



2024 HAWAII UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES
ARTS, HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCES, & EDUCATION JANUARY 4 - 6, 2024
PRINCE WAIKIKI RESORT, HONOLULU, HAWAII

LEONORA SANSAY'S
ZELICA: AND HARRIET MARTINEAU'S *THE HOUR*
AND THE MAN (1841): AARON BURR, JESUS AND
WHITE FEMINISM IN WRITING ABOUT FRENCH
REVOLUTIONARY HAITI



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Synopsis:

In her *Society in America* (1837), Harriet Martineau expressed the sentiments of the growing feminist abolitionist movement that championed the Black heroes of the anti-slavery movement while making analogies to white women's lack of civic rights. In her *The Man and the Hour* (1841), she presents the point of view of the leader of the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), Toussaint Louverture, as a conscientious leader seeking to free his people from white colonial oppression.

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Abstract

American author, Leonora Sansay, and British author, Harriet Martineau, pose two very different interpretations of the Haitian Revolution. While Sansay's fictional account is based closely on her personal experiences living in Haiti during the revolution, Martineau's account is a fictional biography of the leader of the Haitian Revolution, Toussaint Louverture. Martineau's sympathetic hagiography of the Black leader and former slave who led the Haitian Revolution against Napoleonic rule in 1801-03 was intended to garner support for the growing abolitionist movement in America, while Sansay's account exploits the terror and violence from the perspective of a helpless white woman and wife of a white plantation owner who cannot escape the wrathful retribution of Haiti's rebelling African slaves. Both texts can be regarded as pivotal feminist writings that invite women to participate in the shifting political landscape of the Americas. Sansay's involvement and imperialist perspective is influenced by her association with Aaron Burr. Sansay's characters illustrate violence against women as the revolution erupts and predict the future of emancipation in America. Martineau's novel seeks to redress the negative portrayal of the slave revolt and ameliorate future slave revolts by comparing Toussaint to Jesus in her fictional biography. Their divergent views on race stem from their own status as privileged and educated white women asserting their independence through writing on race and slavery in the Americas.

Introduction

American author, Mary Hassal, also known as Leonora Sansay, published her novel, *Zelica*, in London in 1820. It is a revised and expanded version of her novel, *Secret History, or The Horrors of Santo Domingo, in a series of letters, written by a lady at Cape Francois, to Colonel Burr, late vice-president of the United States, principally during the command of General Rochambeau* (Philadelphia, 1808). Sansay's character, Clara, is based on her own experiences as the wife of an American planter who returned to Haiti in 1802 when the French led by General Leclerc on Napoleon's orders sought to reimpose French rule. The Haitian Revolution initiated in 1791 was led by Toussaint Louverture and ended with his control of the island as governor for life in 1801. He was later captured by the French and died in prison in 1803. Sansay's novel places her heroine among the key figures of the revolution, including General Emmanuel Leclerc, Napoleon's sister, Pauline, Toussaint, Henri Christophe and Rochambeau. These male characters who determine the fate of the island with the outcome of the revolution also interact with Sansay's female character on an intimate level, making her novel's heroine a coquette. The placement of her female characters within the political dynamics of revolution yields a distinctly American version of the Haitian Revolution as one that threatened whites with retaliation by both slaves and people of color. As such, it suggests that she supports American policy with respect to the Caribbean as well as interests in the plantation owning Southern states from the perspective of white interests, not abolitionism.

Influence of Aaron Burr

Sansay's account of the Haitian Revolution cannot be separated completely from the politics of her patron, then US Vice-President Aaron Burr. His biographer, Nancy Isenberg (2008) suggests that Aaron Burr knew Sansay as early as 1797. They were well acquainted by

the time he arranged her marriage in 1800 to a Haitian planter, and he remained in contact with her until at least 1812. It goes without saying, that Sansay's relationship with Burr had a profound impact on her career as an author and her desire and ability to portray the events occurring in Haiti during the revolution. Burr, though condemned by modern historians for attempting to make himself emperor of the Louisiana Territory and killing Alexander Hamilton in a duel over Hamilton's character slander, embraced a heroic campaign that mimicked Napoleon's expansionist agenda in Europe. A politician, Burr owned slaves but also represented their interests in court cases while proposing legislation for the abolition of slavery in New York. He made plans to free his slaves in the will he wrote prior to his duel with Hamilton. Sansay's husband was an older widower and French. Her marriage was one of convenience and prior to her departure for Santo Domingo, she travelled to Washington to meet with Burr, who, as Vice President of the United States, prepared a letter of introduction for her (Isenberg 2008 p.240). Scholars have noted that Sansay's account of revolution in Haiti continues to promote negative racial stereotyping of African slaves and their power over whites and women. It does, however, reflect the features of Burr's own platform in which he espoused women's suffrage and the abolition of slavery while at the same time owning slaves and promoting a dictatorial political regime. Thus, Sansay's trip to Haiti was in fact intended to restore the plantation ownership of her husband, an older man who Burr had arranged her marriage to.

