



Toward Accompaniment

UNDERSTANDING THE DESTRUCTIVE
FORCES OF COLONIZATION AS WE FOSTER
PARTNERSHIPS OF DIGNITY IN HAITI



THE HAITIAN TIMOUN FOUNDATION - WWW.HTFLIVE.ORG

THE MOST MARGINALIZED PEOPLE IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE LIVE IN HAITI, SUFFERING THE EFFECTS OF EXTREME POVERTY.



Stuck in this cycle and trying to survive on 50 cents a day, most can't afford clean water and go to bed hungry while suffering the shame of not sending their kids to school.

Even worse, extreme poverty has resulted in over a million orphaned children in Haiti and created opportunities for child traffickers.

Just a 90-minute flight from America's abundance, this is a scandal of our shared humanity.

Few around the world are ignorant of the despair and suffering faced by the people in Haiti, but what is genuinely alarming is that many people worldwide are unaware of the forces that have created such deprivation.

This guidebook seeks to shed light on the destructive forces throughout history that have resulted in one of the most alarming humanitarian crises of the modern world while also shedding light on the ethic of accompaniment that is central to our work in Haiti.

Rev. Lorne Hlad

Chair, International Leadership Team
The Haitian Timoun Foundation

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HAITIAN HISTORY PART ONE

COLONIALISM,
SYSTEMIC INJUSTICE,
AND RACISM

“

By 1720 the French were enslaving 8,000 people a year from Africa.

Hispaniola, the island currently shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic, was “discovered” by Christopher Columbus in 1492.

As the Spanish called it, Santo Domingo became an outpost of the Spanish Empire, important for its position as a launching place for conquests of new territory in the Americas. The course of history for Santo Domingo was quickly set-in motion: slaves were introduced in 1502, and the first sugar mill was erected in 1516.

The first slaves were the native Taíno people, who dwindled from hundreds of thousands in 1492 to the hundreds by 1550.

As the indigenous population was dying of abuse and disease, African people were brought in as slaves; the first 15,000 Africans arrived in 1517.



A DEEPER LOOK

➔ 3 Million



It is estimated upwards of 3 million Taino peoples inhabited the Island of Hispaniola prior to the arrival of Christopher Columbus

➔ 85 Percent



Roughly 85% of Taino peoples had vanished from the Caribbean within 10 years of Spanish occupation. Most died of Smallpox or under Spanish rule.

➔ 1565



1565 is the year the Taino were officially declared extinct on the Island of Hispaniola as only 200 were reported on the French Census.



WHO WERE THE TAINO?

The Taíno were an Arawak people who were the indigenous people of the Caribbean and Florida. At the time of European contact in the late 15th century, they were the principal inhabitants of most of Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico.

The ancestors of the Taíno entered the Caribbean from South America.

At the time of Columbus' arrival in 1492, there were five Taíno chiefdoms and territories on Hispaniola, each led by a principal *Cacique* (chieftain), to whom tribute was paid.

Ayiti ("land of high mountains") was the indigenous Taíno name for the mountainous side of the island of Hispaniola, which has retained its name as *Haïti* in French.

The Spanish settled on the eastern part of the island but focused on their more prosperous colonies in other parts of the Americas.

In the early 1660s, this led to an invasion into the western part of the island by the French.

The French initially cultivated indigo but quickly depleted the soil, so they turned to the more profitable sugarcane crop in the 1690s. In 1697, after decades of fighting over the territory, the Spanish ceded the western part of the island to the French, who henceforth called it Saint-Domingue (modern-day Haiti).

Now fully settled in Saint-Domingue, the French focused on sugar. Sugar production was very profitable, and Saint-Domingue quickly became the richest of France's colonies. As sugar expanded, so did the slave population. By 1720, the French were enslaving 8,000 people each year from Africa. When the French began to plant coffee, Saint-Domingue's profits soared, and more slaves were used for yet another labor-intensive crop.

Crop expansion required additional labor, as did the high mortality of the slave population due to brutal working conditions. It is estimated that by 1787, there were 450,000 slaves in Saint-Domingue.

At this time, 60% of the French slaves in the Americas were in Saint-Domingue, and two-thirds of those slaves were African-born.



By the mid-18th century, Saint-Domingue was producing 60% of the world's coffee.

With such a lopsided population, enslaved people vastly outnumbered the colonists—slaves had begun practicing forms of resistance.



A Resistance Forms

Brave groups of runaway slaves, known as maroons, would escape to the mountains to hide. They armed themselves and would attack plantations for supplies. François Makandal, the most famous maroon leader, led a six-year rebellion from 1751-1757 that sought to overthrow the white regime.

Then came 1789, a decisive year in the history of France. The cry of “Liberty! Equality! Fraternity!” opened the French Revolution.

