

Spanish Discovery and Colonization

The island of Hispaniola (La Isla Española), which today is occupied by the nations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, was one of several landfalls Christopher Columbus made during his first voyage to the New World in 1492. Columbus established a makeshift settlement on the north coast, which he dubbed Navidad (Christmas), after his flagship, the Santa María, struck a coral reef and foundered near the site of present-day Cap-Haïtien.

The Taino Indian (or **Arawak**) inhabitants referred to their homeland by many names, but they most commonly used Ayti, or Hayti (mountainous). Initially hospitable toward the Spaniards, these natives responded violently to the newcomers' intolerance and abuse. When Columbus returned to Hispaniola on his second voyage in 1493, he found that Navidad had been razed and its inhabitants, slain. But the Old World's interest in expansion and its drive to spread Roman Catholicism were not easily deterred; Columbus established a second settlement, Isabela, farther to the east.

Hispaniola, or Santo Domingo, as it became known under Spanish dominion, became the first outpost of the Spanish Empire. The initial expectations of plentiful and easily accessible gold reserves proved unfounded, but the island still became important as a seat of colonial administration, a starting point for conquests of other lands, and a laboratory to develop policies for governing new possessions. It was in Santo Domingo that the Spanish crown introduced the system of repartimiento, whereby peninsulares (Spanish-born persons residing in the New World) received large grants of land and the right to compel labor from the Indians who inhabited that land.

Columbus, Santo Domingo's first administrator, and his brother Bartolomé Columbus fell out of favor with the majority of the colony's settlers, as a result of jealousy and avarice, and then also with the crown because of their failure to maintain order. In 1500 a royal investigator ordered both to be imprisoned briefly in a Spanish prison. The colony's new governor, Nicolás de Ovando, laid the groundwork for the island's development. During his tenure, the repartimiento system gave way to the encomienda system under which all land was considered the property of the crown. The system also granted stewardship of tracts to encomenderos, who were entitled to employ (or, in practice, to enslave) Indian labor.

The Taino Indian population of Santo Domingo fared poorly under colonial rule. The exact size of the island's indigenous population in 1492 has never been determined, but observers at the time produced estimates that ranged from several thousand to several million. An estimate of 3 million, which is almost certainly an exaggeration, has been attributed to Bishop Bartolomé de Las Casas. According to all accounts, however, there were hundreds of thousands of indigenous people on the island. By 1550 only 150 Indians lived on the island. Forced labor, abuse, diseases against which the Indians had no immunity, and the growth of the mestizo (mixed European and Indian) population all contributed to the elimination of the Taino and their culture.

Several years before the Taino were gone, Santo Domingo had lost its position as the preeminent Spanish colony in the New World. Its lack of mineral riches condemned it to neglect by the mother country, especially after the conquest of New Spain (Mexico). In 1535 the Viceroyalty of

New Spain, which included Mexico and the Central American isthmus, incorporated Santo Domingo, the status of which dwindled still further after the conquest of the rich kingdom of the Incas in Peru. Agriculture became the mainstay of the island's economy, but the disorganized nature of agricultural production did not approach the kind of intense productivity that was to characterize the colony under French rule.

French Colonialism

Although Hispaniola never realized its economic potential under Spanish rule, it remained strategically important as the gateway to the Caribbean. The Caribbean region provided the opportunity for seafarers from Britain, France, and the Netherlands to impede Spanish shipping, to waylay galleons crammed with gold, and to establish a foothold in a hemisphere parceled by papal decree between the Roman Catholic kingdoms of Spain and Portugal. This competition was carried on throughout the Caribbean, but nowhere as intensely as on Hispaniola.

Sir Francis Drake of England led one of the most famous forays against the port of Santo Domingo in 1586, just two years before he played a key role in the English navy's defeat of the Spanish Armada. Drake failed to secure the island, but his raid, along with the arrival of corsairs and freebooters in scattered settlements, was part of a pattern of encroachment that gradually diluted Spanish dominance.

French Settlement and Sovereignty

Reportedly expelled by the Spanish from Saint Christopher (Saint Kitts), the original French residents of Tortuga Island (Ile de la Tortue), off the northwest coast of Hispaniola, sustained themselves mostly through two means: curing the meat and tanning the hides of wild game, and pirating Spanish ships. The former activity lent these hardy souls the colorful designation of buccaneers, derived from the Arawak word for the smoking of meat. It took decades for the buccaneers and the more staid settlers that followed them to establish themselves on Tortuga. Skirmishes with Spanish and English forces were common. As the maintenance of the empire tried the wit, and drained the energies, of a declining Spain, however, foreign intervention became more forceful.

The freewheeling society of Tortuga that was often described in romantic literature had faded into legend by the end of the seventeenth century. The first permanent settlement on Tortuga was established in 1659 under the commission of King Louis XIV. French Huguenots had already begun to settle the north coast of Hispaniola by that time. The establishment in 1664 of the French West India Company for the purpose of directing the expected commerce between the colony and France underscored the seriousness of the enterprise. Settlers steadily encroached upon the northwest shoulder of the island, and they took advantage of the area's relative remoteness from the Spanish capital city of Santo Domingo. In 1670 they established their first major community, Cap François (later Cap Français, now Cap-Haïtien). During this period, the

western part of the island was commonly referred to as Saint-Domingue, the name it bore officially after Spain relinquished sovereignty over the area to France in the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697.

Colonial Society

By the mid-eighteenth century, a territory largely neglected under Spanish rule had become the richest and most coveted colony in the Western Hemisphere. By the eve of the French Revolution, Saint-Domingue produced about 60 percent of the world's coffee and about 40 percent of the sugar imported by France and Britain. Saint-Domingue played a pivotal role in the French economy, accounting for almost two-thirds of French commercial interests abroad and about 40 percent of foreign trade. The system that provided such largess to the mother country, such luxury to planters, and so many jobs in France had a fatal flaw, however. That flaw was slavery.

The origins of modern Haitian society lie within the slaveholding system. The mixture of races that eventually divided Haiti into a small, mainly mulatto elite and an impoverished black majority began with the slavemasters' concubinage of African women. Today Haiti's culture and its predominant religion (voodoo) stem from the fact that the majority of slaves in Saint-Domingue were brought from Africa. (The slave population totalled at least 500,000, and perhaps as many as 700,000, by 1791.) Only a few of the slaves had been born and raised on the island. The slaveholding system in Saint-Domingue was particularly cruel and abusive, and few slaves (especially males) lived long enough to reproduce. The racially tinged conflicts that have marked Haitian history can be traced similarly to slavery.

While the masses of black slaves formed the foundation of colonial society, the upper strata evolved along lines of color and class. Most commentators have classified the population of the time into three groups: white colonists, or blancs; free blacks (usually mulattoes, or gens de couleur--people of color), or affranchis; and the slaves.

Conflict and resentment permeated the society of Saint-Domingue. Beginning in 1758, the white landowners, or grands blancs, discriminated against the affranchis through legislation. Statutes forbade gens de couleur from taking up certain professions, marrying whites, wearing European clothing, carrying swords or firearms in public, or attending social functions where whites were present. The restrictions eventually became so detailed that they essentially defined a caste system. However, regulations did not restrict the affranchis' purchase of land, and some eventually accumulated substantial holdings. Others accumulated wealth through another activity permitted to affranchis by the grands blancs--in the words of historian C.L.R. James, "The privilege of lending money to white men." The mounting debt of the white planters to the gens de couleur provided further motivation for racial discrimination.

THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION

The Slave Rebellion of 1791

Violent conflicts between white colonists and black slaves were common in Saint-Domingue. Bands of runaway slaves, known as maroons (marrons), entrenched themselves in bastions in the colony's mountains and forests, from which they harried white-owned plantations both to secure

provisions and weaponry and to avenge themselves against the inhabitants. As their numbers grew, these bands, sometimes consisting of thousands of people, began to carry out hit-and-run attacks throughout the colony. This guerrilla warfare, however, lacked centralized organization and leadership. The most famous maroon leader was François Macandal, whose six-year rebellion (1751-57) left an estimated 6,000 dead. Reportedly a boko, or voodoo sorcerer, Macandal drew from African traditions and religions to motivate his followers. The French burned him at the stake in Cap Français in 1758. Popular accounts of his execution that say the stake snapped during his execution have enhanced his legendary stature.

Many Haitians point to the maroons' attacks as the first manifestation of a revolt against French rule and the slaveholding system. The attacks certainly presaged the 1791 slave rebellion, which evolved into the Haitian Revolution. They also marked the beginning of a martial tradition for blacks, just as service in the colonial militia had done for the gens de couleur. The maroons, however, seemed incapable of staging a broad-based insurrection on their own. Although challenged and vexed by the maroons' actions, colonial authorities effectively repelled the attacks, especially with help from the gens de couleur, who were probably forced into cooperating.

The arrangement that enabled the whites and the landed gens de couleur to preserve the stability of the slaveholding system was unstable. In an economic sense, the system worked for both groups. The gens de couleur, however, had aspirations beyond the accumulation of goods. They desired equality with white colonists, and many of them desired power. The events set in motion in 1789 by the French Revolution shook up, and eventually shattered, the arrangement.

