Créole Enlightenment
The French Revolution and the Reproduction and the Reproduction of Racial Ideology

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Abstract:

In this thesis, I argue that royal despotism and plantation production in 18th century Saint-Domingue produced a philosophical theory which I refer to as créolité. Créolité was an intellectual movement on the island of Saint-Domingue. Créole philosophers sought to use Antillean knowledge to transform and solve the problems besetting colonial society. Crucial to Créole philosopher's analysis of society was the threat of a possible slave revolt and the philosophers sought to theorize a social contract to keep slaves from revolting. Further, Créole planters claimed that royal despotism exacerbated the social problems of Saint-Domingue, namely that of slave subordination. In response to despotism, Créole planters used Montesquieu's theory of mores and legislation and climate determinism to theorize solutions to royal despotism and the instability of slavery. I argue that Créole philosophers elaborated Montesquieu's theories and developed their own philosophical tradition. The ideology of race was central to Créole philosopher's solutions for the instability of the state. While royal despotism created decrees, which limited Créole planters' legislative capacities, the French Revolution provided Créoles with the ability to challenge despotism and rectify the problems of colonial society. I argue that Créole planters achieve this through using the philosophy of créolité to rationalize the institution of slavery for the French revolutionaries.

Part I:

Saint-Domingue: A Century of Despotism and the Colonial Enlightenment

Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good. [1]

On August 27, 1789, Gouy D'Arsy, a Créole deputy representing the island of Saint-Domingue declared heatedly to the French National Assembly that they knew nothing about the colonies they were attempting to control. In his address, he stated, "As to slavery and the slave trade, touch those institutions with a trembling hand unless you can find, in your wisdom, some other way to make the colonies great and prosperous,".[2] D'Arsy's warning articulated the tensions between the wealthy planters of Saint-Domingue who vied for control of the colonies and the revolutionaries who depended economically on Saint- Domingue's slave labor. [1] After a century of despotic control under the Ancient Regime, Créole planters sought to secure a new relationship between the metropole and the colony through the avenues the French Revolution opened to them.[ii]

During the French Revolution, the French Ancient Regime's collapse gave Créole planters the tools necessary to reorganize the relationship between the metropole and Saint-Domingue to their liking. The term "Créole" is meant to signify European settlers born in the Antilles.[3] The participation of Créole planters in the Revolution raises important questions such as the one David Geggus raises, "To what extent did policy evolve out of developments in France and to what degree was it generated by events in the colonies?".[4] From there one must ask, to what extent did the Ancient Regime produce the seeds of its own collapse in its

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[1] Gouy D'Arsy and Comte de Reynaud were the leaders of a Créole delegation that traveled to France in 1789 a year after the Colonial Minister La Luzerne dissolved the Superior Council of Du Cap. The planters arrived in France on June 30, 1789 in order to seek representation with the General Estates.

[ii] The term "metropole" is meant to refer to continental France, not including the overseas territories. In the 18th century the colony and the metropole were distinguished by different sets of laws. The Ancient Regime refers to the French Monarchy from the period of the Middle Ages until 1792.

relationship to the colonies? How and to what extent did the French revolutionaries grapple with the ideologies of slavery? What were the contributions of Créole planters to the meanings of liberty, equality, fraternity? What were the legacies and limitations of freedom within the French Revolution and how did the Créole planters engage in its production?

A few months prior to the convocation of the French National Assembly, Gouy D'Arsy and 11 other planters from Saint-Domingue arrived in Paris from Du Cap.[5] As early as 1674, Créoles had advocated for increased administrative autonomy for the island of Saint-Domingue.[6] However, it was not until the political schism between the French absolute monarchy and the revolutionaries in 1789 that the discontented planters had an opportunity to carve out political space for themselves. The French Revolution was of monumental significance for Créole planters as it granted them legal rights previously denied by the king. The French Revolution's demand for equality correlated with Créole planters demand for civic engagement. However, for Créole planters like Reynaud and Gouy D'Arsy, the French Revolution broke the social space that had previously allowed them to enslave others. Simultaneously, the French Revolution opened a new legal space from which Créoles could fight against despotism and potentially lose their slaves.

In the past few decades, historians and anthropologist have sought to demonstrate how the vector of influence between the colony and the metropole was one of exchange.[7] This thesis seeks to contribute to this growing tradition by examining the transportation of ideas between the island of Saint-Domingue and the French Metropole in the 18th century. The ultimate social distinction between free and unfree remained a pathogenic feature of the French Revolution despite its claims to universalism. I argue that slavery's preservation was a result of Créole planters' intervention within the National Assembly. In 1789, Saint-Domingue knowledge

influenced the ideological lexicon of French revolutionaries and contributed to the revolution's definition of liberty, equality, and fraternity. This thesis seeks to achieve this through examining Saint-Domingue's Créole deputies' activities from 1788-1790 in the National Assembly. In addition to analyzing how créolité's (Créole philosophy) tenets surfaced within the National Assembly's colonial policy.[iii] Créolité emerged as the theoretical foundation of the National Assembly's decision not to extend the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen to the colonies. Créolité's theories on law and society shaped the National Assembly's colonial policy.

By the advent of the French Revolution, Saint- Domingue had earned the title Pearl of the Antilles by the merchants and Créole planters made rich from its profits. Saint-Domingue was the most lucrative French colony in the Antillean world due to Créole plantation science and advanced irrigation systems. From the Ancient Regime's Empire, the 1789 French revolutionaries inherited Martinique, Guadeloupe, Tobago, Saint- Lucia, Saint-Domingue, and Saint-Martin. It is estimated that by 1789, Saint-Domingue not only fulfilled a large portion of France's demand for coffee, but half of Europe's demand as well. This was made possible by the labor of 600,000 slaves under the control 8,500 of Créole planters and roughly 1,200 mulatto planters.[8] In 1789 alone, the year that marks the beginning of the Revolution, Saint- Domingue exported 218 million pounds of sugar, coffee, cocoa, wood, indigo and hides to France. In terms of economic production, Saint- Domingue was valued at approximately 200 million livres tournis, and on this wealth depended the subsistence of approximately one million French men and women. [9] Due to the island's profitability, French revolutionaries decided not to extend the Declaration of Rights of man to the colonies, denying hundreds of thousands of men and women

[iii] The term "créolité" is meant to refer to the Saint-Domingue Créole participators within the Caribbean Colonial Enlightenment. The "Colonial Enlightenment" denotes the 18th century Caribbean philosophical movement that sought to use knowledge to improve plantation society.

freedom. I argue that revisiting the French Revolution through the lenses of Créoles can help us critically engage with the space that universalism left open to the exclusion of others.

Créoles, organized under Club Massiac, suspended the application of the rights of man in the colonies, blocked the enfranchisement of mulattoes, acquired a constitution for the colonies, and protected the institution of slavery from French abolitionist revolutionaries. Slavery remained a part of the French Revolution until the Saint Domingue enslaved revolutionaries emancipated themselves. How then do we reconcile the French Revolution's universalist dedication to liberty, equality, and fraternity with its maintenance of the institution of slavery? One cannot, instead the focus should be on what one learns from the room that universalism left open for slavery. How did the National Assembly found social distinctions based upon the general good? How and why did the French Revolution decide not to extend rights to all? What is the philosophic connection between Créolité and the revolutionaries' definitions of freedom?

The fathers of French Revolution historiography such as Tocqueville and Jules Michelet do not investigate the discrepancy between the preserving of the institution of slavery and the French revolutionaries' claims to universalism; confining its relevancy to the appendix if at all. [10] In the first half of the 20th century, the fathers of Atlantic Studies C.L.R James and Aimé Césaire challenged French Revolution historiography. Both thinkers turned to the locus of these revolutions to rewrite the history of the relationship between the metropole and the colony. C.L.R James revisits the French Revolution in his epic *The Black Jacobins* and reads the fundamental contradiction of slavery as eroding revolutionaries' universalist claims and forcing them to confront their legacy as benefactors of a colonial empire.[11] To Césaire the critical question of the French Revolution was the legality of slavery itself and the French revolutionaries making and unmaking of colonial hierarchies.[12] My thesis is then consistent with

the arguments of Césaire and C.L.R James - the revolutionaries failed to uphold their dedication to the promises of universalism. Had it not been for the slave revolt in Saint-Domingue the French Revolution certainly would have followed the American Revolution in granting rights to a white male polity while excluding blacks from those same rights. This thesis attempts to draw from the implications of Césaire and Jame's argument, if the revolutionaries failed to uphold their universalist claims in making and unmaking colonial hierarchies then what can the proponents of créolité tell us about the very nature and meaning of universalism.

French Historians during the first half of the 20th century, Lucien Leclerc, Blanche Maurel, and Gabriel Debien were the first historians to write about the lobbying activities of planters during the French Revolution and this thesis is completely indebted to their initial questions and explorations. As this thesis is about the influence of créolité on the direction of colonial policy under Revolutionary Assemblies, I draw a lot from the research of Blanche Maurel in his book, *Books of Grievances of the Colony of Saint-Domingue for the General Estates of 1789.* In Maurel's book, Maurel historicizes the political activity of Créole planters in Saint-Domingue in 1788 – 1789, when the Colonial Minister La Luzerne suspended the Council Superior of Saint-Domingue, a year prior to the French Revolution. In 1789 King Louis XIV demanded that all the Estates in France create a list of their grievances which were referred to as the *cahier de doléances.*[iv] Saint-Domingue was not allowed to send in their grievances as the colony was not represented within the General Estates. However, Gouy D'Arsy and Comte de

[iv] The books of grievances, or *cahiers de doléances*, were a list of complaints, suggestions, wishes, demands, and opinions of French citizens regarding problems in the French Kingdom. The books were only requested when the Kingdom of France held a General Estates. There have only been one hundred and three General Estates convened in French History. The General Estates was an assembly of deputies who represented the French Citizens before the King and made demands on the future of the French Kingdom. The General Estates had not met since 1614, however, after a number of political disturbances in 1788, King Louis XVI was forced to convene a General Estates in 1789 beginning the French Revolution.

Reynaud organized Créole planters in Saint-Domingue and pushed them to send in their demands to King XVI. Maurel's book was critical to my understanding of Créole planters' political organization in 1788-1789 and their demands from the French Revolution. In this thesis, Maurel's book is employed to examine the political agitation of Créole planters and their political aspirations. Maurel's book is an excellent exploration into the complexities of political activity in Saint-Domingue under the Ancient Regime.[13]

Gabriel Debien's 1953 illuminating dissertation, *Les colons de Saint-Domingue et la révolution, essai sur le club Massiac's*, is to this day the only book on Club Massiac.[14] Debien unveils Créole planters' extensive control over colonial policy during the French Revolution. Debien examines the Créole group Club Massiac and details the club's lobbying activity. Debien's work was crucial to my thesis as it led me to Club Massiac's archives and demonstrated the breadth of Créole planters' authority within the National Assembly. Debien illuminates on Club Massiac's extensive networks of influence and was crucial to this thesis' historical foundation.[15] French Historian Robert Frostin's book, *White Revolts in Saint-Domingue in the 17th and 18th Century* was fundamental to this thesis' conception of political agitation in Saint-Domingue prior to the French Revolution. Frostin analyzes the motivations behind Créole planters' protests against the Ancient Regime from 1670 -1791. Frostin's text historicizes the development of Saint-Domingue into a French colony and details Créole planter's opposition to despotism on the island. Créole philosophers understood their theory as eroding despotism's hold on the island. This was due to Créole planters' belief that enlightened reform could solve the island's problems. I emply Frostin's text to historicize the emergence of créolité.

In the recent years, historians and anthropologists have begun to study the Colonial Enlightenment. The Colonial Enlightenment refers to the philosophical movement in the colonies

during the 18th century. Historians Malick Ghachem and Gene Ogle's research on Créole philosophers in Saint-Domingue was crucial to my understanding of the National Assembly's colonial policy. I borrow Ghachem's term créolité to refer to Créole philosophers from the island of Saint-Domingue. In Ghachem's essay *Montesquieu in the Caribbean: The Colonial Enlightenment between "Code Noir" and "Code Civil"*, Ghachem exposes the Enlightenment philosopher Montesquieu's connection to the Colonial Enlightenment. Chiefly, Ghachem explores Montesquieu's influence on Créole philosophers such as Emilien Pétit and Moreau de Saint-Mèry.[16] Ghachem examines the connection between Montesquieu's theory of climate determinism and mores' relationship to legislation and créolité. Ghachem's essay was important to this thesis' analysis of Créole philosophers and their intervention within the National Assembly.

Gene Ogle's research on Hillard D'Auberteuil was foundational to my analysis of the National Assembly's debates regarding free men of color's political enfranchisement. Oglé explores two concepts that surface within Hillard D'Auberteuil's philosophy, namely that of "utility" and the "visual economy" of subordination.[17] In my own reading of Créole philosophers such as Emilien Petit, D'Auberteuil, Duval Sanadon, Moreau de Saint-Mèry, and Pierre Victor Moulet, I found that "utility" and the "visual economy" of subordination were shared concepts throughout what I refer to as the philosophy of créolité. Moreau and Petit referred to their theory as using Antillean knowledge for "bien public" or the public good. While Sandon, Malouet, and D'Auberteuil utilized the term "spectacle de cette infériorité" or spectacle of inferiority, which one can refer to as Ogle's "visual economy" of subordination. I maintain that there is a connection between Montesquieu's theory of climate determinism and mores and Créole philosopher's development of the "visual economy" of subordination. Further, I claim that Créole deputies

intervention within the National Assembly was their introduction of the theory of the "visual economy" of race which Créole deputies utilized to rationalize the disenfranchisement of free men of color and slaves.

