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"You Know Haitians…": The Challenges of Community Organizing Among the Haitian Diaspora in Paris, France

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"You Know Haitians…": The Challenges of Community Organizing Among the Haitian Diaspora in Paris, France

by

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Dedication

To the halfies, hyphens, and in-betweeners, searching their past for answers and finding only a mirror.

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I remember pouring over acknowledgements when I read people's dissertations—at first for the gossip (you can find out quite a bit!) and then out of wonderment—could I fill a page or two of thanks? I needn't have worried.

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"You Know Haitians…": The Challenges of Community Organizing Among the Haitian Diaspora in Paris, France

Mitsy Anne Chanel-Blot, Ph.D.

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Supervisor: Edmund T. Gordon

This dissertation focuses on the experiences of Haitians living in France who are active in organizations seeking to benefit Haiti. Focusing on "hometown associations"—collectives formed by members of the diaspora who are generally from the same town, that engage in activities and projects for the benefit of their home country—my main question is how do a group of Haitians, committed to transnational engagement between France and Haiti, manage the challenges, pressures, and expectations in being a "diaspora" in light of the category's increasing institutionalization? Previous research has examined the impact of hometown associations in nations such as Mexico, but I sought to understand their importance in the context of personal, national, and international agendas, agendas that often neutralize or undermine the purpose of hometown associations. Despite increasing attention by national and international policy makers citing diasporas as integral to the survival and growth of struggling nations, my research shows that there is little support given to such collectivities, especially in the case of the Haitian diaspora. I argue that diaspora as a category has become more institutionalized, and as a result is inhibiting progressive, grassroots change more that it

empowers. My research hopes to highlight this trend so that policy makers and humanitarians can take a step back to better identify the future of diaspora as a geopolitical force for change in countries like Haiti, and gauge whether it can still function under the weight of its signification.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The meeting had started late, and by 8pm, patience was wearing thin. The exhaustion was palpable, given that most of the people present had rushed over from work to attend, as was often the case for these meetings. After a round of introductions, including presenting myself, the meeting of the board of the *Plateforme des Associations Franco-Haitiennes* got underway. The majority of the items on the agenda revolved around the upcoming August 2011 mission to Haiti. Following the January 12, 2010 earthquake that leveled much of the country's capital, the *Fondation de France*, a philanthropic donor organization, set up a special fund to distribute donations and government aid money to French organizations working in and for Haiti. The *Plateforme,* commonly known as PAFHA, had received a two-year grant, the first in their near decade-long existence as a federation of hometown associations. The grant notably permitted PAFHA to hire full-time staff members for the first time. The centerpiece of their proposal, however, was their *Formations des professionals,* a bi-national training program that would offer those in France and Haiti professional support to develop and fund projects to benefit Haiti. The project was PAFHA's most formal and ambitious to date, and with it came new considerations.

"We need to discuss our presence in Haiti," began the president of PAFHA, Gary Fleurimont. "Although the Ministry of Overseas Haitians sees us as an international NGO [nongovernmental organization], we are not formally declared. Without this declaration, we do not have access to a special import tax rate, for example. However we can also create a local version of PAFHA in Haiti, and become a local NGO. In order to

do this, it would require a number of local Haitians on the board. So I pose to you the question, should we declare ourselves an international NGO or go local?"

Gadner Seac, the former treasurer of PAFHA and well known for his loquaciousness, was the first to speak: "The priority of the mission is to train people in Haiti. All the energy of the president"—he avoided making eye contact with Gary—"should be to pave the way for Roosevelt's mission. I do not agree at all with becoming an NGO. We are an organization of Haitians. By declaring ourselves an NGO, it would be as if we just like any other international organization going to Haiti, and we know how those organizations are." Around the room, there were nods of assent. "An alternative to NGO status would be to regroup the associations that members of PAFHA have in Haiti."

Gary, sensing upset, headed Gadner off. "We need not be afraid of the term NGO. Regardless of whether we are Haitian, the reality is we *are* coming from France, and that's exactly how Haitians see us. They don't care that we are Haitian; they will treat us like any other outside organization. Like I said, the Ministry of Overseas Haitians already sees us as an international NGO. We just have to make a more concrete decision, and there are multiple options."

A younger member piped up. "We've been discussing this NGO status for a while now, and I've been here for a year."

"Bear in mind we have certain obligations to the *Fondation de France",* interjected Vladimir Boereau, PAFHA vice-president in charge of hometown association membership. "We need to set a date for what needs to be done now. We've wanted a

PAFHA in Haiti for some time, so why not just settle with that? It's worked for Alexandre and his organization, right?"

Alexandre Fleurime, vice-president of international relations within PAFHA, shrugged. "It would be nice to do the PAFHA-Haiti thing, but Vladimir is right, the *Fondation de France* is getting impatient, and *they* want to know what we're going to do."

The conversation made its way around the room, with camps being formed for and against the declaration of PAFHA as an international NGO in Haiti. Though at first people vehemently opposed the proposal, one member articulated a different perspective.

"If we were to work with the Ministry as an NGO, it would be a great strategy to give PAFHA more visibility and to act with greater efficiency," offered Liam Vertus, vice-president of *Union des Saint-Louisiens de France pour le Développement de Saint Louis du Sud*. "Associations in Haiti are limited in scope and vision. If we don't become an NGO, are we missing a chance to be involved in serious discussions in Haiti?"

Vladimir shook his head and raised his voice to be heard over the fresh outburst of conversation. "PAFHA's vocation is to bring organizations together, especially those of the local *paysans* to put them into contact with each other." Vladimir was clearly drawing on the perspective of his organization, *ARCHE*, which raised money to purchase cattle for local farmers. Impassioned, he continued, "We must not abandon this aspect of our mission. It is indispensible!"

"Ok, ok, hold on a second. One does not cancel out the other," Gary reasoned, a bit exhausted and perhaps bewildered by the intensity of the debate. "Let's really look at

the options. If we create a local organization, we must have a certain percentage of Haitians running it, and who knows how long it will take to find someone, especially given the current state of the country. Furthermore, we need to consider what form it will take, and what laws we must follow. But I gather than the sentiment seems to be to abandon the international NGO track…"

"The biggest, and most efficient organizations in Haiti don't even have NGO status!" interrupted Jean-Francois Chausson, the only white French member of the board, president of his organization *L'Espérance*. "We need to reinforce our network in Haiti!" He smacked the table for emphasis. "We don't need NGO status. If done correctly, we will have all the power without all the disagreeability of the NGO status."

Bookending the debate, Gadner declared that no vote could be taken that evening. "We need more research before we can make an informed decision. I motion to table this discussion." After more arguments, including threats to abstain or vote *not* to vote and simply take the discussion of becoming an international NGO off the table entirely, there was a unanimous vote and one abstention to push the NGO discussion to another meeting. After two more grueling hours of debate, the meeting adjourned around 11pm, and people wasted no time heading to the nearby metro to rush home to their families, tabling Haiti for another day.

This dissertation focuses on the experiences of Haitians living in France who are active in organizations seeking to benefit Haiti. My main question is how does a group of Haitians committed to transnational engagement between France and Haiti manage the challenges, pressures, and expectations in being a "diaspora" in light of the term's ever-

shifting meaning? I focused specifically on diasporic collectives known as "hometown associations," organizations formed by members of the diaspora who are generally from the same town, that engage in activities and projects for the benefit of their home country. Previous research has examined the impact of hometown associations in Haiti, notably their support of health and social services (Fagen, 2009; Mooney, 2011). Researchers who looked at the diasporas in New York City, Montreal, and Miami found similar trends: hometown associations were often headed by an individual or a very small, committed group; fundraising was a priority but mostly done through informal channels; inter-group relations were often fractured; there was limited engagement with the Haitian government or with the local communities being served; and an overall lack of organizational sustainability due to the trends outlined above. These characteristics were also found amongst the hometown associations in Paris. My aim, however, was to examine the ways national and international policy agendas shaped the conditions and possibilities of hometown associations, viewed writ large as "diaspora organizations" or as "diaspora activism". "Diaspora" has become a new buzzword in international donor organizations (with lofty titles such as *Diaspora: New Partners in Global Development Aid* and *Diaspora for Development in Africa*), but what diaspora means in these larger institutions does not necessarily translate to what the term signifies to the populations themselves. Rather, the term's popularity in this arena has led to the institutionalization of diaspora—the deliberate use by nation-states and international agencies of diasporas as extensions or substitutions of state projects. In other words, diasporas being brought into the world of humanitarian aid and are being asked and expected to perform the work

of/with NGOs, irrespective of the particular histories, formations, and personal agendas of those communities or the countries they represent. This is particularly detrimental for a population such as Haitians living in France, given the complexity of the post-colonial relationship between France and Haiti, the history of anti-immigrant sentiment and identity politics in France, and Haiti's struggle achieve sovereignty.

Hometown associations amongst Haitians are one of several well-known expressions of transnational diasporic engagement. Transnationalism is best defined as "the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (Basch, Glick Schiller, & Blanc, 1993: 6). These processes are not independent of the societies involved, but are in fact made possible or facilitated by availability of technology or open communication channels. For example, remittances—money sent to friends and family left back home—are possible because of money transfer companies like Western Union, yet policies regulate the fees that are charged that can make it more burdensome to send money. In France, the ease with which one can create nonprofit organizations facilitated the use of hometown associations as the main form of social and political engagement by Haitians living in France. Ease is one thing; sustainability is quite another. My research shows that there is little financial or material support from the government or development agencies given to such collectivities. This has a ripple effect, where Haitians living overseas are seen as unhelpful or selfish by their country folk back home, when in fact they may lack the means and support to take action.

Transnationalism is also deeply tied to the term "diaspora." Diasporas are vehicles for transnational practices, which are actions (such as calling home or sending money) and behaviors (such as reading a local newspaper or listening to a local radio station) that bridge two or more nations in order to "create a sense of community based on cultural understandings of belonging and mutual obligations" (Itzigsohn and Giorguli-Saucedo 2002: 767). It is important to note that transnationalism is not always practiced by diasporas, nor are all diasporas transnational. In the broadest sense, a diaspora is a group of displaced people that have a common place of origin. It is when we attempt to further define a diaspora's characteristics that it becomes increasingly difficult to have a conversation in which everyone is on the same page. The Haitian population is an excellent case study on the complicated nature of diaspora. For Haitians, it is more than a classification; it can signify national unity, cultural distance (you are not as Haitian as those in the country), or responsibility. These shades of difference are linguistically represented in the Haitian Creole language; what diaspora signifies is context-dependent, but still carries material, discursive power. Diaspora as a "floating signifier" makes it challenge to target the issues raised when attempting to organize or mobilize. When international aid agencies use the term "diaspora," they have a specific idea in mind. For example, in the Migration Policy Institute's report entitled *Diasporas: New Partners in Global Development Policy*, they quote Gabriel Scheffer's definition: "Modern Diasporas are ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host counties but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin—their homelands" (Newland, Terrazas, & Munster, 2010: 3). This could be considered a

neutral definition, but the report's aim is to demonstrate the ways in which governments can leverage diasporas as "new actors in development," giving them a chance to "deploy their resources faster and more flexibly than official aid agencies, which are inhibited by bureaucratic requirements" (*ibid,* 2). There is a lot of expectation placed on the potential of diasporas, seen as possessing a wealth of resources that governments and agencies can tap into. However, it is this expectation that can also set a diasporic community or organization up for failure. In light of the call to the diaspora following the earthquake that struck near Haiti's capital on January 12, 2010, we may perhaps ask ourselves whether the term has become a danger to itself and to the people it (presumably) represents.

I argue that "diaspora" as a category has become more institutionalized, inhibiting progressive, grassroots change more that it empowers. This reality also pushes us to revisit the concept of diaspora. I am invested in diaspora as a term of empowerment and agency. In the 1950s and 60s, the term was "re-branded" to not only refer to a group of people, but act as a unifying identity that implied a sense of belonging and even responsibility towards a home country (Clifford, 1994). Diaspora as a "condition" or a state of being became a powerful means of building community and nationalist sentiment among previously independently-acting individuals and families. Displaced people were more than immigrants, defined by their presence *here*, but had history and loose forms of community, defined by their existence *elsewhere*. Arguably, the concept itself has never been seen as a problem; scholars have mainly lamented its widespread use and dilution of its potential and capacity to explain migration-related phenomena. In this research,

however, I ask whether the term "diaspora" has become a liability, acting against the interests of those invested in it. Haitians living in France, particularly those who participate in community organizing, have become handicapped by the internal and external challenges they face with respect to their personal identities, community participation, national(ist) dialogues, and global expectations, and I claim that the institutionalization of diaspora is a root cause. Being labeled and engaged as diaspora can empower but without the appropriate structural support, diasporas—and their respective organizations and practices—can easily falter.

Through an analysis of the inner politics of hometown associations, all the while contextualizing them in higher level politics born out of imperialism, I suggest that we must not only work to particularize diasporic experiences (see Jackson, 2011a), but also take a step back to better identify the future of diaspora as a geopolitical force for change in countries like Haiti, and to gauge whether it can still function under the weight of its signification. In focusing on this specific community of Haitian immigrants—made up of politicians, teachers, doctors, students, and entrepreneurs—my aim is to shed light on the ways in which smaller organizations try to have an active role in their home country while dealing with a multitude of local, national, and international challenges, as hinted at in my ethnographic introduction. I am not prepared to argue for the term's death because it won't address the fundamental problem of these populations inability to be self-determined, but I do believe that the term has been stretched past its limits, and the Franco-Haitian diaspora is a case study in how a term can empower and limit.

My inquiries stem from my fieldwork spent living amongst Haitians living in Paris, France between the years of 2006 and 2012. When I had first started exploring the Haitian population in France, I had expected there to be a strong community with a deep sense of historicity and social consciousness that would compare to my experiences in New York where I was born and raised. I discovered quickly this was not the case, and my first reaction was, *why not*? To answer this initial question, however, I was forced to interrogate my expectation that there *should* have been such a community. The combination of my scholastic immersion in theories of diaspora and transnationality, and my personal experience of Haitian transnational practices had set me up for a strong bias. Beyond the "displaced people" definition, I already had an organic understanding of diaspora as a consciousness, in line with Clifford's description of diaspora as a people living in "tension, the experiences of separation and entanglement, of living here and remembering/desiring another place" (Clifford, 1994: 311). The Haitian communities in New York, Miami, and Montreal had so strongly embodied this tension and yearning that I had taken it as a natural part of the Haitian experience outside of Haiti. Moreover, so strong was the bond between the country and her people that physical separation caused the same symptoms of historical memory, cultural pride, obligation to financially support, and desire to socially organize, regardless of the cities. I had believed that the historical and colonial bond between France and Haiti would produce even worse symptoms, a proud defiance and strong sense of cultural activism. That is why I was so drawn to small hometown organizations; there, I felt, I would bear witness to the various diasporic practices and activities that attempted to bridge the distance between the two countries.

What I discovered instead was that France had exerted a much stronger influence on the possibilities and potential of diasporic communities. Furthermore, in spite of Haiti's move to harness the power of its citizenry abroad through the creation of a special state department, it remains a partially realized endeavor as the government tries to determine to what extent Haitians abroad can be part of Haitian life. Lastly, the devastating January 12, 2010 earthquake exposed to another set of constraints at the level of international development. As I spent time with the Haitians living in Paris, both as a volunteer worker and as a friend, I witnessed to the direct detrimental impact French state and international aid policies had on an important facet of the diasporic experience: community organizing. In France, the diaspora was not an alternative, transnational space as it has been described in North America; rather, Haitian community organizers appeared more dependent on nation-state for funding and other kinds of support. Moreover, as France delved deeper into a foreign policy that emphasized partnership with diasporas and local organizations within the developing country, the shift also opened the door to diaspora as a neoliberal extension of the state, (Kunz, 2011) and placed the "burden of proof" of successful development initiatives on the organizations. What the case of Haitians in France pushed me to ask is if a diaspora is still a diaspora if it's existence is because of, not in spite of, national policy, and its capacity to thrive is tied to the state.

It is possible that diaspora is not the right term to use. For one, I use diaspora in the singular, while in fact it can refer to contradictory things (Glick-Schiller & Fouron, 2001; Jackson, 2011a). It creates an awkward situation for myself and other scholars to

use a term that is well understood and misleading at the same time. However, I am not prepared to offer a replacement, because the term is not the problem. Rey Chow argues that language, the articulation of something, has discursive power. She writes, "The act of naming, then, is not intrinsically essentialist or hierarchical. It is the social relationships in which names are inserted that may lead ego the essentialist, hierarchical, and thus detrimental consequences" (Chow 105). For this reason, I look at the ways internal and external dynamics shape how a population is articulated as well as their process of self-making.

The subjective construction of Haitian identity is quite layered, and in a country such as France—with its political ideology of republicanism that sees a one-to-one relationship to the state, and its push to create a homogenous nation-state by suppressing racial, ethnic, and cultural identifications—the negotiations of Haitian identity are often an exercise in proving one's modernity. In chapter 4, I go into detail on the ways that various individuals perform "Haitianess" or "Frenchness". This performance is based on a common idea that there are readily understood markers of being Haitian, as exemplified in the oft-used phrase, "you know Haitians…" In all the places I've traveled to with a significant population of Haitians, I've inevitably encountered someone who will explain some cultural phenomenon or behavior with a small head shake, a long-vowel "a" sound, and say, "you know Haitians…" and be met with nods of understanding. The universality of that phrase, "you know Haitians" belies the real differences between and within populations of Haitians, rendering the phrase as meaningful as it is meaningless. Yet the belief in universality of cultural behavior and experience is what allows me to ask

what makes the Franco-Haitian diaspora such an interesting and distinct group comparative to other diasporic communities in North America.

The inequality between the various Haitian migrant communities is an important factor in this research. The "Haitian diaspora" as a recognized grouping was born out of a political movement in New York to protest the Center for Disease Control's labeling of Haitians as high-risk carriers for HIV in the 1990s (Glick-Schiller & Fouron, 2001). As tens of thousands of Haitians marched down the streets of Manhattan, a heightened sense of nationalism was created amongst a generation; even the Haitian flag was imbued with more meaning as people waved them in solidarity (Laguerre, 1998). That period marked the beginning of "diaspora" as a culturally relevant term to describe Haitians living abroad, even as the term also masked some of the particularities of each of the distinct Haitian communities. The term was meant to impart a sense of unity, yet as migration patterns developed, it became clear that what it meant to be Haitian in New York City was not the same as being Haitian in Montreal or Paris. In fact, Haitians living in the different cities perceived each other differently, and could often describe to me the characteristics of Haitians living in the different locations. Researchers only recently have begun unpacking how important these differences are in how Haitians perceive themselves and their relationship to their country of settlement as well as Haiti. The push towards particularizing diasporic experiences has gained significant traction, but as the term gained popularity outside of academia, it presents new concerns, notably in the area of development aid.

The official development aid (ODA) model, in which "first world" nation-states provide financial and material support to "third world" nation-states has been roundly criticized as imperialist, especially when the loans and grants offered were generally tied to conditions that undermined the sovereignty of the nation-states being helped. In the past seven to nine years, there has been a big push to create a more sustainable engagement between "donor" and "recipient" countries. Following a series of global conferences such as the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* and the *Accra Agenda for Action*, concerted efforts were made by nation-states such as France and supranational entities such as the European Union and USAID to be more cooperative in their aid policies. This was reflected in the linguistic shift from "recipient" to "partner". As a result, the category of diaspora became more popular, as it leveraged the skills and resources of a population that had a vested interest in helping the country they left. Haiti was featured in many of the reports released by development agencies, many of them lauding the diaspora as Haiti's best hope of recovery. In chapter 5, I detail a number of reports came out in 2010 and 2011 that examined the transnational practices of the Haitian diaspora and called upon all international aid agencies to include the diaspora in their mission and projects. The reality however is that policy suggestions will always be shaped by state interests and historical circumstances.

Franco-Haitian organizations do their best to either sponsor or carry out projects in Haiti while living over 3,000 miles away. These smaller organizations are generally transnational in nature, and are considered "philanthropic groups with the capacity to work on various kinds of development projects…and in many cases provide a valuable

source of social capital and a potential for development" by researchers and policy makers alike (Orozco, 2003: 6). Those who participate in hometown associations are attempting to enact what Glick-Schiller and Fouron would refer to as "long-distance nationalism" (Glick-Schiller & Fouron, 2001). Instead of being limited by the borders of the nation-state, "long-distance nationalism binds together immigrants, their descendants, and those who have remained in their homeland into a single transborder citizenry" (Glick-Schiller & Fouron, 2001: 20). The concept of long-distance nationalism is important when trying to understand how national and international policies undermine the capacity of hometown associations to fully participate in the re-building of their nation-state. The term allows us to articulate how the experiences of those abroad is "linked to conditions both in the homeland and the country of settlement" (*ibid,* 27).

The relationship between Haiti and her "children" abroad is far from smooth. The dispersed populations of Haitians in cities like New York, Miami, Montreal, and Paris have fought to be more included in government decisions. In 2001, former president Jean-Betrand Aristide created a special department, *Ministre des Haïtiens Vivant à l'Etranger* (Ministry of Overseas Haitians) to manage the needs of what is known as the "Haitian diaspora" (Laguerre, 1998). The ministry, however, has struggled to be effective in addressing the Haitian diaspora's concerns, and moreover has been plagued by leadership turnover, most recently having gone through three in the past two years. Frustration with the ministry was clearly felt amongst the Haitians I spoke with, in particular because the community of Haitians living in France is often given less attention and financing than communities in North America. So although the Ministry of Overseas

Haitians was meant to serve all of the Haitian diaspora, to quote a well-known Haitian proverb, "*tout moun se moun, men pa tout moun se menm*" (all people are people, but not all people are equal.)

Moreover, there is a hesitation on the part of the Haitian government and the Haitian people to expand opportunity to Haitians in the diaspora because of perceived (and somewhat real) lack of resources. When dealing with Haitian bureaucracy, Haitians returning home for a visit chafe at the necessity to pay import taxes or an entry fee at the airport. I heard often that Haitians abroad felt like "ATMs," charged soley with funding initiatives. The pressure to make and send home money is commonly found. Other countries such as India or Mexico are more inclined to provide more incentives to the diaspora because their priority is investment (Migration P. I. Newland, 2010). Other countries have framed the parameters of involvement by offering ease of access in exchange for job creation. The department of Overseas Haitians has struggled to do either since its creation. In Chapter 3, I elaborate on some of the conversations that Haitian government officials had with the Franco-Haitian diaspora around this very issue.

Glick-Schiller and Fouron do not use them term "diaspora," arguing, "it confounds the different historical experiences and forms of consciousness. Instead, we differentiate between identification with a particular, existing state or the desire to construct a new state, which we call long-distance nationalism, and other forms of transborder ideas about membership, such as those based on religion or a notion of shared history and dispersal" (*ibid,* 23). It is true that the actions that I have observed would fall under the category of long-distance nationalism. Nation building is the primary objective

of Haitian hometown associations. At the same time, what I observed was how membership in these associations was often a way to assert one's identity as Haitian. It was within these spaces, in the middle of Paris, that Haitians could be fully Haitian, and could hone their performances. It is perhaps why it was so common to hear the phrase, "you know Haitians…" regardless of whether what followed was positive or negative comment. It can explain why it was more frequent to discuss the challenges in the community or within the country, rather than envision ways to push past them. Long-distance nationalism places its focus on territory, actions, political mobilization, national involvement, but doesn't (or refuses to) address the performative aspect of being Haitian, which is constitutive of the experience of Haitians in France.

France is a proud nation that seeks to maintain a culturally and racially homogenous and secular citizenry (Weil, 2008), and over the past number of decades government policies have grown increasingly hostile towards communities of immigrants that try to claim distinct identities by calling into question their national loyalties (Hargreaves, 2007; Keaton, 2005, 2006; Peabody & Stovall, 2003; Simon, 2012). Immigrant organizations are looked upon suspiciously by French authorities (Beriss, 2004; Kastoryano & Diop, 1991) and do not receive nearly the same amount of public support as other groups such as sport or social service organizations (Archambault, 2001). As Østergaard-Neilsen writes, for Europeans concerned with migration and the national loyalties of new arrivals, "homeland ties and politics of migrants have always been identified as an intrusion" (Caglar, 2006; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2001).

On the other hand, Haiti is a country almost in perpetual difficulty either due to political upheaval or natural disasters. Most recently, tentative progress towards stability following heavy foreign investment in 2008 and 2009 was effectively crushed on January 10, 2010 during an earthquake that killed thousands and destroyed a large part of the country's capital, Port-au-Prince. As the world reacted to the earthquake, an unprecedented number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from other countries established themselves in Haiti, often without fully researching the context in order to understand what was and wasn't possible. They relied on outdated information such as the CIA citing the official language of Haiti being French (not only is Haitian Creole the other official language, it is the language that the entire country speaks, whereas approximately only 10% of the population speaks French.) It is within (and a result of) these circumstances that Haitians living in France have invested enormous effort, time, and money to "give back" to their home country via development projects in Haiti and community building efforts in France.

In spite of conferences and agency reports urging international NGOS to include the diaspora, and more specifically hometown associations, organizations created by Americans and Haitians with heavy financial backing of either private donors or grants from the United States were given preference over smaller Haitian organizations with more local networks and access. Diasporic involvement often meant offering contracts to organizations with already established relationships with international agencies, to the detriment of local organizations in Haiti and smaller organizations created by the Haitian diaspora who lacked the access to resources or political support to accomplish the same

work. Moreover, because of the political and financial relationship between the United States and Haiti, a heavy emphasis was given to organizations in the United States. Haitian organizations in France received a fraction of the funds supposedly available for all of the "diaspora."

My mission is to frame the struggle of small Haitian organizations in the broader context of discursive and structural inequalities that make it difficult for the Haitian diaspora in France to take their place in Haiti's reconstruction. These inequalities stem from the hegemony "for the constructed, dominant view of the Diaspora" in what Laguerre calls the diasporic public sphere, "the political arena where the Diaspora expresses its political views, discusses its project for the homeland and the Diaspora, interacts with hostland and homeland government officials and politicians, and reflects on its contribution to society" (Laguerre, 2004: 207). In the diasporic public sphere, there is a pressure to have a homogenized opinion, "to persuade others of the legitimacy of their claims so that the Diaspora can be of one voice on a given issue" (Laguerre, 2004:209). Such homogeneity ends up disempowering groups that have a different set of circumstances, like those in France, although this is contested in different ways, especially with the help of researchers who have been teasing out what diaspora means locally. In spite of their unique challenges, Haitians in France contest and persist, and in this dissertation I examine both the motives and the passion behind the decision for a group of Haitians to create and/or participate in diaspora organizations, as well as the impact of the social investment of such organizations.

Using the theoretical frameworks of transnationalism (Itzigsohn & Giorguli-Saucedo, 2002; Kearney, 1995; Vertovec, 1999a), diasporic subjectivity (Brodwin, Jackson, & Martinez, 2006; Gordon, 1998; Radhakrishnan, 1993), and diasporic citizenship (Laguerre, 1998; Siu, 2005a), I grapple with the question of how hometown associations can become more effective in light of the complicated nature of development and shifting views on diaspora as a group that can be politically mobilized. Several scholars have already noted the difficulty Haitians in France face in trying to effect meaningful change for their Haitian brethren (Béchaq, 2010; Mooney, 2009). I argue that these persistent and specific issues of the Haitian diaspora in France are to a certain degree a product of institutionalized marginalization by France and international donor organizations. This dissertation hopes to give voice to these overlapping struggles, and offer potential new directions for international aid policy to better support diaspora organizations.

OUT OF ONE DIASPORA, MANY

I have repeatedly used the term diaspora, while also voicing my concerns with it. In this section I establish the term's historical and political origins--and what I mean—by the term "Haitian diaspora." On the surface, the term can simply refer to all persons born in Haiti but living and working outside the country. When you start to prod, however, the questions flow: what about those born to one or two Haitian parents outside Haiti? Is there an age limit? Is there an expiration date, where after a number of years or decades outside of Haiti you no longer qualify as a member of the diaspora? Can the term be

ascribed and then shed with the appropriate amount of time in Haiti? Is a diaspora a community or classification? Is diaspora a condition or a state of mind?

Many scholars have tried to answer these questions, but diaspora still remains a word with indefinite boundaries. As a term, diaspora was a unifying identity built on a shared experience of (forced) dispersal, exploitation, marginalization and struggle. As the movement of people became more pronounced and spanned ever-longer distances, diaspora as a category has been nuanced to reflect the specificity of experiences of diasporic communities and members. At the same time, not every dispersed population can be considered a diaspora (Clifford 1994; Safran 1991; Tölölyan 1996); certain conditions must be met that permit such an identity to have roots. William Safran lists six criteria, among them the maintenance of a "memory, vision, or myth about their homeland"; the "belief that they "should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity"; and a continual relation, "personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship" (Safran 1991: 82-83). These criteria serve merely as a foundation for understanding the myriad kinds of relationships that exist between peoples and nations.

In this thesis, the way I understand and use diaspora comes out of the intersection of a number of intellectual movements in global Black history, including theories of "double consciousness", cultural continuities, and hybridity, along with pan-African and Black nationalist movements; all have shaped the ways in which the "Black Diaspora" developed and evolved (Glissant, 1989; Kelley & Patterson, 2000; Matory, 1999;

Yelvington, 2001). Early Africanist scholars such as Herskovits and Price sought to develop a synchronic re-telling of the history of people of African descent. Through observation and fieldwork, they discovered continuities that proved that Africans and Afro-descendant people had (enduring) history, in spite of slavery and their generations-long separation from the African continent (Herskovits, 1941; Mintz & Price, 1992). Afrocentric movements including Pan-Africanism and Black Nationalism have been built on these findings, and theorists such as Molefi Asante "consciously set out to explain a theory and a practice of liberation by reinvesting African agency as the fundamental core of our sanity...concerned with nothing less than the relocation of the subject-place in the African world" (Asante 1994: 20-21). Although Afrocentric theorists have been stigmatized in the academic (and non-academic) world as being essentialist, based on perceived shared history as African (and Black) peoples without much concern for difference within and between them, they also paved the way for critical interventions that de-essentialized origins in favor of a "theoretical relocation" (Scott, 1991) and discursivity (Hall, 1994; Mercer, 1960; Scott, 1991). Hall writes "cultural identities [read: diasporas] are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture. Not an essence but a *positioning*" (Hall 1994:395 *his emphasis*). Arguably for Hall, identities (including diasporic ones) about a politics of location, the intersections of history and culture, and the use of both axes in order to position one's self at a given moment in time. Other poststructuralist scholars such as Brent Hayes Edwards and Michelle Wright have challenged any attempt to fix the Black diasporic experience within discourses of

political solidarity. Instead, the concept of diaspora needed to handle the complex processes of identity formation that did not involve an essentialist notion of Blackness, but rather viewed Blackness as always in a state of becoming (Hall, 1994) yet simultaneously rooted in the material and lived experiences of racism and racialization. Diasporas are thus fluid concepts, "a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'" (Hall 1994: 394).

While diaspora has been debated over decades, the term diaspora didn't enter into Haitian vocabulary until the 1980s (Glick Schiller, 2011; Richman, 2005). Diaspora became important during and following the Duvalier dictatorships and the economic crisis it precipitated that pushed Haitians to look to the United States, Dominican Republic, and other Caribbean countries for economic opportunities. Around this time, Haitians in New York City began organizing in protest against the oppressive Duvalier regime. One of the first official uses of the term diaspora was by Haitian scholar Georges Anglade who published the book "La Diaspora," in which he created a map detailing the various migratory paths Haitians have taken over the past century, and argued that the diaspora is more than monetary transfers and has yet to realize its full potential (Icart, 2012; Jackson, 2011b). This was the beginning of a diasporic consciousness, the idea of "l'espace Haïtien," a Haitian space outside of Haiti from which to mobilize. Following the removal of Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier from office in 1986, the collective capacity of the Haitian diaspora was once again put to the test in 1991. Haiti had held its first fair and democratic election that put former priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide into the presidential office. Unfortunately only nine months later, he was removed from office by

a military junta, and Aristide was forced to flee to the United States. Many Haitians living in the States supported the ousted president, and thus worked with him to rule from a distance and ultimately get him back into office (Laguerre, 1999). Aristide's return to office in 1994 was arguably only possible because of the strength of the diaspora and the growing diasporic consciousness and possibilities of transnational action (Richman, 2005).

Questions around whom and what qualifies as diaspora are debated regularly amongst Haitians, with answers shifting based on a range of circumstances and socio-political agendas. I personally classify myself as part of the Haitian diaspora in spite of being born in the United States because I was raised by a first-generation Haitian parent who socialized and educated me in the Haitian tradition. I try to claim authenticity by knowing Haitian history, speaking fluent French and Haitian Creole, maintaining connections with my Haitian family members and friends, and listening and dancing to Haitian music. I leveraged these "legitimacies" during my fieldwork in order to gain quick acceptance into various Haitian spaces, but a backhanded compliment was never too far away. People were often surprised by the fact that I spoke French *and* Creole well, "for a diaspora." Men marveled that I kept pace on the dance floor, dancing well "for a diaspora." It said something not only about the expectations that Haitians have from those born outside of the country to Haitian parents, but also about the different conceptions of diaspora that existed. "Diaspora" was a flexible term, used as a description, compliment, and insult, and they way it was used not only depended on the immediate context (e.g., at a conference on Haiti, informal gathering of family and

friends, or a dance party), but also on the city I was in. “Diaspora” was geopolitically grounded in the different experiences of each diasporic location, and each place carried it’s own expectations of the “diaspora” based on the location’s history with immigration, movement, and community building. Moreover, each location brings with it geopolitical specificities that inform the meaning of "diaspora," even as it remains an indelible part of the language (Brodwin et al., 2006; Glick Schiller, 2011). However, there is also a dominant image of diaspora stemming from North America that has deeply affected the self-perception of Haitians in France as a diaspora.

A frequent question I got in response to an explanation of my research is, “Oh, are there Haitians in France? I never thought about it.” In fact, after the United States and Canada, France is home to the third largest diaspora (INSEE, 2009; Local, 2004). Only recently, however, has the Haitian diaspora of France been given attention in research on migration and ethno-cultural communities, in an explicit attempt to disrupt the hegemony of the US Haitian diaspora as representative of all diasporas (Béchaq, 2010; Brodwin et al., 2006; Jackson, 2011a; Mooney, 2009). The Franco-Haitian diaspora also compares itself to North American diasporas, often using a more idealized image to do so. As a result, there was a lot less room for multi-layered meanings of diaspora.

Arguably because there was neither a strong community formation, nor a national space for cultural identity to exist along a national one, being diaspora was more limited, often meant you were less than Haitian *natif-natale*, born-and-raised. This often structured the conversations I had with other Haitians, as well as the conversations they had with each other. Being *natif-natale* gave you a legitimacy to say certain things and to

act a certain way. When Gadner in the opening ethnography states that "we are an organizations of Haitians," juxtaposing himself against "those other" organizations, he is asserting a particular knowledge that comes with being born in Haiti, in spite of having lived for over 20 years in France and being a French citizen. This is also the assumption that is being made by large international NGOs who desire to work with Haitian organizations; ethnic community-based organizations have specific and useful information that would either help NGOs be more effective, or need to be supported in their own right. However, this mentality of legitimacy can have a negative effect. In discussions amongst association members, I would often hear the phrase "you know Haitians" when discussing the feasibility of a project or activity. There was a reinforcement of negative stereotypes—that Haitians didn't want to do the work, that Haitians weren't going to come to an event without some incentive, that Haitians would arrive late—that often proved themselves true, but were also never directly addressed. This then led to speeches that began "We need to…" or "We must…" which, as a directive, set itself up for more inaction. (It is interesting to note that these kinds of conversations nearly always occurred in spaces that were presumed all-Haitian, and rarely in "mixed" company where non-Haitians were present.)

Just as diaspora can be seen as a condition, many viewed their Haitian-ness as a permanent reality, regardless of their current citizenship or years out of the country. When I asked one Haitian man who had moved to France in the 1970s whether he felt more Haitian or French, he replied, "I am 100% Haitian, and 100% French." Another Haitian man, one who has written a book in French and had lived in France since 1984,

described feeling “at home” whenever he returned for two-week long vacations, yet admitted he would never return to Haiti to live. The complicated relationship between diaspora and citizenship highlights the fact that diaspora is not merely a designation for a group of people, but is in fact a condition (B. H. Edwards, 2003; Gordon & Anderson, 1999), a persistent state of being, built even into the Haitian language. Diaspora refers to those who have left and those who have returned (Schuller, 2007b), presenting a discursive burden on those who wish to be seen legitimately as Haitian.

