

# Capitalism, Lakouism, and Libertarian Communism



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By

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*This work, as with everything I pen, is done in the name of the ancestors,  
lwa yo, Erzulie, my grandparents (Saul and Eugenia Mocombe),  
sons (Isaiah and Daniel), and my wife (Tiara S. Mocombe)*



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# INTRODUCTION

According to the most recent theme of the Global Studies Association of North America conference, globalization under neoliberalism is facing a pivotal moment in history:

Since the economic crisis of 2008 it [(globalization)] has faced serious turbulence, challenged for its vast economic and social problems, as well as its environmental destruction. New political movements have appeared to displace or upset long-ruling traditional parties in the West. And women, constituting a large sector of the new labor force for global manufacturing, continue to struggle for an equal place at home and in society. Traditional Western globalists have offered no strategy except to continue their failing neoliberal model of development. But new roads have emerged that propose radically different possibilities. Among future alternatives to consider are the following: (1) The danger of populism with mass appeal to reactionary nationalism, militarism, misogyny, and racism. Such a future is evident in the rise of right-wing movements in Europe, as well as the ascent of Donald Trump. An important character of this trend is accumulation by militarization, disposition, and expulsions. (2) A re-balancing of political and economic globalization to a multi-polar transnational order. This would encompass a greater role for China in world affairs through its One Belt One Road Initiative for global development. It would also encompass deeper integration into the transnational economy of the global South, and consequently the rise of their influence in world affairs. (3) A new round of transnational accumulation based in green sustainable technologies, the development and application of AI technologies, robotization (automation), and the deepening of bio-technological innovations. A significant sector of the transnational capitalist class is making large commitments in these areas, including both private and state sectors in the US, Europe, and China. The global capitalist market is promoted as the developmental model for these technologies. (4) A transformation of capitalism based in socialist, feminist and environmental ideologies and social movements. An international order based on state sovereignty, equal exchange, common efforts to confront the planetary crisis of environmental destruction, as well as gender and economic inequality.

In this work, I offer the libertarian communism of the lakou system of the African people of Haiti as an alternative solution, in line with the second and fourth propositions outlined above, to the economic, social, and climate

problems associated with neoliberal globalization. In the end, I posit that the libertarian communism of the lakou system must come to serve as a global form of system and social integration the world-over to stave off the environmental and social problematics associated with neoliberal capitalism.

## Introduction

Globalization represents a Durkheimian mechanicalization of the world via the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism under American (neoliberal) hegemony. The latter (American hegemon), I conclude, serves as an imperial agent, an empire, seeking to interpellate and embourgeois the masses or multitudes of the world to the juridical framework of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism, and in the age of (neoliberal) capitalist globalization and climate change this is done within the dialectical processes of two forms of fascism or system/social integration: right-wing neoliberalism and identity politics masquerading as cosmopolitanism or hybridization. In this work, I conclude, that both represent two sides of the same fascistic coin in the age of (neoliberal) globalization and climate change. On the one hand, neoliberal globalization represents the right-wing attempt to homogenize (converge) the nations of the globe into the overall market-orientation, i.e., private property, individual liberties, and entrepreneurial freedoms, of the capitalist world-system. This neoliberalization is usually juxtaposed, on the other hand, against the narcissistic exploration of self, sexuality, and identity of the left, which converges with the neoliberalizing process via the diversified consumerism of the latter groups as they seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with agents of the former within their market logic. Hence private property, individual liberties, diversified consumerism, and the entrepreneurial freedoms of the so-called marketplace become the mechanism of system and social integration for both groups in spite of the fact that the logic of the marketplace is exploitative and environmentally hazardous. Hence, propositions 1 and 3 as outlined by the Global Studies Association are the *modus operandi* of the power elites of the neoliberal project, and are in direct opposition to propositions 2 and 4. In this work, I want to offer the libertarian communism of the lakou system of Haiti as a synthesis of both propositions 2 and 4 to combatting the neoliberal project.

Traditionally, right-wing fascism is usually associated with radical authoritarianism, ultranationalism, forcible suppression of opposition, and strong regimentation of society and of the economy. In the age of (neoliberal) globalization the latter processes are utilized by the American empire to retrench and force nation-states to adopt the juridical rules and

policies of neoliberal capitalism for capitalist development and accumulation. Paradoxically, the left utilizes these same processes, via identity politics, contemporarily, in order to promote equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the globalizing power elites of the right in spite of the climate change problematic caused overwhelmingly by the latter processes under capitalism and American hegemony. Hence, instead of promoting an alternative form of system and social integration to the neoliberal fascism of the right, the cultural elites of the left, antagonistically, seek to integrate within it using the same methods of the fascist right to promote identity politics, diversified consumerism, and equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution as the counter-hegemonic alternative to neoliberalism in the age of globalization and climate change.

