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Who Will Keep Cultivating Sugar? Harriet Martineau, the Haitian Revolution, and the Post-emancipation Plantation Economy

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The Haitian Revolution shaped how planters and pro-slavery intellectuals, abolitionists, and colonial bureaucrats thought about the possibilities, promises, and pitfalls of abolishing enslavement in the nineteenth-century Americas and Caribbean. Uncovering a distinct way of thinking about the Haitian Revolution, this article analyzes how Harriet Martineau's representation of this revolution placed it under the fold of liberal abolitionism by tracing how liberal political economy grounded her abolitionism. For Martineau, the Haitian Revolution under Toussaint Louverture's leadership illustrated how a state-managed emancipation process would reproduce and strengthen capitalist plantation production by transforming the enslaved into wage laborers. In this account, Martineau disavowed the conflict between Louverture's use of state coercion to retain cultivateurs in plantations and cultivateurs' demands to obtain provision grounds. Engaging Martineau's representation of the Haitian Revolution, this article expands scholarship that has explored how political thinkers in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world developed conflicting visions of revolutionary Saint Domingue.

In 1791 the enslaved revolted in Saint Domingue. Their uprising culminated in emancipation from enslavement and independence from the French Empire in 1804. The most consequential and impactful revolution of enslaved people in the Atlantic world, the Haitian Revolution shaped how planters and pro-slavery intellectuals, abolitionists, and colonial bureaucrats analyzed and represented the possibilities, promises, and pitfalls of abolition despite conceiving of enslavement and emancipation in considerably different terms.¹

Heeding Ada Ferrer's suggestion to “explore the ways in which Haiti was talked about as it was created,” this article analyzes how nineteenth-century representations of the Haitian Revolution sparked ambivalent and limited liberal abolitionist imaginaries

¹ Marlene L. Daut, “Introduction: A World of Haitian Revolutionary Fictions,” in Marlene L. Daut, Grégory Pierrot, and Marion C. Rohrleitner, eds., *Haitian Revolutionary Fictions: An Anthology* (Charlottesville, 2022), xxi–lviii, at xxii–xxxiii.

by engaging Harriet Martineau's writings on revolutionary Saint Domingue.² Born in 1802 in Norwich, England, Martineau became one of the most prominent women writers and abolitionists in the Anglo-Atlantic world. Her writings include the article "Account of Toussaint L'Ouverture" (1838) and the historical novel *The Hour and the Man* (1841). The latter became the most influential novel about the Haitian Revolution in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world.³

Foregrounding political-economic issues in Martineau's work, I contend that her representation of the Haitian Revolution advanced liberal abolitionist projects. For liberal abolitionists like Martineau, emancipation should transform the enslaved in an orderly way into free laborers who would work in plantations and sell their labor on the market in exchange for wages. Writing about the Haitian Revolution, Martineau contended that it was an emancipation process that successfully maintained order and stability in the post-emancipation plantation economy under the leadership of the statesman Toussaint Louverture. In her account, Louverture's government increased Saint Domingue's economic prosperity by providing a labor supply for sugar cultivation, protecting planters' landownership, expanding profitable trade networks, and instilling labor discipline in *cultivateurs*.

Analyzing Martineau's account of the political economy of revolutionary Saint Domingue, I argue that she *disavowed* the conflict between Louverture's use of state coercion to force *cultivateurs* to labor in plantations and *cultivateurs'* demands to obtain provision grounds. A "disavowal," explains Sibylle Fischer, "becomes productive, generating further stories, further screens that hide from view what must not be seen."⁴ Borrowing from Fischer's claims about political thinkers in the Atlantic world at once acknowledging and concealing the realization of freedom and racial equality in the Haitian Revolution, I emphasize how Martineau obscured the coercive mechanisms with which the Louverture regime forced *cultivateurs* to work in sugar production after abolition. Using the category of disavowal allows me to trace how Martineau denied the revolutionary dimensions of Haitian emancipation and instead made it a referent for liberal abolitionist projects that sought to end enslavement without disrupting plantation production. Namely, Martineau stressed that *cultivateurs* accepted and supported Louverture's project, transforming them into free laborers working in the capitalist sugar industry. Denying *cultivateurs'* efforts to leave plantations and subsist autonomously outside planters' and the state's control, Martineau conceived of the Haitian Revolution as an exemplary state-managed emancipation process. This conception rejected the importance of *cultivateurs'* revolutionary agency in resisting the continuation of coercive sugar cultivation under the novel free-labor regime.

² Ada Ferrer, "Talk about Haiti: The Archive and the Atlantic's Haitian Revolution," in Doris L. Garraway, ed., *Tree of Liberty: Cultural Legacies of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World* (Charlottesville, 2008), 21–40, at 22.

³ Marlene L. Daut, *Tropics of Haiti: Race and the Literary History of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World, 1789–1865* (Liverpool, 2015), 60.

⁴ Sibylle Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Durham, NC and London, 2004), 32. Building on Fischer, Eduardo Grüner and Neil Roberts have theorized the disavowals of freedom in the context of the Haitian Revolution. Eduardo Grüner, *The Haitian Revolution: Capitalism, Slavery and Counter-modernity* (Cambridge and Medford, 2020), Ch. 3; Neil Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage* (Chicago and London, 2015), Ch. 1.

Exploring political-economic issues in Martineau's writings on the Haitian Revolution, this paper contributes to scholarship examining her abolitionism. Deborah Anna Logan contends that moral principles anchored the abolitionism of Martineau, who thought that "the progressive moral and ethical evolution of humanity" necessitated "immediate, universal emancipation."⁵ However, other scholars have highlighted how Martineau did not frame her abolitionism solely in moral terms but tied it to her work as a political economist. Cora Kaplan suggests that Martineau "drew heavily on the stadial theories of civilization so key to T. R. Malthus and [Adam] Smith," to frame abolition as a requirement for political-economic development.⁶ Drawing on Kaplan's work, I investigate how Martineau criticized enslavement as an unproductive, unprofitable, and inefficient organization of labor that relied on low-quality workers and kept plantation economies stagnant. In contrast, she insisted that a process of state-managed emancipation, like the Haitian Revolution, would bolster sugar production. Transforming the enslaved into disciplined and motivated free laborers would make the plantation economy prosperous, productive, and profitable. My analysis of Martineau's representation of the Haitian Revolution therefore underscores how political-economic issues, rather than moral principles, grounded her abolitionism.

Attending to Martineau's writings on the Haitian Revolution, this article furthermore expands scholarship that has analyzed "the conflicts between different visions of Haiti" developed by nineteenth-century political thinkers in the Atlantic world.⁷ For Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "the Haitian Revolution was unthinkable in its time" for European political thinkers, whose categories failed to grasp how the enslaved engaged in revolutionary action.⁸ Without discounting unthinkability, Susan Buck-Morss notes that some "eighteenth-century Europeans *were* thinking about the Haitian Revolution," pointing to how Hegel saw Haitian emancipation as the universal realization of freedom.⁹ Turning to the Americas and the Caribbean, scholars have noted how planters and pro-slavery intellectuals feared that the example of Haitian revolutionaries would animate the enslaved elsewhere to fight for emancipation, ruin plantation economies, and engage in racial violence.¹⁰ Different from planters' and pro-slavery intellectuals'

⁵Deborah Anna Logan, "The Redemption of a Heretic: Harriet Martineau and Anglo-American Abolitionism," in Kathryn Kish Sklar and James Brewer Stewart, eds., *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Antislavery in the Era of Emancipation* (New Haven and London, 2007), 242–65, at 242. For a similar claim see R. K. Webb, *Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian* (New York and London, 1960), 154–5.

⁶Cora Kaplan, "Slavery, Race, History: Harriet Martineau's Ethnographic Imagination," in Ella Dzelainis and Cora Kaplan, eds., *Harriet Martineau: Authorship, Society, and Empire* (Manchester and New York, 2010), 180–96, at 183. Like Kaplan, Iain Crawford foregrounds political economy in his analysis of Martineau's writings on US slavery. Iain Crawford, "Harriet Martineau, White Women, and Slavery in the Antebellum South," *Nineteenth-Century Prose* 47/2 (2020), 89–116.

⁷Ferrer, "Talk about Haiti," 36.

⁸Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, 1995), 82.

⁹Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh, 2009), 51. Italics are in the original unless otherwise noted.

¹⁰David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford, 2006), Ch. 8; Edward Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation: The Caribbean Roots of the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge, 2008), Ch. 2; Jason T. Sharples, *The World That Fear Made: Slave Revolts and Conspiracy Scares in Early America* (Philadelphia, 2020), 242–53.

fear, Adom Getachew notes that Haitian revolutionaries “pointed to another vision of freedom” that enriched and expanded abolitionism transnationally through “the collective autonomy of sovereignty” and “a transnational empire of liberty.”¹¹ Indeed, Julius S. Scott has shown how black abolitionists built transnational communication networks joining Europe, the Americas, and the Caribbean to spread the Haitian Revolution’s influence and demonstrate black people’s capacities for freedom and self-determination.¹²

Expanding this scholarship’s focus on how conflicting representations of the Haitian Revolution shaped conceptions of emancipation in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world, this article analyzes Martineau’s writings to uncover a distinct way of thinking about revolutionary Saint Domingue. Specifically, I show how Martineau’s representation of the Haitian Revolution advanced a liberal abolitionist project that pointed to the possibility of ending enslavement and maintaining a stable labor supply to continue producing and trading sugar. By elaborating representations of revolutionary Saint Domingue that often stood in for the historical revolution itself, liberal abolitionists provided ideological foundations to conceptions of emancipation as a state-managed process that would transform the enslaved into free laborers without disrupting capitalist plantation production. Although this paper focuses on how liberal abolitionists represented the Haitian Revolution, it traces connections and differences with views of this revolution held by pro-slavery thinkers and abolitionists for whom emancipation should realize *cultivateurs*’ self-determination and autonomy from the plantation economy.

