 (12.5%)	7 (87.5%)	0
	Baassa, Abaffa	2 (25%)	6 (75%)	0
Senegambia	Bambara, Barba	99 (55.31%)	32 (17.88%)	48 (26.82%)
	Senegalaise, Wolof, YOLOF	98 (68.53%)	13 (9.09%)	32 (22.38%)
	Malez, Mâle	2 (18.18%)	9 (81.82%)	0
	Poulard, Fulbe, Foule, Poule	23 (60.53%)	2 (5.26%)	13 (34.21%)
	Mandingue, Mandingo	132 (62.26%)	49 (23.11%)	31 (14.62%)
	Hausa, Aoussa, Haoussa,	38 (44.19%)	29 (33.72%)	19 (22.09%)
Bight of Benin	Mina, Mine, Amina, Amine	101 (66.01%)	9 (5.88%)	43 (28.10%)
	Arada, Aja, Adja, Juda, Adia	233 (62.63%)	80 (21.51%)	59 (15.86%)
	Nago	245 (56.71%)	103 (23.84%)	84 (19.44%)
	Fon, Fond	19 (70.37%)	0	8 (29.63%)
	Tiamba, Thiamba, Chamba, Quiamba	84 (70.59%)	4 (3.36%)	31 (26.05%)
	Taqua, Attapa, Tapa, Taquoua, Tapaye	24 (77.42%)	1 (3.23%)	6 (19.35%)
	Cotocoli, Cotocoly,	31 (68.89)	6 (13.33)	8 (17.78)
	Aguia, Yaguia	12 (50%)	2 (8.33%)	10 (41.67%)
	Damba, Lamba	1 (100%)	0	0
	Gambery, Gamberi	4 (80%)	0	1 (20%)
	Guinee	1 (7.14%)	11 (78.57%)	2 (14.29%)
	Daomet, Dahomey	3 (100%)	0	0
Bight of Biafra	Miserable	34 (79.07%)	2 (4.65%)	7 (16.28%)
	Ibo, Igbo	243 (62.63%)	80 (21.51%)	65 (18.31%)
	Bibi	21 (53.85%)	8 (20.51%)	10 (25.64%)
	Moco	3 (75%)	0	1 (25%)
Gold Coast	Gimba	1 (100%)	0	0
	Cramenty, Caramenty	19 (82.61%)	0	4 (17.39%)
	Bandia, Banguia	2 (40%)	0	3 (60%)
	Cote d'Or	24 (42.11%)	22 (38.6%)	11 (19.3%)
	Quincy, Kissi, Quissi, Quicy	4 (33.33%)	2 (16.67%)	6 (50%)

Table 3.7 (cont'd)

Windward Coast	Canga, Kanga	54 (52.94%)	28 (27.45%)	20 (19.61%)
	Mesurade	40 (76.92)	3 (5.77)	9 (17.31)
	Capelaou	33 (75)	6 (13.64)	5 (11.36)
Sierra Leone	Soso, Sosso, Zozeau, Sofo	25 (43.86)	17 (29.82)	15 (26.32)
	Timbou, Thimbou, Thimbo	7 (70%)	2 (20%)	1 (10%)
	Mende	0	0	1 (100%)
Southeast Africa & Indian Ocean	Madagascar	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	0
	Mozambique, Mozamby	66 (40.24%)	82 (50%)	16 (9.76%)
'Nouveau'		106 (26.57%)	270 (67.67%)	23 (5.76%)
Total		4,619 (36%)	2,301 (17.9%)	1,206 (9.4%)

p = 0.000

Overall, inter-race/ethnic group escapes were more frequent among Africans than African descendant creoles. Bambaras inter-race/ethnicity escape rate was 26.82%, for Poulards it was 34.21%, Minas had heterogeneous group escapes 28.1% of the time, Thiambas escaped 26.05% with others, and Aguias had the highest rates of inter-race/ethnicity escapes with 41.67%. None of these groups had substantial numbers, and therefore may have collaborated with others out of necessity since comrades from the same ethnicity were not readily available.

One of the largest group escapes was perpetrated by an inter-ethnic band of 22 Africans who escaped the Duquesné plantation at Borgne in October 1789. Three of the 22 were Mondongues, Rampour, Barraquette, and Pantin; eight were Kongos, Abraham, Midi, Nicolas, Theodore, Emeron, Telemaque, and two women named Printemps and Catherine; three were Minas, Pyrame and two women Thisbe and Henriette; five Ibos, Alexandre, Victor, Hipolite, Agenor, and Luron; one Senegalaise woman named Agathe; one Bambara, man named La Garde; and one creole woman, Poussiniere.³³² Another large group of nineteen Africans who fled Petite Anse in 1773. Their group included three Kongolese people, Tobie, Lubin, and a woman named Barbe; four Aradas, Blaise, Jean-Baptiste, Timba, and a woman named Grand-Agnes; a Nago man named Toussaint; and eleven

³³² LAA October 28, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9896>

creoles, Foelician, Laurent, Christophe, Jean-Jacques, Joseph, Hubert, three women named Louison, Fanchette, and Catherine, and Baptiste and Louis.³³³ This type of inter-racial/ethnic group escape was particularly diverse considering it was composed of people from vastly different regions. African runaways usually formed groups based on shared regional background, language, or religion. For example, Kongos and Mondongues seem to have been a common combination since they both were KiKongo speakers. A group of two Bambaras and two Senegalais escaped together, all having origins from the similar region in Africa and perhaps also sharing the Islamic faith.³³⁴

Table 3.8: Chi-square Test, Group Escapes among 'Atlantic Creoles' (N=12,857)

	Individual escape	Intra-race/ethnic escape	Inter-race/ethnic escape	Total
English	150 (68.5%)	32 (14.6%)	37 (16.9%)	219 (100%)
Spanish	37 (90.2%)	0	4 (9.76%)	41 (100%)
Dutch	118 (84.9%)	4 (2.88%)	17 (12.2%)	139 (100%)
Portuguese	20 (76.9%)	2 (7.7%)	4 (15.4%)	26 (100%)
French	245 (89.4%)	7 (2.55%)	22 (8.0%)	274 (100%)
Total	570 (4.4%)	45 (.35%)	84 (.65%)	699 (5.4%)

p = 0.000

Table 3.8 demonstrates Spanish-speaking runaways escaped by themselves most often, perhaps an indication of their small numbers in the colony and lack of contact with others from their language group. While the fugitive migration trail typically tended to go in the other direction, few escaped from Santo Domingo into Saint Domingue. In October 1789, nine men and four women, all Kongolese, were reported missing by their owner Montenegro, the commandant of St. Raphael in Santo Domingo.³³⁵ Several other 'Espagnols' listed in the advertisements were fugitives who had been brought from Puerto Rico and Cuba. Low numbers and language barriers didn't necessarily preclude non-Saint Dominguans from escaping with others. Portuguese captives escaped in inter-racial/ethnic groups more often than in intra-racial/ethnic groups, as did fugitives from Dutch,

³³³ *LAA* July 24, 1773, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3707>

³³⁴ *LAA* December 13, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11561>

³³⁵ *LAA* October 17, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9877>

French, and English colonies. At a rate of 12.2% for inter-racial/ethnic group escapes, Dutch speakers were much more likely to run away in a diverse group. In 1770, a group of six escaped the island in a boat, they were Basile, a mulatre from Curaçao; Tam, a Kongolese who spoke the Curaçaoan patois 'papimento'; Louis, a creole from Guadeloupe; Francois from Curaçao; Jean-Baptiste dit Manuel from Curaçao, and Baptiste from Curaçao.³³⁶ English colony-born absconders had the highest rate of inter-racial or ethnic group escape. On the other hand, English speaking runaways also escaped with each other the most. French colony runaways escaped alone at the second highest rate, 89.4%, even though they had the linguistic benefit of being able to escape with Saint Domingue-born runaways. Their French language skills may also have been to their advantage in passing as free.

Social Ties and Destinations

Besides running away in small to large groups, fugitives used their human and social capital to flee from bondage. When possible, enslaved people attempted to connect with family members or other known associates on various plantations. This implies that they had been in the colony for some time and established relationships – biological or fictive – with other enslaved people or free people of color. Skilled labor also was an important avenue for escape. Most enslaved Africans and African descendants performed hard labor in the fields of sugar, coffee, and indigo plantations tilling land, cutting cane, tending to animals, etc. However, larger-scale operations, especially sugar plantations, had a wider array of specialized tasks and positions that were mostly occupied by men but allowed them more daily flexibility than field hands. Sometimes these skilled laborers were leased by their owners to other planters, or they leased themselves out to earn their own freedom. In these instances, quotidian work patterns of unmonitored travel from one plantation to another, or even between different buildings on the same plantation, would have provided narrow but existing

³³⁶ *LA* July 11, 1770, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2760>

window of opportunity to slip away without immediate detection. Another common destination that emerged from the ads was the sparsely populated Spanish territory, Santo Domingo, to the west of Saint Domingue. The imaginary border was the cause of friction between the two colonies, which runaways exploited to their benefit. The ongoing tension over the border will be discussed further in the next chapter. Finally, Saint Domingue's numerous mountain chains were interspersed with small-scale communities of runaways who settled in hard to reach areas, living quietly but at times raiding nearby plantations for provisions. These communities were likely known by enslaved people and attracted new runaways seeking safe haven.

Table 3.9: Frequency Distribution of Social Ties and Destinations (N=12,857)

Social Ties and Destinations	Total	Percent
Family tie	130	1.0%
Labor/skill related	1,632	12.7%
Plantation/area of birth	153	1.2%
Spanish territory	80	.62%
Other runaways and free people	80	.62%
Total	2,075	16.1%

I hypothesized that Saint Domingue-born runaways had more social ties and destinations than did Africans, because they were born and socialized in the colony. Therefore, they had more familial relationships, were preferred for skilled labor positions over Africans, and had more knowledge of the colony's landscape. Chi-squared testing showed a statistically significant relationship between birth origin and social ties and destinations, having a p-value of less than 0.001. Table 3.10 confirms that Saint Domingue-born African descendants were more than 10% likely to use family ties, and more than three times as likely to seek old plantation connections to aid in escape. Interestingly, Africans and Atlantic creoles were more likely to have a skilled trade than Saint Domingans, which counters conventional notions that labor hierarchies followed the logic of the colony's racial stratum. Africans and Atlantic creoles also were over twice as likely to flee to Santo Domingo, and were more than twice as likely to have been harbored by other mawons or free people of color.

Table 3.10: Social Ties and Destinations by Birth Origin (1,978 observations)

Birth Origin	Family tie	Labor/skill	Plantation/area of birth	Spanish territory	Runaways/free people	Total
Saint Domingue	103 (12.7%)	599 (70.8%)	103 (12.2%)	19 (2.3%)	22 (2.6%)	846 (100%)
Africans & Atlantic creoles	21 (1.86%)	956 (84.5%)	42 (3.7%)	57 (5.0%)	56 (4.95%)	1,132 (100%)

p = 0.000

Table 3.11: Chi-square Test, Social Ties and Destinations by Gender (2,075 observations)

Gender	Family tie	Labor/skill	Plantation/area of birth	Spanish territory	Runaways/free people	Total
Men	99 (5.66%)	1,423 (81.4%)	96 (5.5%)	68 (3.9%)	62 (3.6%)	1,748 (100%)
Women	24 (9.6%)	158 (63.5%)	46 (18.5%)	8 (3.2 %)	13 (5.2%)	249 (100%)
Boys	5 (7.6%)	43 (65.2%)	10 (15.2%)	4 (6.1%)	4 (6.1%)	66 (100%)
Girls	2 (16.7%)	8 (66.7%)	1 (8.33%)	0	1 (8.33%)	12 (100%)
Total	130 (6.3%)	1,632 (78.7%)	153 (7.4%)	80 (3.9%)	80 (3.9%)	2,075 (100%)

p = 0.000

Chi-square test findings shown in Table 3.11 on the relationship between gender and social ties/destinations does not prove that women escaped in all-female networks as has been suggested;³³⁷ however, it does demonstrate the social networks more generally were an important aspect in women's patterns of escape. When adult women runaways who had some sort of destination in mind stole away from plantations, they were more likely than men to have either a family relationship, a plantation-based relationship, or contact with other runaways or free people of color. Women fugitives were almost just as likely as men to escape to Santo Domingo. Therefore, women, especially who were creole and mixed-race,³³⁸ relied more on their social capital and relationships to abscond. In keeping with plantations' gendered divisions of labor, men were more likely to use their skilled labor as an exit strategy, exploiting travel for errands, market days, or going to other plantations as leased labor as a window of opportunity for escape.

³³⁷ Moitt 2001: 134³³⁸ Geggus 1996

Family and Plantation Ties

Together, runaways who sought out known family ties and old plantations comprised of 2.2% of the sample. It was not uncommon for enslaved people to have immediate family members who offered them refuge. Though some women attained manumission through their owners, children of these relationships were not always freed. For example, a mixed-race woman named Magdelaine sought out her free mother, Suzanne, in Cap Français.³³⁹ Jean-Baptiste was a creole runaway who had escaped for 15 months, possibly reaching his family of free people of color living in Port-de-Paix where he was born.³⁴⁰ Other instances show that family members who were still enslaved also provided shelter, even if only for a temporary visit for their kin. The parents of Phaëton were based on a plantation in Trou when he absconded to find them; and Venus was suspected to find her mother who lived in Port-Margot.³⁴¹

Plantations, especially larger ones with several housing units, could be places of refuge for runaways who were either temporary absentees, or were lying in wait for a fellow absconder. Pere Labat claimed there was a sense of loyalty and cooperation between enslaved people and runaways, detailing double closets slaves constructed in their cabins to conceal a friend or to hide stolen goods.³⁴² Desiree, a Mondongue belonged to the Charron plantation in Acul, yet it was suspected that for some time she had been staying at the Caignet plantation, also in Acul.³⁴³ Jean-Baptiste, a dark-skinned creole “having traits of a white” had escaped for more than 15 months, the ad states he was born in Port-de-Paix where nearly all of his family was free.³⁴⁴ Fictive kin ties were also strong, perhaps forged during the Middle Passage, and prompted people to seek out comrades from whom

³³⁹ *LAA* July 17, 1781, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=6022>

³⁴⁰ *LAA* June 4, 1766, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=126>

³⁴¹ *LAA* October 1, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11447>; *LAA* October 15, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11475>

³⁴² Labat [1722] 1724: 58; Munford 1991 (Vol. 3): 955

³⁴³ *LAA* December 15, 1784, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=7201>

³⁴⁴ *LAA* June 4, 1766, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=126>

they had been separated. Isidore, a 22-year-old Kongolese stamped T. MILLET and G. ANSE, representing Sieur Millet of the Grande Anse region in the south, stole a canoe that was later found in Petite-Anse in the north. Millet had sold several slaves to the Balan plantation and it was suspected that Isidore was trying to rejoin them.³⁴⁵

For some, being sold to an especially punitive planter could be reason enough to seek out a previous owner who was relatively benevolent. Such “master exchanges” existed in the Loango coast areas when mistreated enslaved people offered themselves to new owners.³⁴⁶ As James Sweet has pointed out, a 16 or 17-year-old Kongolese boy named Cupidon had been missing from his owner for six months, and it was believed he was in his old master’s neighborhood; another 17 year-old boy from the Kongo, Julien, escaped heading to Fort Dauphin, hoping to be reclaimed by his first owner.³⁴⁷

Labor

The most common tool runaways had at their disposal were based on their labor related skills. Of the runaways in the sample, 12.7% held some position in the plantation hierarchy; carpenters, fishers, coopers, valets, coaches, and hairdressers were just a few of occupations represented that would have allowed people to have relative flexibility in their everyday lives compared to bondspeople whose labor was confined to plantation fields. Though they were still enslaved, skilled bondspeople in more urban areas had contact with people of varying walks of life, and saw parts of the colony they may not have otherwise. Women tended to be seamstresses, hairdressers, and vendors. Marguerite was a seamstress who fled in the summer of 1784, and was last seen working as

³⁴⁵ *LAA* July 2, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11296>

³⁴⁶ Sweet 2017: 89-91

³⁴⁷ *LAA* January 30, 1773, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3524>; *LAA* March 28, 1780, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=5598>; Sweet 2017: 91-92

for soldiers at Le Cap.³⁴⁸ Marianne, a 23-year-old mixed-race woman, was well known as a vendor at the Le Cap market selling fish and fruit.³⁴⁹ Another female vendor was Fanchette, a Mina, who sold vegetables at the market.³⁵⁰ Baptiste, a creole, was both a hairdresser and a violin player who wore a blue vest and black culottes, signifying his relative privilege.³⁵¹ Even commandeurs, members of the enslaved labor force responsible for maintaining order among the work gangs, escaped their bondage. Scipion, an Arada bondsman also served as a mason for his owner and ran away for the second time in the fall of 1779.³⁵²

I included literacy in European languages dominant in the Atlantic world as another skill that facilitated escape. Reading and writing capabilities would have allowed fugitives to legibly forge free papers. Spoken fluency could allow runaways to present themselves to others as a free person of color whose native home was either Saint Domingue or another colony. For example, runaways speaking Dutch or English could potentially head to a nearby port and go aboard a ship. Thom, a quarteron from Saint Christopher, escaped in July 1788 and was believed to have “liaisons with the English.”³⁵³ An unnamed mulatre from Guadeloupe spoke French very well and used this knowledge to pass for free in Léogane.³⁵⁴ Simon, a creole, spoke both French and Spanish, indicating he may have passed for free in Saint Domingue or cross the border into Santo Domingo.³⁵⁵ Besides skilled labor positions, linguistic skills were one of the only forms of human capital afforded to enslaved people since most did not have access to formal education or other tools that could be

³⁴⁸ *LAA* September 15, 1784, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=7051>

³⁴⁹ *LAA* April 22, 1770, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2697>

³⁵⁰ *LAA* October 3, 1770, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2829>

³⁵¹ *LAA* March 18, 1775, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=4306>

³⁵² *LAA* November 9, 1799, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=5510>

³⁵³ *LAA* July 19, 1788, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8833>

³⁵⁴ *LAA* November 10, 1773, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3814>

³⁵⁵ *LAA* March 19, 1774, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3932>

translated to economic or political power. Therefore, runaways made use of the resources most readily available to them in the colonial text.

Santo Domingo and Free Communities

Interestingly, escaping to Spanish Santo Domingo and seeking out other runaways or free people of color were the least common destinations – each accounting for only .62% of the sample observations. The low reporting of runaways fleeing to Santo Domingo and to self-liberated encampments contrasts the several complaints by planters and accounts by former *marechaussée* leaders that attest to the presence of absconders both in Saint Domingue and across the eastward border. Military sources also indicated that Saint Dominguan runaways settled in Santo Domingo and married locals.³⁵⁶ That could have been the case with Cupidon and Bernard, both Kongolesse men who'd disappeared ten years before 1787; Jacques, a Mondongue, who was missing for five years; and l'Eveille, an Ibo man missing for two years. The advertisement speculates that they were in Santo Domingo because they had not been seen at all since their escapes.³⁵⁷ Others traversed into Santo Domingo to trade with or work for the Spanish, such as Gillot, who was considered very dangerous because he stole horses and mules then sold them to the Spanish.³⁵⁸ A Mondongue woman named Franchette had been at large for three years and was known for her business dealings with the Spanish.³⁵⁹ French planters' concerns about runaways to Santo Domingo will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Three.

A handful ads of provide enough detail to hint at established communities the mountains. For example, one ad shows a Bambara woman who was seen headed toward an encampment with

³⁵⁶ La Grange, chargé du recouvrement des nègres marrons dans la partie espagnole de Saint-Domingue, par MM. de Sorel et de Montholan, 1730, ANOM E: 248

³⁵⁷ *LAA* June 16, 1787, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8188>

³⁵⁸ *LAA* February 26, 1766, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=84>

³⁵⁹ *LAA* February 7, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9228>

“many black maroons” in Jérémie.³⁶⁰ Neron, an Arada, and Cipryen, a Kongo, had been escaped for six months and were suspected to be hiding with a black man from Corail Guerineau and “several others” in the southern Baynet mountain that separated Grande-Riviere from Gris-Gris.³⁶¹ Five runaways, four Kongolese and one Mondongue, named Houan or Jean, Jean-Louis, Jupiter, Cesar, and Louis had taken refuge at “the heights of the Black Mountain above the Cul-de-Sac plain.”³⁶² One unnamed Kongolese woman and ten Kongo men escaped from Artibonite and were suspected of finding haven with “other black maroons.”³⁶³ Télémaque, a creole from Jamaica who spoke both English and “the language ordinary to the negres” escaped for nine months into the Cahos mountains north of Mirebalais.³⁶⁴ Pierre-Louis, a griffe and a carpenter, hid for two months in the Grand Bois Mountains in Croix-des-Bouquets, which we will see in the next chapter was a site of conflict between mawons and the marechaussée.³⁶⁵

Free people of color provided refuge to runaways as well, although they risked losing their freedom for doing so, such as Hercule who was sold to the King in March 1768.³⁶⁶ The neighborhood of Petit Guinee in Cap Français was a regular destination for runaways to find housing, lease themselves out for pay, and blend in with the growing population of free people of color. While many of the gens du couleur were wealthy slave owners themselves, manumitted slaves of the *affranchi* class maintained biological and social ties to enslaved people and at times offered them shelter, food, clothing, or work. In June 1786, an absconder named Toussaint was flogged and hanged in the public square of Le Cap, along with a group of slaves and free blacks accused of theft. They were whipped and sentenced to the chain gang for forging free passes and taking up rental

³⁶⁰ *LAA* December 25, 1788, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9150>

³⁶¹ *LAA* May 31, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11240>

³⁶² *LAA* February 8, 1772, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3233>

³⁶³ *LAA* May 19, 1773, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3630>

³⁶⁴ *LAA* March 21, 1780, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=5596>

³⁶⁵ *LAA* September 1, 1773, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3752>

³⁶⁶ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 228; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 165

rooms for a freeman named Larose.³⁶⁷ Marie-Jeanne, a creole from Petit Saint-Louis on March 5th, 1788 was presumed to have been sheltered by free people of color and dressed herself as a man to disguise herself; in 1771, eight men and two women from the Fessard plantation at the Black Mountains were suspected of hiding with free people of color.³⁶⁸

Self-Assertions

While enslaved people identified and experienced moments of latitude they could exploit for their escapes, Saint Domingue was an increasingly repressive society that had strict rules against certain behaviors. Enslaved African descended people, and even those who were free, were not allowed to congregate or be out at night without the written permission of their owner. They could not carry anything that could be used as a weapon, or even wear clothing items or hairstyles that might convey likeness to European culture. These restrictions to black bodies were transgressed by runaways in their attempt to arm themselves as they prepared to escape. Money, extra clothing, food, weapons, or forged free passes would have been vital resources for fugitives embarking on dangerous journeys, especially into the mountains. Table 3.12 shows that the most common self-assertion was when fugitives attempted to blend into the population of free people of color, at times by forging documents attesting to their non-slave status. Not far behind, theft of needed resources was the next common way runaways prepared for life on the run. Sixty-four absconders also prepared themselves by illegally carrying some sort of weapon like a gun or a machete. Finally, 58 runaways were noted to have escaped then were returned on more than one occasion.

³⁶⁷ “Arrêt de la Cour, qui condamne plusieurs Negres, voleurs, et receleurs, 1 Juin 1786,” 27AP/12, AN; Fouchard 1972: 272

³⁶⁸ *LAA* October 11, 1788, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8995>; *LAA* November 20, 1771, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3161>

Table 3.12: Frequency Distribution of Counter-Hegemonic Self-Assertions, (N=12,857)

Counter-Hegemonic Self-Assertions	Total	Percent
Passing as free	576	4.5%
Theft	410	3.2%
Bearing arms	64	.5%
Repeat escape	58	.45%
Total	1,108	8.6%

Table 3.13: Chi-square Test, Counter-Hegemonic Self-Assertions by Gender (N=12,857)

Gender	Passing as Free	Theft	Bearing Arms	Repeat Escape	Total
Men	429 (48.6%)	350 (39.7%)	58 (6.6%)	45 (5.1%)	882 (100%)
Women	129 (72.9%)	34 (19.2%)	2 (1.1%)	12 (6.7%)	177 (100%)
Boys	11 (31.4%)	19 (54.3%)	4 (11.4%)	1 (2.86%)	35 (100%)
Girls	7 (50%)	7 (50%)	0	0	14 (100%)
Total	576 (52%)	410 (37%)	64 (5.8%)	58 (5.2%)	1,108 (%100)

p = 0.000

There were some observable differences in self-assertions by birth origin. Saint Domingue-born runaways, and Africans and other Atlantic creoles, had a statistically significant to self-assertions with a p-value of less than 0.001. Here, interesting findings emerge. As might be expected, Saint Domingue natives were more likely to attempt to use ‘passing’ as a path to freedom because those with higher levels of white ancestry had lighter complexions, giving them skin color privilege associated with the gens du couleur. Table 3.14 shows Africans and other Atlantic creoles were over 7% more likely to steal items and provisions to escape. They armed themselves with weapons more often than Saint Domingueans; and non-Saint Domingueans escaped repeatedly more often. This indicates that Africans and Atlantic creoles exhibited more militant action as they liberated themselves.

Table 3.14: Chi-square Test, Counter-Hegemonic Self-Assertions by Birth Origin (1,068 observations)

Birth Origins	Passing as Free	Theft	Bearing Arms	Repeat Escape	Total
Saint Domingue	301 (58.9%)	168 (32.88%)	22 (4.31%)	20 (3.91%)	511 (100%)
Africans & Atlantic creoles	259 (46.5%)	223 (40.04%)	40 (7.18%)	35 (6.28%)	557 (100%)

p = 0.000

Passing as Free

Any slave who pretended to be free but could not produce someone to verify that information would be fined 3,000 livres and punished to a sentence of three months in prison; and anyone caught in public after 11pm would receive 15 whip lashes.³⁶⁹ Yet, passing as free was the most common way runaways, especially Saint Domingans, embodied and asserted themselves. Of the total runaway population, 4.5% forged or stole free papers and disguised themselves as a free person. Several ads use the phrase “se disant libre” – calls themselves free – to indicate the fugitives were self-presenting or telling people that they were a free person of color. Table 3.13 shows that women were much more likely than men to pass as free. A creole woman named Victoire from Jacmel escaped bondage in the year 1788. The ad describes her as a beautiful 40-year-old who was seen disguised as a man and wearing the outfit of the *marechaussée* – the police force primarily composed of freemen of color tasked with chasing fugitive runaways.³⁷⁰

Theft

Theft of money, clothes, boats, or horses was the next common self-assertion, at 3.2%. Although many enslaved people likely attempted to escape spontaneously when they viewed an immediate window of opportunity, others likely planned their trek as carefully as possible. Deliberation was necessary to avoid capture and reach a chosen destination. Food, clothing, or horses – which slaves were not allowed to ride – were necessary for survival or to expedite the escape by exchanging goods. Rather than escape to Santo Domingo, some runaways used boats to attempt to leave the colony altogether. Compared to adults and girl children, young boys disproportionately stole something before they escaped (Table 3.13). In July 1783, an unnamed man from the Loango coast Malimbé “nation” escaped Le Cap and left with 14 or 15 other men in a

³⁶⁹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 385, 702

³⁷⁰ *LA* August 15, 1791, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9689>

canoe they stole.³⁷¹ Several ads were published over the course of two years for a Mozambiquan runaway named Nérestan, who by December 1789 was seen wielding a large machete and claiming to be free. He had taken refuge with enslaved people from several sugar plantations around Matheux, north of Port-au-Prince and west of Mirebalais, who were concealing stolen liquor from their owners and selling it in local taverns.³⁷²

Bearing Arms

Like Nérestan, some runaways were considered armed and dangerous. Enslaved people were not allowed to carry weapons in the colony³⁷³ but did so routinely, such as carrying mayombo sticks at calenda ritual gatherings, and when they were attempting to free themselves. They used work tools such as machetes and sickles, or stole pistols, hunting rifles, and swords as they faced the imminent danger of their trek. Two creoles, Cambray and Charlot escaped carrying a sword and a machete.³⁷⁴ Jannitte, a creole man, had escaped for two months in 1767 with a gun, a machete, and other effects.³⁷⁵ La Fortune, an Arada commandeur, was believed to be armed with a machete when he escaped a Marmelade plantation in on July 1, 1790.³⁷⁶ Pierre Baillard escaped in January 1775 with a machete and two knives.³⁷⁷ In February 1773, an entire group of armed runaways escaped Quarter Morin in the north: four men, Joseph, Belair, l'Africain, Theodore, and three women, Catherine, Colette, and Leonore were all Aradas and each took with them their sickles and hachets.³⁷⁸ In May

³⁷¹ *LAA* July 16, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11317>

³⁷² *LAA* December 26, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/en/lire.php?type=annonce&annee=1790>; Geggus 2014: 33

³⁷³ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 226

³⁷⁴ *LAA* July 22, 1767, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2001>

³⁷⁵ *LAA* July 29, 1767, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2002>

³⁷⁶ *LAA* July 24, 1790, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=10481>

³⁷⁷ *LAA* January 22, 1775, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=4255>

³⁷⁸ *LAA* March 6, 1773, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3563>

1790, four Maquoua men, Alerte, Adonis, Azor, and Polite, escaped the Mongirard plantation at l'Islet-a-Pierre-Joseph with guns, pistols, gunpowder, lead and other materials.³⁷⁹

Repeat Escapes

Advertisements were placed for perpetual offenders, people who were captured after an initial escape then ran away again. For example, A Kongolese man escaped in October of 1774 and was quickly captured by the marechaussée, but then escaped again in December.³⁸⁰ Another Kongolese man named Chaudiere escaped then was imprisoned for one month, then escaped again after being taken back to Jérémie.³⁸¹ Although repeat escapees only were .45% of the sample, women were more likely than men to be repeat runaways. Other examples of repeat runaways come from plantation data including a creole woman named Zabeth, who in 1768 left a Léogane sugar plantation manager exasperated at her constant escapes. Zabeth took every opportunity to sneak away – she feigned illness and promptly attempted to steal another woman's clothes so she could run away. After being caught in the act, she promised not to take flight again, but did shortly thereafter. When it was observed that she was legitimately sick, Zabeth was sent to a plantation infirmary; yet once the manager sent her another change of clothes she took off again. she fled twice more, both times after having been chained up and sick nearly to the point of death.

In May 1774, the same planter who owned Zabeth, Madame du Fort, sent a group from a sugar plantation in Léogane to her coffee plantation in Abricots. During the exchange, the coffee plantation manager wrote to her indicating that three people escaped – Jasmin Barbe-Blanche, his wife Nanette, and a younger man named Marquis. It was suspected that they went to Cayemittes and advertisements were placed for them at Jérémie and Tiburun. A month after their escape, all three were discovered to be in jail in Jérémie. But, soon after being returned to du Fort's manager, Jasmin

³⁷⁹ *LAA* June 17, 1790, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=10389>

³⁸⁰ *LAA* December 3, 1774, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=4216>

³⁸¹ *LAA* July 5, 1775, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=4410>

ran away again. This time he did not make it very far due to starvation and sickness. Before Jasmin died in late September, he admitted that he had familiarity with the Grande Anse area and planned to pay another black man with a silver cufflink to take him across a river. Despite the hardship Jasmin endured, Marquis still ventured to run away again in October. He had stolen chickens belonging to other blacks for the subsistence, presumably to sell them for himself.³⁸²

Some runaway advertisements were published multiple times and across mediums. The *Gazette de Saint Domingue* and *Courrier Nationale de Saint Domingue* carried a small number of the same notices that were placed in *Les Affiches Americaines*. Repeated advertisements were not counted in this dataset for quantitative analysis; however, their frequency has qualitative implications regarding the length of time runaways escaped, or those who were captured then escaped again after their return. For example, Jasmin, a 25 to 26-year-old Kongo man was reported as a runaway on January 18th, 1783, one week later January 25th, then again four weeks later February 22nd, suggesting that he avoided capture for at least one month.³⁸³ Advertisements for Victoire, a creole woman, ran on July 15th, 1789, July 22nd, and July 29th.³⁸⁴ Over time, the *Les Affiches* runaway advertisements seem to have ran repeatedly with increasing frequency, especially as the Haitian Revolution drew nearer. Out of 798 ads placed in the year 1790, over 300 of them had been repeats of previously published ads. On the other hand, there were only 11 repeated ads for the years 1766 through 1768 combined. It seems that reporting became more negligent because the number of repeated ads increased alongside the growing number of Africans imported to Saint Domingue.

³⁸² Debien [1973] 1996: 120-122

³⁸³ *LAA* January 18, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11032>; *LAA* January 25, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11041>; *LAA* February 22, 1783, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=11081>

³⁸⁴ *LAA* July 15, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9592>; *LAA* July 22, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9608>; *LAA* July 29, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9633>

Timing and Length of Escape

Part of runaways' strategy in escaping was to deliberately time their flight to align with windows of opportunity when there would be less attention paid to the goings on of the enslaved population. Weekends, holidays, and natural disasters created enough distractions for absconders to slip away without detection. Colonial planters generally allowed enslaved people to have leave from work to attend parties on Christmas, Easter, New Year's, and other Catholic celebrations. Temporary absenteeism after these events was somewhat expected, either due to dalliances with romantic partners or a long weekend stay at a different plantation's party. Planters kept track of who was missing at their end of year account books, but were measured in giving out punishments for escapes during the holiday seasons.³⁸⁵ Interestingly, analysis of the runaway ads show that escapes were most frequent during high summer months and least frequent at the end of the year. Higher productivity on plantations may have contributed to an uptick in mawonaj during the summer, since harsh weather perhaps made hard labor nearly unbearable.

In the last week of each year, only 151 runaways were reported, while even fewer were reported during the first week. This may be planters were too preoccupied with preparations for Christmas and New Year's celebrations to travel to the city and place an advertisement for a missing person. Overall, the 25th, 29th, and 30th weeks of the year saw the highest numbers of reported runaways, overlapping with June 20th-26th, July 18th-24th, and July 25th-July 31st respectively. Spanning the years 1766 to 1791, 314 enslaved people escaped in the late June period; 302 in the third week of July; and 309 in the last week of July. Other Catholic festivities during those weeks were for Saint Jean-Baptiste in Trou and Jean-Rabel (June 24); Sainte Marguerite in Port-Margot (July 20); and Saint James the Greater (July 25), Sainte Anne in l'Anse-a-Veau (July 26), Saint Pierre in Limbé (July 29),

³⁸⁵ Debien [1973] 1996: 130

and Sainte Marthe in Marmelade (July 29).³⁸⁶ In addition to being moments of distraction for plantation personnel, these locally celebrated holidays also would have been gathering times for enslaved people to partake in their rituals and enhance oppositional consciousness through seditious speech about freedom and liberation. Findings from Chapter Two show these types of ritual spaces may have influenced mawonaj, and were participated in by runaways themselves.

Table 3.15: Length of Escape in Weeks (9,888 observations)

Mean	Median	75% Percentile	90% Percentile	95% Percentile	99% Percentile	Range	Standard Deviation
9.03	3	8	17	30	104	780	28.7

An important insight the ads provide were the approximate length of time the runaways had been missing. Although we are missing data for 2,969 observations, the remaining 9,888 are a good portion for study and are displayed in Table 3.15. The average escape length was nine weeks, or approximately two months. The median was only three weeks, meaning most advertisements were placed less than one month after a person's disappearance. Some ads were posted as soon as within the same week. Still, these figures help to distinguish *petit* mawonaj – or temporary truancy from *grand* mawonaj – the intent to permanently escape. The other half of runaways observed escaped for more than one month, which is longer than the few days of absenteeism typically associated with *petit* mawonaj. Five per cent of the observations, or 494 runaways, had been missing for 30 weeks, or over six months. Of these, 99 runaways had been missing for over two years. Genevieve, a 30-year-old creole woman, and her two griffe sons Françoise and Paule had the longest escape reported, 780 weeks or 15 years.³⁸⁷ Longer lengths of escape clearly indicated a desire to live as a free person, however defined, away from plantation enslavement. Some of these escapees fled to Santo Domingo

³⁸⁶ Almanach historique et chronologique de Saint-Domingue, pour l'année bissextile 1788, John Carter Brown Library

³⁸⁷ LAA September 26, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9817>

and intermarried, some found relatively stable communities of mawons in Saint Domingue's mountains, and others passed for free in Saint Domingue's urban towns.

A limitation to our understanding of grand mawonaj and the length of escape is the issue of underreporting. Plantation managers often failed to mention issues of mawonaj to planters who lived abroad, likely to avoid questions about mishandling of the enslaved work force.³⁸⁸ While private inventories and other records may indicate that plantations were missing laborers, these runaways do not always show up in the *Les Affiches* advertisements. For example, a 1775 inventory of the largest of the Galliffet sugar plantations, Grande Place, indicates there were seven people en mawonaj: Francois, a mulatre missing since 1749; Augustin, age 57, Samuel, 60, and Andre Ibo, 53, all missing for "a very long time"; Mingo age 54; and Mathieu age 53 and Neptune dit Anga, 35, were both missing for four years. Eight years later, a 1783 inventory of the same plantation shows most of these runaways were still at large: Samuel, Andre, Mingo, Francois, Mathieu, and Neptune. Others were mentioned in this list who had also committed grand mawonaj: Paul, age 33, was missing since September 9th, 1775 and Marie-Francoise, griffe, since 1749. The 1783 inventory for Habitation Desplantes, another Galliffet property, shows that Michel, a 45-year old Kongolese, had been en mawonaj for a long time as well as Alexandre, 26, who escaped in 1778. In the 1786 inventory for Grand Place, Blaise was added to the list of mawons. He was 32 and escaped on September 10th, 1784 during a trip to the hospital. It seems that he was probably subsequently captured because, with the exception of Blaise, the original ten Grande Place and Desplantes runaways were still listed as mawons in January 1791.³⁸⁹ This case serves as an example that some

³⁸⁸ Debien [1973] 1996: 111

³⁸⁹ "Inventaire des effets trouves dans les habitations de M. de Galliffet a la sortie de M. Masson en 1775"; "Recensement des negres, negresses, negrillons et negrittes existants au premier janvier 1783 sur les cinq habitations de Mr. le Marquis de Galliffet"; "Etat du mobilier existant au premier Janvier 1786 sur les ..."; and "Etat par métier des negres des cinq habitations de Monsieur le Marquis de Galliffet au premier de Janvier 1791," 107AP/127 dossier 2, AN

plantation managers and owners simply gave up on looking for runaways with any real earnest, allowing fugitives to make out on their own for years at a time, potentially reproducing themselves and forming self-contained *manon* communities or passing for free in nearby towns.