Sociological theory regarding the contemporary (1970s to the present) phenomenon of globalization focuses either on these two logics of convergence and hybridization as though they represent two distinct alternatives. In this work, I argue they are not. The former, convergence, highlights the ever-increasing homogenization of cultures and societies around the globe via socioeconomic (neoliberal) rational forces. From this perspective globalization is tantamount to Westernization or Americanization of other cultures and societies via neoliberal economic, market, subjugation or by force with an emphasis on entrepreneurial freedoms, ultranationalism, and individual liberties. The latter, hybridization, emphasizes heterogeneity, the mixture of cultural forms and practices out of the integration of society via globalizing processes stemming from improvements in information technology, communications, mass media, etc. In this latter form, cultures and societies are not homogenized, but are cultural forms that are syncretized with liberal democratic Western capitalist rational organization, which offer an alternative to the former process and its exploitative and oppressive logic through a diversified consumerism that emphasizes exploration of the self, sexuality, and identity within the neoliberal framework of the marketplace. Hence, the other is an “other” (rational) agent of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism.

Amidst this argument regarding the nature and origins of globalization is climate change, which is a change in global or regional climate patterns around the world associated with the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use and abuse of fossil fuels. In this work, I want to propose that in globalization under American hegemony both positions regarding globalization are purporting the same process, convergence, via fascist measures of two groups, the right and cultural left of the American empire and other nation-states and communities, and that the only counter-hegemonic alternative to this thesis of convergence is the climate-change

effects of the earth itself, which requires that humanity reconstitute its form of system and social integration. The earth is counter-hegemonic to globalizing processes because of the ecological devastations, i.e., global warming, soil erosion, resource depletion, etc., associated with capital accumulation and capitalist relations of production, which antagonistically pins the material resource framework, the earth, against the logic of economic growth encapsulated in the neoliberal Protestant discourse of the global social structure of inequality under American hegemony, which attempts to integrate the masses or multitudes to the neoliberal juridical framework of capitalist globalization via right-wing neoliberal ideology and force and left-wing identity politics via diversified consumerism of once marginalized others seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the former within the neoliberal framework of the contemporary capitalist world-system. Hence, Hybridization, is not an alternative to the convergence thesis, but complement its fascist neoliberal framework because the hypothesis here is that the purposive-rationality of the hybrid cultures and practices when they encounter globalizing processes under American Hegemony is for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution, with whites within a fascist call for identity politics and diversified consumerism not to overthrow or offer a counter hegemonic alternative systemicity to a process, capital accumulation, which threatens all life on earth via neoliberal market forces, pollution, global warming, etc.

“Culture of globalization” and the “globalization as culture” metaphors represent these two sociological approaches to understanding the contemporary postmodern phenomenon we call globalization (1970s-2000s). These two sociopolitical understandings regarding the origins and nature of globalization, as Kevin Archer et al (2007) points out, have “set off a vigorous and at times rancorous debate within the social sciences” (2007, pg. 2). On one side of the debate you have theorists who emphasize the “culture of globalization” and argue the idea that “the constitutive role of culture is critical for grasping the continued hegemony of capitalism in the form of globalization...Culture, they assert is increasingly being co-opted and deployed as a new accumulation strategy to broaden and deepen the frontiers of capitalism and to displace its inherent crisis tendencies” (Archer, 2007, pg. 2-3). In a word, in the continual hegemonic quest of capitalism to homogenize the conditions of the world to serve capital, globalization, in the eyes of “culture of globalization” theorists, represents a stage of capitalism’s development highlighted by the commodification of culture, diversified consumerism, as a means for accumulating profits from the purchasing and consuming power of a transnational class of administrative bourgeoisies and professional cosmopolitan elites in core,



semi-periphery, and periphery nation-states who subscribe to the social integrative norms of (neo)liberal bourgeois Protestantism (hard work, economic gain, political and economical liberalism, consumption, etc.). This “culture-of-globalization” understanding of globalization or the postmodern condition in late capitalist development is a well supported position, which highlights, in the twenty-first century, the continued hegemony of capitalism in the form of globalization (Hardt and Negri, 2000; Kellner, 1988; Giddens, 1991; Harvey, 1989, 1990; Jameson, 1984, 1991).

“Globalization-as-culture” theorists out rightly reject this socioeconomic position or interpretation underlying the emergence and processes of globalization. They believe “that globalization is marked by the hollowing out of national cultural spaces either consequent upon the retrenchment of the nation state or because culture continues to be a relatively autonomous sphere” (Archer et al, 2007, pg. 2). That is, “[f]or the “globalization-as-culture” group...culture is not that easily enjoined due to its inherent counter-hegemonic properties vis-à-vis neo-liberal globalization. Rather, for this group..., contemporary globalization is not merely economic, but a system of multiple cultural articulations which are shaped by disjunctive space-time coordinates. In other words, globalization is as much if not more the product of inexorable and accelerated migratory cultural flows and electronic mass mediations beyond the space-time envelopes of the nation-state system and the successive socio-spatial fixes of global capitalism” (Archer et al, 2007, pg. 4). In fact, culture, in many instances, serves as a counter-hegemonic movement to (neo) liberal capitalism as a governing “rational” system. This line of thinking is best exemplified in the works of Stuart Hall (1992), John Tomlinson (1999), Homi Bhabha (1994), and Edward Said (1993) among many others. For these theorists, cultural exchanges are never one-dimensional, and hybridization of culture in many instances serves as a counter-hegemonic force to the homogenization processes of global capital. That is, as postcolonial hybrids in their encounter with their former colonizers dialectically convict the former colonial powers of not identifying with the lexicons of signification of their enlightenment ethos, the hybrid identity is counter-hegemonic as they seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their white counterparts as an ethnic *other* (Bhabha, 1994).

