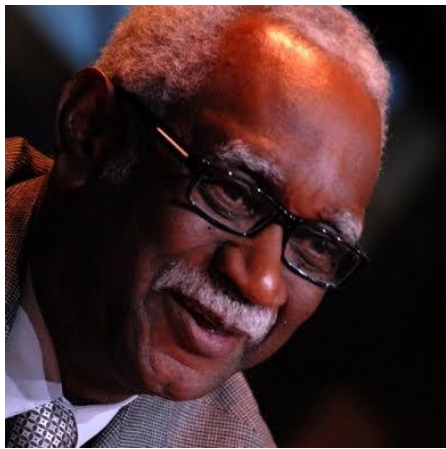


ImajiNASYON Think-and-do-Tank

The necessary change of narrative for character building requires the collaboration of a team of scholars, practitioners and specialists that will engage collectively in revisiting the fundamentals of Haiti's history, anthropological and sociological makeup, transgenerational trauma, root causes of exclusion and to rediscover the positive resources and potential that can generate, healing, enthusiasm, ideation, problem solving and collective action for the common good.

The multidisciplinary collective will provide a think-and-do scaffolding around the bridging process between communities and young educated Haitians.



Jean Casimir, (Haiti) PhD Sociology and Anthropology, teaches at the Faculty of Human Sciences, State University of Haiti. He obtained his professorship at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, where he taught for several years with a particular focus on studies of social change and development. He was a visiting Professor at Stanford University, at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica, and a Mellon Visiting Professor at Duke University. He published on social structures of Mexico, Brazil, Haiti and the Caribbean in general. Casimir is a former Ambassador of his country to the United States of America

(1991-1996). He has also held various posts with the United Nations, including among others United Nations Social Affairs Officer, and a position with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. His publications include *La Cultura Oprimida* (1980), *La Caraibe, une et divisible* (The Caribbean: *One and Divisible*, 1992), as well as countless book chapters and articles on Haitian culture, history and development in Haitian Creole, French, English and Spanish. In his most recent work published under the title *The Haitians: a decolonial history* (2020) Jean Casimir argues that the story of Haiti should not begin with the usual image of Saint-Domingue as the richest colony of the eighteenth century. Rather, it begins with a reconstruction of how individuals from Africa, in the midst of the golden age of imperialism, created a sovereign society based on political imagination and a radical rejection of the colonial order, persisting even through the U.S. occupation in 1915.

The Haitians also critically retheorizes the very nature of slavery, colonialism, and sovereignty. Here, Casimir centers the perspectives of Haiti's *moun andeyo*—the largely African-descended rural peasantry. Asking how these systematically marginalized and silenced people survived in the face of almost complete political disenfranchisement, Casimir identifies what he calls a counter-plantation system.



Edwidge Danticat (Haiti/USA) Edwidge Danticat is a Haitian-American writer whose literary works focus on the lives of women and their relationships. She also addressed issues of power, injustice, and poverty. She is the author of several books, including *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, an Oprah Book Club selection, *Krik? Krak!*, a National Book Award finalist, *The Farming of Bones*, an American Book Award winner, and the novels-in-stories, *The Dew Breaker*, *Claire of the Sea Light*, as well as *The Art of Death*, a National Books Critics Circle finalist. She is also the editor of *The Butterfly's Way: Voices from the Haitian Diaspora in the United States*, *The Beacon Best of 2000*, *Haiti Noir*, *Haiti Noir 2*, and *Best American Essays 2011*. She has written seven books for young adults and children, *Anacaona Golden Flower*, *Behind the Mountains*, *Eight Days*, *The Last Mapou*, *Mama's Nightingale*, *Untwine*, and *My Mommy Medicine*, as well as a

travel narrative, *After the Dance*, *A Walk Through Carnival in Jacmel* and a collection of essays, *Create Dangerously*. Her memoir, *Brother, I'm Dying*, was a 2007 finalist for the National Book Award and a 2008 winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for autobiography. She is a 2009 Mac Arthur Fellow, a 2018 Ford Foundation Art of Change fellow, a 2018 winner of the Neudstadt Prize, a 2019 winner of the Saint Louis Literary Award, a 2020 United States Artist Fellow, and a 2020 winner of the Vilcek Prize. Her most recent book, *Everything Inside: Stories*, is a 2020 winner of the Bocas Fiction Prize, The Story Prize, and the National Books Critics Circle Fiction Prize. She is a Member of the New York Writer's Hall of Fame and The American Academy of Arts and Letters. She is a member of the Technical and Scientific Committee of Le Centre d'Art and remains passionately attentive to the lives of Haitians in Haiti and beyond borders.