Sansay's relationship with Aaron Burr is far more relevant to her portrayal of slavery during the Haitian Revolution. Burr represented such contradictions between democratic freedom and the hypocrisy of slavery and imperialism. Federal period America embodied the values of liberal democracy while at the same time condoning the barbarity of slavery and furthering imperialist designs. The sale of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 by Napoleon created the opportunity for land speculation by Americans as well as imperialist expansion. Burr mounted the possibilities of creating a Western Empire with himself as its emperor which included plans to also invade Mexico and liberate it from Spanish rule. In fact, Burr, the politician, paid homage to the liberal intellectual fashions of his age while at the same time, clinging to archaic notions of imperialism which were closer to Napoleon than Jefferson (Gerson 2023). Sansay's novels should be viewed as an extension of this imperialist expansion plot which aimed at placing Burr as emperor. In a move to promote his own agenda, Sansay was married off to a former American plantation owner and sent with him to reclaim his estate once restoration of French rule had been achieved. The publicity that Sansay's novel stirred among white Americans and Europeans is consistent with the contradictions of the institution of slavery which could only be perpetuated by such a bi-mercurial lens. Sansay's heroine is both a victim of white and Black oppression.

While Martineau anticipates Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, such an act is not immediately conceivable by Sansay, although she portrays the Haitian Revolution as the starting point for ending slavery throughout the Caribbean. During the first revolts of 1791-1793, prior to the abolition of slavery, white newspapers like the *New Jersey Journal* reported massacres of white plantation owners: "Thousands of women, old men and children who could not find the necessary means to embark...await, with consternation and terror, their turn to be massacred" (Drexler 2008 p. 23; *New Jersey Journal* 28 Sept. 1793 p. 1). After the Louisiana Purchase, the United States suspended diplomatic ties and trade with Haiti (Dillon and Drexler 2016).

Sansay's narratives also purport to illustrate the massacres of whites by blacks that occurred during the revolution from the perspective of a white planter's family. Gruesome atrocities were described in contemporary accounts, such as the dismemberment of white infants snatched from their mother's breasts. In fact, the revolution that defeated the French in 1804, despite the capture and death of Toussaint by LeClerc, was largely in response to the French general LeClerc's policies of "killing negros and restoring slavery" although historians point out misconceptions. For example, instead of following Napoleon's orders to send rebel black officers to France and Corsica, Leclerc sought to eradicate the rebels completely through mass executions. Napoleon also did not specifically order the restoration of slavery, but rather the reinstatement of pre-existing laws. This meant slavery would not be restored in Santo Domingo where the French had outlawed it in 1794 but would remain in other French colonies. Acting on his own initiative, Leclerc attempted a virtual genocide of the revolutionary factions, including women and children, who were not only hanged but subjected to mass drownings and even gassed with sulfur in the holds of French ships. Leclerc's death from yellow fever allowed sufficient regrouping as well as incentive of the revolutionary faction to retaliate and defeat the French in 1804 (Girard 2011).

Sansay's historic close contact with the white planters as a wife of an American planter seeking to reacquire his plantation estate property in Santo Domingo with the French invasion gives her story authenticity as do her actual historic letters to then, Vice President Aaron Burr, who is believed to have been her lover. Sansay's historic letters are of importance because in her fictionalized account, she titles her first version of her novel as a series of letters to Burr. Burr, who was accused by Alexander Hamilton of being unprincipled and a potential dictator, was killed by Burr in a duel over Hamilton's slander. Burr's own life represents the same contradictions of the American and French revolutions that purported to extend equality to all citizens but excluded women and slaves. Burr owned household slaves but supported the emancipation of slavery in New York state. He also defended the rights of manumitted slaves. Burr, like Jefferson, under whom he served as Vice President, had a slave lover from the Caribbean, and in 1804 with the acquisition of the Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon, Burr made treasonous plans to acquire the territory for himself as emperor and extend his revolution into Mexico to annex the Spanish territory to his own private kingdom. He was tried for his enterprise, but the presiding Judge Marshall, did not convict him, stating that the evidence was insufficient (Stewart 2011).