Influences on Length of Escape

Besides plantation managers' negligence, what other factors contributed to the ability to successfully escape? How effective were group escapes, destinations, and self-assertive behaviors in preparing runaways for longer periods of self-liberation? Using Kwallis one way tests of variance, I tested the influence of these variables on runaways' length of escape. There was a statistically significant relationship between group escapes and lengths of escape, with a p-value of 0.0001. Table 3.16 shows that the average lengths of escape between individual, and intra- and inter-race/ethnic group escapes were not that big. However, inter-race/ethnic group escapes had a slightly longer length of escape of 9.8 weeks. This shows that racial solidarity, and the various skills and forms of knowledge runaways carried with them, was an important aspect that contributed to a slightly above average length of escape.

Table 3.16: Group's Average Lengths of Escape (in weeks)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Frequency
Individual escapes	9.19	24.81	6,154
Intra-race/ethnic group escape	8.18	37.01	2,432
Inter-race/ethnic group escape	9.81	28.04	1,302
Total observations			9,888

p = 0.0001

Based on Table 3.17, there also is a statistically significant relationship between social ties and destinations and length of escape with a p-value of 0.0498, which is less than .05. When looking at the average length of escape between runaways using neighborhood ties or headed to other destinations – family, labor sites, former plantations, Spanish territory, and other fugitives – there was only a statistically significant difference in escape durations between labor/skills and the Spanish territory in facilitating escape. The difference between them was 21 weeks: labor/skills contributed

to an average of 10.6 weeks of escape, whereas those who escaped to Santo Domingo had an average of 31.86-week escape. Thus, on average, runaways who decided to flee Saint Domingue altogether were the most ‘successful’ runaways. The second most successful destination were being harbored at other plantations, runaways hiding at plantations in the living quarters of their comrades had an average of 15.68 weeks of escape. Having family connections and linkages to other runaways had similar success rates of contributing to an average of approximately 14.3 weeks of escape.

Table 3.17: Length of Escape (in weeks) by Social Ties and Destinations

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Frequency
Family	14.28	31.43	105
Labor/skills	10.56	35.79	1,268
Former plantations	15.68	44.73	118
Spanish territory	31.86	95.47	65
Other maroons	14.26	25.24	65
Total observations			1,621

p = 0.0498

Lastly, self-assertions had a statistically significant relationship with length of escape with a p-value of 0.0001. According to Table 3.18, passing as free was the most successful self-assertion that contributed to a longer length of escape, 22.8 weeks. The duration of escape for passing for free is well above the average for the entire sample, 9.03 weeks (Table 3.15). This seems to be a testament to the existence of the modicum of social fluidity in Saint Domingue that allowed a minority of African and African descended people to change their social status. A distant second most influential self-assertion was repeated escape, which led to an average of 8.74 weeks of relative freedom. Though enslaved people who attempted to free themselves repeatedly probably learned new tactics with each unsuccessful escape, their durations of escape were still below average for the entire sample. Similarly, theft and bearing arms, actions most commonly taken by Africans, Atlantic creoles, and young boys, did not result in an above average duration of escape, which suggests they were less than effective means to escape.

Table 3.18: Length in Escape (in weeks) by Self-Assertions

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Frequency
Passing as free	22.81	59.10	434
Theft	3.1	4.63	320
Bearing arms	5.23	6.1	56
Repeat escape	8.74	16.36	42
Total observations			852

p = 0.0001

Temporal Changes

The sample data from colonial newspapers, especially the long-published *Les Affiches Americaines*, are well suited to yearly temporal analyses. Figure 3.2 shows that reports of fugitives steadily increased between the years 1766 and 1791 in keeping with the growing enslaved population. The lowest frequency of mawonaj was the year 1779, when only 290 runaways were reported. The rate of mawonaj increased most dramatically between 1779 and 1783, doubling from 290 to 666 yearly runaways. The frequency of mawonaj continued to increase to its highest level of 820 and 817 runaways during the years 1785 and 1789 respectively. By 1791, only 238 runaways were reported, however this is likely due to the uprising in the north that ended the publication of *Les Affiches Americaines*.

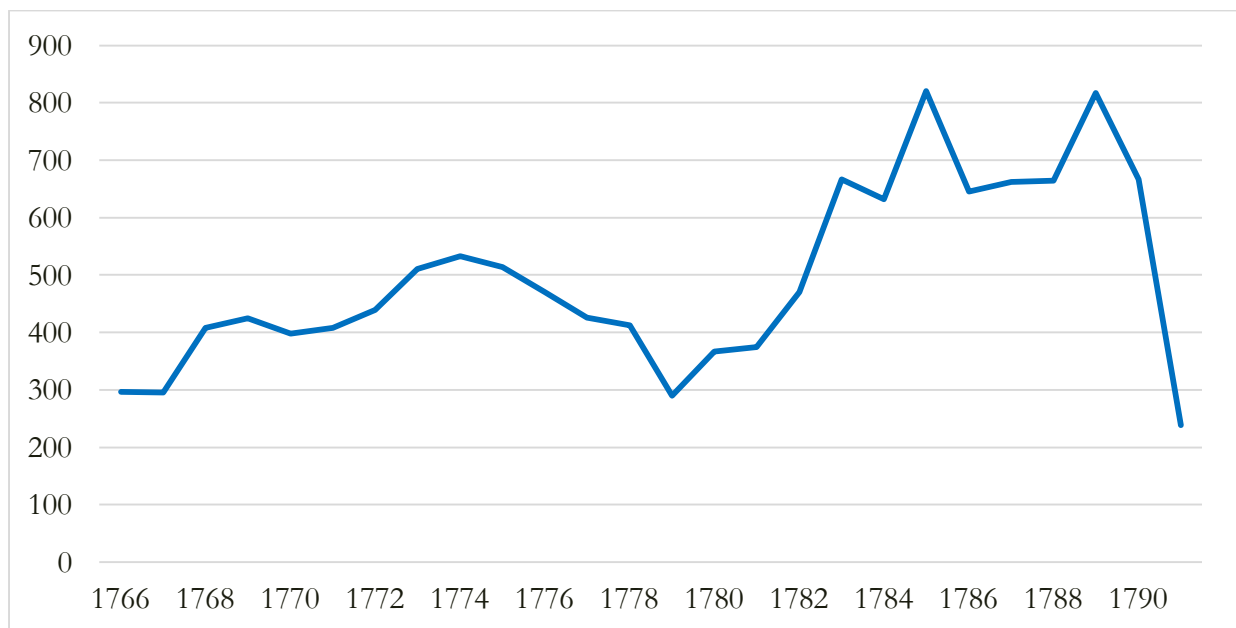


Figure 3.2: Frequency of Runaways over Time (N=12,857)

I wanted to look at group and individual escapes to find out how oppositional consciousness was operationalized beyond one person's pursuit of freedom, but extended to families, work gang associates, shipmates, and perhaps even strangers. Overall, people escaped by themselves more often than they did in small groups, which is clearly demonstrated in Figure 3.3. Group escapes were at the highest rate in 1769 at 52.7% of all escapes, then decreased steadily until reaching their lowest point of 18.3% in 1782. But, group escapes increased again until 1791 when it represented 50% of all escapes. Individual escapes were much more common, reaching its peak in 1782 then steadily decreasing until 1791. It is possible that escaping individually was easier than negotiating a dangerous feat with someone else. When people did escape in groups, they were more likely to do so with a cohort composed of a cohesive language, culture, race, or ethnicity.

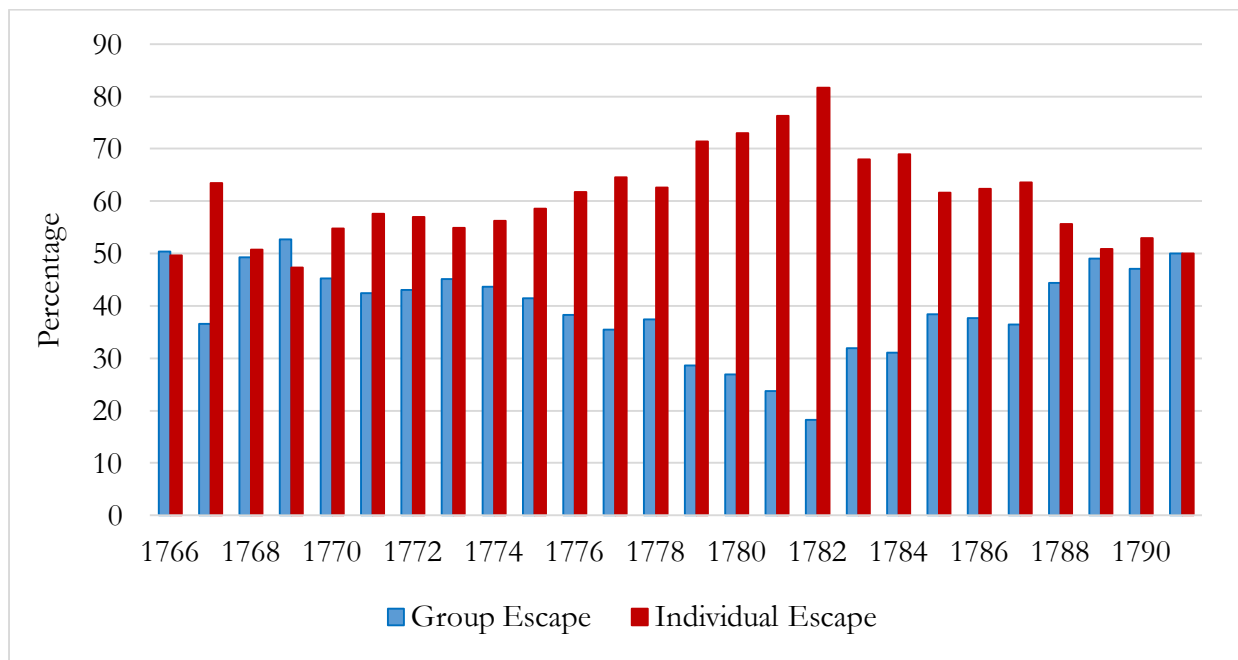


Figure 3.3: Rates of Group and Individual Escapes over Time (N=12,857)

A temporal analysis of runaway groups' size is of interest because it shows the recruitment aspect of the micromobilization process, and how those patterns changed over time. I created a variable for group size using the same year, week, plantation locations and destination, and lengths of escape to determine membership in the same group. Given these factors, it is very unlikely that

multiple people would be incorrectly included or excluded from a group composition due to chance. With a Poisson regression of the generated variable for group sizes by years, I found a statistically significant ($p = 0.028$) increase of group escape sizes with 0.3% growth per year. Figure 3.4 shows that most groups were composed of five or less persons, but on average, fugitive groups were getting bigger leading the Haitian Revolution. The year 1789 especially seems to have influenced the overall average; that year several groups composed of more than ten people escaped, including one group of 22 – the interethnic band of Mondongues, Kongos, Minas, Ibos, a Senegalaise, a Bambara, and a creole who escaped the Duquesné plantation in October.

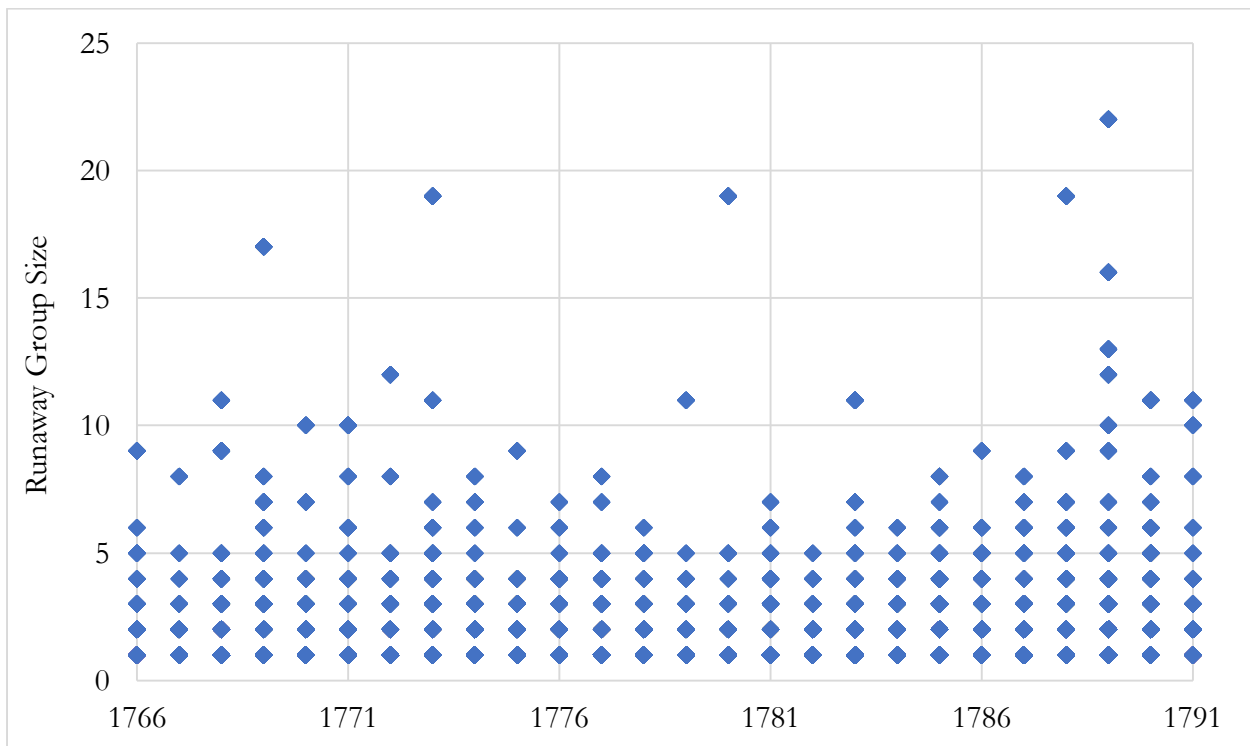


Figure 3.4: Runaway Group Sizes over Time

When looking specifically at group escapes, I've separated intra-racial/ethnic and inter-racial/ethnic group escapes to find out if there were observable changes that would indicate growing solidarity around race or if people clung to their disparate identities. Same race/ethnic groups were predominant over mixed-race groups, displayed below in Figure 3.5. Intra-race/ethnic group escape was at its height in 1768, representing 36.5% of all escapes then decreasing until its lowest point of

7.7% in 1781. Intra-race/ethnic group escapes then increased steadily until 1791. Inter-race/ethnic group escapes were less prevalent overall and was at its highest point in 1766, 23.9%, however it did outpace intra-race/ethnic escapes between the years 1779 and 1784. These years coincide with the decline of group mawonaj overall (Figure 3.3), and the British blockade on Saint Domingue's ports, preventing new slave ships from arriving. Therefore, enslaved people would have been forced to either escape alone, or to build new relationships with people of different backgrounds due to the lack of newly imported Africans. Other implications of the blockade will be discussed in more depth in the following chapter. From 1784, inter-race/ethnic group escapes increased steadily, albeit at a lower rate than intra-race/ethnic group escapes, until 1791. While shared African ethnicity remained a significant aspect of group escapes, it was also becoming common for runaways to take flight in a group of people from diverse backgrounds. This shows that a growing sense of racial solidarity was forming in rebellious activities during the pre-revolution period. Inter-race/ethnic runaway bands could muster together a wider set of knowledge, skills, and resources as they set out to geographically isolated independent living zones.

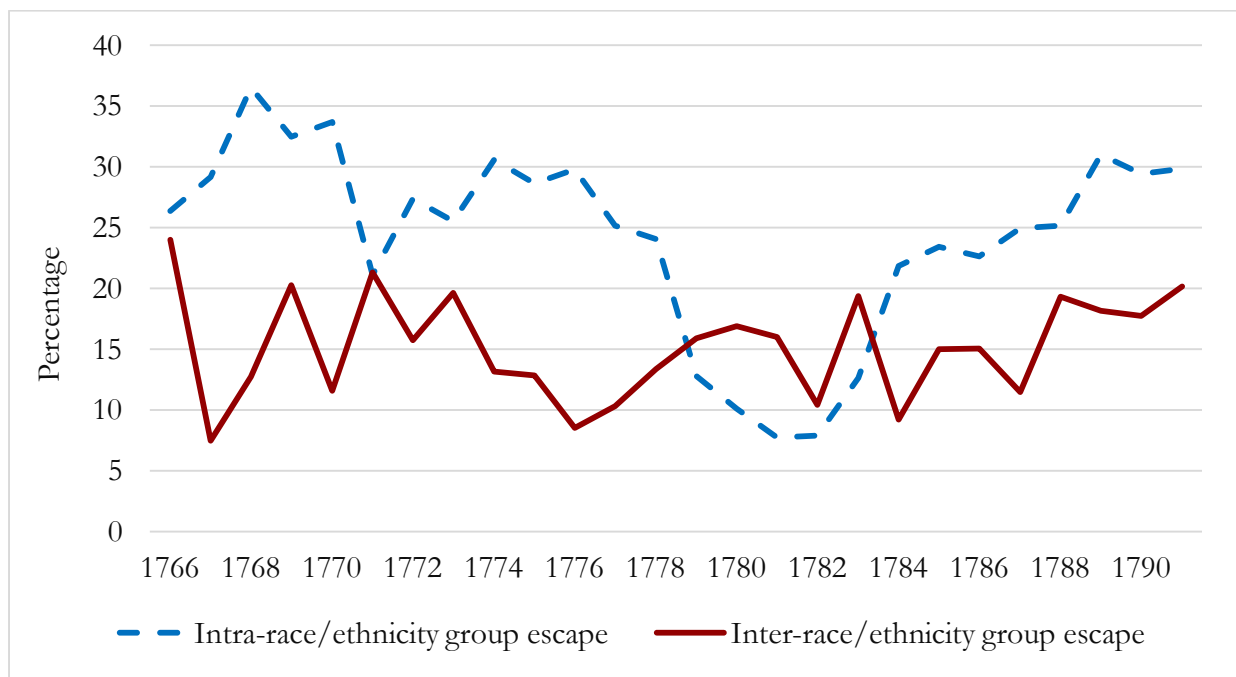


Figure 3.5: Intra-Race/Ethnic and Inter-Race/Ethnic Group Escape Rates over Time (N=12,857)

Self-Assertions over Time

I combined each category of self-assertions, passing as free, theft, bearing arms, and repeated escape, to gain an aggregate understanding of the tools runaways used in their escapes over time. The frequency of self-assertions was at its lowest point in 1770, when only 17 were reported in the ads. There was a sharp increase after 1770, reaching 47 self-assertions in 1772. The number of self-assertions decreased again to 30 in 1775, then increased again to 56 in 1777. After decreasing again to 39 in 1781, the number of self-assertions grew to its highest level of 68 in 1782 and 1785. There was a marked decrease after 1785, landing at 42 in 1786 then continuing to decrease. Figure 3.6 below generally seems to follow the frequency pattern of mawonaj overall, indicating that the more slaves escaped the more they prepared themselves for the perils of escape.

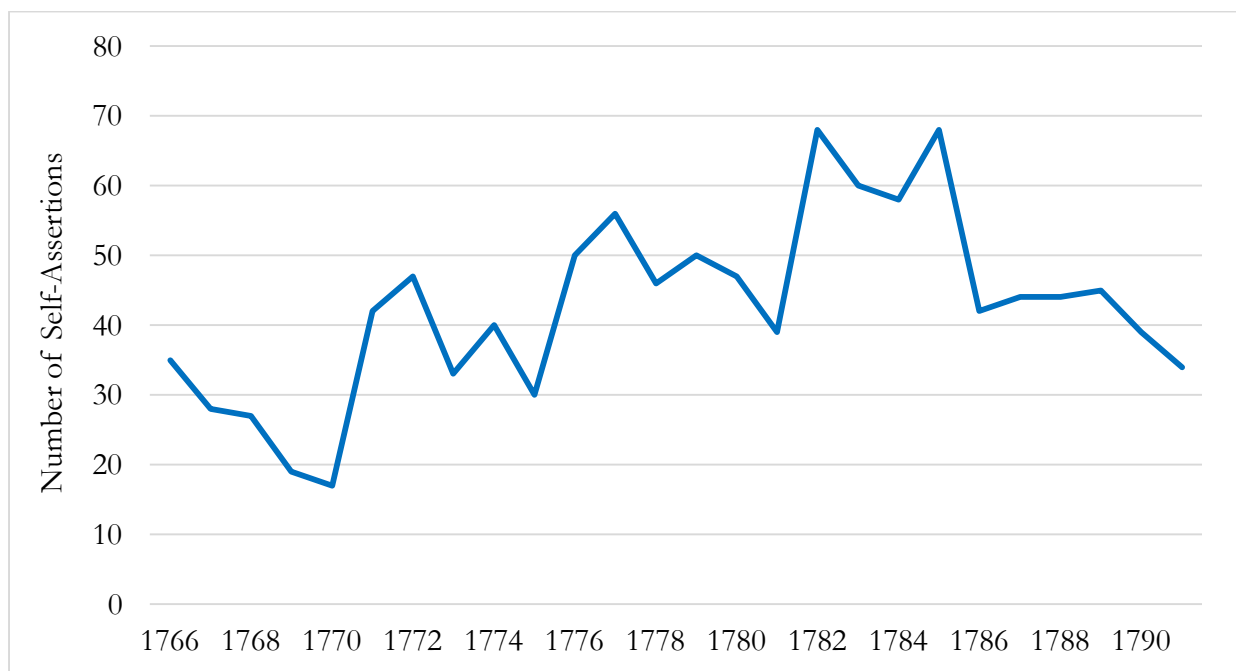


Figure 3.6: Frequency of Self-Assertions over Time (N=12,857)

Length of Escape over Time

To look at lengths of escape over time, I used a negative binomial regression and had statistically significant findings with a p-value of 0.011. For each year, there was a .4% increase of the length of

time, in weeks, runaways were missing. This means that over the 26-year span of the *Les Affiches Americaines* publication, there was an overall increase of 10.4% in escape durations. While most runaways were reported within a short window of time, fugitives were slowly beginning to find ways to be more successful at escape. More and more, enslaved people were leaving plantations for months and years, rather than days or weeks, at a time. There was a steady increase in durations between the years 1783 and 1786, with 416 and 572-week escapes respectively appearing. The longest recorded length of escape, 780 weeks or 15 years, was advertised in the year 1789, the same year that saw the largest group escape of 22 runaways. This supports the finding that inter-race/ethnic group escapes contributed to a slightly above average duration of escape (Table 3.16). The histogram displayed below in Figure 3.7 shows a gradual increase in escape lengths, proving an escalation of grand mawonaj leading up to the Haitian Revolution.

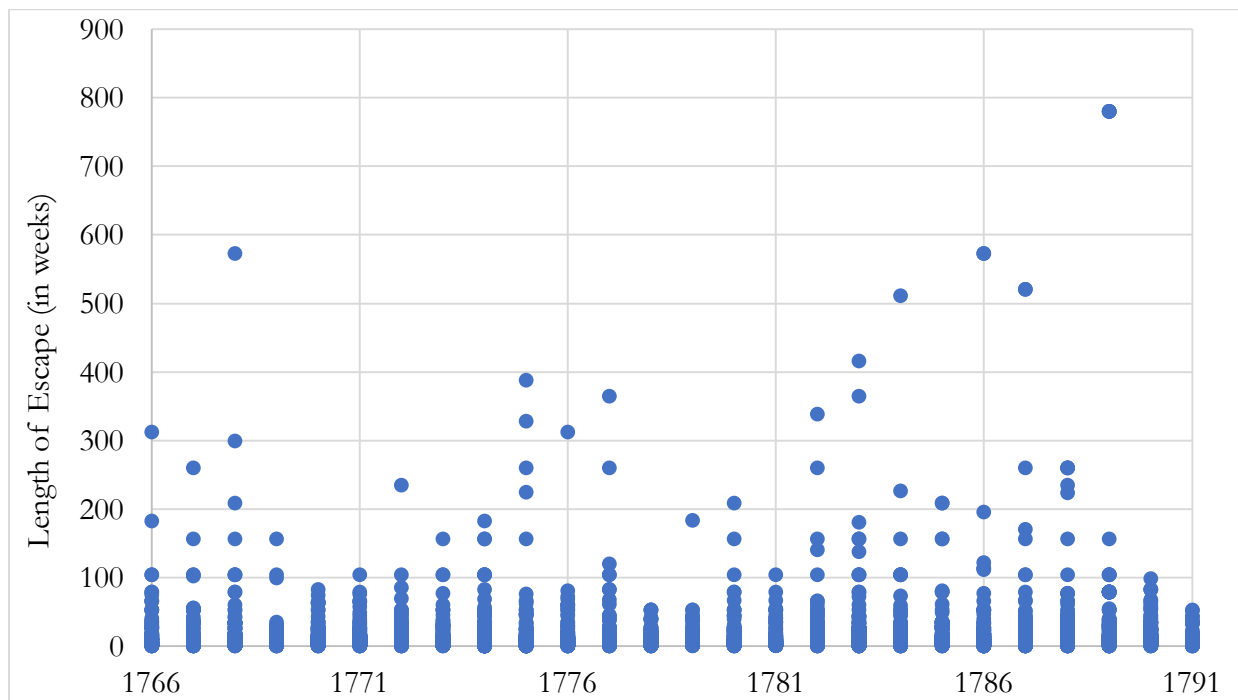


Figure 3.7: Length of Escape (in weeks) over Time

Locations

Geographic data can be gleaned from the advertisements because of the newspapers' publication location and general reach, providing insights about how many advertisements were placed or distributed in the major urban centers, Cap Français, Port-au-Prince, and Saint Marc; the location where the planter was based; and the suspected location of the runaways. Since *Les Affiches* started in Le Cap, and the northern parishes were more densely populated, most of the ads were from the city resulting in 6,874 runaways being reported there (Table 3.19). Planters often had to travel from rural areas to reach the major towns to take out the ads. Therefore, the plantation location can be inferred from the name of the plantation owner, lawyer, or manager. Some ads were missing critical information about locations, there is only data for 11,853 for the newspaper publication locations. Plantation locations were known for 10,107 runaways. The highest number of parishes represented as plantations of origins were urban centers like Cap Français, Port-au-Prince, and Saint Marc. Other places that experienced high numbers of mawonaj were Gonaïves, Artibonite, Léogane, Jérémie, Arcahaye, and Dondon.

Runaways' suspected location were only known for 1,191 cases, but of these the northern parishes seem to be the most common runaway destinations. Besides those who went to higher populated towns to pass for free, several runaways had been last seen in Trou, Fort Dauphin, and Limbé. A section of Trou called Ecrevisses was a popular location, and was the place where Thélémaque Canga pillaged plantations. In the west, Artibonite, Léogane, and Cul-de-Sac attracted the most runaways. The southern parishes that most mawons fled from were Jérémie, Les Cayes, and Anse-a-Veau. Though these southern districts did not report as many runaways' suspected destinations as northern parishes, this does not mean there were no mawon hideouts in those areas. Since the southern parishes were less populated than the north, it could be that mawons in these regions lived amongst themselves in relative peace. As discussed above, two *Les Affiches*

advertisements mention collectivities of mawons in Jérémie and Baynet. Other primary sources, which will be explored in the next chapter, speculate attest to mawon presence in the mountains south of Jérémie, Port-Salut, Jacmel, and Cayes de Jacmel.

Table 3.19: Frequency of Runaways' Locations

Newspaper publication location		Planter Location	Runaways' Suspected Location
North (Cap Français) – 6,874 runaways	Ouanaminthe	70 (.69%)	22 (1.85%)
	Fort Dauphin	274 (2.71%)	52 (4.37%)
	Terrier Rouge	95 (.94%)	36 (3.02%)
	Trou	191 (1.89%)	48 (4.03%)
	Valiere	30 (.30%)	2 (.17%)
	Limonade	227 (2.25%)	40 (3.36%)
	Quartier Morin	134 (1.33%)	22 (1.85%)
	Grande Riviere	278 (2.75%)	40 (3.36%)
	Dondon	348 (3.44%)	30 (2.52%)
	Marmelade	127 (1.26%)	11 (.92%)
	Petite Anse	187 (1.85%)	22 (1.85%)
	Cap Français	1,287 (12.73%)	122 (10.24%)
	Plaine du Nord	58 (.57%)	27 (2.27%)
	Acul	158 (1.56%)	25 (2.1%)
	Limbé	263 (2.6%)	48 (4.03%)
	Port Margot	158 (1.56%)	31 (2.6%)
	Borgne	263 (2.6%)	24 (2.02%)
	Plaisance	270 (2.67%)	25 (2.1%)
	St. Louis du Nord	118 (1.17%)	9 (.76%)
	Port-de-Paix	210 (2.08%)	24 (2.02%)
	Gros Morne	104 (1.03%)	32 (2.69%)
	Jean Rabel	102 (1.1%)	8 (.67%)
	Mole St. Nicolas	84 (.83%)	7 (.59%)
	Morne Rouge	108 (1.07%)	23 (1.93%)
West (Saint Marc) – 577 runaways	Saint Marc	500 (4.95%)	30 (2.52%)
	Gonaïves	384 (3.8%)	29 (2.43%)
	Artibonite	305 (3.02%)	59 (4.95%)

Table 3.19 (cont'd)

West-South (Port-au-Prince) – 4,402 runaways	Bombarde	2 (.02%)	0
	Port-a-Piment	15 (.15%)	4 (.34%)
	Ile de la Tortue	6 (.06%)	0
	Petite Riviere	15 (.15%)	2 (.17%)
	Verettes	28 (.28%)	4 (.34%)
	Mirebalais	169 (1.67%)	16 (1.34%)
	Arcahay	346 (3.42%)	16 (1.34%)
	Croix-des-Bouquets	219 (2.17%)	27 (2.27%)
	Port-au-Prince	647 (6.4%)	45 (3.78%)
	Léogane	427 (4.22%)	47 (3.95%)
	Grand Goâve	73 (.72%)	7 (.59%)
	Baynet	27 (.27%)	0
	Jacmel	161 (1.59%)	15 (1.26%)
	Cayes de Jacmel	19 (.9%)	1 (.08%)
	Cul-de-Sac	212 (2.12%)	43 (3.61%)
	Isle Gonave	5 (.05%)	6 (.5%)
	Petit Goâve	133 (1.32%)	25 (2.1%)
	Fond des Negres	73 (.72%)	6 (.5%)
	Anse a Veau	217 (2.15%)	8 (.67%)
	Petit Trou	74 (.73%)	4 (.34%)
	Jérémie	341 (3.37%)	13 (1.09%)
	Cap Dame Marie	37 (.37%)	1 (.08%)
	Cap Tiburon	26 (.26%)	2 (.17%)
	Coteaux	27 (.27%)	2 (.17%)
	Port Salut	56 (.55%)	0
	Torbeck	7 (.07%)	1 (.08%)
	Cayes	237 (2.34%)	11 (.92%)
	Cavaillon	61 (.60%)	6 (.5%)
	St. Louis du Sud	21 (.21%)	1 (.08%)
	Aquin	89 (.88%)	14 (1.18%)
	Santo Domingo	24 (.24%)	16 (1.34%)
Total observations		10,107	1,191

Locations over Time

It was not feasible to do a temporal analysis of covariance testing to examine the changes of specific locations, which would have allowed me to track the parishes that experienced the most mawonaj and when. Therefore, I used a multinomial logistic regression for the city where the ads were posted and found a p-value less than 0.001. Cap Français was the base outcome because it was the colony's oldest and most populace urban center. Comparing Le Cap to Saint Marc and Port-au-

Prince, there was a 5% yearly increase of ads placed at Saint Marc, which may be due to the proliferation of news media and urbanization of the town.³⁹⁰ There was a 2% yearly increase of ads placed in Port-au-Prince, which also can be explained by increased urbanization. We can also assume that increased urbanization in these areas was a direct result of the expansion of plantation economies, bringing new enslaved people with them. As new plantation communities emerged, the enslaved Africans and African descendants brought to those plantations responded to their new situation by taking flight. Moreover, free people of color tended to have a significant presence in urbanized areas, inadvertently creating spaces where enslaved people could blend in and pass for free.

³⁹⁰ Geggus 1991b: 91-92



Figure 3.8: Runaways' location of origin (blue) and suspected hiding location (red) – *proportionate to the frequencies reported in Table 3.19*. “Carte de l’Isle St. Domingue,” Moreau de Saint Mery, 1796. Retrieved from the Library of Congress.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

Several of the hypotheses put forward were proven correct with quantitative analysis, and have important implications for the way we understand the relationship between identity, solidarity, and micromobilization networks. Group escapes were one way runaways exhibited or cultivated relationships and trust – people decided to escape with familiars from slave ships, living quarters, or work gangs, someone willing to take a life-threatening risk, and was in proximity. Over time, group escapes did become more frequent, although not as frequent as individual escapes; and the average group size slightly increased each year. Generally, it was easiest to build ties for mawonaj with members of the same ethnic, religious, linguistic, or regional background. This explains why intra-race/ethnic remained a prevalent form of group escape overall. These racially/ethnically cohesive mobilization network patterns mirrored those that appeared among rebel bands during the early years of the Haitian Revolution that were organized by nation, such as the Nago, Gold Coast, the Moco (Ibo), and the Kongolese fighters led by Macaya.³⁹¹

However, by recruiting and mobilizing people of a different racial or ethnic background, runaways exhibited the growing importance of racial solidarity. Inter-race/ethnic group mawonaj increased slowly after 1784, and though the rate was still less than intra-race/ethnic group escapes, it was closely associated with longer lengths of escape. Moreover, longer lengths of escape were reported before the revolution. Therefore, inter-race/ethnic mawonaj has interesting implications for understanding the importance of ‘weak ties’ in successful mawonaj leading to the Haitian Revolution. Although previously existing relationships have long been acknowledged as important resources in building one’s social capital, scholars are beginning to see the value in transient, ‘weak’ relationships. While homogeneity in a personal network can help foster confidence, trustworthiness, and a sense of cohesion, heterogeneity exposes people to new knowledge, information, resources,

³⁹¹ Madiou 1847: 105; Thornton 2000: 203

and opportunities (Granovetter 1973; Burt 1992). It is established that social ties can lead to participation in mobilization (McAdam 1988), but heterogeneity in those collective action networks also contribute to shared affinity with a cause and the production of a singular identity over time (Melucci 1985; Melucci 1989; Taylor and Whittier 1992; Diani 1997). Diversity of skills and knowledge was greatly beneficial for a dangerous venture such as mawonaj, because a mistake or gap in timing, resources, or information could be life-threatening. Though it required a considerable amount of trust among participants, a diverse composition of mawonaj groups was a successful strategy for escape.

It is true that colony-born creoles were more likely to escape alone or in an intra-race/ethnic group, while Africans escaped in groups more often than did creoles. Also, overall creoles didn't have more social ties and destinations than Africans, except for plantation and kin-based connections. Women especially use their relationships to family, plantation-based connections, other runaways, and free people of color to facilitate escape. This sheds empirical light on previous speculations that women's mawonaj was shaped by their personal networks. Conversely, Africans were more likely to head to Santo Domingo, to other runaways, and used their labor skills to escape. While conventional wisdom has suggested that creoles were more 'successful' at mawonaj because of the social capital afforded by previously existing connections, this may not have been completely true because refuge in Santo Domingo and inter-ethnic group escapes were two of the most effective means of achieving longer lengths of self-liberation. Saint Dominguan creoles were more likely to pass for free, which was another effective way of staying free. Still, it seems that in mawonaj, building weaker ties through reaching out to people from other backgrounds and seeking unfamiliar lands to east had more pay off in durations of escape.

Micromobilization theory suggests that temporal stages of participation are important when considering who joins collective action efforts, why they join and when, and what their participation

qualitatively looks like (Ward 2015; Ward 2016). At times, it may not necessarily look like participation at all, particularly if the overall movement is in abeyance. However, awareness of and sympathies for a cause can contribute to action indirectly or directly given the right timing and circumstances, available resources, and linkages to people who are already involved. Runaways and slaves were not necessarily discrete categories of social actors, rather they represented different stages of human activity that may or may not have transformed into collective action. We've seen repeat absconders discussed above, and will see in the next chapter enslaved people who escaped, were re-captured or returned voluntarily, then escaped again only to bring along others or to become part of a wider uprising. The linkages created or exemplified by runaway groups, and their ongoing contact with plantations – via raids, hideouts, recruiting, or kidnapping – fostered oppositional consciousness that may not necessarily have manifest itself in an immediate sense, but unfolded over time. The next chapter will further engage micro-level and aggregate patterns of mawonaj within historical context to identify factors that contributed to or hindered escapes.