*The impact of the revolution reached Saint-Domingue, escalating tensions between grands Blancs (big whites: the elites, plantation owners, and the like), petits Blancs (little whites: merchants, shopkeepers, etc.), and free gens de couleur (mulattoes, who were often wealthy landowners but did not have the same rights as white colonists). Grands Blancs wanted local autonomy from France; mulattoes saw their chance for citizenship and equality; and petits Blancs were eager to protect their position in the color-based class system. All of these groups were against freeing the slaves.**

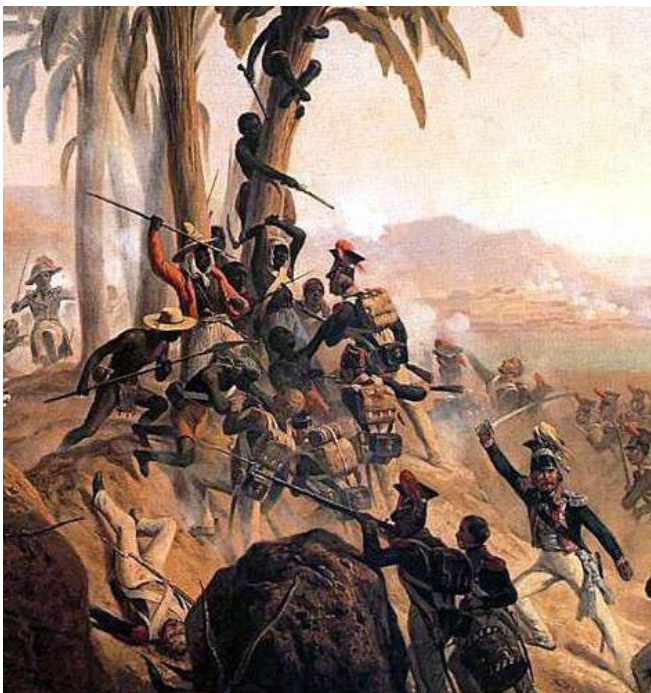
Amid all of this infighting, the slaves, who outnumbered the free population more than 10 to 1, began to organize. Why were liberty and equality not meant for them as well? In August 1791, the rebellion started, and during the following two years, the fight for liberation continued, and, eventually, France sent agents to try to quell the uprising.



In 1793 the remarkable Toussaint L'Ouverture, a former slave, rose to power and battled French, Spanish, and British forces.

By 1801 he had control of Santo Domingo (current-day Dominican Republic), where he eradicated slavery.

At this point, Napoleon tried to regain control of Saint-Domingue to restore French rule. L'Ouverture was captured in 1802, deported to France, and killed in 1803, but the resistance was still strong without him.



“

Haitian independence of 1804 marks the first independent nation in Latin America.

On November 18, 1803, the French were dealt a mortal blow, and Saint-Domingue was no more. Independence was proclaimed on January 1, 1804, for the new country of Haiti.

Section 1: Key Points

Key Points To Remember

01

The Taino people were the native inhabitants of the island nation now referred to as Haiti. The Taino people were organized into chiefdoms and lived in relative peace on the island until 1492.

02

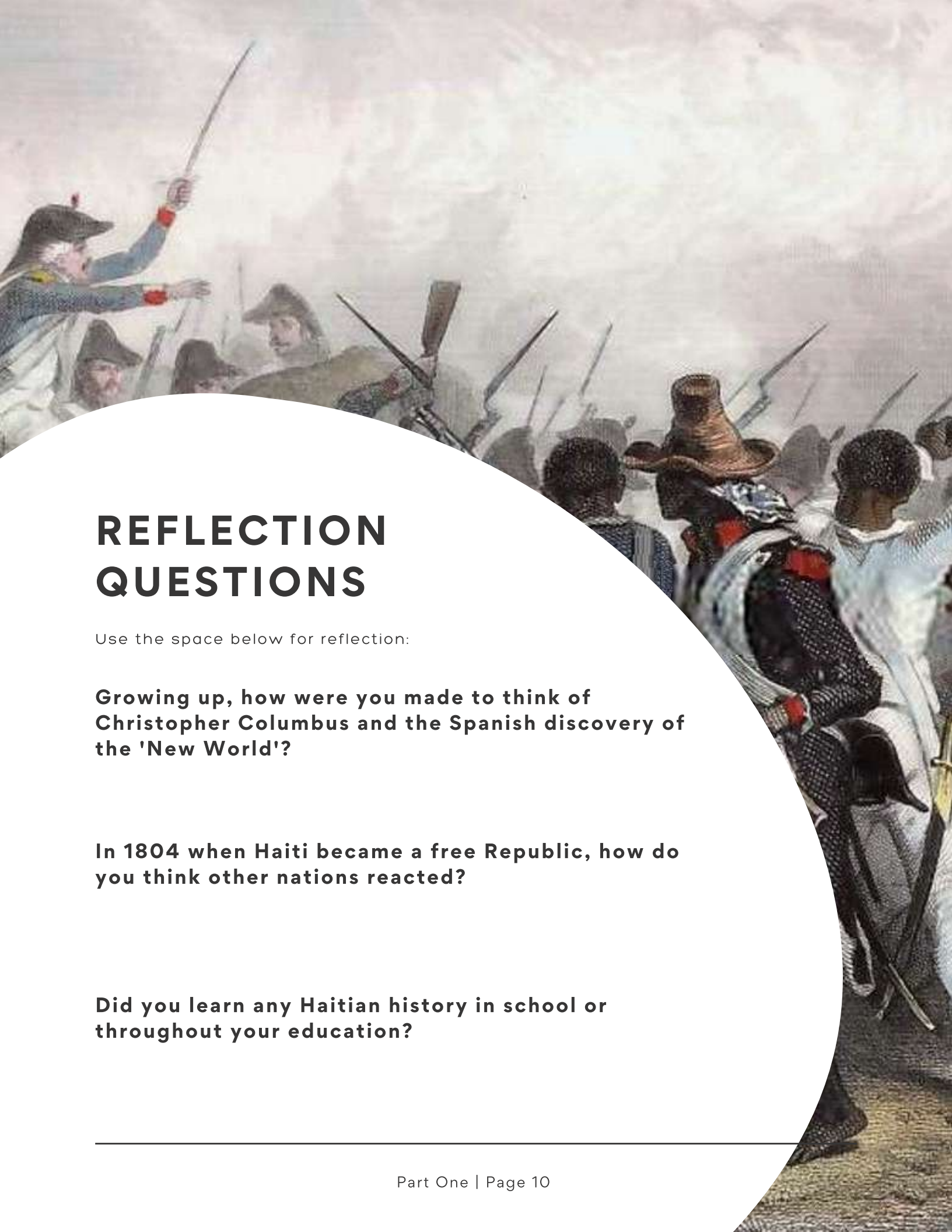
Today, **The Haitian People are primarily descendants of enslaved Africans** who were brought to the island by the Spanish and French after the indigenous Taino peoples were brutally killed.