Theoretically, for me, building on structuration theory, which views human social action as a duality and dualism tied to social structure the contents or social facts of which human actors internalize and recursively organize and reproduce as their practical consciousness, this debate between the advocates of the “globalization-as-culture” and the “culture-of-globalization” hypotheses is a fruitless debate grounded in a false ontological

and epistemological understanding regarding the origins and nature of the fascist (neo) liberal capitalist system that gives rise to the processes of globalization under American hegemony. Both groups ontologically and epistemologically assume that the origins of capitalism and its discursive practice is grounded in the dialectic of reason and rationality, thus drawing on the liberal distinction between capitalism as a public and neutral system of rationality that stands apart from the understanding of it as a private sphere or lifeworld cultural form grounded in the ontology of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism as argued by Max Weber (1905). The latter ontological position, if assumed by both schools, is a point of convergence that resolves their opposition, and gives a better understanding regarding the origins and nature of the processes of globalization and counter movements to what are in fact metaphysical cultural forces. That is to say, both schools of thought are putting forth the same convergence argument, the culture of globalization position from a Marxian systems integration perspective and the globalization as culture position from a Weberian social integration perspective. For the culture of globalization position cultural practices are homogenized to integrated within the rational rules or systemicity of capitalist relations of production and consumption at the world-system level so as to generate surplus-value from the consumption of cultural products as commodities in core nations, industrial production in semi-periphery nations, and agricultural production in periphery nations. The globalization as cultural group suggests that in the process of acculturating social actors to the organization of work within the capitalist world-system, homogenization does not take place. Instead, in the process of integration within the world-system, cultural groups intersubjectively defer meaning in ego-centered communicative discourse to hybridize the lexicons of significations coming out the globalization process thereby maintaining their cultural forms not in a commodified form but as a class-for-itself seeking to partake in the global community, via the retrenchment of the nation-state, as hybrid social actors governed by the liberal rational logic of the marketplace without discrimination.

The two positions are not mutually exclusive, however, and when synthesized highlight the same position, globalization, under American hegemony, contemporarily represents the homogenization of social discourse and action via hybridization. The latter, hybridization and its accompanying diversified consumerism, as the mechanism of social integration in globalization under American hegemony for the “other,” is the by-product of the black American civil rights movement of the 1960s coupled with the outsourcing of American industrial work to the rest of the world beginning in the 1970s.

Following the Protestant Reformation and the rise of Protestants to positions of power within the Westphalian nation-state system all social actors were interpellated and socialized via Protestant churches to be obedient workers so as to obtain economic gain via the labor market. Be that as it may, the church and the labor market (via education) became the defining institutions for socializing social actors as both Protestant agents and agents of and for capital. That is individuals, Protestant agents, with a work ethic that would allow them to pursue economic gain via their labor in a market as either agents for capital, laborer, or agents of capital, administrative bourgeoisie. The relationship, therefore, between the Protestant ethic and the capitalization of labor or the constitution of the labor market are not mutually exclusive. Instead they were and are necessary components for constituting a capitalist society under the metaphysical discourse of Protestantism. The Protestant Ethic and God, in a word, legitimated the organization of social actors as laborers, and the labor market was constituted to ensure that workers were rewarded, accordingly, to ensure that the discursive practices of the labor market were in line with the metaphysical discourse of the Protestant ethic.

What the two sociological approaches to understanding globalization have done is to separate the dialectic and theorize their respective positions from opposite sides of the dialectic, the culture of globalization scholars from the side of labor organization (forces of production) and practices and the globalization as culture people from the side of social integration (social relations of production). The “culture of globalization” scholars identify the economic practices by which Protestant agents organized and organize social practices the world over to socialize individuals to become “agents of and for capital” for the purpose of generating surplus value or economic gain for capital. In a word, the organization of work and its relation to the desires of capital is the dominating factor in understanding the processes of globalization for the culture of globalization group. Given the mutual constitution of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism this latter position is not inaccurate as the labor market also serves to integrate the social actor as not only an agent of capital but also a Protestant agent, i.e., a worker who gains, status, upward economic mobility, etc. by being obedient and working hard.