CHAPTER FOUR: REPERTOIRES AND REVOLUTION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss the tradition of mawonaj, and attempt to demonstrate through evaluating changes over time that there was collective oppositional consciousness that contributed to the Haitian Revolution. The previous chapter analyzed runaway slave advertisements to illustrate micro-level patterns of behavior associated with escape. Here, those significant findings will be contextualized within the *longue-durée* of mawonaj and rebellion in Saint Domingue based on review of archival documents and secondary sources. I treat rebellion and aggression from mawon bands similarly, since runaways often were in contact and collaboration with plantation slaves. Even those runaway submerged networks that were not in contact with slaves were well-known in the local parishes and gained notoriety in the colony.

Resistance to enslavement and the slave trade was a consistent reality since the first Africans were brought to the island Española, yet it also had roots on the continent in resistance to the EuroAmerican slave trade. From the Upper Guinea region to Angola, captive Africans being funneled from the hinterlands to the coasts – as well as those who were bonded by domestic forms of enslavement – escaped their owners, staged revolts and raids, and formed self-protective communities in geographically isolated zones (Rathbone 1986; Rasid 2000; Diouf 2003; Ferreira 2014). These are also not to mention the slave ship revolts that occurred regularly, and with intensity after 1750 when the French trade intensified (Richard 2001). The survivors of African revolts, as well as civil wars and inter-state conflicts – were likely sold into slavery in the Americas, where mawon community formations and open rebellion may have been an extension of the defensive and offensive strategies that were employed on the African continent to resist the Euro-American slave trade.

While we can only speculate that awareness of how and when to escape and/or rebel in the colony was influenced by patterns of African resistance to the slave trade, it is a bit easier to point to antecedent events that encouraged the development of shared consciousness within Saint Domingue's local context. Part of this context included sites of conflicts between colonists and mawon bands, public executions of rebels, and known locations for runaways to escape. Saint Domingue was not only mountainous, lending to geographic isolated areas, but also contained several deep cave sites where runaways could hide. These caves were locations for Taíno ritual practice, and likely also served as protective zones for runaways in transit toward a mawon community.³⁹² Some of these sites included what is now called the Voûte à Minguet of Dondon and Bassin Zim in Hinche, Central Plateau; the Bohoc/Colladère at Pignon and St. Francique at St. Michel de l'Attalaye, both in the Central Plateau; Dubedou near Gonaïves in Artibonite; the caves of Tortuga Island; Grotte Dufour in Marmelade; the Morne Deux-Têtes Meillac at Limbé; caves at Camp-Perrin; the Moreau Cave at Port-Salut; the Grotte aux Indes at Pestel; the Grande Grotte at Port à Piment; and the Grotte nan Baryè in Grande Anse.³⁹³

In Saint Domingue, repression came in the form of an expanding militarized force called the *marechaussée*, dedicated to hunting runaways. When escapees founded or joined established communities, those leaders often were publically executed. The French were particularly creative in their methods of torture; while the popularity of public execution was declining in mainland France (Foucault 1977), in the colonies it served not only to punish overt resistance but as a symbolic deterrent to keep others from absconding and disrupting labor productivity. These spectacles may also have played a role in giving mawon band leaders notoriety within the slave communities, elevating them to local heroes whose deaths were not only mourned but would have been revered

³⁹²St. Mery 1797 (Vol. 1): 200; Fouchard 1972: 316; Beauvoir-Dominique 2009: 84

³⁹³ Beauvoir-Dominique 2009: 80-81

based on Africa-inspired cosmologies. Over time, more connections developed between runaways and plantation slaves, and small-scale uprisings occurred increasingly before the Haitian Revolution began.

THEORY & LITERATURE: MAWONAJ, AN ATLANTIC WORLD REPERTOIRE OF CONTENTION

The reigning conceptualization of a ‘social movement’ located the origins of this specific type of political activity within the rise of industrialization and struggles for democracy, particularly in England and the United States (Tilly 2004: 3). This definition created a gap in theorizing and research on varying forms of collective actions, such as the numerous insurgencies against enslavement in North America, South America, and the Caribbean (Calhoun 1995; Clemens and Hughes 2002; Gould 2005; Peterson 2013). Scholars have begun to acknowledge the limitations of the social movement definition because of its temporal (Gould 2005) and geographical (Martin 2005) parameters. In response, theorists (Tilly, Tarrow, and McAdam 1996; Tilly, Tarrow, and McAdam 2001) have advanced *contentious politics* as a conceptual umbrella for understanding the commonalities between various forms and stages of political activity including riots, rebellions, social movements and revolutions (Tarrow 2012). With such clarifications, the notion of contentious politics widens social movement theory, and provides a basis to investigate non-contemporary and non-Western processes, as well as those that eventually lead to revolution.

The understanding that forms of contentious politics are not necessarily discrete phenomena allows for framing the origins of collective action types to include repertoires, a collection of distinctive tactics that become culturally grounded, routine actions that were born from struggle, and are temporally convenient – learned, adapted, and performed at participants’ choosing (Tilly 1995; Traugott 1995; Taylor and Van Dyke 2004; Tilly 2006; della Porta 2013). Repertoire theorists assume that structural conditions influence the types of social actions people are capable of undertaking (Tarrow 2004); in turn, historically constituted forms of consciousness allow individuals to make

sense of their circumstances and develop the tactics that initiate historical transformations (Swidler 1986; Fantasia 1988; Hall 1990; Kane 2000). Repertoires, and the combinations of tactics of which they are comprised, are historically specific and bounded by time and space (Tilly 1995; della Porta 2013; Ring-Ramirez, Reynolds-Stenson and Earl 2014).

Institutional repression efforts or reactions from antagonists constrain the number of available repertoires, which then must be newly innovated over time until they prove to be ineffective. Repertoires, or mobilization more broadly, are particularly efficacious when regimes experience periods of economic or political crisis (Skocpol 1979; Goldstone 1991; Tilly 2006). In addition to these macro-level trends, micro-level contentious actions and shared consciousness lend themselves to forming effective repertoires through identity-work social ties, and organizational forms that constitute everyday life from which collective claims emerge (Tilly 2006: 42). Tactics within a repertoire can evolve over time and be invented and re-invented, adopted, and repeated if they are deemed feasible, legitimate, and effective for its participants (Biggs 2013). Established repertoires are taught to subsequent generations of actors, who then adapt them to changing conditions. This assumes that people have awareness of their circumstances, and, within those contexts, are knowledgeable of which disruptive performances effectively contest power structures.

I situate this research within Africans' and creole African descendants' collective consciousness and its influence on *grand mawonaj*, an aspect of the pre-Haitian Revolution repertoire of contention. Saint Domingue was an economically booming colony with a rapidly changing population landscape. The increases of newly imported Africans had a direct effect on patterns of resistance. These captives learned resistance strategies from their homeland contexts and through contact with new Africans and African descendants in Saint Domingue who were more familiar with the colony's landscape and history. Awareness of resistance was facilitated further by the internal trade of captured runaways who encountered new plantation communities. We can also speculate that

‘successful’ runaways served as linkages between mawon settlements and plantations, creating a web of individuals and communities geared toward self-liberation. Comparative histories provide theoretical insights about mawonaj as a form of resistance and the ways in which self-liberated people’s fashioned themselves according to their local contexts.

Mawonaj was regular practice in the Americas, and had often had strong potential for facilitating rebellion. Self-liberated zones were organized settlements where runaway African descendants’ interactions and relationships could produce distinct cultural and religious expressions, as well as collective intentionality toward freedom. Well-known runaway communities existed and thrived during the 17th and 18th centuries, particularly the *Palmares* kingdom in Brazil, the maroons in Suriname and Jamaica, and the *palenques* in Cuba and Colombia. These communities were highly populated and organized, and presented constant military challenge to colonial authorities. In some instances, such as in Jamaica, self-liberated communities were such a formidable force that they commanded and negotiated treaties with respective colonial governments (Price [1973] 1996; Genovese 1979; Heuman 1986; Thompson 2006). In the western region of Saint Domingue, a self-liberated group known as The *Maniel* also established a peace treaty with the French in 1786 (Debien [1973] 1996; St. Mery [1798b] 1996). Knowledge of Caribbean and South American maroon communities and rebellions also would have spread to Saint Domingue through local trading, sailors, and the press, perhaps influencing and validating mawonaj as an appropriate resistance tactic.

DATA AND METHODS

This paper primarily relies on archival sources, including materials from the Archives Nationales d’Outre Mer (ANOM), particularly the Moreau de St. Mery Collection (F3). The F94 file contained several letters and memoires on mawonaj in Saint Domingue, offering suggestions for how to eradicate runaway bands and requesting additional forces be sent to areas they occupied. The C9A collection holds documents related to the self-liberated communities in the Baoruco mountains, and

the treaty of the Neybe mawons with the French and Spanish governments. Series A has materials on mawonaj in the early 18th century, and Series E contained at least two letters from naval administration about runaways. Printed primary sources by lawyer M. L. E. Moreau de Saint Mery were exceptionally important, especially the *Description Topographique, Physique, Civile, Politique et Historique de la Partie Française de l'Isle Saint Domingue* (1797a), its updated version (1797b) re-printed in 1958, and *A Topographical and Political Description of the Spanish Part of Saint-Domingo* (1798c). His six-volume set *Loix et Constitutions* (1784) is a collection of court rulings, laws, and regulations in the colony dating to the 17th century, and was an important resource for uncovering prosecutions against runaways and contextualizing the long-term mawonaj tradition. Unpublished portions of *Loix et Constitutions* reside at the Bibliothèque Haïtienne des Pères du Saint-Esprit in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, which extend the previous volume past the year 1786.

Data also came from other collections like the Jérémie Papers at the University of Florida (UF) at Gainesville and the Tousard Papers at the University of Michigan. The UF Gainesville digital Caribbean collection houses most if not each full issue of the newspaper *Les Affiches Americaines*, which at times announced the public executions of mawons and other rebel leaders. The runaway advertisements from *Les Affiches* are digitally archived in the *Marronnage in Saint Domingue* database as a reference source in attempt to identify and locate individuals described in other primary source data, their respective plantation owner, and who they may have been associated with in their escape. Though the ads and other sources are not fully complete in their descriptions of runaway's biographical information, it is possible to piecemeal together data that may help pinpoint individuals and flesh out their stories. Another digital archive of primary sources that has recently emerged is the CUNY Dominican Studies Institute website, *First Blacks in the Americas: The African Presence in the Dominican Republic*. This site includes early sources on the first Africans brought to Española and their rebellions against the Spanish during the 16th century. These early revolts and mass escapes into

the Baoruco mountains and the island's then-abandoned western region would serve as foundation, symbolically and literally, for future resistance in Saint Domingue.

The primary and secondary source data helps create a narrative about how and why patterns of mawonaj varied across time and space, and I integrate significant findings from quantitative analysis of the *Les Affiches* advertisements discussed in Chapter Three. I contextualize these micro-level mawonaj patterns, and armed rebellion more generally, within Saint Domingue's economic, political, environmental, and social changes and events such as legal modifications and shifts in plantation production levels. I give attention to Atlantic world conflicts, especially between the French, Spanish, and English; figures from to the EuroAmerican slave trade that show the population growth of enslaved people due to the influx of newly imported Africans; local happenings especially increasing repression and domination of enslaved blacks, runaways, and free people of color; and environmental factors like natural disasters and geographic proximity to mountains, caves, and Santo Domingo. I also hypothesize that decisions to escape were guided by oppositional consciousness gained through approximation to ritual activities and ongoing resistance throughout the colony. I looked for possible changes in the pace and nature of escapes before and after these significant factors.

BACKGROUND: MAWONAJ AND OPEN REBELLION

Early Española, 16th Century

Enslaved Africans rebelled against their newly encountered circumstances from the onset of their arrival on the Caribbean island. As early as 1503, Governor of Española Nicolás de Ovando lamented to the Spanish crown that African runaways were consistently escaping.³⁹⁴ Some of these self-liberated Africans took up residence with members of the remaining Taíno population and

³⁹⁴ 1503, March 29. Zaragoza, Spain, Archivo General de Indias, INDIFERENTE,418 L.1,100R-102V

participated in the 1519 to 1534 war against the Spanish, led by the Cacique Enriquillo. The first uprising driven primarily by enslaved Africans in Española took place on Christmas Day of 1521. A group of twenty Wolofs from Diego Columbus' sugar mill recruited several other enslaved Africans and autochthonous individuals from a nearby plantation in attempt to seize the town of Azua then join Enriquillo.³⁹⁵ By the second day of their escape, the rebels had secured weapons, encountered and killed several Spaniards, and mobilized blacks and indigenous from a home near Ocoa. The insurgents intended to kill all the Christians at an Azua sugar mill and there reinforce their numbers. The early presence of Wolofs in the Americas was a result of Spanish controlled commercial trading through the *Damel* of Kajoor in the Senegambia region during the early 16th century.³⁹⁶ These Wolofs were part of region-wide warrior traditions, and possibly were Muslims who may have been carrying out a continuation of *jihad* against the Spanish Christians as vengeance for their bondage.³⁹⁷

It is suspected that after the 1521 revolt, repeated uprisings were concealed by colonial officials who did not wish to admit loss of control over the enslaved population and the countryside outside Santo Domingo. For example, a group of Wolof runaways had begun attacking various plantations on horseback; their riding skills impressed, or embarrassed, Spanish representatives in Española.³⁹⁸ However, recently uncovered archival sources indicate ongoing resistance in the early 16th century. King Charles V of Spain wrote a letter in December 1523 indicating escapes and uprisings continued after the 1521 revolt, suggesting colonists in Española arm themselves given the growing African population.³⁹⁹ In April 1528, the Crown had received notice that there were

“blacks that are runaways and of wicked life and wiles that are not domestic, nor do they work as they are obliged, and [they] induce the other blacks that are peace and working to leave and rebel and do other crimes and ills, from which it results that the

³⁹⁵ Fouchard 1972: 300-307; Guitar 2006: 41, 49; Daniels 2008: 44-45; Landers 2009: 35

³⁹⁶ Rudolph Ware lecture, October 11, 2015 at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

³⁹⁷ Landers 2015; Gomez 1998: 62-64; Gomez 2005: 16

³⁹⁸ Landers 2004: 5

³⁹⁹ 1521, December 27. Pamplona, Spain. Archivo General de Indias, PATRONATO, 20, N.2, R.2 – Imagen Núm.: 1/4

said blacks that are in the mines and other farms and businesses rebel and commit other crimes.”

He issued an order to the governor of Española to investigate the number of escaped Africans in the colony so that they would be returned and placed under surveillance.⁴⁰⁰ Some Africans were captured and jailed, awaiting their punishment and in February 1537, the Spanish crown attempted to expedite their executions.⁴⁰¹ The Spanish implemented new taxes to finance military expeditions but were largely unsuccessful. Well-known leaders Diego Guzman, Diego Ocampo, who negotiated his freedom along with some thirty others, Miguel Biafara, Juan Criollo, and Juan Canario descended from the Baoruco and consistently harassed the Spanish. These incursions prevented Spanish expansion into the countryside and kept settlements contained to Santo Domingo.⁴⁰² Further, in 1532, accounts showed a privileged slave one day killed his owner, then prompted others to begin a “killing spree” but the perpetrators were not punished.⁴⁰³

By the 1540s, there were seven thousand mawons in the eastern country- and mountainside, and population imbalances between the increasing number of enslaved Kongolese and plantation personnel left sugar plantations vulnerable to raids.⁴⁰⁴ In 1544, military squads were sent to fight two mawon groups roaming the island. Led by Española-born *ladinos*, rather than Africa-born *bossales*, one group was composed of 15 rebels, and the other 37. Most of these runaways were killed or captured then returned to their owners.⁴⁰⁵ An African uprising of 1547 targeted the town of Azua, where inhabitants were descendants and followers of Enriquillo, who after his war with the Spanish only negotiated freedom for himself and his immediate family members leaving the Africans out of

⁴⁰⁰ 1528, April 6. Madrid, La Espanola. Archivo General de Indias, PATRONATO, 295, No. 89

⁴⁰¹ 1537, February 3. Valladolid, Spain. Archivo General de Indias, SANTO_DOMINGO, 868, L.1, F.33R-34V

⁴⁰² Landers 2000; Landers 2002: 234; Thompson 2006: 304; Landers 2015

⁴⁰³ Guitar 2006: 53

⁴⁰⁴ Landers 2000; Matibag 2003: 32

⁴⁰⁵ 1545, April 24. Valladolid, Spain. PARES, Archivo General de Indias, SANTO_DOMINGO, 868, L.2-245 RECTO-IMAGEN NUM: 489/766

the agreement.⁴⁰⁶ Sebastian Lemba was a feared Kongolese mawon who was leader of the Baoruko encampments for nearly fifteen years. Spanish sources described him as a highly skilled blacksmith with extensive military knowledge, which he used to organize West Central African-styled raids⁴⁰⁷ on nearby plantations, dispersing his forces of 140 small groups to attack from varying directions. During one such incursion for food, clothing, salt, and women, he kidnapped a Kikongo-speaking blacksmith to aid with the production of weapons.⁴⁰⁸ The Spanish initiated convoys into the mountains, where they found many Taíno and Africans; Lemba was caught and executed in 1548. His head was propped on a wall of Santo Domingo – Porta de Lemba – as a warning to others. Years after the execution, residents of Santo Domingo remembered Lemba as a military leader, regarding him as “Captain Lemba” whose confrontations with colonial forces was a “war.”⁴⁰⁹ Other rebels who rose up met a similar fate to Sebastian Lemba – Fernando Monteros and later in Spring 1554 Juan Vaquero “the cowboy” were hung and quartered, and Monteros’ body parts displayed along the roads to Santo Domingo and in the city plaza.⁴¹⁰

French Arrival

By the late 16th to mid-17th century, Spanish presence in western Española was on the decline as they could no longer sufficiently defend themselves against the encroachment of the English and Dutch, but most specifically the French. A greater number of French descended on Tortuga, a small island off the northwestern coast, and there they began to trade with West Central African runaways who had made their way from the island’s Spanish side. These Kongo-Angolans were being brought to the island in part because of the 1580 union between the Spanish and the Portuguese, who for

⁴⁰⁶ Thompson 2006: 304

⁴⁰⁷ Thornton 1988b: 368

⁴⁰⁸ Landers 2002: 235; Guitar 2006: 39-41

⁴⁰⁹ 1553. Archivo General de Indias, Justicia, 76, fo. 1593v., Dominican Studies Institute Dominican Colonial Documents Collection

⁴¹⁰ Landers 2015

over a century already had trade relations and presence in the Kongolands. In the 1590s, the Spanish sent cavalries against the absconders in the north, where they captured several of the most “dangerous” Angolans: Louis Angola, who ran away with his pregnant Biafran wife, Antonin Angola, and Sebastian Angola. Subsequent expeditions were unsuccessful, and in the face of defeat the Spanish organized depopulation of the north to relocate south, essentially ceding the west to the French.⁴¹¹ As the French began importing Africans to the developing sugar enterprises in what was soon to become Saint Domingue, the captives posed as much of a threat to the French as they had been to the Spanish. Africans quickly took note of the contestations over the west-east border, and exploited it and French-Spanish tensions to their benefit.

The Baoruco mountains bordering Santo Domingo were the birthplace of the cacique Enriquillo,⁴¹² the stronghold of Sebastian Lemba and his followers, and continued to be the site of runaway settlements in the early 17th century. A “gang of warriors” comprised of over 30 Africans were captured in the Baoruco mountains, many of whom were Senegambians, signified by their names: Juan Faula, Juan Mandigo, Beatriz Mandinga, Maria Mandinga, and Francisco Mandinga, Anton Xolofo, and Ana Mandinga.⁴¹³ In 1662, a Spanish archbishop was sent to peacefully reduce the number of runaways in the Baoruco. There he found six hundred self-liberated families were encamped in four *palenques* along the southern coast. The archbishop attempted to compromise with them, however these mawons were self-sufficient and did not feel the need to negotiate surrender. They had corn and other crops, livestock, and the women searched for gold in the rivers. The men traded these goods in Santo Domingo – possibly with the various African ethnic Catholic brotherhoods – and made weaponry using the iron and steel they acquired.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹¹ Landers 2002: 235; Landers 2015

⁴¹² Fouchard 1972: 305

⁴¹³ Gomez 2005: 16

⁴¹⁴ Landers 2004: 5; Landers 2015

The Spanish established a town near Santo Domingo for the runways called San Lorenzo de los Negros de Minas. The mawons were self-governing and captains from each ethnic group – Minas, Aradas, Kongos, and Brans from the Gold Coast – held authoritative control over their respective group. Garcia Congo was the sergeant of the town militia, while his lieutenant was Mina and captain was of the Bran nation. The groups operated independently but came back together when necessary.⁴¹⁵ In the months leading up the Code Noir’s ratification in 1685, the governor of Saint Domingue sought specific directives to limit the number of enslaved Africans in the colony. Conversely, he also expressed concern about the numerous Africans, indigenous, and *mulatres* escaping to the Spanish territory. Nearly one hundred of the fugitives were captured by French military and returned to Saint Domingue. The governor alleged that not only had runaways learned the meaning of freedom during their escapes, but that 24 of them were responsible for the killing white colonists. These concerns would influence the writing of the Code Noir’s aim to maintain royal control of the colonies through regulation of “crimes” committed by the enslaved – especially mawonaj.⁴¹⁶

In the same year as San Lorenzo’s founding, a man named Padre Jean led an insurgency in the north aiming to kill all the white colonists between Port-de-Paix and Port Margot. Padre Jean killed his Spanish owner then headed toward Tortuga for refuge, perhaps since the small island had been the site of rebellion of white planters desiring independence from France.⁴¹⁷ From there he crossed over to Petit Saint Louis, where he recruited 25 enslaved Africans, some of whom had been kidnapped by the French from Spanish owners. As they travelled east a nearly reaching Port Margot, they mobilized others and killed any Frenchmen with whom they crossed paths with hopes of gaining a pardon from the Spanish. The insurgents were blocked at the Borgne parish, raiding

⁴¹⁵ Landers 2002: 235-236; Landers 2015

⁴¹⁶ Munford 1991 (Vol. 3): 902-903; Ghachem 2012: 55-60

⁴¹⁷ Ghachem 2012: 33

plantations for additional arms and supplies. The insurgents were eventually sought out by boucaneers commissioned by the governor then retreated to the mountains near Port-de-Paix, then eventually were found by French settlers' defensive units who were initially reluctant to engage. Padre Jean and six associates were killed, but many others fought their way back into the Spanish territory where they were received with impunity.⁴¹⁸ Other runaways from the French plantations in the west began running east to claim religious asylum.

During the 1690s, the Spanish and French began what would become a near century-long conflict over control of Española's western lands – a local scene of the larger Nine Year's War wherein the French fought against Spain, England, and parts of the Holy Roman Empire.⁴¹⁹ The French attacked Santiago in 1690; and the next year the Spanish retaliated by pillaging what would become Cap-Français and reinstated it into their territory. Between 1691 and 1695, Spanish and English forces penetrated as far west as Port-de-Paix, burning towns and capturing enslaved Africans and taking them to the Spanish town for free blacks, San Lorenzo de los Negres de Minas.⁴²⁰ Bondspeople owned by the French took advantage of the conflict and began to rebel. In 1691 around Léogane, 200 bondsmen were implicated in a conspiracy to kill their owners and take over plantations. Two of the men involved were broken alive and three others had their legs cut off.⁴²¹

November of 1691 saw another conspiracy in Port-de-Paix organized by Janot Marin and an 18-year old Senegambian named George Dollo "Pierrot," who planned to rally others to leave the colony and go to war against their owners. With Marin at the head of seven, their plan was to

⁴¹⁸ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 2): 666; Fouchard 1972: 307-308; Manigat 1977: 432-433; Munford 1991 (Vol. 3): 900-902; Cauna 1996: 327-328; Daniels 2008: 46-48

⁴¹⁹ Pritchard 2004: ch. 7

⁴²⁰ St. Mery 1798c (Part 1): vi, 161

⁴²¹ Fouchard 1972: 307; Manigat 1977: 432-433; Fouchard 1988: 34; Cauna 1996: 327-328; Daniels 2008: 46-48; "de l'introduction des negres à Saint Domingue de leurs révoltes, de leur traitement, etc. 1501/1718" ANOM F3 94: 1-8

assemble in Limonade and head to the Spanish territory. Once they left, the remaining slaves at Port-de-Paix would kill all the white men, women, and children of the parish and the rebels would be granted power over the district by the Spanish. Marin and Pierrot were assisted by a young white indentured servant, who later revealed the plot, and a bi-lingual mulatre from the Spanish territory. The “mulatre Espagnol,” named Espion, was a spy who had been in communication with Marin and Pierrot for three months. Espion instructed the men to try to take over Port-de-Paix by convincing the blacks to leave, and once the masses agreed, Marin and Pierrot would send a black lieutenant named Congre to Gonave so the Spanish could receive the news then descend on Cap Français. Upon arrival, the Spanish would relinquish control over Port-de-Paix to the black rebels. However, once the French learned of the impending Spanish attack, military aid was sent to galvanize troops from the northern districts who were then informed of the revolt of blacks who wished to join the Spanish. Although it was nearly a successful attempt to exploit the Nine Year’s War fighting between French and Spanish forces, the plot failed, resulting in Marin and Pierrot being sentenced by a military tribunal then burned alive.⁴²²

Others were more successful at using Spanish aggression to their benefit and escaped to form a small town near the capital Santo Domingo. Over 100 escaped in 1692, and twenty years later approximately 500 former enslaved Saint Domingans were still living in the Spanish lands. Another mawon camp formed within territories under French control, this time in the mountains outside of Cap Français. These encampments attracted entire family units and committed incursions until 1704.⁴²³ In May 1697, 300 enslaved people in Quartier Morin and Petite Anse organized an insurrection but were quickly disassembled,⁴²⁴ though it is not clear if this was another attempt by the Spanish to undermine French control of enslaved Africans to gain the upper hand in combat.

⁴²² St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 1): 500-502; Vaissière 1909: 232; Munford 1991 (Vol. 3): 903

⁴²³ Munford 1991 (Vol. 3): 944-945

⁴²⁴ Fouchard 1972: 309; Heintz Jr. and Heintz 1978: 27; Munford 1991 (Vol. 2): 904

Still, the Treaty of Ryswick was ratified in November 1697 ending the Nine Year's War – but it would not be the last time enslaved people's uprisings and escapes were timed to take advantage of the ongoing French-Spanish conflict that created vacuums of power in Española's northeastern regions. Despite the Treaty establishing the west as French territory, Spanish incursions to the east would continue as late as the 1770s until a formal agreement in December 1777 established the final geographic boundaries between the two European colonies.⁴²⁵ In looking at mawonaj over the *longue durée*, it is important to consider international contestations in the 18th century that impacted Saint Domingue's economy, including the Nine Years' (1688-1697), Spanish Succession (1701-1713), and Seven Years' (1756-1763) Wars, as well as the Usonian War of Independence (1775-1783).⁴²⁶

The Early 18th Century

Though research on Saint Domingue during the first half of the 18th century is somewhat negligible, French presence in western Española was solidified by the turn of the 18th century and sugar and indigo production began to take off. The steady output stimulated a growth in the enslaved population. In the century's first decade and a half, just over 10,000 African captives were imported to Saint Domingue. By 1716, the yearly number of Africans arriving was over 14,000, which increased over two-fold between 1736 and 1745. The largest proportion of captives were brought from the Bight of Benin, accounting for 68,551 individuals between 1700 and 1750. West Central Africans were the second most common group trafficked by the French. Captives from this broad region totaled 43,931 for the first half of the century. Senegambians were another numerous group, tallying 22,547 of those brought to Saint Domingue; and 16,693 Gold Coast Africans were counted in the first half of the century (Table 1.0).

⁴²⁵ St. Mery 1798c (Part 1): xxvi-iii

⁴²⁶ Cheney 2013: 46

By May 1699, settlements in the south and the west formed what would become Maniel self-liberated community. Saint Domingue governor Galiffet's troops went into the countryside surrounding Léogane and stumbled across 50 runaways, discovering their houses and crops. In June 1700, a letter was sent to Brach d'Elbos complaining that the number of runaways that resided in the mountains was still considerable despite efforts to hunt them.⁴²⁷ Then in August, other complaints from Petit Goâve stated runaways were escaping to the mountains in dyads and triads, then eventually groups. A planter in Nippes claimed to have lost ten slaves and only recaptured three; five out of seven slaves slipped away from a plantation manager named Castera; and an official named Bricot lamented that six to eight people fled from his property. For the next two years, Galiffet continued to pursue runaways in the Baoruco mountains, at Jacmel, and at Cayes de Jacmel with little success of extracting them from the caverns, caves, and tunnels.⁴²⁸ Later in 1703, four blacks ran away from a Galiffet plantation, prompting his report of their escape.⁴²⁹ In the west, Galiffet and a crew of 15 men pursued a runaway band, spending over two months in the woods and at times going days without water. On the expedition, Galiffet destroyed the mawons food and plantations, and killed three fugitives and captured eleven, while 30 others escaped.

Another plot was uncovered in 1704, during the War of Spanish Succession when M. de Charritte proclaimed that Africans near Le Cap were again planning to kill the local whites at the behest of Spanish agents.⁴³⁰ In 1705, there was a complaint that runaways gathered in the woods and selected leaders among themselves. While at large, they would rob travelers, find food at various plantations, and hide in the quarters of other enslaved people still on plantations.⁴³¹ A 1705

⁴²⁷ "Lettre du ministre au Sieur de Brach au sujet des negres marrons, 2 juin 1700" ANOM F3 94: 18; Munford 1991 (Vol. 3) 945

⁴²⁸ Munford 1991 (Vol. 3): 923, 945

⁴²⁹ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 382

⁴³⁰ Heintz Jr. and Heintz 1978: 27

⁴³¹ Hall 1968: 44; Fick 1990: 52

ordinance was passed that threatened to return to slavery any free person of color who helped or traded with fugitives.⁴³² Acknowledging that mawonaj rates tended to be excessive during wartime,⁴³³ the Council of Léogane issued a bounty for the government to pay 25 *piastres* for any person in Santo Domingo who could return and runaway, but this restitution was rarely paid. In February 1711, the king of France overruled the Council of Léogane, stating that each planter had individual responsibility to re-locate fugitives.⁴³⁴ Later in May, two runaways were killed, Houx and Moussac, and their owners were compensated six hundred livres each for their losses.⁴³⁵ Mass desertions were reported by M. Dubois, the colonel commandant of Cul-de-Sac, to which militias were organized in 1715 and 1717.⁴³⁶ In July 1715, Dubois sent a convoy to Santo Domingo to recapture runaways, but came up empty handed because the Spanish warned the escapees of his arrival.⁴³⁷ The 1717 dispatch discovered a settlement in a well that was 40 feet deep, presumably constructed by the fugitives to meet their needs for fresh water.⁴³⁸ That same year, a bounty was issued for a runaway from Port-de-Paix named Joseph, who was accused of stealing, attempting to form a rebel band, and conspiring to kill his owners.⁴³⁹

Runaways to the Spanish territory remained an issue, and attempts to control them was met with conflicting outcomes. The Spanish king gave an order in 1718 to return to the French all the blacks who had taken refuge in Santo Domingo.⁴⁴⁰ The French went into Azua, with the commandant of Azua was supposed to lead the charge. An expedition into the Baoruco in 1719 resulted in the

⁴³² St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 2): 25; Fouchard 1988: 34

⁴³³ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 2): 158; Munford 1991 (Vol. 3): 939

⁴³⁴ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 2): 228, 234; St. Mery 1798c (Part 2): 170-171

⁴³⁵ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 2): 253

⁴³⁶ “Lettre de Dubois au sujet des marrons a Saint Domingue, 18 mars 1715” ANOM F3 94: 29

⁴³⁷ St. Mery 1798c (Part 2): 172-173

⁴³⁸ St. Mery [1798a] 1985: 248

⁴³⁹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 2): 585

⁴⁴⁰ “de l’introduction des negres à Saint Domingue de leurs révoltes, de leur traitement, etc. 1501-1718” ANOM F3 94: 1

capture of a band leader and ritual healer name Michel, and other leaders in Maribaroux.⁴⁴¹ But in another case, runaways in Santo Domingo were rounded up for return to Saint Domingue in 1719, but local Spaniards opposed this ruling by force and instead took the captives to San Lorenzo. By the late 18th century, San Lorenzo held some 300 free black inhabitants, all descendants of either kidnapped or runaway African-Saint Domingueans.⁴⁴² Between 1721 and 1723, tensions between the Spanish king and his colonial officials were again exacerbated when the governor of Santo Domingo declared that he would no longer return French runaways to Saint Domingue. In somewhat of a ploy, he wrote to French administrators that he had captured 128 runaways and that the colonists could come and retrieve them. So, the French colonists sent a ship to the bay of Ocoa with two representatives. The two agents went to the Santo Domingo, but as the fugitives approached the boat, the Spaniards apparently changed their minds and gave arms to the Africans, who then declared they were free. The two agents only narrowly escaped but later attempted to charge the Spanish crown for the sunk costs.⁴⁴³

Small slave rebellions, as well as large-scale and loosely organized settlements of self-liberated women, men and children were a constant presence in Saint Domingue during the 1720s. Pere Jean Baptiste Labat estimated there were six to seven hundred heavily armed women and men living at the Montagne Noir southeast of Port-au-Prince.⁴⁴⁴ Of primary importance for the survival of these communities was access to food, clothing, work tools and weaponry, all of which were not easily obtained. Consequentially, armed self-liberated bands often would attack nearby towns or plantations to gather needed resources. These types of raids were consistently reported as ‘disturbances’ to which several iterations of colonial constabularies – usually comprised of free men

⁴⁴¹ St. Mery [1798b] 1996: 135; Sosis 1971: 169; Fouchard 1988: 34; Matibag 2003: 47

⁴⁴² St. Mery 1798c (Part 1): 161

⁴⁴³ St. Mery 1798c (Part 2): 173; Hall 1971: 65

⁴⁴⁴ Labat [1722] 1724 (Vol. 2): 266

of color – were galvanized by Chastenoye to respond. The marechaussée fugitive slave police force was formed in March 1721 to chase the near 1,000 who had assembled in the north and central regions, particularly Maribaroux in Ouanamithe and Cul-de-Sac respectively.⁴⁴⁵

Also in the north, twenty-one members of a revolt at Saint-Louis were imprisoned in September 1721, five of whom were charged especially with being armed. The others had taken arms with them to desert to Santo Domingo. Alexandre, César, Bozat, Jasmin, Francœur, Louis, Marion, and Thérèse were identified as the major conspirators of the rebellion. Alexandre and César, the primary leaders, were executed by strangulation, then their bodies were decapitated and mounted at the plantation of their owner as an example to others. Bozat, Jasmin, Francœur, Louis, Marion, and Thérèse were forced to watch Alexandre and César's execution, then reintegrated into the Saint Louis prison. On their first day, they were flogged then branded with hot iron in the shape of the *Fleur-de-Lys* to keep them from escaping again.⁴⁴⁶

Other mawon settlement leaders were targeted such as notable figures Colas Jambes Coupées, who was captured and executed in 1724 at Bois-de-Lance between Grande-Riviere and Limonade. For four to five years, Colas attacked whites throughout Bois de Lance and Morne à Mantègre in Limonade, a known runaway settlement.⁴⁴⁷ He was called 'chief of the Cabales,' or conspirators, by the courts of Le Cap,

“known for his marronages to the Spanish, seducing and carrying off other slaves; leader of an armed band, highway robber in broad daylight as well as at night ... attacking even whites; having several intelligences and secret correspondences to abolish the Colonies; instigator or accomplice in the gangs of Cézar, Jupiter, Louis, and Chéri, all of whom were punished with extreme torture and death; accused, furthermore, of sorcery and magic for having, a number of times, escaped from irons and prisons, and having poisoned several Negroes. And since all his crimes and his life are known all over the area, and by everyone in the most minute detail ...”

