

Teva's notes on:

The Haitian Revolution

[hey-shon]

Overall Goal of Research: I will be presenting this along with my group in the winter exhibition, so, we need to be prepared to defend either perspective: Was the revolution effective for the people or not? (Pro/Con debate) We need to know as much evidence as possible to defend our claim.

Graphic Organizer Stuff:

Revolution Name & Date

- Haitian Revolution, 1791 - 1804

What is the Haitian Revolution?

- The Haitian Revolution stands out as one of the most successful slave revolts in history. Saint Domingue (present day Haiti) had the second largest slave population in the world. It was populated with French colonists, however, 90% of Saint Domingue's population were slaves. In 1791, the year the slaves revolted, there were over 500,000 slaves in the colony. Lead by their leader, Toussaint, a free person of colour, they fought for 13 years over freedom of their colony. The slaves ultimately defeated the French, and gained an independent Republic in 1804.

How Did Location and Resources Play a Role in the Revolution?

- Saint Domingue was considered one, if not, the most valuable and profitable place in the world at that time. Because of it's environment, it allowed the perfect conditions to sustain indigo, coffee, and sugar plantations all across the land. Saint Domingue supplied 40% of Europe's sugar and 60% of their coffee. Because the 'workers' of the plantations were enslaved, it cost practically nothing to gain immense profit from these plantation. It was so profitable, that around 10 - 20,000 slaves were brought to Saint Domingue per year to be put to work in these ever-growing plantations.

Groups Involved

- The slave population of Saint-Domingue was ruled by the French. At the time of the Haitian Revolution, France had also been in battle with Spain and Britain. The slaves allied with the Spanish at one point in an attempt to defeat the French. When the French saw no hope in winning after Britain also joined in, they declared freedom of the slaves and the slave colony allied with the French. After a couple of years, Napoleon (a French political leader) decided to attempt to create a new world empire, and needed money. After attempting to overthrow the slaves once again in 1802, the slaves defeated the French and declared freedom.

Status in Saint Domingue

- There were four tiers of status in Saint Domingue. At the top was the "Grand Blancs". Not many Tall Blancs actually lived there, they often just stayed in France and profited off of their

plantation investments. The few who did live there were dominant in political and social force. Then, there were the free people of colour. They were the children of a relationship between a former slave and a French colonist, or children of rape who their fathers had decided to set free. They also owned plantations and slaves, as it was an economic condition at the time. Then, there were the "Petite Blancs". They managed the plantations and were often workers of the Grand Blancs. At the bottom, were the slaves who made up 90% of the population. In 1790, there was a Ratio of 1 French colonist per 10 slaves.

Goal of the Revolution:

- The goal of this revolution was to eliminate slavery in Saint Domingue and to create an independent Republic of Haiti.

Results of the Revolution:

- The revolution ended up resulting in the creation of an independent Republic of Haiti in 1804. It also ended Napoléon's attempts to create a French empire in the Western Hemisphere and likely caused France to sell its North American holdings to the United States (the Louisiana Purchase). It also frightened both France and Britain into abolishing the seizing of Africans as slaves and led to the end of the transatlantic slave trade.

Key People:

- Toussaint L'ouverture : the "founding father" of Haiti, intelligent and sophisticated leader of the Haitian Revolution
- Vincent Ogé, an *affranchi*, led an unsuccessful revolt in October 1790. The former slave Toussaint Louverture became a leader of the slave revolt and made himself ruler. Napoleon sent General Charles Leclerc to overthrow him and restore French rule, but Haitians, led by Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henry Christophe, prevailed over the French, and Dessalines declared Haiti independent in 1804.

Underlying Conditions (Incubation Stage):

- When slaves heard news of the French revolution, it seems it reassured them that now was the time to revolt. The society and government was flawed to begin with, as the lowest class, the dehumanized slaves, were an overwhelming majority of the population. This created a recipe for a revolution, as everyone but the upper class were unhappy, and a large slave population of around 500,000 were prepared to fight for freedom.

Key Triggers (What was the tipping point of this revolution? Crisis Stage):

- I believe, the tipping point of the Haitian Revolution was in 1802, when General Lecrec was sent by Napoleon to capture the Haitians leader, Toussaint. After he was captured, the Haitians retaliated with a strong battle that lasted 2 years. It was one of the most intense battles, but luckily, with the help of yellow fever killing many of the french troops. The Haitians were able to gain independence.