The permanence of the diasporic condition and of being Haitian can lead to a dissonance in how people imagine Haiti, both now and in its future. Haiti has changed a great deal from decade to decade, and people born and raised in specific periods have very different ideas of Haiti. For example, the nostalgia for a Haiti “before Duvalier” is very present amongst older Haitians. The years under the President Estimé, who immediately preceded Duvalier, are sometimes referred to as the “golden years.” Under Estime’s rule, many Haitians testify to how well the country was run. Subsequent generations of Haitians (who are now in their 30s and 40s) can only point to the militarized reign of the Duvaliers that, in contrast to the subsequent military juntas and precipitous decline of country, seemed preferable to the abject poverty they experience today. The latest generation of Haitian youth under 25 years of age will never know Haiti under Duvalier. These segmented collective memories create rifts in cross-generation communication and lead to differing ideas of what Haiti’s reconstruction should look like and shape even imagined possibilities for Haiti’s recovery. Those who

are able to testify to Haiti's previous glory have nostalgia unmatched by those who only have their imaginations with which to envision a new future.

A few friends and I were enjoying our first trip together to Port-au-Prince on our way to the "Festival d'Artisanat," an annual two-day forum featuring locally made art, ranging from pottery to metal work to woodwork. We felt like school children on a fieldtrip, excited to escape our little street in Gressier (a town an hour outside of Port-au-Prince) for an adventure. Frederique was especially taking advantage of the unobstructed view from the passenger side to film video, since our mode of transportation was a retired *tap-tap* taxi-van, and the sliding door had been removed for easy in and out access. We watched the other cars, *tap-taps* and pedestrians zoom by as Mario Percy, a local artist and impromptu tour-guide pointed out various buildings and points of interest. The road from Gressier to the capital runs along the coast of Haiti and in between the green fields and full trees, you could catch glimpses of boats fishing in the water. Closer to the capital however, the road moved inland, and passed by a couple of factory plants and homes and office buildings in various states of disrepair. Trash, mostly consisting of Styrofoam food containers and plastic bags of water, was strewn everywhere.

Caught in traffic at one point, I stared outside at a group of grey concrete homes haphazardly erected close to each other. "You see here?" Mario waved his hand into the open space where the door would have been, "these houses didn't use to be here. You could be standing at this spot and see straight through to the ocean from here."

Confused, I peered out. "You mean the ocean isn't that far from here?"

"No! It's right behind those houses! Under Duvalier, you weren't allowed to build just anywhere. This place used to be so beautiful. My friends and I would come here at night, never worried about violence or being attacked....well, I was a young man, so it was different, but you could be outside at night, and enjoy the beach. It was clean! The beach used to come all the way up to where we are now."

Disbelieving, I pressed further. "If that's true, how did they manage to build houses on sand?"

He scoffed. "They built them on the trash piles! Haitians continue to build poorly-made building after poorly-made building, and there was no government to stop them from doing so."

I looked out again, a little more wistfully. "Such a shame. I wish I could have known that Haiti."

"I feel bad for people your age," Mario agreed. "They'll never know Haiti as I knew it. You think this is Haiti, and it's not. That's why the youth don't care. They've never known any other Haiti."

I share this example to convey the difficulties in managing the expectations and responsibilities of the various parties invested in Haiti's recovery. Within Haiti, there is a diversity of perspectives on Haiti's potential amongst the various generations. For Haitians living in other countries, having seen how democracy and bureaucracy function elsewhere has influenced their opinion on the direction the country should take. Moreover, those in the diaspora who are still invested in rebuilding the country fight for their voice to be given as much weight as those who continue live in Haiti, which has

created conflicts. Adding to the already cacophonous mix, international aid agencies, influenced by the political and economic interests of the countries that fund them, also regularly weigh in, their opinion often out-weighing the rest combined. With these multiple, contrasting visions for Haiti, which path will take the country out of poverty for good? My inquiry into the challenges of Haitian organizations in France is rooted in the everyday negotiations and decisions that occur as a result of these conflicts of opinions.

On a more practical note, in trying to clarify my terminology, I feel caught between a rock and a hard place: I cannot escape using diaspora as both a category and concept. When using diaspora to talk about a population of Haitians, I use it in reference to those born in Haiti or of Haitian descent, through the third generation. These are people who at the very minimum actively acknowledge and build a part of their identity around being Haitian, but do not currently live in Haiti. I will use diaspora interchangeably with "diasporic community," taking care to qualify the term "community" due to the common hesitation by Haitians living in France to consider themselves as part of a "community" as they defined it, as I will address in chapter 2. For many of the Haitians that I met both in France and in Haiti, being part of the diaspora did not mean that you necessarily had contact with people in Haiti, spoke the language, or were active in an organization. To that end, I will also use diaspora as a concept: a "third space" where "the 'here and there,' 'now and back then' coexist and engage in constant negotiation, and it is within this time-space continuum that diasporic subjects interpret their history, position themselves, and construct their identity" (Siu, 2005b). Haitians in

France are always negotiating their identities, never fully "being" diaspora but, to paraphrase Hall, always in the process of becoming (Hall, 1994).

By separating out concept and category, I do not imply that the two don't overlap. Rather, it is a way to stress my point that diaspora as an institutionalized category may have compromised its fluidity as a concept, and created the possibility of a failed diaspora. The concept of a failed state has its origins in the writings of Max Weber who stated that the success of a state is tied to its monopoly on force (Weber, 1994). This is later nuanced by Antonio Gramsci, who argued that states can rule either through force (coercion) or through consent (hegemony) (Forgacs & Gramsci, 1988); either way, there is an acknowledgement of the state's sovereignty, or capacity to act on behalf of its own self-interest. A failed state, then, is one that is unable to act for itself. I apply the same logic to the idea of a failed diaspora—a diaspora that cannot act on behalf of its own self-interest. Diasporas in and of themselves cannot neither be a "success" or failure—they do not have a defined boundary or centralized governing body. The judgment of a diaspora as a failure can only occur through the institutionalization of diaspora, that makes it a constituency with interests worth defending (even if this is difficult to prove.) Institutionalization also creates material contours around which they are evaluated and measured. Who would be defining diasporas as failures? It occurs implicitly in the ways the Haitian diaspora is described by parties at all levels—international, national, and local, including by Haitians themselves. It becomes easier to point and blame when diaspora moves out of the realm of the concept and into the world of categories.

Institutionalization requires definition, a naming. Institutionalization of diaspora has focused on their capacity to produce capital, due to their focus on remittances and the economic development of the country. This includes tourism, entrepreneurship, philanthropy. It has been noted that the work of local groups and hometown associations—broadly labeled as "diaspora advocacy"—has been the least studied by international aid agencies (Newland 2010:10). International aid agencies are actually responsible for this direction of institutionalization. The typical focus in Haiti on poverty reduction has led to the major focus on the economic potential of the diaspora, rather than supporting and expanding the knowledge and skills within the diaspora, and bridging the diaspora to Haiti through various institutions. The Haitian diaspora in France is particularly susceptible to the appellation of failed state because of the distinct nexus of French xenophobia, national and international aid policies, and local dynamics among Haitians that reproduce class and color inequalities. The focus on poverty reduction limits the possibilities of the diaspora, and arguably forces them to be in a position of crisis management rather than focusing on long-lasting institutions. It is why it is easy for Aiwha Ong to envision a multiple-passport wielding South Asian (Ong, 1999)—the diasporic focus is on mobility, market expansion, capacity building.

To clarify, I am not calling the Haitian diaspora a failed one. It is merely a way to show what can happen when the institutionalization of a term is taken to its full conclusion. However, it is not a far cry from the feelings of frustration that are felt by Haitians themselves. They may feel like failures because they are unable to become fully realized as diaspora, or as diasporic citizens. Diasporic citizenship is defined as "full

belonging within the diaspora", but the possibilities for diasporic citizenship are often shaped by the circumstances and access to different forms of capital. Diasporic citizenship for Haitians is still a project on the route to realization, but not quite there yet, because of the gross levels of inequality that exist within Haiti that are often mapped onto the collectivities formed outside of Haiti. It must be underlined that none of these concepts can exist outside of the context of the nation-state and international agendas.

The important presumption in my research is that Haitians in France are distinct, and that Haitians organizing in France face specific challenges of identity and community formation that must be addressed both locally amongst themselves and globally by state and international institutions. A solution would be to re-focus the priorities of government as well as allow the diaspora to define itself, and—paraphrasing Karl Marx's theory of class-consciousness, act for itself.

TRANSNATIONALITY AS IDENTITY AND THEORY

The institutionalization of diaspora is in remarkable contrast to the general expectation of immigrants to assimilate into the dominant culture, often by severing ties with their home country as they integrate fully into the new society. This expectation required an essentialization of the state, an expectation that subjecthood was achieved primarily through the nation-state (Foucault, 1978, 2003). It was necessary for immigrants to integrate in order for them to achieve a sense of belonging, in turn contributing to a more cohesive society as well as a more controllable population (Bloemraad, Korteweg, & Yurdakul, 2008; Foucault, 1979). As the movement of people

increased dramatically, social scientists began to question the assumption and examine the differences in the ways states' incorporated immigrants, and "how cultural, institutional, or ideological differences create different opportunity structures for migrants' subsequent incorporation and citizenship" (Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Yurdakul 2008: 152). Moreover, it forced a reconsideration of the state as a central organizing institution, and opened up a space for theorizing transnationalism.

Transnationalism was introduced in the late 1980s and popularized by anthropologists in the 1990s, during a period of great ideological debate over the future of the nation-state. Increased migrant flows, rapid development of communication technology, globalization, and the rise of multinational corporations all contributed to the idea that the nation-state would no longer be the dominant model of political organization, but would give way to more global and supranational networks such as the European Union and more porous borders permitting exchanges of peoples and actions. As a theoretical framework, transnationalism reifies and challenges the nation simultaneously. It relies on the networks created between nations, various systems of interaction and exchange while globally intensifying the kinds of interpersonal and community relations that were once seen as only local. Vertovec states that "transnationalism (as long-distance networks) certainly preceded 'the nation,'" yet now transnationalism cannot be engaged with without engaging nations. The diaspora, as a group of dispersed peoples who are by definition associated with another nation (even if they do not actively maintain ties to it), are an excellent representation of transnational practices. Safran looks at the diasporic experience as forming a "triadic" relationship

between "a globally dispersed yet collectively self-identified ethnic groups", "the territorial states and contexts where such groups reside", and "the homeland states and contexts whence they or their forebears came" (Vertovec 1999a; *see also* Faymonville 2003; Safran 1991).

One of the first important ethnographies in the study of transnationalism was Constance Sutton's *Caribbean Life in New York City* (Richman, 2005; Sutton & Chaney, 1989). Sutton studied the exchanges and networks developed between the Caribbean and the US, which she called the "transnational socio-cultural system" (1989: 20). This spurred a number of ethnographies focusing on transnationalism, most notably the work by Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc. An ethnographic study on immigrant populations from St. Vincent, Genada, Haiti, and the Philippines to the United States, *Nations Unbound* (1994) viewed the nation-state as a "deterritorialized construct," and as such people outside the physical territory of the nation could still "forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (Basch, Glick Schiller, & Blanc, 1993: 6). Although not all immigrant populations were transnational by default, transnational practices such as keeping abreast of news from back home or sending money to family is not entirely uncommon.

Karen Richman describes one of the creative ways in which diasporic connections are sustained. In her detailed ethnography, Richman examines the discursive formation of Haitians in Haiti and abroad through the story of "Ti Chini", a labor migrant who became Richman's primary ethnographic participant (Richman, 2005). While her overall project addresses Haitian political economy and the transformation of Haitians from

"agrarian peasants into producers of unskilled labor for export and consumers of imported food" (2005: 32), she looks at one particularly emotional transnational practice of exchanging "letters" via audiocassette tape. Due to financial constraints and poor infrastructure, many Haitians are unable to go to school, and thus a disproportionate number of them are illiterate. For those unable to call loved ones, many Haitians "write" letters by recording them on audiocassette tapes and mailing them or sending the package with another person. The tapes permit a communication that moves beyond the two-dimensional letter, as letter-writers are able to converse more naturally, sing, invite others to speak on the tape, and generally convey more emotions, even through silence. Richman describes both ends of the experience, the letter "writing" and the listening, which often involved a gathering. By generating an audience, this "ritual" crosses space to bring people geographically separated together in one room. This may be practice that is very much classed (growing up, my mom occasionally received such letters, but explained them to me in a way that registered them as shameful), but it is one expression of transnationalism among many. Categories of race, class, and gender, along with the politics of location, structure members' engagement with Haiti.

How do such transnational practices fit in with broader discourses of migration and globalized processes? Aiwha Ong tries to strike a balance between the political economy of globalization and human agency, mediated through cultural dynamics. Moving beyond the local and the global division that reinforces the separation of the economic (global) from the cultural (local), Ong tries to understand these relationships from a "horizontal" and "relational nature of the contemporary economic, social, and

cultural processes that stream across spaces, and the embeddedness in differently configured regimes of power" (Ong, 1999: 4). Also engaging the concept of transnationality, Ong captures both the movement across space and time, as well as the "changing nature of something" (1999: 4). She uses the term flexible citizenship in order to address how migrants "respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions…and cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel, and displacement" (1999: 6). She uses the image of the multiple passport-holder to show how migrants circumvent traditional relationships to the nation in order to create new possibilities for the lived experience. The drawback to Ong's argument is that is assumes mobility in the first place and a certain amount of privilege. However, the multiple passport-holder is a transgressive subject, able to move beyond the limits set by the nation and maintain a plurality of relationships. Although the acquisition of multiple passports for Haitians may not be as possible as it is for the Ong's Hong Kong businessman, many Haitians have circumvented the limitations of their mono-citizenship by giving birth to their children in countries with policies of *jus soli* such as the US and France. I encountered of a number of Haitians that acquired US or French citizenship through this means, but spent a large part of their childhood in Haiti. One research participant explained that while he proudly retains his Haitian passport, his sister acquired French citizenship (thus giving up her Haitian passport) through a temporary government program for Haitian citizens born during a certain time period.

Subject Formation

My discussion of identity and subject formation draws on the theoretical lens of Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, Stuart Hall, and Franz Fanon, and those who are in conversation with them. What links these theorists together is their postmodern, poststructuralist approach to subjectivity, which has paved the way for concepts extremely key in developing diaspora as a concept, process and identity, discussing the role of power, the relationship between agency and structure, and postcoloniality and racial subjectivity. While they are all grounded in a similar deconstructivist approach, they have each offered a distinct angle in the discussion of the subject. Foucault, for example defines the subject in two parts: 1) the processes by which individuals are made subject to power and 2) how these processes of power actually work to produce particular kinds of historical subjects. For Foucault, power is enacted through discourse that seeks to normalize and regulate the production of particular kinds of subjects. If the subject only comes into being through discourse, there can be no claims to identity that assume that identities are stable, unified, and coherent across time and space – the subject must always be located within history and discourse. However, Foucault does little to address how, if individuals are so permeated by and subjected to power, they are able to resist the discursive norms by which they are constituted and create social transformation (McNay 1994).

Whereas Foucault doesn't believe in the unified subject, Althusser understands the subject to be overdetermined, created through multiple, overlapping discourses. He uses interpellation to describe how a subject is "hailed". The Subject comes into

existence through a pre-existing discourse, where there are multiple levels of recognition: the recognition of one's relationship as a subject in relation to a Subject, the Subject's recognition of the subject, the subjects' recognition of each other, and the subject's recognition of itself. Within these overlapping determinations, or overdeterminations, there is no room for self-making. The subject is already determined before the subject exists, and therefore there is no agency.

Stuart Hall situates himself in between these positions, and engages the concept of identification, which he views "as a construction, a process never completed--always 'in process.' It is not determined in the sense that it can always be 'won' or 'lost', sustained or abandoned...identification in the end is conditional, lodged in contingency" (1996: 2-3). The subject cannot be overdetermined because it is constantly shifting, however is it not so fragmented that it cannot temporarily and strategically position itself. The questions that become important aren't who are we or where do we come from, but "what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. Identities are therefore constituted within, not outside representation"(1996: 4). This is an important shift in thinking, because it re-situates the self within the discourse as an acting agent. Social categories such as race are "floating signifiers" that derive meaning from context rather than being dependent on a dominant ideology (Hall 1986). However, floating signifiers do not allow for solidarity based-resistance, which limits the utility of his argument for social movements.

Diasporic Citizenship

We can better understand the relationship between local identity and community formations and participation in transnational networks through the use of the framework of diasporic citizenship. The concept has been central to the works of Michel Laguerre (1998) and Lok Siu (2005), each with a distinct take on what term means and its implications in studies of diasporic communities. Michel Laguerre uses this framework to study the Haitian community in the United States, tying them to Haiti in a continuous flow. Laguerre takes a sociological approach to diasporas, classifying them as either active or passive (in reference to their real or symbolic relationship to their homeland) which of course implies some hierarchy (whether intentional or not), and then writes that "diaspora entails a double allegiance" (1998: 9) which rests the relationship purely on a national dichotomy. In a definition that is quite literal, Laguerre sees diasporic citizenship as describing

> the situations of the individual who lives outside the boundaries of the nation-state to which he or she had formerly held primary allegiance and who experiences through transnational migration (or the redesigning of the homeland boundaries) the subjective reality of belonging to two or more nation-states. Diasporic citizenship includes the national and transnational outlook, attachment, and commitment. It presupposes some level of integration in the country of residence and some kind of attachment with the homeland (1998: 13).

Laguerre's intervention is only a beginning, since he tends to homogenize the Haitian diaspora rather than offering points of how the diasporas have been differentially affected depending on their location. In contrast, Lok Siu's work on the Chinese diaspora in Panama incorporates the temporal and spatial dimensions of belonging, and destabilizes

the category of citizen as tied to the nation. She takes a different definitional approach, describing diasporic citizenship as:

> the processes by which diasporic subjects experience and practice cultural and social belonging amid shifting geopolitical circumstances and webs of transnational relations; suggests marginality, difference, and lack of full belonging to any one nation-state, yet it also hold out the possibility of creativity, innovation, and perseverance that come with occupying this intersection; a social process that encompasses both the legal-juridical aspects and the cultural-affective dimensions of belonging (2005:10).

This definition offers a more nuanced means of understanding the politics of belonging, and requires a deeper discussion of the role of cultural memory and nostalgia. Furthermore, her ethnography brilliantly handles the way "contests of belonging within the local Chinese community are intertwined with a collective struggle to claim belonging to the National Panamanian community" (2005:162). Such a framework is the most useful for the purposes of this research in being able to understand how Haitians in France manage both local productions of identity and community in a hostile national environment, and within a broader discourse of transnational participation in the Haitian diaspora. Diasporic citizenship also seems to be a middle class concept because of the kinds of access that the middle class (both within the diaspora in Haiti) seek. The desire for diasporic citizenship is salient in France because of how middle-class the diaspora is. Diasporic citizenship works better for my research rather than long-distance nationalism because of the ways that identity and self-making are tied into the everyday transnational practices.

RESEARCH SETTINGS, FIELDWORK, AND METHODOLOGY

For this study, the activities of hometown organizations in the department of Ile-de-France, France and the departments of Ouest and Nippes in Haiti were analyzed over the course of two years. In France, the study focused on the ten-year old federation (an organizational structure that functions to bring together disparate associations) *Plateforme des Associations Franco-Haitiennes* (PAFHA) and a number of its member associations, the Haitian cultural organization *Collectif 2004 Images,* and the website *Reseau Culture Haiti*. The organizations and projects subsequently analyzed in Haiti were selected from those that had ties to member organizations of the federation PAFHA. Methodology included participant observation, formal and informal interviews, and archive analysis. My main form of participant-observation involved volunteering with both PAFHA and *Collectif 2004 Images*. With PAFHA, I was a regular in the office, and was assigned work as needed, and was drafted onto committees whenever appropriate. The director of *Collectif 2004 Images,* Anne Lescot, essentially took me on as an administrative assistant, and I helped her create promotional material, update the website and social networks, and assisted her in hosting two artists from Haiti who spent a month in artist residency in Paris. Through both of these connections, I met a number of people who were either involved in other associations or only loosely active in, or unaffiliated with, any particular organization, who were particularly instrumental in my research. I conducted several formal, semi-structured interviews with the leaders of the organizations, using only note-taking. I also frequently spoke with members of the organization as well as event participants, and made note of certain comments and

conversations in my field notes. It was within these informal contexts that I was best able to get a sense of the everyday Haitian "experience" from more marginalized perspectives. I was always very explicit in my intentions, and everyone I spoke with knew I was a researcher studying Haitians in Paris. I aimed to have a diversity of perspectives, particularly amongst men and women, older generations and younger generations, and Haitians and non-Haitians.

CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

The significance of this research lies in shaping the conversation amongst Haitians in the diaspora and critiquing the relationship between diasporic Haitians and state and international institutions. This introductory chapter has served to outline the main objectives of the dissertation and present the problematic of Haitian associational life in France and the theoretical frameworks of transnationalism, subject formation, and diasporic citizenship that I will use to interpret the experience of Haitians living and organizing in Paris, France. Chapter two will elaborate on the context of my research, examining the relationship between and within associations in France and their partner organizations and projects in Haiti. After laying out Haitian history and the circumstances surrounding the various periods of emigration, I will delve into Haitian associational life in France. There have always been various organizations created by Haitians who migrated to France, but they have changed significantly from being more political in nature, protesting oppressive regimes and occupations, to leaning more towards social and/or social service based activities. This is arguably due to the way the population has aged over time with fewer youth or second generation Haitians becoming

involved in cultural associations. Amongst associations themselves, there have been efforts to develop a network in order to share information and build social capital. Several issues exist however, including competition amongst associations, arguably a result of the strong focus on development projects in Haiti. This unilateral focus offers less incentive to work with other organizations that may not share the same interest or desire to work in the same commune. Moreover, communication between France and Haiti can be at times difficult or lacking, and these are challenges that must be addressed.

Chapter three will focus on the subject formation of those participating in Haitian associations. Using the theoretical focus of diasporic subjectivity, I will look at how Franco-Haitians see themselves within the diaspora: what it means to them and how it has guided their actions and motivated to be actors in development. Conversely, I will also examine how France views Haitians and Haiti, to understand how the process of interpellation shapes Haitian self-making.

Chapter four I look at the ways gender and sexuality played roles in Haitian identity formation. I build on Judith Butler's theory of performativity to explain how gender and sexuality are used in forms of nationalist performance to assert one's "Haitianess" or "Frenchness".

The penultimate chapter switches focus from the local to the national and global, examining the impact of the French state and international donors such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the capacity for Haitian associations in France to organize. Focus will be given particularly to the France-Haiti partnership

framework document, which served as the blueprint for the French state's actions in Haiti. Although in the past decade there have been concerted efforts to take more sustainable approaches to development aid and craft policy that would establish a more balanced relationship between the donor and aid-recipient ("partner" in development parlance) countries, the results have been inconsistent. France in particular has made a concerted effort to stem immigration, and has tried to simultaneously address immigration and development aid by developing policies that encourage return migration, for example through entrepreneurship grants or simply offering money to return home. I will also examine how the earthquake of 2010 shifted but did not fundamentally change things for Haitians living abroad.

I focus on the particularity of the Haitian diaspora in France, noting that scholarship on the Haitian diaspora has typically focused on those in North America, who have a different experience of acculturation and identity formation than those in France due to the differing socio-political ideologies. I argue that without taking into account the particular challenges of the Franco-Haitian diaspora, they will remain an outlier in the discussions of the potential of the diaspora to help Haiti.

My conversation is in part with other Haitians, but also with those who work supposedly on behalf of Haiti. My title, “You Know Haitians…” is a phrase that I heard by Haitians and non-Haitians alike—a kind of arrogant phrasing that undermined any kind of plurality in the Haitians experience and already precluded their potential. Ultimately, I argue that there has been a push to institutionalize diaspora, to use it as a tool to substitute Official Development Aid, but that because this is diaspora defined by

institutions with their own political agendas, it has actually undermined Haitian diasporic organizing by creating impossible standards, and then blaming Haitians for not living up to those standards.

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Chapter 2: A People's History

One of the main goals of the *Plateforme des Associations Franco-Haïtiennes* (PAFHA) was to bring Haitian associations, often disparate and isolated, into contact with each other in order to build bridges, exchange ideas, and develop a network. In the second year of their existence, the PAFHA held an open house, known as the *Journée des Portes Ouvertes* (JPO) in order to not only get associations in dialogue with each other, but to give the associations a chance to interact with the Haitian community and other people interested in working in and for Haiti. The first JPO was such a successful event that it became the centerpiece of PAFHA's work in France and an anticipated annual affair. I was able to experience the JPO as a simple visitor, a volunteer, and as a volunteer coordinator. My myriad experiences reflect the development of my relationship with the federation and its members, while also allowing me to offer a longitudinal perspective of the federation's organization and activities.

My first JPO was in 2007, during a month-long trip to Paris to do "pre-fieldwork." I took the line 13 train to the last stop in Seine Saint-Denis, a working-class *banlieu* of Paris. The late morning rain made it more difficult to find the large government building in which the open house was being held. Once I found the large grey concrete and steel building, I pushed past the front doors and found myself swept into a cacophony of voices and music. The tables piled high with books, pamphlets, paintings, and various knick-knacks visually overwhelmed me. I had been unsure of what to expect from a cultural "open house", yet I found myself mostly surprised by the

number of people. A young woman greeted me, handed me a flyer, and waved me towards the center where on either side of the room tables were set up, and at each a different association. I strolled from stand to stand, picking up brochures and letters of information. Every so often I would apologetically dismiss offers to purchase the fairly generic souvenirs from Haiti, including small jewelry boxes, painted wooden chalices, and plastic key chains. I followed a crowd upstairs, and found even more associations with their tables set up. Towards the back there was a metal room divider crowded with a dozen large Haitian *art-naïf* paintings. I didn't know anyone and was feeling awkward, so I stood back, but I felt that I was drawing a certain kind of attention; I only realized during my last JPO that it was obvious that I was a newcomer. The event tended to draw the same recognizable faces each year, so anyone new, especially someone who looked as out-of-place as I felt, would be easily identified. Despite the large amount of advertisement in all the appropriate spaces—on the radio, at the Haitian consulate, at places of business, in some places of worship—PAFHA and other organizations always struggled to attract *Haitian* newcomers to their events. Why, however, became somewhat clear as I met more Haitians living in France who were not a part of this circle. The member associations of PAFHA were often seen as exclusive, even if they did not mean to be. I will discuss later in the chapter the impact of this belief. At that moment in 2006, however, I knew none of this, and excited to learn more about the community.

Panel sessions had been held throughout the day on three topics: agriculture, immigration and asylum/refugee rights, and intergenerational dialogue. I went to all three, which were sparsely attended. These conversations felt very side-lined to the more

boisterous tabling area. I focused on the immigration and intergenerational dialogue. One of the (younger generation) panelists on the intergenerational dialogue hadn't shown up, and the discussant turned to the audience for a volunteer. I was definitely one of the younger people there (aside from the children), and I could feel the discussant eyeing me. With a mental "Why not?" I boldly raised my hand and offered to go on stage and join a young man, together representing "Haitian youth."

The conversation that ensued simultaneously addressed my own experiences as a Haitian-American and gave me insight into the particularities of growing up and being Haitian in France. I grew up in an environment that was a balance of Haitian and American. Haiti was never too far from my worldview although I was taught to fear it ("If you keep acting up, I'm going to send you to Haiti!") Conversely, my co-panelist, around 17 or 18 (to my 20 years at the time), felt that all he knew about Haiti "was the music and the flag." The conversation between ourselves and the audience centered around the responsibility of the parents to shed their "shame" of being Haitian and pass along the history, culture, and language to their children in order to build the next generation. There was a vague agreement that parents in the United States and Canada had it "easier" since Haitian communities were more active, but the burden of responsibility lay entirely with Haitians themselves. What I argue, however, is that there are greater forces at work that make community formation and effective diaspora organizing more difficult in France; forces that have been in motion since Haiti's great revolution of 1804.

In order to appreciate the Franco-Haitian diaspora, it is thus necessary to

understand the interlocking histories of Haiti and France. This chapter aims to historically contextualize the challenges of the Franco-Haitian diaspora to organize within and between the two countries. By understanding how and why hometown associations emerge, we are able to situate these smaller collectives within larger processes. The dynamics within an organization, while based on individual personalities and discrete histories, can be seen as connected to larger, overlapping conversations and historical moments: an outcome of colonization and contemporary neglect and/or abuse; expressions of xenophobia and racism; conflict between local, national, and international interests; and an evolving discourse on the responsibility of the diaspora. The conversations between organization members can appear on the surface (and are often described by members themselves) as a lot of in-fighting and dispute over priorities, but they do not occur in a vacuum. My attempt to read between the lines comes from my goal of using them as indicators of the specific challenges the Haitian diaspora faces in France and situate these conversations in broader ones around immigrant community organizing. By calling attention to their exchanges, I hope to make clear that the work of active Haitian organizers requires a socio-historical awareness by Haitians, the French, and all other parties invested in Haiti's future that would lead to specific kinds of support of the activities of the diaspora and help them be more effective. In later chapters, I will expand the significance of such a project on international development and in struggles for gender and sexual equality. My aim in this chapter is largely historical, describing Haiti's triumph and downfall following French colonization, and the ways in which Haiti suffered at the mercy of the United States who often isolated Haiti from diplomatic

relationships with other countries. Haitians have continued to migrate to mainland France (and as the political and economic situation in Haiti worsened, to the neighboring French colonies of Martinique, Guadeloupe, and French Guiana.) There have been several distinct waves, each characterized by a particular politicization that shaped the kinds of organizations created, which I will discuss in the second section. I will then do a comparative analysis of the various diasporas in order to show their divergences, arguing that these cleavages are key to understanding the current experience of Haitians in France and are a direct contributor to the challenges they face in community formation and organizing.

HAITI'S HISTORY

Caribbean colonization, as famously described by C.L.R. James (1989), was brutal, and control was maintained through violence and rigidly imposed racial hierarchies. Following France's first attempt at abolition in 1790, historian Laurent Dubois notes, "the contradictions and failures of emancipation led to new forms of racial exclusion…premised on and responses to projects of racial equality" (Dubois, 2003: 96). Those under colonial rule wanted true racial equality, as promised to them by France's own Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen. The slave rebellions in the French colonies were distinct in the way they demanded rights using the language of republicanism. The enslaved Africans "gave new content to the abstract universality of the language of rights, expanding the scope of political culture as they demanded Republican citizenship and racial equality…in winning back the natural rights the

Enlightenment claimed as the birthright to all people, however, the formerly enslaved laid bare a profound tension within the ideology of rights they had made their own" (Dubois 2004: 2-3). Laurent Dubois goes even further to make the compelling argument that some of the aspects of universalist ideology was in fact derived from colonial Caribbean. "The democratic possibilities imperial powers would claim they were bringing to the colonies had in fact been forged, not within the boundaries of Europe, but through the struggles over rights that spread throughout the Atlantic empires" (2004: 5). Resistance and revolt against French dominance was in part shaped by discourses of republicanism that spread across the Atlantic, but were imbued with a racial consciousness that in its ultimate manifestation birthed the Haitian revolution. The widespread desire to be modern subjects and afforded the same rights as that of French men was a product of the intimate relationship the French shared with its Caribbean subjects. France's attempt to deny their subjects full entry into modernity resulted in protest, revolt, and revolution in the name of racial justice, and resulted in the loss of Haiti.

France, England, and Spain all had an early interest in trying to colonize the Caribbean islands and dominate the budding sugar industry. Beginning in 1625, the two nations slowly gained control over the region. At first they tried to work with the indigenous population of Caribs, but by 1641, the local populations had been "expelled" and enslaved Africans were bought in to work the growing number of sugar plantations on the islands of Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Dominica (DuBois 2004). A robust triangle trade between Europe, the African coast, and the Caribbean Islands developed under the management of the The *Compagnie des Indes occidentales* (West Indies

Company). The Company managed the plantation economies and bought in a steady stream of Africans and white *engagés* (indentured laborers) from France. A few decades later, France acquired the colony of Saint-Domingue in 1697 from the Spanish, which would grow to become the most profitable colony of France, earning the nickname *la Perle des Antilles* (The pearl of the Antilles.) France invested heavily in the economic expansion of the Antilles, controlling trade between the colonies, which limited the economic power of the planters, who "chafed against these restrictions and against their limited capacity to change them" (Dubois, 2004:33). By 1789, the colony of Saint-Domingue had 509,642 enslaved Africans, compared to 26,666 freed coloreds (*gens de coleurs*) and 35,440 white colonists (Benot, 1987).

Revolution

Political dissent was rising in France, in turn was weakening the institutions that held the traditional sources of power and authority in the Caribbean in check (Knight and Palmer 1989: 26). Most white French slave-owners were intent on keeping their plantation economy in order to maintain their economic and political power through the exploitation of African slaves. France's resistance to giving the plantation owners more autonomy, however, created pockets of resentment and disloyalty. Moreover, the debate around slavery in 18th century France, brought about by the American and French revolutions, created a period of social upheaval that brought into question the conditions of citizenship and rights. As abolitionists in France debated the necessity of slaves, white plantation owners grew worried at the prospect of losing their labor force. They talked of

independence from France, which created unrest among the mixed race *affranchis*, or free coloreds (also referred to here as *gens de couleurs)* and African slaves, for different reasons (Dubois, 2005; James, 1989). As the ideological rift grew between French abolitionists and French slave and plantation owners, a number of slave revolts erupted in the French colonies. The French government was highly reactionary as it tried to passify the unstable colonies, first granting rights to freed coloreds and free-born blacks in 1790, then rescinding the rights in 1791 when enslaved Africans revolted in Saint Domingue, France's most profitable colony. The revolt pressed on for years before the French government's decided to abolish slavery in 1794, which caused mixed reactions from the white plantation owners and freed coloreds. The move was arguably done in part to maintain the allegiance of the freed coloreds as well as to potentially gain new, productive nationals from the newly freed Africans (Dubois, 2004). Whites generally fled the island, while the freed coloreds either ignored the decree or instituted a forced labor system.

Soon thereafter, pressure from the white colonists and mainland investors in the colonies convinced French leader Napoleon Bonaparte to work towards reinstating slavery in the colonies. When freed Africans in Guadeloupe and Saint Domingue heard rumors that they would be re-enslaved, more revolts were organized and French troops sent to the island to regain control (Dubois, 2004). In Saint-Domingue, communities of escaped slaves, called maroons, were growing and "maintained open, armed conflict with the plantation society that surrounded them, claiming and defending their liberty" (Dubois 2004b: 54). Rather than aligning themselves with the free coloreds in order to

suppress the revolts and maroon attacks, plantation owners were often caught up in the racist rhetoric popularized by many Enlightenment thinkers such as Hume, Kant, and Hegel.

The presence, circulation, and internalization of such racist rhetoric led to the white colonists' demise on the island on Saint Domingue. Their staunch resistance to forming an alliance with the population of *gens de couleur* (who oftentimes aligned themselves with those in power and not racially) made it such that the white population was isolated and ill-informed as to how to suppress the slave revolts (James 1983, Robinson 2000). Furthermore, the white plantation owners, concerned with the situation in France and their futures, were often discussing the revolution within earshot of their slaves. When asked if they weren't concerned about continuously speaking about liberty and equality in front of their slaves, "their passions were too violent. They ran with their weapons for nothing, lynching, assassinating, and mutilating the mulattoes and their political enemies; in summary, they showed the slaves the methods for obtaining or losing one's liberty" (James, 1983: 72, *my translation*). Strangely enough, plantations owners and freed colored were very aware of the potential for a slave rebellion, but "despite all the talk of revolution, it was a shock when the slaves actually launched one" (Dubois 2004b: 59). The revolt was

> …the most concrete expression of t he idea that the rights proclaimed in France's 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen were indeed universal....the slave insurrection of Saint-Domingue led to the expansion of citizenship beyond racial barriers despite the massive political and economic investment in the slave system at the time (Dubois 2004*b*: 3).