⁴⁴⁵ Debien [1973] 1996: 115

⁴⁴⁶ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 2): 781-782

⁴⁴⁷ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 200

From the above passage, it seems possible that Colas was in collaboration with the same C  zar and Louis who were part of the 1721 conspiracy and later escaped the Saint Louis prison. Colas' capture was not without resistance, as the newly formed free colored corps refused to pursue him.⁴⁴⁸ His group is another example of a submerged network with plans to overthrow the social order of enslavement using poison and serves as an interesting predecessor to Mackandal, who is often thought of as the first runaway leader who also was a ritualist.⁴⁴⁹

The state expanded further by order of the King, who in 1722 appointed Jean-Baptiste Duclos, Sorel and Montholon as lieutenants of Petit-Go  ve specifically to fight against mawonaj.⁴⁵⁰ September 1724, a runaway named Claude was imprisoned in L  ogane for repeated mawonaj.⁴⁵¹ Also in L  ogane, it was decided in March 1726 that the punishment for repeated mawonaj was having the ears cut off and being branded with the Fleur-de-Lys for the first offense.⁴⁵² On June 7th, 1726, another letter was written reporting mawons in Grand Go  ve causing enough disorder through killing and thievery the previous February to warrant a request for the marechauss  e to disperse them.⁴⁵³ While local authorities seemed to have the support of the royal government to the colony by appointing new chiefs to lead the charge against mawonaj, the crown at times seemed to undermine those efforts. On September 30th, 1726, the king cancelled a declaration of Petite-Go  ve's Conseil Sup  rieur from the previous May, which promised a reward of 300 livres for the heads of each runaways and the freedom of any enslaved person who held with chasing the fugitives.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁴⁸ Sosis 1970: 170

⁴⁴⁹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 48-49; Hall 1968: 46; Pluchon 1987: 152-153

⁴⁵⁰ "nomination, par Sorel et Montholon, de Duclos comme lieutenant de Colin, pr  v  t g  n  ral au quartier du Petite-Goave, afin de lutter contre le marronnage, 31 juillet 1722" ANOM A28: 105

⁴⁵¹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 111

⁴⁵² St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 162

⁴⁵³ "Lettre de la Rochalar au sujet des negres marrons, 7 juin 1726" ANOM F3 94: 56

⁴⁵⁴ "Arr  t annulant l'arr  t du conseil sup  rieur du Petite-Goave du 6 mai 1726 qui promettait une somme de 300 livres par t  te d'esclave fugitive ramen   ou la libert   aux noirs qui auraient particip  

Aggressions between the French and Spanish continued into the 1730s; in 1727, fifteen Spaniards destroyed two French settlements in Trou-de-Jean-de-Nantes, Ouanminthe and took with them some enslaved Africans.⁴⁵⁵ Later, some Africans stole a boat and went to Santo Domingo where they began intermarrying with the local population, and a colonial officer LaGrange was tasked with finding them and returning them to Saint Domingue.⁴⁵⁶ The next year, officers at Jacmel were sent into the Baoruco where they captured 46 runaways; then in 1730, 33 were caught and sentenced to the chain gang. This band was particularly mobile, using horses to raid plantations in Saint Domingue and toward the southern coasts. Along the way, they recruited other runaways by offering to give asylum to those who wanted to join.⁴⁵⁷ Plymouth, a runaway from an English colony, was the leader of a band of runaways from Nippes who destroyed plantations in the Grande Anse southern peninsula. Thirty of his followers were captured and several killed, including Plymouth himself by mulatto soldiers, in 1730. Of those in Plymouth's group who were arrested, it was revealed that all of them had been born in the forest. Afterward, the section of Grande Anse was named for Plymouth.⁴⁵⁸ The *marechaussée* were reestablished in January 1733 to respond to the runaway communities who lived in the mountains, especially in the south. Nippes had been a stronghold for *mawonaj* since a group of runaways fled there in 1681, because it was sparsely populated and surrounded by mountains and small patches of forest.⁴⁵⁹ In October 1733, there was another ruling to organize the fugitive police in the southern quarter of Nippes, where many

aux poursuites, 30 septembre 1726," COL A28: 131v; "Arrêt qui annule celui du conseil supérieur du Petit-Goave du 6 mai 1726, en ce qu'il met à prix les têtes de plusieurs negres fugitifs et contumaces, et qu'il accorde la liberté aux esclaves qui amèneraient morts ou vifs, 30 septembre 1726," ANOM A27: 34

⁴⁵⁵ St. Mery 1798c: xiii

⁴⁵⁶ La Grange, chargé du recouvrement des nègres marrons dans la partie espagnole de Saint-Domingue, par MM. de Sorel et de Montholan, 1730, ANOM E: 248

⁴⁵⁷ Debien 2000: 419

⁴⁵⁸ Sosis 1970: 171; Fouchard 1972: 312-313; Debien [1973] 1996: 110; Manigat 1977: 432-433; Cauna 1996: 327-328; Debien 2000: 419; Daniels 2008: 46-48

⁴⁵⁹ Laguerre 1989: 43; Munford 1991 (Vol. 3): 944

runaways had taken refuge and 32 were captured. This dispatch of *marechaussée* was composed of ten men under the leadership of Fayet and Duclos.⁴⁶⁰

Polydor was found in 1734 after his several incursions in the northern Trou district, which along with Fort Dauphin, was a vulnerable area due to their proximity to the Spanish border. He and another runaway named Joseph were leaders of a band that was mostly destroyed by five whites who were later compensated 1,000 livres.⁴⁶¹ Polydor's capture was a challenge, and was in part facilitated by enslaved man named Laurent dit Cezar who was rewarded with his freedom on June 28th, 1734.⁴⁶² The death toll (presumably of whites) and robbery of plantations that Polydor's group inflicted were remembered well after his capture by the naming of a savanna after him.⁴⁶³ Polydor and his considerable following were deemed such a menace to the colony that François Narp, a planter and militia captain of Le Cap who fought and captured Polydor, was celebrated as a hero and his children received an honor in his name some forty years after the revolt.⁴⁶⁴ Three years after Polydor, another leader named Chocolat emerged in Limonade. He was described as more skillful and bold than Polydor, plundering white planters' lands for twelve years.⁴⁶⁵ In February 1735, three more unnamed rebel leaders were captured and killed, and those responsible were reimbursed for their participation in the chase.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶⁰ "Ordonnance du Marquis de Fayet et de Jean Baptiste Duclos qui institue un lieutenant de prévôt de la *marechaussee* pour le seul quartier de Nippes, très étendu, où se réfugient de nombreux negres marrons, 25 octobre 1733" ANOM A28: 156; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 344, 379; St. Mery [1798a] 1985: 248; Debien [1973] 1996: 115

⁴⁶¹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 399

⁴⁶² "Laurent, nègre qui a contribué à la capture du fameux Polidar, nègre marron de Saint-Domingue, son affranchissement, 1734" ANOM E: Lettre L-261; St. Mery 1797 (Vol. 1): 175-176

⁴⁶³ St. Mery 1797a (Vol 1): 163, 183; Debien [1973] 1996: 110; Dubois 2004: 52

⁴⁶⁴ Lettres de déclaration de noblesse en faveur des enfants de François Narp, habitant du quartier du Cap, à Saint-Domingue, célèbre adversaire du negre Polidore et de son parti d'esclaves révoltés, 27 mai 1774; ANOM A14: 242

⁴⁶⁵ Milscent 1791: 4

⁴⁶⁶ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 418-419

In 1739, the *marechaussée* were re-organized and paid extra for any *mawon* they could capture in rural places compared to the runaways they caught in the cities. Table 4.0 shows the northern *marechaussée* pay scale by location. Frontier places like Dondon, Borgne, or Plaisance were riskier expeditions, thus *marechaussée* members were paid 48 livres for their work there. Those who were taken into extraordinary chases, or were incorporated into brigades with training in mountain chases, and could capture a runaway were paid 100 livres. This 100 livres bounty was later expanded geographically to include the island Tortuga, just north of the coast of Port-de-Paix.⁴⁶⁷ There was recognition that these *mawon* chases were more dangerous because they were strongholds of runaway communities, and thus were rewarded to scale. Institutionalization of the *marechaussée* as an external deterrent to escape was met with internal measures to lessen the violent domination of enslavement and hopefully prevent *mawonaj* altogether.

The *fleur de lys* branding on the face and sentencing to chain gangs were implemented as punishments against repeat runaways to replace the death penalty in March 1741. Recently arrived African runaways were punished less harshly than creoles, who received between thirty and fifty lashes.⁴⁶⁸ The new punishment regulations reflected the needs of a growing sugar economy that could make more use of captured runaways than those sentenced to death.⁴⁶⁹ Additionally, there was likely fear that Africans in Saint Domingue defected to the east, especially during periods of Spanish aggression, to escape the harsh death penalty. Spaniards took advantage of Saint Domingue's harsh policies by luring or kidnapping enslaved people from plantations during raids from the east. Spaniards attempted to drive away several planters from Bassin-Cayman, Dondon in 1741, and in 1747 they kidnapped five blacks and a plantation overseer from Marre-a-la-Roche, Dondon.⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁷ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 568-570, 673

⁴⁶⁸ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 660; Debien [1973] 1996: 114

⁴⁶⁹ Moitt 2004: 62

⁴⁷⁰ St. Mery 1798c: xviii

Nearby Dondon, in Port-Margot, there was a mawon chase in 1742 during which a man named Ancel was crippled then compensated 1,000 livres by the Council of Le Cap.⁴⁷¹

Table 4.0: Marechaussée Pay Scale by Location⁴⁷²

Jurisdiction	Parish	Marechaussée Pay
Cap Français jurisdiction	the city of Cap Français	6 livres
	in the Mornes and Balieue of Cap	12 livres
	Petite-Anse, Quartier Morin and Plaine du Nord	15 livres
	Limonade and Acul	18 livres
	Limbé, Grande-Riviere, the Sainte-Suzanne dependency of Limonade	21 livres
	Port-Margot and Dondon	30 livres
	Quartier Vazeux, dependence of Dondon	48 livres
Fort-Dauphin	in the city of Fort Dauphin	6 livres
	in the quartier Dauphin	12 livres
	Terrier-Rouge and Ouanaminthe	18 livres
	Trou	21 livres
	quartiers of Ouanaminthe, Trou de Jean-de-Nantes, Capotille and others	36 livres
Port-de-Paix	in the city of Port-de-Paix	6 livres
	quartier of Port-de-Paix	12 livres
	quartier of Saint-Louis near the point of Icaque and Bas de Saint-Anne	18 livres
	between the point of Icaque and Borgne	48 livres
	Jean-Rabel and Gros-Morne	30 livres
	Pilatte and Plaisance	48 livres

The demands of sugar production required a labor force that was living, rather than executed as mawons, and healthy enough to work long hours on little nourishment. Still, conditions for Saint Domingue's enslaved population and mawons continued to be distressed, and perhaps even worsened with the expansion of the coffee market. As coffee cultivation was introduced to the mountains surrounding the urban plains of Cap Français and Port-au-Prince and the marechaussée's reach continued to expand, living in mawonaj became a more difficult endeavor. The expansion of plantations in the areas surrounding the Cul-de-Sac plain ignited several conflicts between settlers and the runaways who had staked claim to those lands. The marechaussée provost attacked 22

⁴⁷¹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 685

⁴⁷² St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 568-571

mawons in 1740 at Mirebalais, killing seven and arresting fourteen – all of whom were born free. The fourteen who survived the attack stated that there were still 23 others who had escaped. They appeared later in 1742 at Anses-a-Pitre of Cayes de Jacmel and in 1746 in Jacmel; and twelve mawons were captured again in Jacmel in 1757.⁴⁷³ Morne Bleu, a hill located east of Cavaillon, contained several caves in which the mawon Pompey hid and was arrested in 1747. The cave also held evidence of an indigenous community noted by their ritual artifacts.⁴⁷⁴

Runaway communities may not have completely disappeared due to encroaching deforestation for coffee plantations, but became more creative in locating hiding spots. An account from a December 1761 expedition exemplifies the creativity used by mawons to protect their settlements, and simultaneously shows the nature of ongoing antagonisms between them and the *marechaussée*. When the *marechaussée* encountered the mawons during the search, they were probably perplexed and irritated when the fugitives began to dance as a means of taunting their enemies. When the *marechaussée* launched to attack however, many of them fell into a large ditch that had been dug and filled with pine wood stakes and liana plants. Fourteen of the *marechaussée* were left maimed after falling into the ditch; however, the mawons were not without casualties and many of them were also killed.⁴⁷⁵

Newly arrived Africans may have encountered these mawons, and remaining indigenous peoples, or heard stories of them from those who were more knowledgeable of the landscape and the history of mawon presence in the mountains. By the time François Mackandal was brought to Saint Domingue in the 1730s and lived as a fugitive for 18 years, he would have known about Colas Jambes Coupée, Polydor, Chocolat and other rebels in the north through word of mouth. Additionally, some locations bore the name of fugitive communities, such as Piton des Negres,

⁴⁷³ St. Mery [1798b] 1996: 136

⁴⁷⁴ Fouchard 1972: 316

⁴⁷⁵ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 847; St. Mery [1798b] 1996: 136

Piton des Flambeaux, Piton des Tenebres, Crete a Congo, Fond des Negres, and the area named after Polydor. Moreau Mery confirmed that there were free blacks living in Acul de Samedi in Vallière.⁴⁷⁶ Some of these harder to reach locations appear in the *Les Affiches* advertisements as runaway's locations of escape or their suspected destinations. Therefore, collective memory of mawon rebels was part of enslaved people's consciousness, and likely influenced their own desires for freedom.

1750-1791: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ENEMIES

The Spanish: Friend or Foe?

As previously discussed, geo-political contestations between the French and Spanish starting in mainland Europe spilled across the Atlantic to the island Española and caused conflicts between the colonists, as well as rifts and misunderstandings between the colonists and their respective crowns. Port-au-Prince was founded in 1749, and sugar production increasingly spread in its suburban areas.⁴⁷⁷ Economic development in the areas surround Cul-de-Sac pushed Saint Domingue's boundaries eastward, and mawons who had been in these frontier regions found themselves at the center of conflicts between French and Spanish authorities. As it was in the early 18th century, a major concern of Saint Domingue colonists was that enslaved Africans were continuing to take advantage of geographic proximity to the Spanish territory as a channel for escape. African-Saint Domingans had incentive to do so since the Spanish codes held several provisions that allowed for manumission from enslavement, and at times, the establishment of free black towns such as San Lorenzo de los Negros de Minas.

In October of 1751, the militia commander of Mirebalais was granted a substantial budget from colonial authorities to chase runaways into Santo Domingo. The commander, Bremond, had at his

⁴⁷⁶ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1) p. 154

⁴⁷⁷ Geggus 1991b

disposal 300 livres for every captured runaway, a high-ranking militia officer, and as many *marechaussée* archers as he could pay himself.⁴⁷⁸ According to Spanish officials, some 3,000 runaways from Saint Domingue escaped to Santo Domingo, or the Baoruco more specifically, in 1751 alone.⁴⁷⁹ A good number of these probably escaped after the earthquake on November 21st that almost completely destroyed Port-au-Prince.⁴⁸⁰ Spanish planters likely welcomed these refugees to provide additional labor due to the lack of plantation-based economic growth in the island's eastern regions. While Saint Domingue's enslaved population grew exponentially in the 18th century; Santo Domingo's maxed at 15,000 in 1789, a far cry from its neighbor to the west. Though there was growing industry toward the end of the century, Santo Domingo had mostly been a sparsely populated "backwater" colony.⁴⁸¹ Spanish colonists' desires for land and black workers also manifest as aggression over the border – they burned four plantations in Ravines-a-Mulâtres in Vallière in 1757 after warning the planters to abandon the settlements.⁴⁸²

State-sponsored repression of runaways was an easy way the French could respond to their losses to the Spanish, and to other internal issues. The aftermath of the François Mackandal trial resulted in an April 1758 ruling of the Council of Cap Français that not only targeted Africa-inspired ritual practice, but attempted to limit slaves' everyday movements to prevent *mawonaj*. The articles of the ruling banned enslaved people from carrying any offensive weapons except for when they participated in a *mawon* chase with the permission of their owners. They were also disallowed from walking on roads in the cities or parish towns with iron sticks, and needed their owner's written permission to ride horses or mules. Neither could free people of color carry swords, machetes, or sabers unless they were members of the military or *marechaussée*; and they risked losing their

⁴⁷⁸ St. Mery 1798c (Part 2): 174

⁴⁷⁹ Fouchard 1972: 316; Fouchard 1988: 34; Matibag 2003: 54

⁴⁸⁰ McClellan III 1992: 27

⁴⁸¹ Nessler 2016: 12-13

⁴⁸² St. Mery 1798c: xix

freedom for harboring runaways.⁴⁸³ There were no known ties between Mackandal and the Spanish, therefore the ruling did not include provisions regarding punishment for runaways heading to Santo Domingo. In any case, the 1758 decision did not hamper enslaved people from enacting their agency.

While island-dwelling Spanish colonists irritated relations with their French neighbors, during the 1760s the Spanish crown offered collaborative support regarding Saint Domingue's problem of runaways. A letter from the king of Spain on October 18th, 1760 revealed that the primary cause for mawonaj was the harsh treatment enacted by French planters, who had not held up their end of the bargain to stop punishing deserters.⁴⁸⁴ Perhaps in response to these suggestions, the king of France gave colonial planters permission to commute death sentences for fugitives in September of 1763, offering a cheek branding or perpetual chaining as alternative methods of punishment.⁴⁸⁵ While the king suggested that these lesser punishments would "conserve" the enslaved work force, Africans may also have perceived these changes as incentive to escape without fear of the deadly consequences legitimated by the Code Noir.

In addition to taking heed to the king of Spain's advice, French colonists took further initiative to stymie runaways through newly developing print media technologies. The Intendant of Le Cap decided on February 8th, 1764 that *La Gazette de Saint Domingue* would begin including lists of runaways who were captured in each parish jail. These lists would include the name, nation, brand, and age of each runaway, and their respective owners to be subsequently contacted.⁴⁸⁶ The lists of runaways captured and jailed also provide some insight to the number of people en mawonaj and their destinations. A sample of Saint Domingue's two newspapers, *La Gazette* and *Avis divers et*

⁴⁸³ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 226-228

⁴⁸⁴ St. Mery 1798c (Part 2): 175

⁴⁸⁵ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 619

⁴⁸⁶ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 706

Affiches Americaines, shows 371 runaways from February to August 1764. Two hundred and five were found in the jail of Le Cap, and 91 came from Fort Dauphin because of its proximity to the Spanish border. Other common destinations were the area surrounding Saint Marc, particularly the frontier behind the mountains, and Port-au-Prince.⁴⁸⁷ If jailed runaways were not claimed by owners who could show evidence of ownership, the mawons were then sentence to work on public chain gangs in either Le Cap, Port-au-Prince, or Cayes de Saint Louis. This created a free source of labor for the state to complete public works projects and the galleys, and to earn extra revenue by fining negligent owners. Owners who did come to reclaim runaways then had to repay the jail for providing a month's worth of food. After the month if a fugitive was still unclaimed, they would be re-sold as "damaged" in the town centers.⁴⁸⁸

Saint Domingue's earnest attempts to regulate its runaway problem was again undermined by the Spanish – who probably no longer had reason to play niceties with the French since the end of the Seven Year's War. On May 22nd, 1764, the governor of the Spanish territory Don Manuel d'Azlor proposed to the Saint Dominguan planters a plan to build free settlements that would house runaways escaping Saint Domingue.⁴⁸⁹ The Spanish attitude toward re-settling fugitives may have incentivized more runaways from Saint Domingue, resulting in another chase for fugitives into the Spanish territory on August 21st, 1764.⁴⁹⁰ In February 1765, Comte d'Estaing declared a state of alert, mandating that all colonists were required to be armed at all times with guns, bayonets, gun powder, sabers, and machetes or swords. Further, he ordered that fugitive-chasing militias would be

⁴⁸⁷ Debien 1966: 10

⁴⁸⁸ "Arrêt qui casse l'ordonnance rendue le 23 mars 1764 par Jean Étienne de Clugny de Nuits, intendant de Saint-Domingue, et l'arrêt du Conseil supérieur du Cap du 4 avril dernier, au sujet de la suppression de la vente des nègres marrons comme épaves, en raison des pouvoirs insuffisants de l'intendant et du conseil pour légiférer en cette matière, 18 novembre 1767" ANOM COL A11: 414; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 4): 717-718; Moitt 2004: 62

⁴⁸⁹ St. Mery 1798c (Part 1): 78-79; Matibag 2003: 56

⁴⁹⁰ "Negre maron et Espagnol" ANOM F3 132: 257

comprised of gens du couleur and free black affranchis.⁴⁹¹ One year later, a treaty was established between d’Azlor and Rohan, general governor of Saint Domingue, to return all mawons, thieves, and absent without leave soldiers, and to stop the sale of merchants who pass through Bete a Cornes without legal right.⁴⁹² The 1766 treaty also settled that any Santo Domingo planter would be fined 50 livres for harboring fugitives or kidnapped Africans. The two colonial forces also decided to cooperate in their chase of mawons in the mountains.⁴⁹³ This agreement suggests that despite ongoing negotiations between the two royal representatives, Spanish planters continued use African-Saint Dominguan runaways as labor and as trading partners.

After the Seven Year’s War ended, Saint Domingue’s suffering economy quickly rebounded due to the expansion of coffee industry after 1767.⁴⁹⁴ Coffee production was well suited to cooler, wet weather in places with high elevation levels. Thus, newly formed coffee plantations spread into Saint Domingue’s mountains ranges, encroaching on the homes of self-liberated communities that staked claim to those lands for themselves. Contestation over mountain properties seems to have come to a head when an armed mawon band attacked the marechaussée in 1767.⁴⁹⁵ This rebel group was probably composed of a single ethnic group, since inter-race/ethnic group escapes was at its lowest rate in 1767 and intra-race/ethnic group escapes were approaching its highest rate going into 1768 (Figure 3.5). The shoot-out between the mawons and the marechaussée was viewed as a consequence of collaboration between the fugitives and free people of color. A new ordinance was passed in November 1767 to keep free people of color from purchasing arms and gunpowder, with

⁴⁹¹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol 4): 812-815; Fouchard 1972: 218

⁴⁹² “Traité fait entre Manuel de Aslor, gouverneur de la partie espagnole de Saint-Domingue, et le prince de Rohan, gouverneur général de la partie française de l’île, pour la restitution des nègres marrons ou volés, ainsi que des soldats déserteurs et pour la répression des marchands qui font passer des bêtes à cornes sans droits de sortie, 11 décembre 1766” ANOM A27: 129

⁴⁹³ St. Mery 1798c (Part 2): 176

⁴⁹⁴ Burnard and Garrigus 2016: 167

⁴⁹⁵ Manigat 1977: 435; Manigat 2007: 66

the intention of keeping the weapons from the hands of runaways.⁴⁹⁶ The ordinance may have been effective at reducing runaways' capability of obtaining weaponry: the number of self-assertions reported in the *Les Affiches* ads, including bearing arms, decreased between 1766 to 1770 (Figure 3.6). Not only did the colonists aim to repress mawonaj through policing, they took every opportunity to economically profit from it, such as Rohan and the intendent Bongars' 1767 affirmation that mawons would never be formally recognized as free.⁴⁹⁷ The declaration created space for the state to continue to benefit from the criminalization of black self-liberation, because later an ordinance of the king issued in November 1767 overturning the 1764 colonial ruling about runaways in Saint Domingue's prisons. Rather than selling captives after one month, the king ordered that unclaimed runaways be housed in jail for three months before they were sold. The public sales would then only take place four times per year: January 2nd, April 2nd, July 2nd, and October 2nd.⁴⁹⁸

In 1769, Don Nicholas de Montenegro, under commander of St. Raphael, renewed aggression against Saint Domingue when he kidnapped a Dondon planter and four black captives, and took them to Santo Domingo until 1771 when the planter paid a ransom to the king of Spain. Spanish planters continued to violate the 1766 agreement and stake claim to French lands in Saint-Domingue, again in the parish of Dondon. A French mulatre gained permission to settle in Dondon in March 1771, but 50 Spanish men arrived in May, kidnapping the plantation overseer and a black woman then burning down several plantations. In retaliation, an armed force went into Santo Domingo and kidnapped nine blacks and an overseer without damaging any property. Negotiations

⁴⁹⁶ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 142-144; Fick 1990: 53

⁴⁹⁷ "Lettre des...au minister sur le negres marons, Au Port au Prince 10.9.1767" ANOM F3 94: 88; Ghachem 2012: 114

⁴⁹⁸ "Ordonnance qui règle la vente comme épaves des nègres marrons, à Saint-Domingue, 18 novembre 1767," ANOM COL A11: 416; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 139-141

to return each set of hostages ensued, and the French [at least temporarily] agreed to return portions of Dondon to the Spaniards.⁴⁹⁹

Perhaps as a show of good faith, the Spanish sent convoys into the border region to search for runaways, and the French continued to establish militias to retrieve the numerous amount of mawons from the Spanish territory.⁵⁰⁰ In 1770, a group of thirteen runaways from Saint Domingue were captured in the countryside along the border then interrogated in the city Santo Domingo. Six were from the Loango Coast, identifying as Kongo and/or Mondongo. Several knew their French owners while others were recently arrived and could not speak Spanish or French. An unbranded African named Bucu did not know how long he had been in the colony because he had escaped toward the east immediately after leaving the slave ship. This indicates that the political strife over the Spanish-French border was not lost on even the most recently arrived Africans who used the contestation to their benefit.⁵⁰¹ Africans' knowledge of the eastward haven did not go unnoticed; the French government created a commission in January 1776 to search for runaways "who passed daily into Spanish Santo Domingo," providing compensation per fugitive recovered.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁹ St. Mery 1798c (Part 1): xx-xxii

⁵⁰⁰ Lettre des ... un proposition al... detruire les negres marons 14 fev 1775," ANOM F3 94: 112

⁵⁰¹ Landers 2002: 238; Landers 2015

⁵⁰² St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 658-659, 687-688

Domingo. In January 1778, the Intendant of Saint Domingue put forward a letter suggesting there needed to be concern and consensus about the price of return for runaways who were married and living in the Spanish territory. And in the rare case that Spanish blacks were caught in Saint Domingue as runaways, they would not be sold in the cities but kept in jails separate from other absconders.⁵⁰⁴

Geographic proximity to a less hostile colony, Santo Domingo, was an important component of Saint Domingue's context. Though *Les Affiches Americaines* advertisements only indicate 80 runaways headed east over the 26-year publication span, other primary sources paint a different picture: one in which streams of Saint Domingue's enslaved labor force made their way to Santo Domingo at the implicit and explicit welcome of the Spanish. On the other hand, it would not be unlikely that planters exaggerated their losses to obtain financial compensation from the royal or colonial governments. Further, the overwhelming majority black population in Saint Domingue kept white residents at a heightened level of anxiety about a possible revolt – especially when the colony was most vulnerable during periods of war. Whites feared a looming mawon presence and often requested reinforcements to protect plantations from fugitives who returned to steal goods, food, weapons, tools, or to bring others to freedom. It is difficult, if not impossible, to quantify the actual number of runaways in the colony due to the failure of some plantation managers to report fugitive ads. Additionally, we do not know the numbers of women who birthed children while living in self-liberated zones. Therefore, to determine how much of planters' anxieties were justified is also a difficult task. On the other hand, corroborating contemporary sources about rogue fugitive bands can help fill in the picture about the nature and scope of mawonaj in Saint Domingue.

⁵⁰⁴ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 666, 810

Paranoia and Legitimate Threats

The general paranoia about rebellion and mawonaj seems to have been most acute among those who had the most contact with them – and perhaps the most insight – such as members of the *marechaussée*. Bernard Olivier du Bourgneuf, planter and former provost of the *marechaussée*, wrote a memo in 1770 to the naval department on the topic of mawonaj. Du Bourgneuf boasted of his experiences with regularly hunting fugitives and his ability to force runaways back to their owners within six months. Per his past experiences with robberies and incursions by mawons near Fort Dauphin, du Bourgneuf estimated that there were approximately 80,000 runaways in different parts of the colony. In his assessment, the disparate *marechaussée* troops were poorly organized, and their respective provosts had no real understanding of the complexities of the colony. As such, du Bourgneuf suggested appointing an Inspector to monitor all the *marechaussée*, presumably himself, who would then be better equipped to restore tranquility to the colony.⁵⁰⁵ While Du Bourgneuf's estimate of 80,000 fugitives in the colony was most likely an exaggeration to create a stream of revenue for himself, there were plantation attacks by runaways at Fort Dauphin, a popular runaway destination (Table 3.19) during the 1770s and 1780s. Those decades also saw harsh weather conditions that either prompted or dissuaded enslaved people from committing mawonaj.

Based on findings discussed in Chapter Three, the overall frequency of mawonaj saw a slight increase in the early 1770s (Figure 3.2), as did mawon group sizes (Figure 3.4), rates of self-assertions (Figure 3.6), and length of escape (Figure 3.7). Part of these increases may have been influenced by the June 3rd, 1770 earthquake that struck Port-au-Prince and had widespread affects in Léogane and Petit Goâve. The earthquake was not only a window of opportunity for African runaways; it, and other natural disaster like floods, was probably interpreted as a symbol of

⁵⁰⁵ “Du Bourgneuf, Bernard Olivier, ancien habitant de Saint-Domingue et prévôt de *maréchaussée*, *memoire sur les negres marrons*, 1770” ANOM E140: 793

discontent in the sacred realm expressing itself as retribution for wrongdoing.⁵⁰⁶ Further, it took place on the Day of Pentecost⁵⁰⁷ – the observation day for the descent of the Holy Spirit and mass conversions to Christianity, which likely added to its perceived spiritual significance for Kongolese and creole Catholics alike. Several jails collapsed during the earthquake, possibly releasing ritualists and captured mawons who were awaiting prosecution then fled into mawonaj in the aftermath.⁵⁰⁸ The earthquake also may have influenced the composition of runaways who escaped in groups. In 1770, 33.67% of fugitives reported in *Les Affiches* were in an intra-racial/ethnic group while only 11.56% fled with people of a different background. But, in 1771, runaways escaped in inter- and intra-racial/ethnic groups at the same rate of 21% (Figure 3.5), indicating the earthquake had presented some window of opportunity for everyone to exploit.

Another natural disaster was a hurricane between September 2nd and 3rd, 1772 that presented an opportunity for escape.⁵⁰⁹ But, the rate of mawonaj only slightly increased afterward, from 439 in 1772 to 510 in 1773. Colonial authorities were becoming less inclined to be held responsible for controlling enslaved people, especially after events that were beyond human control. Rather, the state, whom some planters would probably have described as neglectful anyway, allowed local parishes to manage the policing of mawonaj and thus address disturbances with more rapid response. On March 20th, 1773, the Council of Cap officially released control of mawon chases, and costs associated with deaths of runaways, to individual jurisdictions.⁵¹⁰ The ruling was quickly followed by an August 26th, 1773 an ordinance from the judge of Le Cap targeting runaways who passed for free in the city. Runaways were forbidden from staying in the city and inn keepers were

⁵⁰⁶ Oldendorp 1770: 181; Thornton 1993b: 192

⁵⁰⁷ St. Mery 1798c: 215; McClellan III 1992: 27

⁵⁰⁸ Laguerre 1789: 52

⁵⁰⁹ St. Mery [1798a] 1985: 170-171

⁵¹⁰ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 427

disallowed from renting rooms to enslaved people, even those who had their owners' permission.⁵¹¹

This ordinance reflected concerns about distinguishing manumitted slaves from runaways, a thin line that mixed-race enslaved people particularly found themselves balancing. A group of six mulatres were to designated to be freed by their owner, and soon after his death they parted from the plantation. Unbeknownst to them, they had not actually been freed and were considered fugitives. Four of the men were returned, but one woman and her children remained at large. She won her freedom in court, but it was later revoked and the women were re-enslaved.⁵¹²

As policing of runaways became more pronounced at the local level, it seems that by 1774 slave owners were increasingly reliant on local jails to rid their plantations of rebels. The state, rather than the planters themselves, were absorbing the rising costs of housing, feeding, and providing care, albeit minimal, to enslaved people so they could be capable of the chain gang construction work. In response, the court of Le Cap made a ruling in July that prisons would no longer incorporate enslaved people into the chain gangs without confirmation from the slave owner. Owners were then charged 120 livres for an enslaved person on the chain gang without their owner's authorization. In 1780, planters were sending sick bondspeople to prisons not as discipline for mawonaj, but to avoid health-care related expenditures. It was decided in May that any new entry to the chain gang had to receive a clean bill of health and readiness for work by a medical examiner.⁵¹³ While these measures aimed to keep excessive numbers of enslaved people who weren't runaways out of jails and chain

⁵¹¹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 460

⁵¹² Arrêt qui reçoit Morisseau d'Ester, habitant de Saint-Domingue, comme appelant d'une ordonnance rendue le 24 mai 1774 par les administrateurs de cette colonie, à propos de la désertion de plusieurs esclaves de l'habitation de feu Philippe Morisseau, son frère, 22 décembre 1775, ANOM A15: 147; Arrêt qui casse et annule celui du conseil supérieur du Cap du 25 novembre 1777, obtenu par Fleury, habitant du Dondon, contre Soubira, habitant de Dondon puis du Cap, ainsi que la sentence du juge du 23 mai 1776. L'arrêt déclare, en conséquence, nul l'affranchissement de la négresse Zabeth, créole, et de sa fille, Adélaïde, mulâtresse, et en ordonne la remise à Soubira, leur maître, 4 janvier 1779, ANOM A17: 16; Ghachem 2012: 105-111

⁵¹³ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 512; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 6): 19; Moitt 2004: 63

gangs, they did not have any measurable impact on mawonaj overall. However, the measures may have contributed to the re-cycling of captured runaways into the plantation system rather than isolating them to the jails. It was common practice for fugitives to be returned to their plantation of origin or a new plantation, taking with them their knowledge, skills, and past experiences with forging a path to freedom.

Writing in October 1791, Claude Milscent, a planter, former marechaussée lieutenant, and later an advocate for the rights of free people of color and slavery abolitionist,⁵¹⁴ described his firsthand experiences with and knowledge of the history of mawonaj in Saint Domingue. One of his first militia expeditions was at the Montagne Noir outside of Port-au-Prince, where a band of nearly 100 runaways had established a base and were stealing food from frontier plantations. This mountain had been occupied by mawons since the early 18th century, when Pere Labat claimed nearly 700 armed runaways were living there. Milscent recounted that the rebels put up a vigorous resistance during the confrontation; their leader Toussaint was killed in the conflict and several others were injured or beheaded. After dispersing this group and returning survivors to their owners, in 1774 Milscent was sent into the rural areas surrounding Cap Français – Fort Dauphin, Ecrevisse in Trou, and Vallière. Fort Dauphin and Trou were among the most popular runaway destination sites; 4.37% and 4.03% absconders were suspected of escaping to the two parishes (Table 3.19). There, Milscent was to chase three rebel bands led by Noel Barochin, Thélémaque Canga, and Boeuf. These groups were separate but connected and collaborated when one was under attack, generally inciting fear of revolt in the border towns.⁵¹⁵

Milscent's appointment in the region was likely in response to planter's complaints, including a letter dated November 21st, 1774 from Vallière petitioning for an organized pursuit of runaways to

⁵¹⁴ Schultz 2014

⁵¹⁵ Milscent 1791: 7

“destroy the black marrons” and “stop the progress of marronnage.” The writer suggested appointing a Provost General over all the parishes who would only answer to the colony governor specifically relating to the chase, capture, and destruction of mawonaj. The governor could then request the king provide an order to put together a *marechaussée* of free blacks and mulattos to do the chase into the mountains. It was also suggested that chain gangs be formed as public deterrents to other potential runaways.⁵¹⁶ These measures had already been in place for some time, but perhaps they were not effective at keeping people from escaping plantations then returning to pillage them.

Another tactic to infiltrate rebel mawons was to offer a bounty on the heads of the leaders.⁵¹⁷ In 1775, Noel, formerly belonging to Barochin of Terrier Rouge, was arrested and accused of disorder and robbery in Fort-Dauphin. It was said that he had assembled a considerable number of slaves around him, including *commandeurs* from different plantation work gangs. Noel’s relationship to the plantations of Fort-Dauphin was one of power and authority through the *commndeurs*, so enslaved people would have known his identity. He even managed to scare the *marechaussée* so much that they wouldn’t dare to approach him. Part of the declaration of Mr. Vincent, lieutenant of the King in Fort Dauphin, stated that he felt there was no other way to stop Noel and his band other than to offer a financial reward or freedom to enslaved laborers who would help the *marechaussée*. Vincent insisted that danger was imminent and that the entire parish of Fort-Dauphin was afraid and in need of public safety, especially since the Procurer-General had retired. The court decided to ensure funds from the colonial bank to provide 4,500 livres to a free person who could turn in Noel alive; 3,000 to someone who could bring his head and his brand so he could be accurately identified as belonging to Barochin; 1,000 livres to an enslaved person who could bring Noel alive; and 600 livres to one who could bring his head and his brand. In both cases, an

⁵¹⁶ “*Pieces concernant la chasse aux negres marrons*, 21 november 1774,” ANOM F3 94: 110

⁵¹⁷ Hall 1971: 76

estimated value of the slave would be paid to the owner in compensation for her or his freedom.⁵¹⁸

The maximum reward 4,500 livres was a hefty sum to pay –was the amount of some of the most valued slaves who were young, healthy, and had a skilled trade.⁵¹⁹ The use of a bounty to capture mawon leaders seemed to have worked; Milscent recounted that Noel fell victim to betrayal by a member of his band who cooperated with authorities then was killed by a *marechaussée* soldier.⁵²⁰

Milscent claimed that after Noel was killed, his followers merged with Canga and Boeuf, whose band grew to over 1,500. The two factions also grew more embittered and pillaged more plantations in retaliation. Rather than loosely organized groups of fugitives who barely eked out survival in the woods, it might be more useful to think of mawonaj bands as having a militaristic dimension that allowed them to use guerilla warfare skills and tactics. They armed themselves, built their camps behind fortified ditches, and worked in collaboration with enslaved people to strategically decide which plantations to attack and when.⁵²¹ Under Saint Domingue's governor d'Ennery, several militia detachments pursued the rebels after they were reported to have plundered one plantation, but they quickly disappeared and reappeared plundering another.⁵²² This description of mawon's offensive strategy is reminiscent of the West Central African fighting styles that befuddled French soldiers in the early days of the Haitian Revolution.⁵²³ The stealth demonstrated by the rebels probably helped create an illusion that they were ever-present and larger in number than they actually were. Whites near Fort Dauphin, according to Milscent, were petrified of what they perceived to be over 10,000 runaways in Canga and Boeuf's bands alone. While Milscent admits that this figure was likely an

⁵¹⁸ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 550

⁵¹⁹ See Tables A.6, A.7, A.8, A.10

⁵²⁰ Milscent 1791: 8

⁵²¹ Laguerre 1989: 47-48

⁵²² Milscent 1791: 8

⁵²³ Thornton 2000

exaggeration, as Bernard Bourgneuf's estimation also was, it is interesting to note that the issue of mawonaj was consistently a topic of conversation that invoked such fear in the colony.

