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## The Use of History in Migrating: Cases from the Haitian Diaspora

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The Use of History in Migrating: Cases from the Haitian Diaspora

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Newport News, Virginia

Bachelor of Arts, The College of William and Mary, 2009

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty  
of the College of William and Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

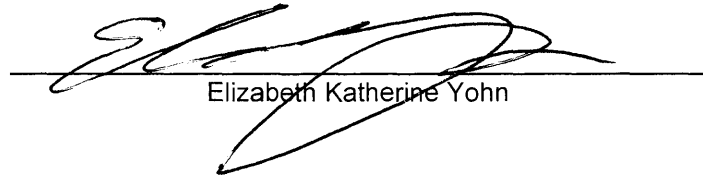
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## APPROVAL PAGE


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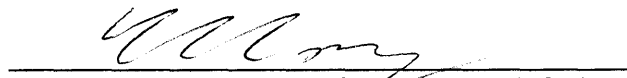


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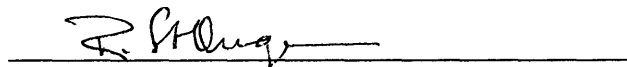
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is an attempt to describe how one immigrant group – Haitians – situates itself within an unconventional political geography, one that reaches across oceans and cultures in a particular and modern “space and time.” In particular, it seeks to understand how Haitians mentally bridge the gap between their experience as Haitians and their experience as new members of other societies: specifically, Montreal, Canada, and Paris, France. Using ethnographic and historiographic sources, this thesis explores the different experiences of Haitians in these deceptively similar sites. Despite being two destinations that are very similar on the surface – both are francophone, Catholic, and primarily white – Paris and Montreal have had fundamentally different influences on the development of their Haitian communities. History itself seems both important and potent in the Montreal context, where multiculturalism encourages – and even demands – that ethnic groups represent themselves as visible components of a diverse society. In comparison, historical interpretation seems absent in Paris, where the Haitian community itself can be described – as it is by some – as invisible. But the subdued image of the Haitian integration experience in Paris should not suggest a lack of success in integration. Rather, informants defined their integration in terms of an individualist perspective that reflected the French creed of republicanism. History, then, does not just describe this process of identity-building and migration; it is part of it. It allows people to distance themselves from the often painful experience of finding acceptance among new neighbors while maintaining ties with their homelands. Through migrating new identities, and new histories, are born.

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Additionally, the writer acknowledges and honors the contributions of her informants and supporters in Montreal and Paris.



*History is neither the work of the gods nor the work of the devil, but ours.  
It is that way because [history] is situated in both space and time ...*  
—Jean-Marc Numa<sup>1</sup>

*To be a member of any human community is to situate oneself  
with regard to one's (its) past, if only by rejecting it.*  
—Eric Hobsbawm<sup>2</sup>

This thesis is an attempt to describe how one immigrant group – Haitians – situates itself within an unconventional political geography, one that reaches across oceans and cultures in a particular and modern “space and time.” While Haiti’s population has always been in flux due to migration, the twentieth century has seen some of the greatest outflows of Haitians to what have become known as sites of the diaspora. Miami and New York in the United States, Montreal in Canada, other Caribbean islands like Cuba and Guadeloupe, and Paris in France have all become part of a greater Haitian experiential geography. Much has already been written on this twentieth-century Haitian experience from sociological and anthropological perspectives. Scholars have sought to understand the experiences shaping immigrant incorporation or assimilation at a given moment from a variety of angles, such as the economy, educational opportunities, problems of the second generation, religion, and health. They have challenged popular conceptions about and conceptualizations of immigrants in terms of their relationship to receiving societies

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<sup>1</sup> “Sommes nous des artisans de l’histoire?” in *Diafrorama* no. 4 (1998): 3.

<sup>2</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, “The Social Function of the Past: Some Questions,” *Past & Present* 55 (May 1972): 3.

and have helped us humanize foreigners.<sup>3</sup> Rather than repeat these findings, however, this project seeks to examine on a more ideological level how Haitians perceive their place in society. In particular, it seeks to understand how Haitians mentally bridge the gap between their experience as Haitians and their experience as new members of other societies. History, this thesis argues, does not just describe this process; it is part of it. It allows people to distance themselves from the often painful experience of finding acceptance among new neighbors while maintaining ties with their homelands. Through migrating new identities, and new histories, are born.

Specifically, this thesis examines the Haitian experience in Montreal, Canada, and Paris, France. Though not the pre-eminent sites of diaspora by number, these sites held and hold significant cultural meaning for Haitians: a common French heritage encompassing language, religion, and history. In their own ways, Paris and Montreal have each been seen as the “dream location” for Haitian migrants, even though it is more common for Haitians to settle in Miami or New York. Yet deeper differences reveal striking variation in the lived experience of Haitians. Because these variations influenced the types of sources available, I used a two-part approach encompassing both historiographical and ethnographical methods. Interviews for this project was completed in February and May of 2008 in Montreal, and in January and June of 2012 in Paris.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The masculine is often used for the neutral in this thesis, with no disrespect to the fact that immigrants (or whatever the antecedent might be at the time of usage) may well be and often are female.

<sup>4</sup> In May 2008, after an initial preparatory week in February 2008, I spent five weeks in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, examining the experiences of the Haitian community with a focus on the modern sovereignty (or separatist) movement there. This project was crafted for a distinct honor’s thesis, as I was unaware I would have the opportunity to continue later with this larger project. I spoke

| Location           | 1950s  | 1960s   | 1970s        | 1980s      | 1990s         | 2000s   |
|--------------------|--------|---------|--------------|------------|---------------|---------|
| Haiti <sup>5</sup> | 3.1M   | ???     | 4.2M         | 6M         | 6.7-7M        | 8-9M    |
| Quebec             | <100   | 101-395 | 2,093-19,224 | 14,915-??? | 35,938-66,920 | 130,000 |
| France             | 3,000* | 396     | ???          | 4,724      | 12,311-30,000 | 60,000  |

Figure 1. Summary of Haitian population estimates, 1950s-present

with nineteen individuals formally, with no additional informal meetings. Each interview was recorded digitally following the guidelines and approval process of the Human Subjects Committee. One individual refused to participate upon learning more about the project on the grounds of representing a major professional association; this person was happy to help me through referrals, though. The informants were generally in their 40s or thereabouts, with some exceptions. There was a mix in terms of gender, occupation, and political affiliation, but they were generally in the professional class. Among the informants included, for example, published poets and authors, politicians, social workers, artists, clergy, and clerical staff. The interview protocol began with basic questions about the informant's background, turned toward his/her experience in Montreal including a sense of his/her personal migration history, and finally focused on experiences with the Quebec separatist movement highlighting political activism and opinions about the 1995 (second) referendum on independence from Canada.

In January 2012 and June 2012, respectively, I spent a total of six weeks in Paris, France, examining the experiences of the Haitian community. I spoke with fifteen individuals formally and an additional two individuals informally, for a total of seventeen interviews. Most of the formal interviews were recorded digitally following the guidelines and approval process of the Human Subjects Committee. One individual refused to be recorded because it was unclear to this person that s/he would be "helpful" to the project; two others were not recorded because I was joining another researcher as a participant-observer. Of those persons I solicited, only one individual refused to participate outright; this person had been randomly selected from visitors to the Haitian Consulate that day by the man who was helping me there in January, and may have been intimidated by the time commitment involved or the consent form I had just pulled from my bag. Another individual, the only Haitian woman I had managed to schedule for an interview, had to cancel at the last minute due to her daughter's sudden illness. In Paris I managed to interview just one woman at all, a native French citizen who has supported the Haitian community in her professional and personal life. All others were men. The informants were generally either in their 30s or their late 50s-60s, in terms of age. There was a mix in terms of occupation, leaning toward ecclesiastical positions, but representing some range of class level. Among the informants included, for example, artists, journeymen, social activists, and clergy. The interview protocol began with the same basic questions about the informant's background as used in the 2008 fieldwork, turned toward a similar set of questions about his/her experience in Paris including a sense of his/her personal migration history, and finally focused on experiences with immigration and life in Paris.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Library of Congress, "Haiti: Population," accessed October 25, 2012: <<http://countrystudies.us/haiti/21.htm>>. Online excerpt from the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress's Country Studies/Area Handbook Series sponsored by the U.S. Department of the Army between 1986 and 1998. See also: "Haiti Population," Index Mundi, accessed October 25, 2012: <<http://www.indexmundi.com/haiti/population.html>>; Claude Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France* (Paris: Harmattan, 1996), 31.

To call Montreal and Paris “dream destinations” is significant for a country that has seen millions of its citizens re-locate in the twentieth century.<sup>6</sup> Twentieth-century Haitian migration can be roughly periodized with a few political dates of note. The first of these is the year 1946, in which Haiti underwent a revolution whose principles of *négritude* and nationalism eventually led to the election of François “Papa Doc” Duvalier as president-for-life. Other revolutions followed in this decade span, solidifying the position Duvalier had made for himself. Pre-Duvalierist migration – between 1946 and 1957 – could be classified broadly in two ways. First, there was labor migration from Haiti to other Caribbean sites, notably Cuba and the Dominican Republic but also to French territories like Guadeloupe. Regine O. Jackson calls these “lateral moves” in her 2011 edited volume on *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora*.<sup>7</sup> Sugar, banana, coffee, and other agricultural industries in the Caribbean used Haitians as key, low-cost workers. Second, particularly after 1946, there was a renewed movement of the upper class for educational and prestige purposes to French overseas departments and to France itself, the latter usually on

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<sup>6</sup> Haiti is a country built by migrations. Movement and change have been core characteristics of western Hispaniola since the first peoples (the Arawaks and Tainos, principally) occupied it. These qualities only became more important through the European settlements and revolutions since approximately the 1500s. Spanish and French traders settled the island, British and Dutch vessels contributed to the movement of goods and people, and of course Africans became an important source of labor for sugar cultivation. Following the late-eighteenth century revolutions American politicians viewed Haiti as an ideal site for sending freed blacks, countering the waves of refugees that had landed in Louisiana, Virginia, and other ports between 1789 and 1804. Haitians themselves often participated in temporary migration for work or education around the Western world, especially the Caribbean and France. Then in the twentieth century the movements escalated under the oppressive and economically unviable Duvalier regimes (father, then son) from 1957 to 1986. James Michener, *Caribbean* (Random House, 1989); Philippe R. Gerard, *Paradise Lost: Haiti's Tumultuous Journey from the Pearl of the Caribbean to Third World Hot Spot* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Robert Debs Heintz and Nancy Gordon Heintz, *Written in Blood: The Story of the Haitian People, 1492-1995*, ed. Michael Heintz (Lanham: University Press of America, 2005); Gad Heuman, *The Caribbean* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2006); Greg Camberlain, “Up By the Roots: Haitian History Through 1987” in *Haiti: Dangerous Crossroads*, ed. North American Congress on Latin America (Cambridge: South End Press, 1995), 13-28.

<sup>7</sup> Regine O. Jackson, *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 17-110.

temporary student visas. By 1946 Haiti had been released (on paper, at least) from American military authority which had lasted from 1915 to the 1930s,<sup>8</sup> and the Second World War had been concluded, re-opening opportunities in Europe. These overlapping migrations capture the experiences of two distinct socio-economic groups. Lateral moves were made primarily by the working-class laborers seeking jobs; educational moves were made primarily by the elite seeking prestige and advancement.<sup>9</sup>

François Duvalier's year of ascendance is a second key date by which to periodize twentieth-century Haitian migration. The 1957 election that put him in office may have been legitimate, but the elections that kept him in power were rigged and backed with the force of the Haitian military. He gave himself the "historical" title of President-for-Life in 1963. Papa Doc's rule was characterized by corruption and the violent persecution of political enemies and intellectuals through a secret police force known as the Tontons Macoutes. Though many hoped this reign of terror would end with his death in 1971, instead Papa Doc's son, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier, took over the presidency. The persecution of perceived political enemies continued for another fifteen years. Economic stagnation and corruption drained the country's

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<sup>8</sup> Sources do not agree on the end-date of the American occupation of that era, because the US left behind some troops and overseers to help govern and monitor the country even after the majority of troops were withdrawn. See, for example, Judson Jefferies, "The United States and Haiti: An Exercise in Intervention," *Caribbean Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (December 2001); Suzy Castor and Lynn Garafola, "The American Occupation of Haiti (1915-34) and the Dominican Republic (1916-24)," *The Massachusetts Review* 15, no. 1/2 (Winter-Spring 1974); Mary Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Leonard H. Danček, "Forgotten My Lais: U.S. Intervention, Occupation and Pacification in Haiti (1915-1930)," Thesis presented to Judge Advocate General's School, U.S. Army, April 1973.

<sup>9</sup> Bastide, Morin, Raveau, *Les Haïtiens en France* (Paris: Mouton, 1974), 32-37. Sherri Grasmuck, "Migration within the Periphery: Haitian Labor in the Dominican Sugar and Coffee Industries," *International Migration Review* 16, no. 2, Special Issue (Summer 1982): 365-377; Glenn Perusek, "Haitian Emigration in the Early Twentieth Century," *International Migration Review* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 4-18; Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 33-38;

treasury. Baby Doc's ouster in 1986, a fourth watershed year for Haitian migration, brought a period of turmoil. Since his ouster Haiti has pursued a largely unsuccessful program of democratization, with American forces occupying the country in the mid-1990s. Political refugeeism and economic stagnation have continued to motivate the migrations of the new millennium.<sup>10</sup>

| Year | Event  |
|------|--|
| 1946 | Négritude revolution in Haiti providing opportunity for ascendance of Duvaliers      |
| 1957 | François "Papa Doc" Duvalier elected; becomes President-for-Life in 1963             |
| 1971 | Papa Doc's death, and presidency-for-life assumed by Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier |
| 1986 | Baby Doc ousted, seeks exile in France; end of Duvalier regimes                      |

Figure 2. Simple periodization of twentieth-century Haitian history

Under the Duvaliers, father and son, the character of Haitian movement changed. Before a matter of work or education, Duvalierist migration was a matter of survival and escape.<sup>11</sup> Color politics inspired repressive policies and violence against intellectuals in general and the mulatto elite, in particular, as the rival of François Duvalier's black elite.<sup>12</sup> Many upper class Haitians fled to North American sites like Miami, New York, and Montréal. This was the "*fuite des cerveaux*," Haiti's brain drain. Then, beginning in earnest in 1971 under Jean-Claude Duvalier, lower

<sup>10</sup> Octave Sainvilus's *Les Exilés Haïtiens et Dr. F. Duvalier (1957)* (Port-au-Prince: 1996) provides an uncommonly detailed review of the rise, rule, and fall of the Duvalier presidents, focusing particularly on François Duvalier. This work seems to be self-published.

<sup>11</sup> To be clear, some pre-Duvalierist migrations were also matters of survival and escape. Often these terms could describe the flight of a fallen regime's political elite and prominent followers. See, for example, Matthew J. Smith, "From the Port of Prince to the City of Kings: Jamaica and the Roots of the Haitian Diaspora" in Jackson, *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora*, 17-33.

<sup>12</sup> Color politics have a long history in Haiti. In French-controlled Saint-Domingue, the territory we know today as Haiti, distinctions were made among black slaves, white slaves, white indentured servants, mulattoes, free blacks, free but poor whites, and rich whites. Color politics played a role in the events of the Haitian revolution, as well. Once a nation in its own right, Haitian political leaders disagreed about the treatment of whites still on the island, inspiring further resentment between blacks and mulattoes. Color politics continued to play a strong role as Haiti, and sentiments were aggravated by white American occupation in the early twentieth century.

class Haitians fled as well, contributing to a “*fuite des bras*,” the flight of the workers (literally their “arms”). These movements were different from the pre-1957 movements in important ways. Whereas Haitian students to France in 1946 would expect to return after earning their degrees, students to North America and France in the 1960s and 1970s often overstayed their visas because it was not safe to return. And while Haitian laborers to Caribbean sites before 1957 were likely to be on specific contracts or terms with employers, laborers leaving under the Duvaliers were not. Duvalierist migration was a movement of exiles.

In 1970 alone, argues Daniel Gay, there were between 20,000 and 25,000 Haitians living in the Caribbean periphery (as a result of lateral moves) and 200,000 living further abroad, particularly in New York.<sup>13</sup> The image on the next page (Figure 3) reproduces a famous Haitian geographer’s interpretation of this history of movement. The geographer, Georges Anglade, had fled from François Duvalier in 1965 to study in Strasbourg, France, before becoming a professor at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) until his retirement in 2002; Anglade passed away with his wife in the January 2010 earthquake that shook Haiti.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 31, 33-38; Daniel Gay, “Haitians” in Paul Robert Magocsi, ed., *Encyclopedia of Canada’s Peoples* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press for the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1999), 650; Sainvilus, *Les Exilés Haïtiens*.

<sup>14</sup> Jackson, “Introduction: Les Espaces Haïtiens: Remapping the Geography of the Haitian Diaspora,” in Jackson, *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora*, 1-2. See also the entry for Georges Anglade in Samuel Pierre, ed., *Ces Québécois Venus d’Haït: Contribution de la communauté haïtienne à l’édification du Québec moderne* (Montreal: Presses Internationales Polytechniques, 2007), 93-99.

