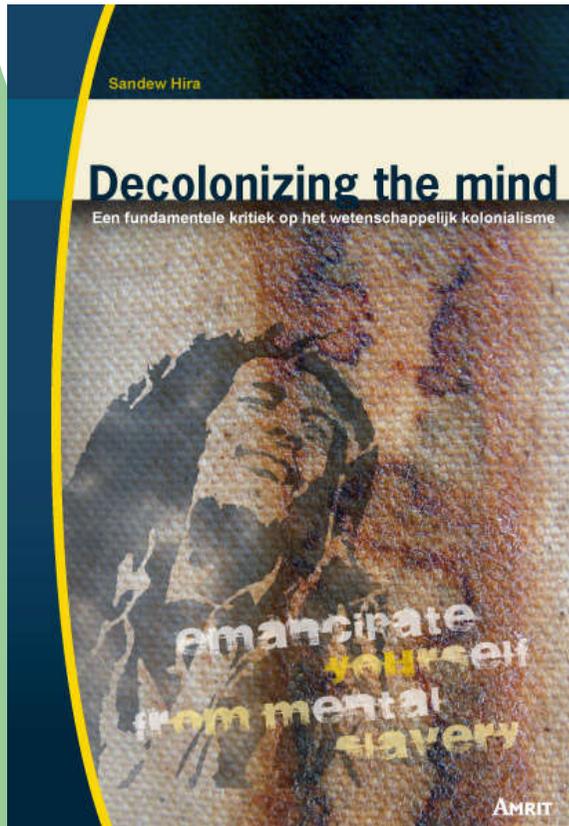


## The Haitian revolution

**Sandew Hira**

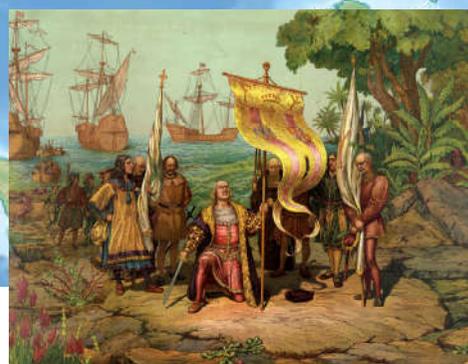
International Institute for Scientific Research



# Decolonial terminology

- Plantation = labour camp
- Discoverer = criminal
- Planter = enslaver
- Colonization = occupation
- Slave = enslaved
- Master = enslaver

# The first voyage of Columbus the criminal



# Five dimensions of colonialism

1. Geographic dimension
2. Economic dimension
3. Political dimension
4. Social dimension
5. Mental dimension

# Geographical dimension

- Modern colonization was a major project of five Western European countries: Portugal, Spain, Holland, England and France.
- Each country had a criminal gang, an elite headed by a king or queen
- They competed with each other in the robbing and stealing from the colonies
- Each had a distinctive period in history in which they dominated: their golden age

# The robbery by the Spaniards and the first genocide in the Americas



*The Spanish colonists forced the Tainos to pan for gold until supplies were supposedly exhausted ...*



# Spanish criminals move to the east



Princess Anacaona

# Slavery and occupation

- 1517: after Indigenous genocide import of enslaved Africans
- The east: French pirates (buccaneers) and tobacco planters, later sugar
- 1697: competition in Europe was extended to the occupied territories in the Americas and resolved with the Treaty of Rijswijk. French occupied Haiti (Saint-Domingue)

# The economic dimension: sugar and slavery



# The world economy of sugar

- Labour of enslaved Africans.
- Rise of shipping industry = triangular trade: enslaved labour, agricultural products, manufactured products
- Rise of finance capital: banks, insurance companies

# French bourgeoisie and enslavers in Haiti

- French bourgeoisie supplied capital to the enslavers in Haiti.