It is logical to surmise that enslaved people were just as preoccupied with mawonaj as their owners; in fact, they were probably *more* knowledgeable about the mawon leaders and their exploits. Rather than retreat to the mountains, some fugitives camped out at nearby plantations where they were protected by friends, family members, or lovers. From the *Les Affiches* ads, 153 runaways sought out familiar plantations, allowing them to be been en mawonaj for an average of 15.68 weeks (Table 3.9, Table 3.17). Alternatively, former members of rebel bands were often sent back to their respective plantations.⁵²⁴ Additionally, individual runaways who were captured and jailed sometimes did not know or divulge the names of their owners, therefore they remained in jail unclaimed. In such cases, they were advertised in newspapers like *Gazette de Saint Domingue*, *Les Affiches Americaines*, and the *Courrier Nationale de Saint Domingue* as “damaged” or abandoned, then re-sold to planters in the city centers – a convenient way to the local jailers to make money since slave prices increased in the 1760s.⁵²⁵ Fugitives who were captured and re-circulated to new plantations likely shared their experiences to the bondspeople, introducing them to successful and unsuccessful tactics for escape. This internal trade of rebellious enslaved people would have been just as important in raising collective consciousness about mawonaj as the rumors about the armed conflicts occurring in the countryside. While individual members of the enslaved population at times took advantage of financial rewards offered to capture rebels, further research on the internal trade of rebels might suggest that interaction and collusion among Africans and African descendants, enslaved and mawon, was more common than previously understood.

⁵²⁴ Milscent 1791

⁵²⁵ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 284

While planters seemed to have had no problem incorporating captured runaways into their workforces, they did worry about the negative influence of factors external to Saint Domingue. Letters surfaced in 1775 framing mawonaj as a pervasive problem that had the capacity to undo the colony. The letter identified several factors that contributed to the runaways' unchecked rule: 1) the Spanish, who provided Saint Domingue's runaways harbor and potentially politicized them against the French; 2) the dense, nearly impenetrable mountains into which the *marechaussée* and other hunters attempted and often failed to pursue fugitives; 3) runaways' propensity to reproduce while at large; and 4) their constant plantation attacks. These issues exasperated planters who – judging by the number and tone of their letters – were desperate for reinforcements. The combination of these factors also led this writer to compare the problem to those of Jamaica and Surinam, suggesting imminent revolt if mawonaj was not contained and eradicated.⁵²⁶ Even in Martinique, a priest named Charles-François de Coutances cited the 80,000 maroons in Surinam, troubles in Jamaica, and the “greatest danger” in Saint Domingue six years prior – presumably the poisoning scare – as presenting a threat to the Lesser Antilles island.⁵²⁷

It is telling that these writers cited two major Caribbean uprisings as legitimization for their fear of mawonaj in Saint Domingue, implying that runaways were inherently ripe for rebellious uprising especially during periods of international conflict like the Seven Year's War. In Surinam, failed treaties with the Ndjukas, Saramakas, Matawais, and Boni maroons marked the beginning of a series of wars between them and the Dutch colonists.⁵²⁸ Additionally, there was a 1763 revolution in Berbice (present-day Guyana) directly neighboring Surinam, where Governor Coffij and Captain

⁵²⁶ “Memoire sur les negres marrons a S. Domingue et les moyenne d’un diminuer le nombre le danger, 1775,” and “Memoire sou les moyenn à employer pas le S. Amant, lorsqu’il sera chargé de poursuivre et faire arrêtes les negres marron de S. Domingue,” ANOM F3 94: 116-118

⁵²⁷ Lettre du père Charles-François de Coutances au sujet de l’installation de deux maîtres, 11 juillet 1777, ANOM F5 A: 18

⁵²⁸ Thompson 2006: 309-310

Accarra led a seven-month hostile takeover of the government by other Gold Coast and Kongolese Africans. Word spread about the Berbice uprising, perhaps from disaffected French mercenaries based in Surinam who fought with the Berbice rebels. Information circulation throughout the Caribbean via sailors, military men, and traders carried the news of rebellions in the Guianas and Jamaica to Saint Domingue. Edward Long's *History of Jamaica*, published in 1774, described the 1760 revolt in Jamaica as an island-wide attempt by Gold Coast Africans to overthrow the colonial government.⁵²⁹ Long's account provided awareness of and insight to the Jamaican revolt to which both colonial Europeans and Africans would have paid attention.

Knowledge of these events would not have been isolated to Saint Domingue's white planter population; in fact, bondspeople may have learned of the rebellions before their owners. Captives from English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch-speaking colonies were routinely brought to Saint Domingue through illicit internal trades. As such, it follows that the Dutch-speakers perhaps would have been familiar with the Berbice and Surinam rebellions of the 1760s; African-Jamaicans and other English-speakers in Saint Domingue after the 1760s probably knew about Queen Nanny's Maroon Wars, Tacky's revolt, and the black Carib Wars on Saint Vincent island; and before the Haitian Revolution, African-Martiniquans probably knew of the 1789 revolt on the tiny French island. Conversations during Sunday markets, clandestine nighttime gatherings, in living quarters, and through mawonaj networks would have informed the local populace to on goings in nearby colonies.⁵³⁰ Despite the warnings from the planters' letters, plantations in the north – Fort Dauphin especially – would be attacked by several armed mawon bands in the coming years.

In the early 1770s, mawonaj was a major concern in the colony, at least according to planters and former military officials near Fort Dauphin, "terrorized" by bands like those headed up by Noel

⁵²⁹ Turner 2011: 690-693; Brown 2012; Kars 2016

⁵³⁰ Scott III 1986: 17-22

Barochin, Thélémaque Canga, and Boeuf. In response to these rebels, the mid to late-1770s saw an increase of structural repression against mawonaj in the form marechaussée expansion. The gens du couleur and affranchis were increasingly viewed as key components of the ongoing struggle to rid the colony of mawonaj. A 1775 ordinance was issued to stem mawonaj and at the same time co-opt the gens du couleur population by allowing planters to offer manumission to enslaved men in exchange for service to the marechaussée. At times, new participants in the marechaussée found it to be a burden, since a condition of the provision was that one was still technically enslaved until the end of their service.⁵³¹ For example, one freeman of color named Antoine was threatened with losing his freedom and being sent back to servitude for abandoning a mawon chase.⁵³² Despite individual protests to marechaussée membership, the expanded militarization of eradicating mawonaj impacted runaways not just by providing more human resources to the fugitive police but offered an alternate path to manumission for potential rebels.⁵³³ The marechaussée expansion was an effective measure: data from the *Les Affiches* advertisements show that the frequency of mawonaj decreased from 514 runaways in 1775 to 426 in 1777, eventually reaching its lowest point of 290 runaways in 1779 (Figure 3.2).

War and Famine as Structural Factors

State-sponsored repression was not the only effective deterrent to escapes. Although some argued hunger was a primary cause for mawonaj, the number of runaways did not increase during the droughts in 1775 and 1776 that killed thousands of slaves.⁵³⁴ Rather, the frequency of mawonaj slightly decreased during those years and continued to do so (Figure 3.2), in part because weakness

⁵³¹ Ghachem 2012: 114-116

⁵³² “Lettre du ministre a M. d’Argout sur les chasses de negres marron et les chatiments à infliger aux negres libres qui participent aux chasses et désertent au cours de l’operations 28 juillet 1778,” ANOM F3 94: 136

⁵³³ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 3): 751; Ghachem 2012: 114-116

⁵³⁴ Debien [1973] 1996: 129; McClellan 1992: 28

and starvation prevented people from venturing into an even more precarious situation as a runaway. Cul-de-Sac officials issued an ordinance forcing planters to grow a certain number of bananas, manioc, or potatoes per slave to prevent further deaths. But, food shortages were reimposed when prices for provisions again rose in 1777 under the British blockade. In 1776, North American allies of France declared independence from Britain, and in February 1778 British naval ships were parked in Saint Domingue's ports blocking imports. When France signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, sugar prices dropped rapidly, which would have caused harsher work regimes on plantations to produce more – even under conditions of famine and starvation.⁵³⁵ Hunger and fatigue from overwork to meet pre-blockade level profits may have deterred all enslaved people from facing the uncertainty of life outside the plantation where there was guaranteed food rations, however meager. Additionally, the stark reduction of newly imported Africans during the blockade contributed to the overall reduction of runaways.

British naval presence at Saint Domingue's ports had a direct impact on French traders' abilities to import more enslaved Africans to the colony, and those already in the colony would bear the weight of compensating for French losses of labor power and decreasing sugar prices. Between the years 1779 and 1782, less than 10 French slave ships arrived to Saint Domingue.⁵³⁶ The frequency of mawonaj was at its lowest in 1779 – 290 runaways reported – because recently arrived Africans typically made up the largest proportion of runaways (Figure 3.2; Table 3.3). The overall frequency of mawonaj was down during the British blockade, as well as the rates of intra-racial/ethnic group escapes, which reached as low as 7.73% in 1781. However, the rates of inter-racial/ethnic group escapes remained over 10%, reaching 19.37% in 1783 (Figure 3.5). This suggests that the lack of incoming Africans forced people to forge relationships across linguistic and cultural boundaries as

⁵³⁵ Cheney 2013: 50-51

⁵³⁶ slavevoyages.org

they sought refuge from bondage. What also seem to have remained steady were the reported incursions and raids on plantations by nearby mawon bands, who were possibly stealing food along with other provisions because of a colony-wide 18-month dry season and malnutrition in 1779 and 1780.⁵³⁷

Three years after former *marechaussée* lieutenant Claude Milscent was sent into northeast Saint Domingue and Noel was killed, Thélémaque Canga was finally captured. Milscent, along with twenty-six mixed-race and six white officers, located and confronted Canga's army of three hundred rebels. Again, Milscent extolled their brave defense. Three of Milscent's men were injured during the conflict, and one died. The rebels' fatalities were more substantial, perhaps because they fought with machetes rather than guns. Nineteen blacks were killed, eight were wounded and captured, and twenty-three were chased away by the mulatres. Canga himself was shot in the head, but somehow survived and escaped only to be captured again. Few of the survivors made off again, while Milscent returned nearly 80 to their owners.⁵³⁸ On October 2nd, 1777, the Council of Cap Français announced that Thélémaque Canga and several survivors of his band were captured, tried, and sentenced to death for destroying several plantations at Ecrevisses and Fond-bleus in Fort Dauphin, the same location where Noel had been active. Canga was charged with defending himself against a white man. His second in command, Isaac, was described as a slave – probably from an English-speaking colony given his uncommon Anglophone name – and accused of the same things; and the third was Pirrhus dit Candide, also convicted of injuring a white person. The three were sentenced to being broken alive on the wheel until death, and then having their heads place on poles on the road from Fort Dauphin to Ecrevilles. Six other men and women were also to be hanged, flogged, and branded.⁵³⁹ It is difficult to know when and from where these men escaped, but it is possible that

⁵³⁷ McClellan III 1992: 27; Cheney 2013: 57

⁵³⁸ Milscent 1791: 8

⁵³⁹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 800

Thélémaque, as the leader, spent the most time as a mawon. Though further evidence is needed to confirm Thélémaque's identity, the *Les Affiches* advertisements may provide a hint: an ad appeared on August 29th, 1768 announcing the escape of a Kongolese Thélémaque from M. Franciosi's plantation in Fort Dauphin.⁵⁴⁰

Meanwhile, there was a renewed struggle to end plantation attacks by mawon bands in the colony's western department at Béate – a small island that forms a sound with Baoruco and Anse-a-Pitre in Cayes de Jacmel. The council of Léogane had increased marechaussée presence in the south in 1705, 1729, and 1741. Yet as the numbers of reinforcements increased, so did the number of runaways. Administrators sent a detachment to Fond-Parisien in Croix-des-Bouquets on February 19th, 1771, and another group was sent to Grands-Bois in Mirebalais on May 19th, 1774. On February 8th, 1775, there was an ordinance to build a town in Croix-des-Bouquets and a sheriff with several horseback police were assigned to Fond-Parisien, Roche-Blanche and Grand Bois. These troops were deemed to be ineffective in stopping runaway bands from their raids, and on October 13th, 1776 another dispatch was sent to Boucan Patate because a newly built guardhouse had been attacked. This offensive was somewhat successful, resulting in deaths of rebels between Fond-Parisien and Grand Bois as far south as Sale Trou.

Two months later in December 1776, a full-scale collaborative offensive between the French and Spanish, numbering 180 men and costing 80,000 livres, was launched from Croix-des-Bouquets against the mawons in the Baoruco mountains. But by January 1777, the expedition was struggling to enter the dense forest and was running out of energy, food, drink, and supplies, even being reduced to drinking their own urine. While some retreated to Port-au-Prince for provisions, the rest went south to Cayes and sent a boat of 100 men to Béate, where Spanish guides suggested

⁵⁴⁰ *Les Affiches Americaines (LAA)* August 29, 1768, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=2251>

settlements were based in caves. When the boat arrived, the mawons had temporarily disappeared. That spring, the mawons re-appeared, commencing a counter-attack at Fond-Parisien – back in Croix-des-Bouquets where the expedition had begun. The rebel bands attacked Boucan-Greffin in May 1777 and again in November 1778, this time kidnapping a domestic worker named Anne from the Coupe property. On December 15th, 1778, another detachment was sent to Boucan-Greffin in Croix des Bouquets, where a brigade of eight archers and two corporals were set to lodge at Sieur Coupe’s property to protect him.⁵⁴¹ While in the hands of her captives, Anne was coerced into marrying a rebel leader named Kebinda, perhaps a BaKongo man named after the port city Cabinda, but before the nuptials she convinced Kebinda to take her to a church where she was recovered by Spanish officials.⁵⁴² Moreau de St. Mery, writing from Cayes de Jacmel, claimed that the raids in this area stopped after 1785, but other sources describing subsequent events disprove his statement.⁵⁴³

Back north, another request was submitted in September 1778 to organize a “maroon chase,” claiming that there were many enslaved people from Limonade had escaped from the habitation Heritiers. There was concern that the runaways were armed with machetes and other sabres, or blunt end sticks, and would put up a resistance; therefore, the request called for a select few mulatres and free blacks to do the hunt.⁵⁴⁴ To address the issue in Limonade, in December 1778 the marechaussée was given license to arrest any enslaved person without a pass from their owner at the market, on plantations, or other public places.⁵⁴⁵ A response letter from the governor was sent to Limonade later 1779, stating that at least one runaway was killed during a chase.⁵⁴⁶ The mawon camp could have evaded capture again due to the proximity to mountainous cave systems. The Bois de

⁵⁴¹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 848; St. Mery [1798b] 1996: 136

⁵⁴² St. Mery [1798b] 1996: 138; Fouchard 1972: 330-331

⁵⁴³ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 2): 309

⁵⁴⁴ “Modele d’un ordre de chasse a negres marrons, du 21.9.1778,” ANOM F3 94: 138

⁵⁴⁵ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 847

⁵⁴⁶ “Lettre du gouvernement au sujet d’un negre tué comme marron alors qu’il n’était pas, 1779” ANOM F3 94: 139

Lance mountain chain in Limonade had been Colas Jambes Coupées' hideout for four to five years; and according to Moreau de St. Mery, these mountains continued to be a refuge for runaways.⁵⁴⁷

Data from the *Les Affiches* ads indicate that 3.36% of runaways whose destinations were known were headed to Limonade, which was just west of Trou (Table 3.19). Another common runaway hiding place in the north was Grand Rivière, which harbored the third highest number of absconders after Fort Dauphin and Trou (Table 3.19). In 1779, runaways from the plantation La Ferronaye at Grand Riviere du Nord set fire to the sugarcane and poisoned the plantation steward and the overseer.⁵⁴⁸

Small-scale rebellion in the north continued, evidenced by an advertisement posted the 18th of January 1780 describing a group of three escapees from the Rogery plantation of Morne Rouge: Blaise, Noelle, and Jean-François, all creoles. They met with Jean-Baptiste and Colas of the Delaye plantation and were reported to be causing disorder on several sugar plantations, and their owners requested that neighboring planters send plantation commandeurs as reinforcements to help put down the rebels.⁵⁴⁹ It is possible that Blaise, along with mawon band leaders Joseph Mabiala and Pierre, was later captured and sentenced in 1786 by the high court of Cap Français to be broken alive and have their bodies exposed at La Fossette following the execution.⁵⁵⁰ Fossette was a common meeting place for bondspeople to hold calendas and burials, so this public execution there would have served as a visible deterrent against rebellion. Figure 4.1 shows the gruesome nature of French execution tactics, namely the “breaking wheel” that literally broke the person’s bones and disemboweled them simultaneously.

⁵⁴⁷ St Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 200

⁵⁴⁸ Manigat 1977: 432; Manigat 2007: 54

⁵⁴⁹ *LAA* January 18, 1780, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=5549>

⁵⁵⁰ *LAA* May 6, 1786; Fouchard 1972: 272



Figure 4.1: “The cruel death of Calas, who was broke on the wheel at Toulouse, March 9th, 1762.”
An example of the breaking wheel used to execute high-profile criminals such as feared mawons by breaking their limbs and causing disembowelment.

Public executions were not the only danger to potential runaways, fugitives were often killed by marechaussée during a hunt. Many planters sought compensation from the government for these deaths, since the fugitive could no longer be counted as a productive member of the enslaved work force. For example, in February 1780 the heirs to the Butler properties filed a claim for 3,000 livres against the commander of the fugitive chase that killed one of their bondspeople named Achille. The case was revisited in 1782 and the family was reimbursed 1,200 livres.⁵⁵¹ The same year, a colonist was whipped, branded, and sent to the galleys for unnecessarily slitting the throats of two runaways he had arrested.⁵⁵² The Bergondy brothers, planters at Fort Dauphin, reported several runaways from their property for which a chase was organized in 1781. An enslaved woman named Zabeth was shot to death during this chase, and her owners were repaid 1,200 livres.⁵⁵³ One man

⁵⁵¹ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 6): 6-7, 253

⁵⁵² Ogle 2005: 231

⁵⁵³ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 6): 528-529

named François who was not running away was killed by a marechaussée officer in 1785, and François' owner demanded repayment of 1,200 livres for the murder.⁵⁵⁴

Colonists seem to have felt the marechaussée hunts and public executions were not effective enough. Another letter from Jacmel emerged in August 1780, suggesting it would be beneficial to work with the Spanish to eradicate mawonaj.⁵⁵⁵ This request may not have been honored, since another letter later was sent to bring attention to the “ravages” being done by mawon bands at Cayes de Jacmel, Salle Trou, and at Boynes in late 1781 and 1782.⁵⁵⁶ A March 1781 hunt was organized, but was unsuccessful and had to return to Anse-a-Pitre for more water. In 1781, planters resorted to hiring hunters that were not marechaussée, perhaps indicating dissatisfaction with the specialized police force; they used a black man named Remy and paid him 1,200 [livres] per runaway he found.⁵⁵⁷ Despite the use of cash rewards to assuage and co-opt the enslaved population, mawonaj and rebellion remained an issue. By 1783, the French slave trade resumed to full swing, bringing thousands more Africans into the colony, and coffee production also rapidly increased with the new labor force at work. Table 1.1 in Chapter One shows that between the years 1781-1785 and 1786-1790, the number of captives shipped to Saint Domingue nearly tripled from 63,099 to 179,851. Advertisements for enslaved runaways were the highest in 1785 and 1789 than other years, 820 and 817 respectively (Figure 3.2).

The British blockade on Saint Domingue's ports during the Usonian War had a devastating impact on everyone in the colony. Food was scarce and expensive, adding to the malnutrition already experienced by enslaved people. Extreme weather conditions like the droughts of 1775 and

⁵⁵⁴ St. Mery 1784 (Vol 6): 718

⁵⁵⁵ “Lettre de M. de Reynaud a M. de Vincent sur la chasse des negres marrons, 7 aout 1780,” ANOM F3 94: 140

⁵⁵⁶ “Lettre du ministre a M. de Bellecombe sur les negres marrons, 8 novembre 1782,” ANOM F3 94: 142

⁵⁵⁷ “18 mai 1786 Saint Domingue” ANOM C9B 36

1776 also contributed to the lack of access to locally grown foodstuffs. The dry seasons were followed by flooding four years later when the Artibonite River flooded on October 16th-17th of 1780, then a hurricane hit in November sweeping away several plantations no doubt destroying important crops.⁵⁵⁸ Harsh living conditions in the colony kept enslaved people from venturing away from plantations, but those who had already successfully escaped faced an equally difficult situation. Mawon bands increased their aggression toward plantations in part as retaliation against the *marechaussée*, but also to ensure their survival by “liberating” food, weapons, tools, and even women.

In the years after the end of the Usonian War of Independence, African wars were intensifying just as the French slave trade was ready to resume. Conflicts between the Dahomey Kingdom and its neighbors were waged in the 1770s and 1780s, and losers on both sides were funneled into the slave trade. On the West Central African coasts, former soldiers in the Kingdom of Kongo civil wars of the 1780s also fed the French slave trade thousands of captives. These captives, as well as Africans from other regions, were imported to Saint Domingue in record numbers, bringing with them cultural, religious, economic, and militaristic knowledge and skills.⁵⁵⁹ As the enslaved population swelled, the frequency of *mawonaj* increased accordingly. Runaways sought out life beyond plantation properties forming organized settlements, and took up arms to defend those communities. Additionally, a French royal ordinance of 1784 may have further inspired *mawon* communities to take on characteristics that indicated organized tactical planning of independent living zones and revised labor practices.

⁵⁵⁸ St. Mery [1798a] 1985: 171; Girard 2016: 74

⁵⁵⁹ Thornton 2000

After the difficulties with food shortages, dry seasons, and flooding, the King of France imparted royal ordinances in December 1784 to improve the quality of enslavement in the French colonies. Bondspeople in Saint Domingue began to take advantage of these provisions, putting the king at odds with local planters. Title II of the ordinance prevented planters from forcing work on Sundays and during fêtes, or Catholic holidays, restricted punishments and provided enslaved people the ability to legally denounce abuse from owners. Pregnant women and wet nurses were allowed a mid-day break from work, and additional clothing was demanded for each enslaved person. Another provision forced owners to provide enslaved people with land plots for cultivation, which then prompted people to sell their extra goods on Sundays at the markets.⁵⁶⁰ These “friendlier” conditions of enslavement not only failed to prevent mawonaj, it may have incentivized escape without fear of harsh punishments. The frequency of mawonaj reached its peak in 1785 after the ordinance was issued, with 820 runaways reported in *Les Affiches Americaines* (Figure 3.2). Runaways could raid plantations for food in the newly emerging gardens to trade and sell, and steal weapons and work tools to cultivate production on their isolated plots of land. Even a planter named Friedmont acknowledged in 1767 that land ownership for enslaved people would end mawonaj by restoring a sense of dignity. He indicated that enslaved people had an attachment to the land and the idea of proprietorship, which led them to escape.⁵⁶¹ This happened in the south where established mawon settlements pillaged neighboring plantations, and outfitted abandoned plantations for cotton and coffee production, which will be discussed later.

Still, other mawons did not wait for the 1784 ordinance to strike out on their own; despite efforts of the marechaussée in the 1770s, mawons remained active in the colony’s central regions. In

⁵⁶⁰ Ordonnance du Roi, concernant les procureurs & économes-gérans des habitations situées aux Isles sous le Vent, du 17 décembre 1784, John Carter Brown Library

⁵⁶¹ Manigat 1977: 433; Manigat 2007: 60

1784, another proposal was put forward to eradicate mawons in and around Mirebalais, Port-au-Prince, le Grand Bois, and Jacmel. This plan included recruitment of 800 gens du couleur to be divided into 16 units.⁵⁶² Grand Bois was a section of Mirebalais formed by a series of bluffs, rivers, and hills, making it difficult to access from Saint Domingue but easier to reach from Santo Domingo.⁵⁶³ Additionally, there was proximity to runaways in the rural or mountainous areas in the south such as the Montagne Noir outside of Port-au-Prince. Also, there was a nearby settlement that was believed to be a threat to southern planters: the Baoruco mountains – technically located in Spanish territory – were regarded as the true home of the ‘Maniel’ mawon community largely composed of enslaved people who fled Saint Domingue.⁵⁶⁴ The Baoruco mountains had been a stronghold for runaway Taínos and Africans since the 16th century, beginning with the cacique Enriquillo’s war against the Spanish and the Wolof Christmas Day revolt. The region continued to be the base from which the Maniel raided both French and Spanish plantations, traded with neighboring peasants, and drained European resources by resisting their hostilities.⁵⁶⁵ However, by the late 18th century, numbers of residents at Baoruco had greatly reduced due to illness and starvation, eventually leading them to accept an invitation to negotiate peace with the French and the Spanish.

A Saint Dominguan officer based at Anse-a-Pitre developed a plan to use Spanish contacts to approach the mawons with an offer to form an independent community. Don Louis de Chavez y Mendoza was placed in charge of the of matters concerning the new settlement,⁵⁶⁶ while Santiago,

⁵⁶² “Cappeau, Joseph Antoine, commis dans les bureaux de l’administration a Saint-Domingue, demande un brevet d’ecrevain des colonies, auteur d’un memoire sur les negres marrons, 1784-1789” ANOM E62

⁵⁶³ Laguerre 1989: 43

⁵⁶⁴ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 2): 493

⁵⁶⁵ Yingling 2015: 30

⁵⁶⁶ “concernant les negres marrons, au Port-au-Prince 6 fevrier 1786” ANOM C9B 36

who also served as a lay priest for the collective, and Philippe led negotiations.⁵⁶⁷ Named in the treaty were 133 runaways, most of whom had either fled or were kidnapped from Saint Domingue, or had been born in the settlement. Per Spanish sources, most among the Saint Domingue refugees were of BaKongo origin. Earlier in 1777, there were 43 men, 37 females – 20 of whom were born in the encampment, and 52 children. The oldest people were Thomas, an 80-year old Saint Domingue creole and couples Maria and Rioro/Roro, and Cotitssia/Catalina and Andre; the youngest was a four-month old baby. Some spoke French and bore French names, others spoke Spanish and had Spanish names, while others spoke KiKongo and had African names.⁵⁶⁸ Later in 1790, Vincent Oge, Jean-Baptiste Chavanne, and others supporters were arrested near Neybe after their failed attempt to revolt on behalf of the gens du couleur; it was speculated that they hid there with the Maniel.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁷ St. Mery [1797b] 1958: 1136; Laguerre 1989: 51

⁵⁶⁸ Landers 2004: 6; Yingling 2015: 30-32

⁵⁶⁹ Yingling 2015: 36

Table 4.1: Families of the Neybe Settlement: Names, Ages, Birth Origins⁵⁷⁰

Rioro / “Roro” and wife Maria, both age 60, mountain creoles	Cotitssia / “Catalina” and Andre, wife and husband, both age 60, mountain creoles	Santiago, age 60, mountain creole, and wife Marguerite, age 30, Saint Domingue creole	Philippe and wife Marie, both age 30, mountain creoles, and children Therese, 15, and Ursule, 8	Pierre Alexandre and wife Salvadore both age 35, mountain creoles, and children Antoine, 14, François, 12, Gumba, 6, and Betronne, 4
Sebastien, age 30, Saint Domingue creole, and wife Françoise, age 18, mountain creole, and children Nicolas, 3 and Françoise, 3 months	Joseph, age 28, and wife Magdelaine, age 20, both mountain creoles, and two children Marie, 5, and Namon, 2	Jean, age 20, mountain creole and wife Catherine, age 28, Saint Domingue creole, and children, Baro, age 16, brought from Saint Domingue and Isabelle, 8 months	Mancal, 20, mountain creole and wife Marie, 20, Saint Domingue creole and two children, Louis, 6, and Roi, 2	Simon, 30, Saint Domingue creole and wife Caterie, 50 mountain creole
Magdelaine, 25, mountain creole, and three children, Saute, 12, Siro, 5, and Michel, 2	Michel François, 30, and wife Françoise, 28, mountain creole, and children Crois, Pierre, Joseph, Jeanne Marie, 15, 8, and 3	Bernardino, 40, and wife Marie Jeanne, 30, both Saint Domingue creoles, and children Salle, 12, Batard, 11, Jean Baptiste, 9, and Pierre, 4	Joseph, 28, Saint Domingue creole and wife Namon, 28, and daughter Victoria, 8	Jean Baptiste, 25, Saint Domingue creole, wife Sauivibe, 40, and children Xeruienegiloo, Jeanne, Marina, Gregoire Jumaux, Pierre, 12, 8, 4 and 1

⁵⁷⁰ “Procès verbal & vérification de ce negres marrons établie dans les montagnes de Neybe”
ANOM C9B 35

Table 4.1 (cont'd)

Sessa, 50, and wife, Marie Louise, 25, both Saint Domingue creoles, and children Jean and Jeanne, age 6 ...	Louis, 21, and wife Marie Seuda, 23, both Saint Domingue creoles, and two children, Pierre, 8 and Jean Baptiste, 6	Rosa, 14, mountain creole, and child Barbe, 14 months	François, 30, Saint Domingue creole, and wife, Naunete, 20, and two children Joseph and Antoine, 5 and 1	Suanar, Saint Domingue creole, 40 and wife, Françoise, 28, mountain creole, and child age 2
LaRose, of Saint Domingue and wife Marie, mountain creole, both 30, and child Jeanne, 2	Laurent and wife Marguerite, both 30 and from Saint Domingue, and child Vincens, 3	Thomas, 80, Saint Domingue creole, no wife	François, 20, Saint Domingue creole and wife Louise, 25, mountain-born and two children, Manuela, 9 and Angelique, 5	Marie, 40, mountain creole, and two children Thomas, 13 and Jeanne, 1
LaFortune, 30, of Saint Domingue and two children, Baptiste and Mengua, 4 and 4 months	Laurens, 40 and wife Therese, 30, both of Saint Domingue, no children	Macuba, 30 and wife Victoria, 15, both of Saint Domingue, no children	Fausto, 60, mountain creole	Salle, 18, of Saint Domingue and wife, Petroune, 14, mountain creole, no children
Quamina, 50, and wife, also Saint Domingue creole, no children	Jacquie, 40, of Saint Domingue	Vincent, 20, of Saint Domingue and wife Simonce, 15, mountain creole	Musunga, 28, Saint Domingue and two children, Ramon and Augustine, 4 and 11	Magdelaine, 56, mountain creole and child Dom, 15
François, 30, of Saint Domingue, no wife	Andre, 30, of Saint Domingue, no wife	Michel, 29, of Saint Domingue, no wife	Sebastien, 28, of Saint Domingue	Antoine, 35, and wife Mine, 32, Saint Domingue, and child Louis, 19
Ybite, 45, of Saint Domingue, no wife	Pierre and wife Collette, both 13 and of Saint Domingue	Gabriel, 25, and Pouba, both of Saint Domingue, no children	LaRose, 19, of Saint Domingue, no wife or children	Joseph, 30, of Saint Domingue
Pocissa, of Saint Domingue, no husband or children				

The Neybe list gives us a glimpse into the type of family and community formations that would have been common within other runaway settlements. Marriage trends show that women from Saint

Domingue married men who were born in the mountains, which may be evidence of the belief that mawons stole plantation women during their raids.⁵⁷¹ For example, the rebel leader Kebinda kidnapped and married a slave woman named Anne who later escaped and reported him to local authorities.⁵⁷² However, we see here that mountain-born women married men from Saint Domingue as well; moreover there were both single, childless men and single women with children, which defies the notion that mawon men forcibly laid claim to women the same way Kebinda attempted. An interesting note is that even the eldest members of the community had been born in the mountains or taken there in infancy, giving further credence that Neybe had been a long-standing encampment. Secondly, the number of children born in the camp suggests strong fertility, perhaps even more so than enslaved women on plantations who averaged between 1.8 and 2 births. Harsher work regimes on sugar plantations were more detrimental to women's fertility than the labor schedules on coffee plantations; and compared to creoles, African women's fertility was more negatively affected by these changes.⁵⁷³ Such reproduction in runaway communities indicates that even with data from fugitive ads and prison lists, we may not be able to accurately quantify mawonaj in Saint Domingue.

The Neybe/Maniel were supposed to be brought into a settlement in Saint Domingue as part of the agreement, however many hesitated or outright refused to claim their property due to mistrust of the French and better relations with the Spanish.⁵⁷⁴ Several letters surfaced claiming that these mawons were still problematic; not only were they not cultivating the lands distributed to them, but they were committing incursions against plantations that joint military action was needed to

⁵⁷¹ Thompson 2006: 67-75

⁵⁷² Fouchard 1972: 331; Debien [1973] 1996: 137

⁵⁷³ Walton 2012: 55, 65

⁵⁷⁴ Yingling 2015: 34; "Concernant les negres marrons au Port-au-Prince, 6 fevrier 1786" ANOM C9B 36

address.⁵⁷⁵ Despite the treaty with the smaller group labelled the “Maniel,” it was reported in August 1786 that there were still mawons living in the Baoruco mountains near Neybe. There were an estimated 1,500 at another site called Christophe, which was outside of Port-au-Prince between the mountains and under Spanish control.⁵⁷⁶ That same month, two other letters – one apparently addressed to the royal government seat in Versailles – appeared similarly complaining about the mawon problem and stating that fugitives from the Spanish territory were still invading Saint Domingue.⁵⁷⁷ The Maniel finally agreed to settle at the town of Neybe, just north of the Baoruco mountains, where they would be governed by the Spanish and baptized as Catholics.

Meanwhile, it seems that the number of runaways from Saint Domingue into the east was increasing. In 1788, the Marquis de Najac wrote to a former governor of Saint Domingue essentially accusing the governor of allowing the mawon problem to grow: “during your administration, over four thousand slaves fled into Spanish territory; since your departure, the Spanish hardly returned any of them, and I am convinced that there are now six thousand in the Spanish colony.”⁵⁷⁸ Planters also feared the treaty with the Maniel would set a negative example to other enslaved people by incentivizing them to escape. Lieutenant Milcent stated that since the treaty mandated that Neybe settlement could no longer accept new members, runaways were forced to occupy the mountains of Port-de-Paix, Borgne, Plaisance, Dondon, Grand-Riviere, Vallière, Limonade, and Fort Dauphin.⁵⁷⁹ Saint Dominguan planters and traveling merchants also attested to growing unrest among their slaves in October 1789 because of circulating rumors that the Spanish were again giving refuge to runaways.⁵⁸⁰ News of the French Revolution also reached Saint Domingue that month, causing

⁵⁷⁵ “Letter commune negres maron, au Port-au-Prince, 30 avril 1786” ANOM C9B 36; “6 mai 1786: Saint Domingue” ANOM C9B 36

⁵⁷⁶ “Concernant les negres marrons au Port-au-Prince, 8.7.1786” ANOM C9B 36

⁵⁷⁷ “A Versailles le 16 aout 1786” ANOM C9B 36; “10 aout 1786” ANOM C9B 36

⁵⁷⁸ Fick 1990: 297n. 20

⁵⁷⁹ Milscent 1791: 6

⁵⁸⁰ Munford and Zeuske 1988: 18

colonists to fear the enslaved population would become politicized.⁵⁸¹ However, it is clear the Maniel, the mawons at Mirebalais and Fort Dauphin, and others such as the maroons of Saint Vincent depicted below had their own understandings of Atlantic world geo-politics and conflict; they employed that knowledge when negotiating their freedom with European colonists – or the rough terrains of their immediate environment.



Figure 4.2: “Pacification with the Maroon Negroes,” Bryan Edwards, 1801. *John Carter Brown Library*. *The maroons of Saint Vincent negotiating terms of peace with the British – probably a similar scene as the Maniel’s discussions with the French and Spanish.*

It is possible that members of the southern Saint Dominguan plantocracy exaggerated the nature of their peril at the hands of fugitive communities in the north and south. However, in looking at Milscent’s numbers of captured rebels compared to the numbers who escaped the *marechaussée*, and the unsuccessful offensives against mawons in the south, it becomes clear that while the *marechaussée* were effective at deterring individual and small groups of runaways they were not as

⁵⁸¹ Benot 2009: 102

effective at completely disbanding organized, militant mawon communities once they were formed and obtained their own weapons. A prime example were the settlements occupying Croix-des-Bouquets who were consistent in their incursions and able to avoid detection of the expeditions – exemplifying craftiness at staging a counter-attack when troops left their posts at Croix-des-Bouquets to attack the caves at Beate. Members of the Baoruco settlements who were not included in the treaty between the French and Spanish continued to raid Saint Dominguan plantations, demonstrating royal authorities underestimated the true nature and scope of mawon presence in the colony.

Planters and ranking *marechaussée* officers, on the other hand, were hyper vigilant about mawons; one could argue that they had the best understanding of how the rebel groups operated because of their constant interactions with them. There was anxiety among some planters about government representatives having made official overtures to a rebel community, which was likely viewed as an insult to their status as slaveholders. To add injury to insult, the Maniel fugitives resolutely rebuffed efforts to be integrated into Saint Domingue. Whether these incursions were legitimate threats to southern planters, the existence of a self-liberated community indeed may have inspired enslaved people in Saint-Domingue's south and west department to conceptualize their own social and economic independence. In the mid to late 1780s, enslaved people began taking up arms against their owners and fled plantations to work for themselves.

