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# "New" Social Movements: Alternative Modernities, (Trans)local Nationalisms, and Solidarity Economies

Mamyrah Prosper

Florida International University, mpros001@fiu.edu

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

NEW HAITIAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: ALTERNATIVE MODERNITIES,  
(TRANS)LOCAL NATIONALISMS, AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMIES

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

GLOBAL & SOCIOCULTURAL STUDIES

by

Mamyrah Prosper

2015

To: Dean Michael R. Heithaus  
College of Arts and Sciences

This dissertation, written by Mamyrh Prosper, and entitled New Haitian Social Movements: Alternative Modernities, (Trans) local Nationalisms, and Solidarity Economies, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

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Alexandra Cornelius

---

Caroline Faria

---

Jean Muteba Rahier

---

Vrushali Patil, Major Professor

Date of Defense: March 20, 2015

The dissertation of Mamyrh Prosper is approved.

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Dean Michael R. Heithaus  
College of Arts and Sciences

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Dean Lakshmi N. Reddi  
University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2015

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation to my parents Simone and Fernand who have always demonstrated unwavering love and support.

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I wish to acknowledge the steadfast support of my family, friends, colleagues, and professors, who all made the completion of this dissertation possible. Their indefatigable work and feedback enthused me to push through this grueling process, and inspired me to produce work that is a contribution to existing scholarship.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

NEW HAITIAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: ALTERNATIVE MODERNITIES,  
(TRANS)LOCAL NATIONALISMS, AND COLLECTIVE ECONOMIES

by

Mamyrah Prosper

Florida International University 2014

Miami, Florida

Professor Vrushali Patil, Major Professor

My dissertation is the first project on the Haitian Platform for Advocacy for an Alternative Development- PAPDA, a nation-building coalition founded by activists from varying sectors to coordinate one comprehensive nationalist movement against what they are calling an Occupation. My work not only provides information on this under-theorized popular movement but also situates it within the broader literature on the postcolonial nation-state as well as Latin American and Caribbean social movements. The dissertation analyzes the contentious relationship between local and global discourses and practices of citizenship. Furthermore, the research draws on transnational feminist theory to underline the scattered hegemonies that intersect to produce varied spaces and practices of sovereignty within the Haitian postcolonial nation-state. The dissertation highlights how race and class, gender and sexuality, education and language, and religion have been imagined and co-constituted by Haitian social movements in constructing 'new' collective identities that collapse the private and the public, the rural and the urban, the traditional and the modern. My project complements the scholarship on social movements and the postcolonial nation-state and pushes it forward by



emphasizing its spatial dimensions. Moreover, the dissertation de-centers the state to underline the movement of capital, goods, resources, and populations that shape the postcolonial experience. I re-define the postcolonial nation-state as a network of local, regional, international, and transnational arrangements between different political agents, including social movement actors. To conduct this interdisciplinary research project, I employed ethnographic methods, discourse and textual analysis, as well as basic mapping and statistical descriptions in order to present a historically-rooted interpretation of individual and organizational negotiations for community-based autonomy and regional development.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Assembly of Caribbean Peoples	ACP
Limonade Women's Association for the Development of Agricultural and Craft Production	AFLIDEPA
National Association of Small Farmers	ANAP
National Haitian Association of Agro-professionals	ANDAH
Accord of Economic Partnership	APE
Association of Milk Producers in Limonade	APWOLIM
Committee for the Abolition of the Third World Debt	CADTM
Caribbean Community	CARICOM
Democractic Convergence	CD
Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights	CLADEM
National Council on Food Security	CNSA
Haitian Collective for the Environmental Protection and Alternative Development	COHPEDA
Convergence of People's Movements of the Americas	COMPA
National Coordination for the Advocacy for Women's Rights	CONAP
Center for Action Research and Development	CRAD
Center for Research and Action on Social Problems	CRAPS
Foundation for Economic and Social Development	FONHADES
Housing Force of Reflection and Action	FRAKKA
Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti	FRAPH
Free Trade Area of the Americas	FTAA

Genetically-Modified Organism	GMO
Research and Support Group in Rural Areas	GRAMIR
Haitian American Sugar Company	HASCO
Hemispheric Social Alliance	HSA
Institute for Social Well-Being and Research	IBSR
Cultural Institute of Karl Lévesque	ICKL
International Council of Women of the Darker Races	ICWDR
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights	ICRH
International Development Bank	IDB
International Financial Institution	IFI
International Monetary Fund	IMF
National Institute of Haitian Coffee	INCAH
International Non-Governmental Organization	INGO
Grouping of Organizations for the Promotion of Development	Inter-OPD
Institute of Technology and Animation	ITECA
Coordination of the Artibonite Region	KORELA
Coordination of the Nippes Region	KORENIP
Coordination of the Sud-Est Region	KORS
Peasant Coordination of Communal Section of Lower Maribawo	KPSKBM
Women's League for Social Action	LFAS
Ministry of the Feminine Condition and Women's Rights	MCDFD
United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti	MINUSTAH
United Movement of Small Peasants	MITPA

Movement of Workers and Peasants	MOP
The Artibonite People's Advocacy Movement	MOREPLA
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People	NAACP
Organization of American States	OAS
Plateforme Haitienne de Plaidoyer pour un Développement Alternatif	PAPDA
National Platform for Food Security	PFNSA
Platform of Peasant Claims of Artibonite	PREPLA
Rally of Haitian Women	RAFA
Source of Limonade's Hope	SEL
Haitian-American Society for Agricultural Development	SHADA
Solidarity of Haitian Women	SOFA
Small Peasants Unite	TK
Union of Patriotic Haitian Women	UFAP
United Nations Mission in Haiti	UNMH
Union Patriotique	UP
Volunteers for National Security	VSN
World Forum for Alternatives	WFA

## CHAPTER I: Introduction

### “New” Haitian Social Movements and the Transnational Anti-Globalization Movement

On November 1, 2012 at 7AM, an expedition of eight people climbed aboard a Nissan Patrol from Plaisance<sup>1</sup> en route to Bayakou, a two-hour hike up the mountains overlooking Dieulène's home.<sup>2</sup> Dieulène had advised us to take additional servings of the bouillon<sup>3</sup> she had served us for breakfast. She and the other leaders of *SOFA-Plaisance*<sup>4</sup> had led delegations to Bayakou several times before this one. This was the first, however, Dieulène would accompany Bernard, a foreigner, to meet the members residing in Bayakou, three hours away from the nearest electric pole. Bernard had traveled from Belgium to come assess the effectiveness of *PAPDA*'s<sup>5</sup> coordination of the funds provided by his organization *Entr'Aide et Fraternité*<sup>6</sup> for collective farming in Plaisance and its neighboring towns. As we neared the center of Bayakou, a young woman inquired about her son who had been reported missing that morning from the only school in the village, run by Catholic missionaries. A neighbor had seen him and another boy roaming around the mountains. We arrived around 10AM and were welcomed by a group of six women. Dieulène facilitated the introductions and urged the Bayakou chapter leader to share with us the needs of her community. Bernard attentively listened, hoping to make out the Kreyòl words. Ricot, *PAPDA*'s field coordinator, then proceeded to translate the

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<sup>1</sup> Haiti is divided into 10 geographical departments. Plaisance is a commune in the Department of Nord.

<sup>2</sup> Dieulène is the main coordinator of *SOFA-Plaisance*.

<sup>3</sup> Bouillon is a traditional Haitian soup composed of primarily greens and starches with beef or chicken.

<sup>4</sup> *Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn* (Haitian Women Solidarity). *SOFA-Plaisance* operates out of Plaisance.

<sup>5</sup> *Plateforme Haitienne de Plaidoyer pour un Développement Alternatif* (*PAPDA*) or Haitian Platform for Advocacy for an Alternative Development.



following for him: “The State does not come here. Only during elections do candidates show up in these parts. If one of our people is sick, we have to unhook a door to transport him [or her] on it down the mountain to the nearest dispensary.” Bernard expressed his astonishment at the community’s methods of survival. He also vowed to continue his support of the Bayakou women’s collective. Ricot, Bernard and I separately documented the exchange using a voice recorder as well as a video camera. To complete the visit, we toured the gardens of vegetables and spices the farmers use to cook as well as sell in town. Bernard, Ricot, and I took pictures of the crops, each one of us with differing motivations and purposes. The women posed; some put on their best smiles. Finally, they requested to see the photographs in order to approve the final versions.



