

L'OUVERTURE

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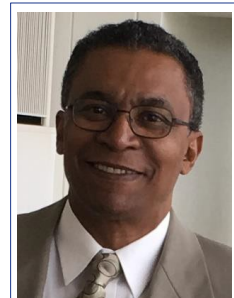
GREETINGS FROM OUR EDITOR, DR. JEAN-CLAUDE DUTÈS

Greetings! When deadlines are looming, time seems to leap ahead in front of me, leaving me gasping for air as though I was trying to stay ahead and afloat of relentlessly cascading waves. Since you are reading this page, another deadline has been met; there is time to breathe, and I am glad to join you on the shore again.

This is our second issue in about six months, a small but significant feat for us. It is dedicated to the memory of King Henry Christophe I. There are several pieces about him: a review of a presentation on the rise of his kingdom, an analysis of the dilemma facing him and a short story about the contradictions inherent in the diverse perceptions of his rule. You will also come across articles about a Haitian revolutionary who turned 100 years old this past September, a look at Naomi Osaka and a strongly moving short story about a young girl's struggle with a painful and transformational experience. In addition, you will find information about our upcoming events and community agencies and services that may be of assistance.

I hope that you will find this issue as engaging and informative as you did the last one and wish you a happy and easy read.

Jean-Claude Dutès, Ph.D.
Editor



GREETINGS FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON, MIKE MOÏSE

Dear Members and Friends,

2020 is proving to be a historic year for change. We have had to adjust to a "new normal" in a pandemic world. While this may have slowed our pace, we did not lose sight of our goal to offer high quality presentations. Rising to the occasion, like taking a walk on a cloudy day with a high probability of rain, we continued the journey, with the sun peaking here and there. Before we knew it, we reached a milestone, organizing our first event, a webinar to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the death of King Henry Christophe.

By all accounts, it was a smashing success. The attendance on a Saturday afternoon more than met our expectations, especially for an event that was organized by the "new kid in town." The feedback that we received revealed that participants, both members and non-members, greatly appreciated the lecture, describing it as informative, edifying, exciting and rigorous. Moreover, many of our members described the guest speaker, Dr. Nathalie F. Pierre's style as refreshing, lively, and genuine. Adding a "degi," like the icing on a cake, Dr. Pierre made it possible for one of her former students to offer a live performance at the end of her lecture. Ms. Harmony Divine, delighted us with a poignant rendition of Haïti's national anthem, "La Dessalinienne."

Thank you Dr. Pierre and Ms. Divine. LCS hopes to see you both again soon. If you were not there, you missed a great spectacle, but you can still enjoy it on YouTube by clicking: [here](#).

NEW EVENT! In keeping with our objective to turn historic dates into opportunities for learning, reflection, and growth, we are overly excited to invite you to attend our second webinar on Wednesday November 18th, 2020 at 7 pm. This event, which will be on the battle of Vertières, will not be a lecture but an interactive discussion with participants that will be moderated by Drs. Jean-Claude Dutès and Guylaine L. Richard.





We would hate for you to miss the opportunity to deepen your knowledge about this great battle, , so make sure you register soon to reserve your spot. Attendance will be limited to facilitate an active and inclusive discussion.

The elections are over, and the win decisive in our eyes, yet there is a mixed sense of relief and tension in the air that is merging into a state of pervasive vigilance. Regardless of the winner, you would have done your job, if you voted. If you chose not to vote, or were unable to do so, we hope you would be able and ready for the next elections. It is never too early to start preparing. America is going through a period of transition; it is a time for prudence and collective affirmation of our interest. We hope each one of you would stay active and engaged in the electoral process at all levels of government. While the presidential race is important, it is through the local officials, the ones closest to us that national policies are implemented. Do you know who your local elected officials are? Do you remember who asked for your vote? Have they delivered on their promises to your community?

Warmest Regards,

Mike Moise
Chairperson

The Vessel of Independence Must Save Itself

Remembering A Complex Man: King Henry I



On Saturday, October 24, 2020, the L'Ouverture Cultural Society, Inc. held its first virtual event. A first, but also a fantastic one! Kudos to LCS Board of Directors! Our guest speaker Dr. Nathalie Frederic Pierre, a young Haitian historian outdid herself with an informative, exciting, edifying and thought-provoking presentation. Her lively, refreshing, and honest style captivated the audience and ensured a memorable time for most.

Setting the foundation for her presentation, Dr. Pierre asserted there is a need to change the way we view our revolutionary history, arguing for a re-periodization of the Haitian revolution, which she breaks into four phases. The first one starts with a slave uprising in January 1791 and ends with the emancipation declaration by Toussaint Louverture and Léger-Felicité Sonthonax in 1793. This period is characterized by the struggle of



property-owning mulattoes, or mixed races, to obtain their civil rights, and the successful revolt of the slaves against bondage.



Dr. Nathalie F. Pierre

The second phase starts with France's abolition of slavery in its colonies in February of 1794 and

ends with the fall of Toussaint L'Ouverture. In this phase, we learned about the exacerbation of the conflict between the Black and the mulatto elites, France's exchange of the Basque Country for Santo Domingo in a treaty with Spain, St. Domingue's emergence under Toussaint as an autonomous entity with its own constitution, and his arrest and deportation.

Re-Periodization of the Haitian Revolution, 1791 - 1808

Phase	Date Range	Objective
1	Jan. 1791 - Aug. 1793	Voting Rights and Emancipation
2	Feb. 1794 - Apr. 1802	Black Jacobins of French Revolution
3	Nov. 1802 - Jan. 1804	War of Independence
4	Jan. 1804 - Nov. 1808	Antislavery War across Ayiti

Major events of the third phase, which begins in May 1802 and ends in November 1803, are France's restoration of slavery; intra-ethnic conflicts between Blacks born in Africa who continued to fight the French after the deportation of Toussaint and Black generals, who were born in the colony, now working for the French invaders; the murder of Ferdinand, Christophe's son in France; war between France and England after the collapse of the treaty of Amiens; and the defeat of France at the battle of Vertières.