Effectiveness of the Revolution:

- The people of Haiti were able to create an independent Republic of Haiti and end slavery of their people. They were the first country to be founded by former slaves. French left them with absolutely nothing.

Ineffectiveness of the Revolution:

- the people of Haiti, after the revolution, lost more than half of their population. After they experienced over 12 years of warfare and famine, it left them vulnerable and devastated even after they gained independence.

Continuity and Change (How did this revolution change this society? What stayed the same?):

Overall (unorganized) notes:

- slave-based economy
- Transported Africans to the French Caribbean
- Haiti is in the Caribbean Sea
- Eighteenth century
- Economy: slave-grown sugar and coffee production
- French slave owners
- Saint-Domingue Frustrated after words of the French Revolution had spread to the French Caribbean Colonies in 1789
- Haitian Revolution stands out as the only instance in which enslaved people and free people of colour fought and defeated the French, Spanish, and British to end slavery and the slave trade.
- Campaign for freedom and equality started in 1791

Timeline:

- 1750–1784 The French Revolution Begins
- 1790–1791 Slave Resistance Gains Momentum
- **1791** Haitian Revolution Begins
- 1791–1792 The Revolution Builds
- 1792–1796 Upheavals in France and Saint Domingue
- 1796–1801 Toussaint Louverture in Power
- 1801–1802 General Leclerc in Saint-Domingue
- 1802–1803 The Final Years of the Revolution
- **1804–1805** Haitian Independence

How Toussaint L’ouverture Rose from slavery to lead the Haitian Revolution:

- described as “the founding father” of Haiti
- Born in the French colony of Saint-Domingue (present day Haiti)
- Lead “the most successful slave revolt in history”
- Helped participate in the downfall European colonialism in the Western Hemisphere
- SD thrived as the wealthiest colony in the Americas
- Profited from it’s sugar, coffee. Indigo and cotton plantations
- Products created through slave-labor force
- SD was a French colony since 1697
- Spanish had colonized the east: Santo Domingo (present day Dominican Republic)
- Haitian revolution was inspired by the French Revolution
- Slaves organized to burn plantations and kill many owners

- TL had entered the war as a Physician
- He was quickly acknowledged as a strategic and charismatic leader
- Was enslaved for half his life
- Led forces to victory over the planter class
- Conquered the Spanish side of Hispaniola
- Established himself as a governor
- Worked to quell widespread domestic unrest and restore the island's economy
- Created a constitution that would abolish slavery
- TL died in a french jail a year before SD gained full independence
- France had recently become a republic: stoking the ire of European monarchies
- SD's rebellion put France's wealthiest colony in America at risk of falling under the control of its enemies: England, Spain
- French attempted to compromise with the slaves 1792
- TL and other leaders refused and resulted in a battle
- TL joined forces with France's enemies when needed
- Made an alliance with Spanish, taking command of a Spanish auxiliary force to reclaim territory of SD
- Refused to negotiate with french until 1794 when France abolished slavery in its territories
- TL rejoined the French, fought the Spanish, and began a campaign against the British
- TL defeated British in 1798 = 15k men, 10mil pounds lost
- TL made a secret agreement with British : ease their naval blockade of imported goods
- 1799, TL made a plan to renew commercial ties that would benefit both economies -> in 2 years, A exports to the colony rose 260%+ to \$7mil
- Restitution policies created: Punishing all acts of retribution against former slaveholder (French,British,Spain)
- Under his stewardship, Saint-Domingue initiated a robust civic overhaul and public-works projects that created roads, widened canals and improved public sanitation
- Ensured they were now paid for their labour
- Abbé Raynal describes TL: as a figure who rises up to eradicate human bondage.
- TL helped carter a revolution
- TL did not live to see his country's independence -> captured during Napoleon's 1802 expedition to subdue the colony
- Jean-Jacques Dessalines declares Haiti's independence in 1804

Myths about the revolution:

- 230 years ago
- Haiti : second independent country in the americas
- Haiti's president : Jovenel Moïse -> assassinated

Myth 1: French Revolution inspired the Haitian uprising

- Though France would go on to abolish slavery, it did not do so until 1794, years after the Haitian Revolution began — and only because of Haiti's uprising.