03

The French would rule the Western part of the Island and instituted a brutal form of slavery to harvest indigo, sugar, and coffee. **This unjust economic system would lead Haiti to become the highest producing colony for the French Empire.**

04

The enslaved population, under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture began to organize against the French and in 1804 victory was declared as Haiti became the first Black Republic in the world to gain its independence through a slave revolt. **Next to the United States of America, Haiti is the second oldest republic in the modern world.**



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Use the space below for reflection:

Growing up, how were you made to think of Christopher Columbus and the Spanish discovery of the 'New World'?

In 1804 when Haiti became a free Republic, how do you think other nations reacted?

Did you learn any Haitian history in school or throughout your education?



HAITIAN HISTORY PART TWO

POST-REVOLUTION &
THE STRUGGLE FOR
EQUALITY



A New Republic With It's Back Against The Wall

On January 1, 1804, tremendous odds were stacked against the new republic. It is understood that in the aftermath of the revolution, the population was greatly diminished.

The base of wealth, the agriculture of sugar, coffee, spices, and indigo, was in physical ruins; most plantations were burned and ravaged in the revolution. The management structure of agriculture was in total disarray. Formerly worked by slaves and overseen by foreigners, Haiti was now populated by free people who desired their own land. The coming Industrial Revolution was already claiming its place in world history, and Haiti's lack of natural resources appropriate to industrialization, lack of capital, and skilled industrialists would disadvantage her in the world economy.

Despite a constitution of free persons, the direction toward despotic rule by a small, wealthy, powerful elite clique was forming by 1804.

Haiti's first leader as a free republic was Jean-Jacques Dessalines.

Dessalines was a former slave turned military leader who suffered horrendous abuse while enslaved. This new leader assumed control of a ravaged land and hurting people. In fear that the remaining French on the island would regain control, Dessalines ordered the removal of all French settlers.

Despite removing the white plantocracy, Dessalines attempted to re-instate the French plantation system to rebuild the sugar trade. In 1806, Dessalines was killed, which would divide the nation in two: a black-ruled north led by Henry Christophe and a mulatto-controlled south led by Alexander Petition

While Haiti would later be "unified" under Boyer, Blacks, especially from Christophe's north, would be excluded from holding power. An ever-increasing elitist mindset would spread among the mulattos from the south only to perpetuate centuries-old racism and notions of white supremacy.

On top of battling elitism and classism internally, the newly independent republic would face even more daunting prejudice on the world's stage.

The international community displayed blatant hostility to the Black nation. Haiti proved to be an ideological threat to countries dependent on slave labor and was thus ostracized.

“

Blacks, especially from Christophe's north, would be excluded from holding power.

Believing in the Africans' innate inferiority, many Europeans and Euro-Americans halted trading relations with the Black republic.



“

Unlike other 18th-century colonial territories, emancipation was not granted to Haiti through diplomacy.



Instead, Haiti fought for her independent status through a bloody revolution that overthrew the occupying colonial nation.

Additionally, as a republic, France was not expected to assist Haiti to develop. Instead, Haitian independence was recognized on condition.

An indemnity of 150 million francs was to be paid and the reduction of customs charges on French vessels to half the amount paid by other countries.