For the globalization as culture scholars the emphasis is on understanding how national cultures avoid being both an agent of capital and a Protestant agent to successfully carve out a national space within the globalizing process so as to achieve equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the globalizing power, America since World War II, which is seeking to integrate the multitude into the capitalist processes of globalization. This

position is not an alternative to the culture of globalization group but is actually saying the same thing. That is, in globalization under American hegemony the attempt of capital, the upper-class of owners and high-level executives operating predominantly out of the US, is to have national cultures carve out national spaces, nation-states, within a global marketplace wherein every group can have a comparative advantage disseminating their natural and cultural resources so as to accumulate economic gain for themselves and national and global capital. So through the commodification of natural and cultural resources and cultural identities (their comparative advantage) for sale and consumption, diversified consumerism, on the labor market global elites hybridize and universalize national discourse and discursive practices.

Hybridized national cultures in this process are not counter-hegemonic they are converging to meet the desires of global capital operating in postindustrial economies with emphasis on servicing the financial wealth of a transnational multicultural (phenotypically, sexually, etc.) capitalist class. Their discourse is not, however, the economic neoliberalism of the globalizing power seeking to fascistically homogenize their practical consciousness to benefit global capital. On the contrary, identity politics or cosmopolitanism, i.e., respect for human rights of “the other” to participate as agents seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution in the fascism of the neoliberal processes of the hegemonic power, is the *modus operandi* of the multicultural “other” elites.

It is this incessant claim for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution of the successful socialized hybrid liberal bourgeois Protestant “other” agent of capital the “globalization as culture” left-wing scholars identify as being counter-hegemonic. This counter-hegemony highlighted by the “globalization as culture” camp is grounded in the fact that the hybrid liberal bourgeois Protestant is allowed, and seeks to, compete in the global capitalist marketplace as a hybrid elite or Protestant agent and agent of and for capital against the gaze of their former colonial masters. This agential moment of hybrid others to participate in the global organization of labor is not counter-hegemonic—as the purposive-rationale of these hybrid agents is economic gain for themselves as an ethnic, sexual, gendered, etc., other at the expense of their poor—but, contemporarily, represents the means by which Protestant agents operating out of the US attempt to universalize their purposive-rationale among the others of the world so as to generate economic gain/surplus value or what amounts to the same thing reproduce the Protestant capitalist social system globally amidst is debilitating effects, i.e., climate change. The global other, via the language of identity politics of its elites, seeks to integrate within the systemicity of globalization not to

offer an alternative to it in the face of climate change associated with capital organization, accumulation, and exploitation.

Hence, globalization represents the discursive practice, “spirit of capitalism,” of American agents of the Protestant Ethic seeking to interpellate and homogenize, through outsourcing, mass mediaization, and consumption patterns, “other” human behaviors, cultures, around the globe within the logic of their metaphysical discourse, “The Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism,” so as to accumulate profit, via agricultural, industrial, and post-industrial/consumerist production, for the predestined from the damned. That is, via globalization social actors around the globe are socialized, through state ideological apparatuses such as education, the Protestant churches, and neoliberal market forces, funded by the IMF via the US nation-state, to become agents of the Protestant ethic so as to fulfill their labor and consumptive roles in the organization of work required by their nation-state in the global capitalist world-system under American hegemony. Integration via the retrenchment of the nation state under American global hegemony subsequently leads to economic gain and status for a few predestined, administrative bourgeoisie, or transnational capitalist class, that in-turn become cultural consumers, given the mediaization of society, of bourgeois goods and services from postindustrial societies like America while the masses are taught (via the church or school) the Protestant work ethic to labor in agricultural, industrial, or tertiary tourist or financial industries. Hence, proper socialization of the other in the contemporary capitalist American dominated world-system is tantamount to hybridization, i.e., the socialization of the other as a liberal bourgeois Protestant *other* seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their white counterparts within the neoliberal framework of the global capitalist nation-state world-system under American hegemony. This left-wing process of integration via hybridization is just as fascistic as the right-wing integrative measures of the globalizing nation, i.e., America.

American capital beginning in the 1970s sought to outsource work to other nation-states in order to escape the high cost of labor and environmental laws in the US. Given the new civil rights legislations enacted in the 1960s, as a result of the civil rights movement, to reinforce the American liberal bourgeois Protestant social order without regards to race, creed, nationality, etc. that discourse would be exported to other nation-states. American capital, therefore, sought to hybridized other ethnic cultures/practices the world over via the retrenchment of the nation state and color-blind legislation in order to make social actors of other cultures known for two reasons, to socialize them to the individualized and entrepreneurial work ethic of the neoliberal globalizing process and to accumulate surplus-