The National Assembly in Paris required the white Colonial Assembly to grant suffrage to the landed and tax-paying gens de couleur. (The white colonists had had a history of ignoring French efforts to improve the lot of the black and the mulatto populations.) The Assembly refused, leading to the first mulatto rebellion in Saint-Domingue. The rebellion, led by Vincent Ogé in 1790, failed when the white militia reinforced itself with a corps of black volunteers. (The white elite was constantly prepared to use racial tension between blacks and mulattoes to advantage.) Ogé's rebellion was a sign of broader unrest in Saint-Domingue.

A slave rebellion of 1791 finally toppled the colony. Launched in August of that year, the revolt represented the culmination of a protracted conspiracy among black leaders. According to accounts of the rebellion that have been told through the years, François-Dominique Toussaint Louverture helped plot the uprising, although this claim has never been substantiated. Among the rebellion's leaders were Boukman, a maroon and voodoo houngan (priest); Georges Biassou, who later made Toussaint his aide; Jean-François, who subsequently commanded forces, along with Biassou and Toussaint, under the Spanish flag; and Jeannot, the bloodthirstiest of them all. These leaders sealed their compact with a voodoo ceremony conducted by Boukman in the Bois Cayman (Alligator Woods) in early August 1791. On August 22, a little more than a week after the ceremony, the uprising of their black followers began.

The carnage that the slaves wreaked in northern settlements, such as Acul, Limbé, Flaville, and Le Normand, revealed the simmering fury of an oppressed people. The bands of slaves slaughtered every white person they encountered. As their standard, they carried a pike with the

carcass of an impaled white baby. Accounts of the rebellion describe widespread torching of property, fields, factories, and anything else that belonged to, or served, slaveholders. The inferno is said to have burned almost continuously for months.

News of the slaves' uprising quickly reached Cap Français. Reprisals against nonwhites were swift and every bit as brutal as the atrocities committed by the slaves. Although outnumbered, the inhabitants of Le Cap (the local diminutive for Cap Français) were well-armed and prepared to defend themselves against the tens of thousands of blacks who descended upon the port city. Despite their voodoo-inspired heroism, the ex-slaves fell in large numbers to the colonists' firepower and were forced to withdraw. The rebellion left an estimated 10,000 blacks and 2,000 whites dead and more than 1,000 plantations sacked and razed.

Even though it failed, the slave rebellion at Cap Français set in motion events that culminated in the Haitian Revolution. Mulatto forces under the capable leadership of André Rigaud, Alexandre Pétion, and others clashed with white militiamen in the west and the south (where, once again, whites recruited black slaves to their cause). Sympathy with the Republican cause in France inspired the mulattoes. Sentiment in the National Assembly vacillated, but it finally favored the enfranchisement of gens de couleur and the enforcement of equal rights. Whites, who had had little respect for royal governance in the past, now rallied behind the Bourbons and rejected the radical egalitarian notions of the French revolutionaries. Commissioners from the French Republic, dispatched in 1792 to Saint-Domingue, pledged their limited support to the gens de couleur in the midst of an increasingly anarchic situation. In various regions of the colony, black slaves rebelled against white colonists, mulattoes battled white levies, and black royalists opposed both whites and mulattoes. Foreign interventionists found these unstable conditions irresistible; Spanish and British involvement in the unrest in Saint-Domingue opened yet another chapter in the revolution.

Toussaint Louverture

Social historian James G. Leyburn has said of Toussaint Louverture that "what he did is more easily told than what he was." Although some of Toussaint's correspondence and papers remain, they reveal little of his deepest motivations in the struggle for Haitian autonomy. Born sometime between 1743 and 1746 in Saint-Domingue, Toussaint belonged to the small, fortunate class of slaves employed by humane masters as personal servants. While serving as a house servant and coachman, Toussaint received the tutelage that helped him become one of the few literate black revolutionary leaders.

Upon hearing of the slave uprising, Toussaint took pains to secure safe expatriation of his master's family. It was only then that he joined Biassou's forces, where his intelligence, skill in strategic and tactical planning (based partly on his reading of works by Julius Caesar and others), and innate leadership ability brought him quickly to prominence.

Le Cap fell to French forces, who were reinforced by thousands of blacks in April 1793. Black forces had joined the French against the royalists on the promise of freedom. Indeed, in August Commissioner Léger-Félicité Sonthonax abolished slavery in the colony.

Two black leaders who warily refused to commit their forces to France, however, were Jean-François and Biassou. Believing allegiance to a king would be more secure than allegiance to a republic, these leaders accepted commissions from Spain. The Spanish deployed forces in coordination with these indigenous blacks to take the north of Saint-Domingue. Toussaint, who had taken up the Spanish banner in February 1793, came to command his own forces independently of Biassou's army. By the year's end, Toussaint had cut a swath through the north, had swung south to Gonaïves, and effectively controlled north-central Saint-Domingue.

Some historians believe that Spain and Britain had reached an informal arrangement to divide the French colony between them-- Britain to take the south and Spain, the north. British forces landed at Jérémie and Môle Saint-Nicolas (the Môle). They besieged Port-au-Prince (or Port Républicain, as it was known under the Republic) and took it in June 1794. The Spanish had launched a two-pronged offensive from the east. French forces checked Spanish progress toward Port-au-Prince in the south, but the Spanish pushed rapidly through the north, most of which they occupied by 1794. Spain and Britain were poised to seize Saint-Domingue, but several factors foiled their grand design. One factor was illness. The British in particular fell victim to tropical disease, which thinned their ranks far more quickly than combat against the French. Southern forces led by Rigaud and northern forces led by another mulatto commander, Villatte, also forestalled a complete victory by the foreign forces. These uncertain conditions positioned Toussaint's centrally located forces as the key to victory or defeat. On May 6, 1794, Toussaint made a decision that sealed the fate of a nation.

After arranging for his family to flee from the city of Santo Domingo, Toussaint pledged his support to France. Confirmation of the National Assembly's decision on February 4, 1794, to abolish slavery appears to have been the strongest influence over Toussaint's actions. Although the Spanish had promised emancipation, they showed no signs of keeping their word in the territories that they controlled, and the British had reinstated slavery in the areas they occupied. If emancipation was Toussaint's goal, he had no choice but to cast his lot with the French.

In several raids against his former allies, Toussaint took the Artibonite region and retired briefly to Mirebalais. As Rigaud's forces achieved more limited success in the south, the tide clearly swung in favor of the French Republicans. Perhaps the key event at this point was the July 22, 1794, peace agreement between France and Spain. The agreement was not finalized until the signing of the Treaty of Basel the following year. The accord directed Spain to cede its holdings on Hispaniola to France. The move effectively denied supplies, funding, and avenues of retreat to combatants under the Spanish aegis. The armies of Jean-François and Biassou disbanded, and many flocked to the standard of Toussaint, the remaining black commander of stature.

In March 1796, Toussaint rescued the French commander, General Etienne-Maynard Laveaux, from a mulatto-led effort to depose him as the primary colonial authority. To express his gratitude, Laveaux appointed Toussaint lieutenant governor of Saint-Domingue. With this much power over the affairs of his homeland, Toussaint was in a position to gain more. Toussaint distrusted the intentions of all foreign parties--as well as those of the mulattoes--regarding the future of slavery; he believed that only black leadership could assure the continuation of an autonomous Saint-Domingue. He set out to consolidate his political and military positions, and he undercut the positions of the French and the resentful gens de couleur.

A new group of French commissioners appointed Toussaint commander in chief of all French forces on the island. From this position of strength, he resolved to move quickly and decisively to establish an autonomous state under black rule. He expelled Sonthonax, the leading French commissioner, who had proclaimed the abolition of slavery, and concluded an agreement to end hostilities with Britain. He sought to secure Rigaud's allegiance and thus to incorporate the majority of mulattoes into his national project, but his plan was thwarted by the French, who saw in Rigaud their last opportunity to retain dominion over the colony.

Once again, racial animosity drove events in Saint-Domingue, as Toussaint's predominantly black forces clashed with Rigaud's mulatto army. Foreign intrigue and manipulation prevailed on both sides of the conflict. Toussaint, in correspondence with United States president John Adams, pledged that in exchange for support he would deny the French the use of Saint-Domingue as a base for operations in North America. Adams, the leader of an independent, but still insecure, nation, found the arrangement desirable and dispatched arms and ships that greatly aided black forces in what is sometimes referred to as the War of the Castes. Rigaud, with his forces and ambitions crushed, fled the colony in late 1800.

After securing the port of Santo Domingo in May 1800, Toussaint held sway over the whole of Hispaniola. This position gave him an opportunity to concentrate on restoring domestic order and productivity. Like Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henri (Henry) Christophe, Toussaint saw that the survival of his homeland depended on an export-oriented economy. He therefore reimposed the plantation system and utilized nonslaves, but he still essentially relied on forced labor to produce the sugar, coffee, and other commodities needed to support economic progress. He directed this process through his military dictatorship, the form of government that he judged most efficacious under the circumstances. A constitution, approved in 1801 by the then still-extant Colonial Assembly, granted Toussaint, as Governor-general-for-life, all effective power as well as the privilege of choosing his successor.