This article proceeds in three sections and a conclusion. In the first section, I introduce Martineau’s abolitionism and her work as a political economist by discussing the short story “Demerara” (1832) and *Society in America* (1837). The second section contextualizes Martineau’s writings on the Haitian Revolution and foregrounds her representation of Louverture as a statesman with admirable military and political leadership who rejected excessive violence. In the third section, I analyze how Martineau disavowed the tensions between Louverture’s use of state coercion to sustain agricultural capitalism and *cultivateurs*’ efforts to work for themselves in provision grounds. To conclude, I underscore the ideological and political-economic ambivalences and limits of how liberal abolitionists represented the Haitian Revolution and conceived of emancipation.

Harriet Martineau, liberal political economy, and abolitionism

Harriet Martineau was born in 1802 in Norwich, England, into a wealthy Unitarian family and, with her seven siblings, enjoyed access to education in schools and with

¹¹Adom Getachew, “Universalism after the Post-colonial Turn: Interpreting the Haitian Revolution,” *Political Theory* 44/6 (2016), 821–45, at 834.

¹²Julius S. Scott, *The Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution* (London, 2020). Recent works have traced the transnational influence of the Haitian Revolution in African American abolitionism: Leslie M. Alexander, *Fear of a Black Republic: Haiti and the Birth of Black Internationalism in the United States* (Urbana, 2023); Brandon Byrd, *The Black Republic: African Americans and the Fate of Haiti* (Philadelphia, 2020); Adam Dahl, “The Black American Jacobins: Revolution, Radical Abolition, and the Transnational Turn,” *Perspectives on Politics* 15/3 (2017), 633–46.

tutors. It was precisely in class with one of her tutors that Martineau first encountered political economy in lessons about the national debt. Yet Martineau only started studying political economy systematically in 1827, first reading Jane Marcet's *Conversations on Political Economy* and then the works of major authors, such as Jeremy Bentham, Thomas Malthus, James Mill, and Adam Smith. Motivated by her interests in and knowledge of political economy, Martineau wrote *Illustrations of Political Economy* between 1832 and 1834 with her brother James's assistance.¹³ A nine-volume work that explained the core tenets of liberal political economy, Martineau wrote it in the format of short stories, rather than as a social-scientific tract, for two reasons. First, women in nineteenth-century Britain were supposed to write in genres such as fiction that appealed to passion, while men wrote more "seriously" about history and political economy. Second, Martineau sought to make political economy accessible to the middle-class English, who understood a short story but not the discipline's specialized language.¹⁴ In Britain, *Illustrations* received glowing reviews, sold fast, and elevated Martineau's intellectual stature and popularity. The first two thousand copies sold in ten days and total sales reached roughly ten thousand copies.¹⁵

In the second volume of *Illustrations*, Martineau included the short story "Demerara" to narrate the return of Alfred and Mary Bruce, the children of a planter, to the British colony of Demerara after spending several years in England. Writing about enslaved labor in the British Caribbean, Martineau drew on Adam Smith to highlight how transforming the enslaved into free workers improved their laboring capacities.¹⁶ For Smith, "a slave ... who can acquire nothing but his maintenance, consults his own ease by making the land produce as little as possible over and above that maintenance."¹⁷ Echoing Smith, Martineau argued that enslaved workers were unproductive, costly, and prone to stealing, therefore reducing the productivity and profitability of plantation labor. In societies "where the labourer is held as capital, the capitalist not only pays a much higher price for an equal quantity of labour, but also for waste, negligence, and theft, on the part of the labourer."¹⁸ An unproductive and costly labor force

¹³Harriet Martineau, *Autobiography*, vol. 1 (Boston, 1877), 54, 103–5. For biographies of Martineau see Deborah Anna Logan, *The Hour and the Woman: Harriet Martineau's "Somewhat Remarkable" Life* (DeKalb, 2002); Valerie Kosssew Pichanick, *Harriet Martineau: The Woman and Her Work, 1802–76* (Ann Arbor, 1980); Webb, *Harriet Martineau*.

¹⁴Lana L. Dalley, "Domesticating Political Economy: Language, Gender and Economics in the *Illustrations of Political Economy*," in Dzelainis and Kaplan, *Harriet Martineau*, 103–17, at 103–4.

¹⁵Dorothy Lampen Thomson, *Adam Smith's Daughters* (New York, 1973), 32.

¹⁶For a complementary argument that insightfully shows how Martineau built on and expanded Smith's conception of sympathy to argue that the enslaved in the US deserved the rights and benefits of citizenship see Lisa Pace Vetter, "Harriet Martineau on the Theory and Practice of Democracy in America," *Political Theory*, 36/3 (2008), 424–55.

¹⁷Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), ed. R. H. Campbell, A. S. Skinner, and W. B. Todd (Indianapolis, 1981), III.ii.12. Most eighteenth- and nineteenth-century liberal abolitionists accepted and elaborated on Smith's critique of enslavement as hindering capital accumulation and productive development due to enslaved workers' high cost, low motivation, and unskillfulness. See David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770–1823* (New York and Oxford, 1999), Chs. 8, 9.

¹⁸Harriet Martineau, *Illustrations of Political Economy*, vol. 2 (London, 1832), 142–3.

rendered plantation economies stagnant. The land remained undeveloped and the population failed to increase. The character of Alfred explained that “the country, cultivated as it is, looks uninhabited. No villages, no farm-houses! Only a mansion here and there, seemingly going to decay, with a crowd of hovels near it.”¹⁹ Martineau underscored how planters received little benefit from enslaved laborers despite importing them to cultivate sugar. Plantations were poorly maintained and sites for settlement did not exist. For Martineau, enslaved workers’ low-quality laboring capacities meant that their labor neither created nor sustained a productive economy.

Martineau, however, did not think that enslaved workers were inherently inferior, instead arguing in “Demerara” that their laboring capacities would improve if employed like free laborers. Arguably, Martineau shared in a key assumption held by liberal political economists and abolitionists in the 1830s, who thought that wages would incentivize black laborers to work productively like their white counterparts.²⁰ Debating about transforming the enslaved into wage laborers in the Anglo-Caribbean, British abolitionists employed what Seymour Drescher calls “the experimental metaphor ... to convey the implication of a tightly controlled protocol” of emancipation.²¹ British abolitionists expected that the imperial state would control the experiment of West Indian emancipation, incentivizing the formerly enslaved to act rationally, develop new needs, and become free laborers in sugar plantations. Although the results of abolition, as of any experiment, could not be predetermined, British abolitionists insisted that a controlled transition from enslavement to wage labor would benefit labor and capital. Black laborers would earn high wages and planters and merchants would capture more profits from sugar cultivation and trade.²²

Adopting the experimental metaphor and speaking to its debates in “Demerara,” Martineau narrated how Alfred carried out an experiment in Mr Mitchelson’s plantation. Alfred employed the enslaved in conditions reminiscent of free labor to improve their laboring performance. If “the main feature of Alfred’s plan was to pay wages” to black workers, he also “promised them clothing in case of their working early and late, [and] showed them the ample provision of meat, bread, and vegetable he had stored at hand.”²³ Incentivized by wages and material rewards, black laborers worked productively when Alfred carried out his experiment. Contrary to the slow and low-quality labor of other enslaved workers, “the whole gang, from Cassius down to the youngest and weakest, were as busy as bees, and from them came as cheerful a hum.”²⁴ For Martineau, Alfred’s experiment highlighted the advantages of free labor over enslavement, with wages and material rewards improving black workers’ productivity. Thus Martineau advanced a core political-economic tenet of liberal abolitionism: free labor is more productive and efficient than enslaved labor.

¹⁹Ibid., 3.

²⁰Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938* (Baltimore and London, 1992), 279.

²¹Seymour Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor versus Slavery in British Emancipation* (Oxford and New York, 2002), 123.

²²Ibid., 123–35.

²³Martineau, *Illustrations*, 2: 66.

²⁴Ibid., 70.

Martineau further elaborated the experimental metaphor in her 1832 article “What Shall We Do with the West Indies?,” published to complement “Demerara.”²⁵ This article reflected a view of British abolition as an experiment carrying out “a consciously shaped, coherent, and controlled program of social change.”²⁶ Martineau stated that emancipation would succeed by ensuring that “the Slaves will be free” and that “the Abolitionists will emancipate” through a process controlled by the imperial state because “nobody temporizes but the British Government, the eternal temporizer.”²⁷ A state-managed process, abolition would create political-economic conditions to keep the emancipated in plantations as a productive and reliable labor force serving the West Indian sugar industry. To do so, the state would appropriate unoccupied lands to prevent free black laborers from becoming peasant proprietors who would leave plantations to work for themselves. Martineau wrote, “let every acre of unappropriated land be formally taken possession of in the name of the King of England,” and, afterwards, “let the entire emancipation of the Negroes be proclaimed.” Without access to land, the formerly enslaved could not become self-subsistent but would have to work in sugar cultivation as wage laborers to subsist: “if they expect not to starve, they must sell the only merchandise they have—their labour.”²⁸ Martineau claimed that transforming the enslaved into productive free laborers in the Anglo-Caribbean required the state to control the experiment of emancipation and make black laborers landless and wage-dependent.