# The political dimension

- Political administration in occupied land is subjected to control in Europe
- Relationship between oppressors and oppressed: Code Noir
- The use of terror: "to burn a little powder in the ass of a nigger"

## The Code Noir – the black code

- Article 12: *We desire that if a male slave has married a free woman, their children, either male or female, shall be free as is their mother, regardless of their father's condition of slavery. And if the father is free and the mother a slave, the children shall also be slaves.*
- The responsibility of white men towards their children

## Social dimension

- Race was the organizing principle
- Haiti 1789: 30,000 whites, 40,000 free mulattoes, 500,000 enslaved Africans
- USA 1866: 4,000,000 81% white, 19% black.
- Jamaica 1838: 311,000 enslaved
- Suriname 1863: 34,000 enslaved
- Curacao 1863: 7,000 enslaved

# The mulattoes

Mulattoes wanted an end to white discrimination and the continuation of black enslavement



André Rigaud, leader of the mulattoes

# Mental dimension

- Code noir:  
Catholicism only  
religion allowed
- Racism: black as  
beasts



## Two views on the Haitian revolution

- Haitian revolution is the offspring of the French revolution
- Haitian revolution is the outgrow of marronage

# The poison scheme of maroon Mackandal (1758)

- The plan: unite all Africans and drive the white out of the island
- Poisoning on a mass scale was the introduction to the revolt



Mackandal on a coin  
1968

# Lessons from Mackandal

- Organization: the experience of disciplined organization
- The ultimate goal: independence and the destruction of white power

# From Mackandal to Dutty Boukman

- Ideology: African religion: voodoo
- Organization: network
- Means: armed resistance



August 22nd 1791

# Cecile Fatiman

- Ideology: African religion: voodoo
- Organization: network
- Means: armed resistance
- 112 years



# Counter terror

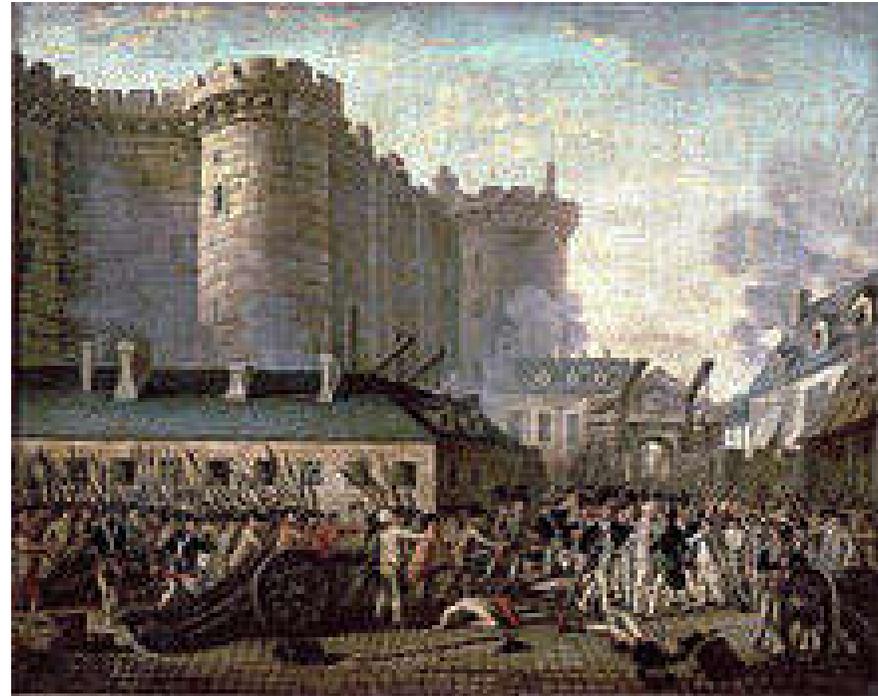
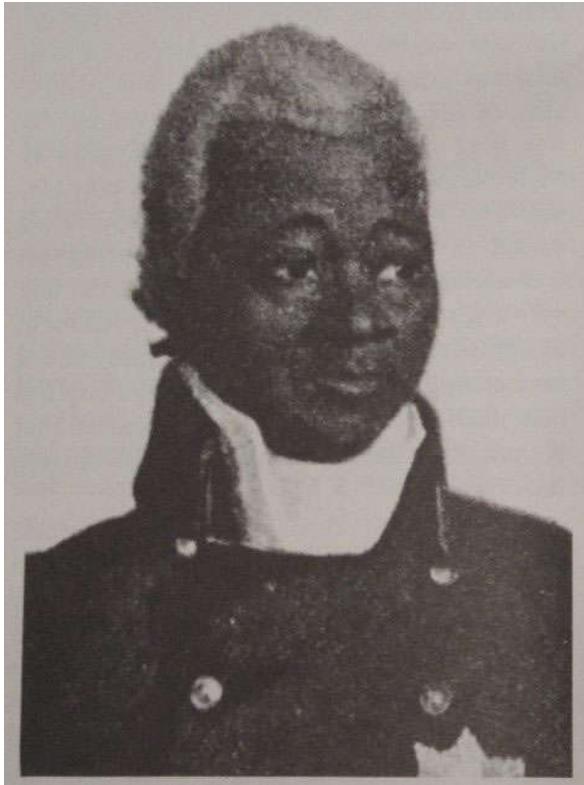
## Boukman revolt