Runaways & Plantation Rebels

Over the course of the 1760s and 1770s, Saint Domingue became an increasingly repressive society. Repression also came in the form of prosecutions against Africa-inspired ritual practices, resulting in implementation of policies that restrained enslaved and free blacks' activities and daily movements. Combined with the rapidly growing enslaved population and exploding production of sugar and coffee that relied on painstaking labor, Saint Domingue was a powder keg awaiting

ignition. While mawonaj bands in the desolate areas were targeted in the late 18th century, people continued to escape from plantations to form rural or mountainous settlements during the 1780s, such as a mawon group led by François, operating outside Le Cap. Lieutenant Milscent, who commanded forces against Noel Barochin and Thélémaque Canga, described François as very intelligent and capable of the greatest feats. Apparently, François' band killed several French and Spanish planters and plundered their dwellings. Hesitant to re-enter the marechaussée after having started a family and settling into a neighborhood militia, Milscent resumed service in 1789 and claimed to have captured 50 rebels and killed 20, including the leader François.⁵⁸² The marechaussée probably were not the only ones who knew mawons by name, runaways also seem to have maintained connections with plantation slaves and incited them to escape and stage small-scale rebellions. For example, a group of twenty enslaved workers on the Gallifet plantations staged a work strike in 1789 by committing mawonaj until the manager they didn't like was discharged.⁵⁸³

In keeping with the increasing enslaved population, slaves' arming of themselves and uprisings against their owners became more frequent. In 1775, two men named Jolicoeur and David were sentenced for thievery in Le Cap,⁵⁸⁴ and another runaway named Francisque killed a plantation accountant.⁵⁸⁵ The next year, some house slaves killed their owner, who also was their father through incest.⁵⁸⁶ A black woman named Rosalie killed her owner, Gautarel, with a knife in 1779, for which she was burned alive.⁵⁸⁷ In April 1784, an Ibo man named Saint-Eloy was sentenced to death by

⁵⁸² Milscent 1791: 10

⁵⁸³ Fick 1990: 98

⁵⁸⁴ "Arrêt du Conseil Supérieur du Cap, Du 12 Janvier 1775, Extrait des Registres du Conseil Supérieur du Cap" ANOM C9A

⁵⁸⁵ Brevet de grâce en faveur de Marot, habitant de Saint-Domingue et économe de l'habitation de Doyte, condamné pour le meurtre commis, le 31 août 1775, sur Sabournin, qui avait recueilli Francisque, nègre marron de l'habitation, 4 janvier 1779, ANOM A17: 26

⁵⁸⁶ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 741, 744; de Vastey [1814] 2014: 109-110

⁵⁸⁷ St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 5): 906

strangulation for just hitting a white man.⁵⁸⁸ Lafortune killed his owner at Dondon in May 1786 by stabbing him in the chest and the side, and was sentenced to being broken alive.⁵⁸⁹ Violation of slave owners' property seemed to have increased as well. Mardy, a Kongo man, was convicted in 1784 as a thief and an assassin of his owner, for which he was broken alive and decapitated. His head was exposed on a pike at Fossette outside Le Cap, where enslaved people typically performed their burial rites.⁵⁹⁰ Two enslaved men and one woman sawed a hole in a white man's home in Limbé and stole merchandise, an offense for which they were executed in 1786.⁵⁹¹ A creole named Cezar, owned by a Capuchin priest, was accused of trafficking enslaved women and men from Gonaïves and attempting to make money from the sales, a violation of the 1758 Le Cap ruling. After the discovery of Cezar's plan, he was condemned to death by hanging; also prosecuted were the landlord who rented him a room and free people of color who forged Cezar's free papers.⁵⁹² Moreover, 1782, 1784, and 1785 were peak years for self-assertive behaviors – theft, passing as free, bearing arms, and repeating escape – based on runaway slave advertisement data (Figure 3.6).

In addition to openly assaulting their owners and stealing their property, slaves were increasingly seeking permanent refuge from the plantation system altogether, much like the Maniel community. The rapid increase of the slave population after 1783 also signaled a steady increase of lengths of runaways' escapes reported in *Les Affiches Americaines*; more runaways were being reported missing for months and sometimes years. People were becoming more knowledgeable about how to escape and were applying that knowledge to their freedom treks. Additionally, inter-racial/ethnic group escapes were also growing, showing that there was a slowly increasing sense of racial solidarity

⁵⁸⁸ St. Mery 1784 (Vol 6): 474

⁵⁸⁹ "Arrêt de la Cour, qui condamne le nomme LAFORTUNE, Negre esclave, assassin de son Maître" 27AP/12, François Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN; Munford and Zeuske 1988: 19

⁵⁹⁰ St. Mery 1784 (Vol 6): 640

⁵⁹¹ Munford and Zeuske 1988: 19

⁵⁹² "Arret de la Cour, qui condamne le Negre CEZAR a etre Pendu, pour crime de Plaigaire ou Vol d'Esclaves" ANOM C9B 36; Geggus 2013: 115

among the enslaved population. The skills, information, and experience shared by individuals from different backgrounds was valuable knowledge to add to their mawonaj repertoire toolkit. Before the colonial situation, groups such as the Senegambians, Biafrans, and Kongolese probably would never have encountered each other on the African continent, but conditions in Saint Domingue prompted them to interact in work arrangements, living quarters, familial units, and ritual gatherings, forging relationships across cultural, geographic, and linguistic boundaries. Primary sources provide evidence of mawon settlements besides the Maniel, who sought to live and work amongst themselves and on their own terms. For example, one group of runaways established an independent living zone on a coffee plantation in Cayes de Jacmel, hiding in plain sight for more than three years without detection under the noses of their owners.

The South

On March 1st, 1787, an ad was published in *Les Affiches Americaines* for seven runaways from Sale-Trou, a neighborhood of Cayes de Jacmel bordering the Spanish territory and the Baoruco mountains. The fugitives included: Valentin, creole; Paul, creole, 26; Jupiter, Kongo, 35; Coacou/Coucou, creole; Lafortune, Kongo, 22; Andre, Mina and Marianne, Kongo, both aged 55 and in chains. Instructions in the ad stated to give notice to Lamothe Vedel should any of the runaways be identified or located.⁵⁹³ Four of these fugitives, Andre, Paul, LaFortune, and Coucou were either captured or returned to Vedel voluntarily; however, they did not remain at his plantation for long. They were included in another group of sixteen runaways who escaped Lamothe Vedel's plantation in August 1788 after a hurricane descended on the 16th of the month:⁵⁹⁴ Andre, Mina; Paul, Coffi, Coucou, Jacob, and Tranquillin, all creoles; Cabi, Valeri, Sans-Nom, Casimir, LaFortune, Basile, Phanor, Hilaire, Catin, and Urgele, all Kongos; and Justine, a creole *mulatresse*. Based on statements published in the *Gazette de Saint Domingue* three years later in April 1791, the latter group of escapees fled to the heights of Montagne de la Selle, one of Saint Domingue's steepest mountains in the parish of Cayes de Jacmel. A Kongolese woman named Rose was found on the Dubois/Lillancourt property after having recently left the runaways led by Andre, Coucou, Lafortune, and Paul. Rose admitted to working with two other women, one named Nangout, under the direction of a black man named Lafoucalt at Lillancourt where she planted coffee, cotton, corn, and other crops.

Based on what we know about African ethnic solidarity in runaway communities of the Americas, runaways tended to elect representatives from their respective ethnic group who then collaborated for strategies of rebellion. The composition of the Vedel runaways indicate that Paul, Coucou, and

⁵⁹³ LAA March 1, 1787, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=7993>

⁵⁹⁴ McClellan III 1992: 27

Lafortune, part of the 1787 contingency, acted as representatives who recruited members of their ethnic group to escape again in 1788. Paul and Coucou were both creoles and brought more creoles with them; and Lafortune was a Kongolese man who mobilized others who also were from the Kongo. These runaways in Cayes de Jacmel formed their own economic mode of production based on the technologies previously used for their oppression. It is possible that, like others in the south, the Cayes de Jacmel mawons sold their products to the Spanish – or to the remaining Neybe mawons nearby – for provisions. Moreau de St. Mery claimed that between Cayes de Jacmel, the Baoruco, and Pointe Beate, there were two tracts of land appropriate for cultivation – one over 170 square miles and the other over 270 square miles. He suggested that these lands, both plains and mountainous, could hold several sugar and coffee plantations.⁵⁹⁵ It was in these areas that enslaved Africans from Saint Domingue organized self-sufficient work regimes away from the domination of white planters.

Rose's testimony was confirmation of previous suspicion that the Vedel runaways were being sheltered by other enslaved people on the Lillancourt coffee plantation, but past attempts by Vedel to pinpoint their location and return them somehow failed. On these lands, the fugitives were growing coffee and cotton, which one of Saint Domingue's fourth agricultural economy often sold illegally sold to Jamaica, who had begun "free trading" at the ports of Jérémie and Cap Tiburon.⁵⁹⁶ The day after Rose was questioned, Justine was also captured at Lillancourt but quickly escaped again. Another woman named Heneriette, a runaway for three years, was found during a search of the Lillancourt property; she was being sheltered by a valet named Zephir. Henriette was questioned, under duress no doubt, and after hearing her statements Vedel and M. Noel, provost of the marechaussée, marched off to Lillancourt. The rebel band was angered at the news of Henriette's

⁵⁹⁵ St. Mery 1798c (Part 1): 82

⁵⁹⁶ Scott III 1986: 69-72; McClellan III 1992: 67

capture and prepared themselves for a confrontation with Vedel and Noel. When the two men arrive, they encountered Andre – the Mina man who escaped in the spring of 1787 and again in summer 1788; he was armed with a machete and a gun, raising his gun to shoot at Vedel. Vedel was unarmed and called for Noel to retrieve his gun. By the time Noel returned, Andre was already out of sight. The absence of Andre and the other runaways from the Vedel plantation was causing delay to productivity; and since the runaways were armed, they posed a threat to Vedel and other planters of Selle and Sal-Trou.⁵⁹⁷

Also in 1788, a revolt conspiracy brewed in Jérémie involving two men named Joseph and Jean-Baptiste, evidenced by several instigators and witnesses that were interrogated in September and December of 1788.⁵⁹⁸ Coincidentally, there was also a mawon settlement in the same area, which possibly were in contact or collaboration with the conspirators. Just before Christmas of 1788, a Bambara woman named Françoise escaped from her owner in Cap-Tiburon and was suspected of attempting to reach an armed community near Jérémie:

Françoise, Bambara, stamped on the breast [MARAIS], age around 30 years, of tall height, red skinned, having marks of her country on the face and body, the middle finger of the right hand cut, speaking French and English; people have seen this negress in the heights of the Riviere des Anglais [English River], called Baumanoir, with a negre who carried a bundle of linen and a sickle, they have taken the road from the Source-Chaude [Hot Springs], opposite Jérémie, north and south, from the Anses, at that spring there are many maroon negroes; there is another negro who left as a maroon at the same time and from the same quarter, and who has carried off a gun with around six [units] of powder and lead. Give notice to M. Marias Lamothe, at Cap-Tiburon.⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁷ “Dénonciation que fait M. Lamothe Vedel de ses Negres marrons, & des faits résultants de leur marronnage, Le 6 Avril 1791,” *Gazette de Saint Domingue Vol. 1* April 13, 1791, p. 382, John Carter Brown Library; “Avis divers” and “suivent les annexes,” *Supplement a la Gazette de St. Domingue*, August 27, 1791, p. 839, John Carter Brown Library; Fouchard 1972: 254-255

⁵⁹⁸ “Interrogation of rebellion instigators, September 27, 1788” and “Interrogation of rebellion instigators, December 15, 1788,” UF Gainesville Jérémie Notary Papers Box 3: 3-3a

⁵⁹⁹ *LA4* December 25, 1788, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9150>

Françoise spoke French and English, and was last seen with a man carrying a package of linens and a sickle near Riviere des Anglais, the northern end of which heads toward the mountains between Cap Tiberon and Jérémie. A third man escaped around the same time as Françoise, but was carrying a gun and six units of gunpowder. Françoise and her unnamed companion supposedly took the road of the Hot Springs near the coves of Jérémie, where many were runaways residing. Figure 4.4 depicts the type of hot springs cave in which runaways would have sought refuge. The coves may have been either the Port-Salut Moreau Cave or the Grotte nan Barye of the Grande Anse.⁶⁰⁰

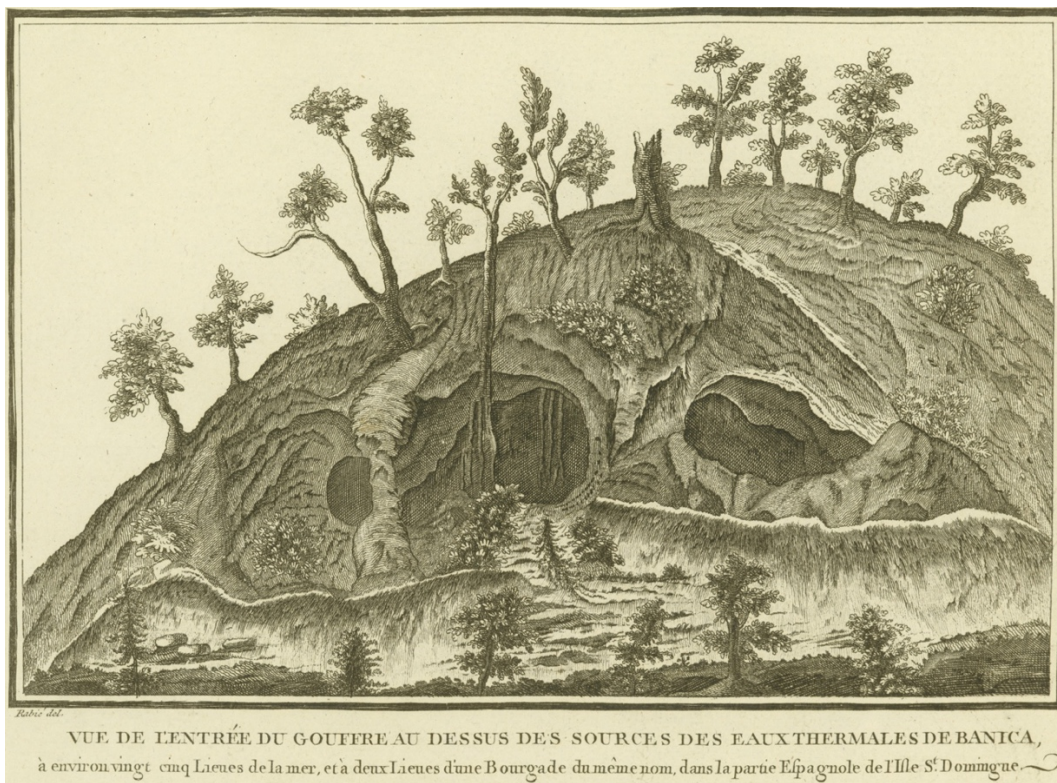


Figure 4.4: “Vue de l’entrée du gouffre au dessus des sources des eaux thermales de banica,” Nicolas Ponce and Moreau de St. Mery, 1791. *John Carter Brown Library. An example of a hot springs cave, which also doubled as places of refuge for runaways.*

Port-Salut, just southeast of Jérémie, later became the site of a large revolt conspiracy in January 1791 when rebels armed with guns, machetes, sticks, and other handheld weapons galvanized forces in the area, and Les Cayes, to join them. Led by representatives from each plantation, they decided

⁶⁰⁰ Beauvoir-Dominique 2009: 80

on the night of January 24th to collectively demand the three free days per week they believed the French king promised based on a rumor that spread through the colony. To further urge the cause, they kidnapped a commandeur and three other enslaved people from one plantation. This revolt conspiracy was discovered and the leaders were captured and sentenced. One of the leaders, Dominique Duhard, was arrested, whipped, branded, and sentenced to the galleys for life; but he somehow escaped and would go on to become part of the Platon mawons that next year.⁶⁰¹

The North

Enslaved people in the areas surrounding Cap Français were exposed to many of the luxuries available in the city, which attracted people from all walks of life especially during the weekend markets. Urban slaves, African and mixed-race alike, purchased their own freedom and at times went on to own prosperous businesses and real estate. The Petit Guinee (“Little Africa”) neighborhood was composed of gens du couleur and affranchis, and was a magnet for runaways to socialize and rent rooms as they re-fashioned their lives as free people. Over 200 runaways were found in Petit Guinee during a search in the early 1780s.⁶⁰² It was a rowdy city of 20,000, while less than 20 police officers patrolled its streets⁶⁰³ – leading to the 1785 Chamber of Agriculture report about calendas and other gatherings of slaves. In June 1786, a group of enslaved people and free blacks accused of theft were flogged and hanged to death in the public square of Le Cap. Others were whipped and sentenced to the chain gang for forging free passes and taking up renting rooms for a freeman named Larose.⁶⁰⁴ On the night of January 15th, 1785, the crew entered the room of a free mulatress Catherine and stole furniture and other effects. Included in the court statement were François, an enslaved man who belonged to a free woman named Jeannette; Colas, slave; Bijou;

⁶⁰¹ Fick 1990: 137-138, 143

⁶⁰² Geggus 2013: 103-107, 115

⁶⁰³ King 2004; Girard 2016: 97

⁶⁰⁴ “Arrêt de la Cour, qui condamne plusieurs Negres, voleurs, et receleurs, 1 Juin 1786,” 27AP/12, François Neufchateau Papers Dossiers 2-3, AN; Fouchard 1972: 272; Geggus 2013: 115

Alexandre; Jean-Louis, an enslaved Kongo; Versailles; Jean Louis, an enslaved Mondongue; Anne; Sieur Masse; Hypolite; Cesar, an enslaved mattress maker; Toussaint, belonging to the free widow Jupiter; and Jean-Louis, a creole wigmaker.

These kinds of informal economic activities were made possible by the complex stratum of race, color, status, and class in Le Cap. The population density of the city and the ongoing interactions between enslaved people, free people of color, and runaways facilitated connections between them to circumvent colonial structures through rebellions, conspiracies, and other forms of resistance. East of Cap Français, rebellion on the Sicard plantation in Fort Dauphin may have been fermenting since an October 1784 ship revolt. Sicard, an old and wealthy planter, was traveling with a colonist named Lavalette from Martinique back to Fort-Dauphin, along with a group of Lavalette's slaves. Sicard's servant Jean-Pierre, aged 14, and Lavalette's captives – all of whom were likely French speakers – successfully conspired to kill their owners and throw them overboard before arriving in Fort Dauphin. Their ship landed on the English island Tortol where the rebels were arrested and sent to Martinique, then back to Cap Français. Later that month, Jean-Pierre was sentenced to be hanged and burned. The other five, Léveillé, Pharaon, Mercure, Luc and Azor were condemned to publicly apologize by standing with a sign board describing their crime. Afterward, Léveillé and Pharaon had their right hands cut off, and all five were broken alive on the wheel and burned.⁶⁰⁵

Word of Sicard's murder and the uprising of his servant Jean-Pierre made its way back to Fort Dauphin, which had already been a hotbed for raids by mawon bands. Several years after the 1784 ship revolt, two large groups of runaways escaped the Sicard plantation. The first of these groups included three men who went on to fight with the mawon leader Louis Gillot dit Yaya, who along with several associates were arrested in February 1787 for pillaging plantations in Fort Dauphin. Yaya had been en mawonaj for ten to twelve years, or perhaps even longer than that if he was

⁶⁰⁵ *LA* 23 October 1784; St. Mery 1784 (Vol. 6): 623-625; Fouchard 1972: 261

described in a 1766 ad detailing a “very dangerous” creole man named Gillot who stole horses and mules from Petite-Anse and sold them to the Spanish.⁶⁰⁶ In any case, Yaya was at some point joined by Narcisse, Manuel Damas, Jean François, Pierre Sicard, Pantaleon, Apollon, Dominique, Jean Louis, and a mulatre woman. From what can be gleaned from Moreau de St. Mery’s handwritten notes, there was a confrontation with the *marechaussée* wherein the rebels were armed with machetes. Several of the accused were interrogated several times and dozens of witnesses were interviewed. The records show that Yaya was charged for attacking plantations and receiving arms, crimes for which he received public notoriety.⁶⁰⁷

Yaya’s associates Pierre Sicard, Jean (Louis or François), and Apollon seem to have been part of a group of seven absconders who escaped the Sicard plantation in Fort Dauphin in early 1787 before the confrontation. On January 28th, 1788, months after Yaya’s execution, an ad was posted for Pierre and his brother Jean, both creole carpenters, and Apollon, Etienne, Francisque, Marie-Rose, and Rose, who were all Kongolese. These six runaways had been missing for approximately one year, perhaps to join Yaya’s uprising.

Pierre, créole, age around 40 years: & Jean his brother, age of 36 years, having a little red skin, both carpenters: & Apollon, age around 35 years: & Étienne age about 32 years: & Francisque age about 50 years: & Marie-Rose age around 28 years: & Rose age around 42 years, all four of the nation Kongo, have been escaped for nearly one year: & César age 30 years: & Parisien age about 28 years: & Jason age about 32 years, all three of the nation Kongo: & Marie of the nation Kongo, age around 38 years, of a beautiful size and strong body, with her three children, savoir; Vincent, créole, age around 18 years, having a pretty face and scars on the clavicles, and an iron collar; & Scolastique, [female] aged around 16: & Marie-Thérèse age from 6 to 7 years. These last seven have escaped since the first of this month; they all depend on the Sommanvert succession, formerly living in the quarters of Trou and Limbé, where they now rest, and where the two carpenters pass for free. Give news to M. Bureau, on the Sicard plantation at the quarter Dauphin, to whom these negres have been leased, and who will give good reward.⁶⁰⁸

⁶⁰⁶ *LAA* February 26, 1766, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=84>

⁶⁰⁷ “Rapport du proces criminel instruit contre des negres marrons, 1787,” ANOM F3 94: 174

⁶⁰⁸ *LAA* January 26, 1788, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8556>

In September 1787, Yaya was sentenced to execution, likely by being broken on a wheel like most of his mawon predecessors, for his pillaging of plantations in Trou and Terrier Rouge.⁶⁰⁹ It is not clear what happened to the others in Yaya's band. The Jean and Pierre listed in the advertisement above seems to suggest that they were suspected of passing for free in Trou or Limbé. Perhaps, if the ad does indeed describe the same mawons who fought with Yaya, the two men evaded punishment for the uprising and were not killed or returned to the Sicard plantation. The public knowledge of this network's escape and open attacks to the plantation system may have influenced enslaved people on their respective plantations. On the first of January 1788, probably during or after New Year's celebrations, another group of seven ran away from the Sicard plantation: César, Parisien, Jason, and Marie, all Kongolese, and Marie's creole children Vincent, Scolastique, and Marie-Thérèse.

Yaya is a common Muslim name, so it is possible that it was Louis Gillot's original name that he went by to reflect his personal background from the Upper Guinea area.⁶¹⁰ Yaya's leadership of this mawon band may have been a continuation of the marabout's tradition of resistance to slavery. Further, several known mawon leaders served as spiritual guides for the members of their networks, for example Colas Jambes Coupées, Mackandal, and Santiago, so Yaya's legitimacy as a leader perhaps derived from his spiritual inclinations. If his origins indeed were connected to that region, he may have been brought to Saint Domingue when the slave trade from Futa Toro (Senegambia) was reinstated after the undoing of the 1776 revolution, wherein *marabouts* led by Abdul-Qadir Kan effectively ended the French slave trade. Muslims, especially those who had formerly opposed the slave trade, were no longer invulnerable to the trade from Senegambia and began surfacing in larger numbers throughout the Americas.⁶¹¹ While there were none brought directly into Fort Dauphin, the number of Senegambians brought to the port of Cap Français increased almost four-fold between

⁶⁰⁹ St. Mery 1797a (Vol. 1): 176

⁶¹⁰ Diouf 1998: 151

⁶¹¹ Ware 2014: ch. 3

1786 and 1787, from 375 to 1,201.⁶¹² Also in those two years, four slave ships – the *Reverseau*, the *Fleury*, the *Amitié*, and the *Alexandre* – from Senegambian ports at Saint Louis and Goree headed to Saint Domingue were noted to have had at-sea insurrections resulting in a combined mortality of 261 captives.⁶¹³

The influence of Yaya's confrontation – as well as those by earlier mawon bands led by Noel, Thélémaque Canga, Isaac Candide, and Pirrhus – may have spread beyond the Sicard plantation to other parts of Fort Dauphin. In a series of letters beginning in early 1787 into 1788, Marie Tousard, wife of career military officer and recent coffee planter Colonel Louis Tousard, complained that escapes were a consistent problem on their Fort Dauphin plantation that Marie managed while Louis travelled. Louis attempted to support to his wife by advising that they use iron collars as punishment yet to no avail, bondspeople on the Tousard plantation continued to escape and steal equipment to sell in town. On January 10th, 1787, the colonel wrote to his mother-in-law Madame de St. Martin assuring her that though several slaves had escaped, among them Pompice (possibly Pompée) and Antoine, they would be captured soon. She responded in February that she was concerned that the runaways had not returned and possibly travelled to the Spanish territory. By June 21st, Louis himself began to worry about the four runaways who potentially reached Santo Domingo. He planned to place an advertisement for them, and to brand Jean-Louis and Michel as punishment upon their return. By July 26th, there was no mention of the runaways in the Fort Dauphin jail. Colonel Tousard did eventually place the ad for Pierre Loulou, a driver on this plantation; yet, as Marie's letters and the November 17th, 1787 runaway advertisement indicate, Pierre was uncontrollable and was well known in Maribaroux and Ouanaminthe, where he frequented the Philibert, de Pontac, and de Vaublanc plantations.⁶¹⁴

⁶¹² slavevoyages.org

⁶¹³ slavevoyages.org

⁶¹⁴ LAA November 17, 1787, <http://www.marronnage.info/en/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8465>

Still, Loulou was returned to the Tousards, though his past escape loomed in their minds. On January 17th, 1788, the colonel suggested that Loulou should receive a new coat as a gift to keep him obliged – but sternly reminded Madame St. Martin that Loulou was to be kept under close watch. Tousard also suggested that another foreman, Jean-Baptiste, needed to be kept in his place because his position afforded him the potential to influence others toward chaos and disorder.⁶¹⁵ The concerns about Loulou and Jean-Baptiste were founded, as they seem to have been repeat offenders. After being captured and returned to Tousard, Pierre Loulou escaped again in August 1788; this time he, Pompée, and Jean-Baptiste managed to evade the Tousards until at least February 1789, when the following ad was posted:

Pierre, called Loulou, mulatto, age of 26 years, from the height of 5 feet 6 to 7 inches, having belonged to M. de Paradès, having his little finger cut, his legs are big and marked with scars caused by sickness; the said negre is well known in Maribaroux, where he has appeared at several plantations, has escaped since the 15th of last August: Pompée, Mandingue, age of 26 years, height of 5 feet 6 inches, stamped PARADÈS, having marks of his country on his face, his right hand wounded, has been marooned for one year: Jean-Baptiste, creole, age of 48 years, of the height of 5 feet 4 inches, strong and bearded, stamped on the left breast COMMEAUX, on the right TOUZARD, having belonged to M. de Paradès: give news to M. de Touzard, lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of Cap, or to M. Filleul, trader at Fort-Dauphin. There will be a good reward.⁶¹⁶

Pompée, a Mandingue, had been missing for a year and thus was never found by Antoine, whom Marie had previously sent to find Pompée. According to Marie's letters, Jean-Baptiste also had a history of rebellion; he was punished in January 1788 for damaging a hen coop. These rebels, especially Loulou, demonstrated consistent hostility on the Tousard plantation, some of which spilled over into the Haitian Revolution when Loulou became part of the insurgency under Jean-François Papillon in 1792.⁶¹⁷ Ironically, Tousard and Jean-François' troops would become later

⁶¹⁵ Anne-Louis de Tousard Papers, 1659-1932: Box 1 and 2; Geggus 2014: 29-33

⁶¹⁶ *LA* February 7, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9233>

⁶¹⁷ Geggus 2014: 16, 32

acquainted when the former was dispatched to put down the revolt at Le Cap in the summer of 1791.⁶¹⁸

It may not be impossible that Loulou and Papillon knew each other before the uprising. Two weeks before Loulou's November 1787 escape, Jean-François, an early leader of the 1791 revolt along with Georges Biassou, fled the Papillon property in Le Cap.⁶¹⁹ That they escaped within weeks of each other (and All Soul's Day on November 1st) may hint at a wider gathering that took place among the future insurgents. It took an additional year after the initial revolt for Pierre Loulou to join Jean-François' ranks, indicating Pierre was a leader in his own right in the areas of Fort-Dauphin, Maribaroux, and Ouanaminthe where he was well known; while Papillon was voted king of the Gallifet plantations closer to Le Cap. During the early years of the Haitian Revolution, Fort Dauphin continued to be an important location for rebels to trade of weapons, food, and resources from the Spanish; and in 1794 it became a place of infamous brutality when Jean-François' troops massacred hundreds of French men, women, and children.⁶²⁰

Planters worried that ties forged by runaways could easily facilitate the spread of insurrection from the city to the countryside if measures were not taken to thwart even short-term mawonaj. Villevaleix was the lawyer for the Breda plantations surrounding Cap Français, one of which was previously home to Toussaint Louverture.⁶²¹ Villevaleix wrote on March 31st, 1790 that there had been drought conditions recently, and fires started by nearby mawons were destroying plantations in the plain of Le Cap. His account casually acknowledges there was indeed a regular presence of runaway communities just outside the port city's bustle. These mawons may have been joined a few

⁶¹⁸ 1791. "A Particular Account of the Insurrection of the Negroes of St. Domingo, Begun in August, 1791." Translated from the French, 4th Edition.

⁶¹⁹ *LAA* November 3, 1787, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=8436>; Geggus 2014: 35

⁶²⁰ Geggus 2002: 19, 180; Landers 2015: 2; Nessler 2016: 57-60

⁶²¹ Girard and Donnadiou 2013; Girard 2016: ch. 2-3

weeks later by a young, newly arrived African who escaped the Breda pottery the night of April 18th or 19th.⁶²² Nine others escaped Breda after an enslaved man was killed due to violent mistreatment, and they refused to return until they were assured no punishment would be given. Later in September, the Breda overseer found and arrested 27 runaways at the pottery and others hiding in the slaves' housing quarters.⁶²³

Lieutenant Milscent's account from 1791 corroborates Villevalleix's mention of mawons gathered around Le Cap to organize a revolt, stating that

“in 1790, being a deputy of the assembly of the north, it was suddenly reported that there was a considerable assemblage of negroes in the morne [small mountains] of Le Cap, well furnished with guns, canons, etc., which formed the nucleus of a general uprising of negroes in the colony...My inquiries taught me that there were about thirty negro maroons of this mountain, armed, some with machetes, others with sickles.”⁶²⁴

One of these runaways may have been Etienne, a mulatre carpenter and cook who escaped in the summer of 1790 with a brown horse, a gun, and a machete, claiming to be free. While the ad for Etienne was placed by Mr. Archambau in Le Cap, Etienne had been seen in multiple locations, including Port-Margot, Gonaïves, Artibonite, and as far south as Saint-Marc, clearly using the horse to reach different parishes. In Etienne's case, his self-identification as a free man may not have been only an individualized posturing to 'pass' as was the case for many runaways, but perhaps was a public proclamation and rallying cry to galvanize other enslaved people and runaways in the northern plain for a meeting in or around Le Cap. Etienne's escape was advertised alongside a Senegalese woman named Martonne. She had been leased to a surgeon but eventually escaped, and was later seen in Grand-Riviere, Dondon, and at Maribaroux on the Philibert plantation⁶²⁵ – one of the sites Pierre Loulou frequented while he traversed the north. The chase that Milscent attempted

⁶²² *LAA* April 21, 1790, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=10249>

⁶²³ Debien 1956: 164-170; Scott III 1986: 25

⁶²⁴ Milscent 1791: 11

⁶²⁵ *LAA* August 28, 1790, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=10562>

to organize against these runaways outside Le Cap never happened, because their camp was informed and scattered before the detachment could reach them.⁶²⁶

The fear of mawonaj as an organizing principle to build a regional or colony-wide network of rebels may have had some legitimacy, especially if we keep in mind rebels' propensity to use women as go-betweens, spies, and smugglers.⁶²⁷ After Jean-François escaped the Papillon plantation at Le Cap in November 1787, his girlfriend Charlotte, a Poulard woman, ran away from the same owner in March 1791. She had been missing for five months before an advertisement for her was placed in *Gazette de Saint Domingue* in early August. It was suspected that Charlotte was abusing the temporary pass she was given, and had been moving about in different quarters. By the time the ad was posted, it was believed that she was in or around Port-au-Prince.⁶²⁸ We may never know exactly what Charlotte was doing in those five months, the different parishes she visited, or with whom she was in contact. However, it may be possible that she left in the spring on behalf of Jean-François to help coordinate the rebellions that would begin a few months later. While Charlotte was traveling in the greater Port-au-Prince area, smaller uprisings began there in July that anticipated the August 1791 mass revolt in the northern plain. By September she was back north with Jean-François, and rebels at the former Galiffet plantation named them king and queen.⁶²⁹ The election of kings and queens was common among the rebels in the north and at Platons whenever they gained military control of a parish.⁶³⁰ There's no direct evidence that Jean-François and Charlotte's coronation was related to the secret *vaudox* gatherings or Kongo-Catholic confraternity celebrations where kings and queens were the central leadership figures, however we do know that initiates of the former were asked to

⁶²⁶ Milscent 1791: 11-12

⁶²⁷ Moitt 2001: ch. 7; Girard 2009: 68-72

⁶²⁸ *Gazette de Saint Domingue* Vol. 2 August 6, 1791 "Esclaves en marronnage," pg. 776, John Carter Brown Library

⁶²⁹ Geggus 2014: 33

⁶³⁰ Thornton 1993b: 207-210

perform rebellious tasks such as stealing before they could enter the secret organization. In such a case, we might then think of Charlotte's crowning as a reward for her role in coordinating the northern and western revolts.

Meanwhile, the gens du couleur were beginning to organize for their rights, which had been constrained in recent years. While Vincent Oge, the wealthy quateron, was hesitant to rally enslaved people to fight for freedom alongside the gens du couleur, Jean-Baptiste Cap, a freeman from Le Cap, armed slaves and attempted to free Oge from prison. Recently uncovered evidence from the Clement plantation in Acul might hint toward a relationship between Jean-Baptiste Cap and Boukman Dutty as early as February 1791.⁶³¹ Later, Jean-Baptiste Cap was voted king of Limbé and Port Margot, then was captured and executed on the wheel in September 1791 as one of the leaders of the mass revolt.⁶³² White colonists feared enslaved people would be inspired by Oge's revolt. This trope was rejected by Lieutenant Milscent, who felt the gens du couleur were indispensable in the fight against mawons and deserved to be treated equal to white men. He was informed of thirty runaways fleeing to join one hundred others in Borgne, Port-de-Paix, and Gros Morne. When he offered to launch an attack with the help of a militia of mixed-race men, his offer was curiously rebuffed, much to his frustration in 1791 when he expressed that the freemen were the only ones capable of putting down the revolt.⁶³³

The West

The repeal of rights and privileges gens du couleur to hold calendas, to practice law or medicine, and to have French citizenship contributed to an overall sense of dissatisfaction. In 1777 there was a police force designed to regulate them in France, adding to their frustrations about discrimination

⁶³¹ Benot 2009: 100

⁶³² *Gazette de Saint Domingue Vol. 2* September 21, 1791 "Nouvelles Coloniales," pg. 891, John Carter Brown Library; Thornton 1993b: 209

⁶³³ Milscent 1791: 12; Schultz 2014: 180

and tightening restrictions on their social mobility and rights in the colony and the metropole.⁶³⁴

Despite this, or because of it, freemen continued to try to prove their worth by fighting with Comte d'Estaing in Savannah during the Usonian War. Avenues to manumission were few, besides service to the *marechaussée* as runaway hunters, and tensions surrounding Port-au-Prince culminated in a conspiracy to burn down the city in the summer of 1787. In the first instance, a slow match was wrapped in a cloth dipped in oil and sulfur in a basket on a rooftop while a barrel of tafia (rum) was used in the August 10th attempt. The assailants were unknown but one black woman was arrested and sentenced to death.⁶³⁵

By 1789, Saint Domingue was experiencing a grain shortage – hunger also hit the citizens of France, prompting the French Revolution – and rumors of the ‘rights of man’ swirled the Atlantic world seeming to promise impending revolt.⁶³⁶ Some colonists even went so far as to attempt to incite a rebellion to create cause for maintaining the enslavement and the colonial order,⁶³⁷ while another colonial official stated in July 1789 that the denial to legal freedom would contribute to a swell of runaways.⁶³⁸ Indeed, that year saw the highest numbers of *mawonaj* overall and the largest group escapes from plantations (Figures 3.2 and 3.4) The mixed race *gens du couleur* were beginning to agitate for citizenship, traveling to the National Assembly in France in October 1789, and their ideas were feared to be spreading amongst the enslaved population. While some freemen in the north were sympathetic and in favor of abolition, *gens du couleur* of the west especially sought to protect their interests – which largely included slavery. Many mixed-race individuals were landowners and owned and traded slaves as property. Though free people of color largely did not

⁶³⁴ “Déclaration du Roi, Pour la Police des Noirs, Du 9 Aout 1777,” John Carter Brown Library

⁶³⁵ St. Mery [1798a] 1985: 206-207

⁶³⁶ Klooster 2014

⁶³⁷ Benot 2009: 102

⁶³⁸ Munford and Zeukse 1988: 18

identify with the enslaved population or their African cultures, they weren't opposed to mobilizing (and during the revolution, coercing) slaves for their own benefit.