Efforts to safeguard Haiti's independence dominate the last phase that starts with the declaration of independence in January 1804 and ends tragically with the assassination of Emperor Jean-Jacques I in 1806. Significant events include General Ferrand's enslavement proclamation that targeted Haitian women for sexual slavery in the western part of the island, that was still under

French domination, and the extermination of boys 12 years of age and under; war against the enslavement proclamation; and the death of the emperor.

Both general events as well as those pertaining to King Christophe's life were puzzling for some, amazing to many and informative for most. Did you know that the Haitian Revolution started in the southern part of the country in a town called, Port-Salut in January, several months before the revolt that took place in the North in August 1791?

Participants also had the opportunity to appreciate King Henry Christophe as both a tender and firm father who wanted to instill a great sense of respect for others in his son. Writing to Jacques Henry, the son, who had mistreated his servants, he wrote "I have been informed you have mistreated your servants. That is not commendable. If you are anxious to merit my esteem and affection, that is not the way to go about it, but rather by means of a more proper conduct, submissiveness to the counsel and advice of those qualified to give them to you, and an affability and kindness which will make all cherish you."

As a monarch, he sought to uplift his subjects' intellectual abilities, improve their morality and better their economic conditions, providing free education throughout the kingdom, implementing more equitable policies that stimulated the production of wealth and regulated in a more reasonable manner the relationships between land owners and those who worked the land.

The rationale for the choice of a kingdom by the king instead of a republic was fascinating as it provided the audience with a glimpse of the strategist,

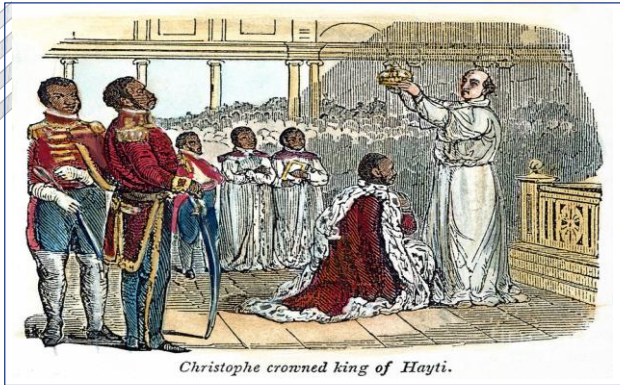
Henry Christophe was. Why adopt a system like the United States which had just obtained their independence but still harbored slavery? There was also a more natural alignment with England's monarchy, not only



Toussaint



because of Christophe’s roots, but also as a better financial ally to support his kingdom. We also learned that there were no official relationships between the newly established kingdom in Haiti and the European powers but that there was trade with European merchants.



Christophe crowned king of Hayti.

King Christophe is often depicted in a one-dimensional view as a strict and even despotic leader. In this presentation, we get a view of a more complex multi-dimensional man. To date, no other leader or government has been able to accomplish what was done in his time. In the Northern part of the country, the Citadel Laférierre and the ruins of the Sans-Souci palace, which encapsulate sublime memories of a glorious past, is a source of pride for all Haitians and of wonder for foreigners. Does that mean we want an authoritarian and despotic leader in Haïti? NO! Christophe’s actions and government need to be appreciated in the context of their times.

What we would want is a return to Christophean ideals of excellence, self-sufficiency, hard work, an educated populace, and the creation of wealth; and, more importantly, the belief that we must work together. As Christophe said in 1813, in an exhortation to the population of the monarchy and

the republic: “Let them at length understand that it is good to sacrifice private passions to the general benefit; let them consider that the vile agents of the French government, like greedy vultures are only watching an opportunity to fall upon their prey; let them reflect, that the vessel of independence in which we are all embark must save itself, or perish with the passengers.”

What we have provided above is but a brief overview of a complex and detailed account of the revolutionary period. To appreciate the intricacies of the relationships between the events and their consequences, and for a nuanced view of this formidable founding father, whose main concern was always the preservation of Haiti’s independence, only a full view of the video of the presentation would suffice.

If you have missed this encounter, don’t you worry! You can still access the webinar on YouTube [here](#) from LCS’ website.

In the video, you will also get the opportunity to hear Ms. Harmony Divine’s rendition of the Haitian National anthem.



Ms. Harmony Divine

Lastly, be sure to join us, in a front row seat, on November 18, 2020 at 7 pm for our next free webinar on: “Reflections on the Battle of Vertières.” In support of more exciting opportunities in the future, we would like to welcome you as a member and a donor.

Please visit our website:

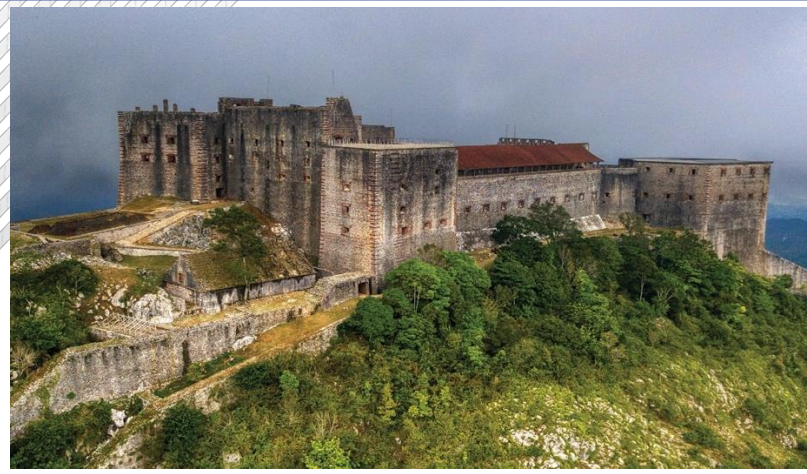
<https://louverturecs.org/become-a-member>