Philosophers Louis Althusser and Franz Fanon and Historian Barbara Fields were crucial to my analysis of créolité's social theory. Louis Althusser's text *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, Althusser develops the theory of ideology and the apparatus. Althusser holds that "no production (commodities, customs, social structures) in society is possible which does not allow for the reproduction of the material conditions of production: the reproduction of the means of production".[18] Ideology is central to the reproduction of the means of production for Althusser. Ideology is the manner through which the state or the ruling body of any society conditions the masses to follow the rules of a given social order. As Althusser maintains,

> *reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of its skills but also, at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order, i.e. a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression, so that they, too, will provide for the domination of the ruling class "in words".*[19]

Althusser's theory of ideology is critical to understanding the project of créolité and Créole philosopher's social theory on plantation society. I will develop the connection between ideology and créolité in later chapters.

Frantz Fanon defines race as an ideology in his essay, *Racism and Culture*. Fanon disclaims the idea that race has any biological or natural qualities. For Fanon, race is an element of culture, stating,

> *Racism is not the whole but the most visible, the most day-to-day and, not to mince matters, the crudest element of a given structure… The precise cultural element, however, has not become encysted. Racism has not managed to harden. It has had to renew itself, to adapt itself, to change its appearance*.[20]

Race for Fanon is not an idea but a part of a structure. Fanon understands race to be an ideology of the state's apparatus which keeps colonial subjects subordinated, stating, "Racism, as we have seen, is only one element of a faster whole, that of the systematized oppression of a people… The racist…has achieved a perfect harmony of economic relations and ideology".[21] Similar to Althusser, Fanon maintains that the ideology of race reproduces the oppression of colonial subject so that colonial subjects will accept their exploitation. In my thesis, I maintain that Créole philosophers theorized on the ideology of race in the 18th century. I argue Créole deputies introduced the ideology within the National Assembly to rationalize the exploitation of Africans and achieve Saint-Domingue's perfect economic relations.

Historian and Sociologist Barbara Fields and Karen E. Fields in their book, *RaceCraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life*, describe the concept of "race" as an ideology. They argue that race is not some a-historical phenomena rooted in biology but instead a concept that arose in a discernable moment in modern history. As Barbara Fields wrote,

> Race is not an idea but an ideology. It came into existence at a discernible historical moment for rationally understandable reasons…During the revolutionary era, people who favored slavery and people who opposed it collaborated in identifying the racial incapacity of Afro-Americans as the explanation for enslavement.[22]

Fields claims that race emerged as a descriptive vocabulary to make consistent the American ideals of freedom and the exclusion of a part of the American population from freedom. While, Fields research is on the American ideology of race, one can find a similar occurrence in French history. This thesis argues that the ideology of race within the French Empire emerges during the French Enlightenment to explain why Africans and free men of color could be excluded from the Enlightenment's ideals of liberty and equality.

This thesis seeks to participate within the move towards analyzing colonial knowledge's influence in shaping Europe and the "discourses that constitute its cultural and philosophic identity".[23] While few have studied créolité's contributions to the French Revolution's philosophical apparatus, créolité helped shape the revolutionaries meaning of freedom. I seek to participate within this tradition by analyzing the contributions of Créole colonial proprietors on the National Assembly's colonial policy from 1788-90. I argue that the despotic character of the Ancient Regime produced in Saint-Domingue a reactionary culture and philosophy articulated by its inhabitants as créolité.[v] I confer that the philosophic and ideological impositions of créolité are a part of Enlightenment history and had their own respective influence on the legal and philosophical lexicon of the French revolutionaries. I argue that créolité emerges as a project of the Colonial Enlightenment to solve the social and economic problems of Saint-Domingue. I maintain that the ideology of race and its productive economic capacity was a central component to the philosophy of créolité. Créole deputies in the National Assembly used the ideology of race to rationalize the institution of slavery for metropolitan revolutionaries.

This thesis is about the limits and possibilities of the French Revolution and argues that slavery was not an immaterial affair for the revolutionaries. Slavery within the French Republic had serious ideological and political repercussions for the revolutionaries and the meanings of the French Revolution at large. My thesis reads the shift in the relationship between the metropole and the colony and the National Assembly's colonial policy of interior and exterior, as the victory of Créole political philosophy. Throughout this paper, I use the term *Créole* in two ways: the first to illustrate the difference between a French European planter from Saint-Domingue and a French European man from France. This was the terms traditionally understood

[v] The term "despotism" refers to Montesquieu's philosophy on tyrannical governments. Despotism is a form of government where law derives from the absolute power of a single entity.

meaning. Créole as a philosophical tradition, which in the essay I refer to as créolité, emerges in the early 18th century. Créolité materializes as Créole planters' philosophical critique of the Ancient Regimes' despotism. [24] Both terms I will define and historicize in Chapter 1. For planters, the difference between Créole and French was not just a cultural identity but a precursor that signified who was equipped to create colonial policy and who was not.

Any discussion on Créole planters' involvement within the revolution necessitates an analysis on 18th century Antillean knowledge production and political realities is crucial. Eighteenth century knowledge and culture production illustrates the significance of the space that the 1789 French Revolution opened to the planters and the implications of Créole ideology on the course of the revolution. Thus, the first chapter will be dedicated to reimagining the relationship between the despotic Ancient Regime and the production of créolité. The realities of the Ancient Regime's despotism in Saint-Domingue produced the environment necessary for the creation of créolité. This thesis is a discussion meant to open the French Enlightenment to the colonies and to explore the legacies of Créole planters on the foundation of the French Revolution's liberalism.

The second part of this thesis is an explication of the interaction between *Le Colonel Société de Saint Domingue* and Club Massiac's interpretations of créolité and the National Assembly's universalism. I do this through analyzing the debate regarding the political enfranchisement of freemen of color in 1789-1790. The French Revolution opened a platform for the Créole planters to redefine the relationship between the metropole and the colony and to challenge the despotic character of the King's relationship to Saint-Domingue. In this chapter, I examine the ideological confrontation between Friends of Blacks and Club Massiac as they debated the limits and meanings of the Revolution in their fight to persuade the National

Assembly of their respective beliefs. The paper will coalesce these arguments into a close reading of the first report of the National Assembly's colonial committee. In the March 8, 1790 decree, I examine the influences of these competing ideologies on the colonial committee. I seek to demonstrate that it was the victory of Créole philosophy over universalist principles that barred the application of the rights of Man in Saint-Domingue, kept political rights from mulattoes, and reallocated much of the administrative power of the metropole onto the colonies transforming and shaping the colonial policy of the National Assembly.

Chapter I: Royal Despotism in Saint-Domingue

Créole's traced the economic, political, and social problems of Saint-Domingue to mercantile despotism. Mercantile despotism refers to the domination of trade policy by merchants and the monarchy at the expense and exclusion of the producers of the commodities. In 1664, Finance Minister of France Jean Colbert passed *l'éxclusif*, a decree which sought to rearrange the relationship between the metropole and the colony and demonstrate the metropole's control over the island's economy.[25] In response to mercantile despotism, Créole philosophers utilized the political and social theory of Montesquieu to demand a new relationship between the metropole and the colony. This chapter will examine the principles of mercantile despotism, Montesquieu's theories, and the philosophy of créolité that informed Créole planter's interventions within the National Assembly. The first section will define mercantile despotism and examine the important decrees, laws, and institutions of Ancient Régime governed Saint-Domingue that informed the intellectual and social formation of créolité.

While, the despotic character of the Ancient Régime would find some of its staunchest opponents in Saint-Domingue in the late 18th century, until 1789, French occupation of Saint-Domingue can be characterized by the over-extension of the metropole's absolute power with

respect to the island's social and economic production. L'éxclusif and Code Noir were the King's decrees most cited by Créoles as being emblematic of royal despotism. Créoles rejection of these decrees helped to define the elite political and intellectual culture of Saint-Domingue.[26] A characteristic that distinguishes Spanish and English colonization of the New World from that of France was that French colonization of the Caribbean was a national project. Unlike Spain and England who relied on conquistadors and adventures to build the New World - the French Ancient Regime controlled the production of the colony.[27] In 1661, Colbert came to replace Fouquet as Finance Minister when the King charged Fouquet with exploiting colonial wealth for his own benefit. As Blackburn reminds us, with the dismissal of Fouquet, colonial development lost its "quasi-autonomous character and was subordinated to national objectives", this meant that Saint-Domingue's Créole planters had fewer legal and economic rights than Spanish or English settlers.[28] The nationalization of Saint-Domingue's economy is what granted the French Ancient Régime extensive control over the legal and social codes of Saint-Domingue, and to which it owed its despotic nature.

The dramatic shifts in colonial policy during the mid 17th century stems from the transformation of monarchical power across Europe. Although the French monarchy began to develop into an absolute monarchy in the 16th century, European absolutism became firmly established in the 17th century. French King Louis XIV came into power in 1651 just as sugar production in Saint-Domingue began to reach new heights.[29] Louis XIV started his reign as King by passing administrative reforms that sought to centralize monarchical power in France. Louis' reforms sought to weaken the nobility's regional power and to centralize power within himself. The same year the royal treasury was on the brink of bankruptcy and Louis XIV selected Jean-Baptiste Colbert to advise the King on economic solutions to replenish the treasury. As historian

of seventeenth century trade Inés Murat wrote, "Colbert was minister of finances and economic affairs, minister of industry and commerce, and minister of the navy and overseas affairs".[30] Colbert identified the wealth of the colonies as having the potential to contribute to the revitalization of France's economy. To Colbert, colonial commerce was simply a means to creating a harmonious national economy through using colonial commodities to vitalize and bring French provinces into the global market.

In 1664, Colbert established the Company of the West Indes, granting the metropole a monopoly on all trade in Saint-Domingue. Créoles vehemently opposed the over extension of the King's power, however, rebellious planters were kept docile by their dependency on the French Navy as the prospect of war between England and France heightened. In 1668, Colbert nationalized the company, placing it under the direct authority of the King. Colbert also introduced Europe's most stringent and restrictive trade regulations of the century, *l'éxclusif*. The exclusive was intended to curb contraband trade and to redefine the relationship between the colonies and the metropole.[31] The decree was meant to demonstrate to the colonies that they existed for the benefit of the metropole and for no other reason. The decree sought to increase profits deriving from the colony by levying high taxes for metropolitan commodities. The exclusive restricted Saint-Domingue's market so that Créoles were only allowed to trade with the French metropole. At the expense of Créole planters, Colbert's mercantile policies enhanced the economies of French metropolitan port cities like Bordeaux, Nantes, Le Havre, and La Rochelle transforming them into powerful commercial centers. Colbert's mercantile policies were perceived as despotic to Créole planters and in 1789 they would demand the end of Colbert era mercantile policies.

Metropolitan despotism continued to expand extensively in the last years of the 17th century as the French king determined Saint-Domingue's legal and social codes. A century later, Créole planters during the French Revolution will attempt to dismantle the colonial codes from this period. In 1685, King Louis XIV released *Code Noir* (Black Code) using a draft of Colbert's reforms on regulations for the colonies. The Black Codes were a set of decrees that sought to regulate the interior management of the island and slavery. The decree was Louis XVI's solution to the violence and moral depravity associated with plantation society.[32] Metropolitan officials regarded the planter's short-term incentives for the massive accumulation of wealth as a threat to the long-term stability of the island. Moreover, Créole planters believed that it was more profitable to force slaves to work to death, producing the most amount of sugar possible, than to invest in the well-being of their slaves. Colonial administrators held that "new laws establishing masters' rights and responsibilities" would provide the stability necessary for the long-term profitability of the island. Influenced by Roman slave law, Code Noir was meant to provide a legal basis for slavery and the moral objectives of the island. [33]

Code Noir demonstrated the ideological disparities between the metropole and the colonies and Créole planters claimed the codes destabilized the colony. The decree established work regulations for slaves, the rights and domestic duties of the planters, and defined the citizen status of free people. Code XIII defined the citizenship status of a person based on the civil status of the mother. The Ancient Regime's Code Noir did not racialize slavery, it is crucial not to conflate the civil status of slavery with race.[34] During the French Revolution, Raimond a freeman of color would claim that racial prejudice emerges in Saint-Domingue more than sixty years after Code Noir's establishment.[35] It is important to note that Créoles considered metropolitan law as inconsistent with Saint-Domingue's social structure. Créoles asserted that the discrepancies of

metropolitan law increased Saint-Domingue's economic and social instability. In the 18th century, in response to metropolitan law, Créoles sought to rectify the challenges facing Saint-Domingue's society. Créole philosophers utilized race as a pseudo-scientific anthropological concept in order to solidify Saint-Domingue's social hierarchy and make slave labor more stable.[36] During the French Revolution, Créole deputies proposed Créole philosopher's theories as legal reforms to make Saint-Domingue's laws match the island's social structure coherent.