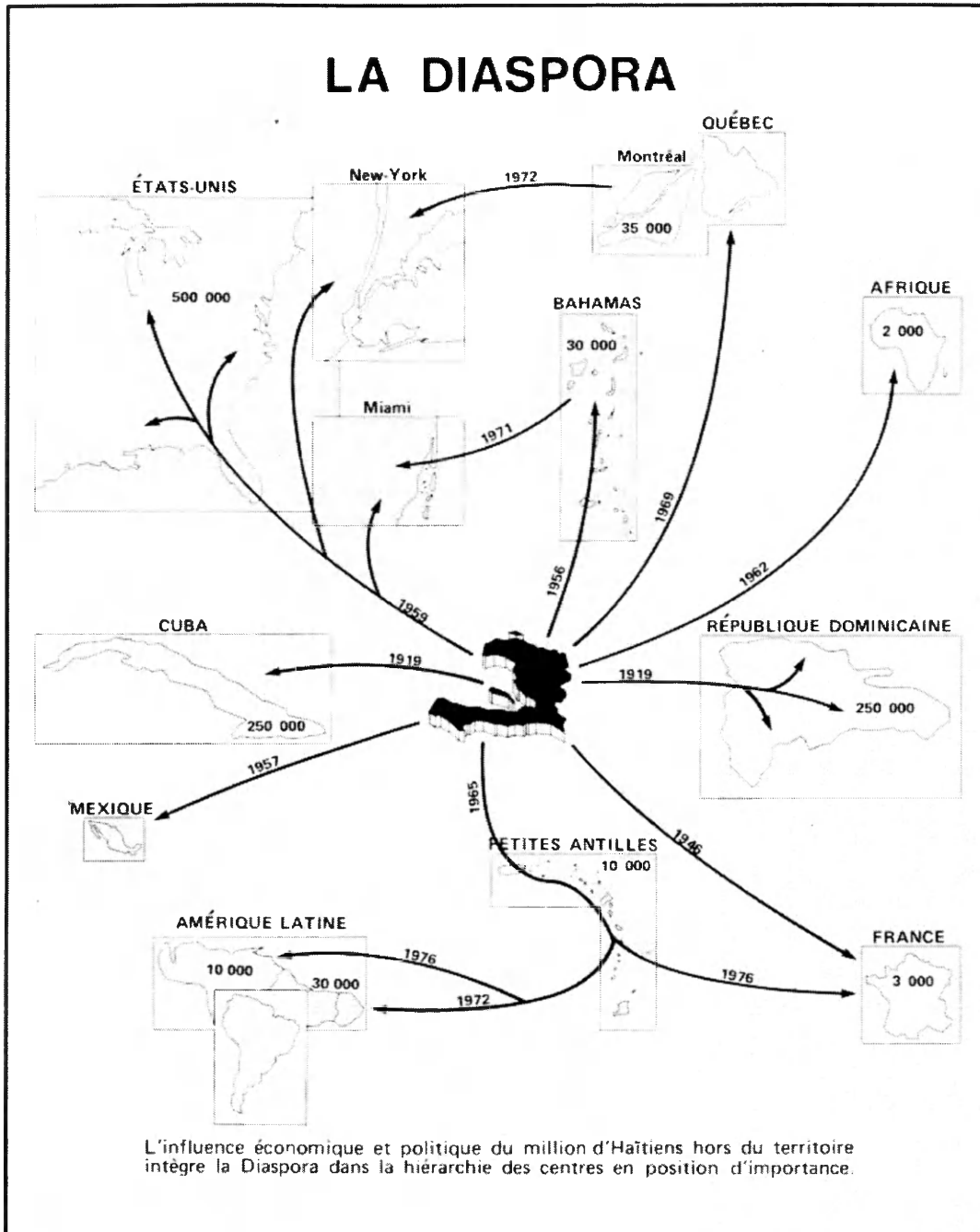


Figure 3. Georges Anglade's *The Diaspora* (1982)<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Georges Anglade, *Espace et liberté en Haïti* (Montréal: ERCE, 1982). Electronic image copy attributed to the Groupe d'Études et de Recherches Critiques d'Espace, département de géographie, UQAM, Centre de recherches Caraïbes de l'Université de Montréal. <[http://classiques.uqac.ca/contemporains/anglade\\_georges/espace\\_liberte\\_en\\_haiti/figures/fig\\_p\\_093.html](http://classiques.uqac.ca/contemporains/anglade_georges/espace_liberte_en_haiti/figures/fig_p_093.html)>



Haitians arriving in both Montreal and Paris in the second half of the twentieth century found themselves in the middle of heated debates on national identity that often hinged on immigration. Joseph's<sup>16</sup> story introduced me to both. As he explained in Montreal in May 2008, Joseph moved to France from Haiti in his late teens to study mathematics. Eventually he earned a master's degree and taught briefly at a private school. The private institution offered him only \$300 a month, which was not a lot, but, as Joseph explained, he was not French. He could not even hope to teach at a public school. Life was difficult because he lacked citizenship; so he moved to Quebec.<sup>17</sup>

Joseph's experience was not uncommon. Haitians saw and still see France as the premier site of Haitian immigration, although most do not get there and although more has been written about New York. The relationship between France and Haitian elites lent the *hexagone* – metropolitan France – an air of sophistication. But, as Joseph quickly discovered, immigration laws and realities have kept it largely out of reach for most Haitians except as a continued site for education. Bastide, Morin, and Raveau described France as the "*pays choisis*" for migrations given its "cultural proximity," and North America as the site for elite migrations given its "geographical proximity" and economic opportunities.<sup>18</sup> Other factors may have influenced their preferences. Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc attributed the primacy of French culture in part to the "Duvalierist monopoly of the discourse on

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<sup>16</sup> Names of informants have been changed.

<sup>17</sup> Joseph, 2008, interview by student, Montréal, QC, 20 May.

<sup>18</sup> Bastide, Morin, and Raveau, *Les Haïtiens en France*, 37.

race,” which made the United States less attractive to Haitians, who aligned with a black culture.<sup>19</sup>

It is difficult to capture the pattern of early Haitian migration to France in statistics. Anglade’s “La Diaspora” cites a movement of 3,000 Haitians directly to France in the year 1946 and indirectly through the Antilles in 1976 among the “first wave” of Haitians to France in the twentieth century. However, the official figures that Bastide, Morin, and Raveau cited of the mid-1960s include just 286 Haitians living in Paris, 75 in Montpellier, and 48 in Strasbourg. (Anglade would have been one of those living in Strasbourg.) Of these Haitians in Paris, 175 were male, 111 female; seventy percent had arrived from Port-au-Prince or Pétionville, the suburb of the capital, thus they comprised a fairly urban group. Seventy percent were also between the ages of 18 and 35, the majority of them students, while the older thirty percent comprised liberal professionals like doctors, lawyers, teachers, diplomats, religious leaders, etc.<sup>20</sup> This early student and professional group were holding their breath for the fall of François Duvalier. As Mooney summarized, “they did not see France as their new home country; rather, they were awaiting a chance to return to Haiti under a more democratic system.”<sup>21</sup> These people largely settled in western Parisian neighborhoods, primarily the fourteenth through seventeenth *arrondissements*, as well as near the Sorbonne in the “Latin Quarter,” the popular

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<sup>19</sup> Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorializing Nation-States* (Basel, Switzerland: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1994). 186-187. See also Gérard Magloire, “Haitian-ness, Frenchness and History: Historicizing the French Component of Haitian National Identity,” *Pouvoir dans la Caraïbe*, Special issue (1997): 18-40.

<sup>20</sup> “Aucun sujet n’appartenait à la classe ouvrière.” Bastide, Morin, Raveau, *Les Haïtiens en France*, 65.

<sup>21</sup> Margarita Mooney, “Mediating Institutions and the Adaptation of Haitian Immigrants in Paris,” in Jackson, *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora*, p. 118.

name given to the fifth *arrondissement* on the Left Bank.<sup>22</sup> Figure 4, reproduced from Bastide, Morin, and Raveau on the next page, illustrates Haitian settlement in Paris around 1967.

Many Haitians who once lived in France did not stay. I had difficulty in 2012 trying to research the “historical” (versus current) Haitian community in Paris because of the transience of early leadership. Prominent activists, authors, and organizers cited in the periodicals of the associations often no longer live in Paris, having moved back to Haiti or to other locations in Europe or North America. Georges Anglade is such an example, as is Joseph and a few of the other Haitians I interviewed in Montreal in 2008. Many also returned to Haiti. For example, W. Kerns Fleurimond, a prominent politician and community leader in Paris in the 1990s and 2000s who wrote that “*France, en théorie, reste la destination rêvée des Haïtiens,*”<sup>23</sup> now lives again in Haiti. These are not exceptional cases. In other words, the idealization of France as a site of Haitian migration must be tempered by numbers.

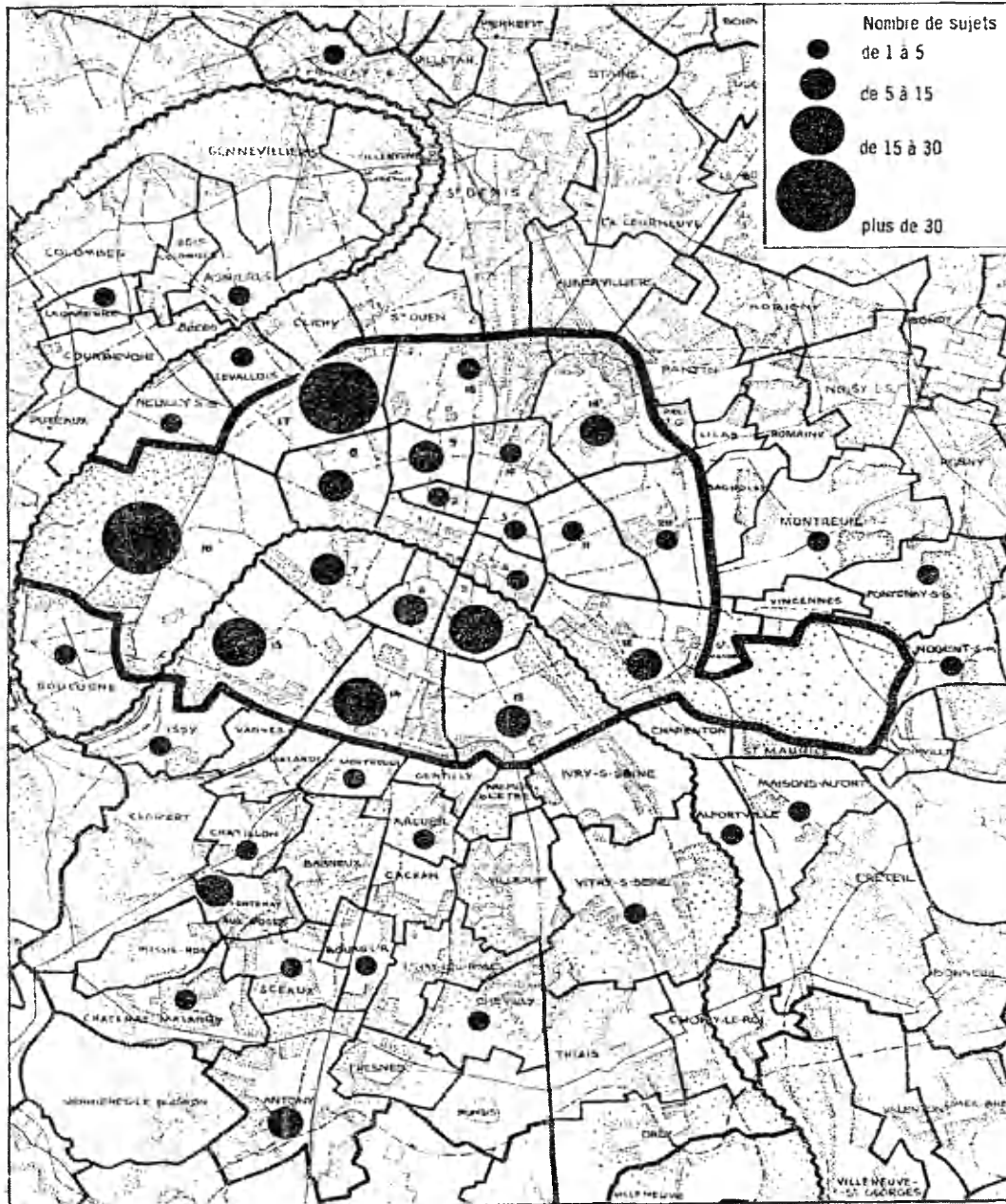
Those Haitians who did stay tended to fan out. Haitians still live in the eighteenth *arrondissement* when they live within the city borders, but more are dispersed throughout its farthest suburbs or *banlieue*, including Aubervilliers, Blanc-Mesnil, Bobigny, Noisy-le-Sec, and Saint-Denis. The population has grown in size, reaching nearly 5,000 in number in 1982 and surpassing 15,000 by 1999, excluding naturalized French citizens. Including French citizens of Haitian origin, the estimate

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<sup>22</sup> Bastide, Morin, Raveau, *Les Haïtiens en France*, 66.

<sup>23</sup> W. Kerns Fleurimond, *La communauté haïtienne de France : dix ans d'histoire, 1991-2001* (Paris: Harmattan, 2004), 13.

IMPLANTATION DES SUJETS HAITIENS A PARIS (par arrondissement)  
ET EN BANLIEUE (par commune)



Carte 1

Figure 4. Haitian settlement in Paris, c. 1967<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Bastide, Morin, Raveau, *Les Haïtiens en France*, 66.

in 1999 could be increased to nearly 25,000.<sup>25</sup> In spite of this community growth, Delachet-Guillon noted in 1996 and others report today that there is no “Haitian quarter” in Île-de-France like there is in Miami, New York, or Montreal; or even like there is for the *maghrébins* and North Africans in Paris.<sup>26</sup> Such dispersion presents interesting problems for community engagement.

Aside from size and location, there were other changes in the Haitian community of Paris. The newest arrivals from Haiti in the 1980s and onward were no longer urban, upper-class, educated elites, but rural and semi-rural workers speaking principally *Krèyol*. Instead of Port-au-Prince, the new arrivals hailed from the south of Haiti, or perhaps from the Artibonite or Gonaïves by way of a brief stay in the capital.<sup>27</sup> Of the fifty community leaders Delachet-Guillon interviewed for her study, 42 percent had emigrated for political reasons, 32 percent for family reasons, 17 percent for economic reasons, just 7 percent for studies, and 2 percent for health reasons.<sup>28</sup> Gérald Chery, a doctoral student in Economics from Haiti studying in Paris in the early 1990s, suggested that more than a million Haitians lived abroad in that decade, primarily in the United States, the Caribbean, and the French Antilles,

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<sup>25</sup> Mooney's figures differ slightly from those of another researcher, Claude Delachet-Guillon. In her 1996 book on the *Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France* Delachet-Guillon put the figure slightly higher, estimating 14,343 non-French Haitians living in France by 1990, not 12,311 as Mooney suggested; Delachet-Guillon's estimation could be larger still at 17,812 by including those Haitians who acquired French citizenship ("*Français par acquisition*"). The inconsistencies in these figurations reflect methodological problems with the French census, which does not typically distinguish among particular socio-ethnic groups. Both Mooney and Delachet-Guillon before her relied primarily on statistics from the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) and the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless (OFPRA). It is unclear from the researchers' descriptions of their methodologies what might have produced such inconsistencies within the same database, although the decade time difference could have a significant impact. Mooney in Jackson, *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora*, 127; Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 66.

<sup>26</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 127.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 7, 44-45.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

compared to an estimated 6.7 million Haitians in Haiti. He begrudgingly added France to that list of sites, qualifying the Haitian community there as “quite small compared to the total.”<sup>29</sup>

| Year | Total  | Men   | Women | Total Growth | Growth Rate |
|------|--------|-------|-------|--------------|-------------|
| 1982 | 4,724  | 2,344 | 2,380 | -            | -           |
| 1990 | 12,311 | 5,768 | 6,453 | 7,587        | 161%        |
| 1999 | 15,666 | 7,409 | 8,257 | 3,355        | 27%         |

Figure 5. Growth of Haitian Immigrants in France (Excluding Naturalized French Citizens)<sup>30</sup>

| Location                         | Total  | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Total, Haitians in Île-de-France | 22,000 | 100.0%     |
| Seine-Saint-Denis                | 6,787  | 30.9%      |
| Val-d'Oise                       | 4,160  | 18.9%      |
| Hauts-de-Seine                   | 3,138  | 14.3%      |
| Paris                            | 2,698  | 12.3%      |
| Val-de-Marne                     | 2,617  | 11.9%      |
| Essonne                          | 1,069  | 4.9%       |
| Seine-et-Marne                   | 840    | 3.8%       |
| Yvelines                         | 691    | 3.1%       |

Figure 6. Department of Residence for Haitians Living in Île-de-France, 1999<sup>31</sup>

These estimations belie the large number of Haitians settled in France illegally. Adding the *sans papiers*, literally “without papers,” may double the official figure. For example, while Mooney’s official figure counts the Haitian population of France at only about 25,000 in 1999, Delachet-Guillon suggested that, including young children, *sans papiers*, and all other types of circumstances, the community numbered about 30,000 in 1996.<sup>32</sup> Fleurimond suggested that the “official estimate” by 2004 was 60,000 Haitians in metropolitan France, but he offered no citation to

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 48. Student’s translation.