Figure 1. Bernard and *SOFA*-Bayakou chapter

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<sup>6</sup> *Entr’Aide et Fraternité* is a Belgian non-governmental organization and foundation.

Our entire visit lasted a little over three hours. We then headed back down the mountains, our water supply already depleted. When we arrived at the dispensary, there was no bottled water available for sale. Dieulène and her teammates pointed to the brook nearby and stated nostalgically, “Before the MINUSTAH <sup>7</sup> brought us Cholera, <sup>8</sup> people could safely drink from stream. Now they do so at their own risk.”

SOFA-Bayakou women farm together and sell their produce in their own village, in the town at the feet of the mountains as well as in the city of Plaisance. Most importantly, they share all profits with one another. In remote areas like Bayakou, individualist capitalist competition yields profit for no one. Instead, residents engage in solidarity economies that foster interdependency and communalism. The collective system ensures the survival of an entire village rather than just one family. Solidarity economies in rural Haiti are a revival of the *konbit*-style <sup>9</sup> farming of small peasants. Social movement organizations (SMOs) around the world including the Global North advance this economic model to redress the deleterious effects of global capitalism, namely the threat to food sovereignty. They are members of the transnational anti-globalization movement that envisions a “pluriverse”<sup>10</sup> world in which autonomous groupings of people control their national production and manage their own participation in the global modern order. As such, social movement leaders from indebted countries strategically compromise their sovereignty to foster translocal partnerships with those

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<sup>7</sup> MINUSTAH is the United National Stabilization Mission in Haiti

<sup>8</sup> See for more information: <http://www.ijdh.org/cholera/cholera-litigation/>

<sup>9</sup> Kreyòl for “a community of people coming together for one common goal.”

<sup>10</sup> Escobar, Arturo. 2008. Territories of Difference : Place, Movement, Life, Redes. Duke University Press.

from debtor nations. More specifically, SMOS like PAPDA, led by polyglot educated activists, utilize their access to Global North funders to circumvent the absent state in order to establish solidarity economies in rural Haiti and to construct an alternative modern citizenship.

**“Politics of Location:”<sup>11</sup> Globalization, “Occupation,” and the Haitian Nation-State**

This dissertation is about the emergence of “new” social movements in Haiti as well as the dynamics of the contemporary world. As such, globalization and modernity, as interwoven discourses, are a major focus of this dissertation as they are linked to the formation and practices of translocal nationalisms, alternative modernities, and solidarity economies. Intensified and accelerated by transportation and communications technology, globalization is the uneven movement of capital, goods, people, ideas as well as diseases. Facilitated by the “Washington Consensus” and military interventions, neoliberal globalization involves the penetration of new markets, and the exploitation of “otherized” laborers and “underutilized” natural resources. Backed by deracinated cosmopolitan elites, globalization is also the circulation of trendy de-territorialized cultural artifacts and mores. Thus, the discourse of globalization emphasizes a re-ordering of old modern structures along with postmodern notions of diversity and multiculturalism. Much like concepts such as the “Third World,” globalization is a recasting of social, political, and economic relations between the “old” metropolises and their “former” colonies, respectively representing progress and backwardness. Accordingly, traditionalism spatialized as rural in opposition to modernism as urban is an integral

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<sup>11</sup> Mohanty, Chandra Tapalde. 2003. *Feminism without Borders*. Duke University Press

component of modernity itself. The binary between “modernity” and “tradition” is a product of the logic of modernity. Therefore, modernity is a global charter of order with local specificities. As such, I echo Hintzen’s (2012) claim that the Caribbean is quintessentially modern.<sup>12</sup>

While globalization processes are direct consequences, remnants, and derivations of colonialism and imperialism, they are not simply re-productions. The United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, non-profit organizations (NGOs), and Christian missionaries have complicated the landscape. No longer is it possible to point directly to the sole power in charge. More pointedly, while the United States (U.S.) occupies the Middle East, Brazil serves as its trusted proxy in Latin America and the Caribbean, and particularly in Haiti via the legitimizing agency of the UN. In my approach to globalization, the local is not simply the product of the global. Instead, the global is itself a set of processes that connects varying localities. As such global systems are also historical systems. Within these systems, there is an articulation at differing moments in time between the local and the global in which the local is re-produced, but not created, within larger global processes (Friedman and Friedman 2008; Mohanty 2003). To appreciate the current order in Haiti, I situate the postcolonial nation-state within a geo-political history of the region as well as the world.

On January 12, 2010, at 4:53pm, a 7.0 earthquake devastated the cities of Port-au-Prince, Léogâne, Petit-Goâve and Jacmel, and neighboring towns and communities.<sup>13</sup> A

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<sup>12</sup> Hintzen, Percy C. 2012. The Caribbean in the Modern World: Ideology, Reality, and Utopian Vision. Paper presented on Panel “Diaspora and Linkages in the New Global Architecture of Development” at the Fifty-Fifty: Critical Reflections in a Time of Uncertainty, organized by The Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) on the UWI Mona campus.

few hours after the disaster, the former administration of René Préal welcomed the U.S. military along with additional UN troops and innumerable international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) to assist in securitizing Haiti's borders— even before aid had been delivered. Within minutes of the earthquake, all major U.S. news stations were reporting on the destruction of Haiti. Within hours, U.S. President Obama delivered a speech urging his nation's people to make donations in support of the disaster relief efforts. Haitians in the Diaspora, concerned about their loved ones in the homeland, avidly watched CNN journalists report directly from Haiti piecemeal information gathered from Skype and Facebook users unharmed by the disaster. All of the institutional buildings of the Haitian State had collapsed. All Haitian governmental agencies were incapacitated. Several days after the earthquake, the Haitian government had still not yet issued an official statement. Talks of reconstruction inundated all discussions on Haiti. The Haitian state, grassroots organizations, the Haitian political and economic elites and the Haitian diaspora identified themselves as necessary agents for the redevelopment of Port-au-Prince, the political and economic center of Haiti.

In the decades preceding the disaster, Haiti had experienced hurricanes that had left the infrastructure of certain key provinces such as Gonaïves, the city of independence, under continual repair. However, while hurricanes occur every year, and sometimes more than once a year, the weakened government agencies of Haiti had yet to develop a disaster relief plan. In addition to the low level of disaster preparedness of the Haitian government, earthquakes are unusual phenomena in the geological history of

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<sup>13</sup> Port-au-Prince and Léogâne are located in the Department of Ouest. Jacmel is the capital of the Department of Sud-Est. The earthquake largely affected the southeast of the country. The north was not affected by the disaster.

Haiti. However, disasters are not unpredictable phenomena (Hoffman and Oliver-Smith 1999). They are social productions. The complicity between the political and economic elites of Haiti and U.S.-proscribed neoliberal policies had engendered exaggerated disparities in the organization of social space in addition to the quality of life between the poor and more comfortable classes. Most U.S. news accounts presented the earthquake as a citywide devastation, invisibilizing the disproportionate fatal effects on poor urban and rural people while most members of the more affluent socio-economic groups continued to enjoy the safety of their homes located in the more privileged suburban areas of the city.

Conversely, the earthquake provided the opportunity for social movements and subsequently, for Haitian civil society to re-emerge unto the “public sphere.” Through the coordination of the centralized organizing body PAPDA, key local activist groups increasingly gained visibility, clearly pronouncing themselves against what they call the socio-economic military “Occupation” of Haiti. The local and international responses to the earthquake highlight competing practices of sovereignty, tensions between the nation and the state, and finally the revival of civil society against the local state and the “international community.” In the dissertation, I de-center the state as the sole interlocutor of the international and agent of development in order to bring to light the contributions of social movements as national actors in the “re-construction” of Haiti.