Conceiving of the emancipated as capable of becoming productive wage laborers, Martineau rejected biological views of race and held this position her entire intellectual and political life. Accordingly, she never agreed with frameworks posing black workers as inherently inferior. For instance, Thomas Carlyle insisted that black laborers were unwilling to work unless forced to do so. “If it be his [the black worker’s] own indolence that prevents and prohibits him,” then a “wiser, more industrious person” should “compel him to do the work he is fit for.”²⁹ Although both Carlyle and Martineau stressed the importance of labor discipline, Martineau found Carlyle’s racist ideology unconvincing. In a letter to her cousin Henry Reeve, she stated that “one might easily show him [William Rathbone Greg] & Carlyle negroes considerably less ‘savage’ than themselves.”³⁰ Martineau even asserted publicly her view that black workers could improve their laboring performance when Carlyle’s racist ideology enjoyed immense influence

²⁵ Elisabeth Sanders Arbuckle, *A Nineteenth-Century Woman’s Engaging with Her Times: Harriet Martineau (1802–1876)* (London, 2019), Ch. 6, esp. 11.

²⁶ Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment*, 124.

²⁷ Harriet Martineau, “What Shall We Do with the West Indies?,” *New Monthly Magazine* 34 (1832), 408–13, at 408.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 412.

²⁹ Thomas Carlyle, “Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question,” *Fraser’s Magazine* 40 (1849), 670–79, at 673. Responding to Carlyle, J. S. Mill defended the abolitionist movement and advocated for increasing the labor supply in the Anglo-Caribbean. J. S. Mill, “The Negro Question” (1850), in Mill, *Essays on Equality, Law, and Education*, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto, Buffalo, and London, 1984), 87–95. For a discussion of the debate between Carlyle and Mill see Holt, *The Problem of Freedom*, 280–84.

³⁰ Harriet Martineau, “To Henry Reeve,” 17 Nov. 1868, in *The Collected Letters of Harriet Martineau*, vol. 5, ed. Deborah Anna Logan (London, 2007), 233–5, at 234.

and popularity in 1860s Britain.³¹ Writing about the US Civil War, she noted that northerners found impressive “how well and diligently they [the emancipated] worked under the stimulus of pay.”³² For Martineau, wages incentivized the formerly enslaved to work productively.

Following the publication of *Illustrations*, Martineau embarked on a trip to the United States between 1834 and 1836, visiting states in the North, South, and West (present-day Midwest). Holding publicly known antislavery views due to the popularity of *Illustrations*, Martineau visited a slave society for the first time in the South. She also met with planters, colonizationists, and abolitionists, from whom she gained insights about the two main projects to end enslavement: sending black workers to Liberia or transforming them into free laborers and citizens.³³ Observing enslavement in the US South, Martineau echoed claims she made in “Demerara.” She suggested that undeveloped conditions in southern plantation production evinced how enslavement rendered black workers idle, unmotivated, and unskilled. In the South, “the depression of agriculture is only temporary, I believe. It began from slavery, and is aggravated by the opening of the rich virgin soils of the south-west.” Contrary to enslaved workers’ use of low-quality methods that deteriorated farmlands, Martineau insisted that “improved methods of tillage, with the advantage of free labour, will renew the prosperity of Virginia, and North and South Carolina.”³⁴ Echoing her claims in “Demerara,” Martineau suggested that Southern agricultural production would improve if the enslaved became free workers.

Despite the similarities between Martineau’s political-economic analyses of enslaved labor in “Demerara” and in *Society in America*, her views on ending enslavement changed from colonization to abolitionism while she was in the US. In “Demerara,” Martineau supported colonization, conveying this point in a conversation between Alfred and his father. Alfred said, “we planters take upon ourselves the expense of transportation, and the society receives our free blacks under the protection of its agent at Liberia,” where “they will labour, and prosper and be happy.”³⁵ Before traveling to the United States, Martineau thought that projects to transport enslaved workers from the Americas and the Caribbean to West Africa would successfully transform them into happy, productive, and industrious free laborers.

However, she enthusiastically embraced abolition and rejected colonization while visiting the US, echoing a broader move made by Anglo-Atlantic abolitionists who shifted from gradualism to immediatism after 1830. For Anglo-Atlantic abolitionists, immediatism prevented planters from abusing gradual measures such as colonization to control black workers and ensured that the evil of enslavement would end promptly.³⁶ Martineau’s turn to abolitionism while in the US also reflected US abolitionists’ increasing agitation. In the US, abolitionists saw British emancipation as

³¹ Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment*, 217–25.

³² Harriet Martineau, “The Negro Race in America,” *Edinburgh Review* 119 (1864), 203–42, at 222.

³³ Logan, *The Hour and the Woman*, 78–98.

³⁴ Harriet Martineau, *Society in America*, vol. 1 (New York, 1837), 300.

³⁵ Martineau, *Illustrations*, 2: 138–9.

³⁶ David Brion Davis, “The Emergence of Immediatism in British and American Antislavery Thought,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 49/2 (1962), 209–30.

an ideal example for popularizing the abolition of enslavement among the US public. Moreover, US abolitionists followed news and accounts about Anglo-Caribbean emancipation to note how the end of enslavement was orderly and peaceful.³⁷ Martineau, of course, knew that the US public paid attention to British emancipation and recounted to Lord Durham how “our experiment in the West Indies is being watched with intense interest” in the US.³⁸

Immersed in that context, Martineau committed to abolitionism in 1835 after attending meetings organized by the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS). Persuaded by US abolitionists’ positions to end enslavement immediately and transform the enslaved into free workers and citizens, Martineau became one of the movement’s leading figures in the Anglo-Atlantic world. In *Society in America*, Martineau underscored her abolitionist commitments by emphasizing its superiority over colonization. “The scheme of transporting the coloured population of the United States to the coast of Africa is absolutely absurd” because it “would carry away the labourers” and leave the southern states without a labor force for plantations.³⁹ In contrast, “abolition would not only leave the land as full of labourers as it is now, but incalculably augment the supply of labour by substituting ... the forced, inferior labour, and wasteful arrangements which are always admitted to be co-existent with slavery” for free laborers.⁴⁰ In Martineau’s view, abolition provided a more plausible solution to the issue of enslavement than colonization. Abolishing enslavement guaranteed the southern plantation economy a labor supply of motivated, productive, and industrious free black workers, while colonization would deplete the labor force and destabilize agricultural production in the South.

Supporting immediate emancipation, Martineau shared similar views with black radical abolitionists like Robert Wedderburn. Inspired by the Haitian Revolution, Wedderburn encouraged black and white workers to engage in a transatlantic revolution that would end enslavement and proletarianization immediately.⁴¹ He wrote, “the fermentation will be universal” because “they [the enslaved] will slay man, woman, and child, and not spare the virgin, whose interest is connected with slavery.”⁴² Despite sharing immediatist positions, Martineau and Wedderburn viewed the process and effects of abolition in different terms. For Martineau, ending enslavement immediately would introduce a capitalist wage labor market to provide the US plantation economy with a motivated, reliable, and productive free black labor force. In contrast, Wedderburn encouraged the emancipated to keep “possession of the land you now possess as slaves

³⁷ Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation*, 145, 155, 176.

³⁸ Harriet Martineau, “To Lord Durnham,” 13 Feb. 1835, in *The Collected Letters of Harriet Martineau*, vol. 1, ed. Deborah Anna Logan (London, 2007), 260–62, at 261.

³⁹ Martineau, *Society in America*, 1: 348, 351.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 352.

⁴¹ Raphael Hoermann, “‘Fermentation Will Be Universal’: Intersections of Race and Class in Robert Wedderburn’s Black Atlantic Discourse of Transatlantic Revolution,” in Gretchen H. Gerzina, ed., *Britain’s Black Past* (Liverpool, 2020), 295–314.

⁴² Robert Wedderburn, “The Axe Laid to the Root, No. 1” (1817), in Wedderburn, *The Horrors of Slavery and Other Writings*, ed. Iain McCalman (New York and Princeton, 1991), 81–8, at 86.

... for if once you give up the possession of your lands, your oppressors will have power to starve you to death.”⁴³ Unlike Martineau, Wedderburn claimed that the formerly enslaved should hold the land in common to escape starvation as a mechanism of labor control that planters would enact.