Guyaine L. Richard, MD, MPH
Secretary

Jean-Claude Dutès, Ph.D.
Vice-Chairperson



La Tragédie du Roi Christophe



La tragédie du roi Christophe, une pièce théâtrale écrite par Aimé Césaire, un intellectuel avec des lettres de créances impeccables qui avait visité notre pays en 1944, bien qu'elle ne soit pas une biographie, cette œuvre fictive offre assez de vraisemblance pour mériter une importance historique en deçà de sa valeur littéraire. Depestre nous apprend dans sa propre biographie, Bonsoir Tendresse, que Césaire, Senghor et Damas en établissant le journal L'Étudiant Noir en 1935 se donnaient comme devise « à lutter et à créer l'humanisation des humanités et de la vie universelle. » Il fut l'un des ténors de la Négritude. Césaire s'ajoute à la liste d'Haïtianophiles et ses observations perspicaces méritent notre respect.

En choisissant ce genre d'écriture, Césaire probablement voulait mettre en exergue l'aspect cornélien de l'expérience de Christophe, un homme complexe qui a possédé de rares qualités mais malheureusement les pratiquait avec un excès notoire. Ce titre pourrait aussi être appliqué à la mésaventure qui continue de frapper la partie occidentale de l'île depuis 1804.

Le roi Christophe illustre les contradictions de notre histoire. Il fut un patriote hors pair, un bon administrateur, il avait une vision du concept de nation (trois atouts rares chez nos dirigeants), mais aimait le pouvoir d'une façon démesurée, était

consumé par une tendance impitoyable à infliger des châtements infligés (des défauts courants parmi nous) et le mal qu'il a créé a prévalu sur le bien qu'il voulait établir. Son règne n'a duré que neuf ans et son successeur fut un obscurantiste qui refusa d'instaurer la scolarité pour les anciens esclaves. On aura beau critiqué ses moyens mais au moins il avait acquis une fin respectable car il croyait dans une infrastructure. Ses opposants ont par contre imité ses moyens despotiques sans pour autant achever des résultats similaires au détriment du pays, une autre tragédie incompréhensible. Dans sa perspective, il voulait brûler les étapes.

À l'avis putatif de Wilberforce « ...Une nation n'est pas une création, mais un mûrissement, une lenteur, année par année... » Il répliqua, « Mais nous n'avons pas le temps d'attendre quand c'est précisément le temps qui nous prend à la gorge ! » Et il surenchérit, « ...Et voilà pourquoi il faut en demander aux nègres plus qu'aux autres : plus de travail, plus de foi, plus d'enthousiasme, un pas, un autre pas, encore un autre pas et tenir gagné chaque pas ! ... et malheur à celui dont le pied flanche ! »

Son impatience basée sur les meilleures intentions fut interprétée comme "sturm und drang;" il voulait tout changer d'un trait comme



une explosion. Il avait des convictions extrêmes et il ne se donnait pas la peine de persuader les autres, de les amadouer pour les gagner à sa cause. Et même son épouse le prévient : « ...pourvu qu'un jour on ne mesure pas au malheur des enfants la démesure du père... »



Young Henri Christophe

Ainsi son héritage intellectuel n'a pas perduré, son système administratif n'a pas eu de suite et il n'a pas laissé un mouvement politique capable de garantir le bien-être de la population des démunis pour lesquels il s'est battu comme un lion. La Citadelle qu'il a érigée en elle-même reflète la métaphore de notre histoire. Après une épopée d'envergure mondiale, la dégringolade a suivi. Cette Citadelle au sommet d'une montagne à pic est entourée de falaises. Donc notre histoire ressemble à ce montage, on part du haut et depuis, une dérive progressive à cause de timoniers maladroits se dessine et ces derniers temps, elle s'accélère dans une course folle au bas du précipice comme une descente aux enfers.

La question à laquelle une solution satisfaisante ne peut être trouvée est la suivante : comment est-ce qu'un peuple qui a pu accomplir de telles apothéoses peut vivre dans un pays qui a échoué ? Certes, une réponse a été soumise par de nombreux observateurs d'orientations idéologiques variées.



King Henry I

L'existence d'une Haïti où les Noirs pouvaient vivre libres et où les opprimés pouvaient trouver refuge en pleine croissance économique et d'épanouissement individuel fut toujours sous-entendue, donc l'épine dans le pied. Les cyniques qui n'y croyaient pas s'efforcèrent d'amplifier les failles, de forger des fables rien que pour prouver une source raciale du dilemme. Les

amis étrangers au fil des ans ont vite conclu que si cette terre avait une certaine allure de loin, de près sa gouvernance a toujours été problématique. Cette conclusion a toujours été constante allant de José Martí à Frederick Douglass au dix-neuvième siècle, à Zora Neal Hurston au vingtième siècle. Nos patriotes compétents qui ont osé lever la voix pour dire la vérité ont trop souvent payé de leur vie.

La fraternité acquise aux fonts baptismaux le premier janvier 1804 s'est vite éclipsée après une durée trop courte pour laisser place au tribalisme. La notion du pain pour tous est devenue la recherche du butin pour soi d'abord et pour sa tribu, que crève le reste ! Le vide creusé par le manque de plan pour le succès de tous fut vite comblé par le marasme ambiant, une constatation qui brise le cœur, ankylose les membres, révolte le patriotisme, traumatise le moral.

Nous assistons avec beaucoup d'amertume que l'idée d'une telle Haïti maintenant se meurt parce qu'elle n'est plus le symbole de succès, d'autodétermination et de liberté pour les opprimés. Se meurt parce que le monde en a maré de la persistance du manque de probité administrative, de stabilité politique. Se meurt parce que les sympathisants de l'idée d'une Haïti ne trouvent aucune preuve palpable pour abreuver leur soif, nourrir leur appétit pour un récit positif d'un peuple prenant son cap pour un meilleur lendemain au lieu de cette litanie de tragédies : massacres d'innocents, vols de deniers publics, l'abandon et la dégradation du patrimoine incluant La Citadelle, le manque de mesures écologiques, un taux d'analphabétisme inouï et l'écart excessif entre les salaires sous fond de pauvreté malsaine.