<sup>30</sup> Mooney in Jackson, *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora*, 118.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>32</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 72.

verify this figure or determine its inclusivity.<sup>33</sup> According to Mooney, Haitian community leaders in Paris in 1999 estimate the population to be nearly 50,000 Haitians in France, approximately 20 percent of whom were undocumented.<sup>34</sup> Such confusion in counting the Haitian population limits what researchers can suggest in terms of historical migration trends.<sup>35</sup>

Illegal immigration to France is popularly credited to the country's restrictive immigration policies in place since the mid-1970s. The state has not always stood out so starkly in its approach to foreigners. France was once famously open to immigrants. As in most countries, immigration was intentionally slowed during the 1930s due to global economic depression; this continued in the 1940s due to occupation and war, although foreign workers were brought in by the German authorities to run the ammunitions and other industrial production processes.<sup>36</sup> In 1945, however, France opened its doors once more. Under the Ordinance of November 2, 1945, foreigners could apply for three types of official permits at their local prefecture of police upon arriving in France: a one-year temporary permit, a three-year ordinary permit, and a ten-year privileged permit. The Ordinance also created the *Office National de l'Immigration* (National Immigration Office, ONI) to oversee the recruitment of workers from labor-sending countries to help man the "construction, public works, mining, steel, and [...] automobile and chemical

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<sup>33</sup> Fleurimond, *La communauté haïtienne de France*, 14.

<sup>34</sup> Mooney in Jackson, *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora*, 119-120.

<sup>35</sup> See also Alec G. Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France: Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007 [1995]), 10-11; and Roxane Silberman, "French Immigration Statistics" in Donald L. Horowitz and Gérard Noiriel, eds., *Immigrants in Two Democracies: French and American Experiences* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1992), 112-123.

<sup>36</sup> Cindy Hahamovitch, "Creating Perfect Immigrants: Guestworkers of the World in Historical Perspective," *Labor History* 44, no. 1 (2003): 69-94.

industries.”<sup>37</sup> The system worked well for a time. But by 1960 the government had lost control of immigration to an increasingly successful clandestine market for workers. By 1968, DeLey reports, “an estimated 82 percent of foreign workers had entered [France] illegally,” becoming “an essential part of both archaic and very modern enterprises and add[ing] considerably to the size of the foreign population in France, which rose from 2,250,000 in 1962 to 3,400,000 in 1971.”<sup>38</sup> That was the year Baby Doc Duvalier came to power, and Haiti’s masses began to flee.

The early 1970s were a period of confusion in immigration policy and practice in France. On the one hand, the country’s civil rights movements influenced the development of amnesty laws, anti-racism regulations, and workers’ rights laws with a strong interest in the experiences of foreigners in France. On the other hand, a global economic crisis influenced the development of anti-trafficking laws, and laws singling out black African migrants. Anti-foreign protests made the workplace and society in general hostile to those same foreigners. In 1974 France officially closed its doors to all foreigners, with exceptions for political refugees, seasonal workers, and those who qualified for family reunification.<sup>39</sup> A right-wing movement in the mid-1980s sought to increase the restrictions on citizenship, as well, but the proposal was withdrawn in 1986 facing “strong resistance.”<sup>40</sup> Thus while it remains difficult to immigrate to France legally, immigration laws “automatically transform second-

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<sup>37</sup> Margo DeLey, “French Immigration Policy Since May 1981,” *International Migration Review* 17, no. 2 (Summer 1983), 198-199.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> DeLey, “French Immigration Policy,” 200; Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 15. For more on French attitudes toward and practices related to race, see Herrick Chapman and Laura L. Frader, eds., *Race in France: interdisciplinary perspectives on the politics of difference* (New York: Bergahn Books, 2004).

<sup>40</sup> Rogers Brubaker, “Immigration, Citizenship, and the Nation-State in France and Germany: A Comparative Historical Analysis,” *International Sociology* 5 (1990): 391.



generation immigrants into citizens,” a process Rogers Brubaker attributes to “classical countries of immigration such as the United States and Canada.”<sup>41</sup>

One of the few options that thus remained open to Haitians, aside from student status or family reunification status, was refugee status. Delachet-Guillon noted that, through the 1980s and mid-1990s, “the quasi-totality of Haitian adults who have come to France in the past fifteen years [1980-1995] have demanded refugee status.”<sup>42</sup> Refugee status offered the most security of all types of immigration statuses possible, granting them a 10-year resident card; they could also attempt to get a temporary resident card for 1-3 years, but its renewal depended on having a work contract.<sup>43</sup> According to Mooney’s data extractions from OFPRA, between 1981 and 2007 a total of 30,453 Haitians requested asylum in France, only 16.5 percent of whom were approved, and 18.7 percent of whom were admitted including cases that were re-examined. Peaks in asylum requests were observed in 1983-1984, 1988-1989, and 2001-2006. The single year with the greatest number of asylum requests from Haitians was 2005, with nearly 5,000 requests made, only 5.7 percent of which were approved and 11.3 percent of which were admitted.<sup>44</sup> Given the limitations on legal migration, it is not surprising that illegal migration to France would be such a popular route.<sup>45</sup>

The Haitian community of Canada stands somewhat in contrast to the small, unstable Haitian community of France. When Joseph arrived in Quebec in 1974, he was fortunate enough to find work within a month at a CEGEP, the type of Canadian

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 394.

<sup>42</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 55.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>44</sup> Mooney in Jackson, *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora*, 124-125.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 126.

educational institution that teaches students between high school and university. He also continued his studies at the Université de Montréal during the summers, whereby he earned a second master's degree, and then went on to the University of Waterloo, where he earned a PhD. He left the CEGEP system to teach at the university level, which he continues to do today. He has become a leader in the community, both for Haitians and other Montrealers.<sup>46</sup>

In part, Joseph benefitted from the larger size of the Haitian community in Montreal by the time he moved there. Anglade's "La Diaspora" places a significantly larger group of Haitians in Quebec, Canada's French-speaking province, than in France. By 1969, according to Anglade, there were 35,000 Haitians in Montreal, more than ten times the Haitian community of Paris at the same time. Indeed, Canada has been a leading destination for Haitians in the second half of the twentieth century, though again Miami and New York have held the strongest attraction. Haitian academic, community activist, and Montrealer Paul Dejean attributed the attractiveness of Canada to five considerations: its political stability; the hardening of immigration laws in previous receiving countries (Cuba, African countries); the relative tolerance of Canadian laws; the "closing of the U.S. due to the Civil Rights movement" (which I assume was a reference to fear of violence or other social factors); and language considerations.<sup>47</sup> Haitians and non-Haitians alike have characterized Quebec as a sought-after blending of the lifestyle of France and the opportunity of the United States. The numbers suggest this is more than just an impression.

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<sup>46</sup> Joseph, interview with student.

<sup>47</sup> Paul Dejean, *Les Haïtiens au Québec* (Montreal: Université du Québec, 1978), 11.

Dejean and subsequent authors note, however, that little is known, statistically, about the first wave in the 1960s. JC Icart, in his contribution to the *Spécial Communauté haïtienne de Canada* of the *Haïti Tribune*, counted approximately 101 seminary students and various other students and fallen political figures like former president of Haiti Élie Lescot among those Haitians who migrated to Quebec before the 1960s.<sup>48</sup> Gay suggests that “the number of Haitians in Canada increased thirty-sevenfold [between 1960 and 1975], from 395 to 14,490.”<sup>49</sup> Another Haitian academic makes a blunt but unverifiable claim that “Haitian immigration to Quebec began in 1963.”<sup>50</sup> His data from the *Ministère de l’immigration de Québec* estimates 310 Haitians in Montreal in 1968, and 208 elsewhere in Canada; this is the earliest year for which he has data. By 1973 he estimates there were 2,093 Haitians in Montreal and just 103 elsewhere.<sup>51</sup> The timing of the arrival of this first wave coincided with a welcoming contemporary political and social climate in Quebec.

Under its program of modernization and growth, now known as the Quiet Revolution and designed to help elevate Quebec’s francophone majority into the middle class, Quebec needed educators, doctors, nurses, and social workers, among other “liberal professionals.” Preference was given to those who spoke French, whether immigrant or native. Quebec lawmakers were also trying to take the reins of power and profit from the English-speaking elite under the auspices of

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<sup>48</sup> Jean-Claude Icart, “La communauté haïtienne de Montréal,” *Haïti Tribune* no. 10, Special issue (November 18-December 1, 2004), 4, < <http://www.cidihca.com/haititribunemtl/HT10-PAGE4.pdf>>.

<sup>49</sup> Gay, “Haitians,” 650.

<sup>50</sup> Hérard Jadotte, “Haitian Immigration to Quebec,” *Journal of Black Studies* 7, no. 4, Special Issue (June 1977), 489.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 490.

preserving and honoring the province's francophone heritage. They created a Ministry of Immigration in 1968 to ensure that immigrants to the province were part of that project.<sup>52</sup> Immigration was also, more broadly, a tool for the Canadian state to manage the influx of immigrants vis-à-vis the demands of economic production across the country. In 1967 a "points system" was added to previous non-discrimination immigration laws, creating a system by which applicants were compared using a number of skills and characteristics that suited employers' needs.<sup>53</sup> Quebec capitalized on its right by elevating language skills in its evaluation of applicants, going so far as to legalize the standing of French in the province. In 1975 the provincial government passed the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, cementing "the right to respect for the cultures of origin by the prohibition of discrimination by language and ethnic or national origin."<sup>54</sup> This was followed in 1977 with the "*loi 101*," or the Charter of the French Language, which made French the official language of the province and prescribed several measures to empower institutions to enforce and sustain this reality.<sup>55</sup> According to Behiels, these laws "streamed 65 percent of primary and secondary immigrant children into French-language schools by 1986-87, up from 30 percent in 1977-78."<sup>56</sup> Whereas migration in France was nearly completely banned, it became a political tool in Quebec.

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<sup>52</sup> Charles F. Doran and Ellen Reisman Babby, eds., *Being and Becoming Canada*, Special Edition of the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 538 (Thousand Oaks: Sage Periodicals Press, March 1995); Michael D. Behiels, "Quebec and the Question of Immigration: From Ethnocentrism to Ethnic Pluralism, 1900-1985", booklet 18 of *Canada's Ethnic Groups* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991), 19; John A. Dickinson and Brian Young, *A Short History of Quebec* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pittman Ltd, 1993).

<sup>53</sup> Julien Bauer, *Les Minorités au Québec* (Boréal Express, 1994), 28, 86-91.

<sup>54</sup> Denise Helly, "Politiques à l'égard des minorités immigrées," *Sociologie et sociétés* 26, no. 2 (Autumn 1994), 22.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-24.

<sup>56</sup> Behiels, "Quebec and the Question," 17.

The first-wave Haitians were easily included through this preferential system. Most were white-collar workers, and many others were students pursuing degrees in liberal and high-skill professions like education, engineering, and medicine.<sup>57</sup> They were also francophone. Of the Haitians who arrived between 1968 and 1972, more than two-thirds described themselves as knowing French only; an additional quarter said they knew both English and French.<sup>58</sup>

Under Jean-Claude Duvalier, however, the nature of Haitian migrations changed. Whereas in 1968, 62.4 percent of all Haitians migrating to Quebec were categorized as “highly educated,” in 1976 only 14.3 percent were.<sup>59</sup> The second wave of Haitian migration to Quebec was much more intense than the first. In three years the population more than tripled from 6,400 in 1973 to 19,244 in 1976. Much of this was due to new migration. Dejean identified 2,109 new Haitian immigrants to Quebec in 1973, which more than doubled to 4,690 in 1974 and barely fell below 3,000 during 1975-1976.<sup>60</sup> Growth did not slow much in subsequent decades, either. In the statistics provided in a *History of Contemporary Quebec* (1989), the Haitian community numbered approximately 14,915 in 1981.<sup>61</sup> Gay suggests that the Haitian population of Canada – effectively, that of Quebec, as more than 94 percent of Haitians migrated to Quebec – increased 150 percent between 1975 and 1992, to a

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<sup>57</sup> Dejean reports that more than three-fourths of Haitian arrivals in 1972 were between 19 and 30 years of age. Of the “active” Haitians who arrived between 1965 and 1972, approximately three-fourths were classified as white collar workers (n=2,181). (“Active” was not defined, but likely refers to working-age adults.) Dejean, *Les Haïtiens au Québec*, 24, 30, 40.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>61</sup> This was the first for which there was data available from Census Canada, according to the authors. See Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, and François Ricard, *Histoire du Québec Contemporain* vol. 2 (Boréal compact, 1989), 585.

total of 35,938.<sup>62</sup> According to official statistics, there were 66,920 Haitians in Quebec in 1996, 45,470 of whom were born in Haiti.<sup>63</sup> Haiti was the top immigrant-sending country for Quebec during the Jean-Claude Duvalier regime (1974-1989), and in 1991 it remained second only to Italy.<sup>64</sup>

| Province         | 1973  | 1974  | 1975  | 1976  |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Alberta          | 2     | 9     | 3     | 2     |
| British Columbia | -     | 3     | 0     | 5     |
| Manitoba         | 7     | 1     | 8     | 1     |
| New Brunswick    | 4     | 13    | 4     | 1     |
| Ontario          | 56    | 141   | 108   | 86    |
| Québec           | 2,109 | 4,690 | 3,308 | 2,966 |
| Total            | 2,178 | 4,857 | 3,431 | 3,061 |

Figure 7. Distribution of Haitian immigrants in Canada (1973-1976)<sup>65</sup>

| Year | Population (n) | Births | Birth rate (%) |
|------|----------------|--------|----------------|
| 1973 | 6,400          | 164    | 25.6           |
| 1974 | 11,421         | 428    | 37.5           |
| 1975 | 15,280         | 883    | 57.8           |
| 1976 | 19,224         | 1,232  | 64.0           |

Figure 8. Evolution of the natality of the Haitian population in Quebec, 1973-1976<sup>66</sup>

Economic changes led to growing hostility toward immigrants during this second wave, however. Immigrants were increasingly viewed as competition in a shrinking job market, regardless of language background or skill level. The second wave Haitians were increasingly low-skilled workers who spoke Haitian *Krèyol* rather

<sup>62</sup> Gay, "Haitians," 651.

<sup>63</sup> Institut de la statistique du Québec, "Tableaux: Le Québec: Immigration, langue et origine ethnique," accessed August 24, 2012, pp. 5, 105, <[http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/publications/regional/pdf3/regRA\\_3-4.pdf](http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/publications/regional/pdf3/regRA_3-4.pdf)>.

<sup>64</sup> Ambroise Dorino Gabriel SJ, "En vue de l'action: portrait de la communauté haïtienne au Québec," Document du SJRM de la Province du Canada français (October 2009), 7, <[http://cif.qc.ca/userfiles/file/Haiti\\_Portrait-pour-action.pdf](http://cif.qc.ca/userfiles/file/Haiti_Portrait-pour-action.pdf)>.

<sup>65</sup> Dejean, *Les Haïtiens au Québec*, 17.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

than French. Gay notes that 71.5 percent of the first wave Haitians arriving between 1963 and 1975 were independent immigrants. A similar proportion of the second wave, arriving between 1975 and 1995, were *sponsored* immigrants arriving under the guise of an Ottawa family reunification policy.<sup>67</sup>

The government attempted several deportations of Haitians, specifically, in 1974 and again later in the 1980s. Dejean, a founding member of the *Bureau de la communauté chrétienne haïtienne de Montréal* (Office of the Haitian Christian Community of Montreal) and author of the first monograph of the Haitian community in Quebec, and other prominent first-wave Haitians who had embedded themselves in Quebec society led the charge against these deportations. The “Drama of the 1,500” in 1974 is the name of one such socio-cultural and political battle, highlighted in a section of Dejean’s monograph. The Canadian government regularized several thousand illegal Haitian immigrants, after much debate and protest. This event demonstrated both the plight of illegals and the relative willingness of the Canadian government to respond to their needs.<sup>68</sup>

Today Haiti continues to be a strong source of Quebec’s immigrants, and immigrants to Quebec continue to make a beeline for Montreal. Of the 131,655 immigrants to arrive in Quebec in 2001, more than 101,000 chose Montreal. Of this figure, 5,160 Haitians were among the new Montrealers, representing approximately 5.1 percent of the total new immigrant population and the fourth-largest immigrant

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<sup>67</sup> Gay, “Haitians,” 650-651.

<sup>68</sup> Dejean, *Les Haïtiens au Québec*; Margarita Mooney, *Faith Makes Us Live: Surviving and Thriving in the Haitian Diaspora* (University of California Press, 2009), 134-139.

group by origin after Algeria, China, and France.<sup>69</sup>

While the migration experience of Haitians to Montreal was not without its difficulties, ultimately both elite and working class Haitians found a place of their own in Montreal – literally. Of the entire population of Haitians in Quebec, some 79 to 82 percent “live in downtown Montreal and in the northeastern [francophone] suburbs of Montreal North and Saint-Léonard.”<sup>70</sup> Gay notes a change in this settlement pattern in the recent decades, however: “Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, Haitians have tended to leave downtown for the northeastern part of the city, notably the Jarry and Saint-Michel neighbourhoods. In addition, there has been a further concentration in Saint-Léonard.”<sup>71</sup> (Figure 9 illustrates the settlement patterns of Haitians in Montreal based on 1996 census data.) There may not be a formal “Little Haiti” in Montreal, but the concentration of Haitians in particular neighborhoods of Montreal provides a huge advantage in communication and community organizing over the experience of Haitians in Paris scattered throughout its farthest *banlieue*.