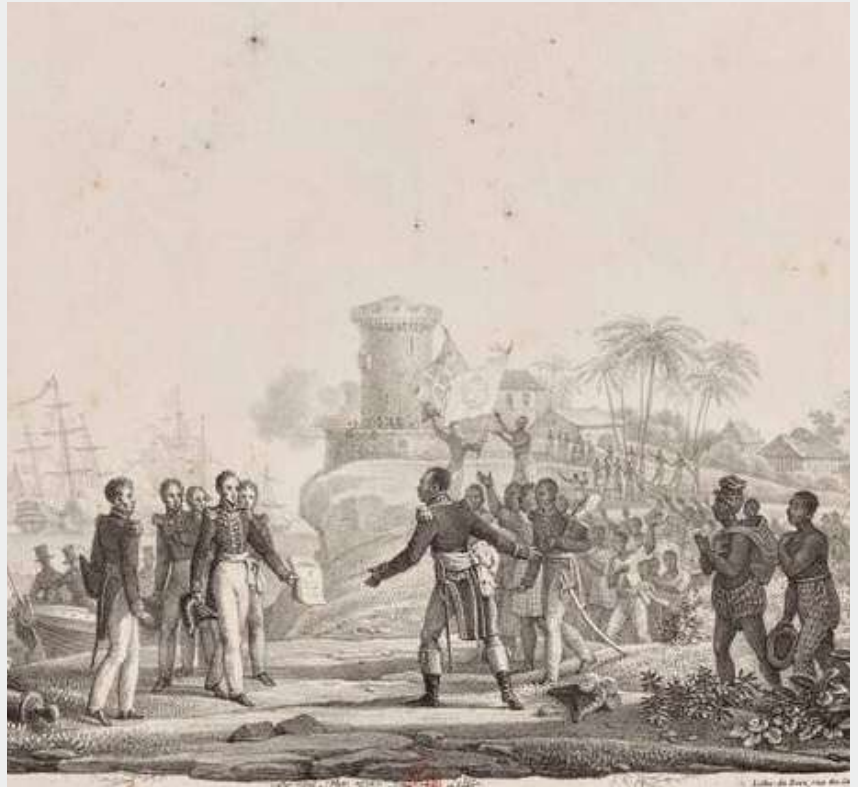
Thus, from the onset, Haiti entered independence with heavy debts, which hindered her upward development.

A DEEPER LOOK

➔ 10X Louisiana



150 Million Francs was 10 times the amount the United States paid to France for the territory in the Louisiana Purchase.



➔ 1825 - 1947



With interest from all the loans, which were not completely paid off until 1947, Haitians ended up paying more than twice the value of the colonists' claims.

INDEMNITY INJUSTICE

On April 17, 1825, France issued a decree stating it would recognize Haitian independence but only at the price of 150 million francs.

Baron de Mackau, whom Charles X sent to deliver the ordinance, arrived in Haiti in July, accompanied by a squadron of 14 brigs of war carrying more than 500 cannons.

➔ 28 Billion



Recognizing the gravity of this scandal, French economist Thomas Piketty acknowledged that France should repay at least US\$28 billion to Haiti in restitution.

Rejection of the ordinance almost certainly meant war. **This was not diplomacy. It was extortion.**

With the threat of violence looming, on July 11, 1825, Boyer signed the fatal document, which stated,

“The present inhabitants of the French part of St. Domingue shall pay ... in five equal installments ... the sum of 150,000,000 francs, destined to indemnify the former colonists.”

By complying with an ultimatum that amounted to extortion, Haiti gained immunity from French military invasion, relief from political and economic isolation - and crippling debt that took 122 years to pay off.

To come up with the money, Haiti took out huge loans from American, German, and French banks at exorbitant interest rates. By 1900, Haiti was spending about 80% of its national budget on loan repayments. It - completely wrecked their economy.

By the time the original reparations and interest were paid off, the country was trapped in a spiral of debt. In today's valuation, Haiti's reparations to France amounted to \$21 Billion

Another critical piece of Haitian history is the United States' role as an occupying force starting in 1915.

In 1915, Haitian president Jean Vilbrun Guillaume Sam was assassinated, and the situation in Haiti quickly became unstable. In response, President Wilson sent the U.S. Marines to Haiti, claiming the invasion was an attempt to prevent anarchy.

In reality, the Wilson administration was protecting U.S. assets in the area and preventing a possible German invasion in light of tension created through the great World War.

The invasion ended with the Haitian-American Treaty of 1915. This agreement's articles created a Haitian gendarmerie, essentially a military force made up of Americans and Haitians and controlled by the U.S. Marines.

The United States gained complete control over Haitian finances and the right to intervene in Haiti whenever the U.S. Government deemed necessary. The U.S. Government also forced the election of a new pro-American President, Philippe Sudr Dartiguenave, by the Haitian legislature in August of 1915.

The selection of a President that did not represent the Haitian populace's choice increased unrest in Haiti.

The Wilson Administration attempted to strong-arm the Haitian legislature into adopting a new constitution in 1917.

This constitution allowed foreign land ownership, which had been outlawed since the Haitian Revolution, to prevent foreign control of the country

The legislature was extremely reluctant to change the long-standing law and rejected the new constitution.

Lawmakers began drafting a new anti-American constitution, but the United States forced President Dartiguenave to dissolve the legislature, which did not meet again until 1929.

The United States' invasion of Haiti is sometimes defended as a benevolent intervention in the name of development.

Edwidge Danticat, a Haitian American author, and activist challenges such an assertion:

The notion that there were indispensable nation-building benefits to this occupation falls short, especially because the roads, schools, and hospitals that were built during this period relied upon a tyrannical forced-labor system, a kind of national chain gang.



Call it gunboat diplomacy or a banana war, but this occupation was never meant —as the Americans professed—to spread democracy,

especially given that certain democratic freedoms were not even available to the United States' own black citizens at the time .