Toussaint's interval of freedom from foreign confrontation was unfortunately brief. Toussaint never severed the formal bond with France, but his de facto independence and autonomy rankled the leaders of the mother country and concerned the governments of slave-holding nations, such as Britain and the United States. French first consul Napoléon Bonaparte resented the temerity of the former slaves who planned to govern a nation on their own. Moreover, Bonaparte regarded Saint-Domingue as essential to potential French exploitation of the Louisiana Territory. Taking advantage of a temporary halt in the wars in Europe, Bonaparte dispatched to Saint-Domingue forces led by his brother-in-law, General Charles Victor Emmanuel Leclerc. These forces, numbering between 16,000 and 20,000--about the same size as Toussaint's army--landed at several points on the north coast in January 1802. With the help of white colonists and mulatto forces commanded by Pétion and others, the French outmatched, outmaneuvered, and wore down the black army. Two of Toussaint's chief lieutenants, Dessalines and Christophe, recognized their untenable situation, held separate parleys with the invaders, and agreed to transfer their allegiance. Recognizing his weak position, Toussaint surrendered to Leclerc on May 5, 1802. The French assured Toussaint that he would be allowed to retire quietly, but a month later, they seized him and transported him to France, where he died of neglect in the frigid dungeon of Fort de Joux in the Jura Mountains on April 7, 1803.

The betrayal of Toussaint and Bonaparte's restoration of slavery in Martinique undermined the collaboration of leaders such as Dessalines, Christophe, and Pétion. Convinced that the same fate lay in store for Saint-Domingue, these commanders and others once again battled Leclerc and his disease-riddled army. Leclerc himself died of yellow fever in November 1802, about two months after he had requested reinforcements to quash the renewed resistance. Leclerc's replacement, General Donatien Rochambeau, waged a bloody campaign against the insurgents, but events beyond the shores of Saint-Domingue doomed the campaign to failure.

By 1803 war had resumed between France and Britain, and Bonaparte once again concentrated his energies on the struggle in Europe. In April of that year, Bonaparte signed a treaty that allowed the purchase of Louisiana by the United States and ended French ambitions in the Western Hemisphere. Rochambeau's reinforcements and supplies never arrived in sufficient numbers. The general fled to Jamaica in November 1803, where he surrendered to British authorities rather than face the retribution of the rebel leadership. The era of French colonial rule in Haiti had ended.

Independence of Haiti

On January 1, 1804, Haiti proclaimed its independence. Through this action, it became the second independent state in the Western Hemisphere and the first free black republic in the world. Haiti's uniqueness attracted much attention and symbolized the aspirations of enslaved and exploited peoples around the globe. Nonetheless, Haitians made no overt effort to inspire, to support, or to aid slave rebellions similar to their own because they feared that the great powers would take renewed action against them. For the sake of national survival, nonintervention became a Haitian credo.

Dessalines, who had commanded the black and the mulatto forces during the final phase of the revolution, became the new country's leader; he ruled under the dictatorial 1801 constitution. The land he governed had been devastated by years of warfare. The agricultural base was all but destroyed, and the population was uneducated and largely unskilled. Commerce was virtually nonexistent. Contemplating this bleak situation, Dessalines determined, as Toussaint had done, that a firm hand was needed.

White residents felt the sting most sharply. While Toussaint, a former privileged slave of a tolerant white master, had felt a certain magnanimity toward whites, Dessalines, a former field slave, despised them with a maniacal intensity. He reportedly agreed wholeheartedly with his aide, Boisrond-Tonnerre, who stated, "For our declaration of independence, we should have the skin of a white man for parchment, his skull for an inkwell, his blood for ink, and a bayonet for a pen!" Accordingly, whites were slaughtered wholesale under the rule of Dessalines.

Although blacks were not massacred under Dessalines, they witnessed little improvement in the quality of their lives. To restore some measure of agricultural productivity, Dessalines reestablished the plantation system. Harsh measures bound laborers to their assigned work places, and penalties were imposed on runaways and on those who harbored them. Because Dessalines drew his only organizational experience from war, it was natural for him to use the

military as a tool for governing the new nation. The rule of Dessalines set a pattern for direct involvement of the army in politics that continued unchallenged for more than 150 years.

In 1805 Dessalines crowned himself Emperor of Haiti. By this point, his autocratic rule had disenfranchised important sectors of Haitian society, particularly mulattoes such as Pétion. The mulattoes resented Dessalines mostly for racial reasons, but the more educated and cultured gens de couleur also derided the emperor (and most of his aides and officers) for his ignorance and illiteracy. Efforts by Dessalines to bring mulatto families into the ruling group through marriage met with resistance. Pétion himself declined the offer of the hand of the emperor's daughter. Many mulattoes were appalled by the rampant corruption and licentiousness of the emperor's court. Dessalines's absorption of a considerable amount of land into the hands of the state through the exploitation of irregularities in titling procedures also aroused the ire of landowners.

The disaffection that sealed the emperor's fate arose within the ranks of the army, where Dessalines had lost support at all levels. The voracious appetites of his ruling clique apparently left little or nothing in the treasury for military salaries and provisions. Although reportedly aware of discontent among the ranks, Dessalines made no effort to redress these shortcomings. Instead, he relied on the same iron-fisted control with which he kept rural laborers in line. That his judgement in this matter had been in error became apparent on the road to Port-au-Prince as he rode with a column of troops on its way to crush a mulattoed rebellion. A group of people, probably hired by Pétion or Etienne-Elie Gérin (another mulatto officer), shot the emperor and hacked his body to pieces.

Under Dessalines the Haitian economy had made little progress despite the restoration of forced labor. Conflict between blacks and mulattoes ended the cooperation that the revolution had produced, and the brutality toward whites shocked foreign governments and isolated Haiti internationally. A lasting enmity against Haiti arose among Dominicans as a result of the emperor's unsuccessful invasion of Santo Domingo in 1805. Dessalines's failure to consolidate Haiti and to unite Haitians had ramifications in the years that followed, as the nation split into two rival enclaves.

Christophe's Kingdom and Pétion's Republic

Many candidates succeeded Dessalines, but only three approached his stature. Most Haitians saw Henry Christophe as the most logical choice. He had served as a commander under Toussaint and could therefore claim the former leader's mantle and some of his mystique. Christophe was black like Dessalines, but he lacked Dessalines's consuming racial hatred, and he was much more pragmatic in this regard. His popularity, especially in the north, however, was not strong enough to offset the mulatto elite's growing desire to exert control over Haiti through a leader drawn from its own ranks. The mulattoes had two other candidates in mind: Gérin and Pétion, the presumed authors of Dessalines's assassination.

In November 1806, army officers and established anciens libres (pre-independence freedmen) landowners--an electorate dominated by the mulatto elite--elected a constituent assembly that was given the task of establishing a new government. Members of the assembly drafted a constitution that established a weak presidency and a comparatively strong legislature. They

selected Christophe as president and Pétion as head of the legislature, the earliest attempt in Haiti to establish what would later be known as the *politique de doublure* (politics by understudies). Under this system, a black leader served as figurehead for mulatto elitist rule.

The only defect in the mulattoes' scheme was Christophe himself, who refused to be content with his figurehead role. He mustered his forces and marched on Port-au-Prince. His assault on the city failed, however, mainly because Pétion had artillery and Christophe did not. Indignant, but not defeated, Christophe retreated to north of the Artibonite River and established his own dominion, which he ruled from Cap Haïtien (which he would later rechristen Cap Henry). Periodic and ineffectual clashes went on for years between this northern territory and Pétion's republic, which encompassed most of the southern half of the country and boasted Port-au-Prince as its capital.

The northern dominion became a kingdom in 1811, when Christophe crowned himself King Henry I of Haiti. Unlike Dessalines, who as emperor declared, "Only I am royal," Christophe installed a nobility of mainly black supporters and associates who assumed the titles of earls, counts, and barons.

Below this aristocratic level, life in the northern kingdom was harsh, but not nearly so cruel as the conditions that had prevailed under Dessalines. Laborers remained bound to their plantations, but working hours were liberalized, and remuneration was increased to one-fourth of the harvested crop.

Christophe was a great believer in discipline. He brought African warriors from Dahomey (present-day Benin), whom he dubbed Royal Dahomets. They served as the primary agents of his authority. Incorruptible and intensely loyal to Christophe, the Dahomets brought order to the countryside.

Many people were dissatisfied with the strictness of Christophe's regime. As productivity and export levels rose, however, the quality of their lives improved in comparison with revolutionary and immediately post-revolutionary days.

In the more permissive southern republic, where Pétion ruled as president-for-life, people's lives were not improving. The crucial difference between the northern kingdom and the southern republic was the way each treated landownership. Christophe gave ownership of the bulk of the land to the state and leased large tracts to estate managers. Pétion took the opposite approach and distributed state-owned land to individuals in small parcels. Pétion began distributing land in 1809, when he granted land to his soldiers. Later on, Pétion extended the land-grant plan to other beneficiaries and lowered the selling price of state land to a level where almost anyone could afford to own land.