With the support of their Antillean neighbors, the enslaved Africans of Saint-Domingue waged a violent war with French troops, demanding political sovereignty. The Black Jacobins, as C.L.R. James would call them, learned of the possibilities for freedom arguably through the example of the French revolutionaries. Republicanism, ironically, was a guiding ideology for both the French and the Haitian revolutions. Yet deviating from an ideal practice of republicanism where racial equality (i.e., color-blindness) would exist, the non-white populations held on to those divisions, expanding their reach and multiplying the categories. Caribbeans, due to their history of discrimination and enslavement, could not deny the power of racial categories; rather, they held on to them as a way to reclaim/re-brand their subjectivity. The task was therefore not to suppress, but to seek empowerment within race-based categories. This empowerment required that "whiteness" be a visible, unneutral category. In doing so, Caribbeans were able to fight not only the French or the categorical "European", but the category of whiteness itself as antithetical to their existence. On January 1, 1804, the enslaved Africans of Saint-Domingue declared Haiti a republic, the first and only Black nation to arise out of a successful slave insurrection.

Growing Pains

The Haitian Revolution created shockwaves around the world by challenging the common assumption that Blacks were incapable of self-rule. Haiti became a symbol of black liberation and as such was both a beacon of hope and a threat to the institution of slavery in other nations (Nicholls 1996: 36). In fact, in Haiti's first constitution, it was

stipulated that all Haitians, no matter their shade, were to be called "black", but that no white man (read: foreigner) could own land or property. This was a hard line, however, and the newly formed government knew it could not afford to be seen as exclusionary. Haiti's first ruler Jean-Jacques Dessalines tried to soften Haiti's image by declaring that he would not intervene in the affairs of other colonies, in the attempt to establish good diplomatic and commercial relations with other nations, particularly with the nearby United States. However, "pressure from the French government, whose diplomatic support the Americans needed in their dispute with Spain over the Louisiana purchase, the United States place an embargo upon commerce with Haiti in February 1806" (Nicholls, 1996: 37).

Aside from Haiti's external difficulties, the fledging country also faced internal divides. From the time of the arrival of the first Europeans to the Caribbean, color was a central factor in establishing hierarchy of rule. Three color-castes existed in the French colonies—the *blancs,* or white colonists (who themselves were divided into the *grands blancs*—wealthy plantation owners—and the *petits blancs*—the merchants and lower middle class workers), the *affranchis*, or free coloreds (also referred to here as *gens de couleurs)* who were generally mixed race, and the *nègres*, the (generally dark-skinned) black slaves. This caste was codified in the *Code Noir,* published by France in 1685, that established the rights, rules and relationships between the color-castes. Though free coloreds were often the victims of racial prejudice and discrimination, they were more inclined to align themselves with the economic interests of the white colonists. After the revolution, white colonists fled, leaving the free coloreds with a significant amount of

power and land. Despite the rise of a new black elite, members of which derived their power from their role in the revolution, the generally lighter-skinned Haitians maintained dominance. Thus the color-caste hierarchy remained intact, and "the hostility between the two groups were frequently such that each would prefer to invite foreign intervention in the affairs of Haiti than to allow its rivals to gain power" (Nicholls 1996: 8). Furthermore, the elites often ignored the rest of the Haitian peasant, largely rural farmer population, upon the backs of whom the wealth of the country was generated. In the attempt to become a respected nation as soon as possible, the Haitian elite—black and mixed race—sacrificed civil society and continuously made decisions that served the political interests of the state at the expense of local production. Essentially, Haiti recreated the colonial system of master-slave it had just overthrown. Farmer explains, " the new elite insisted that the emerging peasantry produce commodities for an international market, but the peasants—the former slaves—wished to be left alone to grow foodstuffs for themselves and for local markets" (Farmer 1994: 74). The disequilibrium between the elite bourgeoisie minority and the peasant farmer majority, between political and civil society (Trouillot, 1989), combined with exploitative foreign interests created a situation of instability in Haiti that helped make possible the US Occupation of 1915 to 1934, which subsequently paved the way for the Duvalier dictatorships that bought the country to its knees.

For the first two decades, France did not recognize Haiti as an independent nation, and as long as France refused, no other country would either. Moreover it wasn't in these nations best interest to do so. The new republic was, as Paul Farmer puts it, a "pariah

nation," and its vulnerability exposed it to unfavorable market exchanges. The lack of recognition didn't prevent countries like Great Britain or the United States from trading with Haiti, though the United States quickly dominated imports; according to Farmer, "by 1821, almost 45 percent of imports to Haiti came from the United States; 30 percent were of British origin, and 21 percent were French" (Farmer 1994: 78). After briefly annexing the neighboring colony of Santo Domingo from 1822 to 1844, Haiti realized that they needed to expand their market presence in order to survive as a country, and this was impossible without international recognition of sovereignty. France had finally agreed to recognize the country's independence, but not without a price. In 1825, in exchange for diplomatic recognition, France demanded that Haiti pay an indemnity of 140 million gold francs (later reduced to 90 million gold francs). (The United States, for its part didn't recognize Haitian independence until 1862.) Haiti, in no condition to pay such an exorbitant amount, was required to borrow money from France in order to pay off the indemnity. Haiti made payments to France until 1950.

US Occupation

Saddled with a heavy debt, unequal market relationships, and internal racist/colorist politics, the Haitian government became increasingly unstable. New governments took over by coup every few months or years. Between August 1911 and July 1915, Haiti went through six presidents, of which four were killed in office (Trouillot 1990). Around this time, the United States was solidifying its influence in the region. With the newly built Panama canal, and a new naval base in Guantánamo Bay,

Cuba, the United States wanted to secure the North American region for its own political and military interests. In fact, the US was enforcing the Monroe Doctrine, a policy put into place by President James Monroe in 1823 declaring that European interference in North or South America would be viewed as acts of aggression. In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt added an addendum to the Doctrine, named the "Roosevelt Corollary" that gave the US its own permission to militarily intervene in any Latin American country. Upon the brutal assassination of Haitian President Villbrun Guillaume following his order to have 167 political prisoners murdered, it was this corollary that the US invoked to invade and occupy Haiti for nineteen years.

The US occupation is seen very differently by those studying Haitian history or US diplomacy. Two months after they invaded, the US marines put into place a Convention that gave the US full authority for ten years. This was done without any true input from the Haitian people or leadership. When Haitian leaders protested and rebellions became more frequent, the US disbanded the Senate and extended the Convention an additional 10 years (Farmer 1994; Trouillot 1990). During the occupation from 1915 to 1934, the US sought to modernize Haiti and make it a safer place for foreign investment (Nicholls 1996). Many public works went underway, including the building of hospitals, schools, roads, and other infrastructure. In order to do so, however, the American military instated a system of *corvée*, or indentured servitude. Haitian peasants were put to work in these public projects, but paid little, if at all, and in many cases were physically abused. Some reports compared the *corvée* to the re-establishment of slavery. The United States also took the liberty of re-writing the Haitian constitution.

The 1918 version eliminated the provision that no foreigner could own Haitian land. Another major change was the centralization of government administration. Prior the occupation, Haiti's affairs were distributed along major coastal cities such as Cap-Haïtien and Gonaïves. Following US intervention, the government became centralized in the capital Port-au-Prince. The other cities lost major sources of revenue as ports, and this precipitated the influx of peasants, more than ever forced to find paid labor instead of being able to live entirely off their land, in the capital city.

Paul Farmer asserts that the US Occupation, "was not, as its apologists suggest, the sudden manifestation of a new U.S. interest in protecting the Haitians from their own corrupt rulers. It was rather the continuation of a pattern established in the nineteenth century, and in many ways the logical succession to a brand of imperialism that had already taken root throughout Latin America" (Farmer 1994: 90). When one examines the US' stated motives alongside the history of its relationship with Haiti, it is not difficult to see that the US operated purely with its own interests in mind, despite some of the "good" work it did in modernizing the country.

It can be surprise some that the US would have such a vested interest in Haiti, particularly with its history of unstable governments. My own mother, a Haitian woman raised under Francois Duvalier's regime, actively dismisses the notion that the US had any reason other than altruism to intervene in Haiti either directly or indirectly. US policy documents reveal however that altruism was far from the minds of government leaders in Washington (Dash & Arthur, 1999). For example, Paul Farmer summarizes US policy objectives during the Cold War as follows:

1. The overriding objective is to deny Haiti to the communists.
2. In short-term political terms, the U.S. desires to assure Haiti's support of the U.S. on matters of importance in the OAS, UN, and other international organizations.
3. The U.S. has the continuing objective of protecting private American citizens and property interests in Haiti. (Famer 1994: 109)

Although the intensity of US interest did undermine Haiti's capacity to form other diplomatic relationships, attempts to profit from Haiti's primarily import market were made by other countries. In fact, during the lull in between the US Occupation and the Duvalier dictatorships (covered in the following section), France sought to re-establish diplomatic relations with Haiti. On September 24, 1945, the two countries signed a cultural accord that allowed France to find a stronger foothold in Haiti by installing French cultural institutions such as the *Institut Français* and *Allliance française* (which had stopped operating in 1938 as a result of World War II breaking out in Europe and the rise of Vichy France); expanding the number of French catholic clergymen, professors, and professional technicians; and perhaps most relevant to this research, granting scholarships for university and artistic study in France (Arthus, 2008; Bechaq 2010). The document was written to foster cultural exchanges between the two countries, "but without a true reciprocity from the Haitian side," wrote historian Wein Arthus,

> it is difficult to talk of cultural exchanges. It is more of a question of a policy put into place by France, a costly one, with the sole purpose to export--or keep in Haiti--its language and culture, knowing that 'the French language gives rise to French habits; French habits give rise to the purchase of French products. Those who know French become clients of France (Arthus, 2008).

Indeed, though there was some effort to solidify a working economic and cultural relationship between the two countries, the instability of the Haitian government, the necessity to repay the debt owed to France from the indemnity forced upon the new country in exchange for diplomatic recognition, which resulted in the significant lowering of Haitian import taxes in order to generate the income to pay back, and the stubborn economic policy of the US, undermined this relationship. However, France did succeed in cultivating a generation of educated Haitians who saw France as a premier destination. French anthropologist Dimitri Bechacq, who wrote his doctoral thesis on the Haiti elite living in France, argues that the cultural accord of 1945 planted a lasting seed in the Haitian imagination of France as an elite—in both the adjective and noun form—destination. "No matter the successes or failures of Haitians invested in the migration process," Bechaq writes, "it remains that the members of different Haitian social classes share an image of France, manifestations of which exist today" (Bechaq 2010: 9, *my translation*). The accord paved the way for one of the most significant waves of Haitian migration to France during the reign of the Duvalier family.

Duvalier Dictatorships

The US occupation ended rather hastily, with the US Marines pulling out without ensuring that the Haitian government was prepared to once again shoulder the

responsibility of self-rule after a series of puppet presidents. Haiti did manage to recover somewhat, particularly under the rule of President Dumarsais Estimé (from August 1946 to May 1950) and Paul Eugène Magloire (from December 1950 to December 1956.)

The man who would declare himself "President for life" and rule Haiti with fear for fifteen years grew up during the US Occupation. Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier witnessed with acuity the impact of US hegemony on the Haitian people, particularly as it related to nationalism and color consciousness. Duvalier subscribed to the ideologies of the "movement indigèniste," that fought against US cultural imperialism through Haiti nationalist expression, and "noirisme," a racialist ideology that elevated darker-skinned Blacks over the lighter-skinned mixed race folk. While these movements in and of themselves are founded on a resistance to the traditional power structures and bring the Haitian people—the peasants—into the foreground, they were in actuality used as form of political pandering between the Black middle- and upper-class bourgeoisie and the mixed race urbanites. The pandering was effective, however and Duvalier obtained the support from the black middle class, along with approval from US forces that helped him rise to power.

Duvalier was initially seen as a military puppet, to be easily controlled (Dash & Arthur, 1999; Trouillot, 1989), but within his first few months of office his true colors shined through. One of his first business items was to create his own personal security force, infamously nicknamed the *Tontons Macoutes*. These "boogeymen" were responsible for ensuring the Haitian people's loyalty to the new president. Duvalier became increasingly paranoid of losing power and used his macoutes to infiltrate every

level of society. Although macoutes had an official uniform, a navy blue jumper that struck fear in any who caught site of them approaching, many macoutes were also undercover. Naturally, these macoutes were even more dangerous than their more visible and brazen brethren. Any report of political dissent, even a casual comment against Duvalier's regime, would ultimately result in a person's, or even a whole family's, death. During family discussions I would often hear my mom say, "what Haitian family wasn't touched by Duvalier?" and by touched, it was obvious she meant experienced death at the hands of a macoute.

As the years passed and the terror and bloodshed increased, the international community remained largely silent. In fact, the US even provided $40.4 million in funding his first four years in office, often as unconditional grants (Farmer 1994). The US continued to meddle when power transferred from Papa Doc upon his death in 1971 to his 19-year-old son Jean-Claude Duvalier, nicknamed "Baby Doc." Many hoped that the son, being so young and potentially susceptible to influence, would be a relief following the state of terror his father had created, but unfortunately Baby Doc followed his father's path and upheld the totalitarian power of his office. Trouillot writes, "the greatest difference between the two regimes lay in the deepening of relations between the state and holders of capital at home and abroad, and the increased support of the U.S. government…a totalitarianism with a human face, one that rested on increased economic dependence, particularly on a subcontracting assembly industry tied to the United States" (Trouillot 1990: 200). Baby Doc demanded more money, and the loans offered by the World Bank and IMF required Haiti to become more liberalized. These structural

adjustment policies favored export manufacturing, and international companies came in and built factories in and around the capital, trying to capitalize on a cheap and docile labor force. This led to the dramatic growth and overcrowding of the capital as peasants, no longer able to sustain themselves through farm work, took up jobs manufacturing toys, baseballs, and apparel. Yet, according to Farmer, this “industrialization did little to arrest an economy in free fall” and as Haiti’s debt grew, so did the amount of people in poverty. In the 1970s, the first waves of Haitian “boat people” arrived on the shores of Florida and nearby Caribbean islands, demanding political asylum. For various political reasons however, the US government classified these Haitians as economic refugees and denied them entry or easy access to a green card (Laguerre, 1984).

Eventually the situation deteriorated to a point of no return for Jean-Claude Duvalier. A series of large protests and uprisings eventually became too much for Baby Doc to handle, and with the help of the US, he fled the country in 1986, eventually ending up in Paris, France.

The rise and fall of Aristide

For four years following the fall of Baby Doc, Haiti was ruled by various military juntas who seized power every few months. During this period, a Haitian Catholic priest named Jean-Betran Aristide became extremely vocal in denouncing the violence and instability. Aristide had already called attention to himself under the Duvalier regime and was subsequently exiled for three years to Montréal. He returned in 1985, more determined than ever to fight against the endless displays of corruption that impoverished

the members of his congregation. In 1988, Tonton Macoutes under the direction of the ruling Haitian army stormed his church and fired shots into the crowd, killing at least thirteen people and wounding dozens of others, and burned down the structure to the ground. He was excommunicated from his religious order that same year, which paved the way for his bid for the presidency. As a Haitian from a poor background, Aristide was seen as the people's choice, tired as they were from elites constantly jockeying for power. In late 1990, Haiti finally managed to hold their first democratically fair elections, electing Aristide with 60% of the vote. Unfortunately, he was overthrown in a coup eight by yet another person from the Army, General Raoul Cédras. Aristide was exiled to the United States where he stayed for three years. In protest of the military coup, the UN placed a trade embargo on Haiti, which created a severe economic crisis. Working class and poor Haitians began fleeing the country in droves, and the first boats landed on US shores around this time.

With the support of the US, Aristide returned to power in 1994, but with several explicit warnings. First, he was not to engage in class warfare, pitting the bourgeoisie against the proletariat masses, but to bridge the two. Second, he was to work more closely with Parliament and cede more power to them, thus decreasing executive authority. Lastly, Aristide was to support a more neoliberal economic policy. Although the US threatened to cut off US monetary support from Haiti if Aristide did not cooperate, Aristide made several gaffes that ultimately led the US, along with participation of Canada and France, to oust him from office and exile him, first to Jamaica then to the Democratic Republic of Congo where he ended up living for seven

years (Farmer, 2004). First, Aristide nominated a close friend as Prime Minister, René Préval, passing over a number of other possible candidates and showing clear favoritism. When new elections were held in 1995, Préval won, but Aristide ran once again in 2001 and once again took office. He waged a campaign to demand France to repay the indemnity Haiti was forced to pay. He calculated that with inflation, the debt amounted to approximately 21 billion. France for the most part ignored Aristide's demand[1] but Aristide made it a central issue, making himself very unpopular with international press.

In his second time in office, Aristide made a number of political errors that were used against him by the United States and international donor institutions to first freeze aid to the already impoverished country, and later remove Aristide from office. The circumstances for Aristide's forcible (and arguably unjust and illegal) removal from office lay beyond the scope of this dissertation, but this history is important in understanding to what extent international powers undermined Haiti's sovereignty. Support for Aristide within the country remained strong, particularly amongst the poor.

In 2006 Préval was re-elected to office, where he served out his term. The economic situation in Haiti made some small improvements, all of which were wiped out in the 2010 earthquake.

Goudougoudou

> The earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010, will forever be remembered as one of the world's deadliest disasters. For 35 seconds the earth shook and reduced a nation—already struggling with the historical weight of slavery,

[1] In 2010, some activists calling themselves the "Yes Men" created a fake government website and uploaded a video of a very official looking person reading a statement that France would indeed pay the money back.

> underdevelopment, imperialism, and intense internal divisions—to rubble….It is no exaggeration to say that the earthquake permanently changed Haiti.
> --From *Tectonic Plates* by Mark Schuller and Pablo Morales

Many scholars agree that that the earthquake's devastation was not merely a result of shifting tectonic plates. The earthquake merely collapsed the already fragile social, political, and economic scaffolding in place. Scholar Anthony Oliver-Smith writes that "a disaster is made inevitable by the historically produced pattern of vulnerability, evidenced in location, infrastructure, sociopolitical structure, production patters, and ideology that characterizes a society" (Oliver-Smith 2010: 33). Several realities came together to create the disaster: 1) undermining of rural economy and the development of Port-au-Prince as a industrial center, forcing peasants to move to the capital, 2) unregulated housing development, leaving the poor to live in shantytowns, and 3) lack of infrastructure or access of clean water or electricity for the vast majority of population.

On the other hand, the earthquake brought the Haitian diaspora into the light as a vital resource toward Haiti's recovery. It is well known that the most important "use" of the diaspora is the sending of individual monies to family and friends. According to the Inter-American Development Bank[2], about $1.5 billion US dollars are sent back home through wire transfers, making up more half of the Haitian government's gross domestic product (Sutton & Chaney, 1989; Zephir, 2004). After the earthquake, the World Bank[3] estimated that there would be a 20 to 25% increase, aided somewhat by Western Union

[2] http://www.iadb.org/en/news/webstories/2010-01-28/keeping-remittances-flowing-to-haiti,6481.html
[3] http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2010/05/17/haiti-remittances-key-to-earthquake-recovery

and Money Gram reducing their fees[4] during the 2010 year. Remittances (the formal name given to money that is wire transferred to family and friends, that often greatly supplements, if not substitutes for, income) have been the cornerstone for development efforts in Haiti, but because the money is sent to individuals, it only benefits the local economy by increasing certain people's purchasing power, but does not fund the necessary infrastructure in order to support the government and other institutions such as hospitals and schools. This financing can also become a crutch; as one reporter summarizes in regards to money wired home by the diaspora,

> Without their assistance, there would have been many more "boat people" trying to escape the misery; the level of violence and crime would skyrocket even more than it has. However, in a way, the diaspora is funding Haiti's "welfare system". It's not helping the Haitian people to stand on their own two feet (Uttley, 2005).

A number of scholarly and newspaper articles appeared between 2010 and 2012 (Lundy, 2011; Macintyre, 2011; Maclaren, 2010; Paraison, 2010) lauding the potential of the diaspora and suggesting new ways to include the diaspora in Haiti's future. This discourse around diaspora however is somewhat particular; not every country has a population that could be identified as a discrete group, let alone mobilized to invest in the country's future. In the introductory chapter, I discussed the politics behind the term diaspora. In the following section I expand on the relationship between diaspora and the countries of settlement.

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[4] http://www.irinnews.org/report/88397/haiti-us-remittances-keep-the-homeland-afloat

THE RISE OF A DIASPORA

Through a deeper understanding of Haitian history, it is possible to better contextualize the waves of migration that pushed Haitians to other Caribbean nations, North America, Europe, and Africa. Haiti's constant political and economic upheaval often left its citizens with few alternatives, and many sought their fortune abroad if they had the means to do so. Several patterns of migration emerged as a result, that often corresponded to specific moments in Haitian history (see table 1.) Migration patterns were structured by geographical distance, socio-economic status, and the immigration policies of the destination country. Thus, the kinds of communities that emerged in the various cities to which Haitians migrated often had specific characteristics that shaped the relationships formed with other ethno-racial communities, and the kind of engagement with both the country of settlement and Haiti.

In the early 20th century, it was common for elite families to send their children to study in France. Towards the 1950s and 60s, entire middle- and upper-class families migrated to France as a result of Duvalier's regime of terror (Béchaq, 2010; Jackson, 2011a; Laguerre, 1984). François Duvalier, or Papa Doc, had a distinct hatred for Haiti's elite population, who were typically racially mixed and lighter skinned(Trouillot, 1994). France, then, became a safe haven for Haitians who were middle class and educated. According to the first official demographic study of the Haitian population in France, *Les Haïtiens en France* by Roger Bastide, there were around 500 Haitians living in the French metropole during the Duvalier dictatorship. However, by the 1980s, the economic and political situation in Haiti had deteriorated significantly and the country

went through several oppressive military regimes, and Haitians with more limited socio-economic status migrated in large numbers to the Dominican Republic and other surrounding Caribbean islands (including Guadeloupe, a department of France), the United States and Canada.

PERIOD/WAVE	**SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT**	**MIGRANTS' PROFILE**	**DESTINATION**
1915-1934	US Occupation of Haiti	Massive emigration in rural areas Peasants' resistance	Cuba, Dominican Republic
1934-1950	Search for better education	Upper Middle Class	France, Canada, West Africa
1957-1963	François Duvalier regime	Politicians, Professionals Educated Elite Upper Middle Class	West Africa, France, Canada
1964-1971	François Duvalier self-proclaimed President-for-life	Middle Class Politicians	West Africa, France, Canada, U.S.
1971-1986	Jean-Claude Duvalier replacing father as President-for-life	Massive emigration of middle class & the working class poor	U.S., the Bahamas, Canada, Dominican Republic
1987-1994	President Aristide election (1991) *coup d'état* after 9 months	Massive emigration of working class poor	U.S. (mainly Miami), Bahamas, Dominican Republic
1995-2009	Political Turmoil Economic hardship	Massive exodus from working class poor to middle class from rural towns	Mainly U.S. & Canada, Wave to French Guyana
2010-2012	Weakened government and infrastructure following the earthquakes	Working class poor and some middle class	Mainly U.S., Brazil, but all borders are deliberately tightened

Table 1: Adapted from "Wave of Haitian Migration" (Casseus-Eybalin, 2008)

According to a 2009 US Census report, there are approximately 830,000 people of "Haitian ancestry" within its borders, with 376,000 living in Florida, and 191,000 living in New York and the rest living in Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Connecticut (Albert, 2010). The Canadian census estimates that approximately 100,000, Haitians live in Montreal. In France, there are about 30,000 living in the department of Ile-de-France (in which the capital city of Paris is located) according to the 2009 census data (INSEE, 2009; Local, 2004). These estimates are more than likely grossly inaccurate, since they do not take into account the vast number of Haitians that are undocumented, and current migration patterns have bought a larger number of working class and poor migrants to France. Many scholars believe that there are as many as 2.5 million Haitians living outside of Haiti. The Haitian government early on recognized the significance of this outside population, and Aristide nicknamed this population the "tenth department" and created an official ministry within the Haitian government in 1994. The nickname no longer applies since there is now an actual new tenth department (so Haitians living abroad would be the 11th department), but the institutionalization of the diaspora points to awareness of the importance of the group in government affairs and the future of the country.

Haitians in the US

Haitians were subjects of interest during a period of intense research on the experiences of immigrants and the challenges of integration. The US government made several significant changes to its immigration policy over the course of three decades that

dramatically changed the fabric of the country. In 1952, the Immigration and Nationality Act was passed that eliminated race as a bar to immigration or citizenship, but it wasn't until 1965 that an amendment was passed that abolished nation origins quotas, in preference for limits on immigration per hemisphere (120,000 in the Western hemisphere and 170,000 in the Eastern.) In the 1980s, two more acts were passed: the Refugee Act of 1980 redefined the category of refugee and increased the limit from 17,500 to 50,000; and the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 that was aimed to curtail illegal immigration by punishing employers who hired undocumented workers, but it only served to create a new market for forged documents and increased presence of undocumented workers. The Immigration Act of 1990 increased the immigration limit to 700,000, but also established a preference for skilled laborers and family reunification, which led to "chain migration" as individuals brought their spouses, parents, and children into the country. As a result of all these policy changes, the number of immigrants in the US jumped from 9.7 million to 19 million between the years of 1960 and 1990 (*United States Foreign-Born Population by Country of Birth: 1960, 1970, 1980, and 1990*, 2011). Today, immigrants make up 13% of the US population, a number that is somewhat disproportionate to the amount of attention immigrants receive in the media and by politicians concerned with their presence in the US.

A robust canon of research exists documenting the experiences of Haitians in the United States. In fact, some of the earliest ethnographies focused on the community in New York that blossomed in the late 70s and 80s (Keely, 1978; Sutton & Chaney, 1989) and were followed thereafter by studies on Haitians in Florida (Stepick, Grenier, Castro,

& Dunn, 2003; Zephir, 2004) and Illinois (Woldemikael, 1989). Other ethnographies followed up with the second generation (Portes, 1996; Rumbaut & Portes, 2001).

In 1960 there were only approximately 5,000 Haitians in the US. By 1970, there were about 28,000, and by 1990, the number had jumped to 225,000. As more working-class and poor Haitians arrived to US shores, their image in the media worsened, contributing to their difficulty in articulating a more unified identity that reflected their transnationalism (Basch et al., 1993). Government instability in Haiti forced thousands to flee, only to encounter a number of hostile policies in the US that stigmatized them and established them as "unwanted." Stepick summarizes that between the "U.S. Coast Guard attempting to intercept boats of Haitians before they left Haitian waters, the disproportionate incarceration of undocumented Haitians who made it to U.S. shores, and the highest disapproval rating of any national group for political asylum requests," Haitians in the United States have had no shortage of discrimination over the past several decades (Stepick et al., 2003). Perhaps one of the better known cases of egregious profiling was done by the Center for Disease Control [CDC], which identified Haitians, along with homosexuals, hemophiliacs, and intravenous drug users ("heroin addicts") as the groups with the highest risk to pass along the HIV virus. Haitians living in New York were sufficiently outraged to stage a massive protest. In April 1990, about 50,000 Haitians flooded the streets of lower Manhattan and Brooklyn to demand the CDC to remove the category of Haitian from their criteria (Faison Jr., 1991). The CDC did eventually backpedal but the stigma followed Haitians for decades.

Haitians in the United States also had to contend with racial and ethnic dynamics. From its birth, Haiti had a particular racial consciousness that grounded them in Blackness as an identity—in fact, one scholar argued that the 1804 Haitian constitution was the first document that conceived of Blackness as a social construction rather than as a biological fact (Gaffield, 2007). In the United States, however, it was clear that to be Black was to be at the bottom of society's totem pole, and many Black immigrants, conscious of their multiply situated identities, manifested different attitudes towards their African American counterparts. Although some new arrivals identified with the struggles of the time, others chose to distance themselves from African Americans so as to maximize their chances of success in the United States (Kasinitz, 1992; Stepick et al., 2003; Waters, 1999). Haitian immigrants for example would emphasize their ability to speak French or their education as a point of distinction from "other" Blacks. This caused tensions within certain neighborhoods where these communities rubbed elbows, such as in Flatbush, Brooklyn, NY or Hollywood, FL. Ethnic distinctiveness grew in the 1980s and 90s (Kasinitz, 1992) as increasingly more immigrants identified strongly with their ethnic identity, bringing more attention to the diversity of Blacks in the United States, but also prompting more research on immigrant communities and their descendants. A number of sociological studies were conducted that pitted Black immigrants against African Americans in their quest to gauge assimilation. For example, a study sought to understand why children of immigrants had higher rates of educational success than their African-American peers, implying that there was something cultural,

rather than structural, that created divergent success rates. This kind of ethno-racial "war" was criticized by Jemima Pierre, who reflected that,

> the discursive use of Black immigrant "ethnic" and "cultural distinctiveness," while admittedly reflecting an important recognition of the heterogeneity of the United States Black populations, is in fact predicated upon a repackaged "culture of poverty" discourse that serves to reaffirm the overarching racial order" (Pierre, 2004).

Regardless, these discourses contributed to the strengthening of diasporic communities in the United States. These communities were further supported by other institutions that acted as extensions of (or substituted for) the state. Mooney, who studied the Haitian Catholic diasporas in Miami, Montreal, and Paris, examined how religious spaces--in this case the church--function as "mediating institutions," "established institution of the host society [that] attempts to speak, or mediate, on [a community's] behalf with the local and national governments" (Mooney 2009: 9). Mooney argues that "Haitians' religious faith provides them with narratives of hope in situations where they have little status or political voice" (Mooney 2008: 9). These religious spaces mediate the experiences between Haitians and their respective State agencies, each characterized by distinct ideologies. In the US, the notion of the "melting pot"—even if more of an ideal than a reality—permits a greater level of cooperation in the Haitian community of Miami, the most successful of the three diasporas in permitting social and economic mobility, according to Mooney.

Haitians in France

Haitian migration to France has been understudied in comparison to the streams towards the United States and Canada, but their history is quite revelatory. The Haitian migrant population in France has gone through several class-based demographic shifts over the past century. In the early 20th century, it was common for elite families to send their children to study in France. Towards the 1950s and 60s, entire middle- and upper-class families migrated to France as a result of Duvalier's regime of terror (Béchaq, 2010; Jackson, 2011a). François Duvalier, or Papa Doc, had a distinct hatred for Haiti's elite population, who were typically racially mixed and lighter skinned (Trouillot, 1994). France, then, became a safe haven for Haitians who were middle class—educated and well off. According to the first official demographic study of the Haitian population in France, *Les Haïtiens en France* by Roger Bastide, there were around 500 Haitians living in the French metropole during the Duvalier dictatorship. However, by the 1980s, the economic and political situation in Haiti had deteriorated significantly, and Haitians with more limited socio-economic status migrated in large numbers to the Dominican Republic and other surrounding Caribbean islands (including Guadeloupe, a department of France), the United States and Canada.

Although official estimates of the number of Haitians in Ile-de-France (the department in which Paris is located) to be roughly 30,000 as of 2009, other sources place that number closer to 60,000, including the undocumented (INSEE, 2009; Local, 2004). Current migration patterns have bought a larger number of working class and poor migrants to France. When I spoke with René Benjamin, who served as a bridge

between Haiti and the Haitian community in Ile-de-France, he explained that families in Haiti pool together their resources in order to send one family member. Besides being an obvious financial feat, it can prove difficult to complete all the necessary paperwork because of missing or falsified birth certificates and limited visas. Nonetheless, there is a sizeable population, yet until the earthquake Haitians were rarely seen or mentioned in the national media or in academic discourse on "Black France" or the Afro-Caribbean populations in France. Much has not changed since the disaster. Today when Haitians are discussed it is usually in a context of aid, a discussion about Haitians "over there" and rarely those already in mainland France.

Moreover, when looking at the demographic of those who actively work in Haitian associations, it can be revealing of some of the major issues they face. First the population has aged with very low levels of renewal. Some of the largest waves of Haitian entrants, generally lower-to-middle class, came in during the 60s and 70s as students. At that time, Haiti was in the full throes of a dictatorship, so many students also engaged in long-distance political activism, doing what they could to raise awareness around and help get rid of Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier. As the political climate shifted from a dictatorship to political unrest to economic instability, the students, now middle-aged professionals, became more focused on providing and supporting social services. Migration to mainland France, however, slowed as the cost became prohibitive, and less scholarship opportunities were available. The age disparity has made many organizers conscious of finding ways to encourage intergenerational dialogue and youth participation. Gender make-up tells another story. Known figureheads in the community

are predominantly men, although statistics show that Haitian migration to France is made up of 44% men and 55% women (INSEE, 2009). The lack of women involvement has shaped the kinds of issues addressed and the way they are addressed. There is a heavy focus on education and healthcare with very little focus reproductive health and agency. Individuals and organizations such as the *Association des Femmes Haïtiennes* (Association of Haitian Women) that have attempted to address this gap have not been taken seriously.

I will go into more detail about the Haitian population in France in the following chapter, but it is important Haitian independence from France did not lead to any true form of sovereignty for the defiant nation; the Haitian people were exploited internally by the elite ruling class and externally by European nations and the United States. From the nation's inception, the precedent for dependency was ensured, and this has played the pivotal role in the problematic dynamic between the Haitian people, the Haitian state, and foreign nations. At the root of all this is the relationship between France and Haiti, a relationship whose import in popular literature on Haitian history is often confined to colonialism. Although France indeed plays a lesser role than the United States in Haiti's affairs today, the legacy of elitism and the complicated split between the Haitian people, the Haitian diaspora, and Haitian leaders stems from the days of French colonial rule and continues to play a subtle role in Haitian politics (Trouillot 1989).

CONCLUSION

The diaspora has shown throughout the years their capacity to influence and shape Haiti. For better or for worse, Haiti's future is tied to the future of its diaspora. It is the love for Haiti that motivates Haitians and their descendants to mobilize and invest from afar. Yet being a "diaspora" signifies more than belonging to a global community of displaced individuals. The way one understands themselves as a diaspora (or not) and the power that the term has to mobilize is context-dependent. One must be aware of the politics of place that shape one's identity as fundamentally as other social categories (Brown, 2005). In other words, one must talk about diasporas in plural form, recognizing that each are distinct. When I first became interested in studying Haitians in Paris, it was born out the realization that there was something different about the Haitian diaspora in France in comparison to the New York diaspora with which I was more familiar. Discursively, it is often easier to refer to a singular Haitian diaspora, as if it was a single community that could be mobilized in times of need. Only recently has scholarship sought to unpack this singular way of perceiving the diaspora as more studies have come out on the particularities of the Haitian experience in the Dominican Republic, the Bahamas, Guadeloupe, and France (Béchaq, 2010; Brodwin et al., 2006; Jackson, 2011b; Louis, 2012; Mooney, 2009). I follow in the footsteps of Regine O. Jackson and the contributors to her excellent anthology *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora* to be aware that "indifference to the diversity of diaspora spaces could reproduce the 'homogenizing effect' of older theoretical approaches and erase important structural and cultural difference in the experiences of Haitian diasporans" (2011: 31).

There is more work to be done on being intentional in thinking through how Haiti, other nations, and the diaspora within those nations will work together on rebuilding the beleaguered nation. Individual remittances are indispensible, but the collective power of those remittances, if channeled into organizations or political action committees, could have a wider range of impact. Hometown associations, situated at the juncture of the nation-state, the international community, and the people, can be effective tools in this endeavor when they are given the appropriate tools to be successful. Their capacity to act and successfully carry out their missions depends not only on the competencies, resources, and networks that individuals bring to the table, but on the ability of the organization to leverage the sum of those things in both national and diasporic public spheres. This investigation focuses on conveying how important these pieces are by providing an account of the challenges when they are missing. In the next chapter, I examine the relationships within and between hometown associations in France.

Chapter 3: The Ups and Downs of Organizational Life

One of my earliest experiences in Paris that actually spawned my interest in studying the Haitian diaspora in France occurred in the summer of 2006. I was attending the Caribbean day carnival, sponsored by the City of Paris. I had waited anxiously for the Haitian float to pass so that I could proudly wave my flag and dance in the streets next to the truck. To my deep disappointment, a Haitian float never appeared, and on my way home I wondered how Haiti could have not made an appearance alongside other Latin American nations with both small and large populations in France, such as Trinidad and Tobago and Brazil. I found out later from René Benjamin, founder and director of the organization *Haïti Développment*, that Haiti had been represented in the past, but more than likely communication had broken down between the leaders in the Haitian community and the French Caribbean community—as it periodically has done in the past—and therefore the effort to have a Haitian float that year had probably been abandoned.