Burr came from a slave owning family in New Jersey. As an adult at the age of 19, he joined Benedict Arnold's disastrous campaign to capture Quebec from the French in 1775 where Burr began a relationship with a Native American woman, Jacataqua, from the Abenaki tribe, who reportedly bore his child (Darley (2021; Williams 1925). He also had a relationship with an Indian slave servant woman, known as Mary Emmons or Eugenie Beauharnais, from Calcutta. This Eastern Indian woman moved to Santo Domingo where she joined the household of a British officer, Jacques Marcus Prevost, the husband of Burr's future wife, Theodosia. Following the death of her husband, Theodosia married Burr and brought Mary Emmons into their household in New York. Emmons gave birth to two children by Burr, a daughter, Louisa Charlotte Burr (b.1788) and a son, John Pierre Burr, who was born while she was *en route* to visit Haiti in 1792 (Sherri Burr n.d.). The relationship between Sansay and Burr suggests that Sansay also understood that the boundaries of nationhood were open to speculation by colonial powers. The Haitian Revolution was simply one in a series of wars that shifted national

boundaries. The methods of acquiring them also were unscrupulous. Sansay served an important role in promoting an interpretation of one such event for Anglo and European audiences which would have repercussions throughout Europe and America where colonial plantation owners contributed to the wealth of nations. Although as a woman she could not participate in the generals' land grab for personal ownership of land, she personally stood to reap a comfortable life as a wife of a plantation owner. Her fictional account acknowledges that she lost her economic stability even as she risked losing her life during the social upheaval. The clear demarcation of the racial social hierarchy that existed in Santo Domingo during the French invasion in Sansay's novel reveals the reality of the system of exploitation with slaves at the bottom and white plantation owners at the top. Sansay enjoyed social soirees that were introduced by Pauline Bonaparte and the flirtatious encounters among couples was a constant form of entertainment. As a white female participant, she provided key insights into a revolution that ultimately claimed, according to one contemporary account, the lives of 100,000 whites and 60,000 blacks during the entire course of the revolution from 1791-1804. An 1841 report in the *Colored American* claimed that only 2000 whites were killed by the rebels and that whites killed 10,000 insurgents (Horne 2015). Bonaparte planned a reconquest of the island in 1801 and sent his general, Emmanuel Leclerc, the husband of his sister, Pauline, to Santo Domingo with more than 17,000 troops (Girard 2011 p. 54). The total population of slaves was nearly 500,000 at the time of the first revolution in 1791; they far outnumbered whites who comprised 40,000 while people of color comprised 28,000. The racial dynamics of Sansay's narrative are important since they reveal the politicking that had to occur in order to sway support by the colored people and slaves to the white plantation owning classes at a time when freedom was promised to the winner and the French Constitution of 1794 which had already abolished slavery in Santo Domingo.

Zelica as a Racial Mediator

Sansay presents this politicking as a sexual negotiation. White men and Black men alike are attracted to Clara's beautiful servant, Zelica, who, as a mulatto child of a white supporter of the revolution, enjoys a higher social status and is educated in France. The Black general Gaude desires Clara, and this results in her being sexually compromised. The French general Rombeau also takes an interest in both Clara and Zelica. Although Clara's husband, St. Louis, castigates her for allowing herself to be comprised by the attentions of other men, he too desires the beautiful Zelica. Zelica has been promised by this father to General Christophe, who ultimately defeats the French becomes the first king of Haiti in 1804-05. Zelica, however, is unattracted to him, presumably because his skin is darker than hers. She is conflicted by her duty to her father and her disgust with the sexual contract her father demands, and ultimately refuses him for demanding sexual slavery. Multiracial polygamy was evident throughout the island and the recognition of a class or colored people as higher in status than slaves imported from Africa demonstrates that white believed it was a key to controlling the African slave population which far outnumbered them. It was even considered by Napoleon as an official mandatory policy (Girard 2011 p.187). Thus, the beautiful seductive Zelica, acts as a racial buffer for whose loyalty induces her to protect her mistress whenever she can and for as long as she possible can.

In *The Secret History*, the narrator is the sister of Clara, who observes that Clara is miserable in her marriage to a "loquacious" talker who bores her. She feels powerless in the bonds of marriage and her inability to dissolve them. The narrator's perception of the French campaign succinctly summarizes the goals of European colonists who returned to the island to restore their claims to the plantations and their slaves: "all places of honour or emolument are

held by Europeans, who appear to regard the Island as a place to be conquered and divided among the victors, and are consequently viewed by the natives with a jealous eye” (Sansay 1808 pp. 9-10).