Pétion's decision proved detrimental in the shaping of modern Haiti. Smallholders had little incentive to produce export crops instead of subsistence crops. Coffee, because of its relative ease of cultivation, came to dominate agriculture in the south. The level of coffee production, however, did not permit any substantial exports. Sugar, which had been produced in large quantities in Saint-Domingue, was no longer exported from Haiti after 1822. When the

cultivation of cane ceased, sugar mills closed, and people lost their jobs. In the south, the average Haitian was an isolated, poor, free, and relatively content yeoman. In the north, the average Haitian was a resentful but comparatively prosperous laborer. The desire for personal autonomy motivated most Haitians more than the vaguer concept of contributing to a strong national economy, however, and defections to the south were frequent, much to the consternation of Christophe.

Pétion, who died in 1818, left a lasting imprint upon his homeland. He ruled under two constitutions, which were promulgated in 1806 and 1816. The 1806 document resembled in many ways the Constitution of the United States. The 1816 charter, however, replaced the elected presidency with the office of president for life.

Pétion's largely laissez-faire rule did not directly discriminate against blacks, but it did promote an entrenched mulatto elite that benefited from such policies as the restoration of land confiscated by Dessalines and cash reimbursement for crops lost during the last year of the emperor's rule. Despite the egalitarianism of land distribution, government and politics in the republic remained the province of the elite, especially because the control of commerce came to replace the production of commodities as the focus of economic power in Haiti. Pétion was a beneficent ruler, and he was beloved by the people, who referred to him as "Papa Bon Coeur" (Father Good Heart). But Pétion was neither a true statesman nor a visionary. Some have said that his impact on the nations of South America, through his support for rebels such as Simón Bolívar Palacios and Francisco de Miranda, was stronger and more positive than his impact on his own impoverished country.

Although Christophe sought a reconciliation after Pétion's death, the southern elite rejected the notion of submission to a black leader. Because the president-for-life had died without naming a successor, the republican senate selected Pétion's mulatto secretary and commander of the Presidential Guard (Garde Présidentielle), General Jean-Pierre Boyer, to fill the post. In the north, King Henry committed suicide in October 1820, after having suffered a severe stroke that caused him to lose control of the army, his main source of power. The kingdom, which had been ruled by an even narrower clique than the republic, was left ripe for the taking. Boyer claimed it on October 26 at Cap Haïtien at the head of 20,000 troops. Haiti was once again a single nation.

Boyer: Expansion and Decline

Boyer shared Pétion's conciliatory approach to governance, but he lacked his stature as a leader. The length of Boyer's rule (1818-43) reflected his political acumen, but he accomplished little. Boyer took advantage of internecine conflict in Santo Domingo by invading and securing the Spanish part of Hispaniola in 1822. He succeeded where Toussaint and Dessalines had failed. Occupation of the territory, however, proved unproductive for the Haitians, and ultimately it sparked a Dominican rebellion.

Boyer faced drastically diminished productivity as a result of Pétion's economic policies. Most Haitians had fallen into comfortable isolation on their small plots of land, content to eke out a quiet living after years of turmoil and duress. Boyer enacted a Rural Code (Code Rural),

designed to force yeomen into large-scale production of export crops. The nation, however, lacked the wherewithal, the enthusiasm, and the discipline to enforce the code.

Boyer perceived that France's continued refusal to settle claims remaining from the revolution and to recognize its former colony's independence constituted the gravest threat to Haitian integrity. His solution to the problem--payment in return for recognition--secured Haiti from French aggression, but it emptied the treasury and mortgaged the country's future to French banks, which eagerly provided the balance of the hefty first installment. The indemnity was later reduced in 1838 from 150 million francs to 60 million francs. By that time, however, the damage to Haiti had been done.

As the Haitian economy stagnated under Boyer, Haitian society ossified. The lines separating mulattoes and blacks sharpened, despite Boyer's efforts to appoint blacks to responsible positions in government. The overwhelming rate of illiteracy among even well-to-do blacks foiled Boyer's intentions. Still, his government effected no substantial improvements in the limited educational system that Pétion had established. The exclusivity of the social structure thus perpetuated itself. Many blacks found no avenues in the bureaucracy for social mobility, and they turned to careers in the military, where literacy was not a requirement.

As Pétion's successor, Boyer held the title of president-for-life. The length and relative placidity of his rule represented a period of respite for most Haitians after the violence and disorder that had characterized the emergence of their nation. Pressures gradually built up, however, as various groups, especially young mulattoes, began to chafe at the seemingly deliberate maintenance of the political and social status quo.

In the late 1830s, legislative opposition to Boyer clustered around Hérard Dumesle, a mulatto poet and liberal political thinker. Dumesle and his followers decried the anemic state of the nation's economy and its concomitant dependence on imported goods. They also disdained the continued elite adherence to French culture and urged Haitians to forge their own national identity. Their grievances against Boyer's government included corruption, nepotism, suppression of free expression, and rule by executive fiat. Banding together in a fraternity, they christened their organization the Society for the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. The group of young mulattoes called for an end to Boyer's rule and for the establishment of a provisional government.

The government expelled Dumesle and his followers from the legislature and made no effort to address their grievances. The perceived intransigence of the Boyer government triggered violent clashes in the south near Les Cayes. Forces under the command of Charles Rivière-Hérard, a cousin of Dumesle, swept through the southern peninsula toward the capital. Boyer received word on February 11, 1843, that most of his army units had joined the rebels. A victim of what was later known as the Revolution of 1843, Boyer sailed to Jamaica. Rivière-Hérard replaced him in the established tradition of military rule.

DECADES OF INSTABILITY, 1843-1915

Leyburn summarizes this chaotic era in Haitian history. "Of the twenty-two heads of state

between 1843 and 1915, only one served out his prescribed term of office, three died while serving, one was blown up with his palace, one presumably poisoned, one hacked to pieces by a mob, one resigned. The other fourteen were deposed by revolution after incumbencies ranging in length from three months to twelve years." During this wide gulf between the 1843 revolution and occupation by the United States in 1915, Haiti's leadership became the most valuable prize in an unprincipled competition among strongmen. The overthrow of a government usually degenerated into a business venture, with foreign merchants--frequently Germans--initially funding a rebellion in the expectation of a substantial return after its success. The weakness of Haitian governments of the period and the potential profits to be gained from supporting a corrupt leader made such investments attractive.

Rivière-Hérard enjoyed only a brief tenure as president. It was restive and rebellious Dominicans, rather than Haitians, who struck one of the more telling blows against this leader. Nationalist forces led by Juan Pablo Duarte seized control of Santo Domingo on February 27, 1844. Unprofessional and undisciplined Haitian forces in the east, unprepared for a significant uprising, capitulated to the rebels. In March Rivière-Hérard attempted to reimpose his authority, but the Dominicans put up stiff opposition. Soon after Rivière-Hérard crossed the border, domestic turmoil exploded again.

Discontent among black rural cultivators, which had flared up periodically under Boyer, re-emerged in 1844 and led to greater change. Bands of ragged piquets (a term derived from the word for the pikes they brandished), under the leadership of a black, former army officer named Louis Jean-Jacques Acaau, rampaged through the south. The piquets who were capable of articulating a political position demanded an end to mulatto rule and the election of a black president. Their demands were eventually met but not by the defeated Rivière-Hérard, who returned home to a country where he enjoyed little support and wielded no effective power. In May 1844, his ouster by several rebel groups brought to power Philippe Guerrier, an aged black officer who had been a member of the peerage under Christophe's kingdom.

Guerrier's installation by a mulatto-dominated establishment represented the formal beginning of *politique de doublure*; a succession of short-lived black leaders was chosen after Guerrier in an effort to appease the piquets and to avoid renewed unrest in the countryside. During this period, two exceptions to the pattern of abbreviated rule were Faustin Soulouque (1847-59) and Fabre Nicolas Geffrard (1859-67). Soulouque, a black general of no particular distinction, was considered just another understudy when he was tapped by the legislature as a compromise between competing factions. Once in office, however, he displayed a Machiavellian taste for power. He purged the military high command, established a secret police force--known as the *zinglins*--to keep dissenters in line, and eliminated mulatto opponents. In August 1849, he grandiosely proclaimed himself as Haiti's second emperor, Faustin I.

Soulouque, like Boyer, enjoyed a comparatively long period of power that yielded little of value to his country. Whereas Boyer's rule had been marked by torpor and neglect, Soulouque's was distinguished by violence, repression, and rampant corruption. Soulouque's expansive ambitions led him to mount several invasions of the Dominican Republic. The Dominicans turned back his first foray in 1849 before he reached Santo Domingo. Another invasion in 1850 proved even less successful. Failed campaigns in 1855 and in 1856 fueled mounting discontent among the

military; a revolt led by Geffrard, who had led a contingent in the Dominican campaign, forced the emperor out of power in 1859.

Geffrard, a dark-skinned mulatto, restored the old order of elite rule. After the turmoil of Soulouque's regime, Geffrard's rule seemed comparatively tranquil and even somewhat progressive. Geffrard produced a new constitution based largely on Pétion's 1816 document, improved transportation, and expanded education (although the system still favored the upper classes). Geffrard also signed a concordat with the Vatican in 1860 that expanded the presence of the Roman Catholic Church and its preponderantly foreign-born clergy in Haiti, particularly through the establishment of parochial schools. The move ended a period of ill will between Haiti and the church that had begun during the revolutionary period.