### **“New” Haitian Social Movements?**

This dissertation presents information on the under-theorized social justice movement in Haiti. Additionally, it positions this pluralized movement within the broader literature on

the postcolonial nation-state as well as Latin American and Caribbean social movements. This dissertation is about the rise of “new” social movements in Haiti as well as the rapport between civil society and the state in postcolonial Latin America. Inaccessibility to state institutions, practices, politics, procedures, and discourses created a wedge between different Latin American populations and the state (De la Torre and Sanchez 2012, Rahier 2012, Harcourt and Escobar 2005, Oslender 2001, Trouillot 2000, Davis 1999, Alvarez 1998, Dagnino 1998, Slater 1998, Calderon et al. 1992, Escobar 1992, Escobar and Alvarez 1992). Characteristic of the colonial state was the distancing of the state from society (Young 1994). Newly formed Latin American postcolonial nation-states utilized colonial institutions and structures upon which to construct their modernity and participate in the global system. Former indentured and enslaved Indigenous and Afro-descendants groups were geographically isolated from the centralized power, marginalized from the dominant culture, and excluded from participating in state institutional practices. White-mestizo elites dominated the political and economic arenas. In the case of Haiti, the 1915-1934 U.S. Occupation followed by the three-decade long dictatorship of the Duvalier family completely eroded civil society.

Following the Great Depression and World War II, most Latin American states endeavored to decrease their economic dependence on U.S. markets and imported manufactured goods by developing their own national industries for local consumers. In turn, trade unions grew and formed political ties with ruling parties and states, eventually leading to their decline (Roberts 2007). In the case of Haiti, unions were dismantled by the totalitarian regime of the Duvalier family and the import-substitution industrialization (ISI) model was not applied. The collapse of ISI and the subsequent economic crisis in

the 1970s pushed the U.S. and U.K. administrations to impose the “Washington Consensus” on Latin American and Caribbean nation-states. Concurrently, new identity-based social movement organizations ascended, demanding recognition as well as redistribution. They sought to re-shape the political as well as the cultural domains of their respective nation-states (Escobar and Alvarez 1998). Neoliberal globalization had further distanced the state from the reaches of the multitudes. Conversely, geographic, institutional, and cultural detachment had allowed marginalized peoples to develop collective identities away from the state, and to mobilize and organize into collective action (Davis 1999).

New Social Movement (NSM) theorists set apart class- and identity-based movements, claiming that the latter are distinct from the former. On the contrary, Latin American social movement theorists promote a new definition of citizenship that reconciles culture and politics (Featherstone 2008, Lee 2007, Oslender 2001, Polletta and Jasper 2001). They propose to examine culture and social movements as an interwoven dynamic process. Thus, new social movements are not “new.” Instead, they are a response to the invisibilization of certain identities in previous or “old” class-based movements. They are the embodiment of previously systematized individual experiences within a national context under specific local conditions. In the case of Haiti, Haitian Platform of Advocacy for an Alternative Development (PAPDA) serves as the link between class-based and identity-based social movements in order to advance a comprehensive nationalist agenda. In the dissertation, I discuss the multiple tactics of PAPDA at the local, national, and international level. Founded in 1995, the coalition of SMOs functions as a think tank as well as executes alternative economic “experiments.”



PAPDA identifies political opportunities and targets for collective action. It coordinates various social movements and endeavors to forge a collective identity among members. Finally, as a mobilizing structure, PAPDA aims to dismantle the “Occupation.”

### **Research Questions**

The issues raised by the scholarship on Latin American and Caribbean social movements push me to ask the following: How has the Haitian Platform of Advocacy for an Alternative Development (PAPDA) re-shaped the state and civil society in Haiti? Some Latin American and Caribbean social movement actors are members of both the state and civil society. In the dissertation, I am interested in understanding how PAPDA and its member- and allied-organizations navigate these two spaces in order to effectuate social change. Social movements utilize various strategies to recruit and retain members, and to produce collective identities and present a coordinated national agenda. PAPDA functions as a link between identity-based and class-based social movements, entrusted by its member- and allied-organizations to articulate a unified narrative. In the dissertation, I inquire about the following: How has PAPDA situated itself within the larger Haitian Popular Movement? Both the scholarship on social movements and the postcolonial nation-state point to the fragility of sovereignty in the Global South. Consequently, I pose the following question: How has PAPDA framed sovereignty within the transnational counter-globalization movement? The scholarship on the postcolonial nation-state highlights the inherent contradictions that inform national discourses and practices of race, class, gender, and sexuality. In the dissertation, I seek to examine how PAPDA and its member- and allied-organizations deploy race, class,

gender, and sexuality in their (re)definition of modern national and global citizenship. In what follows, I outline my dissertation chapters.

### **Chapter Summaries**

In the dissertation, I examine the relationship between globalization and social movements in Haiti. Accordingly, I organize my work around the evolution of the social movement coalition PAPDA established after the cultural turn in politics by activist organizations already engaged in the previous transnational anti-dictatorial “Revolution of 1986.” As I mentioned above, re-presenting “new” social movements in Haiti requires that I locate them in their proper historical, economic, political, and cultural contexts. It also obliges me to situate myself in my own work. As such, in Chapter II, I explain my use of feminist ethnography to examine my fluctuating positionalities as a student researcher, a diasporic Haitian woman, a movement supporter, and a friend in the field that both allowed and restricted my entry into “the field.” I also discuss the methods I employed such as in-depth interviews, the gathering of discursive and visual material, participation observation as well as basic geographical and statistical information in order to provide a thick description. I show how these different methods facilitated my re-construction of social movement resistance against the “Occupation.” I also bring to light the ethical issues I considered around naming my informants, documenting my fieldwork data, and utilizing friendship as a method. Finally, I acknowledge that my analysis is but a re-production of an incomplete “reality” that highlights the contributions of marginalized actors that seek to transform society.

To make social change, social movement actors invoke national laws to denounce state malfunction and regulations that maintain inequality. Thus, social movements challenge dominant structures and discourses (Ray and Korteweg 1999; Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Kriesi 1995). As such, in Chapter III, I examine the articles of the 1987 Constitution as well as the newly amended version of 2011 against the Civil, Rural, Penal, Commercial, and Fiscal Codes. Constitutions and special laws are social contracts between the state and its constituencies. They regulate people's bodies and lives. Moreover, they provide guidelines for the practice of sovereignty, democracy, and citizenship. In Chapter III, I discuss the globalization of Global South constitutions following the independence movements in Anglophone Caribbean colonies and the neoliberal multicultural turn in Latin America. I draw attention to the local and global political opportunities that made possible the negotiation and creation of new constitutions in the American Global South that recognized and granted rights to previously invisibilized populations. I point to the promotion of neoliberal democracy and human rights through the "Washington Consensus" and UN declarations as well as the rise of "new" social movements in Latin America (and Haiti) and the transnational anti-globalization movement as catalysts for this shift. In consequence, the history of constitution-making is also the history of "new" social movements in Latin America.

In Chapter IV, I present the history of PAPDA, which is also the history of "new" social movements or what activists call "*Revolisyon 1986*" as well as the history of the transnational anti-globalization movement in Haiti. Thus, I document the two decades of fieldwork of the coalition. I analyze the linkages and interdependencies between Haitian and other social movements from varying geopolitical national contexts. As such, I point

to social movement leaders' concerns about the NGOization of the coalition.

Nevertheless, I emphasize that extra-national donations make social movement praxis possible. They enable PAPDA to “experiment” with solidarity economies in the “under-developed” rural areas. Additionally, I examine coalition tensions that arose around the definition of tradition and the promotion of gender equality. In order to discuss coalition-building processes between ideologically related SMOs, I weave together the accounts of PAPDA leaders as well as platform publications. I also analyze the socio-economic composition of the leadership, which serves to underline the coalition’s mission. Haitian social movement leaders aim to accompany and equip the “popular masses” with the right tools to intervene in the Port-au-Prince public sphere, thus creating a rural civil society.