Pascale Denis (Haiti/USA) received her medical degree in Psychiatry from Haiti's State University and worked as a licensed psychiatrist for over 10 years before moving to the United States. Her approach expanded on the disease or medical model of psychopathology, by including contextual factors to better understand and treat patients. Specifically, the value of addressing patient's culturally based beliefs about their illness, challenges, and interventions, as well as the need to include family if treatment is to be successful. She also worked for a couple of years with a team of psychologists providing psychological support to women victim of politically motivated abuses.

Pascale Denis is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor who received her Master's degree in Mental Health Counseling from the University of Miami. As a psychoanalytic psychotherapist in private practice, she strives to create spaces that allow for in-depth exploration, and that support self-growth and change. She works with a diverse population, with a focus on gender, sexual and affectional orientation, as well as challenges associated with acculturation for first- and second-generation immigrants. In November 2012, she started and is still facilitating a monthly cancer support group, in Creole, for Haitians with cancer, and their caregivers, the only one in Miami-Dade County. Pascale Denis brings to her practice a keen interest for Haitian art and culture and a passion for the exploration of our transgenerational traumas and strengths both in Haiti and in the Haitian-American communities.



Laurent Dubois,(USA/Haiti) is the Democracy Initiative Professor in the Corcoran Department of History at the University of Virginia, and Co-Director of the Democracy Initiative. From 2007 to 2020, he was Professor of Romance Studies & History at Duke University, where he co-directed the Haiti Laboratory from 2010-13 and then founded and directed the Forum for Scholars & Publics. He has written about the Age of Revolution in the Caribbean, with *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (2004) and *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804* (2004), which won four book prizes including the Frederick Douglass Prize. His 2012 *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History* was a New York Times Notable Book of the Year. He has also written about the politics of soccer, with *Soccer Empire: The World Cup and the Future of France* (2010) and *The Language of the Game: How to Understand Soccer* (2018). His work on the cultural history of music, *The Banjo: America's African Instrument* (2016), was supported by a Guggenheim Fellowship, a National Humanities Fellowship, and a Mellon New Directions Fellowship. His most recent book is *Freedom Roots: Histories from the Caribbean* (University of North Carolina Press, 2019), co-authored with Richard Turits. His writings on music, history and sport have appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Slate*, and *Sports Illustrated*.



Yanick Lahens (Haiti) lives in Port-au-Prince, where she divides her time between writing and the social and cultural development of her country, particularly with young urban organizations. She taught literature at the university and contributes to radio and televised debates on societal issues. In 2019, Lahens was the first visiting scholar for the newly created Francophone Chair at the prestigious Collège de France in Paris. Her inaugural lecture and subsequent seminars were highly publicized events attended by literary and cultural celebrities from the African and European continents. Her keynote affirmed Haiti's singular place in

the world as the only State created by the successful battle of African captives against a major colonial power in the early 19th century. She serves on the boards of several higher education structures in Haiti and beyond. A great figure in Haitian literature, Yanick Lahens is regionally and internationally recognized through numerous Caribbean and European awards. She is the author of short stories, novels and critical works on Haitian literature and society in Haitian and foreign magazines. *Bain de lune* (Sabine Wespieser publisher, 2014), her great novel about the Haitian peasantry, fruit of several years of work, won the 2014 French Femina Prize. Her books are translated into English, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Japanese. The American edition of *Bain de Lune* was prefaced by Russell Banks. She is a founding member of ISMA, a courageous multisector initiative in Haiti to organize around mental health issues.



Gaston Jean, (Haiti) has a PhD in Environmental Science, and is a community leader.

Son of two farmers, Gaston completed his schooling and undergraduate university studies thanks to the courage and tenacity of his mother. He returned to his native region as a science schoolteacher and became a strong leadership figure for youth and smallholder farmers. He founded several community organizations and two rural internet centers where youth have free access to learning. Facing terrible political pressures in 2011, he studied at the National Institute of Applied Science in Lyon, France where he completed two Masters (Local Development and Community Project management) and a PhD in environmental science, specialized in ecological sanitation, composting and waste management. He returned to Haiti and to his native region where he continues to lead innovative projects in production and environmental protection. Parallel to his community work, Gaston Jean is attached to the Science and Innovation research department at Quisqueya University in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.



Gaston Jean will be a key bridging agent between ImajiNASYON's think-tank and some of the fundamental pieces of the project. The community association of smallholder farmers that he belongs to, Asosyasyon Orijinè Gwomòn/Granplèn, AOG, will be the pilot host of our immersion sessions and the organization's stability a model for the future. AOG has created their own community foundation based on local and diaspora participation, service and fundraising and AOG's "green school network" comprising some 60 rural community schools has been the main instrument for reforestation of the Grand Plaine region over the past 20 years with no help nor recognition from the State nor from international development agencies.