Sansay recognizes the greed that motivates the colonists and the violence they will resort to in order to reacquire their estates; she also describes the luxury which the slaves afforded the white Creole plantation owners as though it were a lost Edenic paradise: “Every inhabitant lived on his estate like a Sovereign ruling his slaves with despotic sway, enjoying all that luxury could invent, or fortune procure” (Sansay 1808 p. 18). As a woman author and a businesswoman, Sansay presents an independent view of the evolving political and social situation. Her attachment to Burr to whom she reported undoubtedly freed her from the constraints of marriage intellectually so that she shifts from the perspective of a wealthy planter’s wife to that of a detached observer. Although the need to employ Negroes as servants and in the military was important to whites in America, Sansay contrasts the threat that they pose to white women with the traditional social roles of loyal Negroes. Of one Creole woman, Sansay’s narrator relates: “She told me that her husband was stabbed in her arms by a slave whom he had always treated as his brother; that she had seen her children killed, and her house burned, but had been herself preserved by a faithful slave...” (Sansay 1808 p. 19). Sansay’s Anglo narrator cannot take sides in the conflict since these loyalties are predetermined by race and gender although she recognizes the motivations of slaves and the hardships they have endured. She still imagines them as uncivilized savages despite the promotion of Blacks to administrative posts: “The negroes have felt during ten years the blessing of liberty, for a blessing it certainly is, however acquired, and they will not be easily deprived of it. They have fought and vanquished the French troops...” (Sansay 1808 p. 26).

Sansay’s colored female heroine, Zelica, corrects negative racial stereotyping of coloreds by identifying her father as a caring white man who supports emancipation and recognizes his paternal ties to his daughter, educates her in France, and seeks to marry her to General Christophe, the future king of Haiti, to improve her social position within a new free Haiti. Although the large mulatto or colored population was created by the practice of white slave owners maintaining concubinage with their female slaves, parental obligations did not normally carry over to offspring. Sansay also diverts the reader’s attention to the abusive relationship between Clara and her husband in order to avoid the topic of rape of slaves by white masters and sexual abuse which was common practice (Geggus 1996 p. 264).

In the first version of her narrative, *The Secret History*, Clara is raped by her husband who threatens to disfigure her by throwing acid in her face. Clara and Zelica trade identities twice in the novel, Zelica. The first time occurs when Zelica hides Clara from Glaude who has kidnapped her. The second time occurs at the end of the novel when after Clara’s death when Zelica is mistaken for Clara when she boards the British ship that transports them away from Haiti. The drama of the mulatto or in this case quadroon captured the imagination of white audiences with the dramatic irony of female kin of slave owners who could be subjected to the same brutality as the slaves.

The contrast between the relationship of Zelica and Clara, who represent the rapport among white planters and coloreds, their mulatto and quadroon, counterparts, even kin, and the reality of racial hatred is exemplified by Victor Séjour’s *The Mulatto*. Séjour’s portrayal of black

man named George who discovers the evil circumstances surrounding his birth when he learns that his white slave owning father in Haiti raped his slave who gave birth to George. This demonstrates the animosity that existed in such “unions” where colored offspring were produced by masters and their slaves. Sejour’s novel bypasses the term, concubinage which was frequently used to suggest that both parties benefitted from such unions, and that they were based on mutual consent outside of marriage, when in fact, no consent actually existed for slaves. The plot maintains the distinction between rape and concubinage when George’s wife, also a mulatta, tries to defend herself against being raped by George’s father, Alfred, and is executed for her crime. George finds solace among the maroons in the mountains with his young son, but he returns to avenge the child’s mother by beheading Alfred and murdering his new wife and child. Just before George’s blade falls on Alfred’s neck, he reveals that he is in fact George’s father. The perversion of normal family ties in interracial relationships in the slave-owning plantation illustrates the barbarity of the system but also its contradictions, where slaves could rise to become slave owners themselves or inherit estates. By contrast, Sansay portrays Zelica as an amiable quadroon woman who is simply conflicted by her desire for her independence and romantic love, her love of her white father and her devotion to her white friend. The question of rape among slave owners and their slaves is subordinate to Sansay’s portrayal of lawful unions and friendships among whites and coloreds (Daut 2015). This reflects the political climate of America at this time where Sansay’s patron, Vice President Aaron Burr, and President Thomas Jefferson, both maintained long term concubinage relationships with their slave women, Sally Hemmings and Mary Emmons. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg (2000) suggests that Zelica “plays the male role more convincingly than do any of the male characters” (p. 267) and that the plot is a variation on the Oedipal plot since Clara dies as a result of her friendship with Zelica, instead of Zelica’s father who is the assassin’s target. In this case, the two women Clara and Zelica form the central motif of friendship and affection which is tested by their racial and cultural identities.