My experience at the carnival became an ethnographic metaphor for the reality of the Haitian population in France as a group that exists as simultaneously present and absent—present in the sense that they do enter the French national discourse, but almost always in reference to problems in the country itself. Their absence from the national imagination as neither a threatening immigrant group, like North African migrants, nor an Afro-Caribbean group, unlike Guadeloupe or Martinique, creates a situation where Haitians fall through the ideological cracks. Haitians are not alone in this, however;

South Asian immigrant groups, such as the Sri-Lankan Tamil or Pakistanis, are rarely featured in the media (Breeden & Wong, 2011). However if we explain away a community's invisibility due to a small population size, or a high number of immigrants being undocumented, we miss the bigger picture of understanding how other systems at work create hegemonic structures that privilege certain experiences and standpoints over others. In France, for example, the dismissal has allowed for greater discursive space being occupied by North African migrants, to the detriment of understanding the distinct experiences of other immigrant communities.

It is this multi-level invisibility—and arguably, neglect—that frames this chapter. Here, I will delve into the core of my research, examining the internal dynamics and external influences of Haitians and their organizations. My aim is largely descriptive, profiling the main organizations with which I worked, and the introducing the people who were instrumental to my fieldwork experience. I analyze some of their personal attitudes towards their work within the organizations as well as their experiences in Haiti and in France, all of which are developed within intersectional contexts of race and class ideology, pressures of assimilation, and cultural identity. As I try to weave their stories, I will draw on the analytical frames presented in the introduction, namely subject formation, diasporic citizenship, and transnationality, in order to contextualize the motivations and actions of the research participants.

I have chosen to give a certain amount of attention to the challenges between members and within organizations because these issues—and the attempt to resolve them—formed a major part of my experience within this community and reflect the every

struggles of “being diaspora”. As a researcher, though, I could have been drawn to the conflict more than necessary, whether it was that people thought that was what I wanted to hear, or because that was what I thought (misguidedly) I was meant to write about. Regardless of the reasons, it structured my experience, and at several points I became concerned that my entire dissertation would be filled with dramatic stories. Upon further reflection, however, I was moved to try to understand why there was so much conflict, beyond the immediate circumstances. I found that people’s individual stories had some common threads and clear ties to broader issues, and thus I have structured this chapter around making those connections clear. In the first section I will discuss the history of formal organizations in France in order to “set the scene,” so to speak. Understanding at the outset the differences in the ways French associations are conceived of and the role they are seen to play in the French nation-state can make it easier to see how those differences manifest themselves in Haitian hometown associations. In the second section, I will profile the organizations and institutions that were central to my research, and describing their dynamics that I argue are a manifestation of the pressures they experience in managing their identity and responsibility as a diasporic community, pulled in multiple directions without a clear sense of where they might be most needed.

ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE IN FRANCE

In France, nonprofit organizations, which include associations, cooperatives, mutual banks, and even certain kinds of insurance companies, have long held a position of deep importance (Salamon & Anheier, 1992). Prior to the institutionalization of

nonprofit organizations in French law, they were regulated by a highly centralized French state. As a Roman Catholic country, France deviated from other Catholic nations such as Italy by replacing the Church with the state in public institutions. Institutions such as schools and hospitals, and the provision of social services such as care for the sick and poor, were regulated by the French state itself (Archambault, 2001). France subscribes to the political ideology of *etatism*, or statism, as opposed to deriving its sovereignty from civil society. In a country that is statist, like France or Germany, "the state constitutes a separate and superior order of political governance that derives much of its legitimacy from a well-developed bureaucratic elite, as well as from a long history of authoritarian political rule" (Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001). The implications of this for nonprofits are significant; whereas the nonprofit sector in non-statist countries served to complement the state in taking care of its citizens, in statist countries nonprofits often dealt with the issues that the state overlooked or neglected (Archambault, 2001). Early 19th Century associations revolved around labor rights, and were thus seen as a threat, viewed as anti-republican and sectarian. In 1810 Napoleon banned any association with more than twenty people as a way to control and suppress any uprisings. This restriction wasn't lifted until the 1901 law that guaranteed the right of citizens to create associations. Following the legalization of French associations, France broke with the Catholic Church and established itself as a secular state in 1905, which also permitted the creation of "cult" or ostensibly religious organizations. According to Lindsay and Hems, the French nonprofit sector,

emerged as the result of the ideological struggle between republicanism and the Catholic Church over the rights of the individual. Until 1901 the legal right of individuals to associate in groups was heavily restricted and only allowed by specific permission of the government. The creation of associations or *association declareée* was therefore seen as the final victory of the Republic over the Catholic Church in France (Lindsay and Hems 2004: 267).

The 1901 law defines associations as an, "agreement by which two or more people pool, permanently, their knowledge or activities for purposes other than sharing profits"[5] (*Loi du 1er juillet 1901 relative au contrat d'association*, 1901). Although defined broadly, organizations closely reflected the historical moment in which they were born, and were often treated as an instrument to carry out a specific project (Regourd, 2007). In the early 1900s, a large majority were labor-based organizations, including labor unions, which reflected at the time large population and political upheaval due to World War I and the subsequent interwar period that brought in an immigrant-based work force. This was followed by a period of strong communist sentiment in France in the 1940s and 1950s. Decolonization occurred in the late 1950s and 1960s ushering some economic stability (in France, at least), and as a result organizations were being created by the new middle class who were no longer focused on labor but on more social issues. New kinds of associations cropped up: "for environmental defense and protection; for the concerns of feminism, notably the fight against restrictions on birth control and the prohibition of abortion; and for international development and Third World countries" (Archambault, 2001). These broader issues dovetailed with the growing global nonprofit sector towards the end of the 1970s (Archambault, 2001;

[5] The original text reads, « Convention par laquelle deux ou plusieurs personnes mettent en commun, d'une façon permanente, leurs connaissances ou leurs activités dans un but autre que de partager des bénéfices. »

Werker & Ahmed, 2008), and encouraged a continued partnership between the government and the private sector.

The 1980s witnessed a major shift for associations for a number of different reasons. In 1981, a reform was passed that allowed immigrants to also create associations. This was followed by the 1982 decentralization act that empowered local communities to act in their own interests, thus distributing the social responsibility of the government onto civil society. There was a dramatic increase in the number of nonprofits created between 1960 and 1990—the number jumped from 16,000 to close to 60,000 (Archambault, 2001). The expansion of this right for migrants certainly contributed to the increase. Research has shown that migrant organizations and their transnational connections are built most often by migrants who are more established in the country of resettlement (Caglar, 2006; Guarnizo, Portes, & Haller, 2003), although recent arrivals may often benefit from such associations. Migrant associations opened up new possibilities for community building and expanding collective agency within France. This was particularly significant for the Muslim population in France. As an example of the impact, one study did a survey of sixty-six Islamic associations, two of which were created between 1960-1969, eleven between 1970-1979, and 53 between 1980 and 1991 (Kastoryano & Diop, 1991). The goals of these organizations ranged from strengthening political representation to religious gatherings. Unfortunately, such organizations, both cultural and religious in nature, were met with a large amount of suspicion and outright hostility as anti-republican and an impediment to integration within the French state (Hamidi, 2003). Those with anti-immigrant politics saw organizations created by

immigrants "as places where immigrants stick together, develop bonds with each other apart from the rest of society, and as places that foster communitarianism rather than integration" (Hamidi, 2003). The awkward relationship between the state and these immigrant associations manifests itself in different ways, whether via the overemphasis of their adherence to French values, or in their difficulty in obtaining state funding.

Certain linguistic or political dances are required to be seen as good French citizens while maintaining group membership rights. For example, one of the board members of the federation *Plateforme des Associations Franco-Haïtiennes* (PAFHA, I will go into more detail later in this chapter), Vladimir Lessage explained his decision to change the name of his association, ARCHE. ARCHE originally stood for *Association Religieuse et Culturelle d'Haiti et son Environment* (Religious and cultural association of Haiti and her environment.) Vladimir explained that he had difficulty obtaining funding from government entities because, "they would see the word "religious," point and say, what is this?" He then changed the words to *Association pour le Rayonnement Culturel d'Haïti et de son Environnement* (Association for the spread of Haitian culture and her environment), strategically changing the words while keeping his acronym "brand."

Although Vladimir was comfortable using tactics to maximize his chances of funding, few associations actually manage to secure outside monetary resources. Associations are strictly dependent on member support, either through member fees, private donations, or volunteers. Funding was the primary concern for every association I spoke to. Lindsay and Hems report that although public funding makes up close to 60% of total funding for associations, "less than 1% of the 880,000 associations in France

receive 43% of this public funding" (Lindsay & Hems, 2004). There was some money available through local government (mayoral) offices, but generally successful proposals occurred in cities already aware of and engaged with their populations' needs. For Haitians located in the surrounding suburbs such as Saint-Denis, Massy-Palaiseau, Argenteuil, Aubervilliers, or Cergy, local governments were more likely to offer small grants. This was especially true following the earthquake. The following section will delve into the specifics of Haitian presence in France, and the ideological and political context in which they organize.

HAITIAN EXPERIENCES IN FRANCE

Every last Friday of the month, *Maison d'Haiti* (Haiti House) would host an event open to the public. Sometimes it was a film screening, other times it featured a guest speaker or a roundtable on a provocative topic. This one particular Friday, the event was a discussion on the role of Haitians in French history. I arrived fairly early, and sat by myself waiting for others to show so the program could begin. Since many of the guests are regulars, my presence was fairly remarkable, and I wasn't surprised when a woman in her mid-30s approached me, curious. She introduced herself as Marlene, opened the conversation up with, "I don't think I've seen you here before, where are you from?" I gave her my rehearsed spiel, saying that I was a New Yorker student of Haitian origin ("étudiante newyorkaise d'origine haïtienne"), and she lit up immediately: "I lived in New York!"

With very little prompting from me, Marlene told me her story, as if nearly desperate for someone to hear it. She was born in Haiti, but left when she was 8 for France with her parents. She spent from ages 8-17 in France. She told me how much she loved it. When her father, who was working in Africa with UNESCO, lost his job they decided to move to New York. She acquired US citizenship, completed the rest of her education in the States, getting her Masters and Doctorate degrees in French and Spanish from CUNY Graduate School, and then taught at CUNY Queens, Hunter, and Hofstra. Marlene hated her time in New York though, always feeling like she never fit in. Haitians in New York rejected her, one reason being she only spoke French (never learned Haitian Creole) so they thought her bourgeoise[6]. She was tired of people hearing her accent and asking, where are you from? Knowing she would never be able to integrate, she decided to go back to France, remembering fondly her experiences there. Unfortunately, in spite of the fact that she'd lived in France for over 8 years, she could no longer claim French citizenship and needed to start at the bottom in the process. Her lack of papers made her life as equally difficult as it had been in the States. She wasn't able to obtain an apartment, and had been living in state-sponsored "hotels" that provided emergency shelter for those who were lucky. Luck was relative, however, and Marlene described the condition of these hotels, repulsed by the broken toilets, roaches, and dirty, co-ed shower stalls. Although she felt much more comfortable socially to be in France,

[6] Language is extremely marked in Haiti. The two official languages of the nation are French and Haitian Creole, but linguistics have long described the relationship between the two as "diglossic," where the language that is most widely spoken is given less prestige than the other. Being fluent in French implies that you had enough money to afford a great education, and *only* speaking French may give others the impression that you are flaunting your privilege.

she was excluded from full participation in the public sphere due to her lack of citizenship. She was at the Maison d'Haiti hoping to develop a relationship with someone who might be able to give her a job, thus opening up a path towards citizenship.

Marlene's story contains several elements of the more common experiences of Haitians who settle in France: a French-heavy socialization, difficulty connecting with other Haitians, a complicated relationship with the United States, some form of exclusion in France. There is little opportunity for any migrant group in France to develop parallel nationalisms (i.e., Haitian-American), or social or cultural identifications (i.e., Black) without ideologically rejecting French national identity. France proudly proclaims itself a republican and universalist nation-state, implying that it is color-blind and anti-communitarian. Any claims to non-French identity or membership in an ethnic or religious community run in opposition to the dominant paradigms of France. These identities can be read as a form of resistance to a unified national identity, particularly in France, where hybrid identities or explicit racial and ethnic identities (and the communities built around them) are heavily frowned upon, if not directly undermined by law or public policy. Of course, this does not prevent such claims from being asserted, but when one does, it can create tensions both within the individual (e.g., where do I belong) and within society (e.g., where does his/her allegiance lay).

The development of the cultural and political subjectivities of Haitian immigrants and their descendants can offer interesting insights into how exclusionary national identity and restrictive state practices shape the possibilities of identity and community formation. These possibilities are shaped by the histories of the countries of origin and

settlement and their bilateral relationship. They are also an outcome of the present moment of transnationality that has been facilitated by advances in technology and increased migration. People have been able to manage a wide range of identities that cross space and time, and can be even contradictory. Identity politics not only plays a key role in the decision to participate (or not to) in an organization, but also shapes other kinds of practices that reflect the extent of their integration or exclusion in their environment.

The Historical Role of Haitians in France

It is with great difficulty that one traces the impact of an event of such significance as the Haitian revolution in French history. The work of anthropologists Roger Bastide, Francoise Morin, and Francois Raveau is testament to that fact. In their ethnography on the Haitian community in France (1974), the first of its kind, they explicitly state that it is migrants who change, and not French culture. They establish a continuum of this acculturation, arguing that Haitians serve as an intermediary group between Africans who retain most of their culture and Antilleans who have been reduced to a "folk" version of their African ancestry (Bastide, Morin, and Raveau 1974). The scholars hypothesize that

> Haitians should permit us to better understand at once the nature of culture shocks (since it comes from a mixed culture, that will respond in a manner different from a pure culture, or those from transitioning societies) and the nature of shocks that we can say are racial, but would be better called colorism (since we will find ourselves in the presence of a range of blood mixtures (1974: 12, *my translation*).

A number of observations can be drawn from their analysis. The scholars acknowledge but trivialize Haiti's history, focusing merely on the civilizing impact that France had on Haitian culture. Second, they reject an analysis of race and racial construction in favor of focusing on the biological/phenotypical differences amongst the different Black populations as a better indicator of the types of experiences immigrants will encounter. Third, they essentialize Antillean, Haitian, and African culture and their communities and place them on a vertical scale in relationship to each other, implicitly supporting the effects of creolization. Their arguments are particularly surprising given that they drew on Fanon and Cesaire to support their thesis yet did so with little critical analysis. In quoting Fanon (2008), for example, the authors focus on how Antilleans are discriminated against because of their color, but they do not interrogate what "color" signifies. Black communities in France are merely victimized by some ambiguous hatred and at a loss because of their incremental physical and cultural distance from their true origins.

The method of analysis used in the ethnography on Haitians in France is not the exception, but rather representative of the ways in which the more problematic aspects of French history are turned on their head and re-packaged so that France disappears in the background as an innocent party. For example, France attempted in 2005 to pass a law that would mandate schools to teach the "positive aspects of colonization"(Henley 2005). To teach colonialism in a positive light would deny the struggles by Black people to fashion their subjectivity apart from Western modernity. Rather, it becomes a debate around how well ex-colonials treated the French gift of civilization. This is clearly seen

in the media aftermath following the 2010 Haitian earthquake. The French public engaged in polarizing debates, asking if France owed Haiti following a particularly devastating colonial and post colonial history after having become the first Black republic in the world, or even whether the country deserved aid given its continuous history of political and economic strife. These discourses of restitution or merit reflect France's racial ambivalence (Hale 2006; Bhabha 1994) towards Haiti and the Haitian diaspora, revealing an inability to address the particular experiences of exclusion and invisibility for Haitian migrants, and a broader struggle with its national identity as a former empire and now a color-blind multicultural state (Bonilla-Silva 2009). Furthermore, the debate reveals how Haitians, multiply positioned as ex-colonial, poor, politically corrupt, and Black, can easily be marginalized or excluded as unlikely or unworthy citizens.

It is important to recognize that "historical relevance does not proceed directly from the original impact of an event, or its mode of inscription, or even the continuity of that inscription" but rather the ways in which history is unearthed or revisited can reveal underlying operations of power that inform current day debates (Trouillot, 1997: 10). Racial discourses in France have been invariably shaped by the Haitian revolution, even if this impact can only be read in its silencing. Most notably, the Négritude movement was heavily influenced by the Haitian revolution and the Haitian scholar Jean Price-Mars, who sought to affirm Haiti's African roots and criticized the Eurocentric attitudes and behavior of the elite. Negritude theorizing emerged in the 1930s, led by Francophone Antilleans Aimé Césaire and Léon Damas, and Léopold Senghor from Senegal, West Africa. Negritude was a cultural response to a sense of alienation and fragmentation that

emerged from France's policy of cultural assimilation (Lewis 2006). This policy is related to the ideology of French republicanism, which is premised on the political and cultural unity of the state. France permitted anyone (in theory, at least) to become French citizens, provided that they became culturally French as well. This in itself was premised on the belief of the superiority of the French (and Western) culture and civilization. The Negritude movement, in turn, celebrated African civilization, and sought to re-establish a black identity while rejecting cultural assimilation (Lewis 2006; Munro 2004; Wilder 2009). Haiti served as an inspiration for (psychological) revolt and identity, particularly for the Martinican Césaire and the Guyanese Damas. Césaire asserts Haiti as where "Negritude first stood up" (Césaire & Breton, 1939: 24), referring to the Haitian revolution. Moreover, the 1915-1934 American occupation of Haiti helped foment a major literary and artistic proliferation around "Haitianism"—Haitian cultural pride—that heavily influenced the Antillean scholars (Munro 2004). Damas, for one, was profoundly influenced by Price-Mars. As cited by Munro, "Damas concludes that Negritude is not an introverted, racially exclusive movement, but has essentially universality aims, and that it owes this fundamental aspect of its vision ultimately to Price-Mars" (Munro, 2004: 6). Haiti, thus, set a precedent for Black cultural pride that inspired generations.

In France, however, race and racism continue to be a contentious subject, let alone any discussion of Black pride. Although I tried to discuss race with Haitians, the conversation was often dismissed because I was an American, and therefore unnaturally "obsessed" with race, which didn't apply to people in France. I therefore rarely discussed race or racial consciousness with my research participants.

Interestingly, I did manage to discuss race in France with non-Haitians. In fact, my first hour in France was colored (pun intended) by an act of racial solidarity. I was in line at customs in Charles de Gaulle airport, when someone tried to cut the line in front of me. A woman I'd never met before defended me against this person by grabbing my arm and pulling me forward, telling the person "she's my cousin." That moment of clear racial solidarity, given that we were the only two Black women in the line, made her intriguing and we exchanged contact information to meet up later. Aurélie was born in Cameroon but mainly lived in the United States and France, switching countries every few years. She kept saying how hard it is to be in France as a foreigner and as a black person. She'd struggled to get a job because her post-secondary education was in the States, and therefore employers discriminated against her. Furthermore, because it is customary on a French resume to place a photo, she felt that her skin color was another strike against her. Her frankness and insistence surprised me—she clearly had a difficult time adjusting in France. Indeed others, when prodded, would readily share such instances of racial discrimination, but it was understood only in terms of racism, generally divorced from racial identity—a racism without race (Mullings, 2005).

I met a journalist at an SOS Racisme event name Max. SOS Racisme is the most well-known anti-racism organization in France. When Max heard what I was researching, he invited me for coffee and offered me a hefty helping of his opinion on the anti-racist movements in France. He was particularly critical of SOS Racisme as an association that is a politician factory, citing the example of Harlem Desir, a former president of SOS Racisme who eventually became a member of the European Parliament

for the Socialist Party of France. SOS Racisme did little to advance what Max felt was necessary in France—a serious engagement with multiculturalism and cultural diversity, a phrase he used over and over again. It isn't about race, he argued, but the history of groups of people that was jettisoned through colonization. He preferred not to think about present inequality as built off of racism or colonization, because then it doesn't allow people to take responsibility for their future. Instead, Max felt that we should be able to talk about the past, present, and future simultaneously. This conversation was certainly much deeper than average, but even in its depth, it revealed the anxiety and discomfort many in France have to discuss race without seeming racist. There is a fear of moving backwards, or perhaps more appropriately, not moving past the past, that precludes discussions around race and racism, as well as gender and sexism.

Invisibility and Exclusion

In correlation with state exclusion, Haitians in many instances have chosen to remain an invisible community, for various reasons, and with various consequences. For example, I spoke to one informant who was a professional dance artist, who had moved from Haiti to France in the 1980s. He had worked the performance circuit and now worked at a dance studio in Seine St. Denis. He explained to me a fellow Haitian had approached him and asked him to participate in a business venture that required some money. The dance artist lent him a large sum, which was never to be seen again. He told me, "I don't deal with Haitians anymore, bunch of crooks!" I met others who offered

stories with similar themes of betrayal and distrust of all Haitians, and their active decision not to associate with other Haitians.

Conversely, incoming migrants with no family or friend connections in France were at a loss to find other Haitians to help them adjust to French society and bureaucracy. Unless they were fortunate to be put in contact with René Benjamin, newly arrived migrants were left to find their own support and resources. In a conversation I struck up in a music store, I met Gerald who told me it had taken him 2 years before he found Pegguy, the storeowner. Gerald had had to navigate the hostile French bureaucracy on his own. Once he found Pegguy, Gerald was finally able to meet other Haitians. Pegguy, told me, "It's hard to find one Haitian, but once you find one, you can find them all." This reality can be quite isolating for new arrivals looking for support and resources. Haitian self-imposed invisibility is also structurally supported by the ideologically republican-based French state, which makes it difficult for immigrants in general to carve out their own space.

The difficulty to create space can also create a situation in which the spaces that do exist are heavily protected. I would qualify Pegguy's comment and say that once you found one Haitian, you may indeed find all of them, but you might also be discouraged from fraternizing with one group over another. The kinds of cleavages that were formed often reproduced the similar kinds of class, color, and religious divisions that existed in Haiti. For example, although I made a deliberate decision to focus on those active in hometown associations, this decision was made extremely easy by the fact that religious and secular groups didn't often mix. People in the association network did remark on

how they tried to draw church communities to their events through internal networking or via promotion on the radio, but it was rare to see that kind of crossover. The membership demographic of an association would also reveal certain levels of power and access that came out in uncomfortable ways, that I will discuss later on in this chapter.

The experiences of Haitians students are another subject of discussion since they made up a significant percentage of the overall Haitian population in France. Due to my age and having attended Paris X in 2006 during my study abroad, I was able to meet a number of young Haitians who were in Paris on a student visa. Their perspectives on France were varied. A few were enjoying their stay in Paris and had a desire to remain a little longer to at least work for a few years. A much larger number, I must admit, could not wait to take the next plane back to Haiti, or at the very least the United States. One 26-year-old male law student wanted to be able to enact real change for his people back in Haiti, and maybe go into politics. He also complained of being desperate to find a Haitian woman to date, since those in France had no desire to date Haitian men (but I suspect this statement was a cleverly disguised pick-up line as well).

The ambivalence of these Haitian students can offer insight as to the apparent lack of a self-defined community of Haitians. There is obviously the transitory nature of some of these students not born in France, whose stay is contingent on their ability to renew their visa; once expired, they must make the decision to stay under a work visa, go back to Haiti, or perhaps try their luck in the United States. Those students that did want to stay however, acknowledged the opportunities they were offered in France that they would have never had access to had they stayed in Haiti. For one older female student,

she told me there was no turning back, and that she was ready to settle down in France, in spite of the several incidences of racism that she had to personally deal with. I did meet one young college student who had two Haitian immigrant parents but had been born in France, and felt very comfortable in France—in fact she loved it. Because her parents never spoke Haitian Creole at home, nor did they talk about Haiti, her identity, she claimed, was more pan-African than anything, and even described her latest room re-decoration that included a lot of earth tones and animal prints.

While students are an oft-discussed population, there was also an interesting friction between Haitian artists and musicians and those in business, medicine, or other similar professions. I spent a significant amount of time with the association Collectif 2004 Images, an organization that sought to promote the artistic production and expression of Haitians, both in Haiti and in the diaspora. I frequently attended plays, dance performances, and concerts that featured well-known Haitian artists such as Mimi Barthélémy and Erol Josué. Larger, cultural events were attended by a wide swath of the community, but the general manager of the Collectif 2004 Images, Anne Lescot, would often complain of the detrimental attitude many had towards Haitian culture and artistic production: "The Haitians in France don't take art seriously. They just use it to achieve their means. They'll play a Haitian movie in order to fundraise, but they won't support the artist himself for the sake of his art."

Although I feel that it has proven difficult in all diasporic communities of Haitians to have a high level of engagement with arts and culture, I would argue that these cleavages and tendencies towards fracture broadly reflects the kind of community

(or more appropriately, the kinds of communities) that exists in France: one that is more focused on integration with the dominant society rather than historical memory and ethnocultural self-preservation. Thus, collective memory appears to be almost entirely absent in comparison to other Haitian diasporic communities like Montreal. In early summer of 2012, Elizabeth Yohn, a young graduate student who was doing her master's thesis in History on the Haitian religious communities in Montreal and Paris contacted me. Struggling to meet community members, she'd hoped I could help her find good contacts in Paris. Over lunch, we swapped stories, sharing what we'd observed in our respective research. In my fieldnotes about that meeting, I wrote:

> [Elizabeth] made this interesting point about how deeply important history was to the Quebec-Haitian population, in spite of there being a very limited history. Many books and articles have been written on this history, in spite of it being light. She expected there to be a similar relationship to history in France and was surprised when she discovered that there wasn't. "History just doesn't matter to them," she said with a shrug. And indeed, part of the reason for their absence in the literature on the Haitian diaspora was because of the lack of ownership over the history between France and the Haitian diaspora. But the question is why, when [Haitian] history is so utterly important to Haitians, and when France is clearly a major player in Haitian history, is there so little interest in contemporary movements between the two countries? (June 18, 2012)

Perhaps it is not as Elizabeth states that "history just doesn't matter," but that, unlike Canada or the United States, there has not been the same amount of "space" made available for immigrants to weave their narratives in with the new nation's narratives. In a country that has actively sought to protect its national identity at all costs, there is little room or tolerance in France for other histories. What makes the situation worse, however, is the notion that Haitians only have themselves to blame for this lack of

history. Without the broader understanding of how immigration and development policies in France have shaped, and in some cases undermined, Haitian community formation, it can be easy to point fingers at one another.

On a deeper level, the lack of cultural spaces and the inability (or lack of desire) to integrate keeps the Haitian population in a liminal state. Anthropologist Paul Brodwin's work on Haitians in Guadeloupe is useful in getting a better sense of what may be happening in France. He uses a model of diasporic subjectivity that is contingent on the people's immediate environment and that "subject formation depends on processes of both exclusion and agency" (Brodwin, 2001). As a result, Haitians migrants, including students, are often more interested in what is happening in Haiti than what is happening in Paris. This observation is reinforced by the weekly Haitian radio show "Kon Lamby", whose topics are quite often focused on Haiti, and report less often local news on Haitians living in France. In the next section, I discuss how Haitian hometown associations are another important space and way for Haitians to mediate their exclusion by building a community based around being from the same city.

HAITIAN HOMETOWN ASSOCIATIONS AND THEIR IMPACT

Haitian diaspora organizations have actively tried to come up with more sustainable solutions to help Haiti, moving beyond remittances while casting suspicion on international development agencies. Haitians both within Haiti and living abroad have a fairly long history creating civil society organizations (M. Edwards, 2009), particularly cooperatives. In Haiti, the first cooperative was established in 1937, a few years after the

end of the U.S. Occupation (Shaffer, 1999). By 1973 there were 61 cooperatives, mainly in agriculture and microcredit, and by 1990, over 300. These cooperatives were for the most part created by and within the Haitian peasantry (Marcelle Smith, 2001), and offered an alternative to the packaged American democracy that was pushed onto the Haitian government that has historically struggled to bridge the "state" and "nation" (the people) (Trouillot, 1989). Outside of Haiti, organizations served in several capacities: as political platforms to address what was happening in Haiti at the time; as means to maintain social networks via hometown associations; as community builders; as social service organization for offering assistance to other Haitians; and as a media outlet for events occurring within Haiti and the diaspora (Glick-Schiller & Fouron, 2001; Laguerre, 1998; Zephir, 1996). Above all, such organizations served as the bridge between Haiti and their new country of settlement, regardless of the level of direct involvement with the home country.

Many researchers have examined organizations created by those who have re-settled in a new country, often musing on what makes a successful hometown association (Casseus-Eybalin, 2008; Howes, 1997; Orozco, 2003; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2001; Ramakrishnan & Viramontes, 2010; Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001; Schuller, 2007a; Vertovec, 1999b). Manuel Orozco, who carried out a study on Mexican hometown associations, cites the following criteria for organizational effectiveness: capacity building, organizational nature (how an organization is structured), partnership and collaborative capacity, long-term durability, and impact (Orozco, 2003). Orozco's list, while on target, does place the emphasis on the organizations themselves, and less on

the context in which they are acting. It is not enough that an organization is able to develop a partnership with other institutions, but it must have the framework to be considered a legitimate partner in the first place. Based on the particular struggles of Haitian hometown associations, I would add to this list "institutional framework," that distributes the burden of success or failure to other actors that could have a significant impact, such as the host country. Organizing in France or Europe requires a different relationship to the state and sources of funding than exists in the United States, which has a very strong private sector for funding small organizations. In fact I argue that it is this difference that has undermined the development of a diasporic community, which in turn weakened the base upon which Haitians in France would be able to influence the tone or agenda. Their silence is read as assent when in fact they do have particular concerns that are rendered invisible because of the dominance of the Haitian diaspora in North America.

In spite of not being necessarily as closely knit as other diasporic communities in North America, the Haitians in France generally had very few degrees of separation. As one young male told me during one of my earlier fieldwork experiences, "Once you meet one Haitian, you meet them all!" For Haitians involved in associational life, they are no exception. The movers and shakers of the community were well known, from the ones who were the community's elders like Daniel Talleyrand, Nicole Tardivel, and René Benjamin, to those who were part of a younger generation (between 30 and 55 years of age) of activists.

Many associations have a social aspect built-in, often organizing social and cultural functions to raise money for projects in Haiti, such as building a school or sending supplies. Social benefits and fundraisers are an important part of Haitian organizing, particularly for hometown associations, because outside funding is very difficult to obtain. Based off of ethnographic fieldwork conducted from 2011-2012, the vast majority of associations are either self-funded—that is, the association leader puts his or her own personal money into funding a project—or are entirely reliant on membership fees and dues. The next most popular source of funding is the local (French) government such as city halls. The January 2010 earthquake that struck Haiti's capital was a watershed moment for the Haitian diaspora in France, since it opened up never-before-seen avenues and amounts of funding that permitted many associations to finally implement projects they'd had on the proverbial back burner for years. This catastrophic event also motivated many to create new associations; According to the *Journal Officiel d'Associations*, the French government's publication of creations, there was a 100% increase in the number of associations created with ties or projects in Haiti specify time frame[7]. France was pushed to become heavily involved in giving recovery aid to Haiti. Their policy, which had shifted the year before, proved to be advantageous for associations, but in the context of their history, French development policy has not

[7] All associations are required to formally register with the state, and the state publishes this information in the *Journal Officiel d'Associations*. I did a very basic keyword search of "Haiti*" and crosschecked in the descriptions that the organization was indeed working for or in Haiti. Between 2000 and 2010, some 400 organizations were created dedicated in some form or fashion to the Haitian community. Presently there are around a hundred active Haitian hometown associations in France.

changed much, and the repercussions of this can be felt in the aftermath of the funding blitz. This will be further discussed in the next chapter.

My experiences within the network of Haitian associations interestingly traced the historical evolution of various important and lasting associations. One of my first interactions with the Haitian community in Paris was visiting with René Benjamin, the president of *Haïti Développment* (HaiDev). I had received his contact information from someone at the Haitian Embassy with an assurance that René was the person to speak to if I wanted to know more about Haitians in Paris. I called him, made an appointment, and took the train down to his apartment in a southwest *arrondissement* of Paris. When I got to the door, a younger woman greeted and ushered me into his living room, telling me to wait for René there. Once she'd disappeared, I looked around the large living area, evidently used as both a den and a workspace. A large table in the middle was covered with papers, and on the far wall was a small computer desk with a large monitor and more papers. I'd barely had time to soak the scene in before he appeared behind me. A short, slender, and spry light skinned man with a warm smile greeted me, sat me down, and pulled up a chair. I stammered out my purpose for the visit: Could he tell me about the Haitian community in Paris? Specifically, where were the Haitians? (At age 20, my line of questioning was very basic.) He was extremely welcoming and told me about his long-time experience in France and working with other Haitians in Paris. He had come to France in the 1950s as a young man to study and worked for a very long time in finance. Like many Haitians who travel abroad, he saw his time in France as temporary, and remained involved in Haiti through groups. According to the testimonial published

upon his death in 2009, he created an organization in 1961 to encourage other students to remain active in Haitian politics and development (Andre, 2009). Yet as the socio-economic and political situation worsened in Haiti, more and more lower-middle and working-class poor Haitians began arriving in France. Confused, I asked, how could poor Haitians afford to come to France? How did they manage to get past airport security without the necessary paperwork? He replied that families would often cobble together the money to buy the plane ticket over years. Documents such as birth certificates and passports were also often forged. Many Haitians would enter France under a legitimate visa and would face problems registering with the *Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides* (The French bureau for the protection of refugees and stateless persons, or OFPRA) because they would lack the appropriate paperwork. Laughing, he told me one story of a man who used the same birth certificate of a member of his family, so he ended up being registered in France under a woman's name. When it came time to renew, it was a mess because he needed to try to get a copy of his original birth certificate that is actually quite difficult to do since municipal governments don't always keep track of births.

René realized that he needed to expand his mission beyond working with students to help less fortunate newcomers find their footing in France. He created *Haïti Développment* to bridge the gap between the Haitian community and the French state. René and volunteers would assist newly arrived Haitians with paperwork, and help them find housing and employment. By the 1970s, René's organization was proving services for up to 2000 Haitians a year (Royal, 2010). The French state recognized his

significant contribution and generally funded his association. He had a special spot for young Haitian women who often struggled even more to obtain these basic necessities. Following his wife's death he felt that it was a win-win situation to welcome at any given time two or three women into his home for nearly free lodging. Sadly, as he grew older, René was not as able to keep up its mission. By the time he passed in 2009, HaiDev was no longer doing the same work.

Collectif Haïti de France

In 1986, René founded the *Collectif Haïti de France* (The Collectif). Concerned by the turmoil in Haiti following the departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier, Rene and others decided to bring together eighty organizations in a collective to address issues in Haiti particularly around human rights ("Historique du Collectif Haïti de France," 2010). As the situation in Haiti grew more precarious, especially with the election and subsequent ousting of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the collective grew and became an important space for Haitians and the French to come together and organize politically. The Collectif quotes two longtime members on their site who described that time period:

> Jean Michel: After the establishment of the military dictatorship in 1991, the Collective had been very active. The collective held meetings every week. The idea quickly arose of helping those who, within Haiti, fought against the dictatorship, especially those trying to liberate the media. The Collective decided to raise money to buy radio transmitters. For a time, a clandestine radio was in operation in the Port -au-Prince. Such solidarity action required a lot of discipline and a partitioning within the Collective. I participated in raising money for the radio.
>
> Bernard: In the early 90s, when I was in a long period of unemployment, I got involved with the collective in the creation of the Aisohaf (*Aide et Soutien aux*

Haïtiens de France, Help and Support for Haitians France) with *l'Association des Etudiants Haïtiens de France* (Association of Haitian Students of France), Gisti (*Groupe d'information et de soutien aux émigrés*, information and support for immigrant group) and *Haïti Développment*, to help new refugees to prepare their application for asylum. *Cimade* (an ecumenical social service organization that helps refugees and asylum seekers) let us use their office on rue de Grenelle where we treated 5,000 cases. We held our drop-ins on Saturday morning. Information passed like wildfire in the community and those who need papers began lining up at five o'clock, like in Haiti! Street vendors were probably wondering what was going on!

In general, Haitian associations during that time period were very politicized. New arrivals were often young student activists who were frustrated by the political upheaval and economic deterioration of their beloved country. Many had also intended to go back to Haiti, so it was in their best interest to strive for stabilization. Haitian diasporic communities globally were mobilizing and demanding justice.

Etzer Charles, the former Haitian Ambassador in the United Nations for Education, Sciences, and Culture (UNESCO) and the former *charge d'affaires d'Haïti en France*, both in the 1990s, told me how, in response to a growing pressure from certain Haitian groups in Paris who were determined to see Aristide returned to office, occupied the Haitian embassy with his full blessing. It was one of the most overt demonstrations by Haitians living in France.