The nationalist coalition PAPDA includes an unusual feminist dimension. Feminist scholarship has traditionally viewed nationalism as dangerous to women (Alexander 1994; Chatterjee 1993; McClintock 1991). As such, in Chapter V, I pay special attention to PAPDA’s relationship with its feminist organization already mentioned above, SOFA, and their co-constitution of a “new” nationalist movement. In doing so, I trace 100 years of history of the feminist movement in Haiti to discuss the rise of feminist consciousness alongside nationalist movements. I begin the chapter with the anti-U.S. Occupation resistance movements to focus on women’s contributions. I then extensively profile the first feminist organization in Haiti and their struggles to incorporate women in the national legal imaginary. I also examine women’s lives under the dictatorial regime of Duvalier and the dismantling of the feminist movement in Haiti through gender-based violence. I follow up with an analysis of the transnationalization of

the movement and its instrumental role in the “Revolution of 1986.” Piecing together my interviews with SOFA leaders, I provide an exposé of the “new” Haitian feminist movement that continues to make use of century-old practices of transnational organizing with other women’s movements, of national collaboration with other women and men, and of state infiltration to move their agenda.

Haitian social movements make claims to the state with sit-ins, protests, press releases, symbolic assemblies, as well as notebooks of demands. Having thoroughly discussed PAPDA and its emergence, in Chapter VI, I focus on one of the coalition’s national actions, the *Cahiers de Revendication*.<sup>14</sup> In doing so, I provide an ethnographic analysis of three sets of three retreats organized by PAPDA and other allied-organizations that brought together peasant SMOs from various locations in the same department to formulate departmental as well as regional notebooks of demands and recommendations to the transnational capitalist Haitian state. I first focus on the ripe national as well as the international opportunities such as the anniversaries of two major historical events that emphasize Haiti’s dependency on international economies as well as the delayed elections that incentivized leaders to gather social movement members. I also highlight the financial links between the platform and its extra-national allies. Then, I evaluate the Participatory Action Research (PAR) process designed by facilitators to solicit member contribution. I point to the tense negotiation of movement frames between leaders and participants. As such, I demonstrate that collective identity-making is asymmetrically co-constructed.

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<sup>14</sup> French for “Notebook of Demands”

To conclude, I recall the main arguments I advance in each chapter of the dissertation. “New” Haitian social movements are local expressions of the hierarchical transnational anti-globalization movement. I review my previous analysis of the Non-Profit Industrial Complex to highlight the multifarious linkages and interdependencies between social movements from debtor and indebted countries. I also problematize social movement visions of a “pluriverse” post-capitalist world of self-determining yet globally connected nations. “New” Haitian social movements are continuations of previous fights against the dictatorship of the Duvalier family. Thus, I argue that they link “old” class-based with “new” identity-based discourses in their attempt to collapse the rural and the urban, “tradition” and “modernity”, as well as the local and the global. “New” social movements endeavor to take over the state by at times, opposing and at others, appropriating dominant cultural and political local and global discourses. They invoke national legal texts as well as international dictates to back up their claims. Additionally, movement leaders recruit, mobilize, and organize members into action by engaging them in a fraught process of collective identity-making. More pointedly, “new” social movements converge and collaborate to denounce the “Occupation” of Haiti. I restate my claim that “new” nationalist social movements are not dangerous to women even though they continue to struggle with fully integrating a gendered dimension to their discourse and work. Nevertheless, I point to PAPDA’s exclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) issues and call for additional research on these “newer” movements.

## CHAPTER II

### Constructing the “Homeland” as the Field: Positionalities, Activism, and Feminist Research

When the event hostess, Julie,<sup>15</sup> announced Ricot, the crowd cheered. Ricot had stood in front of the assembly of women just a few months before, during the planning of the grand opening of *AFLIDEPA*<sup>16</sup>’s center. “Applaud yourself, not me!” he exclaimed upon exiting the stage after his speech. Julie then invited supportive community and family members in addition to key international, national, and local organizational allies and donors to speak and share with the audience with stories about their relationship to this collective of women. The event concluded with the presentation of the staff of the new peanut butter transformation center and shop as well as the seed store. At the closing of the event, the organizers served refreshments, *kasav ak manba*<sup>17</sup> and *Lèt a Gogo*<sup>18</sup> yogurt, stressing the importance of consuming locally-produced goods. As I gathered my belongings and prepared to head over to the seed store to witness the distribution process, I heard my name shouted through the loud speakers. Yolène had run to the stage and yanked the microphone from the young DJ to thank me for having participated in the successful realization of the event. Just the day before, I had visited the center and volunteered to transform peanuts into butter; and just a few hours prior, I had sat beside

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<sup>15</sup> Julie is a leader of the youth branch of AFLIDEPA.

<sup>16</sup> *Asosyasyon Fanm Limonad pou Devlopman Prodiksyon Agrikòl ak Atizana (AFLIDEPA)* or Limonade Women’s Association for the Development of Agricultural and Craft Production. AFLIDEPA is affiliated and receives economic and political support from PAPDA. The inauguration took place on March 26, 2013 in Limonade, a municipality of Cap-Haitien, in the Department of Nord in Haiti.

<sup>17</sup> Kreyòl for “cassava and peanut butter”.

<sup>18</sup> *Lèt a Gogo* (Haitian for milk in abundance) transformation centers produce dairy products, mainly yogurt. AFLIDEPA’s brother organization *Asosyasyon Pwodiktè Lèt Limonad (APWOLIM)* or Association of Milk Producers of Limonade, owns and manages a center. Like AFLIDEPA, APWOLIM is affiliated and supported by PAPDA.

her in a circle of members preparing the refreshments. Yolène publicly acknowledged me as a friend of PAPDA and therefore an ally of AFLIDEPA. I timidly accepted her plea to speak on stage, only to express gratitude for their warm welcome.

In Chapter I, I presented the research questions and theoretical foundations underlining my research and work in social movement studies and postcolonial studies. In this chapter, I outline my research strategies and discuss the theoretical frameworks that informed my choice of methods of inquiry and analysis. In particular, I explain how I selected feminist ethnographic research methods as a result of my involvement both as a researcher and member in translocal activist and diasporic networks. First, I examine the tensions inherent in my fieldwork by untangling my varying positionalities in the field as a U.S.-educated diasporic Haitian woman, a movement ally and activist, and finally as a friend. Next, I identify the methods I applied and detail their function in my project. I discuss the use of in-depth interviews, the collection of discursive and visual texts, participant observation methods in the foreground of spatial re-presentations and descriptive statistics, and constructivist grounded theory to produce a thick ethnographic analysis. Expanding on feminist and activist research methodologies, I conclude with pertinent reflections on ethical decision-making processes that informed my research, particularly in reporting fieldwork findings.

### **Empowering Methods**

I designed and executed my research project using key concepts including the nationalist negotiation for graduated sovereignty, the practice of community-based autonomies, the de-centralization of citizenship, the reconstitution of gender regimes, the formation of



collective identities, and the uneven connections between translocal activists. I unpacked these conceptual themes through the examination of knowledge derived from organizational and individual activists expressed through their “auto-critique” of their own work, from my observations of and partaking in activist networks and activities, and from textual and visual organizational narratives. In this vein for my project, not only did I draw from theoretical frameworks emerging from indigenous experiences and typologies and critical thought produced by Haitian nationals themselves, but I also brought to bear Donna Haraway’s (1988) concept of “situated knowledges.” Haraway (1988) argues that rather than performing the “god trick” of claiming absolute, objective knowledge, a more responsible and accountable knowledge admits to its partiality and situated-ness. Rather than aiming for universalizing theories from “nowhere,” I sought to localize, historicize and pluralize organized social change by developing critical analyses of the cross-sectorial, intra-national, and translocal networks of power that shape the under-theorized Haitian social movements.

Mason and Dale (2001) argue that a “researcher’s conceptual or theoretical stance on the empirical social world leads him to choose a particular method and thus to understand the nature or essence of phenomena in a different way from researchers with different orientations” (1). And in turn, these methods shape the “quality” of knowledge we can produce. Like other postcolonial and feminist theorists, I call for the development of alternative epistemologies and methodologies that move beyond traditional positivist binaries such as objectivity versus subjectivity and knowledge versus politics (Collins 2000; Harding 1986; Haraway 1988; Alexander 1997; Grewal and Kaplan 1994;

Mohanty 2003; hooks 1992; Rose 1993). Instead, in our work, we recognize that multiple subjectivities constitute “reality.”

