

Prompt: To what extent did the Atlantic Revolutions cause societal change in the Americas from 1770 to 1840?

Document 1

Source: American Declaration of Independence, written primarily by proponent of American independence, Thomas Jefferson, 1776.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new Government.

The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. He has refused to pass Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only. He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; He has giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

- For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world
- For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent

Document 2

Source: Continental soldiers at Yorktown; on the left, an African-American soldier of the 1st Rhode Island Regiment (1781)



Document 3

Source: U.S. Constitution, Article 1. Section 2. The "Three-Fifths Clause," Ratified 1787

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature...

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.

Document 4

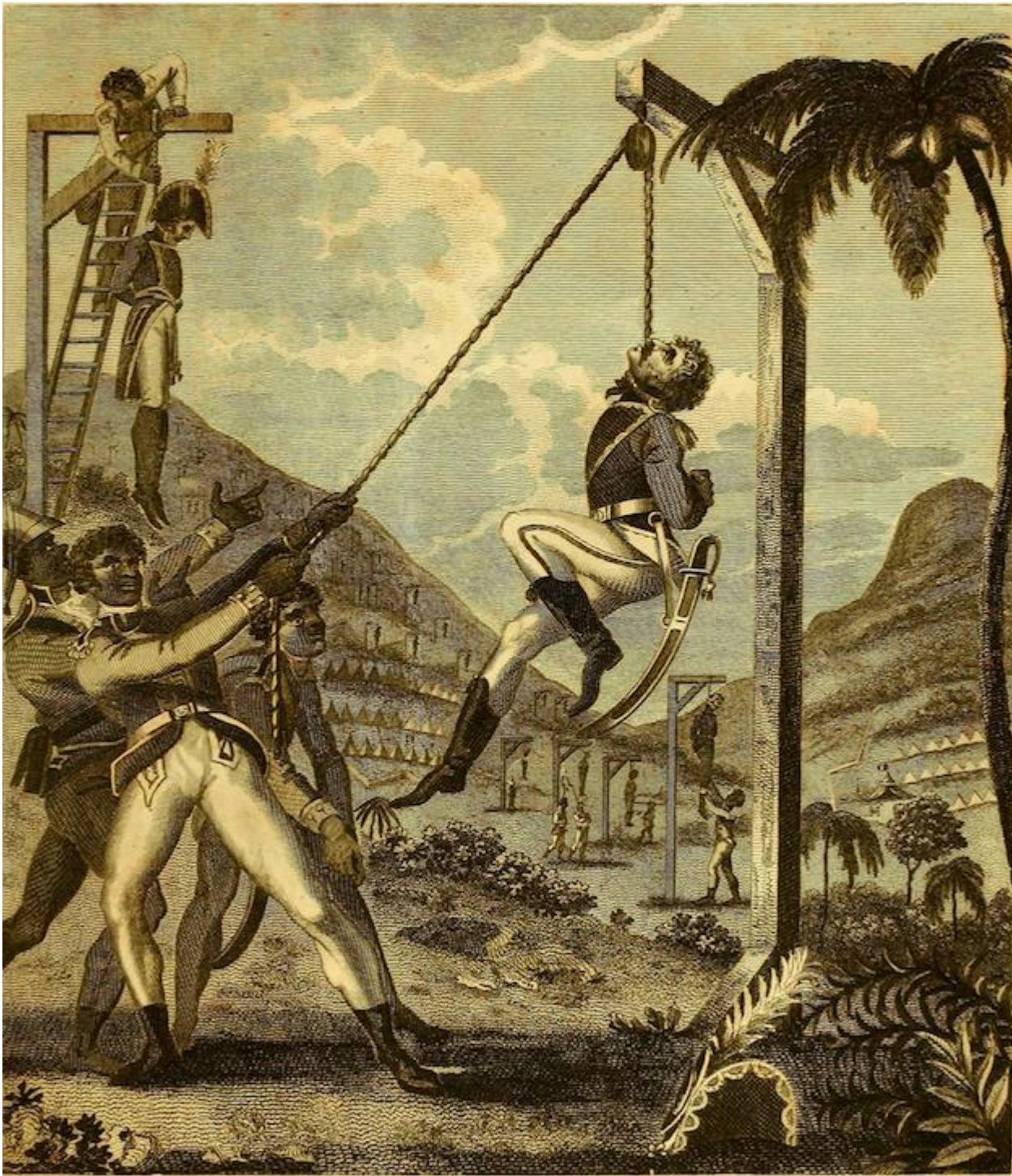
Source: Toussaint Louverture, in a Letter to the French Minister of Marine and Colonies under the French Emperor Napoleon, 13 April 1799.

[The whites in St. Domingue during the French Revolution] wanted to escape from their arbitrary [or absolutist] government, but they did not intend the revolution to destroy either the prejudices that debased the men of color or the slavery of the blacks, whom they held in dependency by the strongest law. In their opinion, the benefits of the French regeneration were only for them.

Thus, while whites were erecting another form of government upon the rubble of despotism, the men of color [men of mixed African and European descent] and the blacks united themselves in order to claim their political existence; the resistance of the former having become stronger, it was necessary for the latter to rise up in order to obtain [political recognition] by force of arms. The whites, fearing that this legitimate resistance would bring general liberty to St. Domingue, sought to separate the men of color from the cause of the blacks in accordance with Machiavelli's principle of divide and rule. Indeed, the silence of pre-Republican France on the long-standing claims [by blacks in Haiti] for their natural rights made by the most interested, the noblest, the most useful portion of the population of St. Domingue... extinguished all glimmer of hope in the hearts of the black slaves and forced them, in spite of themselves, to... turn their arms against their fatherland...

Document 5

Source: Illustration by Captain Marcus Rainsford, British officer, entitled "Revenge taken by the Black Army for the Cruelties practiced on them by the French," 1805.



Document 6

Source: Mexican painting *Allegory of Independence*, depicting the personification of Independence seated holding a Phrygian cap, a symbol of freedom usually associated with the French Revolution, flanked by the creoles Hidalgo and Iturbide, with Hidalgo stepping on a figure representing despotism, 1834



Document 7

Source: Colombian Constitution of 1821, promulgated when Colombia obtained independence under the leadership of Simon Bolivar.

Article 5. The state recognizes, without any discrimination whatsoever, the primacy of the inalienable rights of the individual and protects the family as the basic institution of society.

Article 13. All individuals are born free and equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection and treatment by the authorities, and to enjoy the same rights, freedoms, and opportunities without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, national or family origin, language, religion, political opinion, or philosophy.

The state will promote the conditions necessary in order that equality may be real and effective will adopt measures in favor of groups which are discriminated against or marginalized.

Article 16. All persons are entitled to their free personal development without limitations other than those imposed by the rights of others and those which are prescribed by the legal system.

Article 17. Slavery, servitude, and the slave trade in all forms are prohibited.