



(Voodoo) spiritual leaders. There was no need to haggle over any last minute plans. They knew better than Karl Marx's (later) "wage slaves" that "they had nothing to lose but their chains." And the horrible treatment that their 'masters' heaped on them added a sense of desperation for them to kill or be killed once they revolted! Yet, Boukman and the female offered more inspiration than centralized leadership. And when the revolt was launched shortly thereafter, it was led by scores of decentralized bands of African workers, Maroon guerrilla groups –who were all joined shortly thereafter by separate Mulatto-led groups.

Before the well-known Toussaint L'Ouverture came on the stage, the Haitian revolution was being led by figures that the decentralized groups propelled forward: the Maroons Jean Francois, Bissou and Lamour Derance, and the rebel-enslaved workers Romaine the Prophetess and Hyacinthe the fearless leader of the battle of Croix des Bouquets. And the Mulattos had a number of their own independent groups and distinguished leaders plus there was also a small segment of whites who were in league with the anti-slavery wing of the French Jacobins, and who loosely allied themselves with one rebel group or another.

Within two years of the beginning of the French revolution, and continuing for twelve harrowing years, the Haitian revolutionaries would go on to militarily engage and defeat first their colonial enslavers, and afterwards a succession of armies fielded by Spain and England, as well as a traitorous Mulatto army, and finally tens of thousands of Napoleon Bonaparte's veteran French 'revolutionary' troops.

The victorious Africans would go on to found the country of Haiti in 1803/1804; the only country in world history established by formerly enslaved workers.

What better example could we use to weigh Marx's words about the "workers" engaging in, "fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and peoples struggles... in order to change yourself and make yourself fit for political rule?" (ref. cited)

The Marxist giant, C.L.R. James, who penned the classic *Black Jacobins* (1963, Random House) dissects that struggle. In it, James compares the Haitian revolutionary army led by Toussaint and later Jean Jacques Dessalines and Henry Christophe with the later Russian Bolshevik party: "[Toussaint and ]...his Black army generals filling the political role of the Bolshevik party" (James, 283). This brilliantly led, tightly organized and courageous army represents my dragon here. And James' book does much to rescue them from the shadows of history from our study. They are the ones who would surface as the most notable elements, while scores of the decentralized receded to the background.