Transformed into an immediatist, Martineau participated in Boston abolitionist circles, where she became interested in the Haitian Revolution and Toussaint Louverture. She claimed that “Dr [Charles] Follen,” an abolitionist and Harvard professor, “first fixed my attention on this Man [Toussaint L’Ouverture].”⁴⁴ Even more, Martineau regularly read the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator*. Edited by William Lloyd Garrison, this newspaper published articles favorable to the Haitian Revolution and Louverture, including one that recounted the July 1835 lectures of British abolitionist George Thompson in Andover, Massachusetts. Praising the Haitian revolutionaries’ and Louverture’s accomplishments, Thompson explained that under Louverture’s leadership “peace and order were restored” and “the liberated slaves were industrious and happy, and continued to work on the same plantations as before.”⁴⁵ Although Martineau did not know Thompson personally, she was aware of him and echoed his account of how Louverture kept *cultivateurs* in plantations to maintain order and make the island more economically prosperous.⁴⁶

Martineau encountered further references to the Haitian Revolution in the works of other Boston abolitionists such as David Walker, whose 1829 pamphlet *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* circulated widely and called for the enslaved in the US to rebel.⁴⁷ Having read Walker’s *Appeal*, Martineau characterized “its language” as “perfectly appalling.”⁴⁸ In *Appeal*, as Melvin Rogers explains, Walker contended that “African Americans must perform their freedom” to resist the domination of enslavement, servility, and ignorance.⁴⁹ A crucial dimension of Walker’s view about black Americans performing their freedom entailed embracing insurrectionism. Destroying enslavement in the US through a revolution would show black Americans’ capacity for and commitment to freedom and self-government. Walker stated that “my colour will root some of them [whites] out of the very face of the earth. They shall have enough of making slaves of, and butchering, and murdering us in the manner

⁴³ Ibid., 82.

⁴⁴ Harriet Martineau, “To William Johnson Fox,” 8 Dec. 1840, in *The Collected Letters of Harriet Martineau*, vol. 2, ed. Deborah Anna Logan (London, 2007), 71–2, at 71.

⁴⁵ R. Reed, “Anti-slavery Meetings at Andover,” *The Liberator*, 8 Aug. 1835, 2. I would like to thank Leslie Alexander for pointing me to this source.

⁴⁶ In a letter to Maria Weston Chapman, Martineau wrote that she had not met Thompson despite her sister Elizabeth knowing him. “To Maria Weston Chapman” (1837), in *The Collected Letters of Harriet Martineau*, 2: 11–12.

⁴⁷ For an account of Walker’s life, work, and influence see Peter Hinks, *To Awaken My Afflicted Brethren: David Walker and the Problem of Antebellum Slave Resistance* (University Park, 1997).

⁴⁸ Harriet Martineau, “The Martyr Age of the United States,” *London and Westminster Review* 32/52 (1838), 1–32, at 4.

⁴⁹ Melvin Rogers, *The Darkened Light of Faith: Race, Democracy, and Freedom in African American Political Thought* (Princeton and Oxford, 2023), 64.

which they have.”⁵⁰ To illustrate his claims about black Americans needing to act as revolutionaries to become free, Walker pointed to the Haitian Revolution and encouraged black Americans to follow its example.⁵¹ He wrote, “Hayti, the glory of the blacks and the terror of tyrants, is enough to convince the most avaricious and stupid of wretches.”⁵² Unlike black Americans, Walker suggested that Haitians did not live in conditions of enslavement, ignorance, and servility to whites. Instead, Haiti elucidated how blacks had ample capacities to perform their freedom by engaging in revolutionary self-emancipation and improving their social and individual conditions.

Besides Walker’s *Appeal*, Martineau probably knew about Maria Stewart, another Boston abolitionist who referenced Haiti in her speeches. As Kristin Waters notes, Stewart was a friend and mentee of David Walker and possibly attended meetings organized by the BFASS in 1833, only two years before Martineau joined.⁵³ There, Stewart would have met one of Martineau’s closest friends, Maria Weston Chapman. Adopting black nationalist positions influential among African American abolitionists, Stewart drew inspiration from Haiti as a nation where a sovereign black people showed their ability for freedom, engaged in militance, and enjoyed independence and self-determination from European colonialism.⁵⁴ Claiming that “it is useless for us [black Americans] any longer to sit with our hands folded reproaching the whites, for that will never elevate us,” Stewart urged black Americans to stop waiting for whites to abolish enslavement and rather follow the Haitians and fight for freedom. “All the nations of the earth have distinguished themselves,” including “the Haytians, though they have not been acknowledged as a nation, yet their firmness of character and independence of spirit have been greatly admired and highly applauded.”⁵⁵ Stewart stressed that African Americans should fight as a sovereign nation like the Haitians to assert their freedom, independence, and self-determination from enslavement and racial domination.

After spending two years in the US, Martineau returned to Britain in 1836 transformed into a committed and influential Anglo-Atlantic abolitionist. Earning recognition as an “American affairs expert,” she wrote extensively about US enslavement and abolition for British journals and newspapers.⁵⁶ Importantly, Martineau continued cultivating her interests in the Haitian Revolution. She read extensively about revolutionary Saint Domingue and Louverture and in 1838 visited Fort de Joux, where he was imprisoned and died.⁵⁷ Fascinated by Louverture and the Haitian Revolution, Martineau decided to write about this historical figure and event.

⁵⁰David Walker, *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (1829) (Chapel Hill, 2001), 23, available at <https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/walker/walker.html>.

⁵¹Alexander, *Fear of a Black Republic*, 84.

⁵²Walker, *Appeal*, 24.

⁵³Kristin Waters, *Maria W. Stewart and the Roots of Black Political Thought* (Jackson, MS, 2022), 5, 240.

⁵⁴Patrick Rael, *Black Identity and Black Protest in the Antebellum North* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 223–6.

⁵⁵Maria Stewart, “An Address Delivered to the Afric-American Female Intelligence Society of Boston,” *The Liberator*, 28 April 1832, 2–3, at 3.

⁵⁶Logan, “The Redemption of a Heretic,” 260.

⁵⁷Martineau, *Autobiography*, 412, 437.

The Haitian Revolution, Toussaint Louverture, and state-managed emancipation

Martineau focused on the Haitian Revolution, especially on Toussaint Louverture's government, in two texts: the article "Account of Toussaint L'Ouverture" published in 1838 in *Penny Magazine*, and the two-volume historical fiction *The Hour and the Man* (1841). In both works, Martineau stressed that the Haitian Revolution did not amount to an enslaved uprising but was an emancipation process controlled by the state under Louverture's command. She insisted that Louverture's government managed a transition from enslavement to free labor that remained orderly and increased Saint Domingue's prosperity by implementing labor policies that kept *cultivateurs* in plantations, protecting estates owned by planters, and curbing violence. Conceiving of the Haitian Revolution as an emancipation process that did not disrupt the plantation economy, Martineau disavowed the tensions between *cultivateurs* and the Louverture regime. She argued that the formerly enslaved supported Louverture's project maintaining them as plantation laborers, thereby concealing how the state used coercion and *cultivateurs* resisted it and sought to become self-subsistent. Engaging in a disavowal, Martineau denied how the Haitian Revolution inspired conceptions of emancipation as a process enacting black freedom and self-determination from the capitalist plantation economy. Instead, she incorporated the Haitian Revolution into a liberal abolitionist framework that advanced a view of post-emancipation societies in which *cultivateurs*, while formally free, would remain under the state's and planters' control in the process of plantation production.

Although *The Hour and the Man* was a historical fiction, Martineau did not frame it as purely fictional but argued that it accurately presented the main revolutionary leaders' actions, beliefs, personalities, and policies. To write it, Martineau consulted various historical sources about the Haitian Revolution, including the two most popular early accounts of it: Bryan Edwards's *An Historical Survey of the French Colony in the Island of St. Domingo* (1797) and Marcus Rainsford's *An Historical Account of the Black Empire of Hayti* (1805). Martineau likewise read the *Haytian Papers*, a compilation edited by the abolitionist Prince Saunders that included documents written by French and Haitian military leaders and the Haitian Declaration of Independence.⁵⁸ As Martineau stated, "the portraits which have some pretension to historical truth are those of Toussaint himself, Jean François, Christophe, Dessalines, and the other negro generals, old Dessalines, Bellair, Raymond, the French commissaries and envoys, Bayou, and Moyse."⁵⁹ Claiming historical accuracy, Martineau praised the historical Louverture's project to abolish enslavement while controlling *cultivateurs* to maintain a labor supply for sugar production. Such a process, as Jean Casimir underscores, relied on "draconian agricultural regulations ... to rebuild the commodity-producing plantation system," and necessitated the development of "a repressive apparatus" to control *cultivateurs* in plantations and punish those who left.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Harriet Martineau, *The Hour and the Man: An Historical Romance*, 2 vols. (New York, 1841), 2: 187. She included selections of the *Haytian Papers* in *ibid.*, 188–209.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 188.

⁶⁰ Jean Casimir, *The Haitians: A Decolonial History* (Chapel Hill, 2020), 148–9.