La tragédie se résume en opportunités ratées qui ne reviendront jamais. L'ironie, le potentiel pour une réalité contraire est à fleur de peau et est du domaine des choses possibles ; la vraie tragédie est la lassitude ou le découragement des sympathisants prêts à donner un coup de fouet pour changer le paradigme.

Reynald Altéma, M.D.



NIGHTMARE



By Reynald Altéma, MD

That night, Roberta couldn't sleep any longer, once awakened in the midst of a nightmare, soaked in sweats, palpitating, afraid, nervous, annoyed. This nightmare added confirmation to what her sixth sense had a suspicion of: her only daughter, Sandra, nicknamed Sansann, was in the throes of a torment of tragic proportion that would entangle the entire family. In fact, very early on Roberta had noticed that Sansann was facing a trying episode. For just about one week, she was no longer the same person, a metamorphosis astonishing in its scale, its sudden appearance and its very existence.

Fettered by insomnia, she was going over recent events. The first clue was Sansann's refusal to eat breakfast on Monday. This simple act was remarkable for its rarity; she would only do it if she had a sore throat with a fever. Roberta felt her forehead and the temperature was normal; besides, she didn't pretend to be sick. She had no interest in food. Later for dinner, instead of the appetite of the starved, she displayed that of a bird for she had barely touched it, even her favorite desert, grapefruit preserve. The following day, Sansann didn't join her friends for the makeup session. Normally she would be the first one to invite them to comb each other's hair, and especially sing at

the top of their lungs. Sansann chose solitude, far from her companions. Cloistered in her room in utter silence, a very bizarre scene for one always singing with a shriek, even alone. This sepulchral silence resonated in her maternal heart worried about a bad omen, a death knell.

That Monday, at sunset, Roberta tiptoeing, opened slightly Sansann's bedroom door and she was asleep. Roberta repeated that act on several occasions but there was no change, Sansann remained in a profound sleep. She didn't do her homework. This pattern will repeat itself for the rest of the week.



The change in Sansann, this beautiful thirteen-year-old girl, wasn't lost on her friends and classmates, Roberta learned. All observed that her humor went from cheerful to gloomy, from brilliant student leading the class to a pupil disinterested. Listening to the radio's hits together without her voice echoing the singer's, difficult to imagine, impossible to live through. Her participation in class made a 180-degree turn, hence nobody could benefit from her witty interventions, a painful observation. Her absence weighed heavily and shared the odd optics of a sunrise without sunrays or of an evening without a moon.

Roberta, up during this sleepless night, was thinking about a lot of possibilities to explain Sansann's change of behavior. While listening to the news on the radio the day before, there was a session on incest and the symptoms seemed similar to what she saw with her. This possibility became an obsession. She wanted to be sure before addressing and discussing the matter with her husband who is so jealous and protective. This perspective opened the door of a permanent nightmare. The worst, she was thinking, would be the discovery of this bully, this pervert and incestuous parent. Her torment wouldn't stop until she had the answer, and the truth was established. Toward this, she will be ready to do everything and move mountains.

She remembered that at the beginning of this crisis, since

Roberta was watching her closely, she believed that it was a simple temporary episode of melancholy of a young adolescent that just had a physiologic milestone. Puberty or not, however the duration and extent of the change were worrying her more and more. This was why the following day, Saturday morning, no longer able to hide her concern, "What's wrong, darling?" she asked. Instead of an answer, Sansann turned back and ran to her bedroom, her eyes welling up in tears. The sight of these tears brought an acute agony similar to a fresh wound dug by a sharp blade. Sensors of her maternal intuition became activated. Roberta opened the door and was floored to see her daughter in the fetal position on her bed, crying incessantly. "Sansann darling, tell me what is bothering you!" Heartbroken, she cuddled her and the two remained in silence for a while. "Someone did harm to you, a friend, a boy, a male adult?" she insisted. Sansann shook her head for a negative reply. "What part of the question are you saying no to? The fact or the person?" No answer. Sansann couldn't answer because she felt uncomfortable to tell the truth.

Sansann didn't think her mother would believe her, because in her naivete, the harm, so horrifying is unimaginable. The guilty one is so close, a deceitful adult parent. The dilemma was for her was the rupture of the faith placed in him with all her innocence. The notion of respect of an elder, especially of a close relative was being questioned. This upending of the

natural order went beyond her mental capacity of a young adolescent. She was loathed to reveal the nature of the harm, she was afraid of the consequences of such an avowal, yet she couldn't tolerate the idea of staying tight lips, lest it be continuous. That was the worst challenge of her young existence.

This challenge started in the most innocuous manner. She kept insisting on taking dance lessons from her uncle, for the past few weeks, for that was the new craze among her girlfriends. He was her mother's younger brother and he would come and stay for the weekend from time to time. Sansann adored him because he always spoiled her. He used to dote on her with sweets when she was small. In others' presence, he would act normal, however, when they were alone, he would give himself the liberty of grazing her breasts or to keep her tight against him during the dance lessons and getting bolder. Going from bad to worse, the last time he tried to touch her pubic region while making remarks about her bust size, her rump and even to try to kiss her. He only stopped when she hollered. This desperate scream, shocking, left her stunned, depressed and conflicted, wondering if she didn't have her part of blame. This took her to the abyss, a prison where emotional suffering was endless, where the notion of brightness was absent and replaced in succession by penumbra and its twin, chiaroscuro, or their cousin, complete darkness. In that world, happiness, entertainment,



respect, self-esteem are phantoms without any meaning in the present. Warm tears nourished that world daily, hatred for male gender, insularity, distaste of human interactions, germination of nothingness, when even salt had an insipid taste.