“

Although U.S. troops officially pulled out of Haiti in 1934, the United States exerted some control over Haiti's finances until 1947.

The United States occupation of Haiti also left behind other scars and wounds that are felt to this day by the Haitian people.

On December 6, 1929, U.S. Marines fired upon 1,500 people in Les Cayes, wounding 23 and killing 12. During the nineteen years of the U.S. occupation, fifteen thousand Haitians were killed.

The U.S. withdrawal was followed by a series of unstable governments, which culminated in 1957 with establishing a twenty-nine-year dictatorship under Francois Duvalier and his son, Jean-Claude. Their rule was characterized by the corruption that drained the nation's coffers and human rights violations that left thousands dead. In 1986, massive protests and international pressure forced the younger Duvalier to flee the country, giving way to a new constitution and democratic institutions

Section 2: Key Points

Key Points To Remember

01

The Haitian Revolution and fight for independence resulted in widespread damage across the country, **destroying the agricultural system which led to massive losses in economic opportunity.**

02

The Nation would initially be split between the North and South as well as along ethnic lines. **In a short time, the ruling class within Haiti would consist primarily of wealthier Mullaato's (lighter-skinned Haitians)** who would exclude darker skinned Haitians.

03

Haiti was forced to pay reparations to France for their independence, while other nations adopted hostile trade policies and profited from exorbitant interest rates charged to the nation who was trying to service a massive debt.

04

The United States Military occupied Haiti from 1915-1934, during which the United States seized control of Haiti's finances while pressuring the legislature to make constitutional changes favoring foreign powers and land ownership. **Over 15,000 Haitians were killed by U.S. Marines during the occupation.**



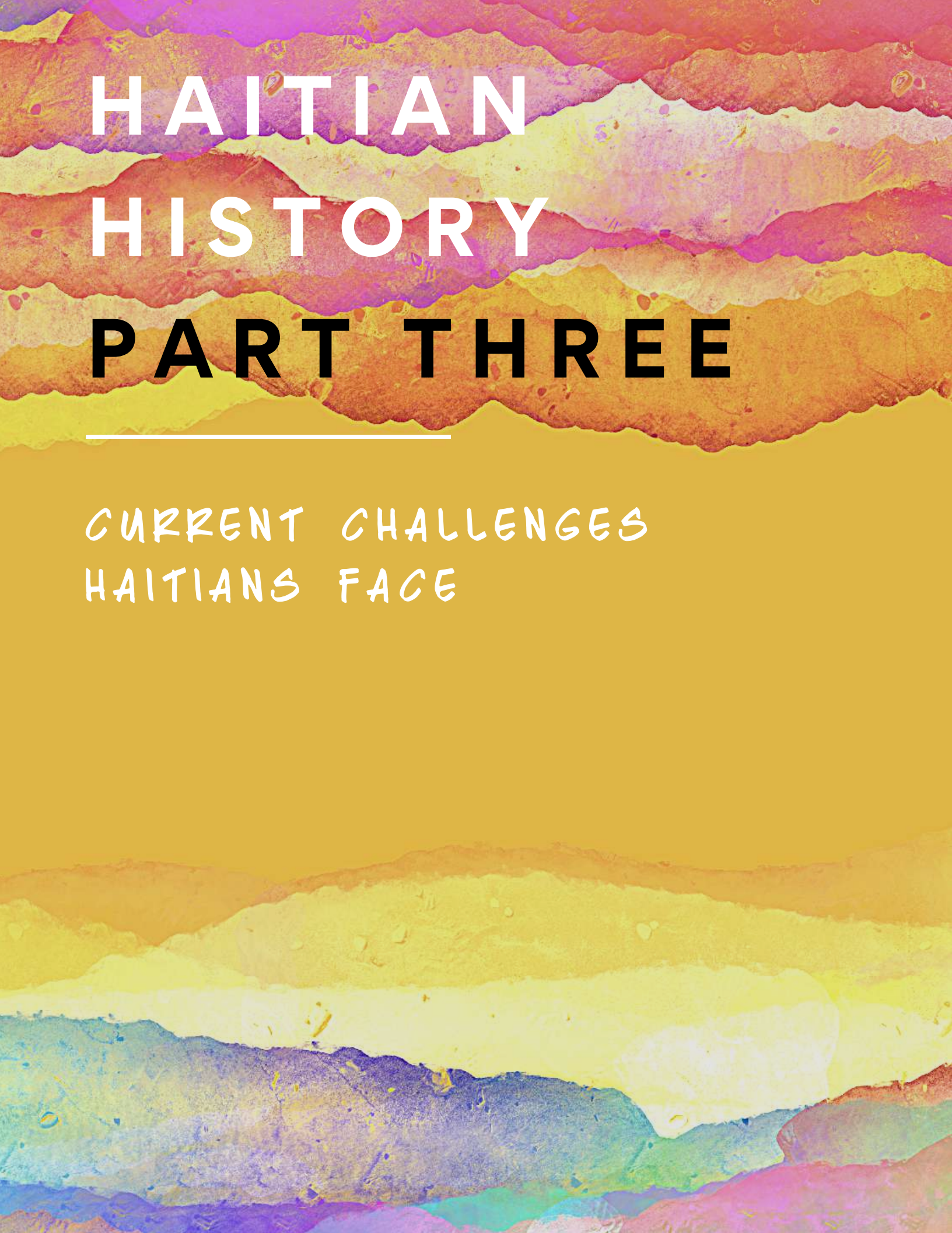
REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Use the space below for reflection:

After gaining independence in 1804, what do you think was the biggest adversity facing the new Republic?