Code Noir's sixty articles sought to impose on colonial society the metropolitan's ideals of the perfect social institution for plantation society. Under the Ancient Regime, if the mother was of free status then the child was of free status regardless of their ethnic origin and thus French citizens. This is foundational to Créole planters' confrontation with the Ancient Regime's despotism and influences the demands they made during the French Revolution. The legal racialization of slavery was a victory of Créole deputies during the French Revolution. Code Noir gave Créole planters the responsibility of giving slaves religious education and proper nourishment. Créole planters found breaking the law would have their slaves confiscated, and, "The masters will be prosecuted at his request and free of charge, which we want to be observed for the barbaric and inhuman crimes and treatments of masters towards their slaves".[37] But the reason why Créole planters resented the decree was because they believed the codes brought slaves into the civic body and weakened Créole control over their slaves. The decrees intention was to show the dominance of the monarchy over internal matters of the island; despite its distance from the metropole, and served as a remedy to the decay of moral culture associated with the island. It is critical to understand that Code Noir did not define slavery in racial terms. Créole planter's confrontation with despotism and empire stemmed impart from the different ideological perspective of the metropole and the metropole's ignorance of race.

Eighteenth century Saint-Domingue can be characterized by both, the growth of sugar and Créole resentment over metropolitan regulations. Créoles began to systematically resist the metropolitan's authority and demanded new legal codes that would enable them to combat the power of royal despotism. In 1716, 1738, and 1758 small attempts to appease Créole discontent were made by the King XV as the security of France in the early 18th century was fragile due to the death of the Sun King XIV and the prospect of war with England.[38] The early 18th century reforms failed to satisfy the Créole planters as the metropole continued to dictate the island's internal and external legislation. As a result, Créole planters organized against mercantile despotism and the right to create internal legislation. In the process of creating colonial reforms, Créoles produced an ideology and a philosophical tradition particular to Saint-Domingue. The complicated patterns of slavery, plantation production, indentured servant's descendants, royal despotism, and mulattoes weaved together a distinct culture that would influence the discourse Créole planters brought to the National Assembly.

Montesquieu's Mores and Theories on Legislation

In order to make sense of créolité, one must understand Montesquieu's theories of climate determinism and mores' relation to legislation being that these theories directly influenced Créole philosophers. Thus, this section will examine Montesquieu's theories and its influence on Créole philosophy. The Ancient Regime's colonial despotism predates the origin of the political category formulated by Montesquieu, suggesting that Montesquieu had the colonies for direct inspiration for his philosophical inquiries into power, domination, and freedom. Serving on the judicial committee of Bordeaux, Montesquieu's *L'éspirit des Lois* demonstrates an intimate comprehension of the relationship between the metropole and the colony.[39] Montesquieu was interested in the project of understanding the structure of society and the legal

bond that holds it together. As a result, Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws* was a philosophical inquiry into human law and social institutions. To Montesquieu malignant legislation and governmental apparatuses generate chaos within society. For Montesquieu, there existed only three forms of government, democratic republican, monarchical, and despotic. The best form of government would be one that is, "most conformable to nature, is that whose particular disposition best agrees with the humor and disposition of the people in whose favor it is established", meaning that to not produce chaos, governments must design laws in relation to the people it governs.[40] Créole philosophers later developed this theory and utilized it within the National Assembly to demand that the assembly not enfranchise freemen of color.

Créolité was influenced by Montesquieu's theory on legislation and mores and to make sense of créolité's confrontation with despotism, one must understand the traditional meaning of mores. Historian of the Atlantic world, Malick Ghachem elaborates on Montesquieu's critique of the production of legislation, arguing that legislators confused law with mores or manners.[41] The original meaning of mores comes out of its historical association to traditionalism and customary law. Montesquieu believed that laws needed to be organized to meet the diverse needs of its inhabitants, meaning that laws should,

> *be relative to the climate, whether hot or cold, of each country, to the quality of the soil…. To the manner of living of the natives, whether husbandmen, huntsmen, or shepherds; they should have a relation to the degree of liberty which the constitution will bear; to the religion of the inhabitants, to their inclinations, riches, number, commerce, manner, and customs.* [42]

Thus, a monarchy that did not create laws reflecting the mores of the people it governed was despotic in nature. Montesquieu defined a despotic government as a government in which, "a single person directs everything by his own will and caprice".[43] As Ghachem read Montesquieu, "mores were pre-political and hence immune to sudden changes and excessive tinkering by the

science of legislation. Inescapably local in character, they were a function of the climate and the terrain", one can use this reading of Montesquieu to understand Montesquieu's appeal to Créoles.[44] Any government that did not understand the relationship between mores and laws would then be despotic in nature and Créoles saw the metropolitan's laws as ignorant of the island's mores. Within the National Assembly, Créoles would align themselves with revolutionaries by casting themselves as the victims of royal despotism. They would demand that the revolutionaries grant them legislative rights over the island that royal despotism refused them.

Montesquieu was terrified of a society in which all law derived from the whims of the absolute power of the king opposed to the needs of those they rule. He held the belief that a constitution without checks and balances or an intermediary power, would lead to a tyrannical monarchy. As philosopher David Carrithers remarks, "the absence of a complex legal system safeguarding liberty is the chief distinguishing feature of despotism. One man decrees and all the rest obey".[45] Laws needed to be inspired by the people that lived under them. For that reason, Montesquieu believed that one nation should have many different customary laws that provided for the needs of each community. For Montesquieu, traditional laws exemplified a local sensibility that met the diverse needs of a specific population and was a requirement of all non-despotic governments. Créoles utilized Montesquieu's theory on traditional law in two manners. The first, Créole planters argued that in order for the French Empire to be profitable then Créoles must be enabled to be active citizens while retaining their own Antillean culture. The second, Créole deputies within the National Assembly claimed that traditional law enabled them to disenfranchise freemen of color for the benefit of the unified empire.

Although Montesquieu was not the climate determinist that he is often made out to be, climatism's basic premise was that minds and characters vary from climate to climate.[46] Accordingly, laws should adapt to those variations, stating, "It be true that the character of the mind, and the passions of the heart are extremely different in different climates, the laws ought to be relative both to the difference of those passions, and to the difference of those characters".[47] Montesquieu held the belief that warmer climates produced weaker morals. For Montesquieu, slavery then was only suitable to climates as warm as the Antillean sun being that "there are countries where the excess of heat enervates the body, and renders men so slothful and dispirited, that nothing but fear of chastisement can oblige them to perform any laborious duty: slavery is there more reconcilable to reason".[48] Montesquieu believed that Europe's cold climate produced characters unsuitable for slavery which made slavery "abhorrent" on European soil. For that reason, the French Antillean could not be governed by the same standards as the metropolitan, as the sun produced different characters.

Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws, written in 1748, gave Créoles a philosophical language to describe their exploitation at the hands of the absolute monarchy**.** In this light, the monarchy's absolutist colonial policy stood in direct opposition to Montesquieu's enlightenment theory. Absolutism was despotism. Code Noir was the imposition and over extension of the monarchy's power on Saint-Domingue's cultural and political sphere. To Montesquieu the Ancient Regime's approach to the colonies would inevitably result in the loss of the colonies, instead Montesquieu advised, "In general, people are very attached to their customs; to deprive them forcefully of their customs is to make them unhappy; thus one must not change customs, but rather engage people in changing their customs themselves."[49] Créoles maintained that law must derive from the local population opposed to originating from the king, which in its very nature would then be

despotic. Créole planters asserted that the colony's success depended on their local knowledge determining the social and legal structures of the island, referred to as *connaissance local* (local knowledge). However, Montesquieu's theory on mores and legislation influenced more than Créole planters' analysis of despotism. Créole planters employed Montesquieu's theory in order to stabilize the social structure of Saint-Domingue and theorize racial ideology.

The Colonial Enlightenment and the Ideology of Race

In Montesquieu's wake, Créole philosophers sought to utilize Antillean knowledge to solve the colony's problems and improve the French empire. Adjacent to their metropolitan enlightened contemporaries, Créoles formulated distant futures in which the organization of the state would be radically different. In this chapter, I will explore the relationship between the "Colonial Enlightenment" and the demands that Créole deputies made within the National Assembly. This will be done by analyzing the legal and social theory of Créole figures such as Emilien Petit, Argenteuil, Malouet, and Moreau. Créole philosophers were concerned with questions of empire and the legal doctrines and social institutions that hold it together. They were interested in using Antillean knowledge to create the "perfect legislation" to secure the stability and profitability of Saint-Domingue.[50] In order to understand the philosophy of créolité, one must first understand the cultural and ideological terrain that shaped their philosophical formulations.

While a detailed analysis of Créole culture is outside the domains of this paper, certain aspects of Créole culture are necessary to understanding Créole deputies' claims within the National Assembly. Créole planters' obsession with slave activity, the proximity of their slaves, and the isolated rural character that defined Créole life are necessary to understanding créolité's theoretical foundation. Ninetenth century French Historian Pierre de Vaissière's book *Saint-*

Domingue: The Society and Life of Créoles under the Ancient Regime, provides valuable insight into the lives and practices of Créoles. By the early 18th century, the occupants of Saint Domingue began to associate themselves more and more with the Antillean world. Though the term Créole today has been commonly used to refer to a hybrid language of African and European descent this was not its original meaning. In eighteenth century Saint-Domingue, aristocratic and wealthy Saint-Domingue settlers began to wield it as a social identity that separated them from Frenchmen, freemen of color, slaves, and little whites.[51] Little whites referred to European settlers in Saint-Domingue who did not own property while Big whites referred to wealthy planters. [52] Créoles were a part of the New World, with a sun much hotter than any sun in France and a social structure dependent on the production of colonial commodities. This is not to say that Créoles ceased to be French men. Those apart of the Grand Blanc class (wealthy white planters) continued to marry into noble French families and to send their children to school in France. It is instead to say, that Créole as an identity emerges out of the particularities of Saint-Domingue life caused by the gradual impoverishment of the nobility, the explosion of the slave-based plantation economy, and the despotic control that the French king had on regulating the particularities of Saint-Domingue life.

Créoles' isolation and proximity to hundreds of enslaved Africans made Créole's fearful of the possibility of a violent slave revolt. Créole privilege and the enslavement of Africans necessitated the creation of a radically different social code than the one that held metropolitan nobles and peasants together. Créole isolation on plantations worked by dozens if not hundreds of slaves played an important role in the production of Créole culture. Créoles often lived within small family units of five to six and a Créole settler could therefore be outnumbered by anywhere between 20 to 50 enslaved Africans on a given plantation.[53] Créole's paranoia about the stability

of the institution of slavery and possibility of a slave revolt was a constant feature of Créole life and played an important role in the production of the island's ideology of race and créolité. The paranoia resulted in the establishment of a power dynamic between masters over slave that was fundamental to the identity of Créoles. During the French Revolution, Créole deputies would suggest that the numerical superiority of slaves necessitated the creation of social codes that conditioned Africans into slavery**.**

The numerical superiority of enslaved Africans and the Ancient Regime's despotism inspired créolité's elaborate theories on social structures, class, race, and the role of law and the state. The production of ideology was essential to the Créole's Enlightenment project. If one thinks of ideology in the Althusserian sense, ideology then represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. While ideology itself does not reflect the real-world, this does not mean that ideologies do not have material existences. For Althusser, ideology maintains a material existence as it is always confined "to an apparatus, and its practice, or practices", thus the Créoles sought to make slavery into a material existence through attaching the island's social mores to the state's legal apparatus.[54] Ideology then is one's performance of one's relation to institutions. It is then no surprise that the architects of Saint-Domingue's society, the French settlers, would produce an ideology to make coherent the social inconsistencies, extreme division of labor, and material realities of the island. What is more surprising is the scientific importance that rationalizing slavery held in the 18th century. The logical inconsistencies of the Enlightenment, primarily that of slavery and freedom, led Créole thinkers to join the scientific interventions of the 18th century. Créole philosophers spoke the same language as metropolitan philosophers and believed in the power of knowledge to transform society.

Créolité and Royal Despotism

While the Enlightenment project held ideals such as "liberty" and "humanity" which today seem antithetical to the ideals of a slave society, the project of créolité was also interested in the ideals of liberty and humanity. What differentiated enlightened metropole thinkers from Créole thinkers was the local knowledge and ideological apparatus that Créoles analyzed their world through. Créolité presupposed that in order to have liberal state, a prosperous empire, certain localities of violence were necessary to establish the freedom of others. Créoles believed that the economic prosperity of the institution of slavery required a specific social institution and in turn, that social institution required a political apparatus conducive to that social system.