Separated by more than 20 years, Martineau’s narrative is supported by the recent events in abolitionist history that included England’s final abolition in 1838 of actual slavery in the Caribbean as well as the slave trade (abolished in 1807). Revolts among slave rebels in British colonies in Barbados (1816) and Jamaica (1831) forced the British to recognize the gravity and necessity of complete abolishment. This gradual abolition of slavery was also consistent with the progress of the northern Union states in America toward gradual abolition which Martineau found so hypocritical of the rights of citizenship. Martineau had both support from her abolitionist contemporaries as well as personal moral and feminist reasons for adding to this body of literature for the final abolition of slavery. By contrast, Sansay’s narrative in *Zelica*, was based directly on events the author experienced between 1801-02 while in Haiti during the revolution. Her narrative reflects her own vulnerability as a white colonial wife of a plantation owner as well as her patronage by the US Vice President Aaron Burr. At the same time, Sansay demonstrates some impartiality in her ability to analyze the events from the perspective of all parties and is critical of both Blacks and whites. Martineau by contrast remains entirely focused on the achievements of her hero, Toussaint, as an abolitionist model for posterity.

Martineau’s *The Man and the Hour* and Carlyle’s *On Heroes*

Martineau’s view of the achievements of Toussaint were influenced by Carlyle’s *History of the French Revolution* and *On Heroes, Hero Worship and the Hero in History*. Luke Sayers

makes an extensive comparison between the two works and Martineau's portrayal of Toussaint, while noting that Carlyle himself did not objectify Toussaint as anything more than a "three-fingered Jack" or a "sooty African" in his *Chartism* (1839) (Sayers 2021). Martineau takes the bloody events of the Haitian Revolution and transforms the historiography into an apotheosis of hagiography in a way that was never acceptable in American abolitionist texts. She rightly portrays Toussaint as the anti-hero of Napoleon's Cult of Emperor who has the power to wield just as much power in public opinion decades after his death.

Carlyle's chapter divisions would also have inspired Martineau. The chapters of the hero as divinity, prophet, poet, priest, man of letters and king would certainly have appealed to her own assessment and classification of Toussaint's accomplishments. However, Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (1831) also mentions the "heroic heart" that sees throughout time and embraces a *Communion of Saints*, wide as the world itself, and as the history of the world" (Carlyle 1863). According to Carlyle, "A thought never did die yet" which its creator had not created out of the entire history of the past to transmit to the future. Thus, the act of writing and publishing and drawing on history transforms the heroic thought from the past to the future. While Martineau expressed opinions in conflict with Thomas Carlyle, their shared appreciation of history is significant. On February 12, 1838, Martineau indicated in a letter to Carlyle that they had evidently discussed common issues that concerned them both: "I cannot agree with you as to the worthlessness of "theory" & politl [sic] economy, & am as far as ever from being disposed to let the race suffer when they may be helped (as I conceive) by our using our understandings about the social facts we witness, & acting upon the science thus gained" (Logan, ed., *Collected Letters*, vol. 2, 2016, p. 15). Carlyle's "World Phoenix" could be understood to encompass a body of work that includes both contemporary writing and reshaping of the past to create the future. In this way, Martineau understood how her own writing and biography of Toussaint would not only inspire her readers to join the abolitionist cause, but also to help shape the organic future by spreading the morality of her hero.

Vodou was a uniquely Haitian syncretic religion that combined African and Christian religious beliefs. At one time, Toussaint was an ardent practitioner, and he encouraged its rituals. However, during the late period of his reign, he actually banned it in an effort to control social unrest under his rule (Hazareesingh 2020, p. 178). The practice of Vodou undoubtedly increased his popularity and encouraged support during his rise to power, but during his administration phase, he imposed unpopular laws that governed forced plantation labor, in effort to make the country economically viable in an international marketplace. Martineau's hagiography does indeed reflect aspects of hero and the divinity of the man who had the capacity to affect his entire people with his message. The people in turn were impressed by the hero's devotion to their cause. According to Carlyle, the hero is a recurring principle in human history that galvanizes the support of the people to follow the example of the hero who leads them to a greater and higher destiny:

And now if worship even of a star had some meaning in it, how much more might that of a Hero! Worship of a Hero is transcendent admiration of a Great Man. The greatest of all Heroes is One—whom we do not name here! Let sacred silence meditate that sacred matter; you will find it the ultimate perfection of a principle extant throughout man's whole history on earth (Carlyle, 1840, p.11-12).

Toussaint's contemporaries noted his remarkable superhuman abilities, not only to influence his followers, but his indefatigable energy, which, like that of Napoleon, enabled him to achieve superhuman feats of endurance and conquest. His aid-de-camp made speeches that hailed Toussaint as the republican hero and successor to Spartacus in speeches made on Feb 5, 1800 and again in 1801 (Hazareesingh, 2020, p. 178). During his rise to political power, he orchestrated public celebrations that encourage a hero worship of him that approached divinity. These ceremonies were based on the new republican liberties that his regime promised that were synthesized the hero worship of a deity. For example, his modern biographer Sudhir Hazareesingh notes that a procession of civic and religious authorities formed a procession on the outskirts of town and held aloft a canopy that he was to walk beneath in a procession in his honor. He first refused by claiming that this special treatment, claiming that it identified him as a deity, but in fact, that is what the celebration achieved. After walking through a series of triumphal arches (after the Ancient Roman tradition), he was awarded a medal with the inscription, "After God, it is him" (Hazareesingh, 2020, p. 156). It seems that Martineau believed that it was time to place Toussaint among the other great leaders who shaped the tide of history towards equality, such as Martin Luther.