After its publication, *The Hour and the Man* became immensely popular, especially among US abolitionists who were the book's intended audience.⁶¹ The newspaper *National Anti-slavery Standard* published its first two chapters and a glowing review written by Lydia Maria Child. She "hail[ed] these volumes with grateful joy, as powerful agents in the anti-slavery reform" that showed "in an impartial, but glorious light, the much misrepresented Revolution of St. Domingo."⁶² Like Child, other US abolitionists, such as James Theodore Holly, Wendell Phillips, and William Wells Brown, among others, elaborated their representations of the Haitian Revolution influenced by *The Hour and the Man*.⁶³

In the novel, Martineau challenged negative representations of the Haitian Revolution, specifically rebuffing Bryan Edwards. *Historical Survey* was "useful chiefly as representing the prejudices as well as the interests of the planters."⁶⁴ The owner of approximately 1,500 enslaved laborers in Jamaica and a Member of the British Parliament between 1796 and 1800, Edwards participated in the mission sent by the governor, the Earl of Effingham, to the city of Cap Français with aid and supplies for the French colonists after the initial uprising in 1791.⁶⁵ Writing *Historical Survey* six years after visiting Saint Domingue, Edwards compared the island's political-economic conditions before and after the revolution. Edwards explained that before the revolution Saint Domingue's plantation economy was immensely profitable and prosperous. Fertile agriculture provided "greater returns than perhaps any other spot of the same extent in the habitable globe," and Saint Domingue's "towns abounded in warehouses, which were filled with the richest commodities and production of Europe, and the harbours were crouded [*sic*] with shipping" that had a value "equal to £4,765,129."⁶⁶ For Edwards, Saint Domingue's productive and profitable sugar cultivation and trade generated tremendous opulence.

Yet Edwards noted that revolutionary emancipation hindered the colony's access to profits, wealth, and markets. Haitian revolutionaries destroyed plantations, leaving the island without its key places for producing sugar. Citing the Saint Domingue Assembly leader, Edwards emphasized the devastation engendered by the revolution: "that verdure with which our fields were lately arrayed, is no longer visible; discoloured by the flames, and laid waste by the devastations of war."⁶⁷ If the island's plantation economy quickly fell into ruin despite its past prosperity, Edwards also insisted that Haitian insurgents remorselessly slaughtered the French population. In June 1793 "a negro chief called *Macaya*, with upwards of three thousand of the revolted slaves,

⁶¹Daut, *Tropics of Fire*, 60.

⁶²Lydia Maria Child, "The Hour and the Man: Or Toussaint L'Ouverture," *National Anti-slavery Standard*, 10 June 1841, 2.

⁶³Susan Belasco, "Harriet Martineau's Black Hero and the American Antislavery Movement," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 55/2 (2000), 157–94, at 159–60, 178–9, 182–3.

⁶⁴Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 2: 187.

⁶⁵Olwyn M. Blouet, "Bryan Edwards and the Haitian Revolution," in David P. Geggus, ed., *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World* (Columbia, SC, 2001), 44–57.

⁶⁶Bryan Edwards, *An Historical Survey of the French Colony in the Island of St. Domingo* (London, 1797), 131, 135–6. £4,765,129 in 1797 is roughly equivalent to £501,597,352 in 2024. See the Bank of England's Inflation Calculator at www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator.

⁶⁷Edwards, *An Historical Survey*, vii.

entered the town [of Cap], and began an universal and indiscriminate slaughter of men, women, and children.”⁶⁸ According to Edwards, the Haitian revolutionaries ruined the prosperous sugar industry and massacred French colonists.

That Martineau criticized Edwards’s representation of the Haitian Revolution highlights its influence in discussions about emancipation in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world. As Edward Rugemer notes, “Edwards’s interpretation translated into a general theory of insurrection that implicated abolitionist agitation in the origin of slave rebellion.”⁶⁹ Enslavers, especially in the US, adopted Edwards’s theory and evoked the “horrors” of Haiti to suggest that abolitionist agitation caused the 1811 Louisiana rebellion and Nat Turner’s rebellion.⁷⁰ Martineau, who met planters on her US trip, rejected this argument. Abolitionists like “Garrison ... a strenuous ‘peace-man,’” are “the chief reason ... why no insurrection movement has taken place in the United States.”⁷¹ Contrary to Edwards and US planters, Martineau claimed that abolitionism prevented enslaved rebellions.

If Martineau criticized Edwards’s *Historical Survey*, she also found unconvincing representations of Louverture as a fickle, vicious, and untrustworthy general who was “savage in warfare, hypocritical in religion,” and “the very prince of dissemblers.” Instead, Martineau claimed that Louverture was fair, heroic, rational, and courageous: “remarkable for a singular gentleness and placability, [Louverture] ought to not be believed sanguinary from that time forward on the strength of the unsupported charges of his disappointed enemies.”⁷² Praising Louverture, Martineau drew on Marcus Rainsford’s *An Historical Account of the Black Empire of Hayti*.

Charles Forsdick explains that Rainsford developed one of the initial positive representations of Louverture in Britain after visiting Saint Domingue and meeting Louverture in 1798.⁷³ Rainsford’s representations shifted from previous ones demonizing Louverture to admiring his character, discipline, and egalitarianism. For Rainsford, Louverture refused to participate in the initial revolutionary actions because his “heart revolted from cruelties attendant on the first burst of revenge in slaves about to retaliate their wrongs and sufferings on their owner.” Only after helping the owner of the plantation where he worked leave safely for Baltimore, Louverture “join[ed] the army of his country” and quickly “rose superior to all around him.”⁷⁴ Instead of representing Louverture as a vengeful revolutionary, Rainsford extolled him as a political and military leader who rose to a position of command based on his accomplishments, commitment, and impeccable judgment.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 116.

⁶⁹ Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation*, 44.

⁷⁰ Matthew J. Clavin, *Toussaint Louverture and the American Civil War: The Promise and Peril of a Second Haitian Revolution* (Philadelphia, 2010), 13–17.

⁷¹ Martineau, “Martyr Age,” 4.

⁷² Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 2: 179–80.

⁷³ Charles Forsdick, “Situating Haiti: On Some Early Nineteenth-Century Representations of Toussaint Louverture,” *International Journal of Francophone Studies* 10/1–2 (2007), 17–34, at 27.

⁷⁴ Marcus Rainsford, *An Historical Account of the Black Empire of Hayti* (1805), ed. Paul Youngquist and Grégory Pierrot (Durham, NC and London, 2013), 153–4.

Echoing Rainsford, Martineau contended that Louverture bore no responsibility for the violent start of the Haitian Revolution. The character of Louverture stated that “the revolution of St. Domingo proceeded without any interference from me—a negro slave.” Rather than ascending in political rank by leading a revolution, “I associated myself with the Spaniards ... who had extended protection to the loyal troops of my colour” and then “an unerring voice told me that my allegiance was thenceforward due to the [French] republic.” Fighting initially on the side of the Spanish and then with the French to abolish enslavement, “the blacks in their new condition wanted a leader” and “they chose me to lead them—to be the chief.”⁷⁵ Suggesting that Louverture had no involvement in the planning and execution of the initial revolutionary activities, Martineau explained his political importance based on his military campaigns, leadership, and skills.

For Martineau, *cultivateurs* and soldiers’ actions and demands, which were key to ensuring the historical Louverture’s rise to power, held little relevance except their decision to choose him as their chief with the sovereign power to lead revolutionary Saint Domingue.⁷⁶ Thus Martineau equated Louverture to a statesman, a political and military leader entrusted with sovereign command of the revolution freeing his people from enslavement. Indeed, she used this category to describe Louverture’s political standing, calling him “the great negro statesman” whose “frequent presence among the adoring people” underscored the tremendous legitimacy and support that he enjoyed.⁷⁷ As a political leader, Louverture exemplified the knowledge, reason, sovereignty, and strategy of a statesman rather than the bloodthirstiness and vengefulness of a revolutionary.

Martineau furthermore noted how Louverture found nothing agreeable in the violent acts that the Haitian revolutionaries perpetrated at the beginning of the revolution. According to Martineau, the revolutionaries ravaged sugar fields and terrorized the whites before Louverture assumed command: “it was clear that the negroes had everything in their own hands, and that the spirit roused in them was so fierce, so revengeful, as to leave no hope that they would use their power with moderation.”⁷⁸ Lacking in moderation, Haitian revolutionaries attacked planters and their families with excessive violence. Enslaved insurgents “murdered his [a planter’s] brother-in-law on Flaville’s estate, and carried off his sister and her three daughters into the woods.”⁷⁹ Despite no campaigns of mass executions of whites occurring when the revolution began, Martineau evoked physical and sexual abuse of white men and women by enslaved insurgents to suggest that Louverture responded with reprobation and disgust to racial violence.⁸⁰ His character asserted, “I look at the hell you have made of this colony

⁷⁵ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 161.

⁷⁶ As Kevin Olson analyzes, Haitian revolutionaries made demands that have been systematically excluded from historical accounts of the Haitian Revolution. Kevin Olson, *Subaltern Silence: A Postcolonial Genealogy* (New York, 2024), Ch. 6.

⁷⁷ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 191.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁸⁰ Studying the mass executions of whites ordered by Dessalines in 1804, Philippe Girard calls them a genocide. However, Robin Blackburn insightfully cautions against characterizing racial violence in Haiti

between night and morning, and I say that if this be not from revenge, there must be something viler than revenge in the hearts of devils and of men.”⁸¹ Underscoring how Louverture criticized violence, Martineau insisted that he disapproved of murdering enslavers and destroying plantations regardless of the revolution’s abolitionist aims.