Aristide was finally allowed to return[8] in 1994, but he was a very different man. His return came with many conditions imposed by the United States and international donor organizations that influenced his administration's vision and action. The situation in Haiti continued to face many hurdles, and thus Collectif Haïti de

[8] This permission being granted not by Haitian authorities, but by American authorities; an indication of how thoroughly Haitian sovereignty was undermined.

France in the late 1990s decided to expand their focus from human rights and government accountability to development. The Collectif thus began to assist other organizations in their achieving their projects. This put them on their current path, where the Collectif today functions as a federation of associations across France organizing in support of Haiti. Their mission is to put organizations in touch with each other in order to create a broad base from which members could draw support and potentially collaborate on their projects. According to their website, their main objectives are to "inform, organize, support, advocate, and collaborate"(“Historique du Collectif Haïti de France,” 2010). The organization today boasts eighty member associations and 150 individuals and continues to grow and be active in Haiti.

La PAFHA

The *Plateforme des Associations Franco-Haïtiennes* (PAFHA) was a 2002 offshoot of the Collectif. René was actually the first president of the organization, where he stayed for two years. The goal of PAFHA was very similar to that of Collectif Haïti de France, to create space for organizations to come together in cooperation. PAFHA however wanted to bring awareness to the role of Haitian associations in France, and increase their visibility within the Haitian diasporic community in France.

PAFHA’s main event is the *Journée des Portes Ouvertes,* which was inaugurated in 2003. The event was conceived of as a way to help Haitians and non-Haitians alike discover the work of organizations based in France working in and on Haiti. The day-long “open house” also features discussion panels, performances, a book salon and art

gallery, music, and food. Also every year, PAFHA sets up a booth at the annual French culture and music festival, *Fête de l'Humanité*. The three-day long event has Woodstock-like (or Austin City Limits-like) atmosphere, with a couple of stages for live music, tents for holding debates, and hundreds of booths set up in the middle for organizations. The *Fête* is a major fundraising opportunity for PAFHA, and they focus on selling Haitian food, drink (various kinds of arranged rum), and souvenirs, all while blasting *konpa* music.

Throughout the year, PAFHA also holds other events that are geared towards knowledge sharing. Known as *Journées d'education*, or Days of Education, a member association of would put together a discussion panel on a topic of interest, inviting outside speakers to offer different perspectives and advice. Past topics included working with architectural firms and the role of the diaspora in Haiti's higher education. These Days provided an opportunity for associations (members and non-members) to network amongst each other, or brainstorm new ideas for projects. In 2011, PAFHA piloted their first training aimed at providing technical support for projects based in Haiti. The training was held both in Haiti and France, in order to improve the chances of securing funding and to set expectations with those in both countries about the proposal, execution, creation of a budget, and evaluation of a project. This was necessary because often the difficulty in working transnationally from France was that those entrusted with the project locally didn't always have the knowledge or resources to follow certain protocols (such as having a separate bank account to keep track of expenses or keeping records of communication) that are required when one is operating as a nonprofit.

Conversely, many in France didn't always know the best procedures to follow. It is relatively easy to create an organization, but not evident how to keep one in operation, and the trainings were a way to mediate this. They were extremely well received in both countries.

Particularly in 2010 and 2011, there was often talk of *mutualisation*, or the sharing of goods, services, equipment, lodging, etc to maximize their utility and cost-benefit. The president of PAFHA, Gary Fleurimont, was sensitive to the tendency towards individuality amongst hometown associations. He saw PAFHA as an opportunity to "mutualize" the efforts of disparate organizations that could otherwise flounder without greater support. General consensus from PAFHA members was that the federation provided a much-needed space for them to operate within. Membership certainly did not guarantee success, but it created a small community that was otherwise difficult to find if one was not a member of a religious organization.

INTERNAL CHALLENGES

PAFHA as a federation was deemed necessary by those with associations, yet PAFHA readily admits the difficulty faced in its creation. PAFHA writes plainly on their website:

> A long period of exchanging ideas was necessary to create the conditions for mutual recognition between the association partners. Too much mistrust and prejudices have hampered previous experiences. We had to try to dissipate power on a sounder footing.

I often heard from PAFHA's president Fleurimont similar language, an admission of feeling a combination of frustration and hope that many in the associative life express at some point. One of the most common themes of discussion at association gatherings was what was "wrong" with Haitians. The list often included being only interested in social events (as opposed to more culturally-oriented events); wanting free food or money without having to "work" for it, or; preferring to create a new organization rather than work with (and by their estimation, for) another one. There were also other less judgmental responses. For example, Roosevelt stated that the main two problems of the Haitian community was the fear of being Haitian and the lack of intergenerational dialogue. Often criticized (or at least pitied) by the media, various governments, even by history, many Haitian nationals often internalized these comments and parroted them back as fact. It was easy to enter into this self-deprecation, tempered only by prideful references to the Haitian revolution. This bipolar engagement with Haitians and Haitian identity fosters an environment of shame, and parents may be less inclined to encourage Haitian cultural identification within their children. More broadly, this arguably undermines community building in an environment that already is hostile to expressions of non-French nationalism.

Another internal issue that was openly acknowledged was the differences in the class and color makeup between the associations. Early Haitian migration patterns to France favored the middle and upper class, and then later the working class become more present. The division between the classes is reflected in the association factions. Collectif Haïti de France from the beginning had established connections with French

individuals who were invested in some capacity in Haiti. The close collaboration between Haitians and the French led to a diverse organization that was often (and is currently) headed by white French persons. The Collectif also gathers associations from across France, whereas the vast majority of Haitians settle in the department of Ile-de-France in which Paris is located. PAFHA, on the other hand, is vastly made up of Haitians whose dates of settlement ranged from the 1950s to only a few years ago. Members are also solidly middle-class, often from central and southern Haiti. This difference came across quite visually when I attended their respective general assemblies (meetings held annually for all members). After having been around and volunteered at PAFHA for quite some time, I had taken for granted that people looked like me, that is, darker skinned. When I attended the Collectif's general assembly, I was actually taken aback by the number of white French and lighter-skinned Haitians present; I hadn't expected the difference to be so stark. While there are many other factors for the various rates of success or failures among associations, at least one person expressed his opinion that the higher rates of success among member associations of the Collectif might be tied to race. Alexandre Fleurime, president of UniVers Haiti and member of PAFHA, mused that because many of the organizations are headed by white French people, they might be perceived as more trustworthy by French and international donors, and thus able to obtain more money.

The capacity to obtain financing and have a successful association (in that a project was executed) can be seen as a marker of one’s own worth as a Haitian national, as a “diaspora,” and even as a professional. Hometown associations often represent more

than simply a desire to “give back” and invest time in Haiti. Often the association was merely an extension of one's cultural (and to a lesser extent, social) capital. Bourdieu defines cultural capital as individual embodiment of "external wealth" (e.g., culture, education). Cultural capital can be linked to an institution (in for example the case of a university degree), thus creating the possibility for conversion into economic capital. Social capital on the other hand is the “credit” earned from the resources acquired from membership in a group (Bourdieu, 1986). Unlike cultural capital, the latter is based on the building of a network. Arguably Haitians desire to acquire cultural capital because it offers them a route to prestige that can be as easily recognizable as a university degree.

This is something that is particular to France in comparison to the United States. I discussed this with Raymond Kernizan, president of the *Groupe de réflexion et d’action pour une Haïti-Nouvelle* (Reflection and Action Group for a New Haiti, GRAHN)-France. Raymond had the unique experience of having moved about a great deal. He has lived in Canada, the US (Miami), the Netherlands, and France. He'd been in the Netherlands for quite some time before his job had transferred him to France, where he has been for the past decade. He'd left Haiti when he was young, realizing that he wasn't going to get what he wanted from the country, and he left with no intentions of returning to live. In France, he was never really integrated into the Haitian activist movements of the late 90s. He knew the movers and shakers, but had been so busy with work that it made it difficult to participate more. When he'd finally decided to create an association, partnering with various Haitians internationally, he knew he wanted it to be

different from other kinds of associations by the breadth of their vision. According to Raymond, associations tend to have local, small projects, and the *Groupe de réflexion et d'action pour une Haïti nouvelle* (Group of reflection and action for a new Haiti, or GRAHN) was about large projects that addressed the systematic issues in Haiti. Raymond gave me his opinion on why creating organizations matters in France, more than in the United States:

> In France, success here is about the size of your library, how many books you have in your house, how many books you've published. In the United States it's about the cars and the house. You can literally see your success. All you have to do is point to the large SUV in your driveway. The US and Canada are much more materialistic, and that is made possible by the kinds of salaries that one is able to get there compared to France. You can barely make anything in France, the doctor barely makes more money that a government official. You have to show your success in other ways, by writing a book, or being the president of an association.

The prestige that comes from being head of your own organization can be just as readily understood as having a university degree. In a conversation with Vladimir Boereau, he stated that people respect you when you present your business card, and the title says “president.” It gives you more credibility when meeting with potential funders. Yet I would argue that a focus on cultural, and not social, capital is detrimental to the associative community as a whole. This is not to say that social capital isn't being generated, but the lack of attention in cultivating the necessary networks that give capital its “credit”, and the dilution of the network with “presidents” without care given to collaboration and cooperation is overall detrimental to the Haitian diaspora in France. Bourdieu advises the reader,

> If the internal competition for the monopoly of legitimate representation of the group is not to threaten the conservation and accumulation of the capital which is the basis of the group, the members of the group must regulate the conditions of access to the right to declare oneself a member of the group and, above all, to set oneself up as a representative (delegate, plenipotentiary, spokesman, etc.) of the whole group, thereby committing the social capital of the whole group (Bourdieu, 1986).

Sound advice, but arguably one of the main issues for those that wanted to be considered leaders and organizers in the Haitian community was that they were reluctant to share such power and influence, and thus undermined as a whole their influence. The question then becomes, why is it that in so many cases among Haitian associations, personal prestige and influence has taken precedence over the collective benefit?

This is neither an easy question to address, nor one that could produce a simple, clear-cut answer. The factors that appear to matter the most are class and history. Class divisions make up a large part of the foundation of Haitian society. Class is often talked about in the elite bourgeoisie versus the "people"—the farmers, the merchants, the day laborers, etc. There is however a small middle class in Haiti that aspires to be (or consider themselves a part of) the elite in Haiti, although they do not possess nearly the same amount of capital. The produces a problematic mentality where the middle class identifies more with the elites than it does with the working class and poor. Structures of solidarity among Haitian farmers are well known and have existed since the country's birth—*konbits*, or collective work groups, are considered the bedrock of Haitian society. One is hard pressed to find similar networks of solidarity among the middle class, and among the elite, whatever solidarity exists it is to maintain power and wealth generally at

the expense of their fellow less-fortunate countrymen. Therefore class mentality is a major factor in analyzing community action amongst Haitians, and contributed to some of the internal and external conflicts in organizations.

Conflicts are a normal part of human interaction, and can be a source of information about broader, underlying issues that exist within a network. This was exemplified in the fallout between the Collectif Haïti de France and PAFHA. The Collectif was actually a member of PAFHA even though PAFHA was an offshoot of the former. However this wasn't always clear in how the organizations interacted with each other. The Collectif saw itself as a partner, not a member. A rupture occurred in 2011 between the two organizations, the details of which I learned second hand. Essentially it involved a lack of clarity and communication as to who was responsible for running the association training program, put into place that summer. There were back and forth emails sent that resulted in the Collectif Haïti de France walking away, although PAFHA's reaction was more baffled than annoyed. These kinds of inter-association tensions were really unfortunate since it only served to reinforce factionalism while losing sight of the broader goal of community building.

Conflicts also existed between the member organizations and the structure of PAFHA. Many associations resented being part of PAFHA, claiming that it rendered them invisible and that the PAFHA functioned too much like its own organization rather than being a kind of network. This was part of the confusion when PAFHA received their first major grant in 2010 from the *Fondation de France*. The president of PAFHA Gary told me that a lot of the organizations assumed that the money would be re-

distributed amongst the member organizations. When it became clear that that was not to happen, many became irate with PAFHA and accused them of a lack of transparency and of being in competition with their respective organization. This was more a result of the lack of information and education about how organizations function, and the legal constraints an organization may face when given a grant, but this knowledge did not make communication any easier between parties.

Members did their best to fulfill PAPAFHA's mission of encouraging collaboration and skills sharing between organizations, but this was easier said than done. Josette Bruffaerts-Thomas, president of *Haïti Futur*, told me about having met two people working on two schools not even a mile from one another. She had tried to put them into contact with one another, but they never followed through, and both projects were incomplete because, according to Bruffaerts-Thomas, neither person was willing to give up being the project leader.

During a period of restructuring in 2009, PAFHA decided to try a number of strategies to address the lack of cohesion and full participation. They increased the board member size to 13, in order to give the core participating organizations a vote. They also created new positions within the organization, in order to increase accountability amongst the members. Everyone on the board was given a title of "vice-president" of a specific committee, whether it was international relations, social events, or community development. This was a blatant attempt to give members a sense of importance and place within the organization, but also empower them to act on behalf of not only their personal organization, but the Federation as well. Many of the board members had

business cards, ordered through PAFHA, that on one side, listed their vice-president title and on the other their own organization, where their title was usually president. The business card embodied their dual role within the Federation, but could also been seen as a literal representation of the challenge to be in one role without sacrificing the visibility of the other.

Many board members felt that their own organizations were suffering because they were spending so much time on work for PAFHA. Roosevelt, staff at PAFHA admitted to me, "We have too many meetings, at least 2 per week, and so people get really tired. They spend a lot of time at PAFHA." Even PAFHA's president's association, *Embarquons pour Haïti*, was suffering, virtually inactive because of his investment in the federation. This imbalance was a frequent topic of conversation during meetings. Many members were strapped for time and could only attend so many events, and would often prioritize PAFHA events over those put together by the member organizations. Organization leaders felt that it was only fair to expect support from other members. Location was a big factor—many organizations were located in various suburbs of Paris, often an hour or more by train, whereas PAFHA headquarters was in the Monmartre neighborhood. The unmet expectation of supporting each other's events contributed to the tensions between members whose organizations were struggling to find funding.

The model of the federation also presented an issue, given that it was almost entirely run by volunteers with the exception of Roosevelt, who was part-time, and Regine, a program coordinator whose position was made possible by the grant awarded

by the *Fondation de France*. The burden this presented is made clear in the planning of the Journée des Portes Ouvertes (JPO) in 2012. In June, members of the PAFHA were becoming increasingly stressed in planning the upcoming July open house. The French government had recently given PAFHA the ability to hire two interns. PAFHA decided to assign one intern to work on the JPO since it was the organization's main event and took a large amount of planning and preparation. Most of the other members, unpaid professionals with day jobs, could not spare the time necessary to put together the event, so generally the burden of responsibility fell onto the president, Gary, and Roosevelt, one of the two paid staff members of the organization. That day, Roosevelt was particularly overwhelmed with the amount of work that needed to get done. Apparently because PAFHA had an intern this year to work exclusively on the JPO, the rest of the member associations (namely, those on the board of PAFHA) took a back seat, less involved than the previous year. Roosevelt said,

> See, if I could have the associations take care of certain activities, say, you are in charge of the roundtable discussion, you are in charge of the food, it would mean a whole lot less work for us. But what happens, they assume because we have salaries, they [the Board] no longer need to work, so we [paid staff] are doing twice the amount of work than we did last year, and no one is responding to emails.

He continued to vent his frustration, explaining to me:

> We are always in emergency mode. We don't think long-term. That's a major problem at PAFHA, people don't ever sit down to think about what they are doing, where they are going. People say that I get involved too easily, but because we are always in mode urgence, we aren't able to take advantage of other opportunities because we aren't in the loop.

I then asked Roosevelt what it meant to work at PAFHA. It was clear he had thought a lot about the question, and identified several things he would change about the way it was governed. He also had a lot to say regarding the associations themselves, namely asking, "What is an association without a project?" He continued:

> The difference between PAFHA and CHF [Collectif Haïti de France] is that PAFHA, people often need help with their projects themselves, they come to PAFHA with a more personal agenda, and don't have the capacities themselves. At CHF, people already have their proper projects in place, and they come to CHF with the goal to mutualize their projects, learn from other associations.

This issue was something I was able to witness firsthand while volunteering at PAFHA. One day I happened to be present for a meeting between Roosevelt and a woman who was looking for help with her proposal in order to find funding for her project. As I listened in, I gathered that she was either trying to financially support a school or specifically launch a food program in that school, but it was clear that the woman had not thought of some of the more critical parts of her project such as cost and where the food would come from, nor had she even consulted or confirmed with the parents that their children could or would participate in the program. Roosevelt had to walk her through a lot of the more basic aspects of her program's implementation. I found out later from Regine, the program coordinator, that the woman does the bulk of her work by herself, and doesn't really like or know how to delegate tasks. This meant that she probably had little to no support in Haiti, and was at a disadvantage in terms of being able to address needs or get information without having to go to Haiti herself. To complicate matters further, the woman took a problematic stance towards Haitians

making many disparaging remarks about those still living in the home country. Her patronizing stance entitled her to blatantly lie on the phone as she called potential donors (include the mayoral office of her district), making sidebar comments to those of us in the office about how easy it would be to get the money, a somewhat common attitude coming out of an awareness of the financial opportunity (i.e., disaster capitalism) that the earthquake presented.

EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

Beyond the internal pressures, hometown associations face external challenges, namely Haitian state negligence, a lethal mix of dependency and distance leading to an unequal international division of labor, feeding into the post-disaster urgency yet inevitably returning to the status quo, and the pressures of integration.

State negligence

The research of scholars I have cited earlier such as Orozco, Guarnizo, and Fagen all assert that the success of an organization is dependent on their relationship to the state. Without certain institutional supports, such as through funding, contracting, offering material assistance or maintaining a registry, small organizations can be lost in the shuffle. This is a disadvantage because such organizations are more likely to have connections to local communities, especially in places where populations might be underserved. In Haiti, for example, large nongovernmental organizations and multinational companies tend to establish themselves in the capital, Port-au-Prince. Although they are certainly able to reach a larger number of people, this also leaves other

cities and town underserviced, contributing to a centralization that was directly tied to the overpopulation of Port-au-Prince and greater degree of casualties on January 10, 2010. For hometown associations, support from home and host countries would offer a path toward legitimacy.

Larger associations in France like the Collectif Haïti de France and PAFHA communicate with several different bureaucracies and state institutions in order to draw on the various forms of support these institutions, both in France and in Haiti, can provide. There appeared to be a strained relationship between Haitian institutions and Haitian associations, as far as involvement and accountability were concerned. During my time in Paris, two ministers from the Haitian government visited the Haitian diaspora in Paris: Laurent Lamothe from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship and Edwin Paraison from the *Minstre des Haïtiens qui vivent a l'étranger* (Ministry of Overseas Haitians, or MHAVE.) Though their visits were received with much fanfare and drew large crowds, they generally left a feeling of having only offered lip service without saying anything concrete. This lack of any real attention or ability to hold Haitian government officials accountable further pushes the Haitian diasporic community of France to the margins of the discourse around Haitian investment.

The Haitian Embassy and Consulate

The main institutional links between the Haitian diaspora in France and Haiti are the Haitian Embassy and Haitian Consulate. During my first trip to France in 2006, it seemed logical to begin my quest to find the Haitian community in Paris at the

Embassy. I dropped in without an appointment, and I remember being very impressed by its opulence—plush carpets on the stairs, a deep navy blue with gold trim on the walls. I was greeted by a woman and asked her if there was anyone I could speak to regarding my inquiry. She told me to wait and she would send someone who would be able to help me. A few minutes later, I was introduced to Garrincha St. Germain, a junior secretary. He ushered me into a large conference room and we talked at length about my puzzlement regarding the lack of a visible Haitian community in France. He referred me to René Benjamin, and before I left we exchanged numbers. At our next meeting, I prodded Garrincha for information, but there seemed to be little to tell, and I became increasingly frustrated by how little the Embassy was doing.

For example, Garrincha told me about the Festival of Francophonie, an annual event celebrating the French language spoken in countries across the world. At the time, it seemed obvious to me at the time that Haiti would have been at the forefront of this Festival, with all of its notable literary scholars, writers, and poets, and a continued importance placed on mastering the French language, even if this was problematic; yet they were not included that year. When I asked why, Garrincha shrugged, "There was no money in the budget." I pressed him further. "What do you mean no money? Where is the money coming from?" "The Embassy's budget comes from the Haitian government," he replied. "We never get enough to do much of anything. People complain all the time that we should do more, but if we don't have the money for it, then what can we do?"

The effect of such limited resources had an impact on others who were trying to organize for Haiti. I'd met a Martinican named Philip Cook during a random trip in

February 2012 to the *Maison des Associations* (Center for Associations, a place for any and all associations in that district to have a meeting place, office space, or simply a postal address). I asked the front desk whether there were any associations registered that worked on Haiti, and the person gave me Philip's number. I called him and made an appointment for the following day. He had an impressionable appearance—he was short yet slender, with fine features, light brown eyes and locks that were wrapped around his head in a turban style. He had been born in Martinique but had spent all of his life in Paris, and though he worked as a graphic designer for luxury brands, he dabbled quite a bit in films. A film artist friend had invited Philip to accompany him to Haiti to conduct interviews in schools and orphanages. He traveled on the inaugural flight of Air Caraibes between Paris and PAP. He enjoyed his time there but seven days after his departure the earthquake struck, and all his new friends perished. As he said this, his voice audibly carried emotion and his eyes misted. He was hooked on Haiti from since then. He had held an event in October 2011 at the Cigalle to support Haitian painters and artists. The event's success encouraged him to try again in 2012, but this time he wanted to sponsor four painters from Haiti to come to France and put on an art show with them present. He attempted to obtain the backing of the Embassy; "Not for money," he assured me, "I just wanted them to be listed as a sponsor so more people would come." According to him, the Minister of Cultural Affairs at the Haitian Embassy, Regine Estimé, refused to give her endorsement, and Philip felt it was because she assumed money was being asked. When he asked around, Philip heard that Estimé only supported well-known

artists of the Haitian diaspora. This information left Philip feeling frustrated and annoyed.

These two ethnographic examples show a clear domino effect of the lack of resources and their impact on various parties involved, from the Haitian government, to government agencies, to associations, to individuals. Difficult decisions are made that have a direct impact not only on what can be accomplished, but also the feelings that one gets about the Haitian community. The influence and reach of organizations can only extend so far without additional support through networking and partnerships. The Haitian embassy was the subject of repeated criticism for failing to be a resource for Haitians living in France. As a couple of people I spoke with explained, newly arrived Haitians may not know about the various small organizations, but they do know about the embassy, and thus it's only natural to expect the Haitian embassy to be seen as an important resource for the Haitian population in France. The lack of communication between government institutions—both in France and in Haiti—and Franco-Haitians themselves was frequent topic of conversation at various events I'd attended, but often more than anger or frustration, I encountered apathy. This emotion was more dangerous because it decreased the chance of state agencies and ministries being held accountable to the people they were meant to serve. This was well-exemplified by the receptions of both the ministers of *Affairs etrangèrs et des cultes* (Foreign Affairs and Worship), Laurent Lamothe, and of Overseas Haitians (MHAVE), Daniel Supplice, during my time in France.

The Ministries

The visit of any Haitian government official was always met with a mixture of reserved enthusiasm and skepticism amongst those who attended. My own excitement was tempered by the verbal pat-on-the-shoulder by PAFHA members who told me, "They all say the same thing." Still, I looked forward to visit of Laurent Lamothe in January 2012, and apparently many others had too; by the time the event was underway, it was standing room only.

A number of people were given a chance to speak before introducing Laurent Lamothe, as a way to give community members a chance to have their specific concerns heard and potentially addressed by the minister. Remarkably, the minister and his entourage weren't even present on stage for the remarks made in the beginning, given more fuel to the complaints afterwards that the visit had been more for show than to actually take any concrete action. Gary from PAFHA spoke first, and in a voice filled with nerves, took Lamothe and the Martelly administration to task for not doing enough for those living in France. Gary cited the lack of a Haitian ambassador to France for months, the difficulty of obtaining a passport or visa to travel between France and Haiti, and the unresolved issue of offering double nationality as his main points of concern. He implored Lamothe to involve the diaspora in the development of Haiti, quipping, "Martelly said that Haiti is 'open for business.' Haiti must be open for the diaspora."

Another member of PAFHA, Jocelyn, gave a briefer speech, focusing on other difficulties the diaspora faces in maintaining contact with Haiti, notably the high calling rates and wire transfer fees to Haiti, which was met with a great amount of applause in

solidarity with his frustration. Elodie Télémaque followed, introduced as a voice for the women who "are accused of not being present", calling attention to the gender imbalance with respect to the representation of the Haitian community. Indeed, by visual accounts, the audience was at least 60% male. She left the issue at that, however, and chose to focus on the conditions of return for Haitians. She desired to see more jobs in Haiti open to the diaspora—a contentious topic between diasporic Haitians wanting to return and work in their country and the Haitians who never left yet struggle to find employment, often in direct competition with those with international diplomas and credentials. She also called for the improvement and expansion of infrastructures such as transportation and postal service, and a desire for greater security for those visiting. The last point is in reference to the large amount of kidnappings that were happening in the early 2000s and post-earthquake was regaining some steam. However, this concern always struck me as presumptuous even as it was perfectly reasonable, because it implied a class difference, a certain entitlement to protection that the diaspora deserved over their fellow countrymen.

The president of the *Federation de la Diaspora des Haitiens en Europe* (the Federation of the Haitian diaspora in Europe, a generally inactive group—I couldn't get a hold of anyone who was involved during my research) gave a rambling speech that was basically a plug for his website. As he wrapped up, however, he did ask why since his election Martelly hadn't visited France. He thumped the podium, "All diasporas need to be taken seriously, because without the diaspora, Haiti will be…hmmmm!" Haiti's potential fate was a future better left unspoken.

The last speaker before Lamothe was given the stage was Michaëlle Jean, the former Governor General of Canada from 2005 to 2010. Born in Port-au-Prince, Jean and her family had fled to Canada under persecution by the Duvalier regime. There, she came to lead an active life, becoming an activist for survivors of domestic abuse and establishing shelters across Canada; creating several films and documentaries with her filmmaker husband Jean-Daniel Lafond; and rose to national recognition with a pioneering career in journalism, where she worked for Radio-Canada and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and became the first black person on French-language television in Canada (Azzi, 2012). In 2005 the Canadian Prime Minister nominated her to the office of Governor General. In this role, she became known for her empathetic nature and ability to connect with her audience, a talent she displayed at the event as she opened up her talk with, "mwen pa ka la pou pa pale krèyol! (I can't be here and not speak Creole!)" –a declaration that was met with much applause.[9] She focused on Haiti's strengths and places where there was room for growth, namely in the sustainable tourism industry. A great speaker, she carried the audience on a tide of emotion, imploring, "We cannot continue to define Haitians by their resilience, but must move towards action, move towards growth, and away from conflict." Focusing on our reason for being here, she underscored, "We cannot validate the plan of rebuilding Haiti without supporting the state." Her speech roused the audience and was met with great applause.

[9] Language was an interesting topic of discussion, and will be expanded upon in a later section of this chapter.

Finally the Minister took to the stage, walking on more like a well-known celebrity than a respected politician. Indeed, he was—the Lamothe family is well known and influential in Haiti. Son of a professor and a painter, Lamothe showed early promise as an intellectual and athlete. He earned his bachelors and masters degrees in Florida, and at 26, co-founded Global Voice Group, an international telecommunications company. Drawing on his political and social network in Haiti, he eventually became a special advisor to President Martelly, and co-chaired the Presidential Advisory Council for the Economic Development and Investment in Haiti with former US President Bill Clinton. This set Lamothe up to take the position of Minster of Foreign Affairs and Worship in October 2011, and then less than a year later he was appointed to the office of Prime Minister. His rise to power, though quick, was less than surprising for most Haitians who are familiar with the tight network of elites in Haitian political affairs.

Upon his arrival to France, Lamothe had made a declaration to the media that the purpose of his visit is,

> to strengthen commercial, diplomatic, cultural relations with the French government, is to have a policy of proximity with the Haitian diaspora living in France. Taxi drivers, the association of taxi drivers that we will meet tonight [the purpose] is to show sensitivity, is to show that the new Haitian government wants to know more about their lives, what they do, on how they can help Haiti in a more efficient manner. We want the Haitians who live in the diaspora return to Haiti [because] we have a human resources problem, a problem of resources that are not well established, so we lose our wealth. We want the diaspora to return to Haiti to help us develop this country.[10]

[10] http://www.haitilibre.com/article-4772-haiti-politique-message-de-laurent-lamothe-depuis-la-france.html

At the event held in his honor, Lamothe systematically addressed the main areas of concern for Haitians in Haiti, in particular highlighting President Martelly's plan to ensure that all children are enrolled in primary school for free.[11] He also addressed security, saying that he was reinforcing the police force in Haiti, and justifying rebuilding the Haitian army (the mention of which was met with decidedly mixed reactions) in order to deal with counterfeit goods and ensure the "protection of economic security," citing that $2 million a year is lost between the Haitian and Dominican Border alone. He also mentioned that by 2014, the Cap-Haïtien airport (in the north of Haiti) would become an international airport, and there would be direct flights available between Paris and Cap-Haïtien by 2015. He mentioned his earlier meeting with the only professional Haitian association in France, *l'Association Des Taxis Haïtiens de Paris* (Organization of Haitian Taxi Drivers in Paris), and certain church communities, but he did not address any specific concerns of the diaspora feeling neglected or uninvolved. He brought his speech to a close saying that *ti pa a ti pa* (little by little) Haiti would rise again. Throughout the minister carried an easy swagger throughout his speech, speaking in creole and making jokes here and there, he connected little with the audience. At the end of his twenty minutes on stage, only half the audience stood to applaud his speech.

Although both Lamothe and those who spoke shared a similar desire to see the diaspora more included in the future of Haiti, there was a lack of concrete plans about how that would be accomplished. The Franco-Haitian diaspora wanted for the doors of

[11] Public education in Haiti is free, but there are often fees associated with enrollment, mostly for books and uniforms, that still make school prohibitive.

Haiti to be opened wider for them, for the paths of communication to be cheaper and easier, for the bureaucracy to be more efficient, and for the utility of the diaspora to be appreciated. Both sides wanted the diaspora to return to Haiti, but the Haitian government seemed unsure as to how to prepare the way. Neither the visit by Lamothe nor the visit by Daniel Supplice, the Minister of Overseas Haitians, offered any clarification.

The second visit by a Haitian minister was co-organized by the *Mairie de Pantin* (the mayor's office of the city of Pantin), where Gary serves as a representative. The meeting was held in Pantin's city hall, an old but very regal building. The meeting got underway as the minster Daniel Supplice and members of the Embassy, Gary Fleurimont and Liam Vertus walked in and stood in front. As Gary introduced the minister, we all got up, albeit a bit hesitantly, it seemed to me. The minister said, "Bonjour", we responded, and after an awkward beat—no one on the dais knew quite what to do—and the Minister decided to shake everyone's hand in the audience. Gary then gave a brief introduction of his political life and general information about the diaspora's involvement in Haiti, and his hopes and aspirations for the meeting. He presented a medallion of the city and a photography book of Pantin. The minister presented his gratitude, but mumbled quite a bit and no one clapped after he was done. The microphone was then passed to Liam Vertus, who in a manner full of exaggerated importance, presented themes that he thought were important to focus upon during the meeting, namely

1. Diaspora participation in elections by 2015, tiered by specific regions (Europe, US, Canada, Caribbean)

2. Economic recovery with a plan for government accompaniment
3. Structure to accommodate the diaspora share knowledge
4. Reduction in passport processing times

When Liam was done, another board member, Geoling Moise, then tried to start the audience questioning off, but the minister interrupted that process saying he would reply to the points brought up, precisely because they were points that he felt were not as important as other matters. He appeared frustrated, his tone somewhat impatient, first pointing out that the political involvement of the diaspora would not be possible before the voting system in Haiti was fixed, and that there were "more important things to be done." The minister referenced an earlier meeting he'd had with French ministers in charge of the electoral process and found out that electronic voting is an extremely complicated process, and that even with the possibility of being able to vote from outside, French absentee ballots are counted only after all those in France have been counted. General voting rights by Haitians, he stressed, were more important that trying to count the votes of Haitians living overseas. He then went on to say,

> We need to define the relationship between Haiti and the diaspora: who is Haitian? What do they do? Where are they? The MHAVE is currently working on answering those questions, in order to allow the diaspora to share their knowledge. I know what Haiti needs, but I don't know what you can do.

In these moments, he appeared to almost hold the diaspora with disdain. It was perhaps in response to the general tone set by the minister that Liam asked him a question referring to "your government," to which the minister corrected, "our government."

Supplice eventually softened his tone to be more inclusive: “We can spend 30 years outside of the country but when something bad happens to Haiti we feel bad, when something good happens, we feel good.” Towards the end of his discourse, he stated, “There is no such thing as 50% Haitian, 50% French. Thus we must ask once more, what is the role of the diaspora in Haiti?”

This shift from us-them to “we” did not prevent Supplice from being critical of the diaspora, complaining, “the biggest critique of Haitians overseas is the multiplicity of associations. I can’t visit every city that has Haitian associations. I want to be able to go to one place and see representatives from all these associations [in one place]…Haitians must stop creating associations and create large nongovernmental organizations or foundations.” The audience, made up of a number of people with their own associations, wasted no time in defending themselves and offering critiques of their own.

The first audience member at the microphone, Jean Claude, deliberately asked his question in creole because “I want to speak in creole with my minister, since I can’t speak French at all.” He went on to explain that he built a school in Fond-de-Negres and installed street lighting in the neighborhood as well, but that his main concern was security. He was afraid to return to Haiti in order to monitor the progress of the school because of fear of being robbed or kidnapped. Jean Claude demanded that the Ministry and Haitian government put into place tighter security measures for Haitians traveling to Haiti. Addressing a different concern, Vladimir described how difficult it was to renew agreements with the Ministry of Social Services. “How will you help the diaspora work through this?” Vladimir challenged. Supplice balked a bit at the questioning, quoting a

proverb that “money gives you the right to be heard” (l’argent vous doit à la guele), perhaps implying that it gives you a right to express your opinions but not necessarily get things done in your way. The conversation somehow turned to a comparison between Haiti and France, and the Minister offered the fact that France has 230 consulates in countries across the world, yet there was no General Consul in France. “How do you want another country to respect you when you don’t even have proof you are a citizen of Haiti with a birth certificate?” Again, the minister took on a tone that appeared to demean both Haitians living abroad and at home. The minister framed as Haiti still trying to play catch-up to other countries, and was expressing borderline embarrassment.

Later on that evening, as we were all headed to the metro to go home, I walked next to Roosevelt and asked his opinion of the event. He shrugged. “I wasn't expecting much, but I got the answers I needed.” He observed that both Lamothe and Supplice acted as if they were the entire ministry (and in fairness, this was probably the case), imploring folks to “come see me” with their problems. At the same time, Supplice had been dismissive of smaller associations, asking that more federative structures and national NGOs be created. The likelihood that something concrete could or would be done was fairly small. Roosevelt reasoned that the Haitian government was actually purposely abandoning a portion of the population, the diaspora, and leaving them to their own devices in France. NGOs, he said, were structures that had the capacity—both material and human resources—to act, and thus it put the onus on the associations to have the means to do so, yet if the state didn’t provide some support, it was almost guaranteeing small, hometown associations to fail. While Martelly did say that Haiti is

“open for business” he was also simultaneously undermining the agency of individuals and communities to act for their own freedom, and leaving it open to others, foreigner agencies, NGOs, and companies, to pull Haiti out of its depression. The privileging of state interests over national interests follows a pattern that has existed since Haiti’s early days (Trouillot, 1989).

Moreover, I would argue that neither minister saw the diaspora as equal partners in helping Haiti, but as another source of revenue and human capital. The diaspora was not seen as a permanent community of people with specific concerns *within* France that could be addressed by a more secure partnership between France and Haiti. What was underlined was the fact that the Haitian diaspora is very much focused on Haiti—perhaps to the detriment of community building and networking in France—and that Haiti only cared about the Haitian diaspora insofar as their value and worth to Haiti. I argue that without the support to create the necessary foundation within their country of settlement, fostering community building and networking, it make it more difficult for hometown associations to be collaborative and thus more effective in their initiatives in Haiti.

Distance, Division of Labor, and Dependency

Organizing transnationally might be expected, but it is far from easy. Hometown associations struggle to find a balance in the division of labor when organizing between two or more countries. More often than not, the partner organization becomes dependent on the overseas organization, generally financially but also logistically. One the biggest challenges was trying to find a way for the project to become self-sustaining, but that

often takes time that wasn't afforded to organizations because of funding cycles. Some managed to create this perpetuity, but it was more often the result of fortunate realities more than simple know-how.