value as American capital sought to service the others of ethnic communities as agents of and for capital, i.e., consumers and administrative bourgeoisie controlling production for global capital, for their postindustrial economy focused on financial investment and cultural entertainment. Upon the encountering of the liberal bourgeois Protestant discourse of the metaphysics of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism under American hegemony, the response of the “other” cultural group was and or is participation in the world market system, using the ideological apparatuses of their nation-states and transnational corporations of globalizing forces to enforce this mantra via identity politics for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the elites of the globalizing force. Hence, the hybridization, or liberal bourgeois Protestantism of cultural “others,” which guides the behavior of many “other” cultural identities in the world-system as they seek to open up their nation-state markets for investment and participation in the global market place is a subversive-less hybrid simulacra of white liberal bourgeois Protestant ideals and actions and, contrary to the globalization as culture position, is not counter-hegemonic to the globalizing process under American hegemony. Instead, like the right-wing fascism of the globalizing power seeking to retrench the nation-state system under the control of corporatist dictators within the juridical framework of neoliberalism; the left-wing identity politics of the elite others also adopt the radical authoritarianism, ultranationalism, forcible suppression of opposition, and strong regimentation of society and of the economy of the right in order to promote their purposive-rationality of equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. within the juridical rules and laws of neoliberalism in the face of its deleterious effect, i.e., climate change. The libertarian communism of the lakou system of Haiti, I argue here, from its inception, has served and can continue to serve as a counter-hegemonic alternative world-system to the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism in order to salvage humanity and the world from the latter’s deleterious effects, i.e., exploitation, pollution, climate change, overconsumption, etc.

## **Background of the Problem**

Total liberty and equality became the clarion call of the Africans of the Haitian Revolution who sought to implement these two pillars of their democracy via the lakou system, which emerges out of their Vodou ontology and epistemology, Haitian/Vilokan Idealism, of the provinces and mountains of the country. In other words, the metaphysics and ontology of Vodou produced its epistemology, Haitian/Vilokan Idealism, and normative

ethic, reciprocal justice, which in turn produced its form of system and social integration, lakouism and the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism, respectively, by which the Africans of Haiti sought to recursively (re)organize and reproduce their being-in-the-world against the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and spirit of capitalism of the world-system and the Haitian bourgeoisie, Affranchis. The purpose of this work is threefold. First, I seek to highlight and outline the form of system and social integration, Lakouism and the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism, by which the African people of Haiti recursively (re) organize and reproduce their being-in-the-world. Second, I propose that for Haiti to experience total freedom its leaders must seek to vertically integrate the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism and the lakou system against the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism of the world system under American hegemony. Lastly, I suggest that the libertarian communism of the lakou system must come to serve as the global form of system integration the world-over in the age of climate change, overconsumption, and neoliberalism.

In other words, two forms of system and social integration would structure the material resource framework of Haiti after independence, the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism on the one hand, and the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism on the other. The African majority, referred here metaphorically as the children of Sans Souci, the African Kongolese warrior of the Haitian Revolution assassinated by the Affranchis, Henri Christophe, would be interpellated and subjectified by the enchantment of the world around the former; and their children (metaphorically the children of Dessalines, (Jean-Jacques Dessalines, the creole founder of the Haitian nation-state), young Africans, creole, and free blacks raised or born on the island, although interpellated and subjectified in the former world-view in childhood, many of them would, relationally, marginalize and discriminate against it for the enchantment of the world around the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism of the whites and mulattoes (metaphorically speaking, the children of Alexandre Pétion, the mulatto first President of the Haitian Republic). This work, building on Haitian epistemological transcendental idealism, Haitian/Vilokan Idealism, as it emerges out of Vodou metaphysics and ontology and gets encapsulated in Paul C. Mocombe's structurationist (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019) theory and method of phenomenological structuralism, explores how the Africans of Haiti institutionalized their understanding of total liberty and equality of the Haitian Revolution via the Lakou system of Vodou, which emerges out of their Vodou ontology and epistemology (Haitian/Vilokan Idealism), and their form of social integration, the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism. The work concludes that for Haiti to experience total freedom

and democracy it must seek to vertically integrate the libertarianism and egalitarianism, libertarian communism, of its lakou system as grounded in the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism of the African majority as the nation-state's form of social and system integration at the expense of the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism of the Haitian bourgeoisie, which, contemporarily, promotes neoliberalism, unbridled individualism, diversified consumerism, inequality, exploitation, and oppression. In fact, I conclude that in the age of capitalism induced climate change, the libertarian communism of the lakou system must come to serve as the form of system integration the world-over in order to combat its pressing deleterious effects, i.e., consumerism, climate change, exploitation, etc.

Traditional interpretations of the Haitian Revolution, and subsequent to that the constitution of Haitian identity, attempt to understand them, like the constitution of black diasporic and American practical consciousnesses, within the dialectical logic of Hegel's master/slave dialectic (Genovese, 1979; James, 1986; Fick, 1990; Trouillot, 1995; Nicholls, 1979; Du Bois, 2004, 2012; Buck-Morss, 2009; Ramsey, 2014). Concluding that the Haitian Revolution represents a dialectical struggle by the enslaved Africans of the island who internalized the liberal norms, values, and rules of their former French masters, for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution within and using the metaphysical and epistemological discourses of their former white slavemasters to convict them of not identifying with their norms, rules, and values as recursively (re) organized and reproduced by blacks. Haitian identity/practical consciousness, as such, was and is a simulacrum, of European (French-liberal bourgeois) practical consciousness and identity, which is universalized and presented as the nature of reality as such. This position, predominantly held by white Westerners, is usually juxtaposed against the postmodern, post-structural, and postcolonial approaches of Haitian and other black bourgeois intellectual elites (i.e., Aimé Césaire), which highlight the hybridity, ambivalence, *négritude*, syncretism, *indigénisme*, *noirisme*, and *créolité*, of the Revolution and Haitian consciousness (Genovese, 1979; Fick, 1990; Desmangles, 1992; Trouillot, 1995; Bellegarde-Smith and Michel, 2006).