Intrigue and discontent among the elite and the piquets beset Geffrard throughout his rule. In 1867 General Sylvain Salnave--a light-skinned mulatto who received considerable support from blacks in the north and in the capital--forced Geffrard from office. The overthrow profoundly unsettled the country, and Salnave's end came quickly. Rural rebellion among anti-Salnavist peasants who called themselves *cacos* (a term of unknown derivation) triggered renewed unrest among the piquets in the south. After several military successes, Salnave's forces weakened, and the leader fled Port-au-Prince. *Caco* forces captured him, however, near the Dominican border, where they tried and executed him on January 15, 1870. Successive leaders claimed control of most of the country and then regularly confirmed their rule *ex post facto* through a vote by the legislature, but none succeeded in establishing effective authority over the entire country.

Rebellion, intrigue, and conspiracy continued to be commonplace even under the rule of Louis Lysius Félicité Salomon (1879-88), of the National Party (Parti National--PN), the most notable and effective president of the late nineteenth century. During one seven-year term and the beginning of a second, Salomon revived agriculture to a limited degree, attracted some foreign capital, established a national bank, linked Haiti to the outside world through the telegraph, and made minor improvements in the education system. Salomon, the scion of a prominent black family, had spent many years in France after being expelled by Rivière- Hérard. Salomon's support among the rural masses, along with his energetic efforts to contain elite-instigated plots, kept him in power longer than the strongmen who preceded and followed him. Still, Salomon yielded--after years of conflict with forces led by the Liberal Party (Parti Liberal--LP), and other disgruntled, power-hungry elite elements.

Political forces during the late nineteenth century polarized around the Liberal and the National parties. Mulattoes dominated the Liberal ranks, while blacks dominated the National Party; both parties were nonideological in nature. The parties competed on the battlefield, in the legislature, within the ranks of the military, and in the more refined but limited circles of the literati. The more populist Nationalists marched under the banner of their party slogan, "the greatest good for the greatest number," while the blatantly elitist Liberals proclaimed their preference for "government by the most competent."

Haitian politics remained unstable. From the fall of Salomon until occupation by the United States in 1915, eleven men held the title of president. Their tenures in office ranged from six and one-half years in the case of Florvil Hyppolite (1889-96) to only months--especially between

1912 and 1915, the turbulent period that preceded the United States occupation--in the case of seven others.

Although domestic unrest helped pave the way for intervention by the United States, geostrategic concerns also influenced events. The United States had periodically entertained the notion of annexing Hispaniola, but the divisive issue of slavery deterred the nation from acting. Until 1862 the United States refused to recognize Haiti's independence because the free, black, island nation symbolized opposition to slavery. President Ulysses S. Grant proposed annexation of the Dominican Republic in 1870, but the United States Senate rejected the idea. By the late nineteenth century, the growth of United States power and the prospect of a transoceanic canal in either Nicaragua or Panama had increased attention given to the Caribbean. Annexation faded as a policy option, but Washington persistently pursued efforts to secure naval stations throughout the region. The United States favored the Môle Saint-Nicolas as an outpost, but Haiti refused to cede territory to a foreign power.

The French and the British still claimed interests in Haiti, but it was the Germans' activity on the island that concerned the United States most. The small German community in Haiti (approximately 200 in 1910) wielded a disproportionate amount of economic power. Germans controlled about 80 percent of the country's international commerce; they also owned and operated utilities in Cap Haïtien and Port-au-Prince, the main wharf and a tramway in the capital, and a railroad in the north. The Germans, as did the French, aiming to collect the nation's customs receipts to cover Haiti's outstanding debts to European creditors, also sought control of the nearly insolvent National Bank of Haiti. This kind of arrangement was known technically as a customs receivership.

Officials in Washington were especially concerned about Germany's aggressive employment of military might. In December 1897, a German commodore in charge of two warships demanded and received an indemnity from the Haitian government for a German national who had been deported from the island after a legal dispute. Another German warship intervened in a Haitian uprising in September 1902. It forced the captain of a rebel gunboat (that had waylaid a German merchant ship) to resort to blowing up his ship--and himself--to avoid being seized.

Reports reached Washington that Berlin was considering setting up a coaling station at the Môle Saint-Nicolas to serve the German naval fleet. This potential strategic encroachment resonated through the White House, at a time when the Monroe Doctrine (a policy that opposed European intervention in the Western Hemisphere) and the Roosevelt Corollary (whereby the United States assumed the responsibility for direct intervention in Latin American nations in order to check the influence of European powers) strongly shaped United States foreign policy, and when war on a previously unknown scale had broken out in Europe. The administration of President Woodrow Wilson accordingly began contingency planning for an occupation of Haiti.

Escalating instability in Haiti all but invited foreign intervention. The country's most productive president of the early twentieth century, Cincinnatus Leconte, had died in a freak explosion in the National Palace (Palais National) in August 1912. Five more contenders claimed the country's leadership over the next three years. General Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, who had helped to bring Leconte to power, took the oath of office in March 1915. Like every other Haitian

president of the period, he faced active rebellion to his rule. His leading opponent, Rosalvo Bobo, reputedly hostile toward the United States, represented to Washington a barrier to expanded commercial and strategic ties. A pretext for intervention came on July 27, 1915, when Guillaume Sam executed 167 political prisoners. Popular outrage provoked mob violence in the streets of Port-au-Prince. A throng of incensed citizens sought out Guillaume Sam at his sanctuary in the French embassy and literally tore him to pieces. The spectacle of an exultant rabble parading through the streets of the capital bearing the dismembered corpse of their former president shocked decision makers in the United States and spurred them to swift action. The first sailors and marines landed in Port-au-Prince on July 28. Within six weeks, representatives from the United States controlled Haitian customs houses and administrative institutions. For the next nineteen years, Haiti's powerful neighbor to the north guided and governed the country.

THE UNITED STATES OCCUPATION, 1915-34

Representatives from the United States wielded veto power over all governmental decisions in Haiti, and Marine Corps commanders served as administrators in the provinces. Local institutions, however, continued to be run by Haitians, as was required under policies put in place during the presidency of Woodrow Wilson. In line with these policies, Admiral William Caperton, the initial commander of United States forces, instructed Bobo to refrain from offering himself to the legislature as a presidential candidate. Philippe Sudre Dartiguenave, the mulatto president of the Senate, agreed to accept the presidency of Haiti after several other candidates had refused on principle.

With a figurehead installed in the National Palace and other institutions maintained in form if not in function, Caperton declared martial law, a condition that persisted until 1929. A treaty passed by the Haitian legislature in November 1915 granted further authority to the United States. The treaty allowed Washington to assume complete control of Haiti's finances, and it gave the United States sole authority over the appointment of advisers and receivers. The treaty also gave the United States responsibility for establishing and running public-health and public-works programs and for supervising routine governmental affairs. The treaty also established the Gendarmerie d'Haïti (Haitian Constabulary), a step later replicated in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua. The Gendarmerie was Haiti's first professional military force, and it was eventually to play an important political role in the country. In 1917 President Dartiguenave dissolved the legislature after its members refused to approve a constitution purportedly authored by United States assistant secretary of the navy Franklin D. Roosevelt. A referendum subsequently approved the new constitution (by a vote of 98,225 to 768), however, in 1918. Generally a liberal document, the constitution allowed foreigners to purchase land. Dessalines had forbidden land ownership by foreigners, and since 1804 most Haitians had viewed foreign ownership as anathema.

The occupation by the United States had several effects on Haiti. An early period of unrest culminated in a 1918 rebellion by up to 40,000 former cacos and other disgruntled people. The scale of the uprising overwhelmed the Gendarmerie, but marine reinforcements helped put down the revolt at the estimated cost of 2,000 Haitian lives. Thereafter, order prevailed to a degree that most Haitians had never witnessed. The order, however, was imposed largely by white foreigners with deep-seated racial prejudices and a disdain for the notion of self-determination by

inhabitants of less-developed nations. These attitudes particularly dismayed the mulatto elite, who had heretofore believed in their innate superiority over the black masses. The whites from North America, however, did not distinguish among Haitians, regardless of their skin tone, level of education, or sophistication. This intolerance caused indignation, resentment, and eventually a racial pride that was reflected in the work of a new generation of Haitian historians, ethnologists, writers, artists, and others, many of whom later became active in politics and government. Still, as Haitians united in their reaction to the racism of the occupying forces, the mulatto elite managed to dominate the country's bureaucracy and to strengthen its role in national affairs.

The occupation had several positive aspects. It greatly improved Haiti's infrastructure. Roads were improved and expanded. Almost all roads, however, led to Port-au-Prince, resulting in a gradual concentration of economic activity in the capital. Bridges went up throughout the country; a telephone system began to function; several towns gained access to clean water; and a construction boom (in some cases employing forced labor) helped restore wharves, lighthouses, schools, and hospitals. Public health improved, partially because of United States-directed campaigns against malaria and yaws (a crippling disease caused by a spirochete). Sound fiscal management kept Haiti current on its foreign-debt payments at a time when default among Latin American nations was common. By that time, United States banks were Haiti's main creditors, an important incentive for Haiti to make timely payments.