Emilien Petit, born in Saint-Domingue in 1713, is considered the originator of Créole thought.[55] Petit was the first political theorist in Saint-Domingue to take up the questions of Montesquieu as they related to the relationship between the Ancient Regime and Saint-Domingue. Emilien Petit was an esteemed deputy of the Superior Council and a judge within Saint-Domingue's judicial system. In 1750, two years after Montesquieu released the Spirit of Laws, Petit released his first declarations against "the domination of the king" in his 135 page essay, *American patriotism or Memoirs on the establishment of the French part of the isle of Saint Domingue*.[56] In his text, one finds a young Créole reformist motivated by « bien public » or the love of his country and sought to use his knowledge of the laws and institutions of Saint-Domingue to create the perfect legislation for its prosperity.[57]

The essay was an energetic denunciation of mercantile despotism and the economic policies of the 18th century. Petit sought to challenge the injustices caused by l'exclusif stating, "Their committee agreed to insult the Colonists by threats to reduce them to the most mediocre state, by exclusively privileging all commerce to them (metropole) alone.[58] On the first page of

the essay Petit affirms his support for Créole culture and loyalty to the cause of Saint-Domingue. Petit believed metropolitan ignorance of the island's mores intensified the already fragile stability of the island. Petit's critique of mercantile despotism stemmed from the belief that mercantilist policies restricted the expansion of the island's economy. Petit asserted that mercantilist sought to increase metropolitan profit at the expense of the island's development. As planters often accrued large debts due to the taxes and fines imposed on them by the bureaucratic administration if Créoles failed to uphold the exploitative mercantilist policies. Pétit demanded that the metropole give Créoles the right to control the bureaucratic administration of Saint-Domingue and to allow Créoles to select the members of the colonial administration. Pétit advocated for indigenous councils that would have *local connaissance* stating, "A knowledge of local places and laws must be the basis of all administration".[59] Pétit believed that Créoles best understood the needs of a slave based society due to their comprehensive knowledge of the island's mores.[60]

Moreau de Saint-Méry has received a lot of attention by historians of Saint-Domingue in the last couple of years due to his massive ethnographic record on pre-revolutionary Saint-Domingue and his participation within the French and Haitian Revolution.[61] Born into an important judicial Créole family in Martinique, Moreau was motivated by the inefficiency of colonial administration to create new laws and institutions. In 1784, influenced by Emilien Pétit Moreau had written his encyclopedic account of pre-revolution Saint-Domingue life. Inspired by Montesquieu, the first three tomes of his six volume collection *Constitutions and Laws* analyzed the topography, mores, climate, and history of Saint-Domingue.[62] For Moreau the problem besetting Saint-Domingue was the inability of metropolitan legislators to make appropriate laws for the island.[63] He identified the despotic characteristics of the ministry as the root of the

island's political chaos and advocated for the selection of enlightened Créole lawyers to head colonial policy.

Michel René Hillard-d'Auberteuil was a controversial Créole thinker in the 18th century due to his scientific theories on the productive value of prejudice and his denunciation of mercantile despotism.[64] Though born in France, Créoles welcomed him because of his violent condemnation of the colonial bureaucracy and his radical autonomist spirits. In 1789, Créole legal philosopher Moreau de Saint-Méry and mulatto rights advocate Raimond, utilized d'Auberteuil's theories within the National Assembly. The diverse applications of d'Auberteuil's texts stem from the importance of his colonial theory to French Empire. Published in 1776, his most provocative work, *Consideration of the Present State of the French Colony of Saint Domingue,* was an attempt to use reason and knowledge to reshape colonial society for the benefit of both merchants and planters and the colony and the metropole.

D'Aubrteuil maintained that to secure the future prosperity of Saint-Domingue and to create effective legislation, the island's bureaucrats and administrators required a rigorous education of Saint-Domingue's mores. D'Auberteuil believed the navy's abuse of authority resulted in the instability of the island and its ability to "degenerate into a frightful mix of tyranny and anarchy".[65] He claimed that Créoles were victims of mercantilist despotism. D'Auberteuil considered the trading decree *l'exclusif limiting* to the productive capacities of the island. D'Auberteuil considered the exclusive exemplary of ministerial despotism, stating, "Freedom of trade," said Montesquieu, "is not a faculty granted to the traders to do what they want".[66] D'auberteuil claimed that corruption was endemic to the colonial administration as metropolitan merchants were motivated solely by the short-term. Power then would need to be taken out of metropolitan hands and shifted to enlightened Créoles. D'Auberteuil advocated for

the formation of a reformed magistracy. A magistracy that would be composed of "enlightened" colonial officials equipped with the mores of the island and colonial economic training stating, "the means of discovering the nature of each of these laws must attentively consider the climate, mores, and ideas of the men to be governed".[67] Créole philosophers similar to their metropolitan contemporaries, attempted to use Antillean knowledge to dissolve despotism's hold on the legal and economic capacities of individuals.

Multicultural Empire and American Patriotism

While many historians have framed the works of political theorists such as Pètit and d'Auberteuil as autonomist and have confined the ideals of créolité to an "American spirit", I argue that the patriotism of Créole thinkers was in allegiance to the French nation. Although in his essay American Patriot, Petit does severely critique the administration of Saint-Domingue and the abuse of power by the King, the title of his essay is misleading. A devoted monarchist, Petit's reformed state always remained within the framework of the monarchy, and he never imagined nor did he advocate for the abdication of the king or the secession of Saint-Domingue. Instead, Petit was interested in reforming the administration of the Empire. He wanted the social and economic codes afforded to French provinces stating, "Satisfied with living under the government of a King, such as that of France, the Colony asks only to be established, and to be maintained under the same protection, and in the same tranquility as his other subjects".[68] Créoles wanted a shared and unifed empire, they did not want autonomy. For D'Auberteuil, the reconciliation between the metropole and the colony could be achieved with the proper understanding of, "The difference between the climate the mores and enterprises of Saint-Domingue; and the climate and the mores of France".[69] D'Auberteuil claimed that the monarchy must accept Saint-Domingue's different culture and customs in order to have a prosperous

empire. While D'Auberteuil denounced the royal despotism, he advocated for a strong allegiance to the king and the French nation, stating, "The love of the fatherland is the first of all civil virtues".[70] D'Auberteuil saw himself as improving the French empire for the benefit of both Créole planters and the metropole.

Pétit and d'Auberteuil were social reformers who wanted a multicultural state and English style trade regulations. Pétit was interested in opening the absolute monarchy to less restrictive trading trade and a more liberal centralization of power. As d'Auberteuil wrote, "In England, where all that interests the nation is trade with liberty…the study and meditation of English individuals have sometimes directed the best operations of their government".[71]Petit and d'Auberteuil wanted a dual sovereignty like the King-in- Parliament of the English Hanoverian Empire. Merchants and colonial figures in England forced the English monarchy to accept a dual-sovereignty when the monarchy's mismanagement of the American colonies resulted in the secession of the United States.[72] Créole planters wanted to remain within the French Republic and advocated for reforms not succession.

A few decades prior to the German philosophy of Herder, créolité advocated for a multi-cultural state. The struggle of Créole planters was against despotism and not the monarchy. Créoles believed that though Saint-Domingue produced a different culture than the metropole, an efficient empire would reconcile those differences and give Créoles the right to fully participate in the state. By uniting the colony and the metropole into a legally seamless empire, Créoles wanted the privileges granted to other French provinces. If Saint-Domingue was transformed into a province of France, Créoles would be given both the protection and nationality of the metropole and the right to rearrange Saint-Domingue's internal legislation. Creolité breaks with the cultural homogeneity of the 18th century and advocates for a multi-cultural unified state.

Royal patriotism is an integral feature of Créole philosophy and can draw light on Créole partnership to French Revolution royalist revolutionaries.[73]

The Ideology of Race within Créole Thought

Like all Créole philosophers, Petit saw the social institutions of Saint-Domingue as being inextricably tied to the political institutions that governed it. Pétit considered Saint-Domingue's social institution to be of considerable importance as he believed that colonial commerce depended on the exploitation of slave labor. As mentioned earlier, the numerical superiority of enslaved Africans was a paranoiac obsession of Créoles, and their submission was dependent on a strict hierarchical relation of dominance. Petit was cognizant of the necessity of creating an ideological apparatus to justify the morality of slavery to the metropole during the age of the Enlightenment. Moreover, Pétit was concerned with establishing patterns and rituals for enslaved Africans to absorb their subordination. Petit claimed that just like the mixing of class in the metropole weakens the blood of the nobility, the purity of "white blood" was a necessary component of the social hierarchy in a slave society stating, "The chief reason for the banning of these alliances must be the necessity of maintaining these great number of men in the ideas of respect for the white blood, with which they should not suffer them to become familiar".[74] Pétit presumed that if slaves did not believe in the superiority of whiteness then they would revolt against their enslavement. For that reason, he advocated Créoles for the select emancipation of slaves and the limiting of births of mulatto children so much as the free status of the "sang-mêlé" (mulatto blood) could be utilized to strengthen the power of the master and the subordination of the slaves.

D'Auberteuil was heavily influenced by Montesquieu and this is evident in the way that D'auberteuil describes his project as,

> *I have deepened my reflections on the climate, the customs of the colonists, and those of the men who work .... I have distinguished the customs of the Creoles from those of the French transplanted into the Colony; I have considered the influences of slavery on manners, population, the division of the people into three classes, whites, affranchis, slaves, and the means of preventing the confusion of ranks, and the mixing of classes.*[75]

D'Auberteuil's theories on race and its formulaic prescriptions were motivated by the same "public good" as Pétit. D'Auberteuil theorized on the ability of social hierarchy to create a more efficient system of slave domination, so that slaves generated more wealth for the island.[76] For d'Auberteuil the stability of the island and its prosperity depended on a rigorous racial hierarchy that through a "visual economy" of subordination, solidified one's position in society.[77] The visual economy of subordination would produce the accurate relations of dominance necessary to force Africans into slavery. For D'Auberteuil, the root of the island's instability was the island's social hierarchy not being drawn stringently enough to produce the relationships of dominance necessary to plantation society.

D'Auberteuil believed that the increased French immigration to Saint-Domingue in the wake of the sugar industry's explosion, was detrimental to the prosperity of the island. Too many white French men were arriving to the island than the island could productively utilize. D'Auberteuil saw excess poor whites as a threat to the stability of the island's the social hierarchy. This was because poor whites complicated Créole's notion of white supremacy. To have an efficient society, France would have to curtail the immigration of poor whites. Excess white labor on the island would then be utilized as either skilled artisans or overseers and managers of the island's plantations. For this to succeed, the mores of the island would have to be transformed to change perceptions regarding white labor stating,

> [B]etween white men there must be no distinction other than that which results from their jobs and personal merits; in the colony, there must be neither Grands, nor nobles, nor body of the people; there should only be ingènus, freedmen, slaves, and the laws.[78]

It is important to note the radicalness of d'Auberteuil's theory. D'Auberteuil spoke the language of the enlightenment and he advocated for the eradication of Ancient Regime's social hierarchies. D'Auberteuil sought to replace the aristocratic order of Ancien Regime society with a meritocracy. However, it is critical to understand that the equalizing of colonial whites could only exist on the political and civil subordination of mulattoes and slaves.[79]

D'Auberteuil was a social scientist who consciously theorized about an ideological apparatus of race to condition Africans into slavery. The wealth and free status of mulattoes and free people of color was the greatest threat to the stability of the social hierarchy of Saint-Domingue as it upset the social hierarchy's equilibrium. The threat that mulattoes posed for plantation society lay in the color of their skin, which threatened the "visual coding" of slave subordination and white supremacy. D'Auberteuil saw mulattoes as a threat due to holding the belief that mulatto subordination to white men was crucial for the maintenance of slavery. As Ogle remarks,

> colonial elites believed that a visual economy relating subordination to skin color was the mechanism by which their own superiority was assured over their numerically superior slaves. For that reason, the potential spectacle of a free person of color disrespecting a white threatened to disrupt the mystique of whiteness and as such the slave regime itself. [80]

D'Auberteuil's theory entailed a fortification and rationalize of the visual economy of subordination through creating an intermediary class between whites and slaves, which he termed, "yellow". For D'Auberteuil mulattoes existed to strengthen the subordination of slaves, writing, "to render it such, we must begin by marrying all the free Negroes to mulatto women…

then we must assure liberty's advantages to all mulattos who are the children of the colonists."[81] This would require what Ogle refers to as a massive project of "racial engineering", which would assign a utilitarian social value to mulattoes. Though d'Auberteuil's reforms were never established within his lifetime, d'Auberteuil's theories would directly influence the Créole deputies in the National Assembly. D'Auberteuil's theory on race propelled hysteria over the danger mulattoes posed to Saint-Domingue's stability and influenced the National Assembly's racialization of the citizen.

Moreau sought to apply Montesquieu's social and political theory on Saint-Domingue's institution. Like other Créole political theorist, Moreau identified as an avid disciple of Montesquieu stating, "We will say with the Immortal Montesquieu that the Laws must always be appropriate to Genius, to the mores and essential needs of those to whom they are destined".[82] During the French Revolution, Moreau's theories on race would help to define the colonial committee's colonial policy. Moreau's theories illuminate profoundly on the configuration of racial ideology in 18th century Saint-Domingue. As Dorris Garay has written, "By meticulously theorizing the genealogical progression between black and white, Moreau de Saint-Méry fixated on the one difference that carried political consequences in Saint-Domingue – that between white and non-white, or "sang-mêlé", Moreau's racial project sought engineer the racial fabric of Saint-Domingue to create more efficient relationships of dominance between Créoles, mulattoes, and slaves.[83] Drawing from d'Aubeteuil's social theory, Moreau believed that the institution of slavery relied on the three race's triangular relationship of dominance.

As a racial ethnographer, Moreau theorized 11 distinct racial categories between "pure" black and white. In the French National Assembly, Moreau used the degeneration theory of

vitalism[vi] and climatism to argue that mulattoes were biologically and morally subordinate to whites.[84] In his scale Moreau associated qualities such as intelligence and grace to their percentage of whiteness and their passion and strength, to their percentage of African ancestry. Moreau's philosophical and scientific reasoning of race lead Moreau to create a "ludicrous degree of (racial) theoretical precision. According to Mulatto, mulattoes who had 50 % black blood and 50% percent white blood were stronger than "quaterons". Quaterons had 75% white blood and 25% of black blood and who were weaker due to only having 25% of black blood but smarter than the mulatto due to possessing 75% white blood.