According to Hazareesingh (2020), Toussaint regularly invoked vodou and Christianity in his speeches and ceremonies, as well French revolutionary egalitarian motifs. Following the defeat of the British in 1798 who held town of Mole Saint-Nicholas, Toussaint held a ceremony in which he planted a liberty tree. His speech, however, references the vodou loa, Gran Bwa or Great Wood, a spirit of the forest. The African slaves had introduced vodou by the 1750s and used it to form social groups. Toussaint was familiar with the religion's deities and rituals, which combined West African beliefs with native Taino traditions. Herbal medicine was associated with the vodou loa, Loko, and practiced in marron communities. Toussaint was widely regarded as a healer who invoked the power of vodou deities. He used his knowledge of herbal medicines to heal outbreaks indigenous illnesses, such as malaria, scurvy and yellow fever (Hazareesingh 2020, p.157). Toussaint was also known to invoke Makandal, the leader of the first slave uprising in Haiti in 1751, as a vodou spirit. The vodou religious seamlessly synthesize both Catholic and libertarian beliefs from the time of the 1791 Revolution. When Toussaint led his battle campaigns, he tied a knotted red scarf around his neck that symbolized the loa, Ogoun Fer, the war spirit, who was regarded as his guiding spirit and adviser (Hazareesingh 2020).

Abolitionist History and *Society in America* (1837)

Martineau's sympathy for the African American condition is also evident in her pivotal work, *Society in America* (1837). This work which is based upon a two-year tour of the United States. In this text, she devotes two chapters to the conditions of African Americans and women in America. The author analyzes the backward condition of each and contrasts them to the ideals of the American constitution that guarantees equality to all citizens. In this respect, her ideology aligns with the white feminist writings of Mary Wollstonecraft and Germaine de Staël. Martineau paves the way for the feminist movement of the nineteenth century which combined the abolitionist platform with the feminist platform for equal rights and voting privileges. She concludes her chapter on women with the affirmation of the democratic principle found in the American Declaration of Independence: "The principle of equal rights is all we have to do with here. It is the true democratic principle which can never be truly controverted, and only for a short time evaded. Governments can derive their just powers only from the consent of the governed" (Martineau 1837, p. 154).

Martineau references the radical historical transition from monarchy to a democracy by asserting that “Washington’s super-royal voice greeted the New World from the presidential chair” while “the old world stood still to catch the echo” (Martineau 1837, p. 154). This sentiment is repeated in the context of her next publication about Toussaint, who was inspired by examples of both the American and French Revolutions. Martineau assesses false claims made by a Bostonian that people of color and blacks enjoy total equality with whites, and she concludes her chapter on African Americans by declaring that the growing abolitionist movement will restore the claims to equality made by the American Constitution for races and gender. In response to the claim that “colored people” were “well treated” and their children were educated and that they enjoyed the enfranchisement of citizenship, Martineau retorts that the schools for colored children are “shut up” or “torn down” because whites will not tolerate the education of black children. She offers a second example in which a black family was prohibited from sitting in their church pew in a white church and the assertion of one Connecticut judge who claimed that Blacks were not citizens. What shocked Martineau and others was the glaring contradiction between the egalitarian principles that fueled the American Revolution and the present prejudice against blacks in America. Martineau offers further evidence of this disparity in race from Thomas Jefferson’s claim infants, women and slaves were excluded from the definition of citizenship in American democracy. Indeed, Martineau equates women’s “lack of will and property” with that of slavery, writing: “if the slave disqualification, here assigned, were shifted up under the classification of women, their case would be nearer the truth than as it now stands” (Martineau 1837 vol 1, sec VII). Applying Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence syllogism that the authority of just governments is derived from the consent of the people to the exclusion of women from the rights of citizenship, Martineau concludes, “The principle of the equal rights of both halves of the human race is all we have to do with here. It is the true democratic principle which can never be seriously controverted... Governments derive their just powers only from the consent of the governed” (Martineau 1837, vol. I, sec. VII). The government is, therefore, not “just,” as neither women nor slaves can give their consent to the government since they lack rights of citizenship.