Expanding on the rejection of totalizing truths, postcolonial, feminist, and activist researchers turn their critical gaze to their own positionalities and the worldviews they mold, and the knowledge that emerges from these stances. In the last three decades, they have argued for a more responsible reporting of fieldwork and postfieldwork activities (Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Hyndman 2001). In doing so, they challenge the dominant positivist approaches that place the researcher outside of and above the field. Instead, these theorists demonstrated that the strict boundaries erected by traditional masculinist methodologies are in fact porous and blurry; researcher and researched are both part of the field. Rather than claiming distance and objectivity, I engage in a more transparent process of knowledge production that situates me, the researcher, within the field. As a result of my membership in translocal activist networks and my shared national identity with research participants, I was able to have first-hand experience with key Haitian social movements. The relationships I forged during “fieldwork” have yielded an important addition to the literature on Latin American and Caribbean social movements, in which Haiti does not figure.

Research methodologies and methods that re-frame the scholar as an agent for social change serve as alternatives to positivist empirical and theoretical approaches. Activist research, like Participatory Action Research (PAR), grounded theory research, and ethnographic research locate the scholar in the field; researcher and researched are co-constructed in the field (McIntyre 2008; Kemmis and McTaggart 2005). As an alternative to the positivist metaphor of the “discovery of objects of knowledge,” I

employ Haraway's (1988) metaphor of dialogue, which emphasizes a more interactive, less hierarchical model of exchange between the researcher and her participants.

Understanding an event or experience is at best disjointed without the viewpoints of those for whom it is a lived reality (Genat 2009). Consequently, centering the perspectives of the research participants and their own interpretations of their corporeal experiences is key to finding meaning through experience (Reason and Bradbury 2006).

Interestingly, the aforementioned theorists echo the postcolonial and feminist understanding that academic analyses yield only partial truths. Moreover, these accounts co-constituted by the researcher and participants are mere interpretations of "reality," attempts to assemble events and experiences into one comprehensive narrative.

Consequently, I engaged my study using constructivist grounded theory strategies, which "recognize the interactive nature of both data collection and analysis... and fosters the development of qualitative traditions through the study of experience from the standpoint of those who live it" (Charmaz 2003: 270). Grounded theory research is an interactive process between investigator and informant, data exploration, gathering and evaluation, and the scholar's critical stance and positionalities, providing frames through which meaning is constructed.

Like other postcolonial, feminist, and activist researchers, I admit to only opening a "window on reality" (Charmaz 2003: 523). Nevertheless, I attempt to provide a thick description (Geertz 1977) of Haitian social movement cultural systems using mixed methods of research and analysis. In addition to the traditional qualitative approaches upon which anthropologists conduct their research, I have also applied geographical and sociological methods that help to envisage and assess the state of affairs in Haiti against

which social movement actors organize. A multimodal design of data collection and synthesis further localizes and historicizes the scattered hegemonic processes that shape particular cultural practices.

To translate participant knowledge into academic narratives, I digitally recorded in-depth interviews about their organizational genealogy, their ideological formation, their activist work, their fieldwork methodologies, their relationships to other social movement organizations (SMOs) and actors, their alternative proposal to the state, and their involvement in the transnational counter-globalization movement. Additionally, I observed and participated in their meetings with other leaders, events and activities with other member- and allied-organizations, and their political education trainings and workshops in the field. Moreover, over the course of three years, I collected photographs, speeches, slogans, presentations, debates and secondary materials such as position papers, reports, and publications. Witnessing their engagement in fieldwork allowed me to develop a thicker understanding of their work, one that distinguishes their discourses from their practices. Furthermore, it deepened participants' familiarity with me, which in turn led to more candid follow-up interviews, both informally and formally.

Furthermore, I brought together the Haitian constitution, and the last two censuses to understand how the state imagines and constructs its constituencies and most importantly how the state functions to protect certain transnational economic interests at the detriment of local governance and development. Lastly, I contrasted spaces of social movement activities to state structures and industrial projects as well as natural resource sites. This thick ethnographic approach allowed for the assemblage and production of knowledge on how social movements in Haiti, assisted by translocal allies, intervene in

civil society, against the state and the socio-economic and political arms of “neoliberal” development.

As a result of my conceptual and methodological approaches in the present study, I weaved together accounts of individual and organizational activist insights and ethnography. The collected data show the multifarious strategies developed by social movements in their attempt to re-situate the Haitian postcolonial nation-state. Using these approaches, I sought to center the voices of participants in the study. The exchange between researcher and participant, nevertheless, is quite uneven. As the scholar, I retain the privilege of crafting the final rendering of the research (England 1994; Wolf 1996). As a result, I employed feminist ethnographic research methodologies by inviting key informants to critique my work during the research process, affording them the opportunity to clarify my interpretations; and more importantly, by extending their practice of “auto-critique” with an analysis that is less charged with movement niceties.

### **Insider/Outsider: Both or Neither?**

Having volunteered as an organizer with Take Back the Land in Miami, Florida,<sup>19</sup> I quickly became part of a transnational network of activists attempting to participate in the production of the modern global order, albeit their disparate positionalities. Following the January 12, 2010 earthquake disaster, members of the Haitian Diaspora in the U.S. mobilized in order to provide assistance for the immediate and long-term recovery of the Haitian nation-state. Fellow members of Take Back the Land, themselves Haitian-Americans, encouraged me to contribute my support and efforts to activist organization,

PAPDA. A quick visit to the latter's website revealed a rich exposé of grassroots activities that had been invisibilized by the dominant corporate-owned and -controlled U.S. and Haitian media outlets. After a few electronic exchanges between one of PAPDA's main coordinators Ricot in both French and Haitian Kreyòl, I made my first trip to post-earthquake Port-au-Prince in April of 2010. I met with Ricot at PAPDA's temporary site of operations, what turned out to be the offices of *FRAKKA*.<sup>20</sup> Himself a trained social scientist, Ricot expressed great interest in my research project. The Haitian Popular Movement has yet to be exhaustively and systematically recorded and analyzed. Our conversations further sparked my commitment to conduct the current study.

Histories and geographies of domination and resistance intersect to generate distinct social, political, economic, and cultural systems and consequently distinctive worldviews. Postcolonial, feminist, and activist scholars, interested in the relationships between subjugated and dominant forms of knowledge, have called for all academic work to be situated temporally and spatially (Grewal and Kaplan 1994; Mohanty 2003; Maguire 2001). The grand narratives upon which the victors' History rests, obscuring the lived experiences of the conquered, are rooted in the imposition of one single truth. The pursuit of one universal truth places "the people without history" (Wolf 1982) within a politics of kinship (Patil 2009) that infantilizes them, rendering them incapable of abstractly and critically understanding their own cultural practices. Sound systematic scientific study is said to require unbiased distance between researcher and researched

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<sup>19</sup> Take Back the Land-Miami was a housing rights organization founded in 2006 in Miami as "the" black response to the gentrification of people of African descent from their communities, the result of the U.S. housing crisis.

(Russell 2002). The opposition of etic underpins the nostalgic adherence to “objectivity over a fixed reality” over emic epistemological knowledge.

“Fieldwork embodies a politics of representation” (Hyndman 2001: 263).

Postcolonial and feminist theorists and researchers have demanded a revaluation of insider know-how in response to traditional claims to impartiality that can only derive from an outsider standpoint that otherizes the subaltern subject(s) being studied. They maintain that the insider viewpoint, often derived from knowledge developed from alternate paradigms, is an equally valid explanation of the world. Often themselves occupying insider position, they call for the emergence of knowledges that contend dominant hegemonic discourses (Badran 2009; Mihesuah 2003; Collins 2000; Wolf 1996; England 1994). The result of various civil rights movements, identity politics re-shaped the academy as those previously figured as the objects became the subjects of study, crafting counter-narratives that served to disturb the traditional.