Martineau, however, could not present Louverture as entirely against violence because he led military campaigns. Contending that Louverture did not rely on excessive and indiscriminate violence, Martineau explained that he only used it for self-defense against the expedition led by General Leclerc under Bonaparte’s orders to reestablish enslavement in Saint Domingue.⁸² In a conversation with Euphrosyne, the granddaughter of a cruel planter, who supported the revolution, Louverture explained his position. “The bracing process of defensive warfare” would “be inevitable” and “good for my people” to prize “their liberties, thus hardly won.” For Martineau, Louverture only resorted to violence for the sake of protecting *cultivateurs*’ freedom, unlike Haitian revolutionaries who killed and abused planters and their families indiscriminately. Indeed, the character of Louverture rejected using violence as a mechanism of racial vengeance, finding it illegitimate and unfounded. He explained to Euphrosyne, “if, however, one stroke is inflicted for other purposes than defence—if one life is taken for vengeance, we shall be set back long and far in our career. It shall not be under my rule.”⁸³ Besides praising Louverture’s military leadership, statesmanship, and rejection of revolutionary violence, Martineau also stressed that his government strengthened and benefited Saint Domingue’s sugar industry.

The Haitian Revolution and the post-emancipation plantation economy

Martineau analyzed revolutionary Saint Domingue’s plantation economy by comparing its productivity and profitability before and after Louverture became the leading Black General. In this comparison, Martineau drew on three contexts that shaped British abolitionism. For one thing, as Jack Webb explains, “Haiti became a test case for those campaigning for abolition,” who in the 1820s started contending that the island’s plantation economy evinced how emancipation increased productivity and profitability due to the higher efficiency of free labor over enslavement.⁸⁴ Writing about the Haitian Revolution, Martineau echoed these abolitionist arguments, suggesting that

as genocidal, instead contending that it prefigured twentieth-century colonial repression and anticolonial resistance. Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights* (London and New York, 2013), 211 n. 83; Philippe R. Girard, “Caribbean Genocide: Racial War in Haiti, 1802–4,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 39/2 (2005), 138–61.

⁸¹ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 30.

⁸² The expedition failed resoundingly. Haiti became independent from the French Empire in 1804. For an account of the expedition see Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787–1804* (Chapel Hill, 2004), Ch. 16.

⁸³ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 2: 126.

⁸⁴ Jack Webb, *Haiti in the British Imagination: Imperial Worlds, 1847–1915* (Liverpool, 2020), 8. Also see David P. Geggus, “Haiti and the Abolitionists: Opinion, Propaganda and International Politics in Britain and France, 1804–1838,” in David Richardson, ed., *Abolition and Its Aftermath: The Historical Context, 1790–1916* (London, 1987), 113–40, at 132–4.

revolutionary Saint Domingue produced and exported large amounts of sugar after emancipation.

Martineau furthermore built on influential conceptions of emancipation in 1830s and 1840s British abolitionism that highlighted the importance of the British imperial state controlling the labor of the emancipated to compel them to work in sugar plantations.⁸⁵ Similar to her article “What Shall We Do with the West Indies?”, in which she called the British imperial state the temporizer of abolition, Martineau saw the state led by Louverture as the main institution ensuring that *cultivateurs* would keep producing sugar in revolutionary Saint Domingue.⁸⁶ Moreover, when Martineau wrote about the Haitian Revolution in the late 1830s and early 1840s, British abolitionists and anti-abolitionists debated the prospects of sugar production in the post-emancipation West Indies. With Anglo-Caribbean sugar unable to meet British demand by 1840, planters and anti-abolitionists suggested that emancipation ruined the sugar industry and that reviving it required forcing the emancipated to return to plantations and importing indentured laborers from other parts of the world.⁸⁷ Rebutting anti-abolitionist claims, Martineau insisted that revolutionary Saint Domingue proved how emancipation benefited the sugar industry by transforming the enslaved into disciplined and efficient free laborers.

Recounting the revolution’s start in *The Hour and the Man*, Martineau claimed that *cultivateurs* vacated plantations, making them inhospitable and halting sugar cultivation. At the Breda estate, where Louverture lived and worked at the beginning of the novel, “the canefields, heretofore so trim and orderly, with the tall canes springing from the clean black soil, were now a jungle. The old plants had run up till they had leaned over with their own weight, and fallen upon one another.”⁸⁸ With sugarcane overgrown and uncared for and the plantation deserted, production at Breda stopped, indicating how the island’s sugar industry stagnated because *cultivateurs* withdrew their labor. In historical Saint Domingue, *cultivateurs* indeed left plantations during the revolution “and carved out semi-autonomous rural farms and communities” to become self-subsistent.⁸⁹ Martineau, of course, knew about these efforts to access provision grounds. In a conversation with Louverture, the revolutionary leader Jean Français confessed, “we have stopped all the mills” so that “every stream in the colony has a holyday [*sic*] today, and may frolic as it likes.”⁹⁰

To respond to *cultivateurs’* flight from sugar estates, the historical Louverture and his government relied on state coercion retaining them in plantations. Louverture restricted *cultivateurs’* freedom to control their labor by building on the policies of Étienne Polverel’s and Léger-Félicité Sonthonax, two French Jacobins and colonial administrators who decreed the abolition of enslavement in Saint Domingue in 1793.

⁸⁵ Holt, *The Problem of Freedom*, 180, 183–4.

⁸⁶ Martineau, “What Shall We Do with the West Indies?”, 408.

⁸⁷ Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment*, 158; Holt, *The Problem of Freedom*, Ch. 6.

⁸⁸ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 84.

⁸⁹ Johnhenry Gonzalez, “The New World ‘Sans-Culottes’: French Revolutionary Ideology in Saint-Domingue,” in Burke A. Hendrix and Deborah Baumgold, eds., *Colonial Exchanges: Political Theory and the Agency of the Colonized* (Manchester and New York, 2017), 101–15, at 112.

⁹⁰ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 29.

For instance, Louverture's government upheld Polverel and Sonthonax's policy of only recognizing the landownership of those who had bought or inherited it, most of whom were planters. Louverture also forbade selling small plots of land, ensuring that *cultivateurs* could not become peasant proprietors. Besides enacting policies separating the emancipated from the land, Louverture introduced wage labor in Saint Domingue by decreeing that *cultivateurs* should be paid to work. Yet his policies forbade the formerly enslaved from refusing to labor and introduced punishments like imprisonment and forced labor if they left plantations without authorization. When *cultivateurs* stopped laboring to rebel against these policies, such as in 1795 in the parish of Marmelade and in 1796 in the mountains above the town of Port-de-Paix, Louverture responded forcefully. He mobilized his soldiers, most of whom were also previously enslaved, and repressed the rebellions to restore order. Preventing *cultivateurs* from accessing land, compelling them to labor under threat of punishment, and repressing their uprisings forced them to continue working in the plantations where they had been enslaved.⁹¹

Writing about the Louverture administration's labor policies, Martineau disavowed their coercive character by concealing how state force structured the transformation of the enslaved into free workers. Engaging in a disavowal, Martineau adopted what Eduardo Grüner calls a "*strategy of forgetting*," making state coercion under Louverture a matter that "one does not speak of."⁹² Crucially, disavowing how the state forcefully deprived *cultivateurs* of access to land and retained them in plantations allowed Martineau to insist that the enslaved in Saint Domingue easily and in an orderly manner became free workers whose labor strengthened the post-emancipation plantation economy. Martineau therefore echoed the historical Louverture's belief that "the liberty of the blacks can be secured only by the prosperity of their agriculture."⁹³ With agricultural labor securing freedom, Martineau suggested, the emancipated enthusiastically supported Louverture's labor policies, which were intended to minimize disruption in the plantation economy by ensuring that sugar cultivation continued and that Saint Domingue remained dominant in the global sugar market.

Noting that Louverture "decreed that the former negro cultivators, though now free, should work for five years for their former masters," Martineau stressed that *cultivateurs* welcomed this decree despite having to continue working in plantations. She wrote, "upon his thus pronouncing, the blacks flocked to the fields, with arms by their sides, and the hoe in their hands; and all traces of war soon disappeared."⁹⁴ Insisting that *cultivateurs* immediately and obediently follow Louverture's orders to return to their jobs, Martineau disavowed how the decree authorized using state coercion to punish the formerly enslaved who refused to cultivate sugar. The emancipated did not become free plantation laborers willfully but faced forcible restrictions enacted by the state to prevent them from engaging in subsistence agriculture. As Carolyn Fick explains,

⁹¹ Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA and London, 2004), 184–93; Charles Forsdick and Christian Høgsbjerg, *Toussaint Louverture: A Black Jacobin in the Age of Revolution* (London, 2007), 91–3.

⁹² Grüner, *The Haitian Revolution*, 121.

⁹³ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 105.

⁹⁴ Harriet Martineau, "Account of Toussaint L'Ouverture," *Penny Magazine* 385 (31 March 1838), 121–8, at 125.

“Toussaint knew that the only way managers could obtain the requisite labor from the workers was through coercive measures.”⁹⁵ In Saint Domingue, *cultivateurs* did not approve, enact, and manage the introduction of free labor; it represented a coercive state-led process to procure a labor supply for sugar production.