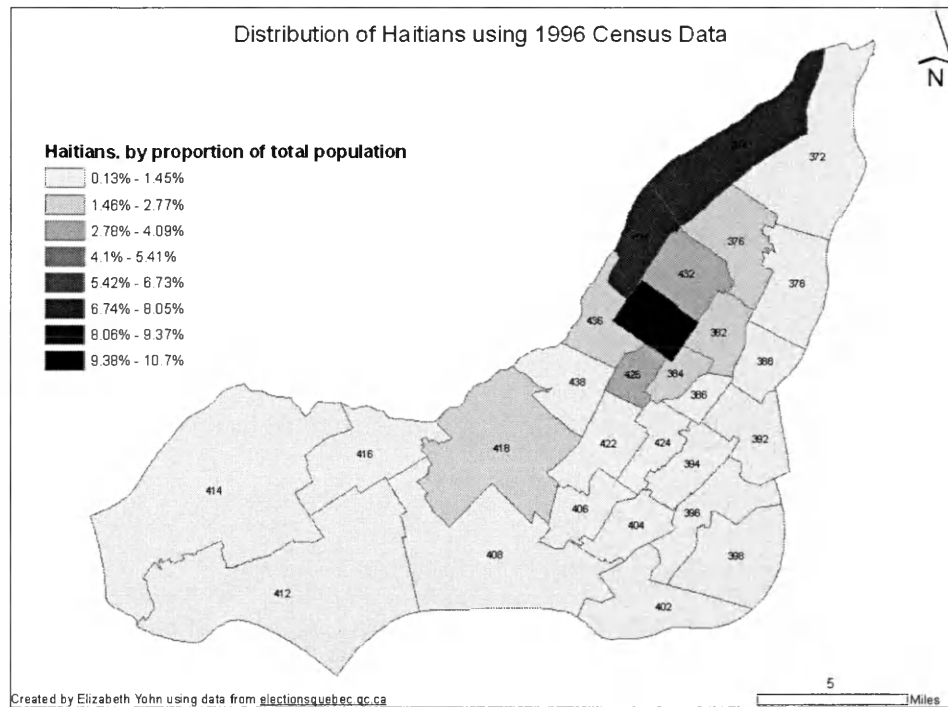
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<sup>69</sup> Statistics Canada (May 5, 2003) cited in Yolande Bouka, “Montreal Nationalism: A Default Multidimensional Identity,” Paper presented at the annual conference of the British Society for Population Studies, University of Kent at Canterbury, 12 September 2005, 25.

<sup>70</sup> Gay, “Haitians,” 651.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. For additional reading on Haitian immigration to Quebec, see, for example, André Bastien, “La présence haïtienne à Montréal: évolution démographique et spatiale,” *Cahiers québécois de démographie* 14, no. 2 (1985): 241-257; Hélène Fullum and Daniel Gomez, “Quelques traits de l’immigration internationale au Québec de 1968 à 1975,” *Cahiers québécois de démographie* 7, no. 1 (1978): 55-82; Mireille Baillargeon, “Atelier immigration,” *Bulletin de l’Association des démographes du Québec* 3, no. 1 (1974): 53-63.





**Figure 9. Haitian settlement in Montreal, c. 1996**

What distinguished France from Quebec was more than just geography; it was a cultural mindset. For Joseph, life was easy in Montréal compared to France. As he put it, having lived in Haiti and in France made it easy to find a job in Quebec. Maybe he was also lucky, he added, but in his estimation there was also a big difference between the way foreigners were treated in Quebec and what he had known in France. In Quebec there was opportunity.<sup>72</sup>

The narrative thus far has focused on *quantifying* the movement of Haitians to France and Canada in the second half of the twentieth century. As Bernard Bailyn famously noted in his discussion of history and memory in the slave trade, numbers

<sup>72</sup> Joseph, interview with student.

do matter.<sup>73</sup> Some things can only be properly visualized, their sheer magnitude understood, through quantification. The graphics and tables punctuating previous paragraphs have served to illuminate Haitian migration trends, based on numbers. However, as mentioned, the numbers available are at best guesses: not only the number of documented and undocumented Haitians in France, or in Canada, but the numbers of Haitians abroad relative to those in Haiti; those in a specific site relative to another; the numbers of second- and third- and fourth-generation immigrants who are classified as Haitian but do not consider themselves to be – or vice versa, those no longer technically classified as Haitian, but who do consider themselves to be Haitian in spite of this technicality. But the more important difference between the Haitian communities of Paris and Montreal is not in their quantity, but in the quality of their experiences. The politics of migration and expectations of the immigrants themselves play a strong role in the development of immigrant communities.<sup>74</sup>

The standard characterizations of Canadian and French immigration policies label the former as “multicultural” and the latter as “republican.” Canadian multiculturalism approaches immigration as the migration of groups of people, through individual moves, into Canadian spaces. The ethnic group is perceived as an important structure to support and maintain. Canadian multiculturalism can be seen to have grown out of two (or more) rivalries: one between French Canada and British Canada, and one between British Canada and Britain. Some argue that

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<sup>73</sup> Bernard Bailyn, “Considering the Slave Trade: History and Memory,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, Vol. LVIII, no. 1 (January 2001): 245-252.

<sup>74</sup> See, for example, the test of integration of immigrant populations in European countries gauging the effectiveness of various approaches to immigration politics. N. Barrach, trans., *Measuring integration: The French Case: Regional indices of social and labor market insertion of third country nationals* (Sciences-po, CERI: March 2008).

multiculturalism at the national level was “a way to deflect the aspirations of Quebec by demonstrating that its linguistic and cultural aspirations were not unique and could not be considered apart from the needs of other communities in Canada.”<sup>75</sup> Thus the Quebecois “ethnicity” was devalued by the validation of *all* ethnicities. Alternately, multiculturalism can be seen as a way for the country as a whole to distance itself from the British style of colonization that asserted the superiority of the colonizers over the colonized. This is only recent, as Elspeth Cameron has noted in the introduction to her edited *Introductory Reader* on Canadian multiculturalism and immigration. She explains, “Canada has only recently – within the last 35 years or so – considered itself a multicultural society. Before that Canada’s self-image was quite the contrary. [...] In fact, Canada began nationhood with a decidedly racist ideology.”<sup>76</sup> From both perspectives, immigration and ethnicity became tools to fight against perceptions of injustice.<sup>77</sup>

In contrast, French republicanism is popularly characterized as somewhat hostile to immigrants because it discourages ethnic mobilization. It is welcoming of

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<sup>75</sup> J.M. Bumstead, *Canada’s Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook* (Santa Barbara: ABC CLIO, 2003), 253.

<sup>76</sup> Elspeth Cameron, “Introduction,” *Multiculturalism & Immigration in Canada: An Introductory Reader* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, 2004), xvi.

<sup>77</sup> Some have felt that this type of universalism has been challenging to codify, though it is not necessarily a problem. In fact, Gershon Shafir (1995) has held up the “vagueness” of “multiculturalist aims” – whatever that means – as one of multiculturalism’s “main assets.” That is, as others have described more clearly, multiculturalism not only values but empowers a kind of universalism previously idealized but at the same time undermined by latent exclusivities, such as racism. In practice, Canadian multiculturalism has been inextricably tied with its policies of immigration. Gershon Shafir, *Immigrants and Nationalists: Ethnic Conflict and Accommodation in Catalonia, the Basque Country, Latvia, and Estonia* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995), 11; Evelyn Kallen, “Multiculturalism: Ideology, Policy and Reality” in Elspeth Cameron, ed., *Multiculturalism & Immigration in Canada: An Introductory Reader* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, 2004), 76; Micheline Labelle, Serge Larose, and Victor Piché, “Émigration et Immigration: les Haïtiens au Québec,” *Sociologies et sociétés* 15, no.2 (1983) : 73-88 ; Lyonel Icart, “Haïti-en-Québec: notes pour une histoire,” *Ethnologies* 28, no. 1 (2006): 45-79; Joël W. Gregory, “Réflexions sur les politiques d’immigration,” *Chaiers québécois de démographie* 4, no. 2 (1975): 24-37; Hélène Fullum and Daniel Gomez, “Quelques traits de l’immigration internationale au Québec de 1968 à 1975,” *Cahiers québécois de démographie* 7, no. 1 (1978): 55-82.

immigrants but not necessarily of immigrant cultures. This began long before the French government closed its doors to new foreigners in 1974. As suggested by its name, republicanism's origins lie in the scientific rationalism of the French Revolution that produced a democratic republic in metropolitan France. It was during this period at the end of the eighteenth century that great philosopher-politicians developed ideas of open citizenship, human rights, and "liberty, equality, and fraternity," as the French motto goes. But rather than reinforce differences in the public sphere, the French decided to require national unity. Religious, political, and ethnic affiliations were not to be celebrated in public. So although France was the top immigrant-receiving country of Europe for much of the last two centuries, it demanded that immigrants become French and did not develop a tradition of celebrating its citizens' immigrant origins.<sup>78</sup> The 2005 *banlieue* riots and the issue of the hijab in recent years have been clear demonstrations of this struggle to maintain "Frenchness" as distinct from "foreign" practices. Noiriel argued that, due to economic and social developments, immigration "had become both complementary and antithetical to citizenship."<sup>79</sup> In general, references to immigration and immigrants in public commemorations and spectacles have been almost absent, until the 2007 inauguration of the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* (National Center for Immigration History) at the *Porte Dorée* in eastern Paris.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 14. For additional information on French republicanism and immigration, see Patrick Weil, *How To Be French: Nationality in the Making Since 1789*, trans. Catherine Porter (Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 2008).

<sup>79</sup> Gérard Noiriel, *The French Melting Pot: Immigration, Citizenship, and National Identity*, trans. Geoffroy de Laforcade (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996 [1988]), xix.

<sup>80</sup> Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 13; Lucille Gilbert, "L'expérience migratoire et le sentiment d'appartenance/ The Migratory Experience and the Feeling of Belonging," *Ethnologies* 27, no. 1 (2005): 5-32; Brigitte Jelen, "Leur histoire est notre histoire: Immigrant Culture in France between Visibility and Invisibility," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 23, no. 2 (2005): 101-125.

France may respect the equality of all French citizens but that does not mean all people in France are really treated equally. The French state's refusal to acknowledge this experience makes it difficult to fight discrimination in, for example, housing or unemployment.<sup>81</sup> While many observers viewed the 2005 *banlieue* riots as a game-changing expression of immigrant (largely *meghrébin*) dissatisfaction, Hargreaves noted that "similar disorders had been occurring intermittently in the banlieues since the late 1970s and early 1980s, with periodic flare-ups."<sup>82</sup> In each case the immigrant community, comprised largely of North Africans, not Haitians, were objecting to practices that kept them poor and suburbanized.<sup>83</sup> Yet the very terms they felt were needed to describe the situation – commonplace terminology in North America such as "minority, ethnicity, race relations, [and] multiculturalism" – were "taboo."<sup>84</sup> Ironically, as Laurent Dubois notes, the model of "republican anti-racism" has led to structural racism that cannot legally be acknowledged or, therefore, resolved.<sup>85</sup> France's refusal to entreat with sub-groups forces each individual to fight his or her own battle.<sup>86</sup> Many Parisian informants referred to republicanism as the reason that there were so few (if any) effective Haitian community associations there. The associations cannot find footing within the

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<sup>81</sup> Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 5. See also the first edition, titled *Immigration, 'Race' and Ethnicity in Contemporary France* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>83</sup> While in North America it is common for the poor to become concentrated in "inner city" ghettos, in France the poor are pushed *out* of the city centers; suburbs are seen as working-class neighborhoods at best, while the inner city is where the wealthy live.

<sup>84</sup> Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 9.

<sup>85</sup> Laurent Dubois, "Republican Anti-racism and Racism: A Caribbean Genealogy" in Herrick Chapman and Laura L. Frader, eds., *Race in France: interdisciplinary perspectives on the politics of difference* (New York: Bergahn Books, 2004), 23-35.

<sup>86</sup> See, for example, the cases examined by Mary Dewhurst Lewis in "The Strangeness of Foreigners: Policing Migration and Nation in Interwar Marseille" in Chapman and Frader, *Race in France*, 77-107. See also any other contribution to that volume.

administrative structures available to them, so there is little they can do to help administer to the needs of the community.<sup>87</sup>

In spite of popular opinion, there are advantages to republicanism and disadvantages to multiculturalism. In some ways, republicanism seeks to go beyond multiculturalism's affirmation of ethnic differences to create a space in which ethnic groups cannot vie for and accumulate (or lose) power. It assumes that everyone should be on equal footing. Multiculturalism, on the other hand, assumes that the universal recognition of ethnic identities will provide the space and desire among all involved to develop a higher-level national identity. It also assumes that all ethnic groups want to be considered, and have the power and visibility to be considered.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, to be "black in Canada" is something unique, according to Cecil Foster, but the lived experience of multiculturalism for blacks there has not necessarily been positive or without racist discrimination.<sup>89</sup> While, according to many of my Parisian informants, *on n'a pas un noiriste* – they have no black collective identity – there is always a racial scheme in Canada, for better or worse.

Gérald, one of the men I interviewed at the Haitian Consulate in Paris in January 2012, prefaced our recorded interview (unprompted but inspired by my explanation of the prepared questions) with a lengthy examination of the impact the contextual community has on "how the Haitian community looks." He made it clear that each site of the Haitian diaspora *has* integrated itself into the local community *insofar as* the local laws, regulations, culture, etc. have made it possible to organize

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<sup>87</sup> Some of these associations are discussed in more detail in the next section.

<sup>88</sup> Kallen, "Multiculturalism" in Cameron, ed., *Multiculturalism & Immigration in Canada*, 91.

<sup>89</sup> Cecil Foster, *A Place Called Heaven: The meaning of being Black in Canada* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1996).

and identify opportunities to integrate. Gérald suggested, in fact, that this was the most important difference for the way each community of Haitians looks. And this difference is influenced by the way the contextual community approaches “outsiders.”<sup>90</sup>

The first academic monographs about the Haitian communities of Paris and Montreal, respectively, provide an interesting introduction to exploring the impact of Haitians (an “outsider” group) on these sites, because they identify the moment at which the Haitian community became a subject of serious and academic conversation. Whose attention were the communities attracting, and for what reasons? In 1974, Roger Bastide, Françoise Morin, and François Raveau co-authored a socio-demographic study of *Les Haïtiens en France* in conjunction with two other studies highlighting the “People of Color in France,” notably African *stagiaires* (interns) and those from the Antillean overseas departments (DOM). Four years later, in 1978, Paul Dejean published a socio-demographic study of *Les Haïtiens au Québec* in collaboration with the leading community service organization for the Haitian community in the province, the *Bureau de la Communauté chrétienne des Haïtiens de Montréal* (Office of the Christian Community of Haitians in Montreal), which Dejean helped found in November 1972.<sup>91</sup> Both attempt in some ways to describe the Haitian communities of either France or Quebec as relevant to the time. They rely largely on surveys of the respective Haitian communities, and insight gathered from key stakeholders and actors in them. However, there are key

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<sup>90</sup> Gérald, 2012, interview with student, Paris, France, 12 January.

<sup>91</sup> Brief historical information on the BCHM can be found at the organization’s website: “Historique,” Bureau de la communauté haïtienne de Montréal, accessed July 30, 2012, <<http://www.bchm.ca/historique.html>>.

differences in the authors' applications of their key findings that set the tone for future studies in each site.

What attracted Bastide, Morin, and Raveau to the Haitian community of Paris was its academic use as an “intermediate group” between the African and Antillean populations of France, the target populations for their study of people of color in France. That is, Haitians helped contextualize findings about other black ethnic communities in France. Justifying this placement of Haitians between the “two poles,” the authors refer to Haiti’s history as the “first French colony to revolt against its white masters in the throes of slavery, a time when African traditions were still vibrant and could be maintained.”<sup>92</sup> At the same time, they argue, an emergent Haitian culture drew generously from its metropolitan French past, the culture of planters, slavers, and white men. These double histories of slavery and metropolitanism formed the basis for classism and racism that would plague the Haitian state – and its emigrants – for its long future.<sup>93</sup> Ideas of cultural difference for Haitians as compared to “back home” and to the “native” French were the central focus of this work. The authors highlighted *vaudou*, homosexuality, and family studies to demonstrate the ways in which Haitians had adapted to life in France. Racism was discussed primarily as a component of Haitian cultural heritage. This scope and focus was most likely influenced by Bastide’s work on “Africanisms,” or anthropological survivals of African heritage in modern African societies such as

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<sup>92</sup> Bastide, Morin, Raveau, *Les Haïtiens en France*, 9.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.



those of North America.<sup>94</sup> In this way, Haitians were seen as exotic and transitional, neither typically black nor typically French.

The researchers' initial interest flared into grander schemes. They felt that a larger study of Haitians in Paris, Montreal, and New York would further contextualize the findings by examining this intermediate group in a spectrum of settings. Though Bastide, Morin, and Raveau could not pursue this larger project due to coordination and funding issues,<sup>95</sup> it is still interesting to hear how they characterized the sites. They expected Montreal to serve as a "hub between the two cultures" – that is, between the Latin culture of Paris and the Anglo-Saxon of New York – "where one speaks French but often submits nonetheless to the influence of the United States, and where we can also find an Anglophone population."<sup>96</sup> These same judgments were unknowingly restated more than thirty years later by one of my informants, a young activist Haitian involved in secular Haitian associations in Paris. As he described the dominant sites of the Haitian diaspora, he suggested that Montreal blends the Anglo-Saxon mentality of the United States, with racial identities and ethnic groups, and the republican mentality of France, with individualism and an absence of racialism.

Bastide, Morin, and Raveau ultimately describe the "*vie quotidienne*" of Haitians in France (primarily Paris) and attempt to illustrate adaptive changes individuals have experienced, through religious, sexual, and cultural practices. This

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<sup>94</sup> Gérard Magloire and Kevin A. Yelvington, "Haiti and the anthropological imagination," *Gradhiva* (online) 1 (2005): paragraphs 39-57. <<http://gradhiva.revues.org/335>>.

<sup>95</sup> Morin did, however, contribute an article on "Les Haïtiens à New York" to an edited volume by Ida Simon-Barouh and Pierre J. Simon, *Les étrangers dans la ville: le regard des sciences sociales: communications présentées au colloque internationale de Rennes, 14-15-16 décembre 1988* (Paris: Harmattan, 1990).