Nevertheless, these aforementioned scholars do not reject nor do they outright discredit outsider viewpoints that can also provide critical interpretations and insights on a given cultural system or practice (Narayan 1997). Similarly, they do not automatically validate insider worldviews that can often be regurgitations of problematic and harmful western paradigms (Oyewumi 2004). “The legitimacy of all knowledges has been called into question, opening up the need for alternative ways to authenticate knowledge through more ethical methods of knowledge production” (Mohammad 2001:104). Instead, a collage of critical stances can yield a more complete understanding of the

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<sup>20</sup> *Fòs Refleksyon ak Aksyon sou Koze Kay* or Housing Force of Reflection and Action is a housing coalition. Since the earthquake, FRAKKA has focused on its campaign of anti-eviction of camps (tent cities) in Port-au-Prince and its outskirts.

“truth.” Consequently, knowledge-building is a dialogical process that uses self-reflexivity and self-awareness of one’s positioning in the field. Rather than seeking supposed objectivity or claiming my account as valid insider information, I unscramble my varying positionalities in the field, highlighting how each one at times increased and at others limited my access to studying Haitian social movements. I examine how my experiences as a young U.S-educated diasporic Haitian woman with ties to translocal activist networks before, during, and after my fieldwork, shaped my research questions, direction, and reporting. Finally, I link the above-mentioned discussion to the methodological frameworks and approaches that inform my research.

*“She’s Haitian-Haitian:” PAPDA authenticates me and my Research*

My second trip to post-earthquake Haiti took place in October of 2010. Ricot and I had stayed in contact from the previous trip via email correspondence. Ricot had a charged schedule but graciously accepted to connect me to member- and allied-organizations of PAPDA. He quickly drew up a calendar of meetings with organizational leaders. While I sat in his office, he telephoned each one of them to explain and endorse my project.

“She’s Haitian-Haitian,” he confirmed. By the time I had “returned to the field” full-time in August of 2012, I had met, interviewed, and socialized with several social movement leaders. Moreover, I had accompanied Ricot several times during his own fieldwork in the North of Haiti, at first as a friendly observer. Ricot struggled to find appropriate descriptors for me when presenting me to a new organization. At times I was a student; others, a researcher; most often, a friend and supporter of PAPDA. Perhaps the most important introduction I ever received, Ricot informed the AFLIDEPA center inaugural



event organizers that I was “one of the people in PAPDA who made activities such as this center possible.” Eventually, Ricot settled on “*pongongon* PAPDA”.<sup>21</sup> Ricot’s qualification of my relationship with PAPDA always caused friendly laughter. Ricot authenticated my Haitian-ness and consequently re-assured everyone that I was a movement ally and friend.

Over time, Ricot’s renewed endorsement afforded me trust as an insider. As a diasporic Haitian, I am inscribed in the national imaginary as a member of the “11<sup>th</sup> department”.<sup>22</sup> The multiple waves of Haitian migration to other parts of the world throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century de-territorialized and re-territorialized the Haitian nation-state to include the Diaspora (Laguerre 2005). The maintenance of family ties across borders blurred the geopolitical distinctions between Haitians living outside or in Haiti. Moreover, I speak and write Kreyòl fluently. I recognize and share the same national myths, stories, rituals and mores that serve to produce a collective Haitian identity. Nevertheless, the nation differentiates and hierarchizes its members according to race and color, language, education, and class, gender and sexuality, age, and religion (Alexander 1997; Chatterjee 1993; Goldberg 2002; Stephens 1999). While none questioned my national identity, my interlocutors were curious to know “*ki kote ou moun*”.<sup>23</sup> The “insider/outsider” border shifts when homogenous categories collapse. Tracing my

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<sup>21</sup> Kreyòl for “pain in the butt who is always around”.

<sup>22</sup> Georges Anglade (1990). Anglade coined the term “10<sup>th</sup> department” in reference to the Haitian Diaspora. In 2003, Haiti incorporated a 10<sup>th</sup> department (Département de Nippes), relegating the Diaspora to the “11<sup>th</sup> department”.

<sup>23</sup> Kreyòl for “where are you from” or “which town or region are your people/family and ancestors from”. Closer translation to meaning would read “of what people are you”.

genealogy to centers of privilege, Port-au-Prince and Jacmel,<sup>24</sup> they attempted to situate me within the biopolitical order of the Haitian nation-state.

*Lavil*, to the social movement leaders, I am a young U.S.-educated student researcher. *Andeyò*,<sup>25</sup> to the members of AFLIDEPA and APWOLIM, I am a young female auxiliary of PAPDA. The inconsistency in Ricot's description of my relationship to PAPDA is a reflection of the varied profiles of the organizational demographics as well as the nature of the encounter. But more importantly, it points to the development of trust and friendships over time and after frequent meetings. As argued by Mohammad (2001), "in this way an 'us' is always in the process of being constructed and filled with meaning, offering a range of subject positions" (107). *Lavil*, I have no organizational affiliations; my role as the researcher is the most salient. However, *andeyò*, I am absorbed in Ricot's field as an extension of PAPDA. *Lavil* is the site of dissent and resistance; organizational leaders utilized the interviews as an opportunity to air out tensions within the movement. On the contrary, *andeyò* serves as a site of harmony and collaboration; organizational leaders and members applauded PAPDA without reserve.

The geographical demarcation that opposes the urban and the rural is a recurring dimension in my analysis of Haitian social movements that figures in the subsequent chapters. The binary underscores the tensions and contradictions in notions of citizenship, sovereignty, and modernity against which the nation elites determine which bodies belong, constructs personhood, and assigns rights.

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<sup>24</sup> Jacmel is the third largest city in the southeast of Haiti.

<sup>25</sup> *Lavil* is Haitian for "city/urban" and *andeyò* means "small town/rural/outside".

## **Negotiating the Field**

### *Story-telling in Mother-tongues*

Research is a dialogical process between the researcher and the researched (England 1994). Though often an uneven exchange, researcher and researched engage in creating meaning through varied interactions, namely through conversations. Whether formal or informal, interviews serve to establish rapport between the two participants. The interview functions as a site through which both the researcher and researched co-construct one another's identity. The identity results from a synthesis of contentious narratives produced in a particular space and time (Cassell 2005; Rapley 2001). Scattered hegemonic as well alternative and subversive discourses and practices provide frameworks from which both researcher and researched seek to understand one another's intentions. Language serves to demarcate spheres of social and economic privilege. It racializes Haitians and ascribes them different forms of citizenship.

As a native speaker of Haitian Kreyòl, I was marked as authentic and my words were assigned value and authority. We told stories and jokes, sang and yelled together, and sometimes debated over politics. I was able to directly develop my own relationships with my informants, without the intermediary of an interpreter. From distant and ceremonial, our scheduled interviews had turned into everyday conversations while we ate and drank, traveled and hiked, worked together, and shared sleeping quarters. Over time, my insider status strengthened and I received more invitations to organizational meeting and work spaces. In consequence, I had to reciprocate by volunteering to do some administrative and clerical work during workshops or events. By embedding herself in the "field," the researcher ensures the maintenance of her access (Bondy 2012).

### *Gender, Age and Student Status*

My first encounters with new informants were met with enthusiasm and in rare cases, with what I perceived at first to be hostility. These varied receptions point to the instability of my insider position. Laval, informants all have graduate degrees and are trained social scientists. Perhaps their restraint was some form of rite of passage. Perhaps I had been too eager to use my digital recorder and to administer my prepared semi-structured interview questions after carefully following all the Institutional Review Board (IRB)'s protocols. I had neglected the human dimension of the process. The informants had set a firm appointment time frame for our first in-person meeting. I did not want to delay them but I also wanted answers to my questions. These were my very first formal interviews for my very first research project. It would take a few more before I learned to engage the interviews like conversations. Andeyò, I got similar deference that is due Ricot, particularly among the female leadership and general membership. Most of the leaders of the member- and allied-organizations of PAPDA are men, many are highly educated and live in the capital. However, their constituencies are composed of people with varying educational background, gender identification, social status, and regional interests. In and out of Port-au-Prince, I vacillated between my positions of insider and outsider (Soni-Sinha 2008).