Both interpretations, contrary to the position of Haitian intellectuals such as Jacques Roumain (1940) and Jean-Price Mars (1928), who advised the Haitian intelligentsia class to look to the provinces and the peasant classes to constitute Haitian culture, identity, and nation-state, are problematic in that they are ethnocentric and racist. They both overlook or misinterpret the initial African (indigenous) practical consciousness of the majority of the Africans on the island for either the practical consciousness



or discourse and discursive practices of the mulatto and petit-bourgeois black elites, *Affranchis*, looking (because of their interpellation and embourgeoisement) to liberal capitalist Europe, Canada, and America for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution, or for their (*Affranchis*) logic of postmodern, post-structural, and postcolonial theories to undermine that African presence in favor of notions of hybridity, créolité, négritude, indigénisme, noirisme, syncretism, intersectionality, double consciousness, race-men, etc.

In keeping with the logic of structurationist sociology, phenomenological structuralism, developed by Paul C. Mocombe out of Haitian epistemology, Haitian/Vilokan Idealism, which emphasizes human identity and consciousness as practical consciousness emanating from their internalization of the ideas and ideals of a social structure that differentiates them as they recursively reorganize and reproduce these ideas and ideals in and as their praxis (Ortner, 1984; Mocombe, 2017, 2018, 2019), the understanding here is that Haitian practical consciousness is a product of two opposing social structures or social class language games. The majority, two-thirds, of the social actors who would come to constitute the Haitian nation-state were African-born amongst a minority of mulattoes, *gens de couleur*, creole, and petit-bourgeois blacks (*Affranchis*) on the island interpellated, embourgeoisied, and differentiated by the liberal-bourgeois language, communicative discourse, modes of production, ideology, and ideological apparatuses of the West (the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism social class language game). As such, given their interpellation and embourgeoisement via the language (French), communicative discourse, modes of production (slavery, agribusiness, mercantilism, etc.), ideology (liberalism, individualism, personal wealth, capitalism, racialism, private property, Protestant Ethic, etc.), and ideological apparatuses (churches, schools, prisons, plantations, police force, army, etc.) of the West, the latter, *Affranchis*, became “blacks/mulattoes,” dialectically, seeking to recursively (re) organize and reproduce the ideas and ideals, the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism social class language game, of the European whites in a national position of their own amidst slavery, racism, and colonialism. This entailed attempting to constitute the nation-state within the mercantilist and (liberal) free-trade ideals of the emerging Protestant capitalist world-system under European hegemony via the *corvée* system, which sought to maintain Haiti as an export-oriented agricultural periphery state/colony under the leadership of a liberal-bourgeois elite class.

The African-born majority, were not blank slates, however, but brought with them from Africa their African languages, communicative discourses, ideologies, ideological apparatuses, and modes of production (form of social

and systems integration), the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism social class language game, to the island, which they recursively reorganized and reproduced on the plantations and as maroon communities via the lakou system in the provinces and mountains when they escaped (Métraux, 1958; Deren, 1972; Genovese, 1979; Rigaud, 1985; Fick, 1990; Desmangles, 1992; Trouillot, 1995; Bellegarde-Smith and Michel, 2006; Du Bois, 2004, 2012; Ramsey, 2014; Mocombe, 2016, 2018).

Following the Haitian Revolution, the majority of the Africans, given their refusal to work on plantations or agribusinesses (*corvée system*), migrated to the provinces and the mountains, abodes of formerly established “maroon republics,” and established a “counter-plantation system” (Jean Casimir’s term), i.e., lakou system, based on husbandry, subsistence agriculture, and *komes*, i.e., the trade and sell of agricultural goods for income to purchase manufactured products and services, organized around the discursive practices of lakous (Du Bois, 2004, 2012; Mocombe, 2016, 2017, 2018). Unlike Jean Casimir, this Lakou system, for me, was not a reaction to enslavement, or a product of race as suggested by the theory of noirisme. Instead, it was grounded in the Vodou religion and its epistemological transcendental idealism and realism, i.e., Haitian/Vilokan idealism. Casimir’s “counter-plantation system” is nothing but the Africans’ lakou system, which is a discursive practice of the discourse stemming from the Vodou religion and its epistemological idealism and realism, i.e., Haitian/Vilokan Idealism. As such, the lakou system is the product of the internalization of the ideas, ideals, and values of the Vodou Ethic as revealed in the material praxis, practical consciousness, and institutions of the Africans of Haiti and not a result of race or innate personalities as suggested by noirisme or afrocentric theories.