Rudderless, Sansann only wanted to sleep, forget the present, and she did so quickly. Her mother left her, with her heart torn, guessing her daughter was captive of an existential crisis. Roberta's incapacity to help her adorable daughter amplified her anguish. Her father had no better luck trying to talk to her.

That night Sansann screamed while asleep. Surprised, her parents reached her bedroom. "Uncle Pierrot, let go off me, you hold me too tight, don't touch me like this!" she shouted. A light clicked, everything made sense, unbecoming, nauseous, scandalous and all. "I am going to kill this low life, this villain!" her father bellowed. Paralyzed, Roberta remained speechless. Taken aback, she was, because she had revered her brother, her godson, the last born in the family.

This crushing blow was searing, like a hand caught in a hornet's nest and coming out all swollen with painful stings. Sansann was surprised she had made such a declaration during her sleep. In a crying spell, she described the misadventure, relieved on one hand, but confused, bitter, very traumatized, wary. Roberta was face to face with a nameless nightmare, her worst torment, with a knot in the throat in the

presence of a tragic and draconian choice. The father saw only one option, a whipping to save his and his princess's honor. Sansann had the darndest time wrapping her head around the fact that her uncle would be physically attracted to her and even be ready to commit kadèjak on her, her niece who adored him. This reality as Sansann saw it was cynical, wicked, the design of a warped and evil mindset, a nightmarish obscenity. That was a rude introduction to this ruthless rule, mistrust filling the void carved out by loss of trust.

Sansann's father came to Pierrot's house armed with a kokomakak to settle the score, ready to give him a beating. Pierrot fled after receiving the first blow. He never made it back to Sansann's residence. That was the easy part. Sansann traumatized had to receive therapy for her mental distress, but despondent, she had recurrent nightmares. It took some time to heal, or better to cover the scar. The price of this scarring was the loss of naivete, the acquisition of mental maturity prematurely.

No word leaked about this incident. Roberta tried her best to nip it in the bud; Sansann's depression was off limit as a subject of conversation with Roberta's friends. The whereabouts of the brother were never explained. Sansann received explicit instruction not to talk about it with her friends. "What will people say?" was a major concern, a consideration

not to be ignored in our environment.





“Aunt Julie's Tears”



PALAIS SANS-SOUCI

By Jean-Claude Dutès, Ph.D.

At the end of a 13-year struggle, a small nation, built by men, women, and boys, who preferred to die than forsake their dignity, emerged against all expectations on the world scene. “Liberty or death” was not just a statement, it was a rallying cry, a reality, and a deed.

This newborn nation represented a threat to the economic world order so dependent on slavery to survive. Against all odds this brave nation survived, battered, wounded but breathing till today. For how long, no one knows, but what we do know is that it was not always like that.

Looking at history, many would say nothing has changed, maybe some short periods of normalcy interspersed with bouts of convulsions. Others would claim that only a fraction of what was is still in existence, and more would affirm that it was condemned to be what it is today because it was a country born out of slavery, built by slaves and led by slaves.

A small child who was sitting a few feet from the people engaged in a discussion, shouted: “what about the kingdom of Ayiti?” “Well,” said an older looking man, certainly in his sixties, “what about it?”

“I heard that it was...,” the child started to say, then stumbled on his words as if searching for a word or a memory that has not yet crystallized, “a place where King Henry lived, the place where there is that big thing called the citadel.”

“What a pity!” said a woman, younger in appearance than the man, but clearly comfortably in her late forties, “of all that was there, that is the only thing that grabs the imagination... What a country!”

“King Henry was a cruel man,” said the man tersely, as an explanation for ending the exchange.

“Didn’t he work at the citadel too when they were building it, like any other laborers?”



"Yes," responded the man, but he was very cruel, he said emphatically.

"Didn't he build a bunch of other castles and big buildings all over the kingdom" said the boy in an insistent tone.

"Yes," the man retorted, "but he was a very mean man."

In frustration, the boy asked, "was he fair?"

The man thought for a second, as if appearing to take the conversation seriously and changing tone, taking a more patient approach, finally said, "He did not tolerate corruption, laziness or idleness, but he was very cruel."

The boy listened but seemed intent on pursuing his inquiry. "But auntie Marie Rose told me that he had a court where the people dressed in their best clothes and had great dinner parties." She said, 'she wished she were alive then, and that she would have been 'une grande dame.'

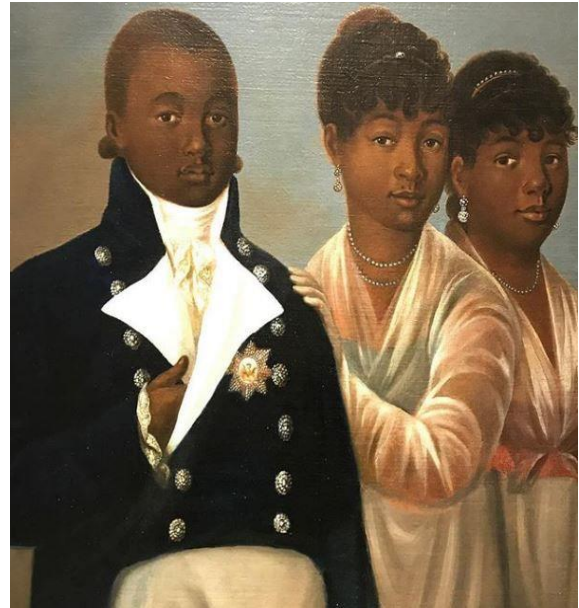
Patiently, the man said "yes, he liked nice things and made sure that the roads were clean and well maintained, but he was kind of extravagant and ostentatious."

The boy looked quizzically and asked, "what does ostentatious mean, that is a new word?" The man replied, "it means that he was showy or flashy, overdoing things, doing more than is necessary."