Following my time in Paris, I spent three months in Haiti in order to meet with some of the partner organizations of PAFHA member associations. For those associations that were successful, this was in part due to their ability to maintain open communication with their partners, and have confidence that when the leadership wasn't in Haiti, they would still be able to manage. *Haïti Futur* for example, was one such success story. *Haïti Futur* was started by Tamara Bruffaerts-Thomas and her husband Jean-Claude Bruffaerts. Josette had been trained to be a teacher at the elite teaching school Elie Dubois, but somehow ended up in consulting, coaching, and teamwork building for businesses. Her job takes her in a lot of different places in France including the overseas territories, which pays for her ability to go to Haiti up to 5 times a year. This mobility clearly influenced the way she approached her work in associations, and gave her the ability to be innovative while still addressing basic issues upfront. Josette had started in 1994 with *Guano*, an organization dedicated to educational support in Haiti. She established partnerships with several schools in and around her hometown of Camp-Perrin, and as one of her earlier projects had tried to implement a laptop program for students, but it didn't work because electricity and internet was unreliable. In 2001 *Guano* became *Haïti Futur*, and its early focus was on offering teacher and student scholarships and building libraries and computer labs. Following the earthquake, Josette successfully applied for a grant from the *Fondation de France* to

install infrared "smart boards" in up to 30 schools. Josette moved beyond simply providing the technology and created first and second grade year-long curricula for the teachers in order to maximize their use of the boards. "The teachers' don't have to be innovative or creative, they can simply teach," she stated. When I pressed her further, she explain, "Teachers may often work another job and wouldn't have time to prepare for class. Plus they are not allowed to take home the laptop to which the infrared smart board is connected. They basically just flip open the book, see what the lesson is, and take it from there." On her trips to Haiti, Josette personally helps install the boards and shows the teachers how to use it in several practice sessions, which also helps familiarize the teachers with the content of the book.

Over the two years that Josette had worked on the program, she'd done her due diligence to think of ways to make the project as sustainable as possible without her presence. I visited a school in Haiti that used these smart boards, and was really blown away by how excited the children work and how effective it seemed. The principal of the school was a long-time friend of Josette's, and had been excited to test the boards. Electricity can be erratic, so the board and accompanying laptop is powered by a generator. The teachers apparently loved working with the board as well, because it exposed the children early to the kinds of technology that might otherwise be inaccessible. Josette did not need to be present for the project to function, but she was far from absent, and did her best to visit the schools and meet with the periodically.

For other organizations, distance was a greater hurdle to overcome. I'd gotten to know Roseline during my time working with PAFHA, and she'd also attend the pilot

training for member associations. I learned about her struggles with her project, but had the opportunity to gain a new perspective during my visit with Celine, the project manager in Haiti. Their association, *France Haïti Solidarité* was created in 2006 in France, with a sole project to build a dormitory for children in the Marchand Dessalines area. A common problem in Haiti is the lack of accessible schools for children in the mountains or far from a town. Many often are required to walk for an hour or more—each way—in order to get to school. *France Haïti Solidarité*'s (FHAS) project wanted to make life easier for the children who attended schools in Marchand Dessalines but lived dozens of miles away by building a dormitory at a halfway point. The building would be a second home for the children during the week, offering children after school help and general education, and hopefully even a source of food or income.

Celine had some experience as a project manager, trained in France at the *Conseil Générale*. She tried to levy her experience to obtain funding for the project. She remarked that funders often seemed to qualify it as either too big or too small, and international nongovernmental organizations were not interested. She worked with Marie Charles and Odile, the only other members of FHAS to obtain grant money from a municipal government in France and from another nongovernmental organization, *Coopération Française*.

Reflecting on her experience, Celine said, "When you are in the diaspora you have projects in mind. It's only when you arrive on the site that you see the reality of the situation." Though they had successfully obtained a space and had started building, unexpected issues developed. Following the passage of Hurricane Isaac, part of the back

fence came down. She had tried to develop ties with another French organization, *Payi Savoie Solidarité*, who already had ties to Marchand Dessalines, but it didn't work out (she didn't elaborate why). Celine expressed reluctance to *work with outside partners*, i.e., non-haitians, preferring to work with other Haitians to get the job done. I asked about the relationship to France and French people. She sort of dismissed the French in particular as "hypocrites" saying, "even if they say they are in solidarity, deep down it's not true. At the same time it cannot be said that the French don't try to help," she qualified. "They gave FHAS 40,000. The French help, we just have to organize Haitians." She also expressed frustration with funders, scarred by an experience with the multinational communications company, Digicel. FHS has hosted a fundraising event that resulted in a promise of 10,000 gds (equivalent to 238 USD) by Digicel. According to Celine, all the papers had been signed but at the last minute Digicel pulled out, and FHAS lost all the money they had poured into the unsuccessful event.

Other organizations were subject to issues of constant re-direction and adaptation because of any number of issues. The general secretary of PAFHA, Conceptia, detailed how easy it was to have a plan in mind, only to get derailed and re-directed to serve different, more immediate needs of the people she worked with in Haiti. Conceptia comes from a religious family, and had worked in a service capacity for a lot of her adult life. She felt compelled to work in Haiti because she knew the country and the people, and hadn't wanted to help other countries without knowing anything about the history or culture of the people. In 2000, she went to Haiti to determine the needs of her hometown in La Colline d'Acquin, and focused on schools. In her first efforts, she sponsored about

sixty children across seven different schools. Unfortunately, when the schools found out that someone in the diaspora was sponsoring some of the students, they started to charge more for the student's tuition. As a result, Conceptia started her own school and hired the teachers. She eventually turned it over to trusted friends who managed the school as best as possible, but they eventually ran out of money to pay the teachers. Conceptia started other development projects, such as soil irrigation, goat and pork raising, and most recently a health clinic. She is quite conscious of trying to work with the local government and followed the appropriate channels to be recognized as a nonprofit by Haitian authorities, but expressed a lot of frustration with the mayor's office constantly losing her paperwork. The earthquake also set her back as far as her projects were concerned, since the money she had raised for them had to used to purchase food. Even though her hometown hadn't been affected, there was a lot of internal migration to her town, and food became scarcer.

On the Ground

My time in Port-au-Prince also coincided with a month-long trip by Frederique Louissant, who was there to represent the organization Tèt Ansanm that was headed by Thechluque Dubique. The organization was based in Gressier, the hometown of several PAFHA members.

I didn't know what to expect when I first drove through Gressier. I was surprised at just how close to the water we were—along a good portion of the drive, I stared out at the bay, marveling at how blue the water was, seemingly unaffected by pollution. The

view was punctuated by small stretches of roadside boutiques, food stalls, and beachfront restaurant-hotels. I was meeting Frederique at a restaurant-hotel named Valou Beach. I'd met Frederique a few times in Paris at PAFHA headquarters and volunteered at his side briefly during the Fête de l'Humanité. He was infamous for getting around Paris on a trotinette, a foot scooter. As one of the few people at PAFHA who wasn't Haitian—his parents were from Martinique but he'd been raised in mainland France—I'd admired his commitment to the hometown association Tèt Ansanm (krèyol for "Work Together"). Tèt Ansanm's main (and it appeared, only) objective was to install solar-powered lampposts along a stretch of road in Gressier. The association held two fundraising events during my year in Paris, but they were largely unsuccessful. The president of the association also tried crowdfunding using the French site "Kiss Kiss Bank Bank," but that, too, fell short of their goal (albeit, both were lackluster attempts). That is why I was so impressed to discover that Frederique had travelled to Haiti on behalf of Tèt Ansanm to move things along with the project. Yet, as the driver turned onto the road identified in the project, it seemed to me that lampposts were not the most important things the community needed given the poor state of the road itself and number of homes in partial ruin, patched together with tin, wood, and grey plastic tarps marked "USAID: From the American People".

Frederique greeted me customarily with a kiss on each cheek, and told the driver to park the car on the side of the road next to Valou Beach. He wasted no time in updating me about the activities of Tèt Ansanm since his arrival three weeks prior, and took me on a tour of the small community, greeting people left and right along the way.

A group of children followed us around, curious about the new arrival. Frederique had invited me to visit that day specifically because there was a meeting scheduled with the members of Tèt Ansanm. It was an excellent opportunity for me to meet the others and witness how Tèt Ansanm operated. The meeting was scheduled for 4 pm at a nearby cabana house, and at 4:15, the first few showed up. By 5 pm, thirteen people were present, and the meeting was in full swing. Frederique took charge of the meeting. As he spoke, I quickly realized a major problem. Frederique spoke in excellent French, punctuated by a few kreyòl nouns and verbs he'd picked up, like "moun" (people) and "mete" (put). The occasional kreyòl, however, could not compensate for the high level French he spoke, and it became apparent to me that the silence that met Frederique when he would ask a question was not a result of disinterest, but the lack of full comprehension of what was being said. Given that I could manage well enough in kreyòl, I tried to tactfully translate the question so that Frederique could get a response, and it worked; people immediately piped up with responses. I wondered how Frederique had gotten by for nearly a month speaking only French, and why Frederique, and not other local members, was in charge of the meeting.

The experience with Tèt Ansanm in particular, both in France and in Haiti, served as a metaphor of the challenges in developing and sustaining the relationship between the Haitian diaspora and the Haitian people. The power dynamics are difficult to manage and the ambivalent place of the diaspora as steward and servant, exploiter and exploitable can lead to a lot of frustration on all ends, and make desperately needed projects more vulnerable to abandonment or failure.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to set the stage for the claim that there is a distinct socio-political formation amongst the Haitian diaspora in France, one that has significant consequences upon Haitian diasporic community formation and their transnational participation in Haiti's future. The distinct history between Haiti and France, and its current manifestations can help us better understand the specific set of challenges that the Haitian diaspora faces while negotiating their national and transnational identities. Diasporic engagement is mediated by a number of factors: country of origin, country of settlement, the respective governments, family, international interest and support, media attention, etc. As a result, associations and their operations are as much of a reflection of their country of origin and personal diasporic investment as they are of the range of possibilities available to them in the country of settlement. In order to have effective recovery, rebuilding, and development projects for Haiti, one must understand not only Haiti's history and current situation, but also the challenges for the diaspora and how various levels of structure, from civil society to the State to international development community mediate the relationship between the association members and their ultimate mission in Haiti.

Chapter 4: The Invisible *Poto-Mitan*

One Sunday morning in Austin, I decided to listen in on the Haitian community radio show Kon Lambi that was streamed from Paris. Started in 1993, Kon Lambi remains to this day quite popular amongst Haitians in France as well as in Haiti. The hosts of the show are also members of PAFHA's inner circle. The show is hosted by the station Frèquence Paris Plurielle that specifically features shows with activist, political, and cultural themes. On this fateful day, the show feature as its guest the first elected Haitian *députée*, who also happened to be a woman. The interviewer, Gadner, was asking her the typical questions of her vision for her constituency in a French suburb. She gave general responses along the lines of helping the community, but she did mention that she wanted to have a special focus on women. She commented, "I think it's important to also address the special concerns of women in—"

"Ah no, no" interjected Gadner. "We cannot engage in divisive policies."

I laughed out loud, almost incredulous, but then thought better of the emotion. Gadner's reaction was unsurprising for a number of reasons. In France, feminist movements have been slow to address the intersectionality of social categories that mediate gendered experiences. In fact, in May 2011 I attended a colloquium at the *Centre National des Recherches Scientifiques* (CNRS) in which Kimberlé Crenshaw gave a talk entitled "Paradoxes of Post-Racialism" that focused heavily on intersectionality, and the discussion that ensued afterwards revealed that the audience found the theory revolutionary—20 years after it had been introduced. As a result of this delay in

understanding systems of oppression, laws are passed that fixate on gender *parité* (material equality) without addressing institutionalized sexism. For example, French lawmakers passed in 1999 a law that supported equal access amongst women and men to elected offices,[12] yet according to an OECD report published in December 2012, French women earn 13% less than men, an increase from 9.5% in 2000, reflecting a widening of the income gap between men and women (*Aide à l'appui de l'égalité hommes-femmes et de l'autonomisation des femmes Mars*, 2011). In such a context, it is easy for Gadner to see an explicit discussion of women as "divisive" since the fact of her election proves that the law works and there is no gender problem, and any further discussion around women and feminism is unproductive, regardless of other systemic issues that still exist and becoming more pronounced.

Gadner's protest also points to issues related to women and gender in Haiti. Haitian women are widely revered as the *poto mitan*, the central pole that supports the structure of the family and forms the backbone of society. The daily experience of women in Haiti however is far from supportive. As anthropologist Cheryl Rodriguez summarizes,

> the women of this nation are particularly invisible and unknown. Gender, powerlessness, and danger form a tragic intersection that frames their daily realities. Women…tak[e] on multiple responsibilities for family stability and survival, yet womanhood renders women vulnerable to brutal poverty, unspeakable violence, and exploitation (Rodriguez, 2010).

[12]Loi constitutionnelle nº 99-569 du 8 juillet 1999 relative à l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes

Thus similarly to France, although there are actually a number of women in the public sphere, and Haiti even briefly had a female president and prime minister, the daily struggles of women are rarely acknowledged or addressed.

I had not set out to research gender in a systematic way, but teachable moments found me, enough to warrant special attention around gender and the ways it intersects with other social categories—race, class, and diaspora. Here, I am using diaspora to refer to a quality of being, rather than a process. When diaspora was first popularized in the 1950s and 60s as a theoretical concept, it was meant to be inclusive, focused on movement and the relationships of a displaced people to "home." In the emphasis placed on inclusiveness, difference—whether national, racial, class, or gender—was rendered secondary. Lok Siu has paid special attention to gender as a site where diasporic populations "contest, forge, and reaffirm diasporic identifications" and argues that gendered practices can provide a certain insight into community formation by "showing how they negotiate their differences and create a sense of collectivity" (Siu, 2005b). The moments I witnessed—from the radio show, to an awards ceremony, to my brief work with LGBT organizations in Haiti—more often revealed the ways in which gender and sexuality was taken for granted rather than actively engaged. Having a gendered analytical lens thus becomes critical to understanding the multi-layered nature of the Haitian diaspora in France (Anthias, 1998). Ultimately we must fight against the persistent silencing of the marginalized amongst the marginalized in order to fully appreciate and wield the power of diaspora for the benefit of the home country.

This chapter will explore the ways that gender and sexuality has structured organizing within the Franco-Haitian diasporic community. I will draw on the theoretical framework of Haitian feminism, a branch of feminist theory that focuses on experiences of violence and looks at feminism as a human rights issue. From small, inappropriate conversations within the office, deliberate silences on the importance of women in organizing, and taboo discussions of homosexuality, my analysis of gender and sexuality occurs between the lines, but can hopefully contribute to a fuller picture of the challenges of community organizing within the Haitian diasporic community in France, as well as consider the implications of an intersectional diasporic analysis on development.

Within this chapter, I also aim to highlight my own experiences of being a young female researcher within this patriarchal environment. Although I have come to appreciate so many of the men and women who contributed to my project, every year I grappled with whether I wanted to pursue this topic because of my constant experiences with sexism. Much of it was related to my own growth as a young woman uncomfortable with her appearance and sexuality, and I'm sure my naiveté attracted a certain kind of undesired attention. Yet part of my hesitation in writing this chapter was related to the fact that in writing about this topic, I could no longer simply play the role of the ethnographer—observer and storyteller—but would now become an engaged subject, exposing my flaws and neuroses for my readers to judge. Yet this is the challenge presented by autoethnography—the exposure of one's positionality in the work, making the ethnographer a visible, constant presence in the text and the bearer of a particular, situated knowledge that cannot be universalized as definitive knowledge about the Other.

The necessity for autoethnography is best explained by Donna Haraway: "all eyes…are active perceptual systems, building in translations and specific ways of seeing…there is no unmediated photograph or passive camera obscura in scientific accounts of bodies and machines, there are only highly specific visual possibilities…" (Haraway 1988: 190). Therefore, I will be applying the lens of feminist ethnography in my analysis as I grapple not only with gender and sexuality as it plays out within the Franco-Haitian diasporic community, but with my own positionality and complicity within this context.

THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF GENDER EQUALITY

There is a pretty strong awareness around the lack of women leaders and community organizers, but efforts to redress this have been slow or incomplete. A particularly telling example was the failed effort to organize an event for International Women's Day in 2012 by PAFHA. One of PAFHA's more active members, Geoling Moise, had tried to put this on the event agenda the summer prior. At a meeting of volunteers, he passionately advocated for something to be done on this day, stating that "the women were the *poto-mitan* of the household and they should be honored!" At the time, I was pleasantly surprised that there was some forethought going into such an event, but March 8, 2012 came and went without anything special planned. When I asked others about what happened, the blame was placed squarely on Geoling who allegedly had a tendency to dream big with little execution. Still, this did not account for the lack of enthusiasm around hosting such an event. It reflected more an old tendency to rely on women to do the work of self-promotion, rather than a co-operative effort. It was this

exact issue that contributed to the rise and fall of the best-known organization of Haitian women in France.

Violande Toussaint, founder and former president *of Associations des Femmes Haitiennes* (AFH) recalled the struggle to be recognized within the community. At its height, the organizations had a regular group of 30-60 women and families who attended the meetings. Unfortunately, the work became too difficult for Violande to sustain since she had her own personal health and emotional issues to deal with, and no one stepped in to take over. Violande, when I spoke to her, was still in charge of AFH, but they hadn't put together an event in years.

AFH had as a goal to promote the personal and professional development of women and families in the Haitian community. Violande's mission was to help socialize women so that they could be independent and know how to function in a new country. It was a way to fight against the insularity that she'd observed within the Haitian community, especially for women who had fewer resources and opportunities to explore their new home. In the beginning, the organization focused on offering French language classes, citizenship advice, and legal support. They also held events such as field trips to French castles and excursions on the river Seine. For her, these trips were important to help Haitian families integrate and learn the history of France. "People have a tendency to stay within themselves," she explained. "It is their obligation to get to know the country they are living in." Violande eventually wanted to start a micro-credit finance project in order to encourage small businesses creation, but the other person on the leadership team hadn't gotten around to looking at the proposal.

In spite of this important work, she described being seen as a “nuisance” by other male-led organizations. According to Violande, they accused her of trying to start a “man vs. woman thing” to get “her little power.” Once her intentions were made clear, Violande felt that other organizations only called AFH when they wanted a greater female presence, or for “women” holidays like Mother's Day and International Women's Day; they relied on AFH to carry out the work of gender that other associations weren’t doing, and after that, the organization was ignored. Violande was clearly passionate about doing the work, but as is the case for many other organizations, she was unable to ensure its sustainability once she needed to step down. The other, younger members of the association had recently moved to other countries, and her health became a bigger priority.

For its part, PAFHA had a notable female presence within the board and among member associations, but remained a very masculine space. Conversations occurred in the office that seemed quite inappropriate to me but were tolerated as harmless commentary. My outspoken nature “outed” me as a feminist even though I never self-identified as one, and I was sometimes provoked on purpose in this conversations. For example, Roosevelt and Liam would sometimes become defensive when it came to issues of female-inclusion. Roosevelt, for example, explained that the problem of the Haitian community in France was tied to the structure of the family. Once the woman gets married, he explained with full confidence, she makes her immediate family her priority, that and her activities in the church. She no longer is interested in participating in the associative life. As I protested, he clarified,

> There isn't a space for children because no one takes the time to really consider the reasons for why a woman is in the spot that she is in, the social structures that shape her role as woman. So by default it is the men who take care of things. The men don't bring their wives or their kids to meetings.

Roosevelt appears to take a seemingly sympathetic stance to explain the lack of women, but reinforces traditional gender roles. PAFHA did make a conscious effort to be more accommodating to families during the *Journée des Portes Ouvertes* event by having a dedicated space for the children where parents could drop them off and visit from time to time while they enjoyed the rest of the event.

These kinds of overtures, however, did not balance out the everyday sexism in the office. One board member referred to PAFHA as his second wife, and that if he kept on coming home late after the long board meetings he would risk losing his first wife. In another meeting, two young women were considering joining PAFHA, but expressed a lot of frustration following negative experiences with other associations. Liam remarked, "You're like a woman who's had a bad breakup with a man." Explicit comments rarely elicited any reaction from anyone (aside from me.) It was only in private conversations with some of the women that I would find out that certain things said or done did bother them, but not enough to make any commentary. For example, Regine, the program coordinator, was always critical of Liam's behavior towards her and Conceptia, the general secretary of PAFHA. Regine accused Liam of coming into the office, sitting down, and asking for coffee. "I'm not a secretary!" Regine would gripe. He would also make demeaning comments that appeared to question her intelligence and her capacity to be effective in her role. Regine, generally good-natured and fun-loving, would fume for

an hour after work when I stopped by. Whereas Regine resisted Liam's attempts to place her in a service mode, Conceptia would usually give in to his masculinist ways and, for example, make coffee and serve it to him. It wasn't that she wasn't aware of the sexism, but simply that it was pointless to challenge it.

There were a few moments of resistance. During a board election, the members were taking nominations for various roles, including general secretary and treasurer. Someone nominated Esther for general secretary, and she wondered out loud if it was because she was a woman. She smiled to cut down on the frankness of the comment, but it seemed to ruffle a couple of feathers anyway, with others once again getting defensive.

Aside from gender and the place of women, sex and sexuality were also discussed somewhat frequently amongst the people I spent time with, for two reasons. First, coincidentally, a sex scandal broke out two days before my departure from the US to France in 2011, and second, my American identity often stoked people's biases and stereotypes.

DSK

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, president of the International Monetary Fund, had been accused of sexually assaulting a black female hotel worker named Naffisatou Diallo. The affair dominated the airwaves and headlines for weeks, and proved to be excellent fodder for controversial commentary. Many men, Haitian and non-Haitian French alike, felt that the Strauss-Kahn (referred to as DSK in the French media) was probably set up because, as one person put it, "what maid comes into a room, knowing its occupied and stays there

to clean? And then how could any man force a woman (or man) to perform oral sex on them without putting their penis at risk of getting bit off?" I learned the word for "conspiracy" my first week. Any attempt by me to try and garner sympathy for the woman was quickly blown off with a dismissive "feminist" epithet. The case revealed intense racism and sexism amongst the French, who attempted to discredit Diallo as an low-class African immigrant who was looking to get paid (Saletan, 2011). As the case played out, Diallo's testimony was deemed not credible because of several inconsistencies in her immigration story ("DA: Strauss-Kahn accuser cleaned after encounter," 2011). In order to stay in the United States, Diallo had applied for asylum using a fake story of abuse and persecution. DSK's defense tried to use this to question her moral character, but prosecution argued that her past mistakes didn't mean that it was impossible she'd been raped. There were many who sought to protect Strauss-Kahn, who, before the scandal broke, had been a viable contender for the French presidency. By the time the case was dropped due to inconsistent testimony by Diallo and an admission by Strauss-Kahn of inappropriate relations (but not rape), men felt all but vindicated, but it was short-lived as other accusers and sexual scandals came forth.

"Oh, you're so American…"

Given that I was of Haitian origin, I had virtually no trouble negotiating ostensibly Haitian spaces—I was given free access, and I never felt that I was excluded or deemed illegitimate to participate in Haitian events *as* a Haitian. When I would encounter the most amount of resistance was in discussions of male and female relations, when all the sudden, my identity as an American became a target. As with race, anything

that came across as communitarian or chauvinist was often decried as American. Being American often seemed to imply anti-progress, a desire to undermine a broader cause by getting caught up in insignificant details. Often I would be told that I felt a particular way (read: I was wrong) because I was American, i.e., prudish, conservative, feminist, easy. One day in the office after a PAFHA committee meeting, Regine and I were talking about the evolving DSK scandal, and Alexandre and Roosevelt came in on the conversation. It shifted to how "easy" American women were versus Haitian women: "You could never have a Haitian mistress, they wouldn't have it. American women are game for anything, they'll do anything. It's so much easier." They had no qualms discussing this with me, an American woman.

I was also in other situations in which my American identity was trumpeted out as a way to invalidate my opinion. I was hanging out with an acquaintance around Les Halles when I witnessed a series of problematic behavior between several lesbian women and a man who was harassing them. They made such a spectacle that others around them were leaving. I made a comment on the situation to the person I was with, saying that this was harassment, but he completely disagreed with my assessment and said that I only thought that way because I was American and lesbian and feminist. He thought it was wrong of me to impose such a heavy word on such a situation; rather, they were all just playing around. To make the situation worse, at the exact same time that this was happening, a black man behind us had been stopped by four policemen, who proceeded to frisk and interrogate the man, but resulted in no arrests.

A MODERNIST ASPIRATION

Notions about gender identity and feminist conscious revealed the struggle that Haitians in France face in trying to integrate. An explicit recognition of women via the

phrase "fanm se poto mitan" appears to conflict with the way gender and race are discussed in France. The push for equality almost appears to make discussions of gender a backwards or pointless endeavor. This attitude, however, seems to stem more from an influence of French attitudes on this question, especially given the way "American" is used as the counter-argument. It reveals the ways that "transmigratory processes politicize and re-organize people in both home and host countries along gender lines" (Burton, 2004).

Gender dynamics amongst the Haitian population revealed the ways that individuals—men, really—displayed evidence of their modernity. Through particular performances, including challenging my feminist values and being crass, men were in fact attempting to show that they were beyond gender. This relates to a larger well-known problem in organizing that, in "focusing as they do on the generic 'people,' [social movements] have, by and large, been gendered as male even as they espouse gender-neutral politics (Chancy, 1997: 1). My American identity was an easy prop to make reductive comparisons between countries. Women and queer folk must negotiate how they can assert their rights without seeming "backwards" or undermining their belonging to the larger category of "Haitian." To have a feminist consciousness was to be "American" and therefore not French, and therefore not worthy.

It must be noted that I was frequenting a particular space, the PAFHA. This is not to say that women didn't organize. On the contrary, I met many women who were not members of the PAFHA who had their own associations. They tended to act more independently or were members of the Collectif Haiti France that had a much broader representation of women, Haitian and non-Haitian French. Aside from the *Association des Femmes Haitïennes*, though, no other organization organized around gender. This is

in stark contrast to organizing in Haiti, where a myriad number of organizations exist dedicated to female empowerment, and in fact it is part of a long tradition of collective, grassroots organizing in Haiti (Burton, 2004; Charles, 1995). Better known ones include *Solidarite Fanm Ayisyen* (SOFA, Haitian Women's Solidarity) and *Kay Fanm* (Women's House). In fact, women organizing both in Haiti and in the US-based Haitian diaspora was central to the overthrow of the Duvalier dictatorship in 1986 (Charles, 1995). Carolle Charles argues that the conditions of oppression via state and domestic violence create a distinct reality that has led to a particular iteration of Third World feminism that she calls Haitian feminism. Haitian feminism is described as a "defiant strain of Third World feminism in the West hinging on socialist reform, a belief in the universalization of human rights, and a steadfast dedication to the uplifting of women in nationalist and global agendas" (Chancy, 1997: 3). Haitian feminism is transnational by its very nature, reliant on the bridges built within and between communities in Haiti and in the diaspora. It appears, however, that the particular history of feminist organizing in the United States created the necessary channels in order to build those transnational relationships. It underscores the importance of locality when analyzing diasporic communities; the apparent lack of such relationships is tied to the socio-political environment of the country in which the diaspora is located. In other words, in spite of the history of organizing in the Haiti, that cultural history is susceptible to influence and erasure in exchange for integration.

The question of how social categories like gender intersected with national identities pushed me to ask the question of what is and isn't considered authentically

Haitian when organizing and building communities. As a bisexual US-born woman of Haitian origin, I had often thought to myself that my identity as Haitian was not only "sullied" by being born in the US, but by also not being straight. Thus I often relied on other identities like being Catholic or tri-lingual in order to play up the legitimacy of my Haitian identity. While I was in Haiti, however, I decided to investigate queer/LGBT movements in order to see how Haitian identity was negotiated from a queer lens.

MASISI/MADIVINEZ

I was 17 when I met a gay Haitian for the first time. I will always remember the moment that my world opened up when I realized that being gay and being Haitian weren't mutually exclusive. Unlike places like Jamaica, where there is a visible and active sentiment of homophobia, in Haiti homosexuality isn't something that is discussed. It's not quite that there is a belief that it doesn't exist, but more that in Haiti, there is a framework for it that at least gives it a chance to express itself. It wasn't until I went to France, however, that I realized just how intriguing of a topic this could be.

I had a fortuitous meeting with Anne Lescot, an anthropologist, filmmaker and cultural community organizer based in Paris. During our first encounter, she asked me if I'd seen her documentary Des Hommes et Des Dieux; I had not. She insisted I wait to watch it on the big screen, so it was several weeks before I had a chance to attend a screening of the film at a Literary Arts festival. I was immediately enraptured by the images of a Haiti I'd never seen before, a queer Haiti. Moving beyond the stale aerial shots of an overpopulated city or forlorn school children, Lescot and her film partner

Laurent Magloire offered an intimate and deeply touching portrayal of the lives of six queer men, documenting their relationships, their spiritual practice, their inner monologues, and their secrets. When I got home hyped up on new ideas, I typed in all kinds of search terms into my browser—"gay Haiti", "masisi", "Haiti* sexuality"—but soon realized that in spite of the ten years that had elapsed since its release, Des Hommes et Des Dieux remained a one of a kind perspective on queer sexuality in Haiti. Today, mentions of queer Haitian sexuality are often in reference to either vodou, where a number of deities are sexually fluid and gender-bending and where many of the hougans and manbos (spiritual leaders) and practitioners are queer; or epidemiology, addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the disproportionate impact the disease has had on gay male Haitians. What of the lives of queer Haitians beyond the hounfo (place of worship) and the hospital?

Although Anne Lescot and film partner Laurent Magloire offer a beautifully rendered exposé of the lives of queer Haitians, they only scratched the surface of the complexity of being gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgendered in Haiti. There have been a number of local and international efforts to increase the medical and emotional support and visibility of LGBT Haitians, but the discrimination and violence that many faced only worsened after the January 12, 2010 earthquake. A joint report by the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) and SEROvie, a Haitian organization that provides health services and seeks to empower "MSM, bisexual men, and transgendered people", stated:

> A group of lesbian and bisexually-identified women interviewed by SEROvie and IGLHRC reported that sexual violence and corrective rape were "definitely a problem" in the IDP [internally displaced persons] camps. Gay and bisexual men reported that they had taken on a more masculine demeanor since the earthquake, altering their voice, posture, and gait —"mettre des roches sur nos epaules"("putting rocks on our shoulders")—in order to avoid harassment both inside and outside of the camps and to reduce the chances of being denied access to emergency housing, healthcare, and/or enrollment in food-for-work programs (Commission & SEROvie, 2011: 4).

Despite some press around the plight of LGBT Haitians, sexuality and sexual violence of LGBT persons there continues to be of low (or no) priority of the Haitian state or large non-profit organizations in charge of distributing aid or health services. As a result, visibly or suspected gay males may be turned away from health clinics due to individual discrimination, or be denied at food distribution because they are not accompanied by a woman head of household, a form of institutional discrimination.

In the past decade, however, no less than three organizations have been created in Haiti that work explicitly with the LGBT population in Haiti. In honor of the ten-year anniversary of Des Hommes et Des Dieux, this investigation will follow-up Lescot's and Magloire's work to offer a new perspective of LGBT lives in Haiti, one where the masisi and madivin are in the center, refashioning their identities in order to allow for "Haitian" and "queer" to exist side-by-side. After a brief summary of the work on queer Haitian sexuality, I will describe the creation and evolution of queer activism in three Haitian organizations—SEROvie, FACSDIS, a lesbian, bisexual, and transwomen organization, and KOURAJ, a Haitian LGBT rights organization—and use them to lay out the present-day realities for queer Haitians: their challenges in organizing, their accomplishments thus far, and the future they envision for themselves and a more open and accepting Haiti.

These organizations move beyond merely offering HIV/AIDS health services and use a variety of strategies in order to serve and protect the masisi (gay/faggot) and madivin (lesbian/dyke) of Haiti and directly confront Haitians and their attitudes towards and beliefs about homosexuality and transsexuality. Each organization has their own approach, but in this paper I show that Haitian associations are developing new models of sexuality by creating spaces outside of vodou, denaturalizing the link between HIV/AIDS and homosexuality, and by challenging Haitian society's silence and secrecy around sexuality and gender expression by re-inserting the masisi and madivin into the nation. They do so by using a nationalist discourse that rests on the local understanding of tout moun se moun, that all people are people, and if one is Haitian, regardless if one is homosexual, one is human. These organizations do not seek to create a "gay Haiti" or parcel out sexuality in their subjectivity as a Haitian national and citizen, but aim to have masisi and madivin recognized for being, quite simply, Haitian.

When Lescot and Magloire first started filming in Haiti, Lescot explained that there was absolutely nothing explicitly being done on or for the LGBT population in Haiti. The filmmakers were fully aware of the uniqueness and importance of their film project. They started filming in 1997, and within a year, the Groupe de recherche et d'action anti-SIDA et anti-discrimination sexuelle [research and action group against AIDS and sexual discrimination, GRASADIS] was founded. GRASADIS worked with Family Health International in order to determine the HIV/AIDS infection rate among men who had sex with men [MSM] and offer community education and "technical and material support for organizations conducting interventions to reduce sexual transmission

of STIs and HIV" (Leonidas, 1983: 24). These organizations, however, received very little support, and were not able to serve consistently the MSM population in Haiti. As the years passed and members of GRASADIS left Haiti for the US, the remaining member saw the need to revise their mission and contribute in a more effective way to the lives of Haitian MSM and transsexuals. GRASADIS became SEROvie in 2007 (double check date). Quoting from their profile from amFAR, SEROvie provides services to "MSM, bisexual men, and transgender people" and "has a dual focus on health and rights, seeking to empower its clients to break a cycle of discrimination, poverty, and HIV infection. To do this, [SEROvie] has used a variety of approaches— from condom distribution and radio shows to anti-discrimination programs in schools and peer education on the street." While SEROvie certainly filled a void, in the decade since the release of Des Hommes et des Dieux other organizations appeared on the scene with the desire to serve the MSM and LGBT population in Haiti, but often came from outside of Haiti with a very specific idea of activism.

On November 30th, the well-known AIDS organization Housing Works, in partnership with Haitian AIDS activist Esther Boucicault, organized what was billed as Haiti's first gay rights march in town of Saint Marc. A dozen Haitian men wore white t-shirts with bold pink lettering that read "Mwen se masisi, m ap vi lavi positif ak vih/sida" (I'm gay, I'm living a positive life with HIV/AIDS). One news report described the moment:

> The gay group first made an appearance when they marched single-file into a St. Marc World AIDS Day concert Saturday night wearing their T-shirts. When they

> received some boos, AIDS organization leaders took the stage and told the crowd that the men were part of the community. When Esther's fiancé Cesar Vincent spoke, someone started heckling him. The emcee took the microphone and called out the heckler, saying, "Now you know what stigma feels like." After the concert, eight of the gay men changed into drag and took to the stage. ("Making History in Haiti," 2008)

This was a momentous occasion, one that received a lot of press. However according to Reginald Dupont, program coordinator for SEROvie, the undercover story is not as positive. In fact, Housing Works had approached SEROvie's president Steve Laguerre in order to collaborate, but when Laguerre tried to explain that it was necessary to take into account the socio-cultural reality in order to intervene, Housing Works decided to make their own "American" way, preferring "to shock, and from this shock see how to open things up" (interview). Dupont explains:

> We [SEROvie] were against it [the march]. Not only was it discriminatory, there were assumptions…once they identify you as homosexual, they consider you as an infected person, if you are homosexual… Therefore it was discriminatory. But these weren't consenting people who were marching voluntarily, because there was along the way certain pressures in the sense that, they would offer 1000 gouds (roughly $143) to go march…and maybe you would know this, that the situation in which people find themselves, 1000 gouds is something for them. But the feedback was not at all positive, because normally there are certain amongst them, that were our [clients] that were contacted on our behalf and amongst them, there were some that tried to commit suicide afterwards…because in the community, the people who knew them, automatically they thought those people were infected, there were some people that took a violent position against them. So some tried to commit suicide. Others had to leave the place where they were living to go elsewhere. There were some that had their beauty studio, and they had to abandon it…"

The assumption that Reginald points to, that Haitians will assume all gays are infected with HIV, is actually something that is constructed and perpetuated (whether intentional or not) by organizations like Housing Works, that purposely and

problematically lump together the two, insisting on shock value than education. It is based on traditional models of LGBT organizing in the United States that have focused on demanding the state to bequeath certain rights to its gay, lesbian, transsexual and transgendered population, such as the right to marry, serve in the army, or change genders on official paperwork. This model isolates sexuality as the only reason for the state to treat gays as second-class citizens, and assumes that once the rights are granted, everything else will fall into place. In reality, this model only benefits those whose other rights are not infringed upon due to, for example, poverty, or race, or gender. In other words, this particular rights model reinforces existing patriarchy, white supremacy, and homonormativity. Rinaldo Walcott described this phenomenon as "white queer homonormative racism" (2009), arguing that North American and Western European LGBT organization often set up a modernist framework that place acceptance of and equal rights for LGBT people as the height of modernity. This teleological understanding of gay and trans rights suppresses alternative expressions and forms of sexuality that exist, and often enters into direct conflict with local cultural forms, as was clearly shown during Housing Works' rights march. Faithfully following this model of development in Haiti, Housing Works had an agenda and preferred to follow it through rather than be more sensitive to the everyday realities in Haiti. The failure of the march as described by Reginald is in large part due to the fact that a solely rights based strategy would be ineffective in Haiti, where the state is often disorganized and at times almost powerless to protect its citizens. Furthermore, Haiti is in the Caribbean, a region widely reputed for its internalized colonial forms of respectability, and firmly anchored notions of

heterosexuality and patriarchy. I share Walcott's concern as a person with a diasporic subjectivity: how does one offer an analysis that invariably "caught between white queer homonormative racism and Anglo-Caribbean homo-hatred" (Walcott, 2009: 4), or more appropriately, Franco-Caribbean homo-hatred and secrecy?