### **Theory and Method: Haitian/Vilokan Idealism and Phenomenological Structuralism**

The notion of lakou life and the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism as a product of the ideas, ideals, and values of Vodou internalized and recursively organized and reproduced in material practice as the practical consciousness of the Africans of Haiti stems from Paul C. Mocombe’s (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019) structurationist theory and method of phenomenological structuralism, which itself builds on the epistemology of Haitian Vodou, i.e., Haitian/Vilokan idealism. As a structurationist sociology, phenomenological structuralism posits that human practical consciousness is predominantly a product of their internalization of the ideas, ideals, and concepts of their social structure or social class language game constituted

via mode of production, language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse, which interpellates and differentiates human actors vis-à-vis their relations to the mode of production. In Haiti, as previously mentioned, two diametrically opposing social class language games would constitute the nation-state: the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism of the African masses; and the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism of the Affranchis, i.e., mulatto elites and petit-bourgeois blacks. Although both worldviews were represented as universal knowledge by their respective power elites, the latter was European, and the former emerged amongst the Africans of the mountains and provinces of the country and—like the European worldview, which is a product of the ever-increasing rationalization of their religiosity, the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism—is a product of their Vodou religion and epistemology.

Unlike German Idealism whose intellectual development from Kant to Schopenhauer, Hegel, Marx, Husserl, Heidegger, and the Frankfurt school produced the dialectic, phenomenology, and deontological ethics, Haitian Vodou and its epistemology, Haitian/Vilokan Idealism, produces a (hermeneutical) phenomenology, materialism, and an antidialectic process to history enframed by a reciprocal justice as its normative ethics. The latter is constantly being invoked by individual social actors to reconcile the noumenal (sacred—ideational) and phenomenal (profane—material) subjective world in order to maintain balance and harmony between the two so that the human actor can live freely and happy. The originating moments of the Haitian Revolution and its call for total freedom and equality demonstrates the antidialectical and normative processes of Haitian/Vilokan idealism, while the creation of the phenomenal world of subjective experiences according to one's capacity, modality, developmental stage (both spiritual, physical, and mental), methods, and spiritual court is symptomatic of the phenomenological (hermeneutics) development in Haitian/Vilokan Idealism and its form of system and social integration, i.e., the lakou system and the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism, which seeks to balance libertarianism and egalitarianism through a form of libertarian communism.

Ontologically speaking, in other words, within the Haitian metaphysical worldview, Vilokan/Vodou, the world is a unitary (energy) material world created out of Bondye (God). The world is a creation of a good God, Bondye Bon, which created the world and humanity out of itself composed of two intersecting spheres, the profane (the phenomenal world) and sacred (noumenal/Vilokanic, mirrored world of the profane). Embedded in that pantheistic material world are concepts, *lwa yo* in Haitian metaphysics and ontology, from the parallel mirrored (Vilokanic) world, that humanity can

ascertain via experience and the structure of its being, form of understanding and sensibility (dreams, reason and rationality, extrasensory perceptions), to help make sense of their experience and live in the world, which is Bondye, and therefore sacred, as they seek perfection and reunification (reintegration) with God, the energy force/source.

That is to say, it, Bondye, provided humanity with objects, concepts, ideas, ideals, and practices, i.e., *lwa* of Vodou, proverbs, rituals, dance, geometry, knowledge of herbal medicine, trades, and skills, by which they ought to know, interpret, and make sense of the external (phenomenal profane) world and live in it comfortably. These transcendently real objects, concepts, ideas, ideals, and practices can either be known through dreams, divinations, experience or rationality, and becomes the structure (once reified and institutionalized as proverbs, husbandry, dance, rituals, institutions, etc.) through which humanity come to know, hold beliefs and truth-claims. So Bondye, a powerful energy force that always existed created the world and humanity out of itself using four hundred and one transcendently real concepts (God and four-hundred *lwa*), ideas, and ideals (geometric principles, mathematics, etc.). Humanity and the world around it are an aggregation of bondye's material energy, the energy of God, which constitutes its existence. In humanity this existence is composed of three distinct aggregation of energy (*ti bon anj*; *gwo bon anj*; *ko*, the body), all of which are material stuff, which constitute our *nanm* (souls) where personality, truth-claims, knowledge, and beliefs are deposited, via dreams, revelations, extrasensory perceptions, divinations, experience, reason, the energy source of a God as manifested via a *lwa*, and can be examined and explored as the synthetic *a priori* of the human agent.

For humanity to constitute its existence and be in the world according to the will of God or Bondye, in other words, transcendently real concepts stemming from God's will (the mirrored world of the profane, *Vilokan*) are embedded in the material world, which is God, and can be ascertain and embodied by humanity via their constituted being as a material being with extrasensory perceptions, reason and rationality, and or through experience. As these transcendently real concepts are ascertain, they are constituted and institutionalized, and passed on through humanity via priests, priestesses, and early ancestors who institutionalized (reify)/ institutionalize them in the natural world via institutions, religious ceremonies, aesthetics, dance, rituals, herbal medicine, trades, concepts, and proverbs. These trades, ideals, proverbs, and or concepts are truisms, mechanisms to ascertain and constitute knowledge, which although they are deduced from the constituted make-up (i.e., consciousness) of the human being, in Haitian metaphysics they are attributed to God and the ancestors who institutionalized (reified)

them in order to be applied in the material (phenomenal) world so that their descendants can live freely in the world, satisfy their needs, be happy, and achieve perfection in order to reunite with the essence of God after their sixteen life cycles.