Given the history of foreign control and intervention in Haiti, what thoughts/feelings may be present for a Haitian who encounters an American or European?

Of the history, you've learned so far, what is stirring inside of you? What questions come to mind?



HAITIAN HISTORY PART THREE

CURRENT CHALLENGES
HAITIANS FACE



Current Challenges

For over 200 years, Haiti has faced constant economic, political, and social adversity. While the history presented in the first two sections sheds light on many of the significant events that have disadvantaged the world's first Independent Black Republic, it is important to remember the tenacity and determination of the Haitian people. Generations of Haitians have lived and died in the pursuit of a better life.

Haitians today continue to suffer from the inhumane actions of those who wield power, and from the inaction of many around the world who choose to turn a blind eye to the suffering of millions.

POLITICAL CHALLENGES

In the modern era, Haiti's political challenges could be summarised as a battle between elite, wealthy factions who fight for power at the expense of the people. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the country's first democratically elected president, was twice deposed in coups in 1991 and 2004. Aristide's successors offered little in the way of stability.

In 2011, Michael Martelly became president following a contested election clouded by allegations of meddling by the United States on his behalf.



Haiti was cast into a political vacuum in 2016, when the election of Martelly's successor, Jovenel Moise, was annulled amid fraud allegations. An interim government ruled the country until early 2017 when the second round of elections confirmed the victory for Moise.

Currently, Haiti is experiencing tremendous unrest and political turmoil as Moise refuses to leave office after five years in office. As Haiti's currency has depreciated, unrest continues to grow across the nation, giving rise to gangs and increased violence.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

On top of political challenges, Haiti is no stranger to environmental disasters.

The island nation is located on a geological fault line in a region prone to severe storms.



Widespread deforestation has left the country especially prone to flooding and mudslides, which strike Haiti twice the rate as the neighboring Dominican Republic.

A 7.0 magnitude earthquake near the capital in 2010 killed 220,000 Haitians and displaced 1.5 million more.

A DEEPER LOOK

➔ 250,000



a quarter of a million people died during the earthquake in 2010. Unicef estimates 20,000 children became orphaned as a result .

➔ 5 Million



It is estimated 5 million people were displaced and rendered homeless after the earthquake.

➔ 2016



Six years later, in 2016 Hurricane Matthew would hit Haiti causing widespread damage, to a nation still trying to recover from the 2010 earthquake.



2010 EARTHQUAKE

On January 12, 2010 a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti

The earthquake hit at 4:53 PM some 15 miles (25 km) southwest of the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince. The initial shock was soon followed by two aftershocks of magnitudes 5.9 and 5.5.

More aftershocks occurred in the following days, including another one of magnitude 5.9 that struck on January 20 at Petit Goâve, a town some 35 miles (55 km) west of Port-au-Prince. Haiti had not been hit by an earthquake of such enormity since the 18th century, the closest in force being a 1984 shock of magnitude 6.9. A magnitude-8.0 earthquake had struck the Dominican Republic in 1946.

In 2015 and 2017, drought led to devastating crop losses, and, in 2016, Hurricane Matthew decimated the country's housing, livestock, and infrastructure.

HEALTH EPIDEMICS

Dengue and malaria run rampant in Haiti, and cholera, believed to have been introduced by UN Peacekeeping Forces after the 2010 earthquake, has killed ten thousand and infected nearly one million more.

Haiti simply does not have the infrastructure to face a global health crisis like COVID-19. According to the World Bank, there are only .2 doctors for every 1,000 Haitians.



AID MISMANAGEMENT

13.5 Billion dollars of aid poured into Haiti following the 2010 earthquake, only to be mismanaged by NGOs and spent on expensive projects that have gone nowhere and accomplished very little for most Haitians.

“

The rubble is off the streets. Haiti's back more or less to normal. But there have not been the improvements there should have been, given the resources.”

Brian Concannon
Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti



Why is Haiti the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere?

This question can only fully be answered when considering the long history of repeated abuse and exploitation Western nations have inflicted upon the land and people.

Colonization, massacres, slavery, unjust reparations paid to France, economic sanctions, occupation, tariffs, corruption, and prejudice have contributed to and perpetuated a state that contributes to millions of people's ongoing suffering. It is a scandal of our shared humanity that just a ninety-minute flight away from America's abundance exists a reality in which millions of people suffer the effects of systemic racism and historical injustice.

When a country and people are disadvantaged and exploited for too long, how can a thriving professional class or sustainable infrastructure exist? Additionally, a second scandal looms in that Haiti's brutal and inhumane history remains mainly unknown to the vast majority of Americans.

Most news stories, articles, or blog posts about Haiti and her people paint a bleak picture of suffering and despair. Often these sources will ask the question - "What can truly be done?" or "Is there any hope for Haiti?"