In early 1791, 35 free people of color, led by Buisson Desmarres, Renaud Robin, the Poissons, and the Bauges, and their slaves and families were charged and sentenced for the death of three white men, Phillippe Gertoux, steward of the Borgella plantation; Grenaudot, carpenter for Borgella; Real, merchandise seller; and Jacques Hiver, manager of the François Boe plantation.⁶³⁹ Buisson Desmarres was a mulatre who lived in Fond-Parisien, a small plain in the parish of Croix-des-Bouquets. The Bauge family of Galets, Croix des Bouquets were mulatres related to a powerful white family and sugar and coffee producers themselves, seizing on the boom after the end of the Usonian War. The Bauges and Desmarres were related by marriage; at least one of the Bauge sisters had married a Desmarres.⁶⁴⁰

Boisson Desmarres and his white neighbor got into an argument about Desmarres' animals crossing over on to the man's property. When the man confronted him, Desmarres lost his temper and physically attacked him – a grave mistake for a freeman of color. The white man furiously left for Port-au-Prince and recruited twenty other whites to approach Desmarres for daring to raise his hand to a white. Knowing that he would soon need to defend himself, Desmarres called his in-laws the Bauges, Renaud Robin, Jean Poisson, several of their slaves, and two other friends and neighbors. The African descendant rebels, free and enslaved, attempted to block the way from Port-au-Prince back to Fonds-Parisien by setting fire to the road. Before the now 1,500 strong vigilante band of whites arrived to Desmarres' house, he and his followers had already abandoned their lands, leaving the whites to burn the plantations of Desmarres, the Poissons, and Renaud Robin. The blacks and freemen followed the same path as mawons had taken for generations to find freedom in

⁶³⁹ “Arrêt du Conseil Supérieur de Saint Domingue du 22 février 1791,” John Carter Brown Library

⁶⁴⁰ King 2001: 219-220

Spanish Santo Domingo, where they were welcomed in Neybe. They wrote to the governor asking for asylum and were told they could become subjects of the crown if they remained in Spanish territory.⁶⁴¹

It is not clear what happened next. Historian Thomas Madiou suggested that the fugitives remained in Santo Domingo,⁶⁴² however other documents indicate they were executed in Port-au-Prince in February 1791. The following were condemned to have their legs, arms, thighs, and kidneys broken alive on a scaffold at the public square: Buisson Desmarres and two of his slaves Jean-François and Jean-Joseph; three men of the Robin family, Renaud, Desruisseaux, and Ferrier; Pierre and Paris Poisson, and two of Paris' slaves Gabriel and David; Jean-François and Jean-Louis Bauge; someone named Aza; and a Spanish black man named Gustine – perhaps the one who provided them shelter. Others who were charged were Emmanuel Gonzal, a free black man and keeper of François Boe's plantation at Fond Verette; Renaud Robin's slaves François dit Degage, Fatime dit Faïman, François dit Tout Mon Bien, and Pierre-Louis dit Pompee; Charles and Nago, both slaves of Buisson Desmarres; Jean Poisson and his slaves Marie dit Marinette, Suzon, a young girl named Iphigénie, and Nicolas; Marie, slave of Bauge; Marie dit Gothon, slave of the widow Borno; Joseph dit Boisson, Jean-Joseph dit Boisson, and Denis-Victor dit Boisson Belleruche; and Jacques dit Frère, a free black named Babo, Jacques-Joseph dit Falaise, and a free woman named Emilie.

That summer in July 1791, enslaved blacks and mulattres of the Fortin Bellanton plantation in Cul-de-Sac near Croix des Bouquets killed the commandeur for suspecting he was too loyal to whites and likely to turn on their plans of a coordinated revolt. This was not the first time the Bellanton bondspeople held a grievance against plantation authorities. Some 20 years earlier in

⁶⁴¹ Lespinasse [1882] 2015: 309-310; Leger 1907: 44

⁶⁴² Madiou 1847: 65-66, 81

March 1769, all the people enslaved at Bellanton went to the governor's residence in Port-au-Prince to file a claim against their white manager.⁶⁴³ After the 1791 killing of the commandeur, the rebels escaped into the woods where they assembled with nearly fifty other bondspeople from five neighboring plantations who had been reported as runaways. The following day, the *marechaussée* set chase to the band of nearly 60 *mawons*, all of whom were armed with guns and machetes, following them to the coast. The confrontation between the *marechaussée* and the rebel band resulted in the execution of nine rebel leaders and two being broken alive on a scaffold.⁶⁴⁴ Six others were sentenced on July 6th by the high court in Port-au-Prince to hang and have their bodies exposed on the Bellanton property for 24 hours as a warning to others.⁶⁴⁵ The remaining rebels disappeared and were later linked to an auxiliary army called the "Swiss."

On July 18th, the Count of Guitton sent a letter confirming an armed rebellion was growing in Port-au-Prince, Vases, and Mont-Rouis at the plantations of Fortin Bellanton and Poix & Payen. Additionally, the enslaved workers at Trou-Bordet were demanding extra provisions and more time to rest. These conflicts, or "derangements" according to Guitton, were blamed on the influx of soldiers and French citizens who were imposing their ideas on the enslaved in the absence of the plantation owners.⁶⁴⁶ However, the tradition of community formation in *mawon* settlements, some of which were located on abandoned plantations, give indication that enslaved people and runaways had their own sense of work, trade, and division of labor. For them, freedom and independence didn't mean a life without labor, but rather subverting enslavement's violent, involuntary, and unremunerative nature by appropriating oppressive technologies as tools for their sustenance on their terms.

⁶⁴³ Manigat 1977: 435; Manigat 2007: 66

⁶⁴⁴ Fick 1990: 86-87

⁶⁴⁵ *Gazette de Saint Domingue Vol. 2* July 9, 1791 "du Port-au-Prince," pg. 700, John Carter Brown Library

⁶⁴⁶ Pluchon 1987: 128-129, n. 20

The Bwa Kayman ceremony had inaugurated the northern revolt and many plantations outside of Le Cap were in ruins by September 1791; and insurrection was about to engulf the Port-au-Prince area, this time at the Fessard plantation in the Montagnes Noir. Fessard was a lawyer in Port-au-Prince and managed the affairs, including the recapture of runaways, for several planters in the area. An advertisement was placed for Coucoulou, a Nago cook age 27-30; Marc, 20-25, a Kongolese commandeur; Herode, also Kongolese, and a 35-year-old carpenter; and Desire, a 20-22-year-old creole gardener belonging to Sr. Fessard fled the plantation on the first of September. Before the escape, they destroyed several buildings and pieces of furniture and took with them all the guns and ammunition on the property. The four men had initially led 14 others to escape as well, but those runaways returned to report that Coucoulou, Marc, Herod, and Desire would stay put.⁶⁴⁷ Though the 14 returned to Fessard's land, it seems that this was not the only mass desertion in the plantations history. On September 17th, 1771, almost exactly 20 years earlier, eight men and two women escaped the Montagne Noir plantation and were suspected of being harbored by free people of color, further suggesting that in the west there had been ongoing collaboration between enslaved people and the gens du couleur.⁶⁴⁸

In late 1791 in the Cul-de-Sac region surrounding Port-au-Prince, conflicting white colonists and gens du couleur courted dissatisfied mawons – perhaps including those who survived and escaped the Fortin Bellanton conflict – and enslaved people as auxiliary armed forces, promising freedom or minimally better work conditions and a reduced work week.⁶⁴⁹ The “Swiss,” the Company of Africans, and Hyacinthe's army fought on both sides of the civil war between the whites and the coloreds⁶⁵⁰ who took advantage of the already fermenting rebellion among the enslaved people of

⁶⁴⁷ *Gazette de Saint Domingue Vol. 2* October 1, 1791, “Esclaves en marronnage” p. 925, John Carter Brown Library

⁶⁴⁸ *LAA* November 20, 1771, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=3161>

⁶⁴⁹ Fick 1990: 120; Geggus 2002: 102

⁶⁵⁰ Geggus 2006: 214-218

the region. Hyacinthe was a Africa-inspired ritual leader whose following was composed of 15,000 who emerged at Croix-des-Bouquets in 1792 during the Haitian Revolution.⁶⁵¹ Some of his lieutenants included Garion Santo, Halaou, Bebe Coustard, and Belisaire Bonaire.⁶⁵² Similar to Jean-François Papillon, Hyacinthe's girlfriend Magdeleine escaped enslavement in August 1790 disguised as a man, and the ad suggests he lured her away to the Ducoudray plantation where he was held.⁶⁵³ Magdeleine also was a creole woman who had family members in Petit Goâve, so it is interesting to note that she transgressed gender norms in two ways: 1) by dressing in men's clothes and 2) by having a romantic relationship with a presumably African man rather than someone who was another creole or white. Her apparent eschewal of conventionally gendered activity might indicate that Magdeleine was active during the western uprisings. This supports later reports that women in Hyacinthe's camp commonly ran errands to exchange weapons and food.⁶⁵⁴ By July 1792, the mawons encampment at Platons in the south was growing larger by the day; and Romain la Prophetesse, another charismatic leader of a folk and/or Kongo Catholic tradition, and his following of nearly 13,000 had established control over Léogane and Jacmel.⁶⁵⁵ The Haitian Revolution, although not wholly dictated by Africa-inspired rituals and mawonaj, gained benefit from mawon bands and ritual leaders at important moments of the revolution's unfolding.

CONCLUSION

The 1770s and 1780s was a time of heightened aggression by mawon bands in Saint Domingue's northeastern corner and the especially in the south, giving new evidence of rebellious activities of enslaved and self-liberated people. Scholars tend to assume that the Maniel were the only mawon community in Saint Domingue because they were the singular group who received formal

⁶⁵¹ Malenfant 1814: 41

⁶⁵² Madiou 1847 (Vol.1): 100-103; Ardouin 1853: 325

⁶⁵³ *LAA* November 13, 1790, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=10738>

⁶⁵⁴ Malefant 1814: 76, 235

⁶⁵⁵ Fick 1990: 127-129; Rey 1998

recognition by the state, thus leaving concrete documentation of their existence. But, the presence of state legitimization of one settlement does not necessarily mean others did not exist or weren't actively agitating the plantation enterprise from outside its symbolic jurisdiction. The 'sovereignty' assigned to the Maniel prioritizes the political nomenclature of the dominant slave society itself, rather than the "sociogenic" mawonaj that was inherently oriented toward "usher[ing] in new orders and refashion[ing] society's foundations (Roberts 2015: 116)." What if, for example, Bernard Bourgneuf was right about there being some 80,000 mawons living in various parts of the colony? These unseen, uncounted, and, until the present study, unnamed fugitives may be the important linkages that circulated shared consciousness between plantation slaves and self-liberated communities. For example, accounts of mawonaj at the outskirts of Cap Français in 1790 provides evidence of some secret meetings that were occurring before the Haitian Revolution began. The possible relationships between revolutionaries Jean-Francois Papillon and Pierre Loulou could be a compelling revelation that sheds new light on the types of allegiances and relationships that were forged in the colonial period.

The suspicion of mawon activity seemed to have been a preoccupation of the plantocracy, whose founded and/or unfounded fears of raiding prompted their desires for increased militarization via the marechaussée. It is not yet clear how much material damage was done by mawon's plantation incursions. Planters commonly requested compensation from the state for enslaved people who were unjustifiably killed by the marechaussée, but it does not appear that any planter asked to be reimbursed for damages to their property. What is clear is that the marechaussée continually received funds to conduct "hunts," that did at times result in casualties on both sides. Even if planters were exaggerating, the pervasive idea of mawonaj – and their political savvy and military-like aggressive tactics against plantations – may have incited those who were still enslaved to rebel. The importance of studying mawonaj at the meso-level is not necessarily to quantify how

many were present in the colony, which is an unlikely possibility. Rather, what is important is comprehend who was committing mawonaj, what they were doing while at large and why, who knew about it, and what people thought about it. Specifically, how did enslaved people's thoughts about mawonaj influence their propensity to escape or not, to rebel or not? What was the true nature of the relationship between mawon bands and enslaved people? Examples such as Noel at the head of a network of *commandeurs*, the Vedel gang, Charlotte Papillon, and Yaya and others from the Sicard plantation demonstrate that runaways used mawonaj strategically to communicate with and potentially recruit enslaved people. To that end, more research is also needed to track the circulation of "damaged" runaways sold to new plantations, and taking with them their experiences as a mawon.

Findings from Chapter Three combined with other sources discussed here help demonstrate that interactions and relationship building among enslaved people during mawonaj processes reproduced consciousness and a sense of racial solidarity over time. The "Vedel Sixteen" show that while shared African ethnicity remained a significant aspect of group escapes, it was also becoming increasingly common for runaways to take flight in a group of people from diverse backgrounds. Inter-ethnic mawon bands could muster together a wider set of knowledge, skills, and resources as they set out to geographically isolated independent living zones. The tradition of community formation in armed mawon settlements, some of which were located on abandoned plantations, give indication that enslaved people and runaways developed their own sense of work, trade, and division of labor. For them, freedom and independence didn't necessarily mean a life without labor; but rather subverting enslavement's violent, involuntary, and unremunerative nature by appropriating oppressive technologies as tools for sustenance on their own terms.

A look at *longue durée* macro-level patterns going back to the 16th century shows that rebels had a keen sense of geopolitics and adapted to or took advantage of political and economic cleavages.

Mawonaj can be thought of as a consistent repertoire tactic that was most characterized by 1) the exploitation of structural cleavages, and 2) population growth of enslaved people in Saint Domingue. These two external factors were also interrelated in the sense that international conflict directly impacted the EuroAmerican slave trade and the volume of Africans who were brought to the colony. The Seven Year's War, continued territorial contestations between the French and Spanish, and the Usonian War of Independence were important events that fostered political strife and the breaking down of Saint Domingue's societal inner-workings, which armed mawon bands exploited for their benefit with aggressive plantation attacks. Conversely, plantation slaves adapted to environmental circumstances like drought and food shortages by staying on plantations until blockades were lifted and everyday material conditions improved.

State-sponsored repression is another critical factor that attempted, albeit at times unsuccessfully, to respond to the seemingly constant threat of mawonaj and aimed to constrain its spread. The *marechaussée* and other militias hunted mawons, and torturous executions of prominent rebels in public deterred others from escaping for a time. In the case of the Fort Dauphin mawons, the death of Noel at the hands of Milscent's troops was a uniting force for Thélémaque Canga and Bœuf's bands. The militarized fugitive slave police had to contend with a massively growing African population whose survival and fighting skills were rooted in their continental experiences. There were no more than 300 *marechaussée* soldiers throughout the colony, a seriously limited number compared to the enslaved population, meaning the *marechaussée* were outnumbered (King 2004; Geggus 2009: 8). Further, environmental and geopolitical factors served as deterrents against mawonaj that were equally as effective as repression, including the expansion of the coffee plantation economies. As crackdown of mawonaj in mountainous areas increased incoming slaves were funneled into plantations that no longer had as many nearby communities viable for refuge. Enslaved people were linked to mawons and vice versa, eventually resulting a high-pressure situation

that eventually exploded into mass revolt. While David Geggus (2002) would argue that mawonaj was a “safety valve” that gave enslaved people an alternative to open rebellion, an assertion that may have some legitimacy given the findings of this dissertation, the connections between mawonaj and plantation rebellions indicate a need for broader conceptualizations of resistance, which repertoires of contention is befitting.

Repertoires are learned and transmitted over time, becoming part of a culture of resistance that develops tactics based on their appropriateness for contesting wider conditions and adapting to structural repression. Enslaved people gained knowledge about successful and unsuccessful strategies for rebellion and mawonaj from several sources: their African experiences; rumor of revolt in other Caribbean colonies; the legacies of well-known mawon leaders; and runaways who were captured and returned to plantations. This knowledge was accumulated over time, and proved to be particularly effective when rebels took advantage of strains and breakdowns in social, economic, and political spheres. As the gens du couleur agitated for their liberties in the late 18th century, Africans increasingly took advantage of social, economic, and political crises to assert freedom on their own terms. Enslaved people’s interrelationships and spread of consciousness between urban and rural plantations was in part based on increased forced migration and ‘urbanizing’ of the slave population, which some scholars have observed are factors that can produce actors who can organize contention and gain access to legitimated channels of power (Goldstone 1991; Tilly 2006), such as the early revolutionists. This shows that when we study repertoires of contention in colonial slave societies, we must pay attention to micro-, meso-, and macro-levels of analysis: networks, environment, structural repression, and population growth and diversity.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINAL THOUGHTS

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LITERATURE

This dissertation contributes to literature in several arenas: slavery and Atlantic world studies, Haitian studies, the sociology of social movements, and Black/African Diaspora Studies. Identity formation during resistance efforts against enslavement has been a salient area of scholarship in recent years. We have new insights about rebellion in Cuba, Brazil, Rio de la Plata, and Florida. But similar advances remain for the French Caribbean. Jean Fouchard's work *The Haitian Maroons: Liberty or Death* (1972) stands as the singular examination of long-term resistance and rebellion in colonial Saint Domingue, and remains an underappreciated piece of scholarship. The present dissertation is in one sense an exercise in performing imitation as flattery, but also has sought to extend Fouchard's scope and methodology. The methodology presented here also attempts to fulfill Leslie Manigat's (1997; 2007) calls for an integrated micro- and macro-level analysis of mawonaj over time.

This work also can help complicate the perhaps false dichotomy assigned to the difference between petite and grand mawonaj. When deeper attention is paid to runaways' motivations for escape, their destinations, and the social networks they cultivated while organizing their escape, one might begin to see that actors could shift between petit and grand mawonaj and that both could be used to serve the same purpose: to achieve a self-defined sense of freedom. An approach that accounts for changes over time also reveal that petit and grand mawonaj were perhaps adaptations to specific material conditions and historical contexts. Runaways often did not flee at a moment's notice; they strategically read the geopolitics of their plantation and the wider world to find the appropriate opportunity to abandon locales of bondage. While interactionist and structuralist approaches to mobilization are standard practice in the social movements field, sociologists have

paid less attention to people of African descent and the social formations against which black actors react.

African Diaspora Studies

Black/African Diaspora Studies has made strides in understanding black resistance to enslavement during the Age of Revolutions; and although it is commonly taken for granted that ritual life and pre-revolutionary forms of resistance such as mawonaj influenced the liberation consciousness of Haitian Revolution, a full study on this topic using archival data has yet to be produced. This dissertation has attempted to fill such a void employing an Africa-centered paradigm and interdisciplinary methodological approach. By employing quantitative and qualitative analyses of resistance, I bring a systematic approach to processes of African Diasporans' human meaning making and social change – issues that are at the core of Black/African Diaspora Studies field.

This methodology is one that is easily replicable for other contexts in the Atlantic world, particularly as archival data becomes more widely available for consumption and study through developments in the digital humanities and public history. Capital gained from the enslaved Africans free labor was a fundamental aspect of how the modern era came into being; therefore, we can assume that mawonaj, or marooning, also was a natural rejection of that bondage. As plantation economies became more engrained in their respective societies, runaway slave advertisements also were a regular part of newspaper publications. These primary sources are increasingly being published through online databases and websites, including *Marroonnage in Saint Domingue*, but others exist for North Carolina, Mississippi, Connecticut, Texas, and even Britain. For example, the *Adverts250 Project* explores colonial North American runaway advertisements, and uses a Twitter account to share an ad that appeared 250 years ago to the date.⁶⁵⁶ Public interest in runaway slaves is

⁶⁵⁶ *North Carolina Runaway Slave Advertisements*, <http://libcdm1.uncg.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/RAS>; *Documenting Runaway Slaves*, <http://aquila.usm.edu/drs/>; *Runaway Connecticut*, <http://runawayct.org/about>; *Texas Runaway Slave*

also reflected in television programming, such as the recent show *Underground* that highlights the lives of absconders from Macon, Georgia. These are valuable resources that can facilitate broader understanding of African origins and ethnicities as Michael Gomez (1998) has shown, as well as the ways enslaved people resisted and re-fashioned themselves as free persons and citizens during the Age of Revolutions (Waldstreicher 1999).

The wealth of data about mawonaj as a form of enslaved Africans and African descendants' micro-level social action during the early modern era helps us further comprehend the role of the diaspora in pushing forward popular notions of self-governing and egalitarianism. Neil Roberts' recently celebrated work *Freedom as Marronage* (2015) bolsters this sentiment, arguing that mawonaj was and remains a core part of Western conceptualizations of freedom. The work of Roberts and other canonical scholars of the Black Radical Tradition like C. L. R. James, Cedric Robinson, and Robin D. G. Kelley demonstrate through research and theorizing that black political life and imagination spans mediums and typologies, starting at the point of personhood and expanding to collective actions, organizations, revolts, and revolutions. Scholarship in Black/African Diaspora Studies, Ethnic Studies, Latin American and Indigenous Studies, and Subaltern Studies has given serious consideration to the non-Western world in the making of modernity, and a postcolonial turn is slowly occurring in the sociology discipline (Magubane 2005; Bhabra 2011; Go 2016). These trends, along with the protest cycle ignited by the 2008 global economic crisis – most notably #Black Lives Matter, may create space for more sociologists to move toward a postcolonial sociology of revolution and social movements.

Project, <http://digital.sfasu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/RSP>; *Runaway Slaves in Britain: Bondage, Freedom and Race in the Eighteenth Century*, <http://www.runaways.gla.ac.uk/>; *The Adverts250 Project*, <https://adverts250project.org/>

Social Movements

Findings from this dissertation show how ritual spaces fostered oppositional consciousness – not just due to the collective effervescence produced by interactions. Rather, ritual interactions and social actions committed to rectifying societal inequalities simultaneously creates a common sense of identity as well as shared understanding of material conditions. Such comprehensions of social imbalances are critical for potential mobilizers to align themselves to a collection of symbols, politicized themes, and means of acting on their own behalf. Africa-inspired ritual practice in Saint Domingue highlights the role of free spaces in bringing people together to express seditious speech, and the use of material artifacts as technologies that mediate real world problems with sacred power.

Social ties and network relationships are critical building blocks of developing a wider movement. People get involved in mobilization based on introduction to ideas, shared interests, and reasons for action through interactions with other actors. Typically, these relationships exist within families, spheres of labor, neighborhoods, or spiritual communities. Close-knit relationships already have foundations of trust, cohesion, and identity, giving individuals a sense of belonging and membership. But, when people reach beyond their comfort zones to build relationships with unfamiliar, they gain access to the knowledge and resources shared between the new person's network. These ideas from micromobilization and network analysis theory was validated by findings from the runaway advertisements that show inter-race/ethnic collaboration was an effective way for absconders to find freedom for extended periods of time. This research has importance for the study of solidarity and collective identity formation in social movement activity.

Long-term perspectives to resistance also reveal important patterns associated with macro-level factors and conditions. Structural breakdown and population growth were the two most significant factors that contributed to mawonaj at the micro-level. State-sponsored repression also was an important deterrent, but did not fully eliminate mawonaj as was intended. Lastly, environmental

issues such as food shortages exacerbated by natural disasters and dry seasons hindered mawonaj, since potential runaways experienced starvation and illness, rendering them too physically weak to venture away from the meager rations available on plantations. The historical analysis of mawonaj presented here exemplifies the idea that repertoire adaption to social conditions is a core component of what makes them effective and lasting.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This dissertation stops its study at the year 1791, when the Haitian Revolution began, but there are implications of the research for understanding the revolution itself as well as the early 19th century. What can be described as a collection of Africa-inspired rituals in the 18th century began to coalesce into the vodou religion post-Independence. Religious figures continued to play important roles as leaders in collective action; and although mawonaj from enslavement was technically no longer a necessity since the general emancipation, Haitians still experienced repressive regimes with labor codes that imposed colonial-era conditions. As such, resistance to newly formed governance structures continued to be an important aspect of Haitians' search for humane living and work conditions, and freedom from bondage (Sheller 2012: ch. 6). Therefore, we can think of the repertoires developed in the 18th century and during the Haitian Revolution as part of the foundation for mobilization after independence.

Mawons and Ritualists during the Haitian Revolution

Some lesser known leaders during the early years of the uprising derived sacred power during their fighting, or were experienced mawons – including Romaine la Prophetess, who assumed the Virgin Mary as his mother and claimed to be her godchild as well as Hyacinthe, a known ritualist. Recent research has shown that Pierre Loulou was a longstanding rebel on his plantation in Fort Dauphin, and a runaway who later joined the ranks of Jean-François Papillon, who also was a

mawon.⁶⁵⁷ Fort Dauphin had consistently been a site of mawon antagonism and later Jean- François’ seemingly inexplicable massacre of Spanish prisoners of war in 1794. During and after the 1791 uprisings, rebels were described by their ethnicity or language rather than their status of being previously enslaved or a runaway. For example Toussaint Louverture allied with “Doco” mawons of Mirabalais and their leader Mademoiselle on the basis that many of the Doco and Louverture were of Arada origin and spoke the same language.⁶⁵⁸ Louverture was a native Fon-speaker whose closest relationships were with others of the Allada/Adja nation.⁶⁵⁹ However, given that runaways often maintained close ties and proximity to plantations, it is not implausible that some of the bands fighting in the Haitian Revolution were actually mawon bands.

The political and economic interests of the most notable revolution leaders at times diverged from the communities they represented. Jean- François Papillon and Georges Biassou famously accepted an overture to free themselves and their officers in exchange for putting down the general revolt – an offer that the French rebuffed to their own subsequent chagrin. When Toussaint Louverture rose to power as the post-emancipation “ruler for life”, his brand of authoritarian labor regimes was not wholly dissimilar to enslavement. Freed people, then referred to as ‘cultivators,’ were forced to continue plantation work to produce the sugar and coffee that would sustain the colony’s economic viability, yet they responded by abandoning plantations altogether and choosing to develop their own plots for sustenance. Soon these cultivators began staging revolts of their own, which were brutally repressed by Toussaint’s army.⁶⁶⁰ It had become clear that Louverture would not tolerate challenges to his authority; this may point to reasons for his regime’s repression of Africa-inspired rituals and leaders of mawon bands. Louverture and future political regimes were aware of

⁶⁵⁷ Geggus 2014: 16, 32

⁶⁵⁸ Dubois 2004: 184

⁶⁵⁹ Girard 2013b; Girard and Donnadieu 2013

⁶⁶⁰ Nesbitt 2008

the potential political power of what was then referred to as vodou especially, and attempted to eradicate or exploit it to control opposing mass mobilization.⁶⁶¹

Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995) has argued that during the Haitian Revolution, African rebels continued fighting against the French after the creoles stopped, casting them as organic, grassroots leaders. This conflict between the masses (Africans) and the elites (landowning creoles) was exemplified throughout the unfolding of the Haitian Revolution when African-born mawon soldiers Jean-Baptiste Sans-Souci, Sylla, “Goman” Jean-Baptiste Duperrier, Lamour Derance, Lafortune – one of the Maniel leaders who had opposed Louverture – defected from Dessalines and the French army in 1802.⁶⁶² Lafortune attempted to return to the Maniel at Neybe, and was rebuffed by the Spanish and his former mawon community.⁶⁶³ Unfortunately, the *Les Affiches* ads are not helpful in identifying Lafortune former plantation; several Kongolese men named ‘Lafortune’ were enslaved in and around Port-au-Prince, Jacmel, Cul de Sac, and Petit Goâve – all areas with close proximity to the Spanish border that would have allowed him to reach the Baoruco. Lamour Derance was a ritualist, as was Giblas.⁶⁶⁴ Macaya attended the “dances” of the Africans, no doubt ritual gatherings, while preparing for revolt in 1795.⁶⁶⁵ The several African bands were called takos, including a mixed-race rebel leader from Port-au-Prince named Jean Zombi, who killed many whites during the Haitian Revolution at the behest of Jean-Jacques Dessalines. Zombi, who may have been a mawon before the uprising, became an influential petwo lwa.⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶¹ Munro 2008: 53-56; Ramsey 2011; Gonzalez 2012: 110-118

⁶⁶² Trouillot 1995; Dubois 2004: 232, 270, Girard 2011: ch. 10

⁶⁶³ Yingling 2015

⁶⁶⁴ Thomas Madiou 1847: 105; Robin Law 1999; Girard 2011: ch. 10

⁶⁶⁵ Thornton 2000: 204

⁶⁶⁶ *LA* April 25, 1789, <http://www.marronnage.info/fr/lire.php?type=annonce&id=9407>; Rigaud 1953: 67; Dayan 1995: 22, 36

Post-Haitian Revolution and Nation-State Formation(s)

Mawonaj was a consistent resistance strategy during the enslavement period, but after the revolution it became a political formation. The death of Jean-Jacques Dessalines in 1806 created a vacuum of power in Haiti that was filled by Henri Christophe, who declared himself king of the north, and Alexandre Petion, president of a republic to the south. But a third independent government in the south, at La Grande Anse, was established and led by a former commander of the Platons kingdom Jean-Baptiste Duperrier or Perrier, known as Goman the Comte of Jérémie, from 1807 to 1819. Backed by Henri Christophe, Goman's state resisted encroachment from Petion's government with insurgents from Jérémie and Cape Dame Marie.⁶⁶⁷

Biographical evidence of a Jean-Baptiste Duperrier in Jérémie includes a record of sell of three slaves by the previously named on behalf of a free mulatress in July 1796.⁶⁶⁸ This action may have been taken as a white or mulatre planter by the same name of the rebel leader, while the latter was referred to as "Goman." Goman was a Loango coast native on the Perrier plantation at either Les Cayes or Cape Tiburon. Fouchard claimed Goman died at age 70 in 1819 or 1820, so he was born around 1750. If he were brought to the colony during the coffee boom and influx of West Central Africans, he would have arrived to Grande Anse in the 1760s as a teen or in the 1770s as an adult. During these years, most West Central Africans brought to the West or South provinces probably came through the ports at Léogane, Port-au-Prince, or Jérémie.

Goman was part of the Platons insurrection, which pressed for territorial rights in the south as early as 1792,⁶⁶⁹ then fought in 1794 under Andre Rigaud, becoming one of the key African leaders who mobilized the resistance to Leclerc's infamous expedition of 1802. After independence, in

⁶⁶⁷ Madiou 1847 (Vol. 3): 436-438

⁶⁶⁸ "Deposit of paper telling of the sale of three heads of slaves by Jean Baptiste Duperrier on behalf of Saintiess, a mulatre libre. 1796 July 28," UF Gainesville Jérémie Notary Papers Folder 2-241

⁶⁶⁹ Fick 1990: 146, 224-226

January 1807, he was voted leader of a peasant rebellion in Jérémie against Petion's agricultural policies that aimed to redistribute land to the military elite. Until 1819, he maintained control over several coastal towns and the inlands by establishing linkages between collaborators and securing resources from them. His second in command, Saint Lous Boteau, articulated a race and color-conscious critique of the mulatre class, represented by Petion and Rigaud, to gain support from the mostly black peasantry. In 1813, Petion resumed aggression against La Grande Anse, his troops burned all the housing quarters and garden plots. The campaign was unsuccessful since Goman's soldiers, likely also veterans of the revolution, staged ambushes and traps, then retreating into the woods – similar guerilla tactics used by mawons in the colonial era. None of the key leaders of Grande Anse were found, leaving Goman to rule for another six years. Though he outlived Petion, who died in 1818, Goman faced a formidable opponent when Boyer became president in January 1819 and decidedly took control of Grand Anse, including Goman's base at Grand-Doco. Goman and two other officers evaded capture by Boyer, but Goman likely succumbed to wounds from the fighting.⁶⁷⁰

We can look to the early 19th century to project backward about how Haitians responded to freedom and independence. In the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution, it becomes clear that the masses of formerly enslaved people maintained an oppositional consciousness. However, this consciousness was no longer opposed to the enslavement system, which had been abolished, nor to colonial whites, but to the Haitian elite who implemented economic and political systems that replicated class and color-based power hierarchies. In response, Haitian peasants organized themselves into *lakou* systems – communally styled labor formations that were dependent on family networks of landownership, thereby circumventing the dominance of the elites.⁶⁷¹ They also utilized

⁶⁷⁰ Fouchard 1972: 352; Nicholls 1985: 171-174; Gonzalez 2012: 97-103

⁶⁷¹ Nesbitt 2008; Dubois 2012: 107-114

forms of mawonaj to protest unfair work contracts, expressing the sentiment that “you signed my name but you haven’t signed my feet!”⁶⁷² Such economic styles harken to the runaway communities that developed agricultural work for their sustenance, as well as to pre-colonial West Central African patterns of landownership and social organization.⁶⁷³

Goman’s rebellion was revived in the 1844-1848 Piquet uprising, which sought to redress economic and racial inequality by calling for an expansion of Republican democracy to include the peasant class, reduced loads, increased wages, and an end to martial law. King Henri Christophe, who had supported Goman’s republic, was also indirectly tied to the Piquets. Christophe’s brother-in-law was Jean-Louis Pierrot, who later became president of Haiti from April 16th, 1845 to March 1st, 1846 and was married to Cecile Fatiman – the mambo who presided over Bwa Kayman. Pierrot had close ties to Louis Jean-Jacques Acaau, a former rural police who led the peasant rebellion at Grande Anse in the 1840s after Goman’s rule was ended by Boyer.⁶⁷⁴ Religious symbolism also remained an aspect of the Piquets insurgency. One of the leaders of the 1844 rebellion was Frere Joseph, a poor, light-skinned peasant and vodou practitioner whose words “the Virgin said: the black who can read and write is a mulatto, the mulatto who cannot read and write is black” captured the complex racial and class-based power inequalities in post-revolution Haiti. Joseph and Acaau’s band the *Armée Souffrante* (Army of Sufferers) wore all white, straw hats, and carried candles, perhaps an invocation of the lwa of the peasantry Cousin Azaka. The Piquets were named after the eight to ten foot sticks they carried, which were often sharpened to an edge and had a poisoned gum added to them to heighten the affect.⁶⁷⁵ These sticks may have been a continuation of the calenda sticks, which were imbued with spiritual power via herbal mixtures.

⁶⁷² Sheller 2012: 166-167

⁶⁷³ Gomez 1998: 144

⁶⁷⁴ Madiou 1847 (Vol. 8): 318-319; Nicholls 1979: 195; Dayan 1995: 53; Girard 2012: 565

⁶⁷⁵ Ramsey 2011: 72-73; Dubois 2012: 127-130; Sheller 2012: 180-183

Nineteenth century collective action among the first and second generation of African-Haitians born into freedom relied on forms of popular mobilization that had been proven effective during the colonial era: Africa-inspired rituals, or vodou, and mawonaj. However, these tactics were not just responses to changing political structures, but became mechanisms for creating political change as in the case of Goman. Today in Grande Anse, Goman is remembered with a statue in which he is holding a large pike. On February 5th, 2015, protesters calling themselves the Goman Brigade descended on Port-au-Prince demanding the resignation of President Michel Martelly.⁶⁷⁶ Other Haitian political figures, especially those involved in the black nationalist movements of the 20th century, considered Goman to be one of the most important national heroes. The tradition of guerilla warfare in the south was inspired by Goman, Boyer's 1826 Rural Code described a likelihood of similar rebellion in Jacmel.⁶⁷⁷ The tradition of mawonaj and vodou lived on as political vehicles throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as in Haitian people's collective memory of the past.

Collective Memory

Contemporary Haitians' understanding of their history is an important aspect of understanding the written record history itself. As Joan Dayan (1995) demonstrated, culture and religion serve as repositories of history, combining myth with reality. Early chroniclers of the Haitian Revolution relied on information from former soldiers and their families, since then a smaller number of scholars have probed the question of how contemporary Haitians do or do not think about the revolutionary era. For example, George E. Simpson and J. B. Cineas (1941) collected folk tales about Christophe, Dessalines, and Louverture in the 1930s; Rachel Beauvoir-Dominique (2010) led field sessions in northern Haiti about remembrance of the Bwa Kayman ceremony; and forthcoming

⁶⁷⁶ *Reuters*, February 5, 2015, "Demonstrators Chant Slogans as They March during Protest in Port-au-Prince."

⁶⁷⁷ Nicholls 1979: 11, 275n43

work from Eriz Zavitz highlights commemorative celebrations of Dessalines and Haitian independence. Interview respondents near Gonaïves show a high regard for Capois la Morte, who fought with Dessalines at the Crete-a-Pierrot battle.⁶⁷⁸

Vodou serves as an important repository for historical memory of the Revolution and those who fought in it, or, at least, the spirit forces associated with the colonial era. The UF Gainesville hosts the *Vodou Archive*, a digital platform containing primary and secondary source data on the histories of Haitian vodou, including important spiritual sites in the city Gonaïves where Haitian independence from France was declared. Oral history indicates one of Dessaline's fighters, Azo Badi, was the founder of *Lakou nan Badjo* at Gonaïves in 1792. Badi and other insurgents under Dessalines used the site as a safe haven, and it remains "ruled" by the lwa Ogou Badagri – Badagri being the name of a Nigerian port city. This evidence might explain why in contemporary Haitian vodou Dessalines remains connected to the several manifestations of the *lwa* Ogou. When Lakou Badjo started, several rituals were observed from the Dahomey, Kongo, Nago/Yoruba. Ogou Batagri, a Nago/Yoruba lwa, was at the center of conflict with the lwas of other regional backgrounds when he refused to cohabitate with them, so Azo Badi sent the lwa to initiate two lakous in Gonaïves – the Kongo-based Soukri and the Dahomean-based Souvenans. Souvenans is said to have been founded in 1815 by "Papa Bwa" (Father Wood), a former runaway from the Cahos Mountains who was born in Benin. For contemporary members, lakous serve not only as work units, but centers of religious and family life that protects the historical knowledge of the colonial and post-Independence past.⁶⁷⁹ Milo Rigaud, 20th century Haitian anthropologist, identified lwa who were remembered as having been rebels during the Haitian Revolution: Loco-de, Sogbo

⁶⁷⁸ Girard 2011: 309; Benjamin Hebblethwaite and Claire Payton interview with Sevite Dorsainville Estime, Nov 1, 2012, UF Digital Library, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00016872>

⁶⁷⁹ Benjamin Hebblethwaite and Claire Payton interview with Sevite Dorsainville Estime, Nov 1, 2012, UF Digital Library, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00016872>; Bureau National d'Ethnology, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Kersou, Hogoun Ferraille, Badagris, Azaca, Marinette, La Reine Boucan, Zaou Pemba and Manman Pemba, La Vierge Marie-Louise⁶⁸⁰ Joan Dayan names other petwo spirits whose names indicate revolutionary origin: Brise Pimba, Baron Ravage, Ti-Jean-Dantor, Ezili-je-wouj, and Jean Zombi.⁶⁸¹ Though documented records are not available to substantiate information relayed through the oral and religious traditions, it is significant to note the ways the Haitian Revolution, and its fighters, is imagined as having a spiritual essence.