<sup>96</sup> Bastide, Morin, and Raveau, *Les Haïtiens en France*, 5-6.

descriptive study seems to provide an inventory of ideas, beliefs, and practices of this small community in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

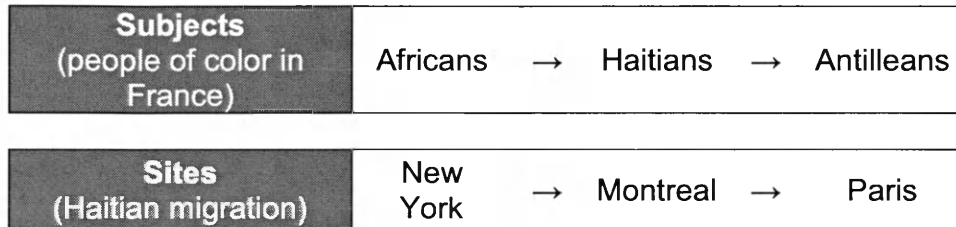


Figure 10. Summary of cultural spectra assumed by Bastide, Morin, and Raveau (1974)

Dejean's study, on the other hand, offers a more political agenda. *Les Haïtiens au Québec* is divided into four sections. The first, "Haitian immigration to Quebec," counts and statistically describes the community as it had developed in the 1960s and 1970s. Dejean identifies ways in which Haitians meet the expected migration standards of Quebec society, as they are relatively educated, fluent in French, and otherwise economically viable and important new citizens. Then, however, Dejean begins to reach beyond such basic (though essential) description by examining interactions between the Haitian community and the larger Quebec community. The second section deals with the "Haitian presence," or the economic and cultural contributions of Haitian immigrants to the Quebec community. He writes as if to counter perceptions that Haitian immigrants are lazy, unskilled, and violent. The third, "Haitian youth in Quebec," deals specifically with issues of the second generation. This section demonstrates clear concern for the welfare of Haitians brought to Quebec at a tender age, or perhaps even born on Canadian soil. Writing about education, in particular, the author reveals daily problems that young Haitians faced in terms of racism, the obstacles of poverty, and other difficulties in integrating

fully into the system. Finally, the fourth deals with the “*drame des 1500*,” the dramatic episode of the early 1970s in which the government sought to expel approximately 1,500 undocumented Haitian immigrants living in Quebec. The section demonstrates the role that the BCCHM played in the government’s decisions to regularize these threatened individuals. Thus while Bastide, Morin, and Raveau seek to describe the lifestyle of Haitian individuals, Dejean seeks in addition to describe the experiences of the Haitian *collective* in Quebec: issues that affect the whole community and require explicit negotiation and accommodation with the Quebec government and society.

Dejean’s work was not the first discussion of Haitians in Quebec, though it was the first full-length monograph. Hérard Jadotte, for example, published an article in the *Journal of Black Studies* in the year prior to Dejean’s book. Titled “Haitian Immigration to Quebec,” Jadotte’s article examines from a Marxist perspective the economic and class-based forces that have resulted in the growth of a Haitian community in Quebec.<sup>97</sup> On one level, Jadotte is responding to the theoretical model of Marxism and “the internationalization of the work process in concert with the internationalization of capital” that has brought Haitians to work in Canada (“and particularly in Quebec”). On another, however, he is responding to the mood of the time, which he characterizes as “the explosion of the idea of universal harmony, of the ‘melting pot’ and successful integration socially.”<sup>98</sup> While Jadotte is primarily concerned with ideas of class struggle and confirming the Marxist model, he is also concerned with a cultural project that situates Haitians in two geographies: Quebec,

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<sup>97</sup> Hérard Jadotte, “Haitian Immigration to Quebec,” *Journal of Black Studies* 7, no. 4 (June 1977): 485-500.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 485-486.

and Haiti. He does so from the perspective of contemporary Haitian history, in which, via the “Revolution of 1946,” the rise to power of “the nationalist faction of the petty bourgeoisie” freed (via repression and persecution) so many Haitians for work abroad. His pride both for Haiti and for the Haitian community in Montreal comes across clearly throughout the article.<sup>99</sup>

But it was Dejean’s monograph that really set the tone for further study of the Haitian community in Montreal. As in Dejean’s work, subsequent authors consistently focused on understanding exactly who these Haitians were. They also pursued an underlying agenda of justifying the migration pattern and proving the value of Haitians to Quebec society. In a short contribution to the journal *Relations* in 1980, Jean-Claude Icart emphasized the three major professions of Haitians in Montreal as “professors, operators, and taxi drivers.” He, like Dejean and to some extent Jadotte, offered some descriptive statistics and geographical observations of the Haitian community in Quebec before providing a somewhat more detailed structural profile (socio-economic groups, political groups, religious divisions, and regional differences) and review of community collective action efforts. He highlighted the “affair of 20 June 1979” in which Montreal police violence against the Haitian community sparked protests from the broader black community.<sup>100</sup> In the face of this “indicator of a greater malaise,” JC Icart suggested to readers that they rethink their position on the Haitian community: the community has formed itself and

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 494-497.

<sup>100</sup> See also “City’s Haitian leader warns of violence ‘in self defence,’” Racism in Canada series, *The Gazette* (Montreal), November 28, 1979, p. 71.  
<http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=MlxxAAAAIBAJ&sjid=oaQFAAAAIBAJ&pg=1157%2C305986>

is trying to solve the problems its members face.<sup>101</sup> Interestingly, in a 2004 re-hash of this article for the diaspora readers of the newspaper *Haiti Tribune*, JC Icart emphasizes the role of the second generation in providing the bridge between the contextual community and the Haitian community in Quebec: “It is up to her [the second generation] to [...] find the balance between the country of origin and the host country[...] to hope for and work to create a new culture and lead the way to understanding between the peoples.”<sup>102</sup> Thus, over the course of 25 years, the focus has gone from intercultural negotiations between Haitians and Quebeckers to intercultural negotiations facilitated by Haitian-Quebeckers.

Raymond Massé took this idea of cultural negotiation further in his 1983 dissertation to comment on the development of a “visible” Haitian “ethnic” community in Quebec. On the one hand, he frames cultural negotiation in the 1980s as a response to economically motivated racism against blacks, including Haitians. However, Massé argues that racism is not the primary pathway of forming an ethnic community or defining a group’s visibility. It is merely mechanical, and reactionary. Rather, ethnicization is the result of the efforts of some small, activist subset of the larger soon-to-be “ethnic” community in the larger contextual community. Specifically, this activist Haitian community comprised those who had earlier fought in the “Drama of the 1,500” and continued to fight against racism and inequalities based on skin color or ethnic origin.<sup>103</sup> Massé’s work confirmed that a Haitian community had

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<sup>101</sup> Jean-Claude Icart, “La communauté haïtienne de Montréal,” *Relations* 40, no. 461 (July-August 1980), 211-213.

<sup>102</sup> JC Icart, “La communauté haïtienne de Montréal,” *Haiti Tribune*, 4.

<sup>103</sup> Raymond Massé, *L’émergence de l’ethnicité haïtienne au Québec*, Université Laval, thèse de doctorat, 1983, 6.

developed and, as JC Icart had suggested, was trying to establish itself within its context: Montreal.

These perspectives from the late 1970s and 1980s formed the platform for additional studies and government inquiries in the 1990s. The leading researcher of multiculturalism in practice in Montreal was Micheline Labelle. Early in her career she had contributed several articles in the tradition of describing the Haitian community. In 1983, for example, she co-authored an article for *Sociologie et sociétés* with Serge Larose and Victor Piché on “Émigration et immigration: les Haïtiens au Québec.” Their work tried to separate itself from the majority of work on international migration, which they criticized for being focused solely on one or the other country: sending, or receiving. Rather, they suggested that there was much more dynamism between these sites, both in economic motivational terms and in terms of the experience of the immigrants themselves. Accordingly, they offered a description of the context that impelled so many Haitians to migrate, and then reflected on why Quebec was among the most common destinations for these Haitians at the time.<sup>104</sup> Considering Jadotte’s earlier article, this contribution was hardly revolutionary but represented an attempt by Canadian researchers to understand a nascent transnationalism that would be championed later by scholars like Nina Glick Schiller.

It was in the 1990s, however, that Labelle’s studies peaked with a landmark anthropological and sociological project targeting four ethnicities in Montreal: Italian, Jewish, Haitian, and Lebanese. Rather than continuing the program described in “Émigration et immigration,” it served as a comprehensive cultural survey of

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<sup>104</sup> Labelle, Larose, and Piché, “Émigration et immigration,” 73-88.

immigrant experiences in Montreal. The project engaged a number of researchers (both senior and junior) under the leadership of Labelle at the Center for Research on Interethnic Relations and Racism at the Université du Québec à Montréal. Together the team engaged roughly twenty leaders from each ethnic community in interviews conducted between February 1990 and May 1991.<sup>105</sup> Eighteen “*cahiers*” (working papers) were initially published from the findings in 1993 laying out the project’s scope and goals, and responding to each of four target questions on associative life, economic integration, racism and youth, and the “national question” for each of the four ethnicities. Then, in 1996, an additional six *cahiers* were published pushing the data toward additional questions of strategies, processes, and comparative discourses beyond the initial descriptive texts. At least three graduate theses were crafted from the students’ contributions to and experiences in the project.<sup>106</sup> What this project demonstrated was an interest outside of the Haitian-origin community in Montreal to understand and to place Haitians in their new context. And, furthermore, by placing items like the “national question” in the protocol of questions, it demonstrated an interest in understanding the exchange and interplay of ideas between native and new Montrealers. They sought to understand not necessarily how Haitians (among others) were different, but where and how Haitians would contribute to local matters.

By the 2000s the focus of studies of the Haitian community in Montreal acquired an historical perspective. Works like JC Icart’s 2004 article sought to

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<sup>105</sup> Micheline Labelle, *Problématique générale de la recherche Ethnicité et pluralisme. Le discours de leaders d’associations ethniques de la région de Montréal*, Université du Québec à Montréal, Département de sociologie, Centre de recherche sur les relations interethniques et le racisme, no. 1, 1993, p. 4.

<sup>106</sup> Full citations of the *cahiers* and other publications can be found in the bibliography.

situate the Haitian community within the larger history of Quebec. Lyonel Icart's 2004 article made this connection even clearer, identifying a seemingly primordial connection between Quebec and Haiti through Catholic missionary work in particular. He suggested that Haitians and Quebecers have always enjoyed a pleasant, neighborly relationship, because there have always been open avenues for communication and exchange of ideas.<sup>107</sup>

But the seminal work of this period must be Samuel Pierre's edited volume *Ces Québécois Venus d'Haïti (These Quebecers from Haiti)*, a sort of "who's who" of the Haitian community in Quebec. It demonstrates in majestic form the "contribution of the Haitian community to the edification of Quebec" through short descriptions of the history of Haitians in each of several economic and cultural sectors as well as selected biographies of the *crème de la crème*. Pierre, who recently became a member of the Order of Canada, has gathered in this book a history from within the community which draws connections between Haiti and the Haitian diaspora and the Quebec community through the lives of men like Frantz Voltaire, Georges Anglade, Jean-Marie Bourjolly, Dany Laferrière, and others like them across education, health, economics, engineering, the arts, and politics.<sup>108</sup>

In a sense, the study of Haitians in Montreal transitioned from a perspective of acknowledgement (Haitians are here), to one of placement (trying to figure out where Haitians "fit"), to one of belonging. Early writers like Dejean and Jadotte brought attention to the presence of the Haitian community, its contributions, and its

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<sup>107</sup> Lyonel Icart, "Haïti-en-Québec: notes pour une histoire," *Ethnologues* 28, no. 1 (2006): 45-79.

<sup>108</sup> See also Marie Labrecque, "Haïti en Québec," *Entre Les Lignes* 8, no. 1 (Autumn 2011): 19; Jean Morisset, "Haïti-Québec ou la rencontre imprévue – rêve, témoignage et interrogation" in Éric Waddell, ed., *Le dialogue avec les cultures minoritaires* (Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1999).



problems. Writers in the 1980s and 1990s began to sharpen their understanding of Haitians as an ethnic group, and also as a contributing force in Montreal society and politics. Recent contributions have, I argue, used history to solidify this sense of belonging that has been long in the making. A shared past, it seems, signifies for them a shared present and a shared future – “shared” in both the sense that they have experienced it together, and that it has been written down and distributed among broad readerships.

Since Bastide, Morin, and Raveau, however, fairly little has been written about the Haitian community in Paris. Even today, the network of researchers on Haitians in Paris is small enough that a worker at PAFHA can remember them by name from memory; a colleague I met while doing fieldwork was excited that “the Haitians in Paris will get some exposure” from our graduate papers. The second book on the Haitian community of Paris was not published for nearly a quarter-century after Bastide, Morin, and Raveau, when Delachet-Guillon published *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France* in 1996. This monograph was inspired by her involvement in AIDS prevention efforts among the Haitian community in Paris, and supported by her two primary organizations of involvement: the *Service Social d’Aide aux Emigrants* (S.S.A.E.) and *Haïti Développement*, the most active Haitian community association in Paris at the time.<sup>109</sup> In this book she set the topic of AIDS aside to concentrate on describing the composition and experiences of the community with which she was engaged on a daily basis.<sup>110</sup> The study relied on

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<sup>109</sup> An interview with Madame Dominique SYLVAIN, “Une femme qui bouge dans la communauté,” *Diasporama* 1 (February 1997), 11.

<sup>110</sup> She wrote about AIDS and the Haitian community specifically in a separate work: *Les Haïtiens de France et le SIDA: Comportements, Croyances, Préventions* (Paris : Harmattan, 1999).

interviews with fifty “privileged informants,” both Haitian and French, targeting the special knowledge and competencies of each informant to generate a comprehensive snapshot.

With this study, Delachet-Guillon confirmed that the Haitian population of Paris in 1994 was not the same as that of 1967, as described by Bastide, Morin, and Raveau. An opening exposition focused on Haiti’s history, migrations, and relations with America. The rest of the work comprised sections covering a brief historical summary of Haiti and its migration trends, arrival in France, statistics, immigration status problems, difficulties of the civil state and of language, and connections with Haiti. Additional sections describe community relationships and their role in establishing Haitian immigrants in their surroundings.<sup>111</sup> She is particularly interested in discussing the lack of changes in immigrant demographics before and after 1986, arguing that nothing changed for rural Haitians when Jean-Claude Duvalier fell. Particularly with the military coup of 1991, violence and injustice ruled the countryside as much during “democratization” as under the dictators.<sup>112</sup> Thus, in addition to describing the sociology of Haitians living in Paris, Delachet-Guillon sought to understand the background of the people with whom and for whom she worked. This focus also reflects what members of the Haitian community of Paris themselves found important: Haiti. As one informant explained to me, for Haitians in Paris it is more important to concern oneself with Haiti because here there are opportunity and resources; in Haiti, there are none. For this reason, as will be

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<sup>111</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 11.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

examined later, the work of Haitian associations in Paris is primarily directed toward Haitians on the Haitian mainland, not toward those in the French metropolis.

Only one other major work stands to be mentioned: that of W. Kerns Fleurimond (2004), a Parisian Haitian, journalist for the Haitian newspaper *Haiti Progrès*, and active member of the French *Parti Socialiste* during the nineties and early 2000s. (He currently resides in Haiti.) He collected his reports from the period 1991 to 2001 into a single edited volume titled *La communauté haïtienne de France: dix ans d'histoire, 1991-2001*. The focus is largely on political activism related to Haitian politics. As Eric Sauray, a prominent Haitian lawyer in Paris, summarizes in his introduction, among the big events of this decade figure “the creation of the Tenth Department, French Section, in 1991; the mobilization of the Haitian community of France against the military coup that overthrew President Jean-Bertrand Aristide; the occupation of the Haitian Embassy in France and the fight to return Aristide to power; and the success of great Haitian artists in France.”<sup>113</sup> In contrast to Pierre’s *Ces Québécois*, Fleurimond’s catalog of the Haitian community focuses generally on Haitian associations and collective activism. Individuals are merely stand-ins for the Haitian associations they represent. Also, whereas *Ces Québécois* seeks clearly to establish the place of Haitians in Quebec, Fleurimond’s collection seems more focused on arguing to the larger Haitian community of the French diaspora’s importance in the history of modern Haiti, its politics and culture especially.

It is telling that in the approximately twenty years since Bastide, Morin, and Raveau’s study, Delachet-Guillon could only cite three unpublished graduate papers

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<sup>113</sup> Fleurimond, *La communauté haïtienne de France*, 9.

touching on various aspects of the Haitian community in Paris.<sup>114</sup> Because so many Haitian immigrants to France arrive on student visas, they represent one of the most active and activist “professional groups” of Haitians in France. The earliest student groups centered around the law programs of the Sorbonne and other *Grands Écoles*. According to Fleurimond the first Haitian student group was a fairly informal collection of some 144 students sent in the fall-winter term of 1959 by the Duvalier government for training in civil service and law, among them “numerous *femmes fonctionnaires*,” as well as young political exiles.<sup>115</sup> Like most socializing Parisians, these Haitian students assumed a strong café culture that guided their choice of meeting spaces. Among the cafés frequented by this group included the “Capoulade” at Boulevard Saint-Michel and Rue Soufflot, behind the Faculté de Droit of the Sorbonne, and “Le Luxembourg,” facing the Jardin du Luxembourg at the *rond-point* of Boulevard Saint-Michel and the garden. Gradually the informal intellectual club opened to other professions and to women, but never to “political illiterates.” The common goal and theme, according to Fleurimond, was always anti-Duvalierism.<sup>116</sup> However, Fleurimond’s description seems colored heavily by his personal focus on Haitian politics. In an article paying homage to the late “Me” André Mehu in the fifth edition of *L’Annuaire de la Communauté Haïtienne en Europe* (January 2003), Antoine Fritz Pierre suggests that this network provided much more in the way of

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<sup>114</sup> Citations as recorded by Delachet-Guillon: SAINT LOUIS Dieuvelorme, *l’immigration haïtienne à Paris*, Institut Catholique de Paris, 69; GAZAN Dominique, *Une approche culturelle de la migration haïtienne en région parisienne durant ces quinze dernières années*, Mémoire de maîtrise d’ethnologie à Paris VII, Paris, 1990, 132 p.; POTTIEZ Daniel, *Familles d’origine haïtienne et assistance éducative*, Ecole Supérieure de Travail Social, Paris, janvier 1994, 150 p.