Comparison between Toussaint and Jesus

Martineau also shaped her portrayal of Toussaint on her portrayal of Jesus in her earlier narrative fiction *Traditions of Palestine* (1830). Much like her later fictional biography of Toussaint, Martineau uses characterization to develop the emerging aura of Jesus as pivotal figure who changes the course of history and religious philosophy (Lecourt 2018). In Martineau’s novel, Toussaint can be compared to Jesus as a divine prophet in his mission to free enslaved Africans from the dirge of slavery. Like Toussaint’s followers, the followers of Jesus perceive the divine mission of the Messiah in his leadership skills and oratory: “It was a voice of gentleness and love; a voice so unlike that of the scribes in their teachings, that many who had before felt it sink down into their hearts, breathed forth, while they bowed the head” (Martineau 1830), p. 54). In the context of the growing American abolitionist movement, Toussaint emerges through Martineau’s fiction as a fledgling leader of the movement whose example should be shared and spread to motivate others to join the cause of freedom and emancipation. For example, in *The Man and the Hour*, the character, General Hermona, observes the loyalty of Toussaint’s men: “Their attachment to your is singular. I no longer wonder at your achievements in the field.” Toussaint replies: “In me they may see one whom, while obeying, they love as a brother” (Martineau, 1841, p. 75). However, Toussaint’s relationships with his subordinates and

his family are more familial as they are portrayed by Martineau as pursuing a simple existence as fishermen, much like the first followers of Jesus. Jesus followers discuss the role of the Messiah to deliver them from the Romans; in a similar manner, Toussaint is portrayed as the divine savior of his people who delivers them from white colonial slavery. In Martineau's historical fiction, Bonaparte and the French army become like the Romans who seek to destroy the simple hallowed land of Haiti and enslave or obliterate its otherwise peaceful inhabitants who seek only carry out subsistence level fishing and farming. Martineau also makes a subliminal reverse analogy between the Roman farmers who – like Cincinnatus – would leave their farms to fight for the Republic. While Toussaint declares his independence from Bonaparte, others contemplate the general's greatness and attest to his decency in times of war: "What majesty he carries with him through all his conquests! How whole nations quail under his proclamations!" Martineau contrasts Bonaparte's proclamation that he was the "Man of Fate" prophesied by the Koran during his campaign in Egypt with her character Laveaux's statement that Toussaint was the "black chief predicted by Raynal," the French philosopher who predicted that a leader would emerge to free Africans from colonial slavery (Martineau 1841 p. 50, 75; Hunt 1996). Likewise, Napoleon's statement that "men must account to him their secret thoughts because nothing was concealed from him" is contrasted by Martineau with Toussaint's statement to the "Mulattoes in the church at Cap that, from the other side of the island, his eye would be upon them, and his arm outstretched, to restrain or punish" (Martineau 1841 p. 264-265).

The massacre of whites is treated in the conditional for the most part by Martineau and is portrayed as an abhorrent act that forces Toussaint and his followers to abandon their Christian moral principles. Incredulously, Martineau's Toussaint asserts that if the whites have been cruel to the negroes, "our duty is clear – to bear and forebear, to do them good in return for their evil. To rise against them cunningly, to burn their plantations and murder them – to do this is to thrown back the gospel in the face of Him who gave it!" (Martineau 1841 p. 34). By making a comparison between Toussaint and Jesus who seeks to lead his people to freedom, Martineau ameliorates the violence of the Haitian Revolution which persisted as the most significant threat to whites who continued to own slaves in the Americas. Martineau continues to discourage a sensationalizing of the massacre by references to the morals of Toussaint and his followers. When Jean mentions the recent history of the French Revolution in which the king was apprehended on the flight to Varennes, "Toussaint, who always uncovered his head at the name of the king, now bent it low in genuine grief" (Martineau 1841 p. 34). When Jean points out that the white slave owners defy the king and are traitors, Toussaint asserts that they are still "less guilty than those who add ravage and murder to rebellion" (Martineau 1841 p. 34). In fact, Toussaint repeatedly says that he is opposed to killing whites. The term, "massacre" is only used in the context of the Massacre River, (Martineau 1841 p. 35) the boundary between the French and Spanish territories, while the verb, "kill" is only used in the conditional as an act that is only considered possible. By contrast, in her novel, *Demerara* (1832), an early fictional work that established her anti-slavery views, Martineau includes a graphic description of a lynching of a slave: "Before the slave hunters could see what happened, a fierce blood-hound lunged at Willy's throat and brought him down, once having tasted blood, the animal was not be restrained by whistles, shouts or blows till the long death grapple was over. When the mangled negro had ceased to struggle, and lay extended in his blood, the hound slunk back into the bushes..." (p. 178-179). On the other hand, possibility of poisoning cattle, murdering the master's children and setting fire to the sugar cane fields is raised as possible actions that are not seriously considered by the slaves since it violates their standards of moral conduct. Since these are the very activities

