



Haiti, a Victim of Western Colonialism

The New Yorker [reported](#) on 17 July 2023 that, “Violent crime has long beset Haiti, but in the past two years, it has risen to an unprecedented level. In 2021, President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated, and the country spiraled into chaos. Since then, an unelected government has struggled to maintain order with an inadequate and corrupt police force, as the gangs that once operated exclusively in the slums have expanded across the capital and into the countryside and beyond. An estimated two hundred gangs are now active in Haiti, and they dominate as much as **ninety** per cent of the capital.

In a nation of **twelve** million people, there have been at least a dozen massacres by gangs fighting over turf, killing more than a **thousand** Haitians last year alone. Women are routinely raped and men murdered; many of the victims are **burned alive** in their homes. Since the beginning of the year, according to a U.N. report, another thousand people have been kidnapped, and at least **two thousand** killed, including thirty-four police officers. Last fall, a gangster known as Barbecue took over the city’s main fuel port for nearly two months, causing devastating shortages of gas, food, and water, with half of Haiti’s population afflicted by acute hunger.”

Haiti is a victim of Western colonialism which continues to plague the world today. In the midst of the French Revolution (1789–99), slaves, maroons, and free people of color launched the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804), led by a former slave and the first black general of the French Army, Toussaint Louverture. Haiti was the first independent nation of Latin America and the Caribbean, the second republic in the Americas, the first country in the Americas to eliminate slavery, and the only state in history established by a successful slave revolt. Alas, since then, their history is a history of intervention, one after another, an episode of tyranny only overtaken by another, and all of this right under the nose of the greatest and richest power of the globe.

Firstly, the colonial powers of that time, namely, the United States, France, the United Kingdom, and Spain refused to accept the birth of a new nation and denied it from opening its embassies or having any trade or other relationships. The French continued trying to re-occupy its lost territory through invasion. It finally gave up in 1825 once Haiti agreed to compensate for the lost property in terms of plantations and slaves. France enforced an exorbitant amount of 150 million Francs on a land mass of 27 thousand square kilometers, which is equivalent to today’s 125 billion dollars. It is to be noted that the early nineteenth-century Franc was a denomination that had 0.29 grams of gold or 4.5 grams of silver and it was approximately equal to half a US dollar of the time. For this number (150 million Francs) to be seen in perspective it can be compared to two other land mass transfer agreements against financial compensation, namely, the Louisiana Purchase and the Alaska Purchase.

	Land	Price	Date
Haiti	27,000 km ²	150 million Francs \$75 million	1825
Louisiana	2,140,000 km ²	\$15 million	1818
Alaska	1,518,800 km ²	\$7.2 million	1867

The enforced payments to France hampered Haiti's economic growth for years, exacerbated by the fact that many Western nations continued to refuse formal diplomatic recognition to Haiti. Britain recognized Haitian independence in 1833, and the United States in 1862. Haiti was forced to borrow heavily from Western banks at extremely high-interest rates to repay its debt. By 1900, almost 100 years after freeing itself from slavery, 80% of Haiti's government spending was debt repayment and the country did not finish repaying it until 1947. This debt was owed to the colonialist powers i.e. to France, Germany, and the United States. In December 1914, the Americans took possession of \$500,000 from the Haitian National Bank, thus giving the United States control of the bank and preventing other powers from doing so. A claim was made that this will give a stable financial base on which to build the economy, whereas the reality was that this enabled the debt to colonial powers to be repaid.

Besides the economic stranglehold of debt and boycott, the Western ideas of nation-state and nationalism were used to carve up the island into two independent nation-states constituting the Western and Eastern halves of the island. Subsequently, these two halves remained at loggerheads for most of their modern history based on the weapons and support from the colonial powers. The two halves were always used to subdue the other whenever the colonial powers wanted.

In the second decade of the twentieth century, US President Woodrow Wilson, after fearing possible foreign intervention, or the emergence of a new government led by the anti-American Haitian politician Rosalvo Bobo, sent U.S. Marines into Haiti in July 1915. The USS Washington, under Rear Admiral Caperton, arrived in Port-au-Prince in an attempt to restore order and protect U.S. interests. Within days, the Marines had taken control of the capital city and its banks and customs house. The Marines declared martial law and severely censored the press. Within weeks, a new pro-U.S. Haitian president, Philippe Sudré Dartiguenave, was installed and a new constitution written that was favorable to the interests of the United States. The occupying US forces remained there until 1934 and a US-appointed financial advisor-general remained in direct control of the island nation's finances until 1941.

Massacres, interventions and coups occupy the rest of the twentieth century for Haiti. In 2004, after indirect meddling, the US once again sent in 20,000 occupying forces to Haiti. In other times, it has been other forces under UN mandates.

The reality of Haiti is that it is a country and a nation that had been deprived of its true potential, economically and politically by the colonial international order. The story of Haiti is a story of any other third-world country, where human pain and suffering did not hamper the greed and power politics of Western capitals.

This is in contrast to how Islam obligates the Khilafah state to spread the mercy of Islam by taking care of the weak and needy in all parts of the world i.e. by allowing them to taste the mercy of Islam by being governed by Islam. The West's international order creates islands of affluence in between condemned people in caged up lands where resources are robbed by Western powers and a financial order for debt payment is enforced upon them resulting in continuous political instability. The United States had declared its Monroe Doctrine in 1823, through which the US declared all of Americas including the Caribbean as its backyard. And what a miserable backyard it is. The richest nation in the history of mankind's neighborhood has the most failed states anywhere in the world. This is the so-called humanity of the Western modern state. They create electrified fences to keep destitute and desperate of these very states and places which the US has itself created. As a matter of fact, the Western modern state cannot succeed without colonialism. Some of the successful Western states which we see today exist only because of the hegemonic international order and its geopolitics which helps perpetuate Western colonialism.

It was a victory for the colonizing Western powers when they succeeded in erecting their systems, values, and behavior to be the reference point for the people of the world. So, the colonized people continue to consider the approval of these powers and conformity to their values as progress and accomplishment whereas real progress will be achieved when Western values and systems are exposed for their corrupt foundation and bigoted reality and replaced with the Islamic ideology, the truly universal and the only system and ideology built on divine revelation. It will be the Khilafah (Caliphate) on the Method of Prophethood that will through its foreign policy of Jihad merge lands and people so that their affairs are taken care of in the most dignified manner.

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