The historical and spiritual biographies of the lwa can point to events of the colonial past, but the memory of Saint Dominguan-Haitian mawonaj have not necessarily been explored as much. Places like Surinam, Jamaica, and Brazil are home to present-day communities who identify as direct descendants of maroons whose settlements have sustained themselves, their cultures, languages, and religious. The study of modern mawons in Haiti seems yet to be probed because enslavement was abolished there in 1793, but lasted in other colonies as late as 1888. However, further field research might reveal that there could be present day state evaders, or at least people whose identities are directly linked to the colonial era. For example, the self-liberated communities in the Baoruco mountains existed and resisted the Haitian government until the post-independence era, when they apparently blended into the neighboring peasant population. During and after the Revolution, Baoruco remained a site of refuge for African-Saint Dominguans fleeing the wars and seeking autonomy from state rule. There were efforts to incorporate them into Saint Domingue in the late 1790s, but Mamzelle in 1793 and Lamour Derance in 1803 continued to defy the French. The community was still led by Lafortune in 1810 and rebels were caught in the Baoruco as late as 1860.⁶⁸²

⁶⁸⁰ Rigaud 1953: 68-70

⁶⁸¹ Dayan 1995: 35

⁶⁸² Cauna 1996: 328; Yingling 2015; Nessler 2016: 84-87

Though now over a century gone, it would not be impossible for descendants of the Maniel, to have maintained some orally transmitted knowledge about the mawons. Other revolutionary era communities include the Polone Haitians – descendants of Polish soldiers who fought with Dessalines against the French. These descendants carry Polish last names, are often distinguished by phenotypical traits associated with whiteness – light skin, blond hair, and blue eyes, and maintain customs and oral histories of their European ancestors.⁶⁸³ Moreover, during field sessions in summer 2015 by this author, an English-speaking Haitian respondent indicated he heard rumor of the “Zing” peoples who are noted for their long locks and contentiously live in isolation in the Artibonite department, which is also where Gonaïves is located. These may be descendants of the “Zingre” people, who Moreau de St. Mery described as descendants of black-skinned East Indians.⁶⁸⁴ Other respondents mentioned a second community in Seguin, a mountainous village south of Port-au-Prince and northeast of Jacmel.⁶⁸⁵ Though these claims remain unsubstantiated, it is interesting to note that the supposed community in Seguin is geographically proximate to the settlement formed by runaways from the Vedel plantation at Cayes de Jacmel in 1788.

If not of these speculations are accurate, it may be most plausible that collective memory of mawonaj is embedded in the lifeways of contemporary Haitians.⁶⁸⁶ As of this writing, Haiti is still in recovery from several natural disasters in recent years, most currently Hurricane Matthew that descended in early October 2016. On October 17th, *The New York Times* reported some survivors of the hurricane had found shelter in the caves of Grande Anse, the region that was most hit by the storm’s eye and has extensive history as a stronghold for mawonaj and post-independence rebellion. At press time, it was estimated that over 500 people found shelter in the six cave systems in and

⁶⁸³ Rypson 2008

⁶⁸⁴ St. Mery 1797 (Vol. 1): 81

⁶⁸⁵ Eddins field research interview in Jacmel, Haiti, August 3, 2015

⁶⁸⁶ Eddins field research interview in at the National Bureau of Ethnology, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, March 14, 2017

around the town of Beaumont. L'Anise Nazaire, along with her mother Elaide Facile who claimed to be 100 years old, led neighbors to the cave that lies beneath their property.⁶⁸⁷ This experiential knowledge of how and where to seek refuge from dangerous weather conditions may also have come from centuries of protesting post-Revolution political regimes and mawonaj during the colonial era plantocracy.

⁶⁸⁷ Ahmed, Azam. October 17, 2016, "Haitians, Battered by Hurricane, Huddle in Caves: 'This Is the Only Shelter We Have'" *The New York Times*.

APPENDIX

Table A.1: African Ethnicities from Runaway Advertisements

I. Ethnicity	II. Geographic Region
0. Congo, Kongo	West Central Africa
1. Bambara	Senegambia
2. Mina, Mine, Amina, Amine	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
3. Ibo, Igbo	Bight of Biafra
4. Arada, Aja, Adja, Juda, Adia	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
5. Nago	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
6. Fon, Fond	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
7. Mondongue, Mondongo	West Central Africa
8. Madagascar	Madagascar
9. Senegalaise, Senegou, Wolof, Yolo	Senegambia
10. Tiamba, Thiamba, Chamba, Quiamba	Bight of Benin
11. Mozambique, Mozamby, Malabar	Southeastern Africa
12. Taqu(ou)a, Attapa, Tapa, Tapaye,	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
13. Poulard, Fulbe, Foule, Poule	Senegambia
14. Mesurade	Windward Coast
15. Quincy, Kissi, Quissi, Quicy	Upper Guinea/Gold Coast
16. Hausa, Aoussa, Haoussa, Aouffa	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
17. Timbou, Thimbou, Timbo	capital of Futa Jallon, Sierra Leone/Upper Guinea
18. Miserable, Misera	Upper Guinea/ Guinea Biassou
19. Mandingue, Mandingo	Senegambia
20. Canga, Kanga, Anga	Sierra Leone, Windward Coast
21. Bibi, Ibibio	Bight of Biafra/northwest Bantulands
22. Soso, Sosso, Zozeau, Sofo	Sierra Leone/Upper Guinea
23. Cotocoli, Cotocoly, Cocolouly	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
24. Barba, Barbare, Baliba, Bariba (38)	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
25. Cramenty, Caramenty	Gold Coast
26. Bandia, Banguia	Gold Coast
27. Cote d'Or	Gold Coast
28. Moco, Moko	Bight of Biafra
29. Mouss/ffondy, Mossondi, Mousombe	West Central Africa/Kongo
30. Aguia, Yaguia	Bight of Benin
31. Damba, Lamba	Bight of Benin
32. Gambery, Gamberi, Jombary	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
33. Choupiti ?	
34. Temenin, Themenin, Temine?	
Thimene	
35. Aya, Ayo	Upper Guinea
36. Macoua, Maquoua	
37. Loco	West Central Africa
38. Baliba, Bariba	Upper Guinea
39. Mayombé, Mayembau	WCA
40. Guiminy	WCA

Table A.1 (cont'd)

41. Massangi	WCA
42. Missi-Congo	WCA
43. Mouridy	
44. Montequet, Congo-Montequé	WCA
45. Malingue 46. Souraca	
47. Capelaou, Coela, Capalhou	Cape Lahou port, Windward Coast
48. Ado	
49. Solongo	
50. Gabonne	WCA
51. Congo-Franc	WCA
52. Chauma	Bight of Benin
53. Camba, Chamba	Bight of Benin
54. Baassa	
55. Gimba	Bight of Biafra
56. Cambray	
57. Daomet/ Dahomey	Bight of Benin
58. Mende	Sierra Leone
59. Diogole, Dioula	
60. Bobo	
61. Ouvanda	Kingdom of Kongo (WCA)
62. Wary	Niger Delta
63. Monconguy (Moussondi)	WCA
64. Songui	
65. Magaffe	
66. Jombary, Gambary	Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
67. Molo	
68. Savarou	Northern Dahomey, Slave Coast/Bight of Benin
69. Gurcy	
70. Malez, Mâle, Malle, Malais	
71. Faud - Poulard	Senegambia
72. Moucaux	Senegambia
73. Guinee	
74. Mazonga-Congo	
75. Maramby	WCA
76. Guizy	
77. Moinsa-Congo	
78. Keingue, Kingue (Malemba-Congo)	WCA
79. Carrebari (Calabari), Carrivary, Calaba	WCA
80. Naquit	Bight of Biafra
81. Louagi – Loango?	
82. Gourmand	
83. Long	
84. Bolongo	
85. Couroceca, Courousol	
86. Mayonca, Mouyaca, Mayaca	

Table A.1 (cont'd)

87. Mouman	WCA
88. Ouatzizy	
89. Majura	
90. Kivi	
91. Danguan, Dangouama, Dagonem	
92. Clamandy	
93. Malgache	Madagascar
94. Cumentu	
95. Manlais	
96. Foueda	
97. Binguella	WCA/Southern Angola
98. Medoque	
100. Nouveau	
101. Four	
102. Abiga	
103. Congo-Mondivi	
104. Quagis	
105. Quimbou-Mine	
106. Congo-Sondi (Moussondi)	WCA
107. Mongol	
108. Mambala	
109. Angole	WCA
110. Bernon	
111. Chouchou	
112. Cotte	
113. Dambame	
114. Tan	
115. Monbal	
116. Moncamba	
117. Binga	
118. Temperamant	
119. Congo Binda (Cabinda)	WCA
120. Vivy	
121. Yobo	
122. Serrere	
123. Ticy	
124. Monbala	
125. Limba	WCA
126. Conon	
127. Imba	
128. Colango	
129. Bondy	
130. Ginola?	

Table A.2: Indigo plantation inventory of Lemoine-Drouet, Torbeck, 1784, Source: Conseil Départemental de la Haute-Garonne Archives Départementales

Sex	Name	Birth Origin	Age
Men	Jean-Baptiste	Creole	?
	Neptune	Canga	55
	Arlequin	Mina	45
	Adonis	Mina	44
	?Pan	Canga	45
	Francois	Creole	35
	Goman	Congo	35
	Jacques	Congo	32
	Jazon	Congo	28
	Alexis	Congo	25
	Sipion	Congo	30
	Denis	Congo	30
	Lafleur	Congo	28
	Gerome	Creole (commandeur)	28
	Alexandre	Congo	29
	Tranquille	Congo	25
	Etienne	Congo	26
	Jasmin	Mandingue	36
	Hipolite	Canga	50
	Cracra	Congo	26
	Gabriel	Creole	24
	Francois	Creole	20
	Pierre	Creole	20
	Francois	Congo	50
	Cuz'a	Congo	30
	Charlot	Tiamba	60
	Dimba	Mandingue	40
	Jean-Claude	Creole	18
	Philippe	Creole (wig maker)	18
	Joseph	Creole	18
	Medor?	Congo	55
	Neron?	Mandingue	35
	Paul	Congo	20
Women	Angélique	Canga	30
	Catherine	Creole	28
	Charlote	Creole	28
	Françoise	Creole	29
	Jeannette	Creole (servant)	45
	Junou	Mandingue	33
	Julienne	Congo	32
	Luerepe?	Congo	40

Table A.2 (cont'd)

Women	Marie Jeanne	Creole	35
	Marie Jeanne	Creole (hospitaliere)	45
	Manon	Creole	25
	Marie Roze	Creole	35
	Marie Claire	Creole	32
	Marie Claude	Congo	28
	Marie	Creole	26
	Minerve	Quiamba	40
	Perrine	Congo	30
	Rozalie	Congo	25
	Suzanne	Congo	32
	Sanitte	Creole (servant)	?
	Zabeau	Creole	18
	Thereze	Senegalaize	65
Boys	Antoine	Creole (son of Manon)	13
	Barnabe	Creole (son of Charlote)	13
	Julien	Creole (son of Venus)	17
	Jean Jacques	Creole (son of Marie Jeanne)	10
	Jean Pierre	Creole (son of Marie Roze)	6
	Jacque	Creole (son of Marie)	2
	Jean Denis	Creole (son of Suzanne)	8
	Petit Pierre	Creole (son of Marie Jeanne)	8
	Pierre Louis	Creole (son of Rozalie)	18 mos.
	Perienne	Creole (son of Suzanne)	4
	Mars	Creole (son of Marie)	2 mos.
	Avril	Creole (son of Manon)	3 mos.
Girls	Anne Adelaïde	Daughter of Suzanne	2
	Marie Françoise	Daughter of Suzanne	5
	Victoire	Daughter of Marie Jeanne	5
	Maximilienne	Mulâtresse (daughter of Sanitte)	1
	Rotina	Daughter of Junou	5 mos.

Table A.3: Rocheblave sugar plantation estate, Quartier Morin, January 1, 1779, Source: University of Florida at Gainesville *Slavery and Plantations in Saint Domingue Collection*

Men/Boys	Age	Women/Girls	Age
Tols, Commandeur, Creole	43	Colette	32
Samouch, sugar maker	54	Rosalie	43
Antoine, sugar maker	50	Jeanneton, Creole	42
Laurent, sugar maker and mason	42	Louison	43
Romandin, sugar maker	43	Renolle	43
Paul, Creole, sugar maker	40	Cherese, Creole	21
Andre, sugar maker	19	Fanchon	39
St. Jean, sugar maker, infirmerie	38	Charlotte	39
Larose, master sugar maker	64	Marianne, osoulangiere?	43
Etienne, Creole, cabrouitier	46	Bibiane	39
Janvier, cabrouitier	45	Rose	31
J. Jacques, cabrouitier	19	Claudine, Creole	22
Janvier, Creole, cabrouitier	19	Nanon, Creole	22
Choisy, moulinier	43	Fecilite, Creole	19
Joli-couer, moulinier	18	Julie	49
J. Pierre, Creole, moulinier	14	Genevieve, Ibo	44
Gerome, Creole, moulinier	13	Coinelle?	43
Pierrette, Creole, moulinier	14	Claire, Creole	23
Antoine, Creole, c/thonnellier infirmerie	49	Marthonne, infirmerie	38
Alixandre, chonnellier	19	Julienne, infirmerie	46
Francois	41	Catherine, Creole	14
Labonte	43	Magdeleine, Creole	14
Joseph	25	Marinette, Creole	14
Jacques	43	Margueritte, Creole	12
Gilles	19	Nanon, soulaillere?	42
Henry, Creole, coach and valet	32	Genevieve, blanchisseuse	50
Hyppotite	19	Zabeth, hospitaliere	53
Narisse	19	Henriette, Cassasriere?	66
Louis, Creole, infirme ----	19	Luelle, infirme?	65
Charles, Creole, cook	20	Crhistina	45
Mathieu, Creole	47	Jeanne	55
Jupiter, gardener	49	Jeannette, Creole	27
Jaia, Creole, cook	38	Helene, J/ infirmerie	47
Gabriel, Jufierene	44	Bethy?, infirmerie	49
LaRochelle, Gen du Soulier	58	Agnes, infirmerie	37
Manuel ?	41	Perienne, gardener	50
Francisque gardener	57	Cecile	50
Alerte	100	Zabeth	64
Lion, son of Agnes	9	Noel, daughter of Agnes	11
Michel	5	Laurine	6

Table A.3 (cont'd)

Augustin	1	Marthe	8
Nicolas son of Jeanneton	10	Agathe, daughter of Cherese	11
Stanislas	7	Petronille, Daughter of Nanon, Thiamba	8
Marseille son of Cherese	6	Aimie, daughter of Jeannette	9
Sylvain son of Nanon, Creole	4	Martine, daughter of Claudine	3
Adrien, son of Felicite	4	Eulalie, daughter of Lameme	4 mos.

Table A.4: Sugar plantation inventory of Brossard-Laguehay, 1784, Source: Bourrachot 1972: 345-349

Sex	Name	Occupation	Birth Origin	Age
Men	Alexis	commandeur	Creole	42
	Jacques	second commandeur		44
	Pierrot	commandeur des batiments	Creole	61
	Jupiter dit Jaugavu			30
	Moise		Nago	27
	Jean Pierre	charpentier	Creole	30
	Raimond	apprentice wheelwright	Creole	19
	Marseille	cooper of the household	Creole	
	Clement	valet and wigmaker	Creole	17
	Ambroise		Creole	17
	Ignace	millier	Creole	16
	David		Creole	12
	Etienne	sugarmaker	Creole	30
	Gervais		Creole	13
	Abraham		Creole	12
	Vincent		Creole	10
	Eloy		Creole	11
	Eustache		Creole	10
	Ulisse			9
	Dominique		Creole	9
	Jean Jacques		Creole	8
	Jean Louis		Creole	8
	Joassim		Creole	10
	Bastien		Creole	7
	Joseph		Creole	7
	Celestin		Creole	6
	Mathurin		Creole	6
	Francois		Creole	6
	Francisque		Creole	2
	Pierre Antoine		Creole	2
	Benjamin			2
	Joseph Quinot			2
	Auguste	Machoquet	Creole	26
	Jean Charles son of Zan/Zace			8 mos.
	George a Leonore			8 mos.
	Pierre Louis à Sophie			7 mos.
	Toussaint son of Jean			14 mos.
	Grégoire son of Marie Louis			12 mos.

Table A.4 (cont'd)

	Jean Jacques a Geneviève			7 mos.
Women	Anonyme son of Marie Grace			15 days
	Jeannette		Timbou	80s
	Marie Louis		Arada	80s
	Agathe		Mina	62
	Fanchette		Arada	80s
	Marie-Louise		Creole	62
	Marie Jeanne		Creole	52
	Madeleine		Creole	52
	Daine	nurse	Creole	47
	Cristine		Adia/Adja	50
	Cotelle		Bambara	52
	Marie Roze		Creole	40
	Nanon		Creole	42
	Rozette		Arada	62
	Claudine		Arada	66
	missing			
	Modeste		Creole	13
	Jouassine		Creole	11
	Bastianne		Creole	15
	Martine			14
	Reine		Creole	14
	Germaine			9
	Angélique		Creole	12
	Julien		Creole	8
	Prudence		Creole	11
	Justine		Creole	8
	Jullie		Creole	9
	Barbe		Creole	9
	Hélène			7
	Jouassine a Rosalie			9
	Euproisie			8
	Charlotte		Creole	7
	Famille			6
	Guitton		Creole	6
	Beatrix		Creole	6
	Gertrude		Creole	6
	Babeth			34
	Petronille		Creole	15
	Agnes		Creole	4
	Célestine		Creole	4
	Jeanne à Henriette			18 mos.

Table A.5: Sugar plantation inventory, Léogane, 1781, Source: Debien and Houdaille 1964: 195

Sex	Name	Notes	Birth Origin	Age
Men	La Douceur	commandeur	Africain	50
	Augustin	master sugarmaker	Creole	30
	Joli-Cœur		Malay	50
	Hercule	cooper	Ibo	35
	Houssa	with legs askew	Congo	30
	Jacques	having a hernia	Barba	20
	Abraham		Mondongue	25
	Apollon	?	Congo	26
	Thomas		Nago	35
	Michel	small cook	Creole	20
	Jean-Louis			18
	Vx?	gardener	Arada	60
	Larose			66
	Petit-Pierre		Creole	18
	Petit Julien			15
	Petit Jean-Louis			10
	Jean-Charles		Nago	16
	Victoire			22
	Georges		Creole	18 mos.
Women	Catherine		Aguaia	60
	Suzanne	one-eyed	Baba	50
	Isabelle		Mine	50
	Rosalie		Creole	20
	Jacquette		Quiamba	50
	Agathe	swollen feet and sores	Nago	50
	Venus		Nago	25
	Isaie			25
	Julie			10
	Marie-Rose			2½ mos.
	Jean-Baptiste			3 mos.
	Rosette		Arada	55
	Angélique	poulaillere		60
	Françoise Pied-long		Creole	15
	Françoise Pied-court			12

Table A.6: Sugar plantation inventory, Borthon de l'Etang, Limbé, 1760, Source: Debien 1961: 373

Sex	Name	Occupation	Birth Origin	Age	Value
Men	César	commandeur	Moco	50	2600
	Scipion	sugarmaker and refiner	Timbou	55	2200
	Conda	master cabrouetier	Creole	35	2500
	Germain	sugarmaker	Bambara	35	2300
	Castor	sugarmaker and cooper		35	3000
	Mercure	chauffeur, valet, and cooper	Bambara	35	2200
	Africain	cabrouetier	Ado	30	2400
	Petit-Louis	animal guard	Arada	60	800
	Baptiste	amateur de breches	Timbou	60	800
	Valentin	guard with bad eyesight	Thiamba	35	500
	Laurent	master moulinier	Creole	35	2500
	Petit-Scipion	moulinier		20	2000
	Pierre			16	1800
	Mane	valet and cabrouet		32	2200
	Loveille	negre de place	Nago	40	1600
	Jacques dit Celadon	master moulinier	Creole	28	2400
	Pierrot-Blan	negre de place		15	1600
	Noel			16	1500
	Alerte	hernia	Congo	48	1000
	Thomas	master cabrouetier	Creole	20	2200
	Jean	animal guard		18	600
	Baptiste	negre de place	Congo	35	1500
Women	Louison	cook		46	1600
	Corossole	seamstress	Creole	45	1800
	Venus	negress de place	Sada	45	1500
	Zabeth		Congo	30	2000
	Genvotte		Arada	20	1800
	Nicole			35	1800
	Nanon	swollen and in danger of death	Nago	28	
	Dica	negress de place	Creole	18	2000
	Françoise			14	1800
	Marie-Jeanne			13½	1300
	Nanette		Arada	42	1700
	Venus		Bobo	45	1500
	Jeannette		Arada	60	600
	Marie-Anne		Creole	35	1600

Table A.6 (cont'd)

Boys	Thoine son of Zabeth			9	1000
	Francois son of Genevotte			4	300
	Jean-Baptiste son of Diac			6 mos.	150

Table A.7: Sugar plantation inventory, Rivaud au Limbé, 1787, Source: Debien 1961: 379

Sex	Name	Occupation	Birth Origin	Age	Value
Men	Cercan	commandeur	Creole	40	4500
	Charles			20	4000
	Adrien		Congo	30	3000
	Leveille			26	3000
	Martin			24	
	Augustin			25	
	Saint-Jean			26	
	Philippe			30	
	Prosper			30	
	Francois			26	
	Goela			30	
	Hippolyte			25	3500
Women	Flore	forte adroite	Mandingue	36	4000
	Scholastique	seamstress	Creole	40	3300
	Zaire		Congo	24	3300
	Madeleine			45	660
	Camba		Bambara	40	600
	Félicite		Creole	11	2400
	Fabien			7	1500
	Sans-Nom			7	1000

Table A.8: Sugar plantation inventory, Loyseau a Fort Dauphin, 1778, Source: Debien 1961: 380

Sex	Name	Nation	Occupation	Age	Value
Male	Jacques	creole		40	2600
	Margo	Congo	cake baker	50	1000
	Jean	Congo	master sucrier	55	2000
	Antoine	creole	sugar maker		1000
	Francois				2400
	Bonaventure			40	2600
	Gabriel			24	2400
	Jupiter	Nago		30	2400
	Jasmin			52	1000
	Jacques	Mina		60	600
	Polyte	Nago		34	2400
	Soliman			40	
	Bernard			38	2600
	La Tulipe	Quiamba		38	2400
	Desire	Barba	nurse	30	800
	Arlequin	Congo		36	1800
	Augustin	creole	has a hernia	40	100
	Filles			22	2600
	Vincent			25	2000
	Alexandre			25	2000
	Corydon	Congo		22	2400
	Orphee	Arada		28	2200
	Monplaisir	Arada	tonnelier	45	2600
	Jean-Louis	creole		20	2600
	Bienvenu	Quiamba		40	1200
	Jean-Pierre	creole		18	2600
	Jean-Michaud	creole	sujet au marronage	25	1200
	Charles			17	1000
	Jacques Ibo	creole	master moulinier	50	2000
	Pierre Momos		borgne		2000
	Calas			30	1500
	Antoine		cabrouetier	18	600
	Baptiste			17	2400
	Petit Michaud			18	1800
	Mathieu Yoyo		cultivateur, hernie	60	100
	Pierrot		nurse	50	400
	L'Esperance	Quiamba		55	1000
	J.B.	Mesurade	pieds pleins de malingres	55	1000
	LaRose	Congo			1000
	Belhonneur			28	1000
	Leveille	Nago	cultivateur	30	2400
	Janvier	creole	cook	40	3500

Table A.8 (cont'd)

	Adonis	Congo		27	2600
	Christophe			24	2400
	Michel			26	2600
	Armand	creole		15	2400
	Hector			14	2000
	Poussain			13	2000
	Auguste			18	2500
	Jacques-Ant.	Congo	master carpenter	35	3000
	Bertrand			20	1500
Female	Agnes	creole		23	2400
	Annique			30	2400
	Anna	Arada		45	2200
	Adelaide			20	2400
	Babichonne			55	500
	Brigitte			25	2500
	Cateau			40	1800
	Dorothée	Nago		40	2000
	Fanchon	creole		60	1000
	Fanchette	Arada		68	--
	Françoise	creole		40	600
	Françoise	Nago	nurse	60	600
	Geneviève	creole		48	1000
	Gertrude	Nago		36	2200
	Goth	creole		50	600
	Guindee	Arada		70	--
	Henriette	creole		32	1800
	Julienne			32	2200
	Laurence			18	1000
	Lisette			35	1800
	Marie-Louise			55	600
	Madeleine			48	1200
	Marie-Grace			24	2400
	Marie-Claude			22	2200
	Martonne			22	--
	Marie-Rose			28	--
	Marie-Louise			70s	--
	Minerve	Nago		42	1800
	Olive	creole		45	1500
	Perrine	Arada		30	1800
	Poposse	creole		50	800
	Petronille	Fond		33	2200
	Pauline	creole		50	800
	Rose	Nago		70s	--
	Renotte	Arada		48	1400

Table A.8 (cont'd)

Female	Cerelle			32	2200
	Suzon			25	2200
	Thérèse	creole		aveugle	--
	Venus	Calfat		34	2400
	Zabeth	creole		50	1400
	Zaire	Arada		28	2400
	Savanette	Nago		25	2400
	Véronique			25	2000
	Prudence	creole		22	2200
	Rosalie	creole		40	2200
Boys	Adrien	creole		5	600
	Ambroise			5	--
	André			6	700
	Claude			7	1000
	Denis			8	900
	Jean-Henri	creole		8	1000
	Quenot			12	1200
	Sylvestre			9	1200
	Raymond			7	700
	Jean-François			5	600
	Julien			7	900
	Laurent			5	700
	Lambert			3	500
	Condiaux			4	300
	Jean			2	300
	Dominique			2	--
	Michel			2	--
	Martial			18 mos.	--
	Clement			15 mos.	--
	Joseph	creole		12	1400
	Eustache			1	1400
	Janvier			12	1400
	Prosper			13	1400
	Nexon			18 mos.	200
	Sulpice			14 mos.	200
	Felix				150
	Larose			1	150
Girls	Angelique	creole		7	900
	Barbe			6	700
	Jeanne			12	1400
	Marie-Josèphe			11	
	Marie-Zabeth			10	
	Marie-Etienne	creole		9	1000
	Modeste			11	1600

Table A.8 (cont'd)

Girls	Bibiane		epilepsy	7	300
	Philis			7	1000
	Marie-Cécile			7	700
	Quitone			3	400
	Coronee			3	600

Table A.9: Sugar plantation inventory, Habitation Harourard, Quartier-Morin, December 1784,
Source: ANOM C9B 7

Name	Nation	Age	Name	Nation	Age
Augustin	Creole	35	Parfais	Creole	21
Francois	Creole	31	Jean Jacques	Creole	41
Télémaque	Congo	53	Paul Capesille	Creole	37
Piller	Creole	26	Jean Baptiste	Creole	33
Medor	Mina	64	Hypolitte		51
Phillipe	Cayenne	42	LaRame	Kiamba	39
Noel	Creole	35	Mercuse		46
Coquia	Creole	42	Barthelemy		36
LaRose	Bambara	47	Maquere		46
Gabriel	Barba	41	Adam Liole		23
Romain	Bambara	56	Robert		18
Fidel	Kiamba	46	Felix dit Daugonan		25
Benjamin	Tapa	42	Saovenue		23
LaRochelle	Creole	41	Bertrane		29
Lina	Arada	36	Patiena		29
Caliste	Arada	33	Daniel		21
Jupiter	Arada	29	Charles		19
Antoine	Cote d'Or	36	Clemens		19
Marseille	Cote d'Or	36	Hilaire		19
Pierrot	Cote d'Or	36	David		19
Bastien	Creole	36	Julien	Creole	22
Noel à Nanon	Creole	26	Fabien	Arada	42
... Rose	Creole	31	Men working as gardeners with animals, servants, the sick no longer working in the field		
Simon	Creole	25	Clon	Creole	46
Milles	Creole	31	Joseph	Mulatre	26
...	Creole	26	Matheiu	Cayenne	40
Baptiste dit Bayan	Creole	46	Pierre	Congo	38
...	Creole	26	Joseph	Creole	31
Petit Louis	Creole	26	Blaise	Creole	24
Christophe	Creole	25	Petite Jacques	Creole	21
Alexia	Creole	23	Antoine	Congo	43
Joseph	Creole	25	Fransisque	Nago	44
Jean Baptiste	Creole	24	Jean Francois	Creole	29
Denis	Creole	19	Silvain	Cote d'Or	20
Servi	Creole	21	Pascal	Cote d'Or	19
Henry	Creole	18	Coyau	Creole	52
Guilhaume	Creole	26	Michel	Creole	19
Mathieu	Creole	21	Jerome	Creole	17
Anoze	Creole	19	Petit Michel	Creole	19

Table A.9 (cont'd)

Name	Nation	Age	Name	Nation	Age
Men working as gardeners with animals, servants, the sick no longer working in the field			Women working in the house		
Belair		18	Cleonou	Arada	30
Jacob	Arada	68	Adelaide	Creole	20
Charles	Creole	41	Madelaine	--	59
Janvier		46	Renolle	--	40
Gamel	Kiamba	70	Charlotte		45
Michaux	Creole	72	Janneton		39
Thélémaque	Dambaou	72	Marie-Noel		41
Pompee	Poulare	50	Toinette		39
Etienne	Creole	81	Genevieve		41
LaFleur	Congo	67	Marie Marthe	Creole	37
Thomas	Creole	102	Jannette	--	27
Cezar	Creole	98	Zabeau	--	43
Printeur	Congo	67	Augustine	--	35
Alexandre	Congo	27	Marie Claire	--	39
Ignace	Creole	15	Lisette	--	25
Noel	Creole	27	M. Louise	--	37
Gervais	Creole	14	Marthone	--	20
Boys working in the house			Prudence	--	31
Paul Eustache	Creole	16	M. Noel	--	37
Jacques	--	19	M. Thérèse		29
Achile	--	16	Babidionne	Tappa	46
Jean Jacques	--	12	Christine	--	41
Auguste	--	15	Cloris	--	41
Luc	--	11	Dorothee	Cotocoly	37
Silvestre	--	17	Nicole	Mina	39
Thomany	--	16	Petronielle	Kiamba	39
Jean Louis	Cote d'Or	17	Eulalie		36
Albert	Soco	16	Olive		39
Jannie a Rosette	Creole	14	Julie		36
Raymone	--	15	Martine		33
Robert	Arada	16	M. Joseph		36
Maurin	Creole	13	Zaire		34
Isidor	--	15	Petrime		26
Thimoichec	Soco	16	Suzette		32
Germain	--	17	Pelagie		27
Remi a Francoise	Creole	15	Claudine		23
Zomore	--	10	Ursule		16
Benoist a Zonba	--	11	Lucile		17
Prosper a Charlotte	--	10	Sophie		17
Bouface a Ranom	--	8	Renette	Creole	23
Nicolas	--	15	Laurence	--	20

Table A.9 (cont'd)

Boys too young for woking in the house			Minerve	Congo	31
Lazarre a Charlotte	Creole	5	Manon, commandeur	--	66
Hare a Cato	Creole	5	Women nurses and midwives		
Maxine a Clorin	--	4	Lucree	Nago	54
Salomon a Augustine	--	3	M. Guilhaume	Creole	56
Thomas a Zabeau	--	4	M. Guitome	--	71
Stanislar a Noel	--	7	Louise	--	72
Bruveau	--	6	Barbe a Lonba	Arada	69
Zubera	--	2	Susanne	Mina	69
Frederic a Noel	--	2	Madelaine	Creole	76
Esomard	--	2	Therese	Nago	76
Espris a Calomor	--	1	Therese Collery	Adia	76
Theodore	--	1	Boqueman	Creole	76
Laurens	--	3	Angelique	Mondongue	64
Alize	mulatre	6 mos.	M. Fachon	Nago	64
Gregoire a Rosette	Creole	7 *	Marthe	Mina	83
Girls working in the house			Nanon Dondon	Kiamba	81
Philis	Creole	22	Zabeth	Creole	81
M. Zabeth	--	16	Anne	--	64
Louison	--	16	M. Jeanne	mulatress	88
Pauline	--	12	Cato	Creole	37
Germaine		15	Cormie	--	58
Marieanne		19	Charloty	--	38
Victoire		15	Angelique	--	79
Relenne		17	Cecile Valentin	--	67
Agathe		16	Francoise Dondon	--	66
Désirée	Creole	15	Cecile Guilbedon	--	67
Renee a Cecile	--	12	Girls too young for working in the house		
Colette a Cristine	--	12	Porgette	Creole	6
Bonne a Marie	--	12	Monique à Olive	--	6
Blandine a Marie	--	11	Eustie	--	6
Seraphine a Julie	--	11	Jeremique	--	5
Tadegone	--	11	Catlermie a Dorothee	--	3
Verine a Cathe	mulatress	10	Zenize a Nicole	--	3
Modeste	--	12	Adrienne à Christine	--	2
			Maricette a Genevive	--	2
			M. Jeanne à Marthe	--	2
			Renetta a Minerve	--	7

Table A.9 (cont'd)

			Mathurine a Pelagie	--	17 mos
			Rose a Zabiau	--	13 mos
			Plie	--	13 mos
			M. Grace a M. Marthe	--	1 ans
			Aglace a Marthone	mulatress	11 mos
			Gomoine a Minerve	--	9

Table A.10: Indigo plantation inventory, Habitation Trou-Vazou, Anse-a-Veau, 1756

Sex	Name	Occupation	Nation	Age	Value
Male	Alexis	Commandeur	Creole	50	4000
	Tony	--	Arada	40	4000
	Joseph	Indigotier	Creole	28	4000
	Leveille	Chasseur et pecheur	Mine	28	3200
	Alexis	Postillon	Creole	25	3000
	Jacques		Creole	25	3000
	Télémaque		Congo	28	3000
	Joseph		Bambara	30	2500
	Medor		Tiamba	26	2500
	Tony		Congo	30	2200
	Alerte		Ibo	32	2000
	Cadet		Tiamba	26	2200
	Claude		Senegalais	42	2200
	Cupidon		Ibo	42	2200
	Alexis		Tiamba	40	2200
	Colas	Cabrouetier	Mine	39	2500
	André		Creole	60	600
	Alexandre		Nago	60	1200
	Adonis		Creole	25	2500
	Atis		Arada	22	1800
	Cupidon		Canga	18	2000
	Ouany		Congo	18	2000
	Neptune		Congo	18	2000
	Pierre-Louis	Valet	Creole	14	2500
	Michel		Creole	15	1800
	Dominique		Creole	13	1500
	Ture		Senegalais	30	2000
	Jupiter			22	2000
	Charlot			25	2000
	Francois			25	2000
	Pompée		Senegalais	25	2000
	Scipion			25	2000
	Pierrot			22	2000
	César			30	2000
	Apollon			27	2000
	Balthazar			26	2000
	Neron			25	1600
	Mahomet			20	2000
	Jean-Baptiste		Creole	10	1400
	Noel			9	1400
	Charles			6	800

Table A.10 (cont'd)

Women & children	Louison	Couturiere et menagere	Creole	30	4500
	Françoise	Couturiere et blanchisseuse		36	3500
	Jean	children of Francoise	Mulatre	8	1500
	Jean-Charles			6	1200
	Antoine			1	600
	Marotte		Creole	26	3000
	Joseph	sons of Marotte		10	1800
	Jerome			breast-feeding	300
	Marthe	Cook	--	32	3000
	Tontonne	daughters of Marthe	--	5	800
	Anne		--	3	500
	Marion Bon-Air	Blanciessue	Creole	48	2000
	Flore	--	Ibo	35	2500
	Marie-Françoise	daughter of Flore	?	11	1200
	Madeleine		Creole	42	1800
	Julie		Ibo	28	1800
	Babet		Nago	40	2000
	Louison		Congo	42	2000
	Venus		--	18	2000
	Nanon		Mine	60	800
	Agnes		Congo	16	1800
	Catin		Arada	50	800
	Isabelle		Creole	25	2000
	Pierre	son of Isabelle	-	2	300
	Rosalie		Moco	40	1500
	Félicite	daughter of Rosalie	--	12	1500
	Marie-Jeanne		--	38	1600
	Ouanotte		Mina	30	2000
	Bastienne	daughter of Ouanotte	Creole	breast-feeding	300
	Marguerite		Senegalaise	20	2000
	Cécile		--	18	2000
	Perrine		--	25	2000
	Bernard	son of Perrine	--	breast-feeding	300
	Diane		Senegalaise	25	2000
	Ceres		--	25	2000

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C9B: 15, 35, 36

C9C: 7

Series E

Series F3 (Moreau de St. Mery Collection)

88, 90, 91, 94, 126, 129, 137, 193, 212-215, 244, 245

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Haiti Miscellaneous Collection

Box 1 Folder 18; Box 2 Folder 1

A. Faulkner Watts Papers

Box 2 Folders 3, 10, and 11

Joel and Amy Spingarn Papers

Box 1 Folder 10

John Kobler Collection

Box 1 (all folders)

Joseph Borome Papers

Box 2 Folders 1-10

Kurt Fisher Collection
Box 8A, Reel 6, Folders 1-5

University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries – Gainesville, FL

Slavery and Plantations in Saint Domingue Collection

Jérémie Papers

Samuel Proctor Oral History Program
Haitian Revolution Memories Collection

University of Michigan William L. Clements Library – Ann Arbor, MI

Anne-Louis de Tousard Papers, 1659-1932
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