Moreau believed that racism was just a natural response to degeneration of the biological and moral qualities of blacks and free men of color. A deeper investigation into Moreau's racial theory will be analyzed in later sections as Moreau's intervention within the National Assembly best illustrates his theories on race. Créole philosophy is of considerable value to historians, due to créolité's conscious production of the ideology of race and white supremacy in the 18th century. Though the Créole philosophers of Saint-Domingue would fail in their project to force the ideological terrain of plantation slavery onto the enslaved, the production of racial ideology as an advantageous tool of the state remains a constant problematic feature of modern liberal society. Créolité is also of chief importance to the French Revolution as Créoles utilized the ideology of race to challenge the National Assembly's definition of universalism and liberty.

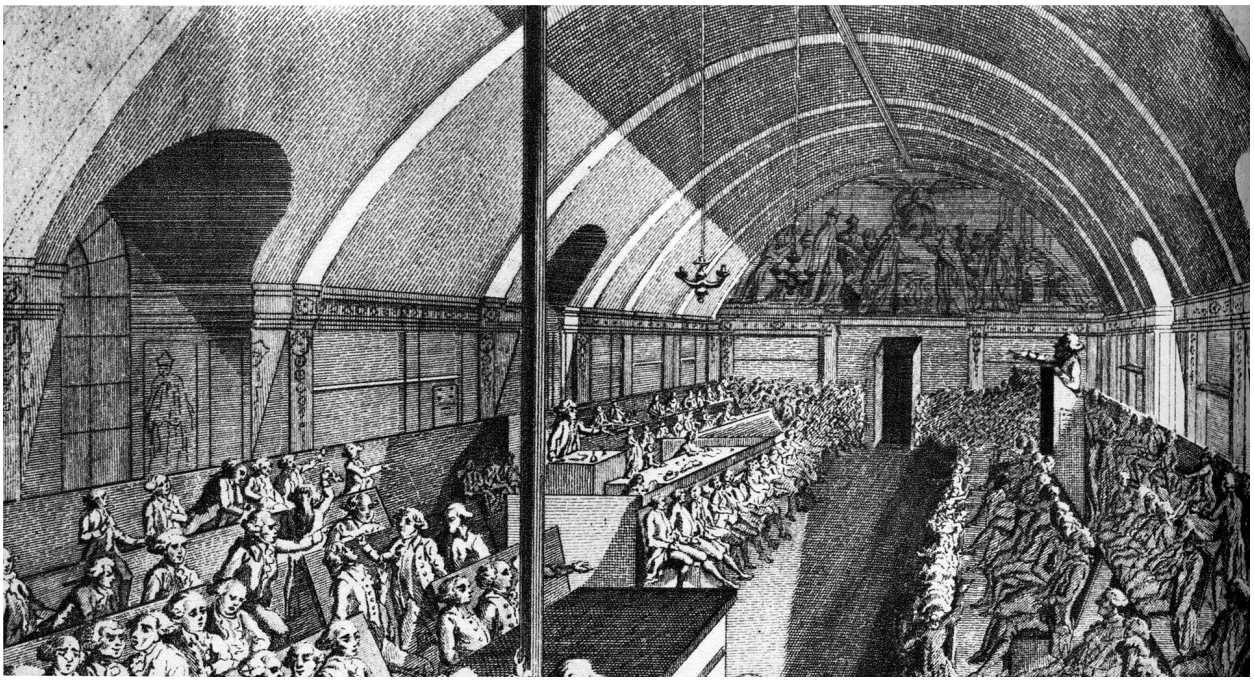
In 1787, Anne-César La Luzerne, the colonial minister of Saint-Domingue, suspended the Superior Council of Du Cap, igniting the Créole struggle against despotism. Créole political

[vi] Garrigus, "Before Haiti", 157-158. "Vitalism refers to a school of philosophical medicine developed by the medical faculty of Montpellier, where more than 70 percent (19/26) of Saint-Domingue's physicians in received their degrees. The school of medicine held that each human physiological type exhibited a specific balance between what they referred to as the "physical" and "moral" or mental forces. Where one force was weak the other was correspondingly stronger, creating a specific temperament for that individual".

philosophy coupled with the resistance of Créoles to La Luzerne's proposed reforms, resulted in the creation of various Créole political organizations armed with a theoretical arsenal. Créole planters would use the avenues opened by the French Revolution to push for créolité's principle reforms. La Luzerne's projected reforms concerning an edict to investigate whether plantations maintained slaves living standards as ordained by Code Noir, the inability of Créoles to make suggestions, and the installation of a new colonial committee selected by La Luzerne, motivated many Créole planters to take a more forward approach in demanding a new administrative structure. Créole and Free men of color (mulatto) planters alike were most concerned with reforms concerning the payment of debt and the seizure of lands which would directly affect many of them, as plantations often incurred large amounts of debt. Moreover, the edict to investigate the conditions of slavery threatened Créoles. Créoles believed that the edict would weaken the authority of masters over their slaves as the possible investigation brought slaves into the civic body. Créoles argued that slaves should be outside the jurisdiction of civic rights. Black inclusion within the civic body would threaten slavery's stability as the superiority of 'white-blood" could then be questioned. In 1789, in response to La Luzerne's proposed reforms, Créole planters travelled to France to demand a new relationship to the metropole.[85]

PART II

The French Revolution and the Reproduction of Race



In France, just a year prior to La Luzerne's slated reforms, King Louis XVI had proposed economic reforms that were rejected by the Paris Parliament. The metropolitan nobility, unlike the Créole planters, had political authority through parliaments which allowed them to share their grievances and make demands of the king. On July 16th, 1787, the Paris Parliaments could demand that the King convene a General Estates, in which the Second and the Third Estates could voice their grievances on the lack of state revenue crippling the France and propose economic reform solutions. King Louis XVI, believing that he was the originator of all law, surpassed the desires of the parliament and registered an edict placing a tax on newspapers and posters. The Paris Parliament believing that the King overstepped his authority, annulled the registration. Under the dual influence of Montesquieu and John Locke, the Parliament saw themselves as the emissary between the absolute monarchy and the people and pushed forward their demands for the King to convene a General Assembly. In retaliation, the King exiled the Paris Parliament to Troyes causing the initial schism between the King and the people and creating a space for Créole planters to voice their concerns.

Capitalizing on the opportunity the political moment offered them, Créoles organized themselves under the banner of patriotism in their struggle against despotism. Gouy D'arsy a wealthy Créole through marriage and French nobleman and Comte de Reynaud, an esteemed Créole general, shaped the first political activities of the planters during the initial months of the French Revolution.[86] Once the mayor of Paris, D'Arsy was a part of the Duc d'Orleans social network and held considerable influence within the French nobility, the merchant houses, and the colonies and for this reason he was selected by Créoles in Saint-Domingue to represent them in Paris. Jean François comte de Reynaud de Villevent became an esteemed member of the Saint Domingue military after 20 years of service and was perhaps the most vocal critic of mercantile

despotism the decade prior to the revolution and in partnership with Gouy D'Arsy orchestrated the campaign to secure political rights for Créoles in Saint Domingue. In 1790, Reynaud was given a seat on the National Assembly's Colonial Committee. It is important to mention that the journey from getting to the dissolution of the Council of Du-Cap to producing colonial law was only possible because of the French Revolution's dissolution of the monarchy's power.

While the General Estates offered all French provinces the ability to send representatives to advocate for their provinces and propose reforms, Saint-Domingue was excluded from the General Estates due royal despotism. Reynaud and D'Arsy knew that to transform the Ancient Regime's relationship to Saint-Domingue and push forwards the ideals of Créolité, they would have to gain the right to participate within the General Estates. On June 30th, 1788, a Créole delegation including D'Arsy and Reynaud arrived in Bordeaux, a province of France heavily associated with colonial commerce. July 15th, 1788, Gouy d'Arsy convoked a meeting with other planters residing in France to create a representative body of colonialist to put pressure on the Estates General to attain the right to participate. The planters donned the title the Committee of Colonialists from Saint-Domingue and together they petitioned for entry into the Estates General.[87] The group sought to secure representation within the Estates General and called for the immediate reinstallation of the Council of Du-Cap. However, the King and the minster La Luzerne were hostile to the idea of admitting Créole deputies into the National Assembly.

As the King was denying the Créole planters representation in the Second Estate, the King was denying the Third Estate equal participation to the First and Second orders in the General Estates. The Third Estate, included everyone that was not a part of the nobility and the clergy meaning the sum of peasants, intellectuals, lawyers, artisans, and merchants totaling in around 27 to 28 million inhabitants.[88] On June 12, in a historic act the Third Estate organized its

members into a separate assembly and assigned themselves the sovereign power of the state. It would not be the fiery speeches of Reynaud or D'Arsy nor their meetings with various colonial officials that would gain them participation within the new formed assembly. Instead, it would be the sheer opportunism of D'Arsy and the resistance of the revolutionaries to absolutism that solidified the place of Créoles within revolutionary history.[89]

On June 19th, seeing the disintegration of the Absolutist political structure, Louis XVI declared the assembly of Third Estate treacherous and made their assembly illegal. On June 20th, 1789, the deputies of the Third Estate which had begun to refer to itself as the National Assembly, found the doors of Versailles closed to them; leading them to conjoin within the royal Tennis Courts of Versailles. The revolutionaries regarded the decision of the King as oppositional to the demands of the revolutionaries and Mounier (a deputy from Grenoble) proposed " that all members of this assembly take a solemn oath never to separate but to gather wherever circumstances require until the Constitution of the kingdom was established and set on solid foundations" declaring the start of the Revolution.[90] Gouy D'Arsy and eight other Créoles were present, and all of them took the oath alongside the legitimate deputies of the Third Estate. Through taking the pledge, Gouy D'Arsy, famous for his opportunism, forced the gates of the National Assembly open to the Créole planters of Saint-Domingue.

Créole Deputies and the National Assembly

June 20th, 1789, marks the first day of the National Assembly and the first time that a colony received representation within a metropolitan assembly. The National Assembly gave Créole planters the stage necessary to advocate for a new relationship between Saint-Domingue and the metropole and Créole deputies used this space to advance the claims of créolité. The

victory of the Créole planters was not celebrated by all. While the National Assembly believed Créoles had a right to representation, they could not decide on how many deputies to admit. The discussion brought into question the legal status of slavery and the civil status of freemen of color. The admittance of Créole deputies within the National Assembly unified Saint-Domingue and the New French Republic into one political entity. This meant that all laws that applied to the new republic applied to the colonies. This put Créole planters in state of uncertainty as the National Assembly was not unified in its support of the institution of slavery within the empire. Further, the Society of the Friends of Blacks protested the admittance of Créole deputies claiming that Créoles were not representative of Saint-Domingue.[91] In 1788, Jaques Brissot founded The Friends of Blacks, an abolitionist society inspired by the abolitionist movement in England. Both Friends of Blacks and the Créole deputies used the avenue of the National Assembly to convince the revolutionaries of their respective ideals.

This chapter will examine the claims of Créole deputies, the political campaign of Club Massiac, and the demands of Friends of Blacks and Colons Américains that influenced the National Assembly's decision not to extend the Rights of Man to the colonies. The first section will lay out the claims of Créole deputies and the emergence of Créole lobbying party Club Massiac. To make sense of how the National Assembly came to protect the institution of slavery, one must first understand the networks of power that were available to Créole deputies and the arguments they utilized to convince the revolutionaries of the necessity of slavery to the new republic. The second section will analyze the debate on questions of freedom and the ideals of universalism between Friends of Blacks and the Créole deputies within and around the National Assembly. Would *blanche-sang* (white blood) define citizenship or would property? Would slavery be a feature of the new republic or would the principle of universalism free all?

In August 1789, King XVI took a more hostile approach to the new National Assembly and revolutionaries responded to the king's attacks by releasing The Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen. As Miranda Spieler has written, "law was the chief instrument for demolishing the monarchy and erecting a regime on its ruins".[92] Through declaring new rights and constitutions, the revolutionaries created a new republic and defined the new citizen. The Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen is exemplary of this revolutionary agenda. While the declaration threatened the stability of slavery within the colonies it also gave Créole planters the space to demand colonial reforms. The declaration's universalism was meant to demonstrate to King XVI the revolutionaries' allegiance to the fulfillment of the revolution and their dedication to the natural and inalienable equality of man. The admittance of Créole deputies into the National Assembly transformed France and the colonies into a single undifferentiated legal empire. Making the revolutionary assembly responsible for creating a constitution for the colonies and defining its citizenry. While Miranda Spieler reads the consolidation of the colony and the metropole into one legal state as "the political ineptitude of a handful of courtiers with fortunes in Saint Domingue", Créoles for decades strategically sought to unite the colony and the metropole into one legal entity but one with different cultures. [93] Créole deputies now had the political power necessary to demand a new relationship between the colony and the metropole as the National Assembly made them active citizens of the new republic.

Friends of Blacks used the declaration to challenge the preservation of the slave trade under the new republic. Brissot took the declaration as an opportunity to force the National Assembly to demonstrate their allegiance to the ideals of universalism and confront the contradiction between slavery and freedom. In Brissot's letter to the National Assembly, Brissot

utilized the revolutionaries' allegiance to protecting the rights of man to demand the abolition of the slave trade, stating,

> *"You have declared these rights; That all men are born and remain free and equal in right to the people of France. The men whose cause we defend do not have such high pretensions, though citizens of the same Empire, and men like ourselves".*[94]

Slavery had been abolished in France for nearly half a century and the unification of Saint-Domingue and France into one political polity, created a contradiction for the revolutionaries. Prior to the French Revolution, the King was granted absolute authority through the assumption that men were not born equal. When the revolutionaries broke with the absolutism of the Ancient Regime the social space that had assumed that men were not born equal collapsed.