About the AOG and its reforestation program (in French)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJz6jXGNjQo>





Eliassaint Magloire, (Haiti) Agronomist, Director of the Organization for the Rehabilitation of the Environment, ORE, Haiti. Mr. Magloire is the most experienced Haitian seed specialist working in Haiti. ORE is a Haitian NGO created in 1985 in the Southern Camp Perrin region where it continues to work to improve environmental, agricultural and economic conditions in rural Haiti. With current food shortages and in the wake of disasters such as the 2010 earthquake and the 2016 category 4 hurricane Matthew, ORE is focused on supporting grassroots efforts to bring relief to the population and offer all available assistance to reduce suffering. Their development projects involve high revenue tree crops, improved seeds (never GMO seeds, never hybrids), cash crops and marketing programs - which successfully increase crop yields and farmer income, produce

nutritionally rich foods, and to protect the environment. ORE collaborates with local organizations and with international technical partners to develop climate-smart techniques and to empower women farmers. As Haiti emerges from its current period of unrest, these programs will play an important role in long-term recovery and Mr. Magloire's knowledge, practice and profound commitment to the smallholder farmers' economic participation is an essential piece to our project.

<https://rti-intl-dev.medium.com/women-maize-and-resilience-how-southern-haiti-is-preparing-for-future-challenges-f5e8d44d4acf>



Dr. Guerda Nicolas, Professor in the Educational and Psychological Studies department at University of Miami, School of Education and Human Development; Secretary General of the Caribbean Alliance of National Psychological Association; and Co-Founder of *Ayiti Community Trust*. She obtained her doctoral degree in clinical psychology from Boston University. She completed her pre-doctoral training at Columbia University Medical Center and her postdoctoral training the New York State Psychiatric Institute/Columbia University, Department of Child Psychiatry. As a multicultural (Haitian American) and multilingual psychologist (Spanish, French, and Haitian Creole), her research is reflective of her background and interests. Her current research focus on the integration of race and culture and well-being for ethnically diverse and immigrant communities. Some of the projects that she is currently working on include promoting academic excellence among ethnically diverse

youth; identify development of Black youths, and empowering ethnically diverse parents to be effective parents. In addition, she conducts research on social support networks of Caribbean populations with a specific focus on Haitians. She has published several articles and book chapters and delivered numerous invited presentations at the national and international conferences in the areas of women issues, depression and intervention among Haitians, social support networks of ethnic minorities, and spirituality.

Her recent books includes:

Contemporary Parenting: A Global Perspective by *Routledge Press*.

Building Mental Health Capacity in Haiti through Collaborative Partnerships by *Nova Publishers*.

Social Networks and the Mental Health of Haitian Immigrants by *Caribbean Studies Press*.

The Psychological Consequences of Extreme Poverty in Haiti by *Grégory Gustemable and Guerda Nicolas; Caribbean Studies Press*.



Michel Péan, (Haiti) is the Executive Secretary - of the Societe Haitienne d'aide aux aveugles (SHAA), the Haitian Society for the blind. Michel Péan became blind in his second year at university. Péan pursued his studies up to his PhD in literature and became one of the most dynamic figures of Haitian civil society engaged in social change. When in 2007, the Haitian government created the position of secretary of state for the integration of the handicapped in Haiti, Péan, until then executive secretary to SHAA, was the first person to occupy the new position. He took on the new role with the enthusiasm and efficiency that have come to characterize his work as an activist for the rights of people with disabilities.

Péan held the secretary of state position until 2010 after spending three years making the integration for the handicapped department one of the most reliable public offices in Haiti. Péan has since resumed his position at SHAA.



Jean Alix René, PhD. (Haiti) Professor of History at Ecole Normale Supérieure, also heads the State University Editing House. Professor René's research fields are the Haitian State during the 19th century and the roots of Haiti's actual systemic crisis. He has published an important study on populist seduction and his latest book, *Haiti après l'esclavage. Formation de l'Etat et culture politique populaire (1804-1846)* received the 2017 History prize from the Haitian History and Geography Society. This work is bringing to light previously untapped sources and archives to analyze the

complex thread of conflicts between the majority of citizens of the newly created Republic of

Haiti and its elites, to retrace the roots of our current economic and social deadlock and to find a positive understanding of the farmers' oppressed but resilient counterculture. Professor Jean Alix René's research and his continued engagement within Haiti's struggling public university, are an essential piece in the construction of this multidisciplinary think-tank.