The extensive influence of *The Hour and the Man* in nineteenth-century abolitionism meant that Martineau’s disavowal of Louverture’s coercive labor policies influenced how US abolitionists represented the Haitian Revolution. The abolitionist James Theodore Holly, who advocated for African American emigration to Haiti, drew on this disavowal in his 1857 lecture *A Vindication of the Capacity of the Negro Race for Self-Government, and Civilized Progress*.⁹⁶ Echoing Martineau, Holly suggested that *cultivateurs* supported Louverture’s decree keeping them in plantations and trusted his commitment to emancipation and efforts to sustain sugar production. “There was no other man” but Louverture that “freemen would have permitted to carry out such stringent measures in the island ... which were so necessary at that time in order to restore industry” and had to be enacted by “one of their own caste” with “unreserved devotion to the cause of their freedom.” For Holly, Louverture’s measures were stringent but uncoercive, with *cultivateurs* agreeing to them rather than facing state coercion to work in sugar plantations. Louverture thus was “the very *man for the hour*,” capable of both abolishing enslavement and providing a labor supply to the sugar industry.⁹⁷

Martineau further expanded the disavowal of coercive labor policies under Louverture’s government by lauding what she saw as their beneficial economic effects. In a conversation between the characters of Louverture and his former owner, Bayou, who had regained control of Breda after returning to Saint Domingue from Baltimore, the Black General ordered Bayou to “show us what can be done with the Breda estate with free labourers ... Make the blacks work well, that, by the welfare of your small interests, you may add to the general prosperity of the administration of the commander-in-chief of St. Domingo.”⁹⁸ In Martineau’s view, transforming the enslaved into free laborers benefited the island materially by expanding cultivation and trade. The formerly enslaved “are all honestly cultivating the fields,” which shows “how rich the whole island is growing; and how contented, and industrious, and honest the people are.”⁹⁹ Martineau contended that Saint Domingue’s exports grew considerably with a productive free labor force increasing the amount of commodities cultivated in plantations.

Underscoring her points about growing exports, Martineau recounted how, in the town of St Marc, Jean-Jacques Dessalines saw “how busy were the wharves—how the storehouses were overflowing—how the sea was covered with merchantships—and how the cheerful hum of prosperous industry was heard the long day

⁹⁵ Carolyn Fick, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville, 1990), 208.

⁹⁶ On Holly’s *Vindication* see David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham, NC and London, 2004), 83–7.

⁹⁷ James Theodore Holly, *A Vindication of the Capacity of the Negro Race for Self-Government, and Civilized Progress* (New Haven, 1857), 25–6, added emphasis.

⁹⁸ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 107.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 193.

through.”¹⁰⁰ Although *cultivateurs* in historical Saint Domingue challenged state efforts forcing them to cultivate sugar for exportation, Martineau nonetheless stated that Louverture’s labor policies sustained the export-oriented plantation economy effectively. *Cultivateurs* worked hard, honestly, and happily, solidifying Saint Domingue’s dominant position in the global sugar market and the profitability of its plantation economy.

Suggesting that the increasing profitability and prosperity of sugar production and trade showed the commitment of the emancipated to Louverture’s political-economic project, Martineau refused to grapple with how growth in the plantation economy depended on exercising state coercion over *cultivateurs*. In fact, she contended that improvements in the island’s sugar exports reinforced popular support for Louverture: “the commerce of all nations visited the shores of St. Domingo under the American flag; the treasury filled; the estates flourished, and Toussaint was adored.”¹⁰¹ Absent from Martineau’s account were the mechanisms of state coercion that sustained and expanded the export-oriented plantation economy by repressing *cultivateurs’* efforts to subsist based on small-scale farming.

As with the disavowal of Louverture’s coercive labor policies, US abolitionists drew on Martineau’s representation of revolutionary Saint Domingue’s export-oriented plantation economy. In a speech about Louverture, Wendell Phillips noted that exports in Saint Domingue grew when he ruled the island, without mentioning the importance of state coercion in this process. Contending that Louverture declared that “the ports of St. Domingo are open to the trade of the world,” Phillips highlighted how “the commerce of the world was represented in its harbors” to emphasize the tremendous increase in sugar exports.¹⁰² Phillips, who carried a copy of *The Hour and the Man* to his speaking engagements, followed Martineau in disavowing that the growth of Saint Domingue’s export-oriented plantation economy depended on the state coercing *cultivateurs* to continue producing sugar.¹⁰³ Aware of Phillips’s speeches, including the one on Louverture, Martineau praised them in a letter to Henry Reeve: “how very fine Wendell Phillips’s speeches are!”¹⁰⁴

Based on her account underscoring *cultivateurs’* support for Louverture’s policies, Martineau disavowed that they revolted against his efforts to coercively control their labor. In October 1801, approximately six thousand workers in the Northern Province revolted against Louverture’s policies depriving them of land and imposing control over their labor. With General Moïse, the north’s agricultural inspector, as their spokesman,

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 182.

¹⁰¹ Martineau, “Account of Toussaint L’Ouverture,” 126. Unlike Martineau, most British liberal abolitionists argued that Haiti remained backwards and undeveloped. For example, Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce advised Henry Christophe to enact British-inspired reforms that would modernize the Haitian economy by attracting African American emigrants to create a middle class and establishing a national education system. See Karen Racine, “Britannia’s Bold Brother: British Cultural Influence in Haiti during the Reign of Henry Christophe (1811–1820),” *Journal of Caribbean History* 33/1–2 (1999), 125–45.

¹⁰² Wendell Phillips, “Toussaint L’Ouverture” (1861), in Phillips, *Speeches, Lectures, and Letters* (Boston, 1884), 468–94, at 480–81.

¹⁰³ Belasco, “Harriet Martineau’s Black Hero,” 177.

¹⁰⁴ Harriet Martineau, “To Henry Reeve,” 21 April 1861, in *The Collected Letters of Harriet Martineau*, vol. 4, ed. Deborah Anna Logan (London, 2007), 271–3, at 272.

the rebels killed about three hundred whites and abandoned sugar estates where they were forced to labor. Military units commanded by Dessalines crushed the rebellion and Louverture ordered Moïse's execution by firing squad.¹⁰⁵ Martineau, however, obfuscated how the Moïse uprising was a manifestation against Louverture's coercive labor policies, instead suggesting that the rebels hated whites and wanted to remain idle. She claimed that "this new violence had for its object the few whites who were rash and weak," with the rebels "wandering from plantation to plantation, idle and discontented."¹⁰⁶ In other words, Martineau framed the rebels' motivations in terms of racial vengeance and an abuse of freedom by equating it to vagrancy.

Martineau, of course, advanced a similar argument in her description of Moïse's involvement in the rebellion. Rather than highlighting how Moïse sided with *cultivateurs* because he opposed Louverture's restrictions on landownership and subsistence farming, she contended that he shared the rebels' hate for the whites. Talking to Louverture's daughter Génifrède after being captured by the army, Moïse argued that he "heard of the insufferable insolence of some of the whites out at Limbé" and "quarrel[ed] with none who avenge our centuries of wrong."¹⁰⁷ According to Martineau, Moïse only wanted to avenge enslavement at the hands of the white population. This claim occluded how he supported granting *cultivateurs* access to provision grounds. Martineau thus denied *cultivateurs'* and Moïse's agency in opposing the Louverture regime and dismissed their resistance to Louverture's project forcing *cultivateurs* to become wage-dependent laborers in the post-emancipation sugar industry.

Besides disavowing the coercive character of Louverture's labor policies and that *cultivateurs* rebelled against them, Martineau noted that his administration protected private property, especially land owned by planters. Indeed, the historical Louverture never enacted a widespread expropriation policy and allowed planters who abandoned their estates to return even if they had conspired against him with the British or the French. When his army captured the Mirabalais region from the British in August 1795, he requested Étienne Laveaux, then Saint Domingue's colonial governor, to return abandoned plantations to their owners. Louverture reasoned that planters, who had expertise in producing and exporting sugar, would help rebuild the island's sugar industry by improving their estates' conditions.¹⁰⁸

In *The Hour and the Man*, Martineau followed Louverture's rationale and presented his measures protecting big landownership favorably. Caze, the representative of planters in the story, illustrated how the measures succeeded: "your voice reached us, inviting us to our homes. We trusted that voice; we find our lands restored to us, our homes secure." The character of Louverture not only concurred with Caze's assessment but emphasized how his government enshrined property rights to benefit Saint Domingue's sugar industry. He stated, "I have restored your estates because they were yours; but I also perceive advantages in your restoration."¹⁰⁹ For Martineau,

¹⁰⁵ Fick, *The Making of Haiti*, 208–10; Forsdick and Høgsbjerg, *Toussaint Louverture*, 96–8.

¹⁰⁶ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 216.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹⁰⁸ Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, 188–9.

¹⁰⁹ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 106.

Louverture's policies ensured that planters enjoyed safe and stable landownership and that *cultivateurs* could not take control of abandoned fields for subsistence labor.

Even more, Martineau argued that planters who stayed in Saint Domingue during the revolution benefited from Louverture's commitment to safeguarding their estates. Thérèse Dessalines, who was Dessalines's wife in the story, mentioned these benefits in a conversation with her former owner, Papalier, after he returned to the island as part of Bonaparte's expedition to restore slavery. During Louverture's rule, "white proprietors were very happy, perfectly satisfied ... I can undertake for L'Ouverture that your daughters' income from their estates shall be sent to them at Paris."¹¹⁰ In Martineau's view, an antislavery government respectful of private property, such as Louverture's, kept planters' land safe from expropriation and serviced by a productive free labor force that made it highly profitable. Crucially, Martineau suggested that Louverture's decision to not disrupt landownership in sugar estates explained revolutionary Saint Domingue's rising prosperity. In a conversation between the planter Revel and his agent, the latter explained that "the property had never before been so secure, nor the estate so prosperous; and that all would go well."¹¹¹ To explain how Louverture established conditions improving sugar production and exportation, Martineau pointed to his measures protecting planters' landownership.