As a US-born woman of Haitian descent, I recognize that my own positionality is awkwardly situated. As Walcott points out in his own article, the position of being a diaspora, caught between North American white homonormative racism and Caribbean homophobia is complicated. As much as I would love to see more protections given to LGBT Haitians, I also recognize that Haiti is currently politically unstable, and it will be difficult to hold the state accountable for the protection of their masisi and madivin citizens. On the other hand, I am continually frustrated by the interventions of non-profits and non-governmental organizations that come to Haiti determined to carve their own path, believing they finally have the solution, and then wonder from their isolated camps why things fail. What I would want for Haitians is action that addresses the systemic issues (discrimination, health care) using local epistemology.

Initiatives like KOURAJ's LGBT bar and cultural center are extraordinary in their idealism and possibility, but I am torn between wanting to see a safe space for masisi and madivin to gather and enjoy themselves, and the imposition of the kind of western framework that thinks in "safe spaces" without seeing how these spaces interact with other spaces, and the nation in general. I am very sympathetic to Diana's point of view, where she said:

> It's hard for me to comment on how certain issues affect the LGBT community in Haiti because we don't really know what this community looks like. What we know is that resources are scarce, there's been a rise in SGBV since the earthquake, Haitian society is homophobic, and most people are unemployed and survive off less than a dollar or day. Advocacy is important, but let's be honest about the root of the problem…The problems faced by LGBT folks in Haiti won't be solved by giving them space to be gay.

We must be more vigilant of the local forms of organization. The discourses that shape what it means to be masisi and madivin in Haiti actually offer plenty of possibilities that can be marshaled into an effective campaign, as local organizations have done. Yet we must continue to grapple with the tensions of the local and the global, and the unavoidable transnational exchanges that continue to create new possibilities that can be mapped onto tradition and history.

CONCLUSION

Organizing around gender is still emergent amongst Franco-Haitian organizations. At first glance, the rampant sexism within the diasporic Haitian community could be seen as the perpetuation of patriarchy so readily found in Haiti. When one takes into consideration the French context and the reality of being a group struggles and strives to integrate, the sexism and the lack of women-based movements is revealed as a strategy of assimilation. Discussions of gender, sexism, and feminism are stand-ins for discussions of nationalism. When shifting perspectives from the diaspora to Haitians themselves, the tensions between nationalism and transnationalism are exposed. A history of feminist organizing in Haiti becomes lost amongst Franco-Haitians; diasporic engagement with feminist and queer movements are seen as a threat to authentic Haitian identity. We

realize how difficult, possibly even problematic, it can be to try to exchange, translate, and carry-over certain ideologies and agendas, all in the name of modernity.

Chapter 5: The Impact of National and International Policy

I tried to calm my nerves before the meeting. I was to meet Daniel and Alex from the *Fondation de France* to see if I could be a part of their research team and potentially get some funding for my impending trip to Haiti. Anne Lescot, whose organization *Collectif 2004 Images* and website *Réseau Culture Haïti* both received funding from the foundation, had set the meeting up for me. Everyone was clearly more relaxed than I was. We walked not to far from the headquarters to a small square filled with tables set up by the surrounding restaurants. We were seated, and once we'd ordered and received our food, the questions began.

"What are you looking to do in Haiti?" "How does it fit in with your research here in France?" "What have you discovered thus far?"

I was on shaky ground since I'd given much thought to those same questions but hadn't settled on any answers yet. I knew I wanted to go to Haiti because the organizations I worked with in France were much more focused on doing service work in Haiti than in Haitian communities in France. What I understood less however was why those efforts had produced thus far so few results; Daniel and Alex sought to understand the same.

"We've funded a few organizations in the past," said Daniel, "but they didn't give us the results we'd hoped. So little has been done. That's why we decided to fund organizations that had already been working for a long time because so many new organizations appeared after the earthquake and we didn't know who to trust."

They looked at me. “What can you tell us about Haitian associations in France? We need numbers. Do you know how many Haitians participate in organizations? How much money they contribute to organizations versus sending back home? How many projects are actually funded? That’s the kind of information we need to know.”

I stared blankly into their expectant faces, knowing full well I couldn’t answer their questions but recognized their importance. I could hazard a few guesses based on a combination of anecdotal evidence and previous research on the Haitian diaspora in France, but I wasn’t in the position to do the kind of national survey it would require. They seemed sincere in their attempt to understand the problems for Haitian organizations to create and execute successful projects but the funders needed more information on how to do so. In an email communication, Daniel wrote to me that the *Fondation de France*’s (FdF) mission was to (quoted in full, my translation):

> support other associations of the Haitian diaspora in its appeal to Haiti Solidarity projects following the earthquake. [The French Foundation] has supported several networks of associations (PAFHA, CHF, Haiti Culture Network, etc...), and associations. We [FdF] repeatedly tried to accompany and guide upstream projects. Despite this, the quality of proposals received was not up to our expectations and we have observed a number of difficulties that you also seem to have identified. Our focus today is to have a study identifying these problems and their causes and making recommendations where possible, including the following:
>
> - Reasons for the institutional weakness of diasporic associations (ability to assemble and prepare a project to raise funds and create partnerships, implementation, reporting…)
> - Blocks preventing them from better coordination on the ground between NGOs and the authorities share information
> - Divisions within the associated diaspora (PAFHA / CHF, etc.).
> - From a general point of view, it would be interesting to estimate how much the Franco-Haitian diaspora invests financially and how much passes through associations with respect to transfers to families.

- A quantitative nature of the funds they use e.g.- local, private, state, foundations, other NGOs, etc.…
- The modalities of intervention associated diaspora, efficiency and relevance: medium duration, geographic area, geographical or thematic approach, providing technical expertise and financial support alone, average budget/project etc.… What distinguishes them from other development actors
- The nature and quality of partnerships with local organizations (governance, which empower local associations over the associated diaspora and what participation / ownership of local populations)
- The local relevance of their activities to the needs of the field
- The support of the *Fondation de France* and the associated diaspora especially their platforms he improved practices? Does it move the lines?
- What recommendations to donors to help encourage the improvement of the quality of intervention associated diaspora?
- Trends at work. Can we observe developments on these issues, improvements, etc.?

It was clear that FdF had given much thought to how to address these persistent problems in working with Haitian associations. My concern was that the framing placed a large portion of blame on the associations themselves. Too often Haitian associations are deemed incompetent, irrespective of context.

Haitians in the diaspora, many of whom create and participate in local social movements, hometown associations and other transnational organizations often find themselves unable to meet the expectations of development agencies or their own people, yet are publicly encouraged to give back, either through traditional forms such as remittances or donations, or in more formalized fashion such as through a development project or running for public office. Governments and large international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and foundations laud diasporic associations in particular as Haiti's best chance for recovery and sustainable development, yet these associations are given little in terms of material and institutional support, expected to first

prove themselves worthy before being funded. When small organizations invariably face challenges, the issues are seen as self-made and personal, while historical and institutional contributions to the problem are ignored. In previous chapters, I have outlined the historical contexts of France and Haiti, and offered in detail the internal and external challenges that Haitian hometown associations face while organizing transnationally. In this chapter, I aim to highlight the complicated positionality of Haitian hometown associations within the broader development agenda, politics, and policies of so-called first world nation-states and international agencies.

The 2010 earthquake spurred a new moment in the history of the Haitian diaspora in France. Associations devoted to working in and for Haiti doubled in the two years following the earthquake, a large number of them created by Haitians who felt compelled for the first time to actively participate in Haiti's development beyond sending remittances to their families. The media also contributed to the push, with headlines such as "What Haiti Needs: A Bigger Diaspora" (Abrams, 2010) or "The Diaspora Can Save Haiti" (Uttley, 2005). France for its part had been revising its policies around development aid to reflect a general trend toward sustainability and accountability between donor and aid-receiving nations. In particular, France had recently adopted a "co-development" policy that explicitly sought to work with diasporic organizations linked to "strategic partnership" countries. In the years following the earthquake, however, the key players in Haiti's recovery haven't been hometown associations or other kinds of transnational organizations headed by members of the diaspora; rather,

national governments and international development agencies have maintained status quo and continue to be given the most decision-making powers.

At the global level, nonprofits have increasingly taken on the role of social service providers. Although France's co-development policy includes a conscious effort to work with local NGOs (that is, in Haiti) to avoid redundancy, their ability to be in a country as a decision-maker contributes to the nonprofit industrial complex (INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, 2007), where the national agendas of developed countries and NGOs are given priority over the local governments of "partner" countries. This is underlined by the fact that foreign aid to developing nations often bypass government coffers and go directly to nonprofits. In his recent book *After the Quake*, Paul Farmer noted that only 1% of the total donated aid went to the government. This undermines the operational capacity of the Haitian state, which then contributes to the image of Haitian leaders as incompetent, even by members of the diaspora themselves. Thus, they are more likely to create and/or support social service nonprofits than try to find ways to reinstate and reinforce Haiti's right to self-rule.

Haiti is sometimes referred to as the "republic of NGOs" (Kristoff and Panarelli 2010), with the second highest number of nongovernmental organizations per capita after India.[13] With every natural disaster NGOs have multiplied, bringing much needed relief but often at the cost of political and economic sovereignty. The NGO problem is a polarizing topic amongst Haitians. The acronym often conjures contradictory images of

[13] www.thenation.com/article/170929/ngo-republic-haiti

benevolence and abuse. Furthermore, the logic that an organization run by Haitians knows what is best for Haiti can problematically hide ways that those same organizations inadvertently reproduce problems of inequality and mismanagement created by large international NGOs. What kind of relationship, then, exists—and even *can* exist—between large international NGOs (INGOs) and bilateral/multilateral aid government agencies such as USAID or *Agence Française de Développement* and Haitian hometown associations? How have different state institutions and INGOs supported, complimented and/or undermined hometown associations?

I first will detail the history of development aid, which in the European context is actually an outgrowth of migration policy. I will then profile the two main agencies that have had the greatest influence on aid. Using data collected from France's official development agency, *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) and the private funder Fondation de France, I examine the evolution of French policy regarding aid to Haiti, both via official development aid (ODA) and through Haitian hometown associations. I will pay special attention to how much aid has been funneled through hometown associations compared to other means, which organizations and in what sectors, how successful the overall policy appears to be and ultimately whether it is a sustainable endeavor.

RELUCTANT NATION OF IMMIGRATION

> [To be] 'French is to relate vertically to an ideal image of the French nation, not to find common ground with other immigrants who have embarked on this process of 'becoming French'" --Dominic Thomas, *Black France*

Understanding the structure of aid from France to Haiti is about understanding history of development aid in France, examining decisions made by France in regards to its own state interests, but also those made in conjunction with objectives laid out by the European Union, United Nations, World Bank, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and other multilateral agencies. Current French development policy is an outgrowth of immigration policy, which has been and continues to be a subject of enormous debate. Concerned with the increasing number of immigrants entering and settling in the country, France sought to curb the flow through state- and European-level policies. As the economic situation of developing nations progressively worsened, thus increasing rates of emigration, other European nations and the European Union began to re-evaluate development aid policies in order to look for new ways to support the economies of struggling countries while maintaining control over migration rates.

After World War II, and in light of a number of anti-racist and anti-colonial movements, Europe struggled to reconcile its need for labor with its xenophobic paranoia. The convergence of restrictive migration in overdeveloped regions of the world (Cornelius, Tsuda, Martin, & Hollifield, 2004) paired with the liberalization of underdeveloped nations' economies has increased the economic disparities between the "global north" and "global south" (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano & Ennis, 2000) and made it difficult for people to earn a living outside of urban centers. At the same time, low-skilled workers were finding it hard to obtain visas for the US and Europe as they were eschewed in favor of high-skilled workers. Shifts in immigration policy also included reductions in family reunification and denial of asylum requests, adding a new dimension

to the debate on immigration and challenging the humanitarian commitments versus the desire to protect national borders and cultures. Overdeveloped nations began re-examining and redefining their national identity in light of their increasing diversity, grappling with extremes of national inclusivity (in the form of assimilationist, integrationist, and multicultural policies) and cultural exclusivity (based on the belief that immigrants can never fully acculturate). Xenophobic paranoia has manifested in both national and supranational (at the level of the European Union) policy making, from the French ban on "conspicuous religious symbols" (an explicit attack on Muslim women's headscarves) and the burqua (a law that affects less than 500 in a population of over 68 million) to the European Union's recently passed "Pact on Immigration and Asylum" that attempts to standardize immigration across the member states. Private organizations such as Frontex have coordinated efforts among EU nation-states to protect the national borders from asylum seekers and economic migrants (Geddes, 2000) and in 2004 were responsible for the repatriation of several thousand African individuals and families over the course of a year (de Haas, 2006). As a result of global economic restructuring, so-called "first world" nations are tightening their borders just as "third world" nations are finding it almost impossible to remain in their country.

When discussing migration trends in the early 2000s, France often gives the impression that such trends were a relatively new phenomenon in France and the nation was caught unaware and unprepared for immigration, a notion that is reinforced by the lack of scholarship on immigration up until the 1980s. The foundational, ideological myth of France as a unified state with a common national culture contributed to

immigration's absence in academic and popular discourse (Hargreaves, 2005; Hollifield, 1994; Noiriel, 1996). Whereas scholars of US historiography were all too willing to accept immigration as a natural component of the nation, in France immigration was seen as "an 'external' (transitional, new, or marginal) problem, which is unrelated to the historical formation of France and has nothing to do with the 'French' or with their past" (Noiriel 1996: 5). The irony was that France was a highly important destination of immigrants, particularly after the 1920s when the US greatly restricted entry to foreigners. Even more ironic is that over 25% of the French population are second or third generation descendants of immigrants. Immigration as a field of study, however, only developed following a combination of factors including the re-examination of national memory and cultural narratives and a large wave of migration that came as a result of a combination of "push" (global recession; political persecution) and "pull" (guest worker programs, industrialization, low birth rates) factors. One of the most well known interventions in this matter is Gerard Noiriel's *The French Melting Pot: Immigration, Citizenship, and National Identity* (1996 [1988]). Noiriel argues that immigration as a process that is "internal" to French history and seeks to position it as integral to its national identity. Studying immigration in France is a complicated and contradictory process that involves taking into account the ideological premises that have kept and continue to keep migration at bay, and the political and economic incentives to keep the borders at least somewhat porous.

World War II left France with a very weak infrastructure, a poor labor force, and low population growth. Proponents of "populationism" made a case to recruit

"immigrant workers and their families from the culturally compatible Southern European, Catholic populations of Italy, Spain, and Portugal" (Hollifield 1994: 147). This deliberate selection of "culturally compatible" immigrants was a strategy to boost French industrialization and overall population with little consequence. Overall though, French immigration became more liberal in reaction to the oppressive fascist Nazi-backed Vichy regime. The moral-republican imperative towards expansive immigration was met with a crisis to control immigration following decolonization movements in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, "which was, ironically, a creation of nationalist and republican aspirations" (Hollifield, 1994: 149). The spike in immigration from former colonies in North and sub-Saharan Africa created the imperative to control the flows and not breach the "threshold of tolerance" (Givens, 2007). Thus formed the basic immigration dialectic that persists today: the desire to uphold a liberal-republican political system that encourages migration worked in opposition to the desire to limit migration as a result of decolonization.

FRANCE AND MIGRATION

In recent years, French membership in the European Union has only served to highlight the conflict between France's universalist dimensions of French Republicanism and its tendency toward ethnonationalist attitudes. Common visa policies have undermined France's ability to regulate border entries. Moreover the development of more robust asylum and refugee policies has caused resentment by the French government to assume responsibility for displaced persons. This is quite evident in France's treatment of Haitian entrants. What is fascinating, however, is the manner that

Haitians are treated in mainland France and in the overseas departments. Haitian migration to France has always been on the smaller end, particularly migration to mainland France. Whereas in the early 20th century wealthier Haitians would often send their children to study in Paris, or would flee themselves to Paris following political persecution by government regimes, the economic and political situation in Haiti had deteriorated significantly by the 1980s, and more Haitians left Haiti to look for better economic opportunities regionally. Aside from the United States, some migrated to other islands in the Caribbean, including the French territories of Guadeloupe and Martinique. Sociologist Margarita Mooney writes "according to the 1999 census, more Haitians then lived in these three Caribbean departments—27, 349—than all the departments of metropolitan France, included Paris and its suburbs, where approximately 25,000 Haitians lived" (Mooney, 2009: 157).

In the French Antilles, and particularly Guadeloupe, Haitians bear the brunt of the economic crisis as a culturally inferior, economically exploited, and juridically discriminated group. It is certainly a "paradox that Caribbean nationals [i.e., Haitians and Dominicans] going to live and work in other Caribbean countries (in this case, Guadeloupe and French Guiana) encounter a reception that is just as unfriendly as that accorded to migrants from those two countries in Europe or North America" (Giraud, 2009: 51). The anti-Haitian sentiment in France in particular coincided with the anti-immigrant sentiment of the 1970s and 1980s, when the French government introduced more work permit restrictions in the interest of reducing the foreign-born population (Giraud, 2009; Hargreaves, 1995). In the Antilles, these laws were taken quite seriously,

with frequent deportations of Haitians who tried to enter the country or who had over-extended their visa (Brodwin, 2001; Giraud, 2009). One of the main reasons Haitians felt outrage over their deportation was that many of those deported should have had a right to residency—many had been there for a decade or more. This right had been extended to the East Indian, Syrian, and Lebanese population. Haitians, however, are highly policed and denied access to citizenship rights that they are technically due. Giraud argues that the rejection of Haitians by Guadeloupeans stems from "a desire to escape at all costs from what Frantz Fanon called 'the great black hole' of poverty and to get as close as possible to the enviable world of the dominant species, the 'whites'" (Giraud 2009: 51). He goes on further to say that it is a "passion for homogeneity" (citing Haitian sociologist Laennec Hurbon), but primarily tied to their identity, based on the desire to be a culturally distinct national group. Haitians living in Guadeloupe do not have much desire to intergrate into French-Guadeloupean life. This separatist attitude does not sit well with Guadeloupeans, who thus find Haitians suspect and "vulnerable to charges of political disloyalty and economic parasitism" (Brodwin 2001: 5).

In mainland France, however, there have not been many studies on the Haitian immigrant experience. Aside from small media reports of Haitians being detained upon entry for months following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, a systematic investigation of Haitian migration to France does not exist. It is clear, however, that France does not give preferential treatment. In December 2010, seventy-five Haitians who'd arrived in the months after the disaster were reported to be in custody of immigration officials. When asked about these detainees, the minister of immigration Eric Besson replied, "They don't

have their papers in order, they cannot establish residency in France…these people lied, pretended that they wanted to study in Benin when they really wanted to live in France. We accommodate those who respect the law, not frauds (*as quoted in* "Haïti: le tri français" *Le Canard Enchainé*, December 29, 2010, *my translation*)." France's preoccupation with its border security over the lives of Haitian people underscores the larger struggle around French national identity in the context of increased population diversity and non-white claims to citizenship.

James Hollifield makes a compelling argument in attempting to understand how France's liberal-republicanism began to give way to restrictive ethnonationalism. He establishes that

> the relationship between immigration and nation building is absolutely crucial in enabling liberal democratic and republican states to control immigration and make immigration policy…the more closely associated immigration is with the political myths that legitimate and give life to the regime, the easier it is for the state to justify its immigration and refugee policies and to manage the ethnic or distributional conflicts that often arise as a result of immigration (Hollifield, 2004: 145).

He goes on further to argue that France experiences a crisis in its national identity as a republican nation. Whereas before the only criteria for difference was one's juridical status (either you're French or not), immigrant became synonymous with non-White and non-Christian as more North Africans emigrated. Policies aimed at reducing immigration failed as more people entered as economic and political refugees, due to an economic recession in the 1970s and 80s. He explains:

> In 1981, French immigration policy took another turn with the election of France's first left-wing government since the Popular Front of 1936. François Mitterrand and the Socialist Party promised to make life easier (and more secure) for the millions of foreigners living in France, while at the same time, asserting greater control over illegal immigration in order to protect French workers from unfair foreign competition…Immigration control was inextricably linked with problems of integration and religion, as French authorities started to come to grips with the permanent settlement of millions of Muslim North Africans and the arrival of an increasing number of sub-Saharan Africans, many of whom were entering as asylum seekers (Hollifield, 2004:159).

Furthermore, the rise in second-generation immigrants (born on French soil) created tensions within France of who could claim French identity. Although France had a policy of *jus soli*, where one gains citizenship through birth on French territory, in the 1990s, this "loophole" came under attack by the then-Minister of the Interior Charles Pasqua who, along with a number of other reforms, made it difficult to impossible for children of undocumented immigrants but born in France to obtain citizenship papers before the age of 18. This left thousands of French-by-birth youth in a void of citizenship, belonging to neither the country of their parents nor the country in which they were born and raised (Stovall & Abbeele, 2003: 7). Over the course of a decade, various other laws were passed as part of an immigration reform package (e.g., Debré law, passed in 1997; Chevènement law, passed in 1998). The modifications affected all manner of people: undocumented parents who were no longer able to apply for citizenship on behalf of their children, thus securing their own right to stay in the country; foreigners who in hoping to marry French citizens were forced to wait two years before they could acquire citizenship; foreigners who were subject to random police stops for identity checks; and asylum seekers who were more scrutinized and prone to rejection.

The Pasqua-Méhaignerie laws were passed in a time when the leader of the *Front National* Jean-Marie Le Pen was generating support for his right-wing politics and despite his known anti-Semitic, racist, and xenophobic attitude, still managed to have a high approval rating. In a television appearance, Le Pen declared, "French nationality, it is either inherited or merited, to the total exclusion of procedures that grant [citizenship] automatically" (*Front National*-Le Pen on Immigration, 2007 my translation).

The Pasqua-Méhaignerie laws blatantly attacked migrants from North Africa and Eastern Europe, in a desperate attempt to maintain the French identity as pure, white, secular, and earned. In a direct contrast to their purported open-access to citizenship, France was desperate to maintain their mono-ethnic nationalism. The public fear generated by French lawmakers with claims that migrants, both legal and undocumented, were responsible for the rising unemployment, decreased access to housing, and general degradation of French life, contributed to the passing of the laws, and even gave Le Pen won 16.86% of the popular vote in the 2002 presidential election. Things have not improved over time—in the 2012 presidential elections, his like-minded daughter Marine Le Pen won a historic 17.9% in the primaries, placing her in third place behind the incumbent president Nicolas Sarkozy, who captured 27.2% and eventual election winner Francois Hollande, at 28.6%.

As soon as the new migration laws were put into place, thousands of people living in France found themselves stuck without citizenship (or chance of citizenship) of any kind and at risk for deportation. According to one news source, "French officials report[ed] that the number of people deported from France in 1994 rose 53 percent to

11,400; another 566 were expelled, at a total cost to the French taxpayer $18 million" (Migration News, 1995). The number of permanent entries decreased to their lowest level since World War II. Deportation, a sort of state-sanctioned ethnic cleansing, is in itself a violent and at times deadly process; in 2003, a recently arrived Ethiopian asylum seeker, 24-year-old Mariame Getu Hagos, was detained for five days before his claim for asylum was rejected and he was scheduled to fly out of Roissy-Charles DeGaulle airport (Fekete, 2005). He did not even make it off the ground before he was suffocated through the use of a "folding technique" (which involves a person in a sitting position, heads between the knees and arms behind the back, and has since been banned) and later died in the hospital.

As France tried to balance its role in the European Union with its own national interests, French immigration law and policy became much more restrictive, in contradiction to it's liberal-republican foundations. France's current problems with immigration stem from its desire to see everyone as French first, and therefore they must construct a narrative that precludes irreconcilable cultural difference (citation and/or further explanation). In doing so, France has tried to distance itself from a history predicated upon reinforcing racial differences and many French politicians have used the law to try and shape national memory and historical discourse (citation).

In 2001, a law was passed by Christine Taubira, a black French female member of Parliament (before her promotion to minister of Justice in 2013 under the current president François Hollande) that stated that France acknowledged the slave trade as a crime against humanity, and that the history of the slave trade and slavery would be

taught in schools.[14] Barely four years later, a new bill was introduced by Hamlaoui Mekachera that sought to recognize the contributions of French soldiers during the Algerian war, and a conservative member of Parliament, Christian Vanneste, added an amendment that cited the "positive role" of colonialism.[15] Incensed, the same year of the bill's passage, Aimé Cèsaire even refused to meet with Nicolas Sarkozy—the former president of France who was then the Minister of the Interior—because of Mr. Sarkozy's endorsement of the bill, one that was pushed through by his political party. Whereas Taubira's law fought for the presence of the slave trade and slavery within curricula, it never indicated how educators should approach the subject, and therefore Mekchera's law is well placed to shape the conversation around French imperialism as a necessary

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[14] In article 1 and 2 of the bill entitled "Loi nº 2001-434 du 21 mai 2001 tendant à la reconnaissance de la traite et de l'esclavage en tant que crime contre l'humanité" (Law nº2001-434 of May 21, 2001 towards the recognition of the slave trade as a crime against humanity"), it is stated that "The French Republic recognizes that the transatlantic slave trade and the slave trade in the Indian Ocean on the one hand, and slavery on the other hand, perpetuated from the fifteenth century, in the Americas and the Caribbean, in the Indian Ocean and Europe against the African, Malagasy and Indian populations Amerindian, constitute a crime against humanity….Educational and research programs in history and humanities programs will provide the slave trade and slavery the important place they deserve. ("La République française reconnaît que la traite négrière transatlantique ainsi que la traite dans l'océan Indien d'une part, et l'esclavage d'autre part, perpétrés à partir du xve siècle, aux Amériques et aux Caraïbes, dans l'océan Indien et en Europe contre les populations africaines, amérindiennes, malgaches et indiennes constituent un crime contre l'humanité….Les programmes scolaires et les programmes de recherche en histoire et en sciences humaines accorderont à la traite négrière et à l'esclavage la place conséquente qu'ils méritent.")

[15] In article 4 of the bill entitled "Loi n° 2005-158 du 23 février 2005 portant reconnaissance de la Nation et contribution nationale en faveur des Français rapatriés" (Law nº 2005-158 of February 23, 2005 seeking recognition of the Nation and the national contribution of repatriated French citizens), it is stated that "university research programs are to give the history of the French presence overseas, especially in North Africa, the place it deserves. School programs are to recognize in particular the positive role of the French presence overseas, especially in North Africa, and give their place in history and sacrifices of veterans of the French army from the territories the prominent place that they deserve.

("Les programmes de recherche universitaire accordent à l'histoire de la présence française outre-mer, notamment en Afrique du Nord, la place qu'elle mérite.
Les programmes scolaires reconnaissent en particulier le rôle positif de la présence française outre-mer, notamment en Afrique du Nord, et accordent à l'histoire et aux sacrifices des combattants de l'armée française issus de ces territoires la place éminente à laquelle ils ont droit.")

and beneficial aspect of history. French lawmakers understood the power of the educational system as a means of indoctrination. As an ideological state apparatus, the school is an important battleground for those trying to ensure a homogenous state. Of the school, Althusser writes that it "teaches 'know-how', but in forms which ensure *subjection to the ruling ideology* or the mastery of its 'practice" (Althusser, 1971).

Mekchera's law is just one example of France's concern with its history and national identity. Historically it has used language and the law to explicitly create a narrative that painted France in a more favorable light, or at the least absolve it from certain responsibility. Mekchera's law specifically addresses French presence in North Africa as positive, but then what of a state like Haiti, officially declared as "failing" in the context of development aid? What are the positive contributions of France to Haiti's rise and fall? The point is, however, that this question needn't be asked because it is clear that Haiti wasn't part of the discussion. The very fact that no French president had ever stepped foot on Haitian soil for 206 years, until the earthquake, is a testament to France's lack of concern or even contempt for the country. I would even argue that France's project around national memory operates to exclude Haitians in particular as France struggles with migration in a highly racialized environment.

The problem of French immigration became a problem of French *integration*, and this socio-cultural problem has overshadowed any political or economic justifications for low-skilled migrant entry. For countries that primarily "export" low-skilled labor such as Haiti (Richman 2005), this can only have negative consequences for those that seek their fortune in France. In recent years, France has developed a new tactic that doesn't merely

address keeping people out, but helps potential migrants stay where they are and encourage immigrants to return home. In the following section, I turn towards development policy.

HISTORY OF FRENCH DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Unlike France's history of immigration, development aid is generally traced back to the end of World War II. As France sought to free itself from the clutches of Nazi Germany, in 1941 beloved General Charles de Gaulle held a conference in London to formally declare resistance to the regime. Prime Minister Winston Churchill was among the other guests in solidarity with de Gaulle. French territories in Africa, including Chad, French Cameroun, and Congo, also threw their support behind France and committed troops to the cause. In order to finance "Free France", de Gaulle created a treasury named *Caisse Centrale de la France Libre* (Central Treasury of Free France). The *Caisse Centrale* was put into place to manage the funds directly supporting troops in the French territories in Africa. Over the next several decades, this treasury transforms over a dozen times to eventually become today's Agence Française de Developpment. It is significant to note, however, that these institutional transformations were generally to benefit France's colonies in Africa and the Caribbean. It wasn't until the 1980s that France enlarged the field to include other developing countries.

The global feeling of concern over the economic state of Europe post-World War II led to the creation of several supranational bodies to help manage international relations and promote international monetary stability. The International Bank for

Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)—now subsumed under the World Bank—and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were created at the 1944 United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference (also known as the Bretton Woods Conference.) In 1945, the United Nations officially replaced the ineffective League of Nations. Following the creation of these multilateral institutions, European nations hoped to boost recovery and level the playing field between nations by boosting industrial production worldwide. The World Bank and IMF promoted economic development in struggling nations through rapid Western-style industrialization, but inherent inequalities between the Western powers and nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America resulted in little progress, and in fact made these nations more dependent on the global capitalist system that necessitated a certain level of exploitation (AidWatch.org, 2013). Even after the period of decolonization in Africa and Asia towards the end of the 1950s and 60s, the newly independent countries found themselves in dire straits, unable to repay loans. With that, the World Bank and IMF instituted structural adjustment policies in the defaulting countries, policies that liberalized their economies, devaluing their currency in order to make their markets more attractive for imports and foreign investments. These neoliberal policies continued through to the end of the cold war, when it became clear that few countries had managed to extricate themselves from debt and economic crisis.

The growing gap between the "first" and "third" world nations ultimately led to a series of conferences and fora that birthed highly influential development aid policy frameworks in today's world: the UN's Millennium Development Goals set in 2000, the Monterrey Consensus on financing for development in 2002, the High Level Fora on Aid

Effectiveness, set in Rome, Italy in 2003, Paris, France in 2005, Accra, Ghana in 2008, and Busan, Korea in 2011. The MDGs created a link between development frameworks and a specific set of targets to be achieved by 2015 (Fowler, 2003).

The goals are:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- Achieve universal primary education;
- Promote gender equality and empower women;
- Reduce child mortality;
- Improve maternal health;
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases;
- Ensure environmental sustainability; and
- Develop a global partnership for development.

These goals required a re-thinking of how these goals would be financed. The Monterrey Conference in Mexico addressed mobilizing domestic financial resources for development, dealing with developing countries' external debts, and some of the consistency and coherence of international aid. The attendees were asked to commit 0.7% of their gross national income towards aid. To date, only five out of the 24 countries who committed have met that threshold, although the United States outstrips everyone in actual dollars (see table 2 and table 3).

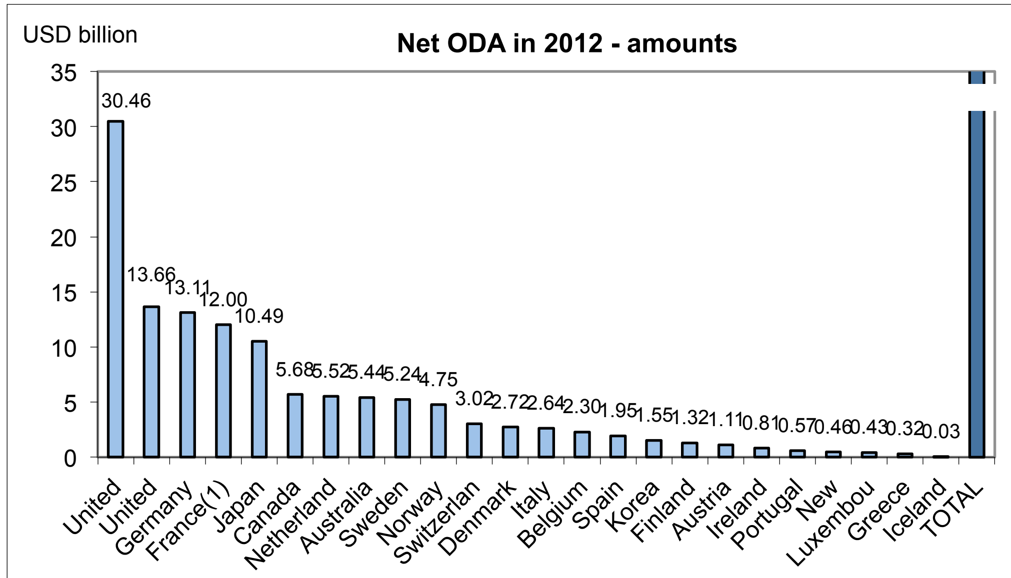

Table 2: Net ODA in 2012 in dollars, Source: Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

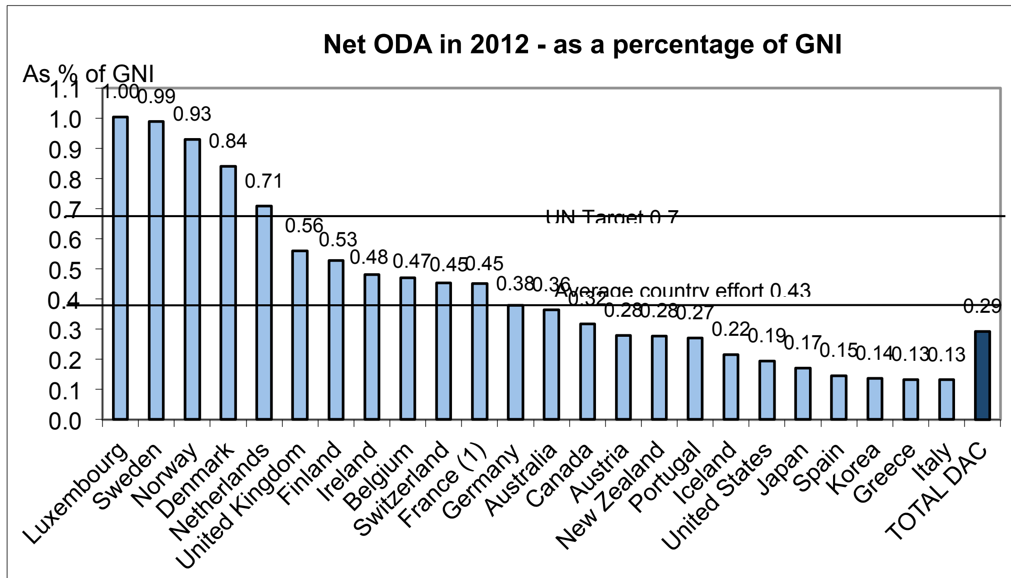

Table 3: Net ODA in 2012 as % of GNI Source: Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

The Paris Declaration of Aid challenged the notion of "growth" as the measure of aid effectiveness, and instead focused on harmonizing the goals of donor and partner

nations in order to hold each other mutually accountable (*The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action*, 2005).