Mooney, in 2009, cites only one additional author after Delachet-Guillon’s monograph in the pantheon of work on the Haitian community of France: Sergo Alexis and his three-part series composed for the Haitian-then-Afro-Caribbean magazine *Diasporama/Diafrorama* (1998-1999).

<sup>115</sup> Fleurimond, *La communauté haïtienne de France*, 278.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 278-282.

practical support than Fleurimond accords. Pierre and Mehu were among the early Haitian law students who met in these cafés of the 1960s. Pierre recalls that Mehu, who never achieved his goal of a doctoral diploma in law, remained throughout his time in Paris a gatekeeper and host for numerous Haitian students so they could find “companionship, advice, refuge, room and board sometimes, and always audience, friendship, and comforts.”<sup>117</sup> For a fairly new and unstable community, the intellectual groups provided the platform for social organization.

By 1996, Delachet-Guillon notes that the approximately two hundred Haitian students in and around Paris met regularly. The most important such student group was (and remains, today) that of Paris VIII (Saint-Denis). The shift in the siting of Haitian student groups in Paris is related to the perception of Paris VIII as a university that is open to diversity and to practical education for workers; for example, in 1996 more than half of enrolled students were of foreign origin.<sup>118</sup> In the 1990s the group incorporated some forty students. And more importantly, it was “on this campus that the [broader] association of Haitian students was born, whose goal is to assist newly-arrived [students] in their [first] steps and in their adaptation.”<sup>119</sup>

It is easy to overlook the activism of Haitian students through their graduate studies. Unlike most American and Canadian institutions, Parisian universities do not regularly archive the theses of students at the master’s degree level (in all its European variations). For example, in my effort to track citations from Mooney’s 2009 comparison of religious practice in Miami, Montreal, and Paris, I searched in

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<sup>117</sup> Antoine Fritz Pierre, “Notre Hommage à l’Ami Me André MEHU” in Pegguy Bazile, ed., *L’Annuaire de la Communauté Haïtienne en Europe*, 5th edition (January 2003), 46-47. BNF.

<sup>118</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 43-44.

<sup>119</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 43.

vain for Smith Glaude's *Le Dynamisme Associatif des Migrants Haïtiens en France Métropolitain* (2001) at Université Paris VIII, Saint-Denis. After contacting Mooney and searching the library catalogues, I enlisted the help of the reference librarians at Paris VIII. The staff contacted several other city universities and libraries before informing me that the only likely library to hold a copy was being moved, thus all its documents were not currently catalogued, or, consequently, available, and would remain unavailable for several years. A few weeks later I happened upon a staffperson at a Haitian association called the *Plateforme d'Associations Franco-Haïtiennes* (Platform for Franco-Haitian Associations, PAFHA) who informed me that Glaude was employed at the Haitian consulate in Brussels. However, he has not returned my request for a copy – which I had to send through a Haitian association in Brussels, because his direct contact information was not available or updated. These challenges make it difficult for anyone to study the Haitian community of Paris, in historical or contemporary perspective.

Fortunately, Fleurimond devoted two pages to summarizing Glaude's paper during his review of "ten years of history" of the Haitian community in France, 1991-2001. From this and Mooney's use of the paper, we can understand that it was a somewhat personal work drawing on Glaude's experiences as an activist within and for the Haitian community of France. More than 300 associations were surveyed for the project. Glaude sought to answer two main questions: (1) what are the motivations that lead Haitian immigrants to form associations, and (2) are these motivations satisfied by the Haitian associations that have formed? Finally, the paper offered perspectives and conclusions about the problems these associations face in

accomplishing their goals. According to Fleurimond's description, Glaude focused in particular on Tenth Department activities and international activities between France and Haiti.<sup>120</sup> While I could not corroborate any of these claims, the work's absence and the process of trying to find it point to the real source of information on Haitians in Paris: Haitians in Paris, not the printed words but the voices.

The difficulty of finding Haitian works in Paris stands in stark contrast to Montreal, where the staff of several reviews and publishing houses have worked hard to disseminate letters on and by Haitians since the early 1970s. Indeed, part of the difference between academic studies of Haitians in France and those in Quebec may lie in the relative visibility of the Haitian community's publishing groups. Bastide, Morin, and Raveau frequently cited works by Haitian and non-Haitian academics published in New York and Montreal in prominent broad-circulation journals. The Montreal journal run by Haitian academic elites, *Nouvelle Optique*, was a frequent source of their information, and later *Collectif Paroles* became a favorite among Quebec researchers. Importantly, many of the founders and contributors to these publications and publishing groups at some point entered into the canon of Quebec letters. This last observation demonstrates that Haitians were eventually included as Quebec artists and academics, and were not simply treated as foreign celebrities-in-residence.

*Nouvelle Optique* was the first Haitian review in Montreal. Formed in 1970 after a meeting of Haitian intellectuals co-organized by the anthropology department of the Université de Montréal and the Center for Haitian Studies in New York, its first editor was Hérard Jadotte, author of the Marxist piece on Haitian immigration to

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<sup>120</sup> Fleurimond, *La communauté haïtienne de France*, 266-268.

Quebec that preceded Dejean's monograph.<sup>121</sup> The review's goal was to offer a place for "Haitian scientific and literary expression" in the face of the suppression and oppression of such expression on the Haitian mainland. The editorial staff connected their work in Quebec with the plight of Haitians back home, suggesting that their offering would provide a place to battle against illiteracy and the stagnation of the intellectual landscape of the country. Their publication aimed to encourage a better understanding of the community's situation to help drive toward the future – "*vers l'avenir*."<sup>122</sup> This expression, "*vers l'avenir*," still figures strongly in Haitian diasporic publications. Haiti's diaspora population is engaged to create a better future for itself and its homeland.

Contributors to *Nouvelle Optique* presented studies from a variety of perspectives, including historical, political, socio-anthropological, and economical discussions of Haiti and its interactions with other states. Others provided new poems, short stories, or critical analyses of Haitian literature. Still others provided journalistic summaries of events in the intellectual sphere of the forming Haitian diaspora. In the fourth issue, published in October-December 1971, the review gathered commentaries on Duvalierism, Cuba, ideologies, and tales from the diaspora. A quotation from Berthold Brecht introduced the issue: "The intervening thought: Dialectic as a means of dividing, ordering, and contemplating the world, by revealing its revolutionary contradictions, makes intervention possible."<sup>123</sup> Among other things this passage evokes the idea of dissent, and the role of dialectic, a form of intellectualism, in mediating the "contradictions" at the heart of dissent. It would

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<sup>121</sup> Pierre, *Ces Québécois Venus d'Haïti*, 350.

<sup>122</sup> "Nouvelle Optique," *Nouvelle Optique* no. 1 (January 1971): 3-7.

<sup>123</sup> *Nouvelle Optique* no. 4 (October-December 1971): 2.



have been important at the time to engage with popular misconceptions about Caribbean politics, with so much attention focused not only on the new President-for-Life but also on nearby Cuban communism, both of which provoked paternalism and fear among the larger North American countries. Other issues of the review discussed Maoism, Marxism-Leninism, and theories of revolution and subversion.<sup>124</sup> As much as this was a means to engage a Western audience in careful examination of Haitian realities, discussing such alternative ideologies was a means of engaging in the political project specific to Haiti, from which these men and women had been exiled. On the one hand, these were simply academics and artists doing what they knew best: writing critically, thoughtfully, and with grounding in tradition, be it academic theory or patterns of expression. On the other, however, these were Haitian activists longing for home and planning, through their words, how best to guide Haiti's future.

*Nouvelle Optique* later changed from a review into a publishing house, though it seems to be closed now. A new cultural review called *Collectif Paroles*, directed by esteemed artists Émile Ollivier and Claude Moïse, became the principal publication of the Haitian community in Montreal.<sup>125</sup> *Collectif Paroles* engaged a larger and broader audience of both contributors and readers. It was with this publication – at least as a signal of change – that the Haitian community of Montreal reached out to new members and to non-Haitian researchers and artists interested in Haitian, Caribbean, and Afro-Canadian studies. Haitian leaders and leaders in Haitian studies in Quebec contributed to the review. The goals of this were clear when the

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<sup>124</sup> *Nouvelle Optique* no. 5 (January-March 1972).

<sup>125</sup> Pierre, *Ces Québécois Venus d'Haïti*, 351.

two focal topics of the first issue, published in September 1979, were “*Dans La Diaspora: la difficulté d’être Haïtien*” (In the Diaspora: the difficulty of being Haitian) and “*Duvalier: hier, aujourd’hui, demain*” (Duvalier: yesterday, today, tomorrow). The editorial elaborated that these collaborators had come together to take charge to redefine both Haiti and what it meant to be Haitian:

We have started with the publication of books that proceed from a need to understand, to interrogate, to [engage in] dialogues, for confrontations among witnesses, to actively seek new avenues of social, political, and cultural intervention. What could be considered an obsession of intellectuals has taken, instead, the image of a commonly-felt requirement among large sectors of the population in Haiti and in the diaspora: the necessity of defining a new project for society that proceeds from a sustained, rigorous, and passionate questioning of all sectors of national activity.<sup>126</sup>

But it was also clear that this review felt it necessary to justify itself among what seemed, to the editors, an abundance of choices of “publications from political émigrés and the revival of the press in Haiti.”<sup>127</sup> They insist that another review was necessary because the question – “*la question haïtienne*” – was large. There needed to be enough space for responses from all to be heard. The work is delicate, they noted: “*l’oeuvre est fragile*.”<sup>128</sup> While the review *Nouvelle Optique* gathered useful theories and commentaries, *Collectif Paroles* hoped to gather more actionable solutions for the future. The spirit of the community had changed from contemplative observation to clear activism.

It is interesting, considering the dearth of publishing activity in Paris in the same period to observe such vibrancy in Montreal. For the editors of *Collectif Paroles* to situate their review within such a glutted market could be mistaken as an overly optimistic presentation of activity, in other circumstances. But if it was false

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<sup>126</sup> “La prise de parole,” *Collectif Paroles* no. 1 (September 1979): 4.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

confidence that led to their vocal justification of “yet another review,” it could not explain the flourishing of Haitian publishing houses in Montreal at the same time. The foremost of these was founded in 1983. Frantz Voltaire – another among the contributors to *Collectif Paroles* – and several other researchers working out of the Center for Caribbean Studies at the U. de M. formed CIDIHCA, the *Centre International de Documentation et Information Haïtienne, Caribéenne, et Afro-Canadienne* [International Center for Haitian, Caribbean, and Afro-Canadian Documents and Information].<sup>129</sup> It incorporated a strong force of Haitian and non-Haitian researchers, including among them a revolutionary of Haitian studies, Carolyn Fick, who wrote the first history of the revolutionary period “from below.”<sup>130</sup> CIDIHCA would remain strong even after the closure of the *Nouvelle Optique* publishing house. Today it continues to be a primary source of research and letters on its focus populations, with a strong bias toward Haitian studies and culture. In 2004 a *Haiti Tribune* article highlighted several areas of service: as a library, as a gallery, as a publishing house, as an archive of audio-visual sources, and as a source of employment for interns and writers-in-residence.<sup>131</sup> They additionally offer cultural presentations and conferences, and participate in the Oral History project for the Montreal Life Stories project by collecting the experiences of Haitian immigrants to Montreal.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Pierre, *Ces Québécois Venus d’Haïti*, 351.

<sup>130</sup> Carolyn Fick, *The Making of Haïti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (University of Tennessee Press, 1990).

<sup>131</sup> Jancy Bolté, “Le Cidihca\*,” *Haiti Tribune*, Special: The Haitian Community of Canada, November 18-December 1, 2004 (no. 10), p. 16. <<http://www.cidihca.com/haititribunemtl/HT10-PAGE16.pdf>>.

<sup>132</sup> “Haiti Working Group,” *Histoire de Vie Montréal/Montreal Life Stories*. Accessed January 21, 2013. <<http://www.lifestoriesmontreal.ca/en/haiti-working-group>>.

| Decade | France  | Quebec   |
|--------|---|--|
| 1970s  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>1974</b>, <i>Les Haïtiens en France</i> (Bastide, Morin, Raveau)</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>1970</b>, review <i>Nouvelle Optique</i> formed (at least six issues, January 1971-March 1973)</li> <li>▪ <b>1977</b>, "Haitian Immigration to Quebec" (Jadotte)</li> <li>▪ <b>1978</b>, <i>Les Haïtiens au Québec</i> (Dejean)</li> <li>▪ <b>1979</b>, review <i>Collectif Paroles</i> formed (ceased 1987; 33 issues)</li> </ul> |
| 1980s  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ?</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>1980</b>, « La communauté haïtienne de Montréal, » (JC Icart)</li> <li>▪ <b>1983</b>, <i>L'émergence de l'ethnicité haïtienne au Québec</i> (Massé)</li> <li>▪ <b>1983</b>, « Émigration et immigration » (Labelle, Larose, and Piché)</li> <li>▪ <b>1984</b>, formation of CIDIHCA (still in action today)</li> </ul>             |
| 1990s  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>1996</b>, <i>La communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France</i> (Delachet-Guillon)</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>1993</b>, Cahiers of the CRRIR working group of UQAM (Labelle et. al.)</li> </ul>  |
| 2000s  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>2004</b>, <i>La communauté haïtienne de France</i> (Fleurimond)</li> <li>▪ <b>2009</b>, <i>Our Faith Makes Us Live</i> (Mooney)*</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>2004</b>, "Le Québec et Haïti: une histoire ancienne" (JC Icart)</li> <li>▪ <b>2007</b>, "Notes pour une histoire" (L Icart)</li> <li>▪ <b>2007</b>, <i>Ces Québécois Venus D'Haïti</i> (Pierre)</li> <li>▪ <b>2009</b>, <i>Our Faith Makes Us Live</i> (Mooney)*</li> </ul>   |
| 2010s  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>2011</b>, <i>Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora</i> (Jackson, ed.)*</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>2011</b>, <i>Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora</i> (Jackson, ed.)*</li> </ul>  |

Figure 11. Studies of the Haitian communities of Paris and Montreal<sup>133</sup>

The discussion of academic publishing in Montreal and Paris points to a semi-formalized social structure bringing Haitians and friends of Haitians together for common purposes: associations. These associations varied between the two sites, although general interest in them did not. Labelle and her colleagues contributed a pointed study of such associations in Montreal, identifying from the early-1990s project interviews two "visions of integration:" a *particularist* and a *universalist* approach, but both oriented toward integrating into the host society.<sup>134</sup> It was Delachet-Guillon who added this important new topic to the small academic discussion of Haitians in France. She describes the associative and community life

<sup>133</sup> The titles included for Quebec are only a sample, targeting those included in this paper.

<sup>134</sup> Micheline Labelle and Marthe Therrien, "Le mouvement associatif haïtien au Québec et le discours des leaders," *Nouvelles pratiques sociales* 5, no. 2 (1992): 65-83.

of the Haitian community, identifying and briefly discussing various types of community organizations and means of supporting the community from her perspective as an active contributor to the community's health.<sup>135</sup> Later, Glaude and Fleurimond both focused on describing associative life among Haitians in Paris, but Fleurimond's work (at least) was oriented quite differently to demonstrate the impact Haitians in Paris had within the broader Haitian community.<sup>136</sup>

The orientations of these associations – toward Quebec in Montreal, and toward Haiti in France – suggest differences in the ways Haitians were able to come together as a community based on the contextual community's laws and ideologies. Whereas Canadian laws enabled Haitians in Montreal to capitalize on and service a growing "ethnic market" for legal-political, social, commercial, and financial services,<sup>137</sup> French laws permitted significantly fewer means of association. Many of the Parisian respondents indicated the difficulties of working in a system that adamantly recognizes individuals rather than groups, ethnic or otherwise. Certainly, there were Haitian businesses that formed in Paris just as they did in Montreal. But it was much more challenging in Paris to offer "welcoming services" – to fight legal battles related to visas and residency, or just to find appropriate housing, employment, and education.

The differences in associative possibility in Montreal and Paris influenced the research I was able to do in each site. As described in the introductory paragraphs, the majority of my interviews in Montreal were with community activists and leaders

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<sup>135</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*.

<sup>136</sup> Smith Glaude, "Le dynamisme associatif des migrants Haïtiens en France métropolitaine," Master's thesis, U Paris 8, Saint-Denis (2001); Fleurimond, *La communauté haïtienne en France*.