Myth 2 : mosquitos defeated Napoleon's army

- 1802, Within two years, a Haitian army led by Jean-Jacques Dessalines defeated the French forces
- Yellow fever affected french troops
- yellow fever killed many French soldiers, the defeat was primarily due to the effectiveness of the Haitian forces

Myth 3 : J-J Dessalines committed 'White genocide.'

- Mike Duncan alleges that Haitian soldiers raped all the White women and concludes that Dessalines committed a "heinous crime."
- many White people remained in Haiti after this alleged genocide
- Anti-colonialism is not genocide

Myth 4 : Haiti became a republic in 1804

- The Age of Revolution: late 18th and early 19th
- Haiti did not become a republic when the colony declared its independence from France in 1804. Instead, it became the "state of Haiti," led by JJD, whom the generals named governor-general for life
- When Haiti did establish a republic in 1806, the result was civil war
- The northern part of the country rejected this political reconfiguration and reestablished the "state of Haiti" and, a few years later, a kingdom

Myth 5 : Haiti was isolated after it declared independence

- Haitians also engaged the broader world in intellectual debates about colonialism and racial equality
- Haitian sovereignty was not directly tied to official diplomatic recognition, nor was the country isolated from the rest of the world

Textbook notes:

- the French revolution inspired the Haitian Revolution (apparently not tho)
- Saint-Domingue -> Present day Haiti
- SD was Frances most profitable colony : over 8,00 plantations
- More than one third of France's foreign trade
- 500,000 enslaved Africans
- After the slave's first attack, the French retaliated and soon became a war
- TL was free from slavery
- TL was influenced by catholic faith and enlightenment
- TL and troops successfully defended SD against Britain and Spain -> intended to take over colony
- 1802 : Napoleon sent SD the largest force ever to leave France with the intent to restore slavery -> slowly, the French began to gain control
- TL agreed to negotiate with French -> French captured him, TL died in prison a year later
- 1804 they declared the Republic of Haiti "land of the mountains"
- Republic of Haiti was the first free republic of people of colour.
- After this, the ppl of Haiti were sad -> 12 years of famine, warfare, lost more than 50% of ppl, plantations were dead
- Haiti was ruled by a succession of military dictators
- Success: they are now independent
- Fail: they have lost so much

The Haitian Revolution (Britannica):

- what is it? a series of conflicts between 1791 and 1804, was the overthrow of the French regime in Haiti by the Africans and their descendants who had been enslaved by the French and the establishment of an independent country founded and governed by former slaves. It was, however, complex, involving several countries and groups.
- Why did it star? The vast majority of the population of Haiti, then the extremely financially successful French colony of Saint-Domingue, consisted of African slaves. The rest consisted of white plantation owners, white artisans and shopkeepers, and *affranchis* (free people of mixed or African descent), some of them wealthier than some of the white artisans and

shopkeepers. The causes of the Haitian Revolution included the *affranchis*' frustrated aspirations, the brutality of slave owners, and inspiration from the French Revolution.

- How is it related to the French Revolution? Several different groups in Haiti were inspired by the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen to seek more freedom. In May 1791 Paris granted French citizenship to landowners—which included some *affranchis* and excluded some whites, leading to civil war. A general slave revolt in August started the revolution. Its success pushed France to abolish slavery in 1794, and the Haitian Revolution outlasted the French Revolution.
- People involved? These are some of the people involved in the Haitian Revolution: Vincent Ogé, an *affranchi*, led an unsuccessful revolt in October 1790. The former slave Toussaint Louverture became a leader of the slave revolt and made himself ruler. Napoleon sent General Charles Leclerc to overthrow him and restore French rule, but Haitians, led by Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henry Christophe, prevailed over the French, and Dessalines declared Haiti independent in 1804
- What may have caused the revolution? a racist society, turmoil created in the colony by the French Revolution, nationalistic rhetoric expressed during Vodou ceremonies, the continuing brutality of slave owners, and wars between European powers.
- Vincent Ogé, a mulatto who had lobbied the Parisian assembly for colonial reforms, led an uprising in late 1790 but was captured, tortured, and executed.
- In May 1791 the French revolutionary government granted citizenship to the wealthier *affranchis*, but Haiti's European population disregarded the law
- US: slave-owning states did all they could to suppress news of the rebellion, but merchants in the free states hoped to trade with Haiti rather than with European powers.