In 1922 Louis Borno replaced Dartiguenave, who was forced out of office for temporizing over the approval of a debtconsolidation loan. Borno ruled without the benefit of a legislature (dissolved in 1917 under Dartiguenave) until elections were again permitted in 1930. The legislature, after several ballots, elected mulatto Sténio Vincent to the presidency.

The occupation of Haiti continued after World War I, despite the embarrassment that it caused Woodrow Wilson at the Paris peace conference in 1919 and the scrutiny of a congressional inquiry in 1922. By 1930 President Herbert Hoover had become concerned about the effects of the occupation, particularly after a December 1929 incident in Les Cayes in which marines killed at least ten Haitian peasants during a march to protest local economic conditions. Hoover appointed two commissions to study the situation. A former governor general of the Philippines, W. Cameron Forbes, headed the more prominent of the two. The Forbes Commission praised the material improvements that the United States administration had wrought, but it criticized the exclusion of Haitians from positions of real authority in the government and the constabulary, which had come to be known as the Garde d'Haïti. In more general terms, the commission further asserted that "the social forces that created [instability] still remain--poverty, ignorance, and the lack of a tradition or desire for orderly free government."

The Hoover administration did not implement fully the recommendations of the Forbes Commission, but United States withdrawal was well under way by 1932, when Hoover lost the presidency to Roosevelt, the presumed author of the most recent Haitian constitution. On a visit to Cap Haïtien in July 1934, Roosevelt reaffirmed an August 1933 disengagement agreement. The last contingent of marines departed in mid-August, after a formal transfer of authority to the Garde. As in other countries occupied by the United States in the early twentieth century, the local military was often the only cohesive and effective institution left in the wake of withdrawal.

POLITICS AND THE MILITARY, 1934-57

The Garde was a new kind of military institution in Haiti. It was a force manned overwhelmingly by blacks, with a United States- trained black commander, Colonel Démosthènes Pétrus Calixte. Most of the Garde's officers, however, were mulattoes. The Garde was a national organization; it departed from the regionalism that had characterized most of Haiti's previous armies. In theory, its charge was apolitical--to maintain internal order, while supporting a popularly elected government. The Garde initially adhered to this role.

President Vincent took advantage of the comparative national stability, which was being maintained by a professionalized military, to gain absolute power. A plebiscite permitted the transfer of all authority in economic matters from the legislature to the executive, but Vincent was not content with this expansion of his power. In 1935 he forced through the legislature a new constitution, which was also approved by plebiscite. The constitution praised Vincent, and it granted the executive sweeping powers to dissolve the legislature at will, to reorganize the judiciary, to appoint ten of twenty-one senators (and to recommend the remaining eleven to the lower house), and to rule by decree when the legislature was not in session. Although Vincent implemented some improvements in infrastructure and services, he brutally repressed his opposition, censored the press, and governed largely to benefit himself and a clique of merchants and corrupt military officers.

Under Calixte the majority of Garde personnel had adhered to the doctrine of political nonintervention that their Marine Corps trainers had stressed. Over time, however, Vincent and Dominican dictator Rafael Leónidas Trujillo Molina sought to buy adherents among the ranks. Trujillo, determined to expand his influence over all of Hispaniola, in October 1937 ordered the indiscriminate butchery by the Dominican army of an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 Haitians on the Dominican side of the Massacre River. Some observers claim that Trujillo supported an abortive coup attempt by young Garde officers in December 1937. Vincent dismissed Calixte as commander and sent him abroad, where he eventually accepted a commission in the Dominican military as a reward for his efforts while on Trujillo's payroll. The attempted coup led Vincent to purge the officer corps of all members suspected of disloyalty, marking the end of the apolitical military.

In 1941 Vincent showed every intention of standing for a third term as president, but after almost a decade of disengagement, the United States made it known that it would oppose such an extension. Vincent accommodated the Roosevelt administration and handed power over to Elie Lescot.

Lescot was a mulatto who had served in numerous government posts. He was competent and forceful, and many considered him a sterling candidate for the presidency, despite his elitist background. Like the majority of previous Haitian presidents, however, he failed to live up to his potential. His tenure paralleled that of Vincent in many ways. Lescot declared himself commander in chief of the military, and power resided in a clique that ruled with the tacit support of the Garde. He repressed his opponents, censored the press, and compelled the legislature to grant him extensive powers. He handled all budget matters without legislative sanction and filled legislative vacancies without calling elections. Lescot commonly said that Haiti's declared state-

of-war against the Axis powers during World War II justified his repressive actions. Haiti, however, played no role in the war except for supplying the United States with raw materials and serving as a base for a United States Coast Guard detachment.

Aside from his authoritarian tendencies, Lescot had another flaw: his relationship with Trujillo. While serving as Haitian ambassador to the Dominican Republic, Lescot fell under the sway of Trujillo's influence and wealth. In fact, it was Trujillo's money that reportedly bought most of the legislative votes that brought Lescot to power. Their clandestine association persisted until 1943, when the two leaders parted ways for unknown reasons. Trujillo later made public all his correspondence with the Haitian leader. The move undermined Lescot's already dubious popular support.

In January 1946, events came to a head when Lescot jailed the Marxist editors of a journal called *La Ruche* (The Beehive). This action precipitated student strikes and protests by government workers, teachers, and shopkeepers in the capital and provincial cities. In addition, Lescot's mulatto-dominated rule had alienated the predominantly black *Garde*. His position became untenable, and he resigned on January 11. Radio announcements declared that the *Garde* had assumed power, which it would administer through a three-member junta.

The Revolution of 1946 was a novel development in Haiti's history, insofar as the *Garde* assumed power as an institution, not as the instrument of a particular commander. The members of the junta, known as the Military Executive Committee (*Comité Exécutif Militaire*), were *Garde* commander Colonel Franck Lavaud, Major Antoine Levelt, and Major Paul E. Magloire, commander of the Presidential Guard. All three understood Haiti's traditional way of exercising power, but they lacked a thorough understanding of what would be required to make the transition to an elected civilian government. Upon taking power, the junta pledged to hold free elections. The junta also explored other options, but public clamor, which included public demonstrations in support of potential candidates, eventually forced the officers to make good on their promise.

Haiti elected its National Assembly in May 1946. The Assembly set August 16, 1946, as the date on which it would select a president. The leading candidates for the office--all of whom were black--were Dumarsais Estimé, a former school teacher, assembly member, and cabinet minister under Vincent; Félix d'Orléans Juste Constant, leader of the Haitian Communist Party (*Parti Communiste d'Haïti--PCH*); and former *Garde* commander Calixte, who stood as the candidate of a progressive coalition that included the Worker Peasant Movement (*Mouvement Ouvrier Paysan--MOP*). MOP chose to endorse Calixte, instead of a candidate from its own ranks, because the party's leader, Daniel Figiolé, was only twenty-six years old--too young to stand for the nation's highest office. Estimé, politically the most moderate of the three, drew support from the black population in the north, as well as from the emerging black middle class. The leaders of the military, who would not countenance the election of Juste Constant and who reacted warily to the populist Figiolé, also considered Estimé the safest candidate. After two rounds of polling, legislators gave Estimé the presidency.

Estimé's election represented a break with Haiti's political tradition. Although he was reputed to have received support from commanders of the *Garde*, Estimé was a civilian. Of humble origins,

he was passionately anti-elitist and therefore generally antimulatto. He demonstrated, at least initially, a genuine concern for the welfare of the people. Operating under a new constitution that went into effect in November 1946, Estimé proposed, but never secured passage of, Haiti's first social-security legislation. He did, however, expand the school system, encourage the establishment of rural cooperatives, raise the salaries of civil servants, and increase the representation of middle-class and lower-class blacks in the public sector. He also attempted to gain the favor of the Garde--renamed the Haitian Army (Armée d'Haïti) in March 1947--by promoting Lavaud to brigadier general and by seeking United States military assistance.

Estimé eventually fell victim to two of the time-honored pitfalls of Haitian rule: elite intrigue and personal ambition. The elite had a number of grievances against Estimé. Not only had he largely excluded them from the often lucrative levers of government, but he also enacted the country's first income tax, fostered the growth of labor unions, and suggested that voodoo be considered as a religion equivalent to Roman Catholicism--a notion that the Europeanized elite abhorred. Lacking direct influence in Haitian affairs, the elite resorted to clandestine lobbying among the officer corps. Their efforts, in combination with deteriorating domestic conditions, led to a coup in May 1950.

To be sure, Estimé had hastened his own demise in several ways. His nationalization of the Standard Fruit banana concession sharply reduced the firm's revenues. He alienated workers by requiring them to invest between 10 percent and 15 percent of their salaries in national-defense bonds. The president sealed his fate by attempting to manipulate the constitution in order to extend his term in office. Seizing on this action and the popular unrest it engendered, the army forced the president to resign on May 10, 1950. The same junta that had assumed power after the fall of Lescot reinstalled itself. An army escort conducted Estimé from the National Palace and into exile in Jamaica. The events of May 1946 made an impression upon the deposed minister of labor, François Duvalier. The lesson that Duvalier drew from Estimé's ouster was that the military could not be trusted. It was a lesson that he would act upon when he gained power.