- 2,000 whites killed
- 180 sugar plantations
- 900 coffee plantations

## Counter terror

- 15.000-20.000 Africans and mulattoes brutally slaughtered

# Toussaint Bréda and the French revolution



Storming of the Bastilles

# The French revolution

- Absolute monarchy versus democratic republic
- Feudalism versus capitalist bourgeoisie
- Clergy versus white enlightenment
- White freedom, white equality, white brotherhood
- *“We have not brought half-a-million slaves from the coasts of Africa to make them into French citizens”.*

# The split in Haiti

- Royalist versus revolutionaries
- Haiti: rich whites against poor whites



Robespierre, a leader of the French revolution

## Two currents on slavery in the French revolution

- Saint-Domingue is economically too important: keep slavery
- Slavery is against the idea of Liberty



Sonthonax, the commissioner for Haiti



## Sonthonax and the new alliance

- Alliance of free blacks and free mulattoes against the enslaved
- Sonthonax regains control of the south, the rebels of the north

## Toussaint L'Overture enters the stage

- His father: born in Africa, son of a king in Benin
- Toussaint born in Haiti in 1743
- Freed in in 1776
- Coffee plantation



# Assistant to Georges Biassou

- Leaders after Boukman: Georges Biassou, Jean Francois and Jeannot
- Toussaint assistant to Biassou



Georges Biassou

# The great betrayal

- In rebel camp: famine, demoralization
- White power in the cities and new troops to arrive
- The betrayal: give the leaders their freedom and they will cooperate to bring back the masses into slavery

# The turning point

- A well trained and well organized army
- Training: drilling, exercises, strategy and tactics
- Organization: officers, discipline, maps

# Strategy and tactics

- The goal for the black masses: liberty and equality
- Strategy: armed struggle
- Instrument: black army

## Strategy in the international arena

- Britain, Spain and Portugal against France.
- Toussaint joins the Spaniard from Santo Domingo.
- France abolishes slavery on February 4 1794
- Toussaint joins the French against Britain and Spain
- 1798: final victory

# The miscalculation of Toussaint

- Haiti would stay in the French empire
- No need to send troops
- He would be political under Napoleon Bonaparte
- Black would be free French citizens
- But Napoleon wanted slavery

# Independence at last

- Jean-Jacques Dessalines succeeds Toussaint
- 1803: defeat of the French army of Napoleon
- January 1, 1804: Haiti independent
- Dessalines and Napoleon emperor for life



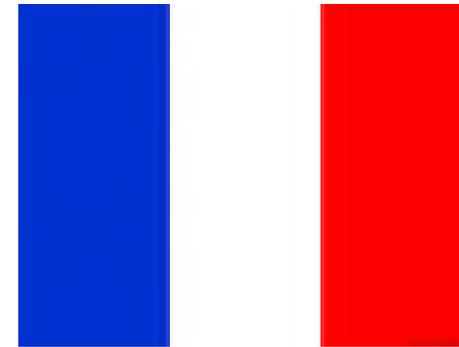
Jean Jacques Dessalines

## Toussaint's vision

- Plantation as the economic base
- 1/3 for the workers, 1/3 for the managers, 1/3 for the state
- Whites as hostages during new French invasion

# Cleaning up white power

- Ripping the flag
- 1804 massacre of the whites



French flag



Haitian flag

# The tragedy of Haiti

- Dessalines the dictator
- 1825: the threat of invasion and blockade
- Reparations

# The inspiration of Haiti

- Simon Bolivar aided by Haiti
- 1793: St. Lucia
- March 1795: St. Vincent
- March-June 1795: Grenada
- May 1795: Venezuela
- July 1795: Jamaica
- August 1795: Curacao
- 1795: Demerara (Guiana)
- The abolitionist in the USA
- The abolition of the slave trade and the drive towards India