that characterized the Haitian Revolution, Martineau's portrayal of slavery in fiction glosses over basic facts about the violence of revolution and retaliation against whites in her effort to generate sympathy for the abolitionist movement. However, a slave who refuses to be honest and work hard is understandable given that his moral code could never apply to the context of slavery so long as he was a slave. When Alfred advises Cassius to be "faithful to your master," Cassius retorts, "Faithful? I have never stolen his sugar --- I have never murdered his children --- I have never even listened to those who talked of burning his canes or poisoning his cattle" (Martineau 1832 p. 54-55). By contrast, the slave owner, Mitchelson, who is delayed upon his return to his home, is "scared with visions of burning cane fields, of a murdered wife and insulted children" (Martineau 1832 p. 120). When Cassius prays, he hopes that the crops fail and that his master becomes poor so that the bonds and suffering of slavery end, and also "let him die in his sleep this night, and then there will be many to sing to thee instead of wailing all the night" (Martineau 1832 p. 124-125).

The idea that abolitionist writings might encourage slave revolts was a sentiment expressed directly to Martineau during her tour of America. Writing to the American Lydia Maria Childs on January 10, 1838, Martineau wrote, "at Washington; & that I had heard, as a plain matter of fact, from every person I met, from Mr Madison down to Mrs Gilman,⁴ that the abolitionists were exciting the slaves to insurrection, and it never occurred to either Miss Jeffery or myself to doubt it till we got to Medford [Mass.]. I have no doubt that I wrote under this false impression, & that my letter to Mr Loring wd [sic] now appear to me just as it does to you" (Logan 2016, vol. 1).

Comparison between Toussaint and Napoleon

Martineau's hagiography is based upon her comparison of Toussaint with Napoleon. Since the two were recognized as the two most significant military leaders of their time, who engaged one another in the conflict of the Haitian Revolution. Martineau contrasts Napoleon's negative profile with the hero profile of Toussaint. Initially, Napoleon, too, had been hailed as a heroic military figure who extended the Jacobin Revolution of democracy and freedom to Italy in his campaigns of 1796. However, once Napoleon assumed imperial authority and withdrew the emancipation of slavery in French colonies, his heroic aura waned with the rise of Toussaint, his nemesis. In addition to these ideological motivators, Napoleon Bonaparte became a common point of reference since his ascension to power in 1801 coincided with Toussaint's assumption of gubernatorial duties in Haiti. Philippe Roume, the French agent in Sant-Dominigue, claimed that Toussaint "was even greater than Bonaparte." According to Roume, Toussaint possessed the same qualities that had made Napoleon successful, including courage, bravery, genius, surprise tactical strategies and great foresight (Hazareesingh 2020, p.189). Roume had sent a pamphlet detailing the success of Napoleon campaigns while noting the similarities between the two leaders. Thus, Toussaint acquired some degree of hero worship among his contemporaries. Both men had taken power by force, defeated more powerful armies, and designed new constitutions for their nations.

Conclusion

The publicity that Sansay's novel stirred among white Americans and Europeans is consistent with the contradictions of the institution of slavery which could only be perpetuated by such a bi-mercurial lens. Sansay's heroine is both a victim of white and Black oppression. As a woman, she retains her virtue only at the cost of becoming an abused woman who is threatened by the lust of Black generals. She further dissociates her character from the evil institution of slavery by killing off her character in an accidental encounter between a white supporter of the revolution and a Black insurgent seeking revenge. Her story was consistent with the attitudes of white towards the institution of slavery and the publicity surrounding the Haitian Revolution would only have confirmed her audience's belief that enslaved Africans were a volatile revolutionary population that needed to be subdued and contained. Martineau, by contrast, begins her novel by describing the idyllic island of Hayti as pristine paradise and Garden of Eden prior to the arrival of Christopher Columbus and massacre or enslavement of the native Tainos. Martineau's interest in the abolitionist movement stemmed from the recent abolition of slavery in British colonies in the Caribbean in 1833 although it was not fully implemented until 1838. In light of this history, Martineau portrays Toussaint as a Christian martyr rather than a leader of a revolt, who seeks first and foremost to uphold the tenants of Christianity. Imprisoned by the French, Toussaint laments: "I erred in...not making myself a king, and separating my country from France. My people might have been laying aside their arms...but at what a cost? Their career would have begun in treason and in murder...We began our career of freedom in fidelity, in obedience and in reverence towards the whites and therefore we may take to ourselves the blessing of Him who made us to be free..." (Martineau 1841 p. 368). The Christological aura of Toussaint outweighs any militant tactical maneuvers to free the island from the French assault and, ironically, casts him in the role of a white protector more than a freedom fighter against white oppression.

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