In order to understand créolité intervention on the National Assembly's philosophy, it is crucial to recognize the importance the revolutionaries assigned the category of the human. To the revolutionaries, Brissot wrote, "You have announced the destruction of all the slavish distinctions which religious or political prejudices had introduced into the great family of humanity", the human species regardless of religion or creed deserved equal rights and this was the foundation of the revolution.[95] The concept of race or skin prejudice does not surface in Brissot's and Friends of Blacks initial essays. It was not until Raimond encountered Friends of Blacks that the Friends of Blacks started to use the language of race. It is important to understand that revolutionaries were conscious of the contradiction slavery posed for the foundation of the new republic. Whereas the North American settlers were able to deny slaves rights due to an elaborate rationalization of slaves' sub-human existence, the French Revolution held Africans within the category of the human. The French Enlightenment absorbed Africans within the category of humanity. If Blacks were indeed human, then for universalism to be legitimate –

Blacks would be awarded all rights afforded to man. Slavery had to be rationalized by the revolutionaries and I argue that Créole deputies utilized créolité to provide that rationalization.

The radicalization of the revolution and Friends of Blacks attacks on the slave trade greatly threatened the commercial maritime and Créole planters. Club Massiac emerges out of these anxieties and sought to protect the institution of slavery from the radicalization of the National Assembly. The members of Club Massiac believed that Créole deputies in the National Assembly instigated attacks from abolitionists within the ever-growing radicalization of the National Assembly. Contrary to popular belief Club Massiac was not a merchant interest lobbying party. Club Massiac was a Créole lobbying party whose aim was to unite all who wanted to protect the profitability of the colonies from the radicalization of the National Assembly. While the club did make relationships with merchant cities and merchant committees within the National Assembly, one had to own property within the colonies to be a member.[96] As merchants and Créoles could no longer trust the power of the monarchy to protect the institution of slavery, Club Massiac emerged to do just that.

Free Men of Color and the Fight for Universalism

The Créole planters were not the only planters to use the opening of the revolution to demand a new relationship to the metropole. Under the leadership of Raimond, *affranchis* (freedmen) demanded the National Assembly fulfill its promises of universalism. Saint-Domingue's initial development as a colony made white settlers dependent on the absorption of wealthy mulattoes into the colonial ruling class. However, during the colonial enlightenment Créoles and colonial officials began to systematically refer to everyone with mixed ancestry regardless of birth status as *affranchis,* a term that meant ex-slave.[97] Raimond identified as a quadroon or someone who had ¼ *noir-sang* (black blood) and was one of the wealthiest planters

in Saint-Domingue. Just like the Créoles, Raimond's group sought to protect the institution of slavery. At first the *gens des couleur* sought to join Club Massiac as the club represented the political power of planters connected to the National Assembly.

August 26th, 1789, Raimond presented himself to Club Massiac. Raimond's speech was an attempt to close the space between Créole planters and quadroon planters. In the meeting notes of Club Massiac, Raimond referenced d'Auberteuil's and expressed quadroon's shared interest in preserving and expanding the wealth of the colony.[98] The next day the club wrote to the Chambers of Commerce of port cities, demanding that they temporarily block the exit of any blacks or mulattos trying to leave for Saint-Domingue. The club deformed the words of Raimond and claimed that he wanted complete equality between free blacks and whites, the abolition of the slave trade, citizenship for all born to a white man and a black woman, and the eventual "affranchisement" of all newborn black children. While the club's claims of the radicalness of the gens des couleurs was fictitious the anxiety of the Créole planters was not. As créolité presupposed that free men of color's subordination was crucial to the subordination of slaves. Créoles believed that if mulattoes returned to Saint-Domingue with the language of the revolutionaries then they would start a slave revolt. To gain support for their beliefs, Club Massiac utilized propaganda to whip up hysteria over a possible mulatto organized slave revolt.

Three days after Raimond's meeting with Club Massiac, Raimond came into contact with Etienne Louis Hector DeJoly, a lawyer who had already gathered dozens of free people of color residing in Paris to demand admittance within the National Assembly. The months between August and November, DeJoly and Raimond worked to develop the freemen of color movement. By November they had 79 members, free people of color organized by Raimond, Ogé, and DeJoly took the name *Société des Colons Américain*. The name was chosen to demonstrate that

neither Club Massiac nor Le Société des Colons represented all the planters in Saint-Domingue. From September 1789 to March 1790, an ideological battle between Club Massiac on one side and Friends of Blacks and the Société des Colons Américain on the other was being fought around and within the National Assembly. Club Massiac and Colonialist of Saint-Domingue coalesced into one group after 1789.[99] The debate between the opposing factions had everything to do with the meaning and limits of the Revolution's universalist principles. A closer investigation into the debates can give us key insight into the definitions that the National Assembly would adopt.

On October 18th, Dejoly gave a speech to the National Assembly defending the political enfranchisement of mulattoes and their right for representation within the National Assembly. DeJoly's intervention within the National Assembly shifted the assembly's attention from the slave trade to the problems of race. In his speech DeJoly spoke about the "tyranny of whites" over "mulatres et quaterons etc" in Saint-Domingue. Dejoly detailed the degradation and humiliation that wealthy mulattoes faced being "Excluded from all places, dignities, professions ... they find slavery in the very heart of freedom".[100] DeJoly arguments for the admittance of mulattoes into the National Assembly rested on three claims. The first, that the decree Code Noir released in 1685 had already given mulattoes citizenship status stating, "Like them, they are all citizens, Free and Francis; The edit of the month of March 1685 grants them all the rights."[101] A fact that Créoles in Saint-Domingue beginning in the 1760's went extraneous lengths to deny. The second claim was based on freemen of color's exorbitant amounts of wealth stating, "they are the owners and cultivators to the relief of the State", Ogé and Raimond both owned at least 400,000 livres worth of property and many mulattoes in Saint-Domingue were probably wealthier than much of the French metropolitan provincial nobility.[102] Ogé and Raimond's

wealth is important because as Garrigus argues, due to their class they would have been considered white in other colonies. This is a result of créolité's racial theory's local character and isolation within Saint-Domingue prior to the French Revolution.

Lastly, DeJoly claimed that the revolutionaries to make the declaration of rights of man valid must hear, "The cry of freedom retained in the other hemisphere. They ask no favor. They demand the rights of man and of the Citizen, those imprescriptible rights based on the Nature and the social contract".[103] DeJoly reclamations rested on the principles of the French Revolution, principles that regarded all men as men and thus deserving of rights. DeJoly speech played a crucial role in shifting the debate between Friends of Blacks and Créoles from discussing the slave trade to the problem of racial discrimination within the National Assembly. Friends of Blacks created a partnership with the Colons Américain and shifted the Friends of Blacks' interest towards demanding representation for mulattoes within the National Assembly.

Following DeJoly's speech, Brissot, Mirabeau, Raimond, Ogé, and Abbé Grégoire released a host of documents and speeches attacking racial discrimination within Saint-Domingue. Their arguments relied on the Revolution's adherence to universalism and the inalienable natural rights of man. Raimond's *Observations on the origin and progress of the prejudice of white settlers against men of color* would leave a remarkable impression on the National Assembly. In his essay, he argued that Créoles were to blame for the disenfranchisement of mulattoes as Code Noir already legally granted free mulattoes citizenship stating, "The white planters, who are the aristocrats, the nobles of the colonies, wish to take these inestimable rights from the free mulattos".[104] Raimond believed that Frenchmen arriving in France after the mid 18th century saw mulattoes as economic competition and produced prejudice to discredit mulattoes and take their land writing, " The peace of 1749 brought to the

islands a great number of white families, who soon adopted resentment and prejudice, which the old whites began to manifest against the people of color, and that their growing fortunes only increased". [105] Raimond is correct, after the sugar revolution of the mid-eighteenth century, new French settlers became increasingly frustrated with the lack of land available to them.

Central to Raimond's history of racism within Saint-Domingue is his desire to return to the past. The first few pages of the essay are a romanticization of early colonial days when "Until then, no prejudice had been known against this class of free men. There was no dishonor in seeing them, frequenting them, living with them".[106] Remarkably, Raimond believed that prejudice against free men of color did not exist on the island prior to the 1750 stating, "That the prejudice raised against us has a very recent origin, since it does not date more than 30 years".[107] Raimond contended that racial prejudice originated within D'Auberteuil's philosophy stating, " That Hilliard d'Auberteuil dared to advance, that white men had to take justice away from men of color to have power only for themselves, without any justice to know it at all".[108]

Raimond believed that property should define citizenship status and not one's quantity of white blood. While he advocated for the enfranchisement of quadroons during his earlier speeches, he wrote, "To grant these rights only to those who have attained a certain degree of white blood ... to violate the principle of equality, as is unnecessary to demonstrate, this transaction with prejudice, would increase the divisions".[109] Raimond's letter to the National Assembly on the history of prejudice in Saint-Domingue is crucial to historians of race. As Barbara Field's has written, "Race as a coherent ideology did not spring into being simultaneously with slavery, but took even more time than slavery did to become systematic", and Raimond was conscious of Créole deputies' attempt to make race a coherent systematic ideology.[110] Raimond attempts to explain to the National Assembly that status should be a

qualifier for slavery and not one's quantity of white blood. Raimond attempted to show the assembly that prejudice of the skin color was against the very principles the revolution affirmed. Free men of color's intervention in the French Revolution was not on whether slavery should continue within the island. Créoles and Mulattoes wanted to maintain the institution of slavery, what they disagreed on was the usefulness of the ideology of race in maintaining that institution. Would the National Assembly utilize the ideology of race to define who deserves rights and who does not or would "Would the National Assembly be less than a despot?".[111]

As stated earlier, the National Assembly was not united in their support of the slave trade and was less united in their support of the disenfranchisement of mulattoes. Moreover, planters not from Saint-Domingue were not all in agreement with Créole planters on the necessity of excluding mulattoes from the National Assembly. The Society of Colonialist in Bordeaux wrote to the Club Massiac stating that they would only target, "people of color without property" and Club Massiac in La Rochelle refused to deny mulattoes rights at all.[112] The disagreements between Antillean colonies on disenfranchisement of mulattoes illustrates the distinct racial elements of Saint-Domingue's thought. Both La Rochelle and Bordeaux were port cities with merchants who saw wealthy mulattoes as business partners. Further, La Rochelle and Bordeaux had large planter populations from Martinique and Guadeloupe. Both Antillean islands had small mulatto populations that were necessary to the development of the islands. Saint-Domingue's social structure was radically different than other Antillean islands and it is for that reason that Raimond would have been considered white on any other island. Créolité and its production of the ideology of race was a result of Saint-Domingue's complicated social matrix and the fear of Créole planters.

The freemen of color had a minor victory when Emmanuel Philippe Fréteau the president of the National Assembly wrote to freemen of color stating,

> *No citizen will ever claim in vain his right to the Assembly. Those whom the interval of the seas or the prejudices concerning the difference of origin seem to place farther from his gaze, will be brought together by those feelings of humanity which characterize all deliberations. Leave on the desk your documents and your request. It will be reported to the National Assembly.*[113]

It is critical to note that the National Assembly's openness to the demands of the mulattoes during the first few months of its inception. One reason for this could be that those not related to the colonies were not strict adherents of créolité. Club Massiac's consolidation of power towards the end of 1789 changed the National Assembly's relationship to mulattoes.[114] Créole deputies and Club Massiac introduced créolité into the philosophical lexicon of the revolutionaries.

Club Massiac did not remain dormant to Friends of Blacks attacks on Saint-Domingue's social hierarchy. The club and Créole deputies sought to shape public opinion in France regarding the colonies to gain support for their policies. The club utilized its vast political network and publishing abilities to wage a propaganda campaign against mulattoes. The campaign included writing letters to the National Assembly, using their deputies on the floor of the assembly, and alarming the French public of Friends of Blacks attacks on the metropole's economic freedom. The campaign utilized racism, deception, and bribery to gain support for the subjugation of mulattoes. Chief members of Club Massiac such as Malouet, Duval Sanadon, Moreau de Saint-Méry, and Cocherel were crucial to the campaign's rhetorical war. Club Massiac's relationship to the Comité des deputes extraordinaire de commerce and the Agricultural Committee within the National Assembly allowed them to put direct pressure onto the bureaucratic engine of the assembly. The Club utilized their relationship to the committees to demand that they divert all discussion on Saint-Domingue. On December 2, 1789, on Massiac's

behalf the Extraordinaire Commerce committee demanded that the declaration of rights of man be suspended from the colonies until the assembly could provide appropriate colonial reforms.[115]

As stated above, this essay seeks to analyze the influence of créolité on the National Assembly's colonial policy. For that reason, this section will analyze the letters, speeches, and essays members of the colonial committee had access to. Through examining the colonial committee's Impressions of the Assembly folders, this section is a detailed analysis of those documents. Créole philosophers Moreau de Saint-Mèry, Duval Sanadon, and Pierre Victor Malouet were chief members of Club Massiac and deputies to the National Assembly. Together, they produced much of Club Massiac's propaganda and their letters are among some of the material the colonial committee used to draw conclusions on colonial reforms. Créoles utilized the discourse of utility, an elaboration of the island's mores, climatism, and the ideology of race to rationalize slavery and mulattoes' political disenfranchisement. In doing so, Créole deputies sought to unite the revolution's ideals to the perpetuation of the enslavement of Africans.