The Haitian Timoun Foundation not only believes in a hope-filled future for the people of Haiti, but we have also been investing in grassroots-oriented initiatives for twenty years that are changing lives every day.

Section 3: Key Facts

Important facts and statistics to know about Haiti according to the World Bank & CIA World Fact Book

01

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US\$797 and a Human Development Index ranking of 169 out of 189 countries in 2019.

02

According to the Human Capital Index, a child born today in Haiti will grow up to be only 45% as productive as they could be if he/she had enjoyed full education and health.

Half of the children in Haiti under five years old are malnourished. The daily caloric intake for all Haitians is 24% below established minimum norms.

03

Haiti remains highly vulnerable to natural hazards, mainly hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. **More than 96% of the population is exposed to these natural hazards.**

04

(30%) of all Haitian children never attend school, only 20% ever finish elementary school and less than 1% graduate from high school.

There are 300,000 restaveks (child slaves) in Haiti mainly because of parents who are too desperately poor to raise their own children.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Use the space below for reflection

Outside of a major natural disaster, Haiti can scarcely be found on major news channels in America. What does this reveal to you?

Is there a global responsibility to help eradicate the extreme poverty in Haiti? How might this be accomplished?

Go personal: What is your motivation for learning more about Haiti or partnering with HTF?



TOWARDS
ACCOMPANIMENT
PART FOUR

BUILDING
PARTNERSHIPS OF
DIGNITY IN HAITI



HTF's Early History

Written by Founder, Rev. Dr. Rick Barger

In 1997, Abiding Hope Church in Littleton, Colorado, the congregation where I served as lead pastor, was amid a significant building expansion project, a project that both stretched previous precedents of the ELCA's Mission Investment Fund in funding such projects as well as the young and growing membership of the congregation. The project was bold and seen as risky by many, a leap of faith.

As the reinforced concrete foundations were being placed, my wife, Harriet, and I took our first trip to Haiti to visit our son, Robert. He was serving in the Peace Corps as its first volunteer ever to live in Cayes Jacmel. It did not take long for the spirit of the Haitian people to seep deep into our bones.

We returned to Colorado and had a story to tell. The congregation had just finished a strategic plan. It called upon this congregation located in upscale suburbia to be a difference-maker in the world.

Central to the notion of making a high impact was the belief that the congregation would search and try to find a place on the planet where it could focus its resources in a big way.

The words of Jesus were taken to heart by this ten-year-old new mission start church. “To whom much is given, much is expected (Luke 12:48). Perhaps Haiti could be that place of focused outreach that Abiding Hope knew it needed.

It was not long before a small team of people joined me on an exploratory trip to Haiti. With guidance and word of mouth referrals we visited all kinds of projects and initiatives, but one of those really captured our hearts – a fledging home for physically and mentally challenged children – the true throw-away children of Haiti – known as Wings of Hope.



We were not only captured by the spirit of the children but by its director, Luckner “Maya” Fond Rose, a former restavek who was raised by a faith-based home and had given his life to giving back. In the immediate weeks after our return from this trip, Abiding Hope began to support Wings of Hope with specific projects of need.



*To whom much is given, much is expected
(Luke 12:48)*

This first exploratory group told their stories of Haiti and soon another group of us went to Haiti looking to fulfill the vision of making a high impact. We began to envision the formulation of a 501-c-3 entity whose focus would be bringing sustainable hope with dignity to the children of Haiti. **We called the envisioned idea, The Abiding Hope Haitian Timoun Foundation.**

On the American Airlines flight from Miami to Port-au-Prince, we crafted a mission statement with a vision and guiding principles on the back of a barf bag. Those things would be our filter as we visited places and looked for partners to walk alongside.

In 2001 the congregation was in yet another large appeal. This time it was to build a discipleship training center. The children that this center would serve would not only be those who lived in Littleton, the site of what the world knows as Columbine. It would also be for the children of Haiti because the congregation designated 10% of the project as funding to the newly formed foundation.

In the fall of 2001, the congregation and the vision faced a crisis. 9/11 happened. There were loud voices that advocated that we needed to stop the appeal and cease plans to break ground. The voices of fear were loud and convincing. The congregation had a decision to make. **Do we heed the voices of fear and let fear own us? Or, do we boldly move forward with faith and hope?** We chose to stand as a witness to the resurrection, break ground, and not look back.

In the chances and changes of life, there are critical decisions that prove to be monumental in their impact over time. As the HTF mission expanded and the name was changed to simply, The Haitian Timoun Foundation, as partners, covenant communities, and donors from all over the country have joined the movement, that bold decision in the fall of 2001 continues to define the DNA of HTF.

It has been and always will be that bold, ***first-to-believe when others refused***, character and tenacity that have steered HTF through earthquakes and hurricanes, and that has built a lifetime of transforming relationships between countless Haitians and North Americans, young and old.

This time of marking twenty years of impact is just another piece of the journey to where the work of HTF and others usher forth a new day. On that new day, if one wants to go see the kind of dehumanizing poverty that defines much of Haiti, one will have to go to a museum to see it. Until then, we press on.

Pou tout moun kapab gen lavi!