<sup>137</sup> Massé, *L'émergence de l'ethnicité haïtienne au Québec*, 7.

outside of the Church. These respondents represented a strong network of community leaders and activists. Everyone seemed to know everyone else, referred me to the same core of people, recognized names of earlier activists that I had identified in archived documents, and suggested a united though diverse community. The physical locations of social services centers were accurate (in terms of addresses and directions) and operational, which greatly aided my work. To contrast, the majority of my interviews in Paris were with community activists and leaders connected to a religious establishment. Community leaders were set in niches apart from one another, each niche an island to itself, and I could broker no referrals or identify recognition of the names of earlier activists from most of the respondents. (A welcome exception to this absence of networking came when I finally connected with workers at a secular umbrella organization, PAFHA, to be discussed later.) The absence of public locations for most of the “secular” community associations and inaccuracy of other contact information greatly hindered my work there. But to suggest that the Haitians in Montreal work harder, better, or more efficiently than those in Paris is to misinterpret the networks.

The Haitian Catholic mission of Paris was founded in 1981 in the twentieth *arrondissement* parish of Saint-Joseph de Belleville, which was frequented by Spanish immigrants at the time. This movement to establish a Haitian Catholic hub was spearheaded by the French priest Ravenel who travelled often to Haiti. Due to difficulties of cohabitation between the Spanish and Haitian groups, the Haitian Catholic community moved to the parish of Bon Pasteur in the eleventh *arrondissement*. Ravenel left this small group for other work, and the spiritual

leadership of the Haitian Catholic community was taken up by visiting theological students from Haiti. Eventually the archbishop of Paris installed the growing Haitian Catholic community in its current location, the Saint-Georges parish in the nineteenth *arrondissement*. The group had grown to 300 regular worshipers by the time of Delachet-Guillon's monograph (1996) and "touched nearly 2,000 Haitians, of whom 70 percent were youths."<sup>138</sup> According to more modest estimates, by the year 2000 the community still "counted only 400 members." Today the Haitian Catholic community of Paris continues to meet at Saint-Georges de la Villette, where it stands, according to Mooney, with *Haiti Développement* as "practically the only rays of hope or connections to Haitian culture many people can find."<sup>139</sup>

These connections are not necessarily developed through the specific theology and practice of Catholic worship, however, though they may be couched in theological or religious terms. Rather, the Church serves as a social hub facilitated by the lay parishioners. The Catholic Haitians in Paris continue to rely on a constant exchange of theology students from Haiti to lead their particular worship service. A theology student comes to Paris for a few months to a few years, then leaves when his studies are complete. This means that individual parishioners have become the true leaders of their religious-ethnic community, for they have longer and more intimate connections with key contacts inside and outside the Church and Haitian communities. It is also, in some ways, easier for them to make the time to cultivate these relationships. The clergy must constantly balance key Church duties such as the Sunday sermon and service with their own continuing studies. Mooney and

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<sup>138</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 100-101.

<sup>139</sup> Mooney, *Faith Makes Us Live*, 156.

others seem to stress the importance of the Catholic community in Paris primarily for it being the source of origin and community work of one person in particular: the late parishioner René Benjamin.

Benjamin's self-operated social service, *Haïti Développement*, which he operated from his apartment, helped new Haitian immigrants to Paris "navigate the complex paperwork required to file for asylum status." Larger offices and halls were occasionally rented for important meetings or initiatives. Though little funding was available for staff or programs, Benjamin did receive money from the *Office française de la protection des réfugiés et des apatrides* (French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People, OFPRA), a government agency. Mooney observes, "In other words, the French government fund[ed] a civil society organization, and one led by a lay leader of a Catholic religious mission at that, to help undocumented immigrants normalize their status vis-à-vis the government."<sup>140</sup> This commentary highlights the seeming absurdity that a devoutly *secular* government would fund a specifically religious and ethnic effort that thwarted its own regulation of illegal immigration. Benjamin was such a prominent figure until his death in 2010 that the broader Haitian community of Paris still rallies around him. In June 2012 Haitian associations celebrated the first *Prix René Benjamin* (René Benjamin Prize) to recognize the efforts of French associations working for Haiti and Haitian causes.<sup>141</sup> This is particularly important because it signifies a recent

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<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>141</sup> "1ère édition du Prix René Benjamin," <<http://www.forim.net/contenu/1%C3%A8re-%C3%A9dition-du-prix-ren%C3%A9-benjamin>>; "Haïti – Diaspora France: Soirée de solidarité avec Haïti, Prix 'René Benjamin,'" *Haïti Libre*, June 13, 2012. <<http://www.haitilibre.com/article-5886-haiti-diaspora-france-soiree-de-solidarite-avec-haiti-prix-rene-benjamin.html>>.



emphasis on networking and shared responsibility among the variety of Haitian associations in Paris.

Margarita Mooney considers the role of the Catholic Church central to the adaptation efforts of Haitians in the three sites of diaspora that she observed for her book, *Faith Makes Us Live*. In spite of notable differences in the ways in which the Catholic communities in Miami, Montreal, and Paris engage with their constituents and the state, she argues that religion is fundamental to each.<sup>142</sup> Specifically, as Mooney suggests, religious institutions such as the Catholic Church provide a means of “cultural and institutional mediation” that “are inseparable and complementary.”<sup>143</sup> Unlike secular organizations or other ethnic associations, which, she implies, focus only on one connection, the Church provides a pivot point between social interactions and state interactions for the immigrant community. Furthermore, the fact that the Church does serve both roles provides even greater legitimacy and power for their work on behalf of the community.

However, I would argue that her lens and methodology have led to an overstatement of the role of the Catholic Church in community life. Specifically, it ignores Haitians’ rich participation in Protestant and secular associations as alternative expressions of Haitian community and identity that are as essential and central to Haitian immigrant adaptation in Paris. Delachet-Guillon noted that Protestant fellowships were well dispersed and represented an array of Christian sects, principal among them Baptist, Evangelical, Methodist, Pentecostal, and Nazareen faiths. According to her, each cared for between 200 and 500 members,

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<sup>142</sup> “Political contexts shape, but do not completely determine, how immigrants turn their religious piety into social action.” Mooney, *Faith Makes Us Live*, 34.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

with a total Protestant community numbering more than 4,500 followers. By 1987 they had organized at the urging of men like Pasteur Rodrigue Valentin of the Nazareen Church as the *Alliance des Eglises haïtiennes protestantes de France*, or the Alliance of Haitian Protestant Churches of France.<sup>144</sup> In my fieldwork in June 2012 the importance of this alliance was highlighted by the visit of the leader of the Protestant Federation of Haiti, Pasteur Exantus Sylvain, to witness the ordination of a member of a church in Blanc-Mesnil that evening. Pasteur Valentin served as the key host for Pasteur Sylvain during his few days in Paris, and both men emphasized the importance of the ordination as an opportunity for the larger Haitian Protestant community to celebrate together.

These sentiments of welcome, solidarity, and community were reiterated and reinforced by a group of ordination attendees who agreed, at the behest of some of the religious leaders I knew, to drive me from the ordination space to the nearest RER station on that rainy evening. Along the way, the driver decided he would instead take me all the way across the city to the sixteenth *arrondissement* where I was renting a room. The other man in the car who had drawn the short straw and was seated sideways in essentially the trunk space (the other seats occupied by women) engaged me the whole way in conversation. He connected France's republicanism to the way that the Haitian community in Paris was so spread out and individualist, in ways that the communities in North America were not. "That's how it is in France – it's not at all the same as in Canada or the United States," he said. And, he added, the churches here cannot serve the whole Haitian community as one unitary group. Rather, each individual church, often acting without a special site of its

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<sup>144</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 101-103.

own (i.e. sharing church space and possibly service times with non-Haitians), can only serve the particular needs of its parishioners. The *Alliance* helps combat isolation among these churches by providing a space for discussion of each congregation's current needs, issues, and desires. Other informants explained to me, for example, that the *Alliance* was currently helping its members negotiate for private property to provide unique locations for their Haitian fellowship.

But, the man in the back seat continued, while there is *no* connection among Haitians across all of Paris, there paradoxically *is*, as well. "Churches are particularly necessary in this community because it's the only place where they can really express themselves as a community." This puts church leaders in the best possible position for acting as leaders of the community as a whole, witnessed in the coming together for the ordination, for example. Yet even this was a small *manifestation* (event) for the community, the man explained. The great *manifestations*, such as those examined by Fleurimond, are rare. They would bring together the community across multiple beliefs, not just a small portion of the Protestant community. When I pressed him a little about the lack of cross-cutting lines of leadership among these parts of the Haitian community, so dispersed across the city and its *banlieue*, he suggested that perhaps there will be a mobilization of sorts, and perhaps there should be. This got a snort from the other man in the car, the driver, who had been half-listening as he navigated the highway across the city. I am not sure if the semi-verbal comment was disbelief that a mobilization would occur, or disbelief that a mobilization was necessary. This few-seconds exchange among us three illustrates

the challenges of building a Haitian community: desire is variable, and the effort required would be great.

The dispersion of Protestant believers geographically has also complicated scholars' ability to apply comparative ethnographic, sociological, and historical methodologies to them, as has been done with the Catholic believers by Mooney in three sites of the Haitian diaspora. But there are additional challenges. Some of my informants highlighted competition among the leaders of Protestant congregations for – for lack of another word – power, which would explain why it was so difficult for me to solicit additional contacts from the men I interviewed. Although there are umbrella groups to bring these faiths together, the leaders want to keep their resources to themselves. Delachet-Guillon credited this lack of communication to social divisions that Haitians brought with them, aggravated by the fact that the community is so dispersed compared to being at such close quarters in Haiti. For example she offered the experience of students, who have nothing in common with the newly arriving Haitians seeking work and refugee status.<sup>145</sup> Only two names were consistently mentioned across the informant interviews and documents: Benjamin, and the leader of a Protestant church named Jean-Yves Mars.

Mars was a prominent contributor to the associations' publications (community magazines and newsletters) in the 1980s and 1990s. Since so many of the authors seem to have left Paris – some for Haiti, or for other sites in France, Europe, or North America – it was exciting to be able to connect Mars-the-author with an extant public figure in the Haitian community of Paris. Yet, no one offered accurate contact information. There were several locations that were mentioned for

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<sup>145</sup> "Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 91.

his congregation, none of which I could verify. His former church building in Saint-Denis seem to have been the site of an unfortunate structural collapse during a worship service that resulted in the deaths of several community members. In January 2012 this address featured only a pile of rubble with a single doorframe standing.<sup>146</sup>

It is even more difficult to discern the role and presence of non-religious associations in the life of the Haitian community in Paris. Mooney seems to dismiss secular associations out of hand, perhaps because on paper they seem ineffective or because it would be challenging to connect with the membership of so many hundreds of organizations. Yet nearly everyone I asked in Paris referred to *both* associations (in the secular sense) and churches as the two main ways Haitians come together in metropolitan France. Even the religious leaders suggested as much, either independently or when asked directly about their secular counterparts.

This was in play nearly two decades ago, when Delachet-Guillon interviewed Haitian community leaders in France for her descriptive study, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*. She distinguished three types of associations in Paris: political, cultural, and development-oriented. Nearly all focused on improving life for Haitians in Haiti rather than in France, marking these as distinctly transnational organizations. This activism for Haiti in Paris has led some to suggest that the Paris Haitian community demonstrates the purest expression of transnationalism, going beyond what can be observed in traditional sites like New York and Miami.<sup>147</sup> For example, the “*Association Haïtienne du Dixième Département*” (the Tenth

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<sup>146</sup> The congregation may have temporarily moved to a site in an eastern *banlieue*, but it was beyond the scope of this project to visit all the potential addresses for this interim worship space.

<sup>147</sup> Private conversation, Paris, June 2012.

Department Association) founded in July 1991 worked simultaneously to support the morale and social life of Haitian exiles and to generate funds for aiding Haiti.<sup>148</sup> Fleurimond (2004) would have us believe that the entire Haitian community has fought solely for Aristide's re-election and for the democratization efforts in Haiti. Many secular Haitian associations seek to supply the resources needed in Haiti: education, medical care, and construction.

Among the hundreds of formally organized associations, most researchers and community leaders count only a handful of effective groups. In the 1990s these included the following, according to Delachet-Guillon: *Haïti Développement*, *Collectif Haïti de France*, *Association Pour Haïti*, *Association des Femmes Haïtiens de France*, and *Association d'aide et de soutien aux Haïtiens en France*.<sup>149</sup> One informant explained to me this is because there is strong interpenetration among the associations. If one association is not working, it is very probable that its leader is simply heavily involved in the projects of one or more other associations, perhaps as a leader or perhaps just as an active participant. Others explained it (anecdotally) as a function of the laws governing associations in France: it only takes three people to have an association, and an association is required to be able to access certain rights such as protest or rally permissions. Still others explained it as an expression of the individualism of the French community. Each wants his own association to be able to express his exact opinion. And, with the ease of forming associations, there is little drawback to separating from a parent association to form one's own. This was particularly evident to me in June 2012, when I observed a meeting between

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<sup>148</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 94.

<sup>149</sup> Delachet-Guillon, *La Communauté Haïtienne en Île-de-France*, 95-96.

two women who wished to start an association and a representative of PAFHA who was mentoring them. While the mentor emphasized that the two should connect with other associations to try to work within an existing structure, they were adamant that their idea required a unique organization to be able to stay true to their beliefs and goals. According to a colleague and the PAFHA representative, this is a fairly typical conversation.

PAFHA's presence potentially signals that the niche-ism among the Haitian community in Paris is giving way to greater cross-community collaboration, even somewhat across the secular-religious divides. The umbrella organization has spearheaded greater communication among the Haitian community-oriented secular and religious organizations of Paris. It seeks to offer a forum and collaborative assistance to all Haitian associations in Paris, providing networking to link like-minded groups and individuals with one another.<sup>150</sup>

And what of informal community organization? Haitian arts serve an essential role in connecting Haitian movements with the larger Parisian audience, which PAFHA's structure and Haitian community publications from the 1950s onward suggest has historically been essential. In fact, I was first introduced to PAFHA through French attendees at a January performance held at a community center in Romainville near the Metro Bobigny-Pantin-Raymond Queneau. I had found the event advertised on the door of the address of Paris's *Maison d'Haïti*, although I could never connect with any leadership of that organization and its doors were

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<sup>150</sup> Delachet-Guillon spoke of a tentative potential precursor to this collective, to be titled the "*Coordination des Activités Associatives Haïtiennes de France*," but I could not comment otherwise on how this and PAFHA are linked historically, if at all. Because of the researcher's close working relationship with René Benjamin, a founder of PAFHA, these entities could be, but are not necessarily, one and the same.

always closed. (As will be discussed later, the Montreal *Maison d'Haïti* could not be more different.) The event was a sort of modern spoken word and dance performance highlighting the plight of Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, drawing particular attention to the plight of Haitian mutes ("*le sort des sourdes*"). I would estimate roughly half the audience was not of Haitian origin. But everyone was there due to connections to Haiti or Haitians. For example, the woman who told me about PAFHA, a retired French schoolteacher, has worked over the years with a particular school-building organization in rural Haiti. The girls with whom I walked back to the metro were there because a Haitian friend had asked them to go as a group.

I found a similar turnout at another Haitian art event in late May at the *Villa Mais d'ici* in Aubervilliers, a northern *banlieue*. This was the first opportunity I had to record some conversations with Haitians. My first two interviewees were both men in their late thirties or early forties and were active in the Haitian art scene in Paris. Both had arrived in France via Aubervilliers, but under rather different circumstances. Anthony was born in Haiti in 1971 and came over to France when he was five years old with his mother, a cleaning woman. He has lived his whole life in Aubervilliers. Georges was born in Haiti around 1974, and did not come to France until 2001. Thus while Anthony made the trip without a choice, it was totally Georges's option as an informed adult. Georges came to Haiti as a result of the elections of Bertrand Aristide at that time (2000-2001). Because of what he experienced there, he chose to come to France to visit his sister (in Aubervilliers), and then sought political asylum. It is unclear if his journey was legal or illegal, or where he stands today in terms of his claim. Anthony actually responded about this difference, saying "It is not



at all the same thing” the way he found himself in Paris and the way Georges found himself here. I think he was referring to the fact of choice, age, and motivation.<sup>151</sup>

When I asked about the Haitian community, both men agreed that there was “a real Haitian community here” in Paris/France, based on their experiences. This struck me as quite different from the four men I had interviewed at the Haitian Consulate back in January under the pressing gaze of the manager and in front of a Consulate representative. Those four men at the Consulate did not seem to feel a sense of connection or community among the Haitians in Paris. A fifth Consulate informant, with whom I had chatted in the lobby while trying to explain my purpose, actually used the phrase “*disparu*” or missing/vanished/lost: “*Les Haïtiens ici sont disparus.*” In part, this man was discussing the way the Haitians fell in the cracks between classification as immigrant North Africans (*maghrébins*) and the French-citizen *Antillais* from the country’s Caribbean DOM-TOMs. But he was also addressing the lack of connections among Haitian individuals in the region.<sup>152</sup> Yet these two men at the festival argued that there was indeed an active and connected Haitian community working through both the churches and the associations. Anthony gave me the name of one association to check out further. Georges was less sure of how the Haitian community operated specifically, but he stressed in part the cultural connections such as through music and art – we were at an art festival, after all.<sup>153</sup>

Michel presented yet a different perspective. His experience with the Haitian community is notable for his distance from it while he is simultaneously engaged within it. I first saw him in January at the dance event where the organizers called

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<sup>151</sup> Georges and Anthony, 2012, interview with student, Paris, France, 3 June.

<sup>152</sup> Private conversation, Paris, France, January 2012.