My interest and enthusiasm to document this piece of the movement convinced participants that I was a supporter. But, it is only for those with whom I have engaged in transformative action that I am an ally. Continuous dialogue between researcher and researched demands that the researcher remain accountable to the conditions of the

interaction. Moreover, it pushes the researcher to start analyzing well before the end of the fieldwork period in order to confirm or modify the course of his research project (Charmaz 2003). As such, I attempted to produce balanced accounts of our intersubjective exchanges. As spatially and temporally bound encounters, however, they vary and contrast depending on where my interlocutors located me socially. As a movement ally, my probing questions were welcomed. Few were reluctant to share. Becoming more visible to movement actors helped to build relationships of relative trust (Bondy 2012). As a young researcher, I am admittedly excited to contribute my doctoral work in Haiti to the scholarly literature on Caribbean and Latin American social movements. Greater familiarization with movement leaders and trends allowed me to sharpen my data collection process. As a young woman, I inadvertently served as a soap box on which other women attending meetings and workshops stood to proclaim their visions of an alternative nation-state. I also gained access to private conversations between women. As a Kreyòl-speaker, I also color my language with proverbs. Some interlocutors preferred to use metaphors of dissent to communicate their disagreements with other members and leadership. The tensions between my fluctuating positionalities highlight that there is no single insider view (Taylor 2011). Instead these positionalities intersect to produce distinct fieldwork experiences and yield distinctive analytic approaches. However, it is above all my position as the final writer of this dissertation that most shapes the research process.

## **Thickening Descriptions: Multimodal Research Methods**

In the first part of this chapter, I argued that my positionalities as well as my theoretical frameworks informed my research project and the methods that I used. In this part, I discuss each of the following methods: in-depth interviews and narrative analysis, visual and textual discourse analysis of secondary texts, ethnography, mapping, and illustrative statistics. Using each method, I attempt to demonstrate how social movements navigate divides within the nation and between the state and the international.

### *Narrating Dissent: “Auto-Critique”*

In this project, I conducted in-depth interviews with men and women, living in various cities and towns in Haiti in which they recounted their organizational histories, their experiences as leaders and members of social movements, both locally and transnationally. Through story-telling, people create and assign meaning to their lives (Frost 2009). As such, they can position themselves culturally, socially, and politically in ways that challenge or imitate individual, organizational, and national norms. Interviewees expressed their opposition to the corrupted state, their frustrations within the transnational counter-globalization movement, and finally their concerns about the progress of the larger Haitian popular movement. Narrative analysis helps to highlight the intersecting hegemonies that underpin the relations between individuals and society (Daiute 2004). It requires that scholars historicize and situate participant accounts using a multidimensional framework. Finally, “the way that people tell stories influences how they perceive, remember, and prepare for future events” (Daiute and Lighfoot 2004: xi). Social movement actors generate and disseminate specified narratives to specific targets

as tools to produce collective identities designed to affect social change. In my narrative analysis, I examined the use of key activist meta-narratives that pervaded in all the interviews.

Between October 2010 and August 2013, I formally interviewed 21 men and 8 women, all leaders of their organizations or associations. Most of my exchanges with participants happened in Port-au-Prince and some in Limonade and Plaisance in the north of Haiti. Using a purposive, snowball sampling procedure, I connected with potential informants. Through Take Back the Land, I was introduced to the leading members of PAPDA who subsequently connected me to other social movement actors. I primarily focused on PAPDA leading staff, member-organizations, and key affiliate associations. Following Ricot into “his” field helped to highlight the urban-rural divide that informs PAPDA strategies to connect local organizations across departmental and national borders, and to reform dominant concepts of citizenship and personhood. While the majority of my interviews occurred in the capital, my more profound encounters took place andeyò. With the leaders of PAPDA’s member- and allied-organizations, my interviews lasted between one to three hours, usually at their office site lavil with the use of a digital voice recorder. With the leaders and members of PAPDA affiliate associations, my formal interviews lasted one to two hours using at times a digital voice recorder and at others a digital camera. However, my subsequent conversations with participants andeyò permitted me to deepen our conversations around specific issues in question in the research project. Lastly, as I often traveled with Ricot, I have countless documentation of both our official and informal conversations. A few remarks in French aside in no more than five interviews, all of my exchanges were carried out in Kreyòl.

With the interview questions I had formulated, I was interested in understanding how social movement leaders negotiate the class and gender hierarchies within their organizations. Moreover, I sought to learn how these dynamics also informed their relationships vis-à-vis the state and their international collaborators. To capture as completely as possible the network of activist people, I allowed participants to develop their stories without imposing too strict of a structure to our interviews. As such, participants could communicate their own thoughts, opinions, feelings, and experiences without the constraints of pre-designed questionnaires and answers (Blee and Taylor 2009). My participants produced narratives that eventually exposed power struggles between movement leaders, tensions between organizational leaders and membership, ambiguity in activist positions about the state, and finally resentment and resistance to infantilizing international discourses on Haiti. In recounting their own stories, interviewees described their multimodal approaches to developing relationships locally, with the state and the international.

Certainly, the context in which these conversations took place also determined the types of issues, ideas, and questions that surfaced (Keats 2009). Andeyò, meetings are presided by PAPDA; there are fewer contestations. Participants have not yet professed adherence to any specific set of political beliefs. Our first informational conversations were awkward; respondents had not yet sufficiently rehearsed presenting their organizations. Laval, leaders dissented with deference to one another. They expressed clear political and organizational ideologies, most likely the result of their academic training. Their responses to my interview questions were well crafted. Andeyò, I experienced the challenge of translating abstracted ideas in English into colloquial



Kreyòl. However, the time spent with participants afforded us the opportunity to expound our conversations about their organizational and personal lives, about their realities as caretakers, workers, and community leaders. Contrarily, lavil, I was able to directly engage participants around the key intellectual concepts that drive the project. Again, the geographical differentiation parallels the language distinctions that mark the Haitian nation-state.

### *Transcribing Alternative Visions: Surrogate Voices*

In addition to interviewing, I gathered secondary texts generated by PAPDA and certain key member- and allied-organizations and conducted visual and textual discourse analysis of the data. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) sees language as social practice (Fairclough and Wodak 1997; Fairclough 2010), and discourse as the (re)production of social domination. In particular, it views language as the enactment, reproduction, and/or resistance by talk and text of the social and the political (Van Dijk 2001). I collected books, pamphlets, reports, and papers produced by PAPDA executive staff that figured either on their internet site or on their library shelves. I identified the creator(s), content, framework(s), and target audience(s) of these discursive productions. Moreover, I assembled and conducted visual discourse analysis of pictures, sound and video recordings of three sets of three-day workshops that occurred in the northern departments gathering representatives from over 100 grassroots organizations (see Chapter VI for discussion),<sup>26</sup> of marches, lectures, and ceremonial events of founding-member SOFA whose leaders have occupied state positions (see Chapter V for analysis). In my analyses,

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<sup>26</sup> These meeting days launched the *Cahier de Revendications*, an important project initiated by PAPDA to comprehensively formulate a regionally-specific national proposal for development.

I was particularly interested in examining how gender, class, and language color PAPDA's (and its members) reification of the urban-rural divide in its re-construction of modern and authentic Haitian citizenship.

*Enacting the Nation: Identity Performance*

While feminist and critical scholars agree that listening to participants' stories is important, they also recognize that in order to provide a rich analysis, they must also understand the broader contexts and processes that are often omitted in participant narratives (Salway et al. 2011). People's own records of their lives are made valuable and meaningful in relation to others. Interviewees had memorized their responses, the result of their organizational training. Developing a relationship with participants outside of the confines of a formal interview was critical to moving past ideological jargon to appreciate their work. "The purpose of ethnographic field participant observation, then, is to observe people in their natural surroundings, their everyday behavior, interactions, routines and rituals, along with the artifacts and symbols that bring meaning to their lives, while of course, conversing and listening to their narratives" (Watt and Jones 2010: 109). My time spent "making friends" with social movement actors afforded me trust and acceptance. My insider status increased my access to information (see discussion above). I observed and participated in their lives. That way, I was able to compare their individual narratives to their organizational work. Moreover, I was able to witness participants' enactment of their multiple roles as facilitators, moderators, speakers, experts, expedition leaders, and as mothers and fathers. The rapprochement permitted me for example to examine how gender and education differentiated social movement spaces

Participant observation is a fundamental component of ethnography (Watt and Jones 2010). It is one method among many qualitative ethnographic approaches to research such as the aforementioned interviews. Ethnography is both a methodology and a final product that privilege participants. “Ethnography is a matter of interpreting the meaning of behavior with reference to the cultural categories within which it is produced, perceived, and interpreted” (Jacobson 1991: 4). Ethnographic interpretation should be responsible and accountable to the participants living the reality of the research (Jones 2010). Critical ethnographers do not simply produce knowledge for its own sake but rather to engage a dialogic relationship with participants that help the latter transform their lives (Brown and Dobrin 2004). With this research project, I seek to de-center the state as the sole designer of the postcolonial nation-state by bringing to light other agents such as social movements. It pushes us to rethink our use of sovereignty in theorizing about the postcolonial nation-state and instead to write about community-based autonomies.