The power balance within the junta shifted between 1946 and 1950. Lavaud was the preeminent member at the time of the first coup, but Magloire, now a colonel, dominated after Estimé's overthrow. When Haiti announced that its first direct elections (all men twenty-one or over were allowed to vote) would be held on October 8, 1950, Magloire resigned from the junta and declared himself a candidate for president. In contrast to the chaotic political climate of 1946, the campaign of 1950 proceeded under the implicit understanding that only a strong candidate backed by both the army and the elite would be able to take power. Facing only token opposition, Magloire won the election and assumed office on December 6.

Magloire restored the elite to prominence. The business community and the government benefited from favorable economic conditions until Hurricane Hazel hit the island in 1954. Haiti made some improvements on its infrastructure, but most of these were financed largely by foreign loans. By Haitian standards, Magloire's rule was firm, but not harsh: he jailed political opponents, including Fignolé, and shut down their presses when their protests grew too strident, but he allowed labor unions to function, although they were not permitted to strike. It was in the arena of corruption, however, that Magloire overstepped traditional bounds. The president controlled the sisal, cement, and soap monopolies. He and other officials built imposing

mansions. The injection of international hurricane relief funds into an already corrupt system boosted graft to levels that disillusioned all Haitians. To make matters worse, Magloire followed in the footsteps of many previous presidents by disputing the termination date of his stay in office. Politicians, labor leaders, and their followers flocked to the streets in May 1956 to protest Magloire's failure to step down. Although Magloire declared martial law, a general strike essentially shut down Port-au-Prince. Again like many before him, Magloire fled to Jamaica, leaving the army with the task of restoring order.

The period between the fall of Magloire and the election of Duvalier in September 1957 was a chaotic one, even by Haitian standards. Three provisional presidents held office during this interval; one resigned and the army deposed the other two, Franck Sylvain and Fignolé. Duvalier is said to have engaged actively in the behind-the-scenes intrigue that helped him to emerge as the presidential candidate that the military favored. The military went on to guide the campaign and the elections in a way that gave Duvalier every possible advantage. Most political actors perceived Duvalier--a medical doctor who had served as a rural administrator of a United States-funded anti-yaws campaign before entering the cabinet under Estimé--as an honest and fairly unassuming leader without a strong ideological motivation or program. When elections were finally organized, this time under terms of universal suffrage (both men and women now had the vote), Duvalier, a black, painted himself as the legitimate heir to Estimé. This approach was enhanced by the fact that Duvalier's only viable opponent, Louis Déjoie, was a mulatto and the scion of a prominent family. Duvalier scored a decisive victory at the polls. His followers took two-thirds of the legislature's lower house and all of the seats in the Senate.

FRANÇOIS DUVALIER, 1957-71

Like many Haitian leaders, Duvalier produced a constitution to solidify his power. In 1961 he proceeded to violate the provisions of that constitution, which had gone into effect in 1957. He replaced the bicameral legislature with a unicameral body and decreed presidential and legislative elections. Despite a 1957 prohibition against presidential reelection, Duvalier ran for office and won with an official tally of 1,320,748 votes to zero. Not content with this sham display of democracy, he went on in 1964 to declare himself president for life. For Duvalier, the move was a matter of political tradition; seven heads of state before him had claimed the same title.

An ill-conceived coup attempt in July 1958 spurred Duvalier to act on his conviction that Haiti's independent military threatened the security of his presidency. In December the president sacked the armed forces chief of staff and replaced him with a more reliable officer. This action helped him to expand a Presidential Palace army unit into the Presidential Guard. The Guard became the elite corps of the Haitian army, and its sole purpose was to maintain Duvalier's power. After having established his own power base within the military, Duvalier dismissed the entire general staff and replaced aging Marinetrained officers with younger men who owed their positions, and presumably their loyalty, to Duvalier.

Duvalier also blunted the power of the army through a rural militia formally named the Volunteers for National Security (Volontaires de la Sécurité Nationale--VSN), but more commonly referred to as the tonton makouts (derived from the Creole term for a mythological

bogeyman). In 1961, only two years after Duvalier had established the group, the tonton makouts had more than twice the power of the army. Over time, the group gained even more power. While the Presidential Guard secured Duvalier against his enemies in the capital, the tonton makouts expanded his authority into rural areas. The tonton makouts never became a true militia, but they were more than a mere secret police force. The group's pervasive influence throughout the countryside bolstered recruitment, mobilization, and patronage for the regime.

After Duvalier had displaced the established military with his own security force, he employed corruption and intimidation to create his own elite. Corruption--in the form of government rake-offs of industries, bribery, extortion of domestic businesses, and stolen government funds--enriched the dictator's closest supporters. Most of these supporters held sufficient power to enable them to intimidate the members of the old elite who were gradually co-opted or eliminated (the luckier ones were allowed to emigrate).

Duvalier was an astute observer of Haitian life and a student of his country's history. Although he had been reared in Port-au-Prince, his medical experiences in the provinces had acquainted him with the everyday concerns of the people, their predisposition toward paternalistic authority (his patients referred to him as "Papa Doc," a sobriquet that he relished and often applied to himself), the ease with which their allegiance could be bought, and the central role of voodoo in their lives. Duvalier exploited all of these points, especially voodoo. He studied voodoo practices and beliefs and was rumored to be a houngan. He related effectively to houngan and bokò (voodoo sorcerers) throughout the country and incorporated many of them into his intelligence network and the ranks of the tonton makouts. His public recognition of voodoo and its practitioners and his private adherence to voodoo ritual, combined with his reputed practice of magic and sorcery, enhanced his popular persona among the common people (who hesitated to trifle with a leader who had such dark forces at his command) and served as a peculiar form of legitimization of his rapacious and ignoble rule.

Duvalier weathered a series of foreign-policy crises early in his tenure that ultimately enhanced his power and contributed to his megalomaniacal conviction that he was, in his words, the "personification of the Haitian fatherland." Duvalier's repressive and authoritarian rule seriously disturbed United States president John F. Kennedy. The Kennedy administration registered particular concern over allegations that Duvalier had blatantly misappropriated aid money and that he intended to employ a Marine Corps mission to Haiti not to train the regular army but to strengthen the tonton makouts. Washington acted on these charges and suspended aid in mid-1962. Duvalier refused to accept United States demands for strict accounting procedures as a precondition of aid renewal. Duvalier, claiming to be motivated by nationalism, renounced all aid from Washington. At that time, aid from the United States constituted a substantial portion of the Haitian national budget. The move had little direct impact on the Haitian people because most of the aid had been siphoned off by Duvalierist cronies anyway. Renouncing the aid, however, allowed the incipient dictator to portray himself as a principled and lonely opponent of domination by a great power. Duvalier continued to receive multilateral contributions. After Kennedy's death in November 1963, pressure on Duvalier eased, and the United States adopted a policy of grudging acceptance of the Haitian regime because of the country's strategic location near communist Cuba.

A more tense and confrontational situation developed in April 1963 between Duvalier and Dominican Republic president Juan Bosch Gaviño. Duvalier and Bosch were confirmed adversaries; the Dominican president provided asylum and direct support to Haitian exiles who plotted against the Duvalier regime. Duvalier ordered the Presidential Guard to occupy the Dominican chancery in Pétionville in an effort to apprehend an army officer believed to have been involved in an unsuccessful attempt to kidnap the dictator's son, Jean-Claude Duvalier, and daughter, Simone Duvalier. The Dominican Republic reacted with outrage and indignation. Bosch publicly threatened to invade Haiti, and he ordered army units to the frontier. Although observers throughout the world anticipated military action that would lead to Duvalier's downfall, they saw events turn in the Haitian tyrant's favor. Dominican military commanders, who found Bosch's political leanings too far to the left, expressed little support for an invasion of Haiti. Bosch, because he could not count on his military, decided to let go of his dream to overthrow the neighboring dictatorship. Instead, he allowed the matter to be settled by emissaries of the Organization of American States (OAS).

Resistant to both domestic and foreign challenges, Duvalier entrenched his rule through terror (an estimated 30,000 Haitians were killed for political reasons during his tenure), emigration (which removed the more activist elements of the population along with thousands of purely economic migrants), and limited patronage. At the time of his death in 1971, François Duvalier designated his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier, as Haiti's new leader. To the Haitian elite, who still dominated the economy, the continuation of Duvalierism without "Papa Doc" offered financial gain and a possibility for recapturing some of the political influence lost under the dictatorship.

JEAN-CLAUDE DUVALIER, 1971-86

The first few years after Jean-Claude Duvalier's installation as Haiti's ninth president-for-life were a largely uneventful extension of his father's rule. Jean-Claude was a feckless, dissolute nineteen-year-old, who had been raised in an extremely isolated environment and who had never expressed any interest in politics or Haitian affairs. He initially resented the dynastic arrangement that had made him Haiti's leader, and he was content to leave substantive and administrative matters in the hands of his mother, Simone Ovid Duvalier, while he attended ceremonial functions and lived as a playboy.

By neglecting his role in government, Jean-Claude squandered a considerable amount of domestic and foreign goodwill and facilitated the dominance of Haitian affairs by a clique of hard-line Duvalierist cronies who later became known as the dinosaurs. The public displayed more affection toward Jean-Claude than they had displayed for his more formidable father. Foreign officials and observers also seemed more tolerant toward "Baby Doc," in areas such as human-rights monitoring, and foreign countries were more generous to him with economic assistance. The United States restored its aid program for Haiti in 1971.