These documents are referenced often in French development policy, and structure the country's funding commitments. In the past two decades, France underwent a series of reforms to better focus their energies on regions and nations that were deemed a priority, notably Sub-Saharan Africa (which in 2011 received 41.6% of France's total available aid and is set to receive up to 60% by 2013), the Mediterranean, and "fragile and crisis" countries. As of 2011, France's overall objectives are to 1) foster sustainable and equitable growth for the poorest populations; 2) combat poverty and inequality; 3) preserve global public goods; and 4) ensure global stability and the rule of law. The development cooperation strategy also cites health and agriculture as two key priority areas. These were all subsumed under the new strategy of co-development.

CO-DEVELOPMENT

Co-development was France's attempt to be more responsible, while still being guided by the political-economic imperatives and ideological premises that informed France's immigration laws. The policy can be defined as "the process through which immigrants contribute to the socioeconomic development of their country of origin while assimilating into the country to which they have immigrated, to the mutual benefit of both countries" (Panizzon, 183). France's co-development strategy is actually a combination of various policies, informal and codified into law, that include co-development, solidarity development, and decentralized government cooperation. Unlike

co-development, which emphasizes migrant participation, solidarity development is a "government-to-government funding of development initiatives with an emphasis on reducing migratory root causes, like unemployment…[and] qualifies as structural aid" (194-195). According to economics scholar Edith Archambault, solidarity is actually a "basic principle of French thinking about social economy; it encompasses such notions as membership feeling, income redistribution, and joint liability" (Archambault, 2001). Decentralized government cooperation is a sub-strategy of solidarity development that sought to stem "brain drain" in countries with heavy high skilled emigration. Panizzon's article provides a useful summary of France's challenges in balancing its immigration concerns with the growing pressure to support less developed countries via development aid. As Panizzon puts it, "France went through a 'learning process' and reinvented the concept as it internalized feedback from the diaspora" (*ibid,* 219). He goes on further to note that "co-development never quite lost its close link to return migration, a fact summarized in the slogan that co-development was designed to give a human face to a security agenda" ('visage humanitaire d'une politique sécuritaire')(*ibid,* 219).

Time frame	1960s-1970s	1970s-1993	1994-2003	2002-2006	2006-2008	2009-present
Strategy	Integration	Return Migration	Migration-Development Nexus	Co-Finance	Priority Solidarity Funding	Solidarity Development/ Co-development Banking

Table 4: Evolution of French Co-development Strategy

One of the more intriguing solutions that France developed in 2008 was a co-development banking strategy. In a tripartite strategy, migrants would be able to create

savings accounts that would be used exclusively for development investment purposes. This strategy relies on a direct relationship between French banks and banks in the home country, thus redirecting money exchanges from private companies like Western Union and reinforcing the banking system in the developing country. Panizzon sees the co-development savings account and bank passbook as a positive step, offering "a valuable incentive mix of tax breaks and penalties" that would hold individual migrants accountable in their investments, as well as positively benefit the banking industry both in France and in the migrant's home country. However in order to receive the tax breaks, migrants are limited to investing in the areas that France, not the home country, has deemed a priority. Few migrants have taken advantage of this process however, probably because it wasn't widely advertised. The banking scheme does hold migrants more accountable--which was a problem that I identified in my research--it also undermines community building, and encourages migrants to be oriented towards helping their country of origin, and not necessarily each other. Panizzon sees this as a positive, but when these strategies are compared to development strategies in Canada or in the US, it actually is a weaker form.

In a study on Haitian diaspora organizations and their work in reinforcing the social service sector in Haiti, Patrica Weiss Fagen and colleagues compared the challenges of development in four locations most populated by Haitians, Miami, New York, Boston, and Montreal (Fagen, 2009). Their aim was to show how such organizations “have addressed serious gaps in Haitian health care delivery and education [and] to shed light on how Haitian migrants and those still in the country are contributing

to development processes which have implications for international policies and practices" (Fagen, 2009: 4). Canada is unique in the sense that it has specific measures to make Haitian diaspora projects more effective. The government created an umbrella organization called the Group of Canadian-Haitian Development Organisations (le Regroupement des Organismes Canado-Haïtiens pour le Développement - ROCAHD) through which a matching grants program was established to fund small development projects created by member organizations. Membership conditions included good organizational governance—capacity to demonstrate effective leadership, active membership, capacity to create a budget, evaluate a program, etc. This kind of initiative worked not only to motivate individuals and organizations to be effective, but also reinforced a sense of community belonging through membership in ROCAHD.

Community building and reinforcement is a necessary part of the partner country-diaspora-donor country equation. Overall, organizations played an important role in bridging Haitians between their new country and Haiti, and there were many collaborations between countries, but not as often between cities. In the locations in New York, Miami, and Boston, the rate of success was more contingent on the history of the particular community and the ability to mobilize the younger generation. Haitians in Paris were very much aware of the differences in their community structure compared to those in the US and France, and would often mention this point in frustration with their own community. This was one of the main impetuses for the creation of PAFHA in 2002. Their goal was to, "accompany Haitian migrants on the path towards integration into French society and to facilitate the activities and member projects that contribute to

development in Haiti as well as in France by searching for funding sources, material resources, technical skills, and all other legal means necessary to achieve these objectives."[16] Community building requires visibility and communication that can contribute to accountability and investment, the same goals as the banking program. What it of course doesn't do is contribute to the French banking system, and this selfishness on the part of the French government is painfully obvious and has been subject to criticism.

The French funding agency *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) has actually demanded more autonomy and accountability from the organizations requesting aid. This has allowed them to become more selective in whom they fund, while permitting better follow-up with each organization they assist. In a conference paper by Guillaume Cruse, an agent with the AFD discussing his organization's forays into co-development, he states,

> …[T]he AFD is not looking to assist novice initiatives. These kinds of operations demand a lot of energy and determination, which is not the jurisdiction of this institution, especially if the expected results are uncertain in light of the exerted efforts. It is our mission to accompany organically movements already in progress to offer a cumulative advantage[17] (*my translation,* Cruse 376-377 in OCDE 2005).

This reasoning is certainly logically sound, but the consequence is that diasporas with less resources, infrastructure, and training to begin with remain at a disadvantage.

[16] Taken from the website, www.pafha.fr

[17] (Original translation) "Mais l'AFD ne cherche pas non plus à s'appuyer sur des initiatives trop novatrices. De telles opérations exigent beaucoup d'énergie et de détermination, ce qui n'est pas du ressort d'une telle institution, surtout si les résultats attendus restent incertains par rapport aux efforts déployés. Il nous appartient en particulier d'accompagner des mouvements naturels déjà en œuvre pour essayer de favoriser des effets cumulatifs porteurs."

There was a clear awareness that of the difficulties in trying to characterize and tailor policy to each diaspora they work with. Furthermore, their aims were very modest, seeking only to assist between 5% to 10% of each diasporic population. How does one support less organized diasporas? The "viable market" attitude of the AFD reinforces inequalities in the diaspora's "purchasing power" because many of those who have the desire and network to help face economic, legal, and technical barriers that make it virtually impossible to effect any change. Combined with a lower negotiating power among fragmented migrant communities, the undocumented status of a large percentage of migrants, and a less developed banking culture in both the migrant community and home country (Vasconcelos 185 *in* OCDE 2005), you are left with a market failure with no alternatives aside from remittances and official development aid.

FRANCE-HAITI PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK

In 2007, France created an intervention framework that would guide France's cooperative action in Haiti from 2008-2012 (*Document Cadre de Partenariat France-Haiti 2008-2012*, 2007). France's aim, in tandem with other bilateral and multilateral donors, was to be,

> …engaged at the Haitian government's side, to contribute to the financing of the country's economic and social development program as well as to ease public spending though a debt reduction initiative, which would permit the Haitian government to have room for manoeuver in the budget and take on the responsibility of the reconstruction process (*Document Cadre de Partenariat France-Haiti 2008-2012*, 2007, my translation).

The policy combines the objectives of the UN's Millennium Development Goals, the Haitian government's priorities outlined in the "Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper" published in 2007, and the French government's priorities in international cooperation as outlined by the *Comité Interministériel de la Coopération Internationale et du Développment* (CICID). The partnership framework document (DCP) is written by and for the French government (and not jointly with Haiti, although it cites Haitian policy), and outlines a tripartite strategy for French cooperation:

> *First*, in line with the Millennium Development Goals, the French government's development aid agency, the *Agence Française de Développement* will primarily focus on Haiti's infrastructure and education sector;
> *Second*, France will also invest resources in the health and rural development sectors;
> *Third*, the French embassy in Haiti will develop programs and partnerships to address and support democratic rule, immigration and co-development, the promotion of cultural diversity and the French language, and higher education and scientific research.

Of course, this document was written before the devastating earthquake that destroyed much of the nation's capital in January 2010. The international community mobilized to offer material and monetary assistance in Haiti's dark hour. France was first on the scene to provide emergency assistance due to its nearby territories in the Caribbean. The French government committed to 326 million euros in aid—the second largest amount after the United States—50% of which had been distributed as of the end of 2011 (Collin & Keller, 2012). It appears, however, that the framework continued to serve as France's main policy in Haiti.

In context, the France-Haiti DCP is a miniaturization of a broadly held development policy. The question then becomes, does the DCP actually achieve the internationally-held aims of harmonization, co-development, and cooperation? These organizations were meant to level the playing field between nations by boosting industrial production, but inherent inequalities between the Western powers and nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America resulted in little progress and made these nations more dependent on the global capitalist system that necessitated a certain level of exploitation.

The France-Haiti partnership framework document is a combination of a series of policies that are for the most part written by international parties. It sets the historical context for Haiti's current issues, although carefully excluding any direct mention of France's role (colonial or contemporary) in Haiti's predicament. France cites its justification for intervention as:

- Small sum necessary for investment
- The mechanisms for realizing the goals are supple which contribute to a quick execution of the projects
- Only francophone country in the Caribbean

The reasons are very practical and are clearly in line with French interests at the very least. The sectors that would receive priority are actively in line with the millennium development goals and France's own development goals, and not with Haiti's development goals as outlined in Haiti's "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper," published in 2007.

MDG	France	Haiti
-Infrastructure -Education	-Health -Rural Sector	-Agriculture and rural development -Tourism -Infrastructure -Science, technology, and innovation

Table 5: Sector Priorities

The France-Haiti DCP recognizes the importance of the Haitian diaspora, particularly in light of the hundreds of millions of dollars in remittances they send to Haiti. The policy focuses on three main groups within co-development: Haitian associations in France, "representatives of scientific, technical, and economic diasporas"—skilled professionals and researchers—, and those Haitians wishing to return home. All groups would be able to apply to special monies that would support them in project development in Haiti.

The policy would be funded entirely by bilateral and multilateral donors. The amounts "pre-earthquake" are revealing:

- The *European Commission* has set aside 233 million euros to support infrastructure, good governance, and education.
- The *Inter-American Development Bank* has set the limit of aid at 50 million US per year, 50% of which to go to roads, 25% of which to supplement the state budget, and the rest (12 million) for all other projects.

- The *World Bank* in 2006/2007 gave 62 million US for primary education, transportation, and land and energy management. It will hold up to 9 million for disaster management.
- The *United States* has annually given 150 to 200 million US to reinforce government capacity and job creation, and support the health sector.
- *Canada* has promised 520 million over the course of 2006-2011 for good goverenance.
- *Spain* promised 12 million in 2007.
- The *United Nations* assists Haiti through its special envoy mission, MINUSTAH. The mission works in conjunction with several other UN agencies including UNICEF, UNESCO, and PNUD.

The total of these aid sources is roughly 562 million. In 2010, however, the total committed aid to Haiti from these same sources totaled over a billion.[18] It is important to note however that in the year following the disaster only 1% of the total aid distributed went through the government; the rest was routed through private organizations. Moreover, the fact of disbursement and expenditure serves as grounds for success, rather than actual results (Fowler, 2003: 22).

The policy is comprehensive and does focus on some of the most important sectors in need of support in Haiti. The France-Haiti DCP seeks to reinforce police capacity, rural development, and water and sanitation. The policy also identifies specific

[18] Taken from data set found at : http://fts.unocha.org/reports/daily/OCHA_R32sum_A893.XLS

partnerships that are necessary to accomplish the overall goals laid out in the document, which spreads the accountability and highlights the importance of partnerships. The main weakness of the policy, however, is that it reads like a more traditional top-down policy directive, with marching orders from the French government and other international agencies, and the burden of responsibility for achieving those tasks is set on the Haitian government's shoulders. Reinforcing the institutional capacity of the Haitian government is not a priority. Though the document portends to take into account Haiti's needs, France clearly aims to protect its own interests, including its borders and its language.

The disconnect can be read in the French goal of "cultural diversity and the French language." French is one of two official languages in Haiti, the other being Haitian Creole. French and Haitian Creole have a diglossic relationship: though a large part of business and government affairs are conducted in French—a holdover from Haiti's colonial past—less than 10% of the population is literate in the French language (whereas 100% of the population speaks Haitian Creole.) In the past three decades, there has been a concerted effort by Haitians to use Haitian Creole in official communication in an effort to make Haitian politics accessible to the population. There has also been a push to standardize grammar and spelling in order to make way for more publications in Haitian Creole. It is thus interesting to note France's focus on "francophonie" through the technical support of a francophone high school and teacher training in French.

Problematically, there is a distinction made between French NGOs in Haiti and ostensibly French NGOs created by the Haitian diaspora. The policy document

emphasizes the cooperation between France and French NGOs, which include Doctors without Borders and Red Cross-France. Separately, it discusses the Haitian diaspora and its (potential) economic contributions. The concern is two-fold: first, there is the assumption that Haitians in France have enough access to socio-economic resources to be able to benefit from these funds. On the other hand, France says little about how to truly incorporate these organizations into the development framework; rather they are yet another group to fund (and not so subtly, another group to encourage to leave France.) This policy is not truly in conversation with the Paris declaration on aid, which strives to create partnerships at every level. In spite of the Paris declaration of aid that sought to work *with* countries in achieving their goals, the France-Haiti DCP does not seem to genuinely take Haiti's goals in mind. In the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the Haitian government listed as its three main goals:

- growth in the agricultural and rural development sector; tourism; updating and modernizing infrastructure; research, technology, and innovation
- human development with a priority in offering basic social services
- democratic rule with a priority on justice and security (IMF, 2008)

Fowler notes that these poverty reduction strategy papers are actually a requirement by bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, and that "without approval of World Bank and IMF boards, no concessionary finance or debt reduction can be provided…Moreover, many other donors are adopting a country PRSP as the basis for coordination and for allocating their aid" (Fowler, 2003: 17). Countries in desperate need of aid "may avoid detailing what they really want to do in favour of specifying what they

think the Bank will approve. Further, the degree to which a PRSP is country, rather than government, owned will depend on the extent of real participation across society as a whole" (Fowler, 2003: 18). Historically the Haitian people have be left outside of decision-making arenas. Haiti's government, due its lack of fiscal autonomy, has been often at the mercy of international forces. In fact, France was involved in the 2006 ousting of the democratically-elected president Jean-Betrand Aristide (and though this fact is mentioned in the policy, there is no acknowledgement of this move contributing to Haiti's political instability.) Moreover, Haitian civil society, neither in France nor in Haiti, is truly implicated in the crafting or execution of this policy. Two of the four sectors identified as important vectors for pulling Haiti out of poverty—tourism and science, technology and innovation—were ignored. This is not to say that the other sectors are not as important, but true co-development would respect the choices made by the partner nation and accompany the partner nation in its endeavor. Given that the France-Haiti document is based in part on the Growth and Poverty Reduction paper, it means that there was perhaps less participation by Haiti than can be inferred from the policy's wording.

BUILD BACK BETTER? : THE HAITIAN EARTHQUAKE OF 2010

The impact of the 2010 earthquake on Haitians cannot be understated. The capitol and some of the surrounding areas were devastated, with government buildings, including the National Palace, and famous landmarks destroyed. The death toll stood at

an estimated (and disputed[19]) 300,000 persons, with an additional million displaced. News media coverage documented the disaster with gratuitous images of bodies trapped under rubble or in mass graves that motivated and mobilized the international community in unprecedented ways to provide emergency disaster relief.

The earthquake prompted France to take a historic first step: on January 17, 2010, President Nicholas Sarkozy landed in Port-au-Prince, the first time a French president had ever stepped foot on Haitian soil *ever*. He told the audience that France intended to "write a new page in our history with Haiti" and that

> The role of the international community, and that of France is to help Haitians regain control of their destiny…international assistance will be massive, and should be long term, but it is up to Haitians, and themselves only, to define a true 'national project' and to then drive it, because it is their country and their future (Sarkozy, 2010).

In the weeks and months following the earthquake, other national leaders echoed Sarkozy's comments, promising both a new page in international relations with Haiti and billions of dollars to assist in the development and support of said "national project." According to the UN Office of the Special Envoy to Haiti, between 2010 and 2012, 6.3 billion dollars were pledged. Organizations such as the American Red Cross and Wyclef Jean's nonprofit *Yele* collected millions intended for disaster relief (food, shelter, health care, etc.), while some was earmarked later to rebuild infrastructure.

The *Fondation de France* proudly declares that they raised 34 million euros (approximately 46 million dollars) in only a few weeks following the earthquake, and

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[19] http://www.cjr.org/behind_the_news/one_year_later_haitian_earthqu.php?page=all

with that they established a special *Solidarité Haïti* fund through which they funded a total of 273 projects. They did their best to be as transparent as possible with who they funded and where, taking care to "privilege the support of NGOs already active in Haiti for a long time, having developed partnerships with communities and local authorities" (*Solidarité Haïti: Trois ans après*, 2013). Yet these were the actions of one private foundation. In juxtaposition, real attempts at collaboration with Haitian and other national leaders maintained revealed that nothing was going to change.

Although the outpour was unexpected but welcome, it did not live up to the hope of being able to, in President Bill Clinton's famous catchphrase, "build back better." Of the billions promised by nations, for example, only 56% has actually been disbursed. Nations such as Venezuela and the US promised over a billion dollars each, only to distribute less than 33% of the total (Venezuela, for example, only distributed 18.8% by the end of 2012.) In other words, though it first appeared that Haiti had been given a grotesque opportunity to carry out projects that would put an impoverished Haiti on the path towards development, the majority of the aid necessary to do so never materialized. Moreover, of the aid that was distributed, less than 1% ever reached the Haitian government; by and large the funding actually went back to its source. According to one report, the single largest recipient of the money donated by the US government was the US government, and

> Thirty-three cents of each of these US dollars for Haiti was actually given directly back to the US to reimburse ourselves for sending in our military. Fourth two cents of each dollar went to private and public non-governmental organizations like Save the Children, the UN World Food Program and the Pan American Health Organization (Ramanauskas & Quigley, 2012).

While it became clear within those first days that the Haitian government was on the whole incapable of managing the disaster given that many of its ministries and national palace had been reduced to rubble, it was only a matter of time before the Haitian government felt obligated to cede much of its sovereignty to foreign institutions. The Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC) that was formed in March 2010, and later supplemented by the Haiti Reconstruction Fund, concretized this seeping of power. The IHRC was half made up of Haitian leaders and half of international donors such as the US, Brazil, the European Union, and the Inter-American Development Bank, but was meant to be "Haitian-led." Its purpose was to evaluate and approve projects geared towards the reconstruction, interestingly regardless of whether they had the funding or not. The money that was pledged by members of the IHRC was placed into the Haiti Reconstruction Fund to be able to multilaterally fund large-scale projects. What occurred, though, was that donors would earmark funds to be used for their specific projects, thus turning "multilateral cooperation and coordination" into "bilateral aid often tied to return to the country of origin or specific individuals who wield political influence" (Willems, 2012: 44). According to the media activist and freelance reporter Joris Willems, the Haitian members quickly realized that their role was to merely approve and endorse the decisions made by the IHRC's leadership. Willems concludes,

> As far as transparency goes—one of IHRC's guiding principles—the IHRC has failed. Its reluctance to share supposedly public information with journalists, researchers, and even its own board members is obvious…concerning projects and their financing, donors still prefer to finance their own projects instead of supporting existing one already approved by the board. The HRF completely

> bypasses its very own objectives—financing projects of strategic importance—by earmarking most of the available funds (Willems, 2012: 44).

Far from being a game changer, the earthquake actually revealed and re-entrenched the problematic practices that had served mainly to benefit all nations but Haiti. That is not to say that progress hasn't been made, but that progress has not been with the full participation of the Haitian government, nor are the advancements necessarily in line with the needs of the Haitian people.

CONCLUSION

Today, at the beginning of 2014, Haiti has taken a backseat in French national and international priorities. The new French ambassador to Haiti, Patrick Nicoloso, frankly stated in his first press conference[20] in July 2013, "There is no change, nor a desire to break ties" in the Franco-Haitian relationship. It is arguable that France certainly never intended to be, either before or after the earthquake, a major partner in Haiti's future. Commercial relationships have barely grown: although French exports to Haiti have doubled between 2008 and 2012, imports of Haitian products have stagnated[21].

This chapter's aim however was to show the impact government, organizations, and policies can have on the capacity for small hometown associations to act in their own interest without the necessary support. The mad scramble for funding by small organizations was in clear recognition that it was a limited window, and it only encouraged short-term planning and action. In this vein, one can see how easily the

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[20] http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article14799#.Us_0JGRDtbw
[21] http://www.ambafrance-ht.org/Relations-economiques

potential contributions of Haitian hometown associations—with their limited sphere of influence and resources—can be undermined. The interests of foreign nations to provide contracts to their own companies (even when those companies had little to no experience or capacity to do the job effectively) are prioritized over the local knowledge and networks that members of hometown associations could offer. This contributes to a more competitive, rather than cooperative, environment. Moreover, the focus was on service-delivery projects, rather than looking at longer-term strategies aimed at poverty reduction.

There is little chance that the policies and agencies of the French state will be able to serve in a supportive role for Haitian hometown associations, despite research stating that their success is tied to close government collaboration. According to the report by the Migration Policy Institute, *Diaspora: New Partners in Global Development Policy*, there are four action-areas that need to be addressed when seeking to encourage the success of a country's diaspora and its organizations:

- Actions to strengthen the capacity of diaspora groups
- Actions to help country-of-origin governments engage more effectively with their diasporas
- Actions to strengthen donors' capacity to create partnerships with diasporas
- Actions to build and share knowledge among diasporas

These areas of intervention require a focus on the steps that would best serve the interests of the country being helped, and not the country helping. However this also requires the diaspora to be able to appropriately and effectively represent its own interests, which the

Haitian diaspora—no matter where—has been unable to do. National policy and international aid organizations will always be able to set the agenda as long as there is little resistance.

Conclusion

The importance of the Haitian diaspora to the development of Haiti is undeniable. Beyond remittances, Haitians living abroad have access to greater educational opportunities and other forms of social and economic capital that, combined with their personal connection to the country, can be mobilized to Haiti's benefit. This has always been the strength and the appeal of a diaspora, both as a category of people and as a theoretical concept. The aim of my dissertation however has been to show the different challenges that Haitians living overseas have organizing within a new country as well as long-distance in Haiti. These challenges span from grappling with internal dynamics to competing with the resources and agendas of large international aid organizations. Indeed, these kinds of things are not unique to the Haitian diaspora; all organizations are made up of individual personalities that may or may not gel, and competition between organizations big and small is inevitable. My objective was to call attention to the expectations of the diaspora others—Haitians and non-Haitians, small organizations and large agencies, Haiti and other countries invested in helping Haiti—have and lay out the reasons why the diaspora can often fail to meet those expectations.

Transnational organizations, hometown associations included, have gained importance in development policy (Guarnizo et al., 2003; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2001) since they are defined by a membership that is considered "diasporic," that is, having some national or cultural relationship with a country of origin, and as a result are arguably better placed to assist in development and reconstruction efforts. Haiti is a

particularly important site to discuss the intersection of diaspora, development, and transnationalism because 1) they have a discursively and politically recognized diaspora that critical to Haiti's survival, but are also seen at worst as a threat by Haitians (Drotbohm, 2009; Perito & Maly, 2006); 2) the country has the second highest number of NGOs per capita (Kristoff & Panarelli, 2010), which brings up questions of dependency and state sovereignty; and 3) in spite of a long history of diaspora involvement and investment in the country, their impact remains fairly localized and Haitian transnational organizations continue to be marginalized by the state and international NGOs. Many studies have already addressed the relationship of the Haitian diaspora to Haiti, but have focused on the diaspora in North America (Basch et al., 1993; Laguerre, 1998; Zephir, 1996). The Franco-Haitian diaspora must then compete with the domineering influence of North American investment in Haiti and the decreasing political and social capital associated with France, which can affect how transnational organizations in France intervene in Haiti, and how local Haitians perceive them, notably as far as language is concerned given the heavily class-marked nature of French compared to English.

When I originally set out to write this thesis, I reflected quite a bit on my intended audience. My research focus was inspired by the self-reflection of Franco-Haitians themselves, frustrated by the limitations of their activity, by the lack of human and material resources, by the short attention span of the media, by their alienation in the North-American-centric discourses on the Haitian diaspora, by the lack of involvement and cooperation by the Haitian government—simply put, frustrated by it all. I, too, had begun to internalize that frustration and set out to better understand what exactly was

going on. In the end what I found was a mix of internal and external pressures, some obvious and others less so, that if left unaddressed would continue to alienate Haitians in France from Haitians in the North American diaspora as well as in Haiti. Moreover, I began to see how the internal conflicts were often a product of the lack of agency felt by Franco-Haitians to capacity to develop, fund, and carry out a project, and their ability to steer the agenda set by the Haitian government often in conjunction with international donor agencies. Thus, the primary audiences for this thesis are the policy makers and researchers that have the capacity to offer a form of support that the Franco-Haitian diaspora lacks. That is not to say that that Haitians in France are not empowered, but if given the right tools and resources, their capacity to effect change could be broadened.

What exactly does this support look like? There are three areas that I would offer as a point of departure for improving the outcomes of Haitian diasporic organizations: training, funding, and institutional tie-ins. I argue that an effective solution in empowering the Franco-Haitian diaspora requires addressing all three, interconnected areas.

When the French Foundation funded the PAFHA for two years to support their initiative to train associations on how to craft a project proposal (with the goal of getting such a proposal funded), it was in recognition that this kind of training was needed. PAFHA worked with the nonprofit *Consultants Sans Frontières* (Consultants Without Borders, based in Switzerland) to hold workshops both in Haiti and in France to help each side create more realistic and well thought out projects, and even improve the relationship between organizers in France and Haiti. The first round of workshops were

successful overall, in spite of logistical problems and low attendance. It was clear that more workshops like these were needed, and on a more regular basis. Haitians in France had many ideas for ways they could help their hometown back in Haiti, but didn't often know where to begin, or incorrectly figured the project could be implemented with extremely limited resources.

Because there was a lack of training and institutional savvy as to how to write proposals, funding was difficult to obtain, aside from small private donations. Funding streams are traditionally set up to support organizations that have been successfully funded in the past and shown a "return on investment." Start-up funding is difficult to come by, and thus financing options are limited. Moreover, the availability of monies can often depend on the immediate need of a country, particularly in times of a disaster. Disaster capitalism (Dupuy, 2010) is an ugly reality that forces countries in crisis to "take what they can get" before the attention is drawn elsewhere. This was certainly the case following the unprecedented amount of donations that poured in following the 2010 earthquake. Haitian organizations were quite aware that this was a limited window of opportunity, and did their best to obtain funding for projects that had languished on the back burner. In fact, so much attention was poured onto Haiti that when an earthquake and tsuanmi struck Japan a little over a year later, killing 18,000 people, leveling a coastal city, and destroying a nuclear power plant, it was claimed that people suffered "donation fatigue" [CITE]. According to the publication *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, in the seven days following a disaster, Haiti lagged only behind Hurricane Katrina in amounts donated to various charities and organizations (Dickler, 2013). Japan only

received approximately $87 million, compared to $275 million donated to Haiti, and $514 million donated towards Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

Part of the reason for the scramble lay also with the impression that associations needed to work on their own because there was so little institutional support. There was a lot of tension between agencies that were extensions of the government (such as the Haitian Consulate and Embassy of France, and the Ministry of Overseas Haitians based in Haiti) and the nonprofit sector. I would often observe some measure of reluctance on the part of the Haitian nonprofit organizers to deal with the Embassy or Consulate. There were disagreements as to how much responsibility there lay with the each domain, each side blaming the other for the lack of accountability.

To restate the question, what exactly does "support" look like for Haitian diasporic organizations? It looks like being able to work in better alignment with government institutions to create programs that will provide training and material resources to small organizations who could thus apply successfully for more funding, leading to more successful initiatives in Haiti. The closer institutional tie-in would also lead to better coordination of, and communication between, various associations, and reduce the amount of redundancy in their projects. It is significant to call attention to these issues as Haiti continues to search for its footing, not only after the 2010 earthquake, but after over two centuries worth of struggle to claim sovereignty and establish a government worthy of its people. For the past three to five decades, discourses of development have placed the responsibility of helping a country considered

"underdeveloped" on the shoulders of "first world" nations such as the United States and Canada, or on the supranational European Union. Now that there is an opportunity to think differently, decision makers must avoid paying lip service and instead truly empower diasporic associations to take action and effect change.

It is clear that while France has attempted to revise its development strategy, it has not pushed itself far enough in applying those changes. As a result, policies such as the France-Haiti partnership framework document read like an official development aid directive, rather than something drafted with full, equal participation of all involved parties. Given that France seems to be at the least aware of the importance of working in "partnership", one of the biggest recommendations I would offer is that France should clearly define its co-development policy. In doing so, the international community would be in a better position to hold France accountable to its own policy goals. Furthermore, France would be able to draft a policy that more accurately reflects their national development goals, rather than simply parroting the goals of multilateral institutions.

Something like the France-Haiti partnership framework document needs to be re-written/revised to be more attentive to the desires of the Haitian government and Haitian people. Rather than requiring the Haitian government to focus on areas that it may not be feel comfortable expanding, France (and other nation-states and institutions) should take more seriously the efforts of the partner government, and allow more sovereignty. The French government must be more attentive to the current socio-linguistic environment in Haiti. French-only language schools will only reinforce the French language's elitism, and continue to make certain kinds of knowledge inaccessible. I would recommend that

France work with Haiti to develop bi-lingual education, which could be aligned with current efforts by France's Caribbean departments to incorporate Antillean creole into local education.

Strategic partnerships with NGOs must be revisited as well. Strategies and projects created by French NGOs and by "French" NGOs—that is, hometown associations and other transnational organizations created by members of the diaspora—should not be separated. Current policy "ghettoizes" diaspora NGOs, devaluing their potential contribution. Co-development strategies should take better into account the specialized knowledge and potential contributions of diaspora NGOs, which would in turn increase the diaspora NGOs capacity to develop, execute, and evaluate their projects.

The late anthropologist Begona Aretxaga states that "the capacity of people to become historical subjects [by] deliberately intervening in the making and changing of their worlds is the product of a movement that goes back and forth from discursive possibility to experience to change in the conditions of possibility" (Aretxaga, 1997:8). In other words, the Haitian community has not been without agency, but the current strategy they have developed works in certain ways to prevent them from being directly targeted as a problematic immigrant group in France, but has also worked in detrimental ways by making it difficult for new migrants to turn to an established community and to establish a collective for transformation. What is necessary is the exposure of France's roots of power, which to a large extent lies in its ability to shape the historical

imagination so that it can continue to deny the existence and agency of the very populations that threaten it.

One important way to begin working towards this is by recognizing the specificities of location when discussing diasporic communities. There is already a trend, but this cannot merely inform intellectual conversations, but must also reach into those discourses that can have tangible effects on a population, on a country. In the case of Haiti, many scholars have finally begun to talk about diasporas, plural, which has broadened the conversation from *who* and *what* is diaspora to *where* and *how* is diaspora created. These questions are important because in order to think through how a diaspora can be effective, we must understand the circumstances through which they act. This however precludes that diasporas *want* to act--there is an expectation, a sense of responsibility that comes with the label diaspora, that perhaps is not fair or deserved. Diaspora's path from a category to identity also heaped on a sense of agency and capacity for action. As this dissertation has shown, not all diasporas are created equal, and perhaps it is acceptable that some, even within one origin population, will simply not produce the same formations.

What of the diasporans themselves? Amongst Franco-Haitians, there was a constant desire to compare their communities to those in the United States and Canada. Indeed, my very presence and research topic contributed to the spectre of "better" diasporas, a physical embodiment of how successful communities in New York, Miami, and Montreal were in producing second-generation Haitians, capable of speaking in Haitian Creole and French, and engaged in Haitian cultural production. What, then, is an

effective diaspora? Michaëlle Jean, Canada's former governor-general who currently serves as UNESCO's special envoy for Haiti, was quoted in an newspaper article[22] as saying,

> When people speak about Haitians, all they say is they speak about their resilience, as if these people were born for catastrophes. ... I think it's time to see more than resilience in the Haitian people. They are capable. It's a work force that needs more investment and that can be very promising.

It's not about an ideal type: it is easy to believe that given the right set of circumstances, one can produce the most effective result. Rather it's about understanding the history, experiences and circumstances that create a particular set of options.

[22] http://m.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/time-to-lead/forging-a-new-haitian-strategy-trade-not-aid/article2035116/?service=mobile

Epilogue

Twelve o'clock rolled past, and my colleagues and I waited for more people to show up. I wasn't quite anxious, but I could feel the expectation of the executive director of the nonprofit where I work, especially given all the food that was there. Confident, I waved my hand dismissively—"I know Haitians, they're always late, but they'll show." Sure enough, almost an hour after the program's scheduled start time, every chair was occupied in the medium-sized conference room. I got started:

> Thank you everyone for coming. It's nice to see both old and new faces! Welcome. My name is Mitsy, and I work for the nonprofit LIFT, which sets short- and long-term goals with people, related to housing, employment, and public benefits. We work together week after week to accomplish those goals to help lift people out of poverty. I work primarily with the Haitian community, and many of you come to me for help with the job search. What has impressed me, however, is how often many of come to me with a job already, in spite of not speaking a lot of English or having a lot of experience. My goal today is to get everyone is a room together so that we can all help each other, exchange information, so that as a community we can help each other out.

Most of the audience nodded their heads. Feeling confident, I soldiered on.

> I often use the example of the 'Spanish' [*panyol*]—many of you say the Spanish folks work together to help each other, and that Haitians tend to be mistrustful and don't want to help one another. I would like to fight against that stereotype. We are here because we believe that things could be different. In this room, there are 20 people that you might never have met before. I encourage you to take advantage of this and widen your network; help each other, and together we can be a better community."

The two-hour program got underway, and by the end, people had shared their common struggles, come up with some concrete suggestions, and exchanged employer addresses that especially benefited the large number of certified nursing assistants present. The

event by nearly all accounts was a success, but I was unable to prevent one woman from sharing her doubts about the whole thing to the whole group, and everyone listened:

> The problem isn't the lack of jobs, it's Haitians themselves. We were talking about the Spanish earlier—they help each other, and they are in positions of power to help one another. Haitians are not in positions of power, and even when they are, they don't want some other Haitian to take their position so they keep it to themselves.

No one said anything in response. Later, as we were wrapping up, the same woman called out to grab my attention: "Blan! [foreigner!]" I spun around, incredulous that this woman could dare debase me in such a way, to not even acknowledge my diasporic origins but to go straight to Othering me. But for her, being Haitian is her shield and sword, her blessing and curse, and it is something that cannot be approximated or imitated. Even as it shifts from one city or country to another, there is a perceived immutability that makes it easy to judge whether someone is or isn't Haitian, and to feel confident to speak on behalf of an entire people, even as there is evidence to support the contrary.

This is what made this work so hard, from start to not-quite-finish. It is an uphill battle, one that will take patience, strategy, and a willingness to step away in order to return with fresh eyes.

After all, I know Haitians.

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