Mores and a Multicultural Empire:

Créole deputies and lobbyist employed créolité's patriotic theory of "utility" to demonstrate the importance of the colonies to the French Republic and to tie the future of the new republic to the future of the colonies. The purpose of the colonial project was fundamental to Créoles rationalization of slavery for the National Assembly. As Petit and D'Auberteuil had written before them, Créoles argued that the purpose of the colony was to transform the isolated provinces of the metropole into centers of commercial exchange. The discourse's intention was to demonstrate the Creole's patriotism and dedication to the French Republic. Within their letters, Créole deputies argued that by using Antillean knowledge of mores they could produce more prosperity for French society. The employment of créolité's discourse of utility was an

attempt to convince the metropolitan revolutionaries of Creole planter's allegiance to the liberty of French people.

In their letters, Creoles connected the welfare of metropolitan population to the prosperity of the colonies. They even went so far as to claim that the protection of France from English domination was dependent on colonial commerce and the slave trade. As Sanadon wrote to the National Assembly stating that if France lost the colonies then the, "Linen and cotton canvas Manufactures of Normandy, drapes of Flanders, Picardy, Brittany, Anjou, the fabrics and hearths of Tours, Lyon, Nimes, the wines and flours of Bordeaux" would also lose their economic value.[116] Créole deputies in demonstrating the interconnectedness of metropolitan commerce to colonial commerce claimed that the liberty of French people depended on the maintenance of the colonial system. Sanadon argued that if France lost Saint-Domingue then the commercial maritime would be ruined stating, "Without colonies France has no or almost no naval force, consequently no means of protecting herself ".[117] Further, those employed directly in the Navy for colonial shipping totaled around 800 men and another 200 men were employed in the slave trade. By portraying themselves as contributing to the employment of a sizeable part of the French population, Créoles sought to sought to convince the National Assembly of their shared revolutionary agenda. As mentioned earlier, créolité sought to use knowledge to better the productive capacity of the island for the benefit of France.

Creoles argued that the prosperity of the colony depended on a recognition of the differences between the metropole and the colony. Creoles believed slavery was necessary to the profitability of plantation commerce. They sought to convince the National Assembly that class was inherent to all societies and that the colonies necessitated a class structure reflective of the mores of the colony. In order to deny the extension of the Rights of Man to the colonies, Créoles

sought to demonstrate how slavery was necessary to the profitability of the colonies. Créoles argued that in order for the colonies to be prosperous and thus the metropole to be free, the enslavement of Africans would have to be a necessary part of the republic as Malouet wrote, "The slavery of which the interest of the state is attached, as well as the fortune of more than a million francs of the two hemispheres, and all the branches of commerce indistinctly".[118]

The necessity of slavery to colonial prosperity rested on three claims, the first historical, the second economic, and the third social. History had made it so that the wealth of a nation depended on its colonies. Créole planters argued that they were the mere inheritors of the colonial system. A plantation society necessitated a hierarchical order different than the one in Europe and that hierarchy was the one between master and slave. Créoles argued slavery's economic value made it a necessary component plantation society. They believed that as they had already contributed to the capital investment of slaves, slavery would have to be a constant feature of the colonies. Further, as the system of slavery necessitated that the planters provide for the wellbeing of their slaves, when freed both the capital investment must be returned and the entire structure of the colony must be changed. In Malouet's letter to the colonial committee, he wrote, "There are six hundred thousand Negroes in the French colonies…The nation, therefore, of a debt of 1,200,000,000 livres tournois, without counting the little thought of humanity which it wishes to exercise, would cause the ruin and decadence of the Empire".[119] Further, Malouet argued that the declaration of rights of man protected the French Nation from the abolition of slavery. Malouet reminded the colonial assembly of article seventeen of the declaration which states, "Since property is an inviolable and sacred right, no one shall be deprived thereof except where public necessity, legally determined, shall clearly demand it, and then only on condition that the owner shall have been previously and equitably indemnified".[120] Créole planters sought

to use the declaration of rights to their advantaged and used the same language as the revolutionaries to demonstrate a joint interest in preserving the economic health of the nation.

Master Slave and the Ideology of Race

As mentioned earlier, Créoles had a paranoiac fear over the possibility of a slave revolt. In their addresses to the National Assembly, they warned the deputies of the impending destruction of the colony if Créoles were not granted internal rule over the laws of the island. Following the premise that plantation society required slaves, large scale plantation production necessitated a substantive slave population. Paradoxically, Créoles argued the significant number of slaves increased the island's instability. Créoles argued that plantation society produced different mores and thus necessitated a different legal and social structure than the metropole. No historical contract existed between European's and Africans as Malouet writes, "But what treaty can I be obliged to do with the Negro… How would I witch him to cultivate for him and for me the two halves?".[121] This was due to the belief that subordination required an ideological apparatus solidified by law. In Europe, the peasant remained a peasant due to the mores of the metropole. A historical process solidified the subordination of peasants. The metropole's mores, social, and legal structure conditioned peasants to accept their inferior position. A contract between the king, the nobles, and the peasants was understood and the social structure made it so that peasants were dependent on their nobles.

In plantation society, the complete subordination of the slave was considered fundamental to the institution of slavery. The institution of slavery was dependent on a relationship of domination between master and slave and Créoles sought to convince the National Assembly of their project of conditioning Africans into accepting their subordinate position within society. Créoles argued that the domination of the master over his slave, needed

to be absolute in order for Africans to accept their inferiority. This meant that, "There can be no mediating power between the Master and the slave… the means of surveillance and protection would produce insubordination".[122] In order for slaves to believe in the superiority of the master, the master's authority over the slave could not be mediated by an outside force. Malouet, Moreau, and Sanadon argued that all metropolitan attempts to ameliorate slave conditions validated the livelihood of slaves and increased slave insubordination. For that reason, Créoles advocated for the creation of local assemblies that could create laws that reflected the needs of slave subordination. As D'Auberteuil stated earlier, "once laws reflect the mores then mores will reflect the law".[123] Once law matched the ideology of slavery then the ideology of slavery would match the laws. Slaves would then be conditioned into slavery and not question the basis for which they were enslaved.

The ideology of race was central to the Créole's project of complete slave subordination for as Moreau claimed, "this prejudice, which is the hidden effort of the whole colonial machine." and for that reason, revolutionaries".[124] Créoles argued that in order for slaves to believe in their inferiority, slaves must associate their subordination to their possession of black skin as Moreau stated, "because there is no apparent distinction between the Whites and those who are not one must use the nuances of the skin".[125] Créoles claimed that it was for this reason that mulattoes must be politically disenfranchised, writing, "If, therefore, you do not wish to destroy slavery, you must agree not to destroy the only prejudices which maintain a necessary subordination of the race of slaves".[126] For that reason, mulattoes must remain in a subordinate position to Créoles due to their possession of black blood. For this reason, mulattoes could not have political rights as Moreau stated, "How could one persuade the slave that his master is superior to him, if he sees his companion to come from behind him, to be instantly equal to his

master?".[127] Moreau asserted that slaves could come to the conclusion that subordination was not a necessary condition of black blood if mulattoes and free men could have equality with Créoles. As Malouet wrote, "The race, mores, prejudices are ... what retain by slavery … If this prejudice is destroyed, if a Black man is among us assimilated to the whites ... the colonies are altered, degraded and dissolved. [128]Créole deputies argued that without the ideology of race the colonies would be destroyed. Within the National Assembly, Créole deputies sought to politically disenfranchise mulattoes because they believed if mulattoes were given political rights then as Moreau wrote, "It is impossible to maintain the inferiority of blacks, if you destroy their means by not presenting to the blacks this spectacle of inferiority, deference, and respect for men free of color and for all whites".[129] Créole philosophers held that granting freemen of color political rights would destroy the "spectacle of inferiority" of race which held slaves subordinate to their masters in plantation society.

Créoles wanted the legal status of slaves to match their possession of noir-sang. Thus, Créoles advocated for the legal status of all who possessed sang-noir to be subordinate to whites, stating, "the Negro, in the present state of things, is even more distant from his master by his color than by servitude; The law that liberates it, at the same time subjects it to the prejudice which marks it out of as civil disfavor, and separates it from society."[130] It is important to understand the nuance of créolité's political reforms. As the idea that one's legal status should be contingent upon one's possession of black blood, broke with the legal codes of the Ancient Regime. As stated earlier, Code Noir made one's legal status dependent on the legal status of the mother and not one's possession of black blood. Créoles demanded that even if the mother of the child is a white free woman, if the father possesses any quantity of black blood, the child's possession of black blood would legally make him illegible for equality to whites. As Moreau

wrote, “If the interval between servitude and the title of citizen is nothing more, you destroy the effort which maintains slavery”.[131]

By explaining the mores of the island the planters sought to expose the island’s ideological terrain. The metropole’s ideological terrain was a contract that emerged from a historical process between kings, nobles, and peasants and which constituted their mutual responsibility to one another. Créoles argued that Saint-Dominge’s ideological terrain was not yet solidified through a historical process and as a result nor was the stability of the island. Further, the despotism of the Ancient Régime blocked Créoles from solidifying the island’s terrain. The contract between master and slave could only be solidified by making the laws reflect the mores. The mores being the custom of Black subordination to White rule. For the relationship between the master and the slave to be solidified then the laws needed to reflect the mores of the island.

Climatism: French Freedom French Slavery

Créole deputies utilized Montesquieu’s climate determinism to rationalize the institution of slavery. Malouet directly references Montesquieu stating,“ Montesquieu has told you: a government must be consistent with its principles and its means. What are the principles of the colonial regime? What are the means of cultivation in the colonies of the torrid zone ? The slavery of the blacks.[132] Créoles climatism rested on two principles, the first biological and the second a moral. Créole’s utilized climatism to argue that in order for the French Republic to be prosperous it must allow for the existence of other sites of violence. Créoles argued that the biological composition of European’s made them incapable of being productive laborers in the colonies. They argued that the Antillean sun melted the bones of whites as both Malouet and Sanadoon noted, “the sun has so much hold on Europeans, that it defends to the marrow its

bones".[133] Créoles argued that the historical process which transformed some men into peasants and others into nobles, included within it the impossibility of enslaving Europeans. It is important to note that at one point French indentured servants cultivated most of the island's first plantations and outnumbered slaves.

Créolité's rationalization follows Montesquieu's notion that colder climates produce characters unsuitable for harsh labor or slavery. While those born into warm climates were more tolerable of harsh conditions and slavery. Créoles argued that it would be impossible to force Europeans who understood liberty to perform plantation cultivation. Créoles argued that the biological configuring of Africans made them tolerable to harsh conditions, as Moreau wrote, "The Negro, on the contrary, having the oily flesh, the sun has no hold upon him… the slave, employed in cultivation in America, is physically more fortunate than the free and poor day-laborer of the Europe.[134] The climate of the Antilleans produced different characters. In the Antilles whites became incapable of performing hard labor while black's best worked under forced and harsh conditions. Créoles argued that the African sun made for harsh rulers who subjected their people to brutal conditions and slavery. Though false, Créole deputies draw this idea from Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* which affirmed that warm climates produce violent despots whose citizen's live under slave like conditions.

Créoles sought to align themselves with the ideals of the revolutionaries and absolve the revolutionaries of their moral inconsistences of the slavery within the free republic. Créoles utilized climatism to solve the moral question of the colonies. Créole deputies asserted that just as the climate differed from place to place, the morals from which one assessed a society needed to shift to match the climate of the society as Moreau stated, "Finally, the National Assembly, which will realize that the declaration of the rights of man is not a plant of all climates, will keep

it in that where it can produce only useful fruits".[135] Créoles claimed that certain climates justified slavery while other climates did not. Europeans then could not hold European moral values to analyze other societies. Moreau wrote that, "our laws, our morals, our mores and religious opinions, restitute them, and when servitude was transmitted to the European colonies, it remained as a being vicious, whose tolerance is justified by necessity".[136] While not all Créoles could agree on the viciousness of slavery they could all agree that its tolerance was a necessity and for that reason as Malouet wrote, "Doubtless it is difficult to reconcile slavery with the principles of natural law. If reason and justice permit a contrary opinion, it is necessary that reason and justice require of us to subtract from our values the servitude of the Negroes." Créoles concluded that Negros must be subtracted from European values in order for the French Republic to remain prosperous.

Créoles argued that European states did not have the moral obligation to extend European mores of equality to those whose climates naturalized inequality. Malouet sought to absolve revolutionaries of their moral obligations and wrote, "A free society is not bound to destroy the servitude of a tribe that is foreign to it. If the slaves of this tribe are transmitted to him by exchanges, the free society has no direct or indirect harm, by receiving them as slaves".[137] It is important to understand the intervention that the Créoles were making on revolutionary philosophy. Créoles posited that for White Europeans to have liberty, then the liberty of others must be denied. Revolutionaries then must recognize the mores and climates of other localities and accept peripheral sites of violence. What then is the relationship between climatism and universalism? What then is the philosophic connection between freedom and enslavement? How did the fathers of liberal though conceive of freedom? When did the fathers civic law consider it acceptable to deny freedom?