The boy just moved on. "You know what aunt Marie Rose said. She told me that in his kingdom, the people made their own clothing and Uncle Toto said the army made their own munitions. Uncle Eric can you tell me what munitions are?"

Another man who was just listening to the exchange between the two said "it is what the soldiers used to fight with, you know their weapons, like shotguns, cannon balls gun powder, and bullets to fight the French in case they returned to try to make us slaves again." How did you know all this?" Uncle Jean said with taint of pride in his voice.

The boy, flushed with excitement, did not seem to hear the question but blurted out, "my teacher, Mrs. Claude told us that the kingdom had many schools for little boys and girls like me and that he liked smart boys and girls who listened to their parents and teachers."



From left to right: Jacques-Victor, Anne-Athénaïre and Françoise-Améthyste, children of King Henry Christophe

Both men motioned their heads up and down in agreement. But the first man interjected with gentle obsessiveness "but he was mean and cruel."

"You are mean to me sometimes, like when I don't want to do my homework, like when you whipped me with the "rigwas". Was he mean like that?"

"Maybe," said the man, "many of the people in his kingdom did not want to work as hard as he wanted them too, he was always in hurry, saying 'there is so much to do and so little time in which to do it.'

The boy, with eagerness in his voice and a clever look in his eyes said, "you mean like when you tell me I should not play so much, and I should be reading or studying and I want to have fun with my friends." The man, somewhat feeling trapped, sheepishly replied 'something like that, but I do it for your own good... 'qui aime bien châtie bien.'





"Ah," said the boy victoriously, he must have loved his subjects so much that he did not want them to be lazy, so when they grow up they can become big important people like you always tell me when you accuse me of being difficult."



Queen Marie-Louise Christophe of Haiti

The man said, "yes and no... it's complicated, you don't understand... adults are not like children, they can make their own mind, they don't like other people telling them what to do, but it is my job to guide you."

"Oh", said the boy, like that time you told grand papa Montasse that you are not a child anymore and to stay out of your business." So, when I grow up, I can do what I want and when I want."

The man with exasperated resignation in his voice said, "yes, but within reason."

The boy said nothing for a while, and just as the man was about to walk away, he said, "Mrs. Joseph told Yoly and I that the king was a man of vision who wanted Ayiti to be like any other kingdom. She said he wanted to show and make Black people believe they too could do great things, like their ancestors in Africa. She said that he did not want us to stay behind the other countries. She said he worked so hard keeping us motivated that he worked himself to death."

The boy with a distressing tone in his voice and a sad look on his face said, "the people must have been cruel to let him work himself to death." "Is it true that he was very rich?"

Before anybody could answer, Yoly who had been listening a few feet away jumped in and said, with her eyes wide open and her arms extended into an arc, "she told us that he left a lot, lot, lot of money in the treasury and Uncle Eric told me that he was an honest man who made his own money and did not take any from the government like they are doing now."

Now, the boy, sensing some competition, jumped in quickly before Yoly could say another word, to declare in a spectacular fashion "Auntie Julie said after his death, the other president took all of the money and send it south and you know what he did: he closed all of the schools so the little boys and girls could never become big men and women anymore when they grow up. She said they stole the money and kept us in ignorance."

Yoly, seizing the moment again and butting in quickly, said, "she became angry and was very mad at that president...remember Jean-Jean how she spit on the floor shouting 'talking about cruelty... the real cruelty is to rob children of an education.' She said that is why we are so poor right now and get no respect from the other countries, even those which we helped to gain their freedom."

A passerby, a man who is an acquaintance of Julie said loudly "depi ou mouri avan, ou antò." Turning toward the man's direction, Julie gave him a hostile look that made him quickly take a more serious tone and blurted out the name "Shakespeare" while holding both hands up, as if to excuse himself and appease Julie. Remember Julius Caesar, he said, "remember Mark Anthony...the evil that men do live after them and the good is oft interred with their bone." Julie said nothing, but the tension in her face and body slowly dissipated leaving a calm, somber and reflective mood in her gaze as she looked into the horizon.

There was a short silence, then the girl spoke first while trying to find Aunt Julie's eyes, from which two small streams of water ran down her cheeks.

Calmly, Yoly asked "is that why Papa kept saying he was cruel?"

"Auntie Julie, can you be both good and bad?" Jean-Jean pondered out loud, pensively.



Mémoires d'un Révolutionnaire



Raymond Cassagnol, the seventh child of Louis and Valentine Cassagnol, was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on September 20, 1920. On December 23, 1943, he married his childhood sweetheart, Fifie. To this union, five children were born (two girls, three boys).

Among his many "firsts," Raymond is an aviation pioneer. In January 1943, he was one of three enlisted airmen from Haiti, selected for training in America. Upon arriving at Moton Field in Tuskegee, Alabama (the primary site for aviation military training), Raymond was assigned to class 43-G-SE. While there, his roommate was



Mr. Cassagnol

Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr., who would later become the first black USAF four-star general.

Having successfully completed all phases of military flight training, on July 28, 1943, Raymond Cassagnol received his pilot wings, the first of five Haitian pilots to graduate at Tuskegee. Several months later, Raymond returned to Haiti and became a primary wartime pilot instructor. He also joined Haiti's submarine-hunting force. Prior to the patrols, Nazis in submarines made leisurely food runs on Haiti's coastal shores, gathering buttermilk and baguettes.

During the daylight sub hunts, flying North American AT-6 Texans (the type of aircraft in which the Haitians trained at Tuskegee), Lt. Cassagnol logged in more than 100 hours patrolling the north and south routes. With the



Haitian Tuskegee Airmen patrolling the shoreline, the Nazis left. Thus, in helping eliminate the food supply to the enemy by way of the Caribbean, the Haitian Tuskegee Airmen made their contribution to World War II and world history. Included among Raymond's many achievements, he is a published author. His 400-page book, "Mémoires d'un Révolutionnaire," penned in French, is an account of his struggles and triumphs.