Rev. Dr. Rick Barger



HTF's Approach

HTF believes in education, economic development, community engagement, and local leadership. HTF supports local Haitian organizations that work every day in three primary areas:

- investing in children
- leadership development
- poverty eradication.

HTF does not operate, own, or manage any programs in Haiti. Instead, HTF supports indigenous organizations in Haiti that work every day to create a more just society. Simply stated, we believe that Haitians know what is best for their country, and when equipped with the resources needed, they are the ones who should lead the change they seek.

For centuries the gifts of Haitian peoples have been diminished and neglected by others. For far too long, the people of Haiti have suffered under systems of systemic racism and injustice which seek to position Haitians as inferior.

HTF stands against these models which perpetuate colonial thinking. **Instead, we are guided by an ethic of accompaniment that honors Haitian culture and peoples.**

GRASSROOTS MOVERS

We are committed to being known as the most effective grassroots movement with a Haitian footprint.

TRAILBLAZERS

We take risks to invest in visionary, Haitian-led initiatives with the potential to generate multiplication of funding from other partners and to change Haitian society from the ground-up.

PROMISE KEEPERS

We will never make a promise we cannot keep. We commit to sustainable investment, both financially and relationally, in our partners to fulfill our promises.



RESPECT GIVERS

We fully honor and respect the Haitian people and their way of life, and only invest in initiatives with Haitian leadership or with a clear plan for ultimate Haitian leadership.

COMMUNITY ADVOCATES

As the Haitian Timoun Foundation, we will be advocates in all ways for Haiti and its children. We will support initiatives that bring hope and sustainability with dignity to the people of Haiti.

TRANSPARENT OPERATORS

We commit to transparent management of funds that allow us to fulfill our mission with excellence and integrity and accept the wise, prudent stewardship of our funds from our partners.

Immersion Travel With HTF

Key Points To Remember

01

Traveling with HTF on an immersion trip is NOT about you going to Haiti to "fix" anything. Simply stated this is not a mission trip. An Immersion trip is about learning what HTF partners are doing everyday in Haiti while being immersed in Haitian culture.

02

Immersion trips are about building long-term relationships with the people of Haiti. For over 20 years, HTF has cultivated meaningful relationships with Haiti's hidden heroes who labor daily for a more just world.

03

Understand that when you travel to Haiti you are carrying on your back the broken promises of other Americans/Europeans who have caused great harm to the Haitian people.

Knowing what you now know, how will you walk alongside those you meet in Haiti?

04

You may find that **'you need Haiti, more than Haiti needs you'**

Accompaniment is a two-way endeavor. It's about mutuality and co-dignity.

The Problem

By: Thomas C. Harris

What problem are you going to fix in Haiti?
Are you going to fix a bare cinderblock house,
stacked one on another,
among thousands and thousands, stretching for miles like concrete ivy,
up mountain ridges, into valleys,
down city streets and through alleyways?
Are you going to paint this house?
Are you going to mend the roof or patch the wall or sweep the floor? What are you going to fix in Haiti?
Are you going to scrape filth from the streets?
Are you going to spend a week shoveling the garbage? Where will you put it?
Will you come back next month to do it again?

What are you going to fix?
Are you going to plant trees on deforested land?
Will you plant a forest? Will you recreate the rainforest? Are you going to fix infant mortality, infectious disease,
mortally dangerous jobs and environmental toxins? Then what? Will you fix over population?

What are you going to fix?
Are you going to fix economic injustice?
Are you going to fix government corruption? Are you going to fix unemployment?
What are you going to fix by coming here with hammer and nail and muscle and books and teachers?
What problem are you going to fix? Nothing.
You will fix nothing. So then...

Do not come here to fix.
The problem is not an inadequate house.
The problem is not a lack of health care.
The problem is not street children or filth or pollution or corruption. The problem is not Haiti.
The problem is you.
The problem is that you have already been given two simple instructions to fix the world: Love God. Love Neighbor.
And you just can't do it.
You just won't do it. The problem is you.

So do not come here to fix with your wealth and energy and good intentions. Do not come here to solve a problem or do a project or
complete a mission.
You are the problem. You are the project.
You are the mission.
And it is God who is the problem solver.
God is the builder.
God is the missionary.
So, come here and let God fix the problem that is you.

Come here so that God can build a concrete space for understanding in the rubble of your heart.
Come here so that God can hammer away the injustice rampant in the economic structures of your mind.
Come here so that God can scrape away the filth from the streets and alleyways of your soul.
Come here so that God can plant trees of inspiration in the deforested soil of your spirit.
Come here so that God can melt your hardened heart.
Come here so that God can do mission work in you. And yes, you do need to come here.

Because, when you are here,
God will work faster than when you are at home. At home, you will always be in the way of God's work:
your plans, your possessions, your prejudice, your life. God will make more progress when you are here.
So come here to be the mission project of God. Come to Haiti to let God fix the problem that is you.
God will do that here.
In Haiti God will fix the problem that is you.
And as God does, So will God fix Haiti.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Use the space below for reflection

What do you hope to learn through your immersion experience in Haiti?

What are the attributes of a good guest? How will you be a good guest while in Haiti?

What questions do you have prior to traveling?

References & Resources

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