According to Paul C. Mocombe (2019), The Haitian epistemological position that would emerge out of this metaphysical worldview, Vodou, of the African people of Haiti and their form of system and social integration is a strong form of Kantian transcendental idealism and realism, which would be institutionalized throughout the provinces and mountains of the island (Desmangles, 1992; Mocombe, 2016, 2019). Kantian transcendental idealism “attempts to combine empirical realism, preserving the ordinary independence and reality of objects of the world, with transcendental idealism, which allows that in some sense the objects have their ordinary properties (their causal powers, and their spatial and temporal position) only because our minds are so structured that these are the categories we impose upon the manifold of experience” (Blackburn, 2008, pg. 356). Haitian epistemological transcendental idealism, Haitian Idealism or Vilokan Idealism, is a form of transcendental idealism in the Kantian sense in that it attempts to synthesize empiricism and idealism (rationalism) via synthetic a priori concepts/ideals the Haitians believe can be applied not only to the phenomenal but also the noumenal (Vilokanic) world in order to ascertain the latter’s transcendentially real absolute knowledges they call, *lwa*, gods/goddesses (401 concepts, ideas, and ideals represented as gods/goddesses), of Vilokan/Vodou, which they internalize and reproduce as their practical consciousness. So like Kant, Haitian epistemological transcendental idealism, holds on to analytic truths, truths of reasons or definitions, as outlined in their proverbs (*pwoveb*); a posteriori truth, truths of experience or experiments, also embedded in their proverbs, geometry (*veves*), rituals, magic, sorcery, and herbal medicine; and synthetic a priori concepts (categories in Kantian epistemology supplemented with trances, dream-states, extrasensory perceptions), truths stemming from the form of the understanding and sensibility of the mind and apparatuses of experience embedded not only in their proverbs and Vodou rituals, beliefs, and magic, but also their understanding of trances, dream-states, and extrasensory perceptions as categories of the mind applicable to the noumenal or Vilokanic realm where transcendental real concepts, *lwa yo*, exist which they must ascertain in order to live life happily in the phenomenal (profane) world. The latter, trances, dream-states, and extrasensory perceptions, they believe, in other words, are categories of the understanding that can be applied to the noumenal or Vilokanic world in order to know gods/goddesses, *lwa yo*, which are immutable/absolute concepts, ideas, and

ideals God has created and imposed upon and in the material world, from the mirrored world of the earth (Vilokan), which the people, who embody these concepts, ideas, and ideals, should utilize to recursively reorganize and reproduce their being-in-and-as-the-world in order to achieve perfection over sixteen life cycles (Desmangles, 1992; Beauvoir, 2006; Mocombe, 2016, 2018, 2019). Hence, unlike Kantian transcendental idealism, which removes God out of the equation via the categories, which imposes the order we see in the phenomenal world, Haitian epistemological transcendental idealism and realism, Haitian/Vilokan Idealism, holds on to the concept of God, supernatural, and the paranormal to continue to make sense of the plural tensions between the natural (material) world, i.e., the world of phenomenon, and the world as such, ideational, noumena, i.e., the supernatural and paranormal worlds, transcendental real world, which is knowable as truth-claims, knowledge, and beliefs, through dreams, divinations, revelations, experience, reason and rationality, and the synthetic a priori, for pure (development of science, i.e., herbal medicine, etc.) and practical reason (i.e., morals and values). Thus Haitian/Vilokan Idealism, unlike Kantian Transcendental Idealism, implies that the objects, concepts, ideals, ideas, etc., of the (ideational) noumenal world are transcendently real and the form of sensibilities and understandings, which include dream states, trances, and extrasensory perceptions are other categories, which can be applied beyond the phenomenal world, where the objects are really subjective ideas, in order to ascertain the nature of the absolute concepts of the Vilokanic/noumenal world in order to achieve balance and harmony with it in the phenomenal (profane) world. Within this pantheistic (Spinozaian) conception of the multiverse and material world, knowledge, truth-claims, and beliefs arise from transcendently real ideational concepts (*lwa yo*) of bondye/God as embedded in the earth's mirrored world (Vilokan) and gets deposited in our *nanm* (souls) intuitively, in dreams, revelations, divinations, extrasensory perceptions, reason, rituals, and or experiences which in turn constitutes and structures the form of the understanding of our minds and bodies (senses) so that we can experience the material world according to our developmental track over sixteen reincarnated life cycles (Beauvoir, 2006; Mocombe, 2016, 2019). The human being recursively (re) organize and reproduce these (Platonic) transcendently real ideational concepts as their practical consciousness in the phenomenal material world not always in their absolute forms as defined noumenally (the sacred mirrored world of Vilokan), but according to their level of learning, development, capacity for knowledge, and modality, i.e., the way they know more profoundly—kinesthetically, visually, etc.