Appearing in venues nationwide, 90-year old Raymond Cassagnol, the last known surviving Haitian Tuskegee Airman, has become quite the

celebrity and benefactor of an array of honors and awards. "None is more deserving," cites Zellie Rainey Orr, who tracked him down after the devastating earthquake in Haiti (January 12, 2010), initiating a ceremony whereby U.S. Rep. Suzanne Kosmas presented to Raymond a replica of the three-inch Tuskegee Airmen Congressional Gold Medal. In March 2007, when President George W. Bush bestowed his comrades the prestigious award, Raymond's whereabouts were unknown. Now, more than half a decade later, he has reconnected with his cadet mates.



Ms. Valentine Charlier Cassagnol & Mr. Cassagnol

*Happy birthday, Mr. Cassagnol!
LCS wishes you continued health and happiness and
congratulates you on being 100 years old, a rare milestone!!*





Bravo and Congratulations, Naomi Osaka!



Turning pro at the age of 22, Naomi Osaka, a shy, soft spoken but assertive young lady, had already won two Grand Slam singles titles within a three-year period. She won two consecutive titles: the 2018 US Open tournament in which she defeated her idol, Serena Williams, in straight sets, and the Australian Open in 2018.

Naomi's blended ethnic identity has brought some degree of pride to several ethnic groups. Born in Japan of a Japanese mother and Haitian-American father, she chose, on the advice of her father, to decline US citizenship, preferring to become a Japanese national. Japanese laws require that persons who qualify for citizenship in more than one country must claim or decline Japanese citizenship when they turn 22 years old.

As a tennis player, she became the first Japanese, and Asian, to win a Grand Slam title and number one spot in female tennis. Since her father is Haitian-American, she became the first player with known Haitian ancestry to ever achieve this feat.

Naomi has gracefully embraced her Haitian roots. After winning her first US Open tournament, a reporter asked her only about the effects of her Japanese and American culture on her tennis playing, though she had just mentioned her Haitian

background, she calmly indicated that she grew up in a Haitian family, with her Haitian grandmother, and was born in Japan to a Japanese mother and live in the United States.

As a woman who has assumed her blackness, her tennis achievements, and actions against police brutality, have also generated warm feelings in communities with African roots and in everyone who believes in justice for all, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Last June, Naomi honored the preciousness of black and brown lives, joining the protest against the killing of George Floyd. She pulled out of a tournament (where she was favored to win) in protest over the police shooting of Jacob Blake, compelling the event organizers to follow her lead. Embracing the fight against social injustice, she stated, "Before I am an athlete, I am a Black woman." According to Steve Tignor, "Naomi Osaka is redefining what it means to be 'good for the game.'" Tignor added that "being good for the game in the summer of 2020 is no longer just being an entertainer, a character, a player, or pulling fans in the seats; in Osaka's case, it meant making sports relevant to social issues in the US today."



In recognition of her talents, charitable activities, and activism, Naomi was included in Time's annual list of the 100 Most Influential People in the world in 2019 and 2020. Ms. Chris Evert, tennis commentator from ESPN with 18 Grand Slam Singles Championships, stated "No one represents our more globalized, multicultural future better than this honest, polite, self-deprecating tennis life force who is a potential champion for years to come." When Mickey Williams, a rising basketball star, asked Naomi what it was like representing blackness on an international scale, she responded "I want to carve my own legacy."

Mr. Leonard Francois, Naomi's father, moved from Japan, where he was stationed while in the armed forces, to the US with his Japanese wife, Tamika Osaka, and their daughters, Marie and Naomi. Upon seeing the Williams sisters, Venus and Serena, at the 1999 French Open and learning that their father trained them, an inspired Mr. Francois remarked that "The blueprint was already made, I just have to follow it" and took on the task of coaching his daughters. He and his wife did not just teach them tennis; Naomi's comportment, keenness of mind, and easy affirmation exudes an inner strength that is rarely felt from players in her age group. They seem to have instilled in her a balanced sense of where she came from and who she is. Did you know that her favorite dish is "legumes?"

Initially, for the first 12 years, Marie seemed more promising, but her tennis journey took a different trajectory after she was injured. As Naomi has said on several occasions, her main motivation growing up was to beat her older sister. Like anything in life, sibling rivalry is a double-edged sword: it can spur growth and self-confidence just as it can stunt development and

impair self-assurance. In their case, its effects were salutary for Naomi. Marie was a great challenger, motivator, and role model since Naomi was three years old; they continue to form a great team.

Combining their sensitiveness to the effects of the pandemic with the fight against injustice in the US, the Osaka sisters wore a different mask with



The Osaka sisters and their family

the name of a victim of police brutality each day they played, and acted as good role models for others

by complying with the CDC's recommendations for protection against COVID-19. With kindness and generosity, in support of the fight against the virus, Naomi and Marie launched a facial mask-making enterprise whose proceeds will go to UNICEF COVID-19 relief efforts. They are involved in numerous charitable institutions including funding a school in Haiti and reaching out to children worldwide through the Osaka Foundation.

Naomi is an authentic, international role model for our generation, women, young people, and athletes all over the world. Through her, we feel that Haiti has made another contribution to the world.

Jocelyne Comeau, MPS



COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

The information below was passed along to L'OUVERTURE by members of our community who wanted to make the Haitian community aware of free available resources for Palm Beach County residents. On behalf of the Haitian community of Palm Beach county, L'OUVERTURE presents a heartfelt thank you to Ms. Jocelyne Cameau, Dr. Marc Lafalaise and Ms. Anna Pierre, who provided the information listed below. You can contact these places to learn about where and when food will be distributed, how to get masks, apply for financial relief, find virtual camps for children, locate COVID-19 testing sites, and seek employment. Because of continuous political and community development changes occurring within the State of Florida, you should monitor the news daily for updates.

<p>FOOD RESOURCES</p> <p>EAT BETTER LIVE BETTER, INC. 4925 Park Ridge Blvd. www.EBLB.org Boynton Beach, FL 33426 (561) 344-1022</p> <p>FEEDING SOUTH FLORIDA INC A 501(c)(3) Organization 301 W. Atlantic Ave. Suite 06 (561) 331-5441 DELRAY BEACH, FL 33444</p> <p>Main warehouse for FEEDING SOUTH FLORIDA INC 2501 SW 32nd Terrace Pembroke Park, FL 33023 (954) 518-1818</p> <p>MEALS ON WHEELS SOUTH FLORIDA In partnership with the Area Agency on Aging and Elder Affairs Provide & deliver healthy meals & nutrition education</p>	<p>HOUSING AND UTILITIES</p> <p>PBS COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT: For residents of PBC who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic through loss of income, reduction in hours, or unemployment. Applications must be submitted through CSD's online portal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •https://secure.co.palm-beach.fl.us CSDServiceEligibility/Account/Login.aspx •Housing, Utilities Assistance •Phone number for rent: (561) 904-7900 •Phone number for utilities: (561) 355-4792 •Phone number for seniors EHEAP (electricity): (561) 355-4746 •Homeless Services Access <p>To access Homeless Services, call Senator Philip D. Lewis Center at (561) 904-7900</p>	<p>SAFETY AND HEALTH</p> <p>STAY HEALTHY: DO YOUR PART TO PROTECT YOURSELF Remember the Center for Disease Control acronym (CDC): C- COVER YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH D-DISTANCE YOURSELF AT LEAST SIX FEET FROM OTHERS C- CLEAN YOUR HANDS, FACES, SURFACES etc., FREQUENTLY</p>
<p>COVID-19 INFORMATION</p> <p>TESTING SITES http://discover.pbcgov.org/coronavirus/Pages/ testing-sites.aspx COVID-19 UPDATE (Corona Virus): Florida Department of Health 850-245-4444 COVID-19@flhealth.gov 24/7 phone # 1-866-779-6121 Palm Beach County Emergency Information Line: (561) 712-6400</p>	<p>IMMIGRATION</p> <p>TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS (TPS) Catholic Charities Diocese of Palm Beach 9995 N. Military Trail Palm Beach FL 33410</p> <p>VOTER'S RESTORATION</p> <p>For assistance with voter's restoration rights, call (877) 698-6830 or contact FRRC at floridarrc.com.</p> <p>A pro bono attorney also will help the individual with fees owed to the office clerks.</p>	<p>MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING FOR PROBLEMS RELATED TO COVID-19</p> <p>https://www.samhsa.gov/find- help/disaster-distress-helpline</p> <p>JOBS</p> <p>UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE Career Source of Palm Beach helps you to find a job and provide training opportunity</p> <p>West Palm Beach: (561) 340-1060 Belle Glade: (561) 829-2040</p>



SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING

EVENTS

SAVE-THE-DATE

DATE	LOCATION	TIME	EVENT
11/18/2020	Webinar / On ZOOM	7:00 PM	<p>Battle of Vertières</p> <p>Join us, for a FREE interactive and engaging conversation about Vertières from a personal as well as from a historical perspective. Where were you when you first heard of the battle of Vertières? How did you feel about what you learned about this battle? Was any event more memorable than others? Who amongst the founding fathers took part in it?</p> <p>To Register for this webinar on 11/18/2020, please click: Here</p> <p>Contact us at: info@Louverturecs.org</p>
01/01/2021	Webinar / on ZOOM	7:00 PM	<p>Haitian Independence Day "Soup Joumou." Please join us for the celebration of Haitian Independence Day as we reflect and gather together safely to drink "Soup Joumou" together as LCS family. Location TBD. More information will be provided by mid-November. Please go to our website: www.Louverturecs.org in our "Events Section" for updated information about this event. No cost for LCS members. Reservations are appreciated by emailing : info@Louverturecs.org</p>



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L'OUVERTURE CULTURAL SOCIETY (LCS)

PRESENTS Our Webinar Series: REFLECTIONS ON THE BATTLE OF VERTIÈRES



DR. GUYLAINE L. RICHARD

Wednesday
11/18/2020
7:00 - 8:00 PM



DR. JEAN-CLAUDE DUTÈS

Join us for an engaging conversation about Vertières from a personal as well as from a historical perspective.

Where were you when you first heard of the battle of Vertières?

How did you feel about what you learned about this battle?

Was any event more memorable than others?

*Let's
Talk!*

A free event by the L'Ouverture Cultural Society Inc.
to commemorate the Battle of Vertières
PLEASE REGISTER TODAY!

To Register for this webinar on
11/18/2020, please click: [Here](#)

For Additional Event Information Please Visit Our Website

www.louverturecs.org

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L'Ouverture Cultural Society Officers,
from left to right: Mr. Richard, Dr. Richard, Dr. Morel,
Dr. Dutès, Mr. Moise, Ms. Cameau and Ms. Clerge-Joseph

MEMBERSHIP

OPPORTUNITIES

YES, I WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER OF L'OUVERTURE CULTURAL SOCIETY (LCS)

BECOME A MEMBER OF L'OUVERTURE CULTURAL SOCIETY (LCS), AND HELP SUPPORT THE MANY IMPACTFUL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS, WE OFFER THAT EDUCATE, INSPIRE AND GROW OUR ORGANIZATION. JOIN US AS WE SEEK TO PROMOTE HAITIAN CULTURE, HISTORY AND CUSTOMS AS WELL AS PROVIDING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NETWORKING, THROUGH EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL CULTURAL ACTIVITIES.

TO JOIN LCS AS A NEW MEMBER, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.LOUVERTURECS.ORG AND CLICK ON 'JOIN SECTION'

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE EMAIL US INFO@LOUVERTURECS.ORG

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