<sup>153</sup> Georges and Anthony, interview.

him out as a celebrity in attendance, although we were not introduced personally. He was participating in the May festival as a musician – performing a traditional yet avant-garde Haitian set. But, as he later explained to me, if you were to ask him to describe his art he would not label it specifically as “Haitian;” it is just art, with no ethnic appellations. “Art transcends these things.”<sup>154</sup>

Or rather, *Michel* has transcended ethnic and cultural labels through his art. He arrived in France to a different Paris banlieue at the age of ten, around the year 1978. His parents brought him here, like so many other parents did with their children, because of the dangers posed by the political climate in Haiti. Like Anthony he has been for most of his life. That life has taken him outside of the Haitian community. He is married and has children with a non-Haitian, and he counts among his friends a diverse group of *artists*, whom (he emphasized) are not defined by a particular cultural label. Nationality seems much less important to him than a passion for what he does through music and other art forms. Yet, paradoxically and essentially, when I asked him what was important for me to understand about the Haitian community here – if one existed, he was not sure – he said it was the culture represented through the arts. He pointed around to another band that was playing on the stage, to the photographs, and the displays portraying the work of the “*Grandes Personnes*” (Giant Marionettes) that we had seen live about an hour previous. The sense of community developed through this cultural creation both remembered and constructed a Haitian idea, and extended it beyond its particular ethnic boundaries.

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<sup>154</sup> Michel, 2012, interview with student, Paris, France, 3 June.

Michel's experience draws attention to the intense and essential lines that are cast between the Haitian community of Paris and broader communities of interest: French, Haitian, diasporan, and more. Religious leaders call upon colleagues from North America and Haiti to attend conferences and events in Paris seemingly as a way to legitimize or lend weight to the affairs. A Guadeloupeen informant, a religious leader of a Haitian congregation, suggested two things in this regard. First, the same individuals are called upon time after time to participate in every event, which he feels limits the Haitian community's ability to network effectively. Second, the connections among these external contacts are often easier to find than those between different Haitian associations and congregations in Paris. The constant transnational awareness provides a two-way impression: the Haitian community of Paris is active and involved in Haiti's affairs, and Haitians from the homeland or other sites of the diaspora are called upon to lend authority to these efforts.<sup>155</sup>

Paris has influenced the development of its Haitian community in different ways than Montreal has influenced its Haitian community. Mooney has outlined the Parisian pressures as follows: (1) the size, dispersion, lack of human capital among Haitians in Paris; (2) the state framework's being incompatible for dealing with groups as opposed to individuals; and (3) a relatively unstable community leadership, since intellectuals return to Haiti or move to "more welcoming" sites of the diaspora and the community's Catholic priests are full-time students only temporarily in France. What this means on the ground is that associations seem ineffective because they are so fleeting, whereas in Montreal the community has had social services and publishing groups in full operation since the 1970s and everyone

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<sup>155</sup> Bonsaint, 2012, interview with student, Paris, France, June.

seems to know everyone else either directly or through kinship and other relationship ties.

The Haitian Catholic community in Montreal is currently located in the Saint-Edouard parish known as *La Misyon Notre Dame d'Haïti* (the Mission Notre Dame of Haiti). Mooney wrote that the Haitian community shared its worship space with the broader Quebec Catholic community in the early 2000s,<sup>156</sup> but it was not clear to me in 2008 that this was still a shared space. The space contained (and contains, at least through 2008), for example, a black Virgin Mary in honor of the Haitian patron saint *Notre Dame du Perpétuel Secours*, honored for providing aid during an epidemic in the late 1880s.<sup>157</sup> And, unlike Mooney and another researcher, Heike Drotbohm, who both did fieldwork in Montreal in 2002, I attended a service Sunday morning, not in the evening, which would suggest an increased prominence for the Haitian parishioners to be able to operate during prime religious service times. Additionally, during the week I was invited upstairs to the offices of the *Misyon*, where some women prepared a typical feast for lunch and several others – men and women – gathered to seek the attention of the priest. This would also suggest more permanence for the Haitian community, having regular offices beyond rented space within a Quebec parish. Interestingly, however, while some authors have drawn clear historical links between Quebec and Haiti via the Catholic faith,<sup>158</sup> there is no information about the history of this parish either as a group or as a location.

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<sup>156</sup> Mooney, *Faith Makes Us Live*, 121-122.

<sup>157</sup> See Heike Drotbohm, "Of Spirits and Virgins: Situating belonging in Haitian religious spaces in Montreal, Canada" in *Suomen Antropologi: Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society*, Vol. 33, no. 1 (2008): 33-50; Drotbohm, "Comment habiller la Vierge? Synchrétisme et anti-synchrétisme haïtien à Montréal," *Diversité urbaine*, Vol. 7, no. 1 (2007): 31-50.

<sup>158</sup> JC Icart, "Le Québec et Haïti: une histoire ancienne," *Cap-aux-Diamants: la revue d'histoire du Québec* 79 (2004): 30-34.

We can say that the Haitian Catholic community was formed at least by the early 1970s, when BCCHM was founded. As suggested in Section Three, the BCCHM – the *Bureau de la communauté chrétienne haïtienne de Montréal* – has played a significant role in transitioning new Haitian immigrants into Quebec society. This began with a very specific action during the *drame des 1500* by facilitating government interviews and providing data that helped administrators make decisions about deporting or regularizing the identified illegal Haitian immigrants in the province. Note that this is local-oriented aid, providing clear welcoming services for Haitians arriving from the homeland, not just providing services for the homeland. This orientation stands in contrast with what is available (and is possible) in Paris. In recent years, however, the BCCHM has found it necessary to drop the “Catholic” term from its name, and remains simply the Office of the Haitian Community of Montreal (BCHM). Thus Catholicism played an important initial role in the life of the Haitian community, but seems to have lost its grip in recent years.

The waning of the Catholic Church’s role in organizing and supporting the Haitian community of Montreal is typically attributed to growing secularism. In 2008 the priest’s primary lament as he ushered me around the upstairs offices and bade me eat lunch was that his parishioners and the Haitian community more broadly were losing their faith. Mooney suggests the broader impact of Canadian and Quebecois secularism, in which the waning of religious tradition has combined with a cold political and social context for religious organization of any sort to weaken the Church’s position in Montreal.<sup>159</sup> Indeed, secular associations (beyond those academic groups previously discussed) have played a stronger role in Haitian

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<sup>159</sup> Mooney, *Faith Makes Us Live*, 148-150.

community life in Montreal than the Church. The *Maison d'Haïti* provides the premier space for after-school tutoring, child and education services, family services, and social life of the Montreal Haitian community. The *Maison* emerged in 1972 from a summer project connected with a YMCA on Montreal's *Avenue du Parc*, funded modestly by the *Centre d'emploi du Canada* (Employment Center of Canada). In 1983, the group opened its own doors in the Haitian neighborhood of Saint-Michel.<sup>160</sup> Again, unlike those secular associations in Paris, the *Maison* provides local-oriented aid geared to integrating and supporting the diasporic community.

I spoke with Laurent there in May 2008, my first interview. He was working as a tutor and mentor for students in the 5-to-12 age group, he said, but it had not always been his calling. He was born in New York City to Haitian parents, and was sent to live in Haiti when he was around eleven months old. He remained there until about age nine or ten. Then he joined his parents in Montreal in 1971. Montreal has been his base since then, despite a few excursions. He attempted to study medicine in Argentina, but found it difficult due to issues with immigration, “a history of things” (a phrase he never clarified), and the politics at the time. Eventually, he earned a degree in sociology (switching from biology) from the English-speaking Concordia University in Montreal. From there he worked with several black community associations: the Negro Community Council, the Black Community Council of Quebec, and by extension the Côte-des-Neiges Black Community Association, “always in the community environment.” In the 1990s he “tried a new approach,” pursuing a construction management-type position in Haiti for two and a half years.

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<sup>160</sup> La Maison d'Haïti, “Historique,” 2012 (accessed November 25, 2012), <<http://www.mhaiti.org/histoire.html>>.

However, due to the politics of the time, he found it impossible to remain. From there he moved to a community association in West Palm Beach, Florida, where the primary focus was helping meet the needs of people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, their families, and the larger community. But after about three and a half years, he returned to Montreal to join the *Maison*.<sup>161</sup>

“I’ve been able to find my niche [...] in helping newcomers adapt,” Laurent said, explaining that his background as a bilingual and multicultural immigrant has helped him understand what needs to be addressed “on both sides of the issue.” This brought him to a career in “intercultural communication,” which seeks to sensitize people to immigrants by demonstrating and applying the knowledge that can be acquired from a shared experience (I am paraphrasing Laurent). A man I met at a conference of the Quebec Political Science Association at the Université de Montréal explained that intercultural communication is really a discipline only found in Canada – nowhere else. It emphasizes in practice the theory of multiculturalism expressed by Canadian politicians at all levels. Yet, interestingly, Laurent does not have Canadian citizenship and therefore cannot fully participate in Canadian life. (He has U.S. citizenship.) Once, he made significant steps toward obtaining Canadian citizenship while competing for a job with Immigration Canada in 1988, but after he realized he did not have enough political clout to win the position, he let his efforts lapse. It is ironic, he noted, because voting and political participation are things he encourages everyone to do as a means to fully integrate into Quebec society. And by “everyone” he means all people, not just the Haitians who arrive in Montreal. Just as Laurent has largely worked for black community (not Haitian community)

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<sup>161</sup> Laurent, 2008, interview with student, Montreal, Quebec, May.

organizations, the *Maison* serves a much broader population of black immigrants and Quebeckers than just those with connections to Haiti. The focus on cultural appreciation simply emphasizes Haitian heritage.<sup>162</sup>

The visibility of the Haitian community has extended beyond the *Maison*, the *Misyon*, and the BCCHM. It was pretty easy to find a Haitian meal in Montreal – I was referred to one restaurant in particular by a Haitian working with the black community in Côte-des-Neiges. This stands in contrast to Paris, where options for finding Haitian food were limited to an event at the Embassy in January commemorating the 2010 earthquake, the May artists' exhibition, and a boxed dinner provided by the congregation after the much-delayed and lengthy ordination in June. Though restaurants had been advertised in Pegguy Bazile's *Annuaire*, a short-lived annual directory of the Haitian community in France, and had been mentioned in other publications, I was hard-pressed to find them. In Montreal, however, there were junior and standard Haitian chambers of commerce uniting the area's business-owners and providing regularly updated directories of Haitian-owned businesses in the greater Montreal area. In 2008 the finishing touches were being placed on a new cultural center called *La Perle Retrouvée* – the re-found pearl, referencing Haiti's historical appellation as the Pearl of the Caribbean. The cultural center is located in the former church of Saint Damase, which the *Perle's* founding association, the *Association Culturelle Haïtienne* [Haitian Cultural Association], was able to purchase in the early 2000s.<sup>163</sup> Whereas one might question if there is a Haitian "community" in France, there is no doubt in Montreal that one exists. Mooney

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Association Culturelle Haïtienne Perle Retrouvée, "Historique," February 15, 2003 (accessed November 25, 2012), < [http://laperleretrouvee.netfirms.com/wpsite/?page\\_id=7](http://laperleretrouvee.netfirms.com/wpsite/?page_id=7)>.



noted that in 2001 Haitians represented the largest nonwhite ethnic group in Montreal.<sup>164</sup> With community organizations like the *Bureau*, the *Maison*, and the recently-constructed *Perle Retrouvée*, Haitians are a visible minority in every meaning of the expression.

Despite being two destinations that are very similar on the surface – both are francophone, Catholic, and primarily white – Paris and Montreal have had fundamentally different influences on the development of their Haitian communities. Through historiographic and ethnographic accounts, this thesis has demonstrated variation in community organization and expressions of community that have been influenced largely by the discourse of the contextual community. History itself seems both important and potent in the Montreal context, where multiculturalism encourages – and even demands – that ethnic groups represent themselves as visible components of a diverse society. Both Haitian and non-Haitian academics have explored patterns of migration and settlement in Canada, with a broad focus on issues of integration and community identity. Prominent community centers are only the visible infrastructure of a vibrant Haitian community there, which participates intimately in all aspects of Quebec society. Dany Laferrière, a Haitian author known for his sharp criticisms of the experience of being a black man and black immigrant in Canada, wrote in his celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Haitian Taxi Drivers' Association in Montreal that "*Une société est un ensemble*" – a society is a collection or an aggregate body.<sup>165</sup> That is, Haitians in Montreal can celebrate their history because society is seen as a collection and confluence of multiple experiences.

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<sup>164</sup> Mooney, *Faith Makes Us Live*, 118.

<sup>165</sup> Dany Laferrière, "Chauffeur de taxi haïtien: le dernier intellectuel en ville," *Association Haïtienne des Travailleurs du Taxi* (2007), 9.

Indeed, Laferrière is frequently cited in both the Haitian *and* the Quebecois literary pantheons.

The degree to which Haitians have integrated the Quebecois diasporic experience into their own history can be viewed in Maximilien Laroche's contribution to *Ethnologies* in 2006. He has incorporated the provincial motto, "*Je me souviens*" [I remember] into a tale of the Haitian immigrant's experience: I forget, I remember, I dream.<sup>166</sup> And it is arguably a reciprocal experience, a cross-pollination of ideas. In Jean Morisset's article "Haïti-Québec," this native Quebecker draws clear connections between the experience of the separatist referenda and the experience of Duvalier. He refers to Haiti as a "*pays-frère*," a brother country, and recounts an intertwined history that has brought Haitian ideas to Quebec, ideas like independence.<sup>167</sup> One story in particular draws them close. In it, Morisset recounts his experience in the Haitian intellectuals' coffee club that met (and meets) in the neighborhood of Côte-des-Neiges in Montreal, in 1980:

The referendum had just been lost in Quebec, the Duvalier clan sustained essentially by Washington[,] and the Vatican was continuing to lead the way in Haiti. Too much waiting, too many frustrated hopes--- too much sadness swirled with the snow, turning into slush! And yet, one flight of fancy always won out over any defeatism: 'If Papa Duvalier, who never knew what was happening here in Montreal, had had the chance to pass through Quebec,' a speaker told me quite seriously one day, 'he would have been forever changed and the country would have had[,] without a doubt[,] a different destiny.' Hm! And if [Quebec Premier Maurice] Duplessis had ever visited Port-au-Prince, heh! what would have happened then?<sup>168</sup>

Here, a Quebecker draws the stories and the histories of the two peoples into intimacy, extending it so far as to suggest that the present realities of each would be changed significantly if only the leaders had taken care to pay attention to the other's

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<sup>166</sup> Maximilien Laroche, "J'oublie, je me souviens, je rêve," *Ethnologies* 28, no. 1 (2006): 133-145.

<sup>167</sup> Morisset, "Haïti-Québec," 193.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.

experiences. That is, here a Quebecker contributes to the transnational identity of the Haitian by affirming the latter's place and contribution to his new land.

In comparison, historical interpretation seems absent in Paris, where the Haitian community itself can be described – as it is by some – as invisible. So little has been written about the Haitian community there, and so little is still available. The works of Haitian students in Paris have been lost due to the record-keeping practices of the university system. Among the available works we can count two sociological surveys – one in the 1970s and one in the 1990s – and a collection of news articles focusing on the Haitian community's actions oriented toward Haiti. Mooney's recent comparative ethnography focuses on only a small aspect of the Haitian community: the Catholic community. The seeming disinterest in studying ethnic groups stems from the state's approach to immigration. The French government actively discourages any group representation other than as a whole French society. Several Parisian informants suggested that the very idea of "integration" is misguided, an intellectual construct imposed from outside that skews the image of the community. As one man put it, "*S'intégrer, c'est à moi.*" (Integration is up to *me* to do.) Many repeated this sentiment in various ways. The Haitians with whom I spoke at all levels generally suggest that integration is expected and is the task of the individual – either the immigrant or his neighbor – to carry out. As much as for some it may be important to have a place to express one's own culture, it cannot be without regard to one's neighbors.

But the subdued image of the Haitian integration experience in Paris should not suggest a lack of success in integration. Most informants were emphatic that on

some level, they were indeed integrated into French society. For some it was a matter of having children and “needing” to be integrated. For others it was a matter of being French in public, in terms of legal status and having French friends. For still others it was a matter of professional standards, being an “artist” rather than a “*Haitian* artist.” In each case, informants defined their integration in terms of an individualist perspective that reflected the French creed of republicanism.

As Jackson’s edited volume highlights, the sites of Haitian diaspora should not be considered monolithically; rather, each site has its own peculiarities of host influence and Haitian response.<sup>169</sup> Even within a given diasporic community, “a seemingly ‘ethnic’ identity such as ‘Haitian’ is fluid and multifaceted,” wrote Glick Schiller and Fouron about the New York Haitian community.<sup>170</sup> Jackson, Brodwin, and Martinez argued that transnationalism has focused overly much on creating a timeless generalization from too few cases – in the Haitian example, from the diasporic experience in New York City. Not only does this perpetuate incorrect assumptions, but it ignores the uniqueness of an immigrant group’s multiple experiences. This thesis has attempted to contribute to such a broader discussion of the transnational experience by comparing the intellectual coming-to-terms of Haitian settlement in Paris and Montreal, respectively. The driving focus of my research – an emphasis on and interesting use of history in Montreal – proved an awkward subject to test in Paris. The expectations for immigrants in Montreal are that they will mobilize as a group and seek to retain an open, public identity as an

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<sup>169</sup> Jackson in Jackson, *Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora*.

<sup>170</sup> Nina Glick-Schiller and Georges Fouron, “Everywhere We Go We Are In Danger’: Ti Manno and the Emergence of a Haitian Transnational Identity,” *American Ethnologist* 17, no. 2 (May 1990):330.

ethnic community. The expectations for immigrants in Paris are that they will do exactly the opposite: keep their ethnicity to themselves and join the French community on an equal cultural footing. And, importantly, Haitians have expressed their place and role in these sites in the terms of that unique political-social context. Recognizing that integration can be expressed in multiple ways, we can explore transnationalism in terms of the integration process itself, based on the local and global simultaneously.

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