Barnave and the Colonial Committee

After months of debate between Créole deputies, Friends of Blacks, and Freemen of color, the National Assembly was no closer to deciding on the colonial question. The Committee of Agricultural and Commerce, the Committee of the Marines, and the Committee of Reports were overwhelmed by the debates. On March 2, Alexander Lameth, the brother of Charles Lameth a wealthy plantation owner, demanded that the National Assembly create a Colonial Committee. The Colonial Committee would be responsible for reading through the letters, pamphlets, and essays on the colonial debate and making the National Assembly's colonial policy. To what extent did the National Assembly's colonial policy develop out of créolité? To what extent did the revolutionaries grapple with the limits of universalism? To gauge the influence of créolité on colonial policy during the revolution one would have to ask questions such as what was the Colonial Committee's relationship to Club Massiac, Friends of Blacks, and the Société des Colons Américain?

The Colonial Committee's members were chosen by the Chambers of Commerce and the committee was meant to close the conversation regarding the colonies to Friends of Blacks and the freemen of color. Out of the twelve members selected for the committee, four were planters from Saint-Domingue: Payen de Boisneuf, J.-B Gérad, Reynaud, and Pellerin de la Buxière. Reynaud was one of the most influential Créole thinkers in Saint-Domingue and arrived with Payen de Boisneuf, J.-B Gérad and Pellerin de la Buxière with Gouy D'Arsy in 1788 and was a member of Club Massiac.[138] Not a single member of the Colonial Committee was connected to Friends of Blacks. Two were merchant planters, Pierre-Isaac Garesché a trader and property owner in L'Arcahaye and F.G. Bégouën a ship owner from Le Havre and plantation owner in Nippes. The other members included, Alexandre Lameth, Nompère de Champagny, Le

Chapelier, Thouret, Alquier, and Antoine Barnave. Antoine Barnave was selected to be the committee's spokesperson for he was one of the National Assembly's most powerful orators and influential deputies. While, Barnave's legacy as a prominent figure in the Revolution has been greatly studied; Barnave's role in colonial affairs has received far less attention.[139] Barnave was concerned with protecting the wealth of the republic and he saw Créole reforms as providing economically to the future of the revolution. Créolité laid the foundation of the committee's colonial policy.

On March 8th, the Colonial Committee released their decisions on the future of the colonies. The committee's *Report to the National Assembly, March 8, 1790, on behalf of the Colonial Committee, by Mr. Barnave* demonstrates the French Revolution's devotion to commercial interests and the prosperity of the colonies. The colonial committee saw its actions as breaking with the despotism of the Ancient Regime. In the report, the Colonial Committee sought to rectify the relationship between the colony and the metropole as, "The colonies have been subjected to the greatest oppressions on the part of the arbitrary and ministerial regimes…as if despotism, exiled them from the metropolitan."[140] The committee claimed that Créoles were victims of mercantile despotism and assured the planters that the National Assembly would work with them to increase the prosperity of the island. Barnave declared that while he understood the arguments of the Friends of Blacks, to abandon the colonies would, "Abandon the colonies, at the moment when your establishments are founded on their possession, and languish would succeed the activity and the misery would be abundant. Referring to the collapse of the institution of slavery and the misery that would ensure for the "souls of the (French) workers" Barnave acknowledges the contradiction between slave labor and freedom, but asserts that slave

labor is necessary the freedom and prosperity of the metropole. However, this was not the National Assembly's rationalization of the maintenance of the institution of slavery.

In the report the committee's decision not to extend the Rights of Man and Citizen to the colonies was motivated by an understanding of society with particular philosophical claims. This would mean that a part of the French population would remain enslaved so that another part of the French population would remain free. If one asks what was the relation of créolité to the National Assembly's colonial policy, Barnave's decision not to extend the declarations rights demonstrates the magnitude of créolité's influence. Barnave would decide not to extend the declaration due to,

> *Your Committee believes that the different laws, decreed for the French provinces, could not be equally applicable to the regime of our Colonies. The Colonies certainly offer, in the political order, a class of particular beings which it is impossible either to confuse or to assimilate with other social bodies. Whether we consider them in their interior, or examine the relations which bind them to the Metropolis, the difference of places, mores, climate, and productions seemed to us to require a difference in the laws, relations of interest and position, between France and its colonies, not being of the same nature as those which bind the provinces of France*. [141]

It is important to recognize the revolutionaries' radical adherence to the idea of Montesaquieu and "the differences of place, mores, climate, and productions seemed to require a difference un the laws" was a radical break with the colonial administration of the Ancient Regime. Central to Barnave's rationalization was the idea that the difference in moeurs and climate necessitated a different legal apparatus and understanding the origin of these ideas can help us understand the limits of universalism. For one to understand how mores and climate came to represent the rationalization of slavery, an exploration of the broader political and philosophical movements of the 18th century namely that of créolité was completed.

Critical to Barnave's rationalization of slavery was the philosophy créolité and Montesquieu. Both theories claimed that laws needed to be organized to meet the diverse needs of its inhabitants, meaning that laws should, "be relative to the climate, whether hot or cold of

each country, to the quality of the soil… To the manner of the living natives, whether husbandmen, huntsmen, or shepherds; they should have a relation to the decree of liberty which the constitution will bear; to their inclinations, riches…mores, and customs". While it is possible, though highly unlikely that Barnave never read Montesquieu, the four Créole deputies within the Colonial Committee certainly did as did Créole deputies to the National Assembly Malouet, Moreau, and Sandon. In their letters to the colonial committee the Créole deputies directly quoted Montesquieu and sought to utilize Montesquieu's theory to rationalize the institution of slavery. As I have tried to show, Créole deputies were not only dependent on Montesquieu. In many ways Créole philosophers sought to further develop Montesquieu's theories and introduced race as an ideology to the National Assembly.

The colonial committee also granted Créoles the right to determine their own legislation internal to the island. As the Barnave was convinced by the Créoles that metropolitan mores did not match the island's mores and thus metropolitan figures could not make efficient law regarding the maintenance of slavery. The colonies were given the right to provide reforms on their internal legislation, as Barnave wrote, "that it is finally time to establish for themselves the instructions on the regime of government which is suited to their prosperity; such is the course which circumstances, justice, and reason have prescribed to us".[142] Barnave uses the term justice and reason to describe the necessity of Créoles to create laws that denied the liberty and equality of blacks and to demonstrate the revolutionaries adherence to the ideals of democracy and equality. By granting Créoles the right to create their own legislation, Barnave saw the National Assembly as fulfilling its promise to dissolve the absolute power of the monarchy and enhance the political power of the commercial elite. The National Assembly granted Créole planters more

authority over the discrimination of black people than did the Ancient Regime. What does this mean for the principles of liberal thought?

Conclusion

In reaction to the despotic characteristics of the Ancient Regime, Saint-Domingue Créoles produced a philosophy to make sense of the social inconsistences of the island. While historians often characterize the confrontation between Créoles and despotism in economic terms, Créoles were also concerned with despotism's control over the social institutions of Saint-Domingue. For Créoles, the economic, the political, and the social were connected and their contentions with the Ancient Regime was not confined to trading regulations. The purpose of the colony was to provide as much wealth as possible for the metropole. Slave labor was considered essential to the production of the island. Créoles asserted that plantation society, due to having slaves, required a particular social apparatus different than the one in France. Créoles were frightened by the possibility of a slave revolt and claimed that in order to keep slaves from revolting, slaves would have to be conditioned into accepting slavery. Créole planters sought to understand the socially productive side of prejudice and affirmed that slaves would only accept their slavery if they had a social explanation and legal apparatus for Blacks enslavement. The conditioning of slavery, entailed a legal apparatus that excluded slaves from the civic body. An apparatus that conjoined slave labor with civil status through excluding blacks from civic society and the rights of the French Revolution.

Créolité emerges as a philosophic tradition in Saint-Domingue, in response to both plantation society and the Ancient Regimes' despotism. Créole's believed that the inefficiency of colonial stemmed from the control that the despotic monarchy had over the internal life of Saint-

Domingue. Créole planters believed that the production of administrative policy was done without consideration of Saint-Domingue's mores and traditions. Metropolitan officials' ignorance of the mores of Saint-Domingue resulted in the production of colonial policies that threatened the stability of the social hierarchy the colonies were dependent on. Créoles claimed that King Louis XIV's Black Codes were most reflective of the ideological inconsistences between the metropole and the colony. Créoles believed that the ideological terrain of the island differed from the ideological terrain of the metropole. Whereas in the metropole, the tradition and legal structure of rural France socially reflected and maintained the king, nobles, and peasants within a stable hierarchy. The legal codes of Saint-Domingue did not match the social order and Créole planters believed that this destabilized the institution of slavery. Créole philosophers sought to improve Saint-Domingue stability through theorizing on a social contract that would make slave labor proficient.

While philosophers and historians have analyzed the inconsistences in Montesquieu's thought on law and freedom no one has examined how Montesquieu influenced the production of a pseudo-scientific theory of race in the colonies. Montesquieu's theory of climate determinism and mores' relation to legislation was the closest language that French enlightened philosophers had to what today we would call an ideological apparatus. Climate determinism was the recognition that different terrains create different mores and produce different people. One can think of mores and legislation as an ideology and its apparatus. For Althusser, ideology maintains a material existence as it is always confined "to an apparatus, and its practice, or practices", thus the Créoles sought to make slavery into a material existence through attaching the island's social mores to the state's legal apparatus.[143] Without the apparatus, the ideology

cannot solidify the practice. Créoles believed that when the legal apparatus of slavery did not reflect the mores, then slavery was not a solidified social practice.

Créole political and social philosophers such as Pétit, d'Auberteuil, Malouet, and Moreau were all interested in solidifying the social practice of slavery so that slaves would not revolt. Through theorizing on social structures that would improve the stability of the state, Créole philosophers utilized Montesquieu's notions of climate determinism, mores, and legislation to produce a rationalization of enslavement. The island and its prosperity depended on a rigorous racial hierarchy that through a "spectacle of inferiority", solidified one's position in society. Créole philosophers sought to theorize on how empire could improve to the benefit of merchants, colonial proprietors, the navy, and the king. Créoles sought to unify the empire into one seamless political entity. By unifying the Empire, Créoles would gain the right to determine the islands legal structure. Créoles wanted the laws of Saint-Domingue to reflect the subordination of slaves by transforming white superiority into legislation. Créoles during the French Revolution achieved this by disenfranchising anyone who had black blood regardless of their civil status and conjoining skin color with labor.

During the French Revolution, Créoles introduced the ideology of race to rationalize slavery within the French Republic and to deny free men of color political enfranchisement. Whether Barnave truly believed in the rationalization of slavery we do not know, but Barnave's justification for the institution of slavery exposes some of the inconsistences of democracy and liberalism from its inception. As one of the founding fathers of democracy, Barnave truly believed in the declaration of rights of man. Barnave claimed that men are born and remain free and equal in rights but determined social distinctions founded upon the general good. Barnave decided not to extend the Declaration of Rights of Man to the colonies as it could possibly limit

the economic prosperity of the metropole. Barnave came to the decision not to extend the declaration due to the sacred interests of the revolution writing,

> *When it comes to the sacred interest of the revolution and the destiny of several millions of Francis, attached to the prosperity of our commerce and to the possession of our Colonies. Not only do they form the most considerable portion of our maritime and external relations; But the value of our productions, the activity of our Manufactures, our transports, our internal exchanges, are to a large extent the effect of our relations with it.*[144]

The enslavement of black people and the political disenfranchisement of all who possessed black blood would be in the sacred interest of the revolution. The ideals of universalism, which presupposed the equality of men and their right to liberty, equality, and fraternity could then be disregarded when the equality of men threatens the economic interests of the state. It would be no surprise that economic motivations were far more important to Barnave than remaining ideologically consistent, as Barnave aligned himself with the commercial factions of the revolution. However what is surprsing about the French Revolution is that Barnave was able to remain ideologically consistent even while denying the political enfranchisement of Freemen of color and racializing slavery. What can this tell us about the role of the ideology of race in liberal thought? The ideology of race provided revolutionaries with a way to deny black people the values the revolution proclaimed as blackness served as a disqualifier. Thus, race has the material purpose of divorcing people from the rights afforded within a liberal democratic state.

Créole deputies' participation within the National Assembly was not regarded as counter-revolutionary or challenging to the principles of the revolution. The contentious divide between

Créoles and metropolitan officials during the first half of the 18th century was rectified by the revolutionaries who granted Créoles more legislative power to disenfranchise their slaves. Créole planters found their way of life more accepted by the National Assembly than the Ancient Regime. The National Assembly provided Créoles with opportunity to challenge ministerial despotism and become active citizens of the metropole. Créoles utilized the colonial committee to push forward the demands of créolité and determine the civic status of slavery. Créoles rationalized the contradictions between the enslavement of Africans and the free republic through employing créolité's ideology of race, delimitating separate legal and moral zones for the colony and for the metropole, and unifying the empire into one politically consistent empire.

While the metropole, during the first few months of the revolution held onto its universalist principles, Créole planters were able to make the enslavement of Africans consistent with the ideals of the revolutionaries. As the French Revolution found the economic interests of the state to be more important than preserving the freedom of men and ensuring man's equality. Créolité then influenced and shifted the metropolitans understanding of liberty. Liberty could be denied for some if it established the liberty of others. Equality could be refused based on the productive value of that person's inequality and fraternity was racialized with the intention of making slavery consistent with the revolution's ideals. When the debates on universalism within the National Assembly are reconstructed through the lenses of créolité, it becomes apparent that Créole deputies' intervention was the introduction of the ideology of race as a social scientific rationalization to deny rights to one group for the economic and social benefit of another.

End Notes

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