Social studies and the Haitian Revolution:

- anyone born to an enslaved woman was enslaved (even if the biological father was white).
- When Quakers and other religious activists “purchased” enslaved people in order to set them free, Southern states banned the practice.
- There were also strict rules forbidding the education of those enslaved.
- Things were different in Saint-Domingue. Not all people of African descent were slaves. A child born to an enslaved mother and a white father could be born free. Enslaved people more frequently bought or earned their freedom, resulting in a large population of *affranchis*, free people of colour.
- Many *affranchis* had plantations and power in the colony
- When the French National Convention freed slaves in France's colonies in 1794, Louverture switched sides and fought for the French -> Spain quickly surrendered
- General André Rigaud rose up against Louverture, starting a civil war
- Louverture and his northern army fought against Rigaud's army of mostly *affranchis*
- By 1800, Louverture had defeated Rigaud, taken over Spanish Santo Domingo, written a Constitution proclaiming himself governor of Saint-Domingue for life, militarized the plantation system, and (again) forced workers back to the sugar fields. Coffee and sugar exports rose, but many on the island wondered if Louverture's “freedom” was worth working in slave-like conditions.
- Committed to defending liberty at all costs, Louverture had turned himself into a dictator, and the colony he ruled over into a society based on social hierarchy, forced labor, and violent repression...[Louverture failed]
- On January 1st, 1804, Dessalines signed the Declaration of Independence and called the new nation “Haïti,” the name originally used by the indigenous Taíno people

- This independence was not widely recognized US president Thomas Jefferson, who personally held people in slavery, refused diplomatic relations with Haiti, as did many presidents that followed. Slaveholding states, not wanting Haitian merchants coming to their shores and talking about slave revolts, pressured the US government not to recognize Haiti.
- 1862 US formally recognized Haiti
- French recognition, on the other hand, came with a price: indemnity payments. Haiti was forced to pay France to compensate for the financial loss experienced by French slave owners. The Haitian government had to take loans from French banks in order to make these payments, thus becoming trapped in a cycle of debt and poverty. In 1914, 80% of Haiti's government budget went to paying France and the French banks.
- Haiti struggles to fulfil their economic goals post-revolution

Crash course video:

- ended slavery
- Sugar plantation by 1700 were thriving
- Soon, SD was the most valuable colony in the West Indies and possibly the world
- SD produced 40% of Europe's sugar, 60% of its coffee
- SD was home to more slaves than any place but Brazil
- Over 40,000 new slaves would be imported every year
- Slaves made up 90% of the population in SD
- Most plantations were large -> over 200+
- Many, sometimes the majority of field-workers were women
- Affranchis were often children of white men who reproduced with enslaved women, the white men in power would free their children
- By 1789 -> 24,800 free ppl of colour, 30,000 white ppl
- Many rich ppl of colour ended up owning slaves and plantations of their own
- Colonial society in SD divided into 4 groups:
 - Top: big white planters who owned the plantations and slaves
 - Below: wealthy, free people of colour (affranchis)
 - Below: poor whites (petite blancs)
 - Bottom: slaves
- slaves were the majority of the population
- Slaves disliked being enslaved
- Free ppl of colour suffered racism and legal discrimination
- Poor whites were resentful of the privileges of the rich whites
- Rich ppl were complaining about slave laws
- Government altered slave laws slightly to 'improve' lives of slaves
- Everyone was unhappy
- HR started when slaves heard a rumour that the king of France had freed them (across the ocean)
- Slaves weren't considered to be people in the society -> Petite Blancs thought they were the oppressed ppl in the society bc they couldn't afford to own slaves
- Spanish supported slave revolts in SD to weaken the french
- French was fighting with Britain and Spain
- 1793 Spanish offered even more support -> TL became an officer in the military
- Oct 1793 British decided to invade SD
- French new they would prob lose the war (fighting British, Spanish, Slaves) -> freed the slaves -> TL switched allegiances and went to french
- Slaves were no longer fighting french, french still fighting Spanish and British