My ethnographic fieldwork in Haiti consisted of attending lectures, workshops, protests and marches, and visiting organizational offices and libraries. In addition, I participated in meetings, workshops, work sessions, and celebrations, and was invited to family spaces and social sites. Being present during these various events made it possible for me to contrast movement discourse from practice. Through my travels with Ricot, I found out about the history of social movements in Haiti, the different currents within the larger popular movement, the connections between different organizations and individual leaders, and PAPDA’s selection process of its international partners. In sharing tasks and stories with men and women during workshops and site visits, I learned about their

personal frustrations within the movement as well as their appreciation of their support network. Additionally, I was also able to observe contradictions between movement narratives on gender and class equality and movement fieldwork. Using these ethnographic methods, I acquired knowledge on the connections between social movement actors and organizations in the capital and andeyò, as well as nationally and internationally.

### *Tracing Resistance*

Using mixed methods in my research allowed for a thicker description of Haitian social movements. Expanding on the ethnographic methods discussed above, I utilize geographical tools to emphasize the spatial differentiations that mark social movements. In Chapter VI, I locate the towns in the departments of Nord-Ouest, Nord-Est and Nord, and Artibonite in which took place the three-day workshop meetings in order to identify and illustrate the interstitial connections between state agencies and social movement actors. I highlight the major environmental, economic, and political features surrounding those sites such as roads, rivers, gold mines, industrial parks, housing complexes, police stations, state institutions, and UN bases. Boundary-making and maintenance between state and social movements produces autonomous zones in which collective identities are created and sustained.

### *Designing Citizenship*

Lastly, I incorporated state-produced descriptive statistics to my ethnographic analysis. In Chapter III, I weaved in data from the 2003 Haitian census in order to demonstrate which bodies the state ascribes personhood and citizenship, which presented political

opportunities for social movement upsurge. These qualitative readings of quantitative documents permitted me to sketch PAPDA's history in relation of the state, and the consequences of its regulations and de-regulations of Haitian social, economic, and political practices.

### **“Always in the Field”: Postfieldwork Accountability**

Feminist, activist, and ethnographic methodologies aim to unsettle the positivist disregard for 'subjects' in re-presenting their lived experiences. Instead, these approaches highlight the power differential that shapes the relationship between researcher and researched (Baez 2002; Narayan 1997; Wolf 1996). As a consequence, feminist and activist scholars advocate for a research process that conscientiously promotes participant safety, responsible reporting, and reciprocal knowledge production (Haney 2002; Maguire 2001). In this last section, I discuss how these ethical methodological concerns grounded my doctoral work. More specifically, I bring into play the parenthetical castigatory remarks of some participants against PAPDA during our formal interviews.

### *Confidentiality and Anonymity*

Social science researchers stress the importance of protecting the privacy of their respondents (Ebbs 1996). In exchange for information, researchers offer participants confidentiality. These rituals of secrecy are observed especially when participants fear retaliation. The guarantee of anonymity encourages participants to freely develop their narratives (Bogdan and Biklen 1998). In my research, however, I found that discord within PAPDA was expressed hesitantly. Most of the leaders did not single out a particular PAPDA executive. Instead they focused on their own failures to check

PAPDA's power. Of course, there were some who passionately denounced PAPDA individual leaders only to quickly request that I strike those comments out of my final transcription. Even with the promise of camouflaging their responses, these participants were concerned that movement insiders would uncover them (Punch 1994). Thus, we agreed that I would share with them the final rendering of my dissertation. Moreover, I chose to restrict my mapping of social movement sites in order to shield participants from the corporeal consequences story-telling may provoke (Sherman and Fetters 2007). While I endeavor to contribute a thick record of Haitian social movements, I also recognize that my project exposes them. Therefore, in this research, I did not utilize geo-spatial technological markers to identify the specific location of organizational and individual spaces.

### *The Politics of Naming*

Interestingly, while the articulate dissidents urged me to keep their outburst a secret, they proudly proclaimed their commitment to a socialist revolution in Haiti. They openly condemn the oppressive transnational structures that underpin poverty. Baez (2002) argues that “qualitative research might necessarily involve a process of negotiating secrets and openness” (46). Participants acquiesced to the publication of our ideological dialogues while they declined to share more exact complaints about movement work. Participants agreed to interview as spokespeople of the organizations with which they work. As public actors, they only seek to disclose their political positions on the state and the international. In those cases, they chose to be identified. As argued by Guenther (2009), “the business of naming is not simple, often involving on-going dialogue between

a researcher and her/his respondents” (413). In writing up my findings, I will divorce individual respondents from their corresponding organizations when reporting intra-organizational conflict. Guenther goes on to state that “the act of naming is an act of power” (413). It can undermine structures of inequality that silence. Revealing the names of the organizations I studied gives meaning to individual accounts. It acknowledges the specific histories that shape social movement work. More importantly, it helps to tell the story of a nation.

*Sharing the Production of Knowledge: The “Gaze” Returned*

At the beginning of our first meeting, movement leaders *lavil* questioned my academic and political intentions with this research project. They also demanded to review my final product. I accepted what I judged to be fair terms. On the other hand, participants andeyò were simply excited to be heard. Nevertheless, they still expected to receive my final writing. Having named their organizations, I became mindful that “we owe our anthropological subjects the same degree of courtesy, empathy and friendship in writing as we generally extend to them face to face in the field...” (Scheper-Hughes 2000: 128). Committed to a research process that centers around the participants, I forwarded them my final monograph. I invited only a select few to critique my work during the write-up process. As a transnational feminist and social movement scholar, I attempt to balance in my work the power-laden relationship between me, the researcher, and the researched. Yet, while I “revise our work in response to the reactions of the researched, surely the published text is the final construct and responsibility of the researcher” (England 1994: 250). My project is not simply a platform from which social movement actors can speak

their dissent; rather, it serves to complicate scholarly conceptualizations of sovereignty and citizenship.

### *Friendships: The Threat of the Personal*

Feminist and activist scholarship seeks “to break down the hierarchical and potentially exploitative relationship between researcher and research by cultivating friendship” (Wolf 1996: 4). As such, this research project was initiated as a result of my friendship with one of Take Back the Land founder Max, himself a close ally of PAPDA. It is through my continual contact with Ricot that I have been able to “enter the field.” Getting close to him allowed me to gain the trust of others and consequently to collect more “data.” As argued by other feminist researchers, fieldwork is always personal (Hyndman 2001). Deciding what to include in postfieldwork analyses is in itself a political act, a re-writing of the “field,” the rendering of a particular story that both protect the “researched” and promote the “researcher.” In order to protect these complex relationships within a charged political climate, I navigated carefully through my data ensuring the exclusion of more sensitive conversations. These omitted pieces can, however, be the subject of another study decades from now when these social movement leaders perhaps will have retired and the political environment permits it.

### **Conclusion**

In Chapter II, I discussed the methodological theories that frame my research. I demonstrated how the methods I utilized served to underline the multifarious strategies social movements deploy to build networks of resistance against re-colonization. I recognized that my analysis captures and reflects a partial “reality” that nevertheless



exposes the multiplicity of actors that shape the postcolonial nation-state. I also explained how my multiple positionalities both benefited and perhaps bogged down the research process. More specifically, I described how building and maintaining friendships increased my access. I discussed the ethical implications of feminist methodologies of friendship. Finally, I brought to light the politics of naming that can serve to empower as well as protect participants.

### CHAPTER III: Globalization and Constitutional