Martineau's account of planters' secure landownership and growing prosperity while Louverture governed likewise influenced how US abolitionists elaborated positive representations of the Haitian Revolution. The abolitionist William Wells Brown, who corresponded with Martineau and likely read *The Hour and the Man*, adopted her claims about planters benefiting materially from Louverture's protection and promotion of the sugar industry.¹¹² He wrote, "even the planters who had remained on the island acknowledged the prosperity of Hayti under the governorship of the man whose best days had been spent in slavery."¹¹³ Drawing on Martineau, Brown pointed to the Haitian Revolution as an instance of how emancipation benefited planters. Generating a prosperous and stable plantation economy required upholding extant property relations in land to sustain sugar production.

Although Martineau accurately underscored Louverture's commitment to protecting planters' landownership, her claim that these policies made the Haitian Revolution successful illuminates the limits of her representation of this revolution and her broader liberal abolitionism. Contrary to Martineau's suggestion that state-managed emancipation in revolutionary Saint Domingue maintained order, prosperity, and stability, Louverture navigated complex conflicts in this society. His efforts to revive the sugar industry through agrarian capitalism required an ample labor supply, yet *cultivateurs* sought to leave plantations to become subsistent peasants.¹¹⁴ To control them,

¹¹⁰ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 2: 129.

¹¹¹ Martineau, *The Hour and the Man*, 1: 213.

¹¹² Martineau and Brown corresponded about helping the runaway enslaved William and Ellen Craft settle in England. See Harriet Martineau, "To William Wells Brown," 14 March 1851, in *The Collected Letters of Harriet Martineau*, vol. 3, ed. Deborah Anna Logan (London, 2007), 190–91.

¹¹³ William Wells Brown, *St. Domingo: Its Revolutions and Its Patriots* (Boston, 1855), 18.

¹¹⁴ Srinivas Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans: Colonialism and Agency, 1688–1804* (Durham, NC and London, 1999), 310.

Louverture relied on coercive measures that, as C. L. R. James states, “confined the labourers to their plantations more strictly than ever,” with the aim of providing a post-abolition labor supply for sugar production.¹¹⁵ Employing coercive measures meant that Louverture sidestepped demands for accessing land from his core supporters, namely *cultivateurs* and soldiers.

At the same time, Louverture enjoyed limited support from planters and French colonial agents, from whom he maintained political autonomy even if he protected property rights and never sought independence from the French Empire.¹¹⁶ Remaining politically autonomous, Louverture, in Srinivas Aravamudan’s words, “create[d] military and political openings despite insurmountable odds.”¹¹⁷ One of these openings allowed Dessalines to declare Haitian independence in 1804 by deepening the path of autonomy opened by Louverture. Contrary to Martineau’s claims, what made Louverture a paramount political leader was not his policies protecting planters’ landownership but his key role in Haiti’s foundation as a black abolitionist state. Despite retaining control over sugar estates, planters supported French efforts to capture and exile Louverture because he never accepted their demands to reclaim ownership of *cultivateurs*.

Writing about the Haitian Revolution, Martineau advanced a liberal abolitionist project, insisting that emancipation in revolutionary Saint Domingue exemplified how ending enslavement benefited the export-oriented plantation economy. Arguing that Louverture managed an orderly transition from enslavement to free labor without disrupting sugar production, Martineau disavowed how controlling *cultivateurs* required using state coercion to dispossess them from the land and retain them in plantations. Thus Martineau’s representation of the Haitian Revolution limited the scope of *cultivateurs*’ freedom to a process transforming them into disciplined, motivated, and skillful wage laborers who would continue working in sugar cultivation.

Conclusion

In her *Autobiography*, Martineau insisted that *The Hour and the Man* “present[ed] that genuine hero [Louverture] with his actual sayings and doings (as far as they were extant) to the world.”¹¹⁸ For Martineau, revolutionary Saint Domingue showed how a state-managed process ending enslavement would strengthen the productivity and profitability of capitalist plantation production. *Cultivateurs* supported Louverture’s post-emancipation measures by quickly returning to work in plantations and not rebelling against his government. Obfuscating the tensions between Louverture’s government and *cultivateurs*, Martineau disavowed that Louverture used state coercion to sustain agrarian capitalism and *cultivateurs* resisted this effort and instead sought to become free as self-subsistent peasants in provision grounds.

¹¹⁵ C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York, 1989), 279.

¹¹⁶ Deborah Jenson, *Beyond the Slave Narrative: Politics, Sex, and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution* (Liverpool, 2011), 70.

¹¹⁷ Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans*, 324.

¹¹⁸ Martineau, *Autobiography*, 446.

Martineau's representation of the Haitian Revolution was far from unique. Other liberal abolitionists shared her account of revolutionary Saint Domingue's capitalist sugar industry growing and developing through a process of state-managed abolition led by Louverture. For the African American abolitionist James McCune Smith, Louverture's policies restored sugar production by making *cultivateurs* disciplined and productive. Importantly, Martineau and Smith shared intellectual backgrounds. The latter also engaged Adam Smith's work in his studies at the University of Glasgow.¹¹⁹ In a lecture on the Haitian Revolution, published in 1841 like the *The Hour and the Man*, Smith wrote, "this [revolutionary] army was converted by the commander-in-chief into industrious laborers, by the simple expedient of *paying them for their labor*."¹²⁰ In Smith's view, Louverture's policies introducing wage labor motivated *cultivateurs* to work efficiently in sugar production. Smith thus disavowed the importance of state coercion to forcibly retain *cultivateurs* in plantations through measures such as barring their access to provision grounds.

Even more, Smith also stressed how Louverture's policies revived the export-oriented plantation economy despite the labor force's smaller size: "the best proof of the entire success of his government is contained in the comparative views of the exports of the island, before the revolutions, and during the administration of Toussaint."¹²¹ Although Smith noted that after the revolution 160,000 fewer *cultivateurs* worked in sugar cultivation, he pointed out the large amount of commodities exported under Louverture to show how *cultivateurs* worked productively and brought profits to Saint Domingue. Echoing Martineau, Smith claimed that state-managed emancipation in revolutionary Saint Domingue was necessary and beneficial for agricultural capitalism and devoid of state coercion compelling *cultivateurs* to keep serving the sugar industry.

Through representations of the Haitian Revolution that underscored the political-economic benefits of ending enslavement, liberal abolitionists shaped their views of how emancipation happened and benefited other plantation economies in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world. In her 1866 book *History of the Peace*, Martineau followed her favorable representation of the Louverture administration's policies protecting planters' landownership to analyze similar measures taken by the British imperial state to abolish West Indian enslavement. Anglo-Caribbean planters retained their landholdings and received a £20 million indemnity to compensate economic losses stemming from costs incurred in transforming the enslaved into free laborers.¹²² For Martineau, state measures that maintained West Indian planters' landownership and economic stability highlighted the apt political-economic foundations of British abolition. Since "the law had recognized human beings as property, and on how bare a legal basis all right to property rests," Members of the British Parliament "were willing to avoid subtle controversy" to pass the Slavery Abolition Act and approved "the gift of twenty millions ... which must ever be considered a remarkable and honorable sign of

¹¹⁹Keidrick Roy, *American Dark Age: Racial Feudalism and the Rise of Black Liberalism* (Princeton and London, 2024), 160.

¹²⁰James McCune Smith, *A Lecture on the Haytien Revolutions* (New York, 1841), 22.

¹²¹*Ibid.*, 22–3.

¹²²Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment*, 136–7.

the times.”¹²³ As in revolutionary Saint Domingue, Martineau claimed that the British imperial state aptly sustained post-emancipation capitalist plantation production by protecting private property and paying an indemnity to offset massive economic losses.

Liberal abolitionists, then, drew on their representations of the Haitian Revolution to engage in what David Scott characterizes “as an ideological maneuver that takes up a position and puts forward a move.”¹²⁴ As Scott explains in his insightful analysis of C. L. R. James’s *The Black Jacobins*, Martineau engaged in an ideological maneuver that brought the Haitian Revolution under the fold of liberal abolitionism. Martineau contended that revolutionary Saint Domingue showed how emancipation created material benefits in the form of profits, prosperity, the expansion of an export-oriented plantation economy, and stable landownership. In her view, abolition need not be a violent break with the extant order of capitalist plantation economies, but rather resulted in these economies growing and flourishing. Ideologically, Martineau’s representation of the Haitian Revolution illustrated how liberal abolitionists conceived of emancipation as reproducing and strengthening agricultural capitalism, limiting the horizon of *cultivateurs*’ freedom to become wage-dependent workers forcibly subjected to the capitalist labor market.

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¹²³ Harriet Martineau, *History of the Peace: Being a History of England from 1816 to 1854*, vol. 3 (Boston, 1866), 348–9.

¹²⁴ Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity*, 53.

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