Jean-Claude limited his interest in government to various fraudulent schemes and to outright misappropriations of funds. Much of the Duvaliers' wealth, which amounted to hundreds of millions of dollars over the years, came from the Régie du Tabac (Tobacco Administration). Duvalier used this "nonfiscal account," established decades earlier under Estimé, as a tobacco

monopoly, but he later expanded it to include the proceeds from other government enterprises and used it as a slush fund for which no balance sheets were ever kept.

Jean-Claude's kleptocracy, along with his failure to back with actions his rhetoric endorsing economic and public-health reform, left the regime vulnerable to unanticipated crises that were exacerbated by endemic poverty, including the African Swine Fever (ASF) epidemic and the widely publicized outbreak of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in the 1980s. A highly contagious and fatal disease, ASF plagued pigs in the Dominican Republic in mid-1978. The United States feared that the disease would spread to North America and pressured Jean-Claude to slaughter the entire population of Haitian pigs and to replace them with animals supplied by the United States and international agencies. The Haitian government complied with this demand, but it failed to take note of the rancor that this policy produced among the peasantry. Black Haitian pigs were not only a form of "savings account" for peasants because they could be sold for cash when necessary, but they were also a breed of livestock well-suited to the rural environment because they required neither special care nor special feed. The replacement pigs required both. Peasants deeply resented this intrusion into their lives.

Initial reporting on the AIDS outbreak in Haiti implied that the country might have been a source for the human immune deficiency virus. This rumor, which turned out to be false, hurt the nation's tourism industry, which had grown during Jean-Claude Duvalier's tenure. Already minimal, public services deteriorated as Jean-Claude and his ruling clique continued to misappropriate funds from the national treasury.

Jean-Claude miscalculated the ramifications of his May 1980 wedding to Michèle Bennett, a mulatto divorcée with a disreputable background. (François Duvalier had jailed her father, Ernest Bennett, for bad debts and other shady financial dealings.) Although Jean-Claude himself was light-skinned, his father's legacy of support for the black middle class and antipathy toward the established mulatto elite had enhanced the appeal of Duvalierism among the black majority of the population. By marrying a mulatto, Jean-Claude appeared to be abandoning the informal bond that his father had labored to establish. The marriage also estranged the old-line Duvalierists in the government from the younger technocrats whom Jean-Claude had appointed. The Duvalierists' spiritual leader, Jean-Claude's mother, Simone, was eventually expelled from Haiti, reportedly at the request of Michèle, Jean-Claude's wife.

The extravagance of the couple's wedding, which cost an estimated US\$3 million, further alienated the people. Popular discontent intensified in response to increased corruption among the Duvaliers and the Bennetts, as well as the repulsive nature of the Bennetts' dealings, which included selling Haitian cadavers to foreign medical schools and trafficking in narcotics. Increased political repression added to the volatility of the situation. By the mid-1980s, most Haitians felt hopeless, as economic conditions worsened and hunger and malnutrition spread.

Widespread discontent began in March 1983, when Pope John Paul II visited Haiti. The pontiff declared that "Something must change here." He went on to call for a more equitable distribution of income, a more egalitarian social structure, more concern among the elite for the well-being of the masses, and increased popular participation in public life. This message revitalized both

laymen and clergy, and it contributed to increased popular mobilization and to expanded political and social activism.

A revolt began in the provinces two years later. The city of Gonaïves was the first to have street demonstrations and raids on food-distribution warehouses. From October 1985 to January 1986, the protests spread to six other cities, including Cap Haïtien. By the end of that month, Haitians in the south had revolted. The most significant rioting there broke out in Les Cayes.

Jean-Claude responded with a 10 percent cut in staple food prices, the closing of independent radio stations, a cabinet reshuffle, and a crackdown by police and army units, but these moves failed to dampen the momentum of the popular uprising against the dynastic dictatorship. Jean-Claude's wife and advisers, intent on maintaining their profitable grip on power, urged him to put down the rebellion and to remain in office.

A plot to remove him had been well under way, however, long before the demonstrations began. The conspirators' efforts were not connected to the popular revolt, but violence in the streets prompted Jean-Claude's opponents to act. The leaders of the plot were Lieutenant General Henri Namphy and Colonel Williams Regala. Both had privately expressed misgivings about the excesses of the regime. They and other officers saw the armed forces as the single remaining cohesive institution in the country. They viewed the army as the only vehicle for an orderly transition from Duvalierism to another form of government.

In January 1986, the unrest in Haiti alarmed United States president Ronald Reagan. The Reagan administration began to pressure Duvalier to renounce his rule and to leave Haiti. Representatives appointed by Jamaican prime minister Edward Seaga served as intermediaries who carried out the negotiations. The United States rejected a request to provide asylum for Duvalier, but offered to assist with the dictator's departure. Duvalier had initially accepted on January 30, 1986. The White House actually announced his departure prematurely. At the last minute, however, Jean-Claude decided to remain in Haiti. His decision provoked increased violence in the streets.

The United States Department of State announced a cutback in aid to Haiti on January 31. This action had both symbolic and real effect: it distanced Washington from the Duvalier regime, and it denied the regime a significant source of income. By this time, the rioting had spread to Port-au-Prince.

At this point, the military conspirators took direct action. Namphy, Regala, and others confronted the Duvaliers and demanded their departure. Left with no bases of support, Jean-Claude consented. After hastily naming a National Council of Government (Conseil National de Gouvernement--CNG) made up of Namphy, Regala, and three civilians, Jean-Claude and Michèle Duvalier departed from Haiti on February 7, 1986. They left behind them a country economically ravaged by their avarice, a country bereft of functional political institutions and devoid of any tradition of peaceful self-rule. Although the end of the Duvalier era provoked much popular rejoicing, the transitional period initiated under the CNG did not lead to any significant improvement in the lives of most Haitians. Although most citizens expressed a desire for democracy, they had no firm grasp of what the word meant or of how it might be achieved.

List of Haitian Presidents

President:	Year(s) in Office:	Notes about term:
Jean Jacques Dessalines	1804 - 1806	assassinated
Henri Christophe	1807 - 1820	suicide
Alexander Petion	1807 - 1818	died in office
Jean Pierre Boyer	1818 - 1843	overthrown
Riviere Riviere-Herard	1843 - 1844	overthrown
Philippe Guerrier	1844 - 1845	died in office
Jean Louis Pierrot	1845 - 1846	overthrown
Jean Baptiste Riche	1847 - 1847	died in office
Faustin Soulouque	1847 - 1859	overthrown
Fabre Nicholas Geffrard	1859 - 1867	overthrown
Sylvain Salnave	1867 - 1869	executed
Saget Nissage	1870 - 1874	full term
Michel Domingue	1874 - 1876	overthrown
Canal Boisrond	1876 - 1879	overthrown
Lysius Felicite Salomon	1879 - 1888	overthrown
Francois Legitime	1888 - 1889	overthrown
Florvil Hyppolite	1889 - 1896	died in office
Tiresias Simon Sam	1896 - 1902	full term
Alexis Nord	1902 - 1908	overthrown
Antoine Simon	1908 - 1911	overthrown
Cincinnatus Leconte	1911 - 1912	died in office
Tancrede Auguste	1912 - 1913	died in office
Michel Oreste	1913 - 1914	overthrown
Oreste Zamor	1914	overthrown
Davilmar Theodore	1914 - 1915	overthrown
Vilbrun Sam	1915	assassinated
Sudre Dartiguevave	1915 - 1922	full term (1st US Occupation)
Louis Borno	1922 - 1930	full term (1st US Occupation)
Eugene Roy	1930	full term (1st US occupation)
Sternio Vincent	1930 - 1941	full term (occupation until 1934)
Élie Lescot	1941 - 1946	overthrown
Franck Lavaud	1946	
Dumarsais Estimé	1946 - 1950	overthrown
Paul Eugène Magloire	1950 - 1956	overthrown
Joseph Nemours Pierre-Louis*	1956 - 1957	

Franck Sylvain*	1957	
<i>Executive Government Council</i>	1957	
Antonio Thrasybule Kebreau (<i>Chairman of the Military Council</i>)	1957	
François Duvalier	1957 - 1971	died in office
Jean-Claude Duvalier	1971 - 1986	overthrown
Henri Namphy	1986 - 1987	full term
Lesli Manigat	1988	overthrown
Henri Namphy	1988 - 1989	overthrown
Prosper Avril	1989 - 1990	overthrown
Etha Pascal-Trouillot*	1990 - 1991	full term
Jean-Bertrand Aristide	1991	overthrown
Joseph Nerette*	1991 - 1992	
Marc Bazin (<i>acting prime minister</i>)	1992 - 1993	
Jean-Bertrand Aristide	1993 - 1994	
Émile Jonassaint*	1994	
Jean-Bertrand Aristide	1994 - 1996	finished remainder of term
Rene Preval	1996 - 2000	full term
Jean-Bertrand Aristide	2000 - 2004	overthrown
Boniface Alexandre*	2004 - 2006	
René Garcia Préval	2006 -	

[*Provisional Leader]