- TL steered colony to independence
- Slavery was diminished, but TL still needed sugar to support colony economically
- TL made ppl work, but payed them for their labour
- TL conflict with Rigaud over refusal to give up control over one of the southern states -> resulted in civil war (13 months)
- TL and JD was able to win
- SD was still technically owned by France
- Napoleon needed money and make profit from slavery again -> re-introduce slavery
- Second phase of the revolution: independence
- TL dies after being captured
- TL was not that popular bc he wanted former slaves to continue growing sugar
- Another war -> french lost
- Haitians had an ally: disease (yellow fever)
- Yellow fever killed thousands of french ppl
- Napoleon gave up : 8,000 of 40,000 ppl of his troops made it back
- Napoleon sold Thomas Jefferson Louisiana
- Haiti was SD's original name by native ppl before Columbus
- The Haitian Declaration Of Independence was a rejection of European racism and colonialism
- Haiti was the second free and independent nation state in the Americas + had one of the most successful slave revolts ever
- Haiti became the first modern nation to be governed by people of African decent/former slaves
- Foiled Napoleon's attempts to build a big new world empire
- Haiti's history since the revolution has been marred by tragedy
- 150,000 people died in 1802/3
- The Haitians more than any other ppl in the age of revolutions stood up for no one to be slaves
- Haiti stood up for the weak, when the rest of the world failed.

Haitian Revolution podcast

- one of the most important revolutions in world history
- Three main groups: whites, free coloured, and slaves
- Tension between groups
- 1492 sailed to Haiti after exploring the island, and named it SD
- SD became the capital city
- Slaves, murders, suicide
- Indigenous population 500,000 -> 59,000
- Sugar became a source of profit
- Most lucrative colony in the new world
- Tobacco at first, but then abandoned bc of competition
- Then indigo for textiles #3 on the big three crops
- Coffee #1 and sugar #2
- 1780's 50% of Europe's coffee
- Sugar plantation is very difficult, and costs a lot
- Created fewer large plantations
- Sugar profited a lot
- Owned by rich ppl bc it was so expensive
- As colony grew, very small amount of rich owners and more slaves

- Around 20,000 slaves coming in per-year
- 1687 (shortly before official French take over) population 4,000 whites, 33,000 slaves
- 1715 66,000 -vs- 35,000
- 1730 80,000 slaves
- 1850 14,000 -vs- 150,000
- 3 main groups: whites, free coloured, slaves
- Whites: divided in two informal groups, rich whites = Grand Blancs, Poor whites: Petite Blancs (big&small whites)
- Big whites were rich and dominated colonial life, owned everything and everyone
- Not many big whites actually lived there, they often just stayed in France and profited off of their investments
- Some did, and the ones who did had were dominant in political and social force
- Small whites were all the other whites, they managed the plantations and were often workers of the big whites
- Non did any manual labour, bc those were done by slaves
- Managers were the worst bc they wanted to make enough money to get away from there (SD was a terrible place to live) -> they often stole from slaves and employers, abused slaves, killed them in order to make enough money and move to France
- If a white man married a black woman, then the children and the mother would be free
- There was also a lot of rape, and the fathers (white men) were happy to keep their children in slavery
- Soon there was a free-coloured community, they had the same rights as white ppl but not as rich
- Some had slaves bc it was an economical condition, not a racial condition
- White and black ppl often were in relationships
- 90% of the population were slaves in SD : 500,000
- Ratio of 10:1 = 10 slaves per 1 non-slaved
- Slaved society
- 10-20,000 slaves came annually through the triangle trade where ppl traded slaves for merchandise
- Slave ships, 15% of the slaves died on route, the rest traumatized and malnourished
- Mortality rate of slaves was 50% after 3-5 years bc of disease, murders, punishments, malnutrition, over-work, suicide, or work accidents
- No one cared about the rights of slaves -> The value of the slave was nothing compared to the profit gained from them
- Many slaves spoke different languages and practiced traditions
- Slaves were human property
- Slave laws: owners were supposed to provide good provisions, 2 new clothes per year, and educate them in Christianity
- Jobs were very dangerous
- Coffee plantations were better than sugar for the slaves
- Privileged slaves were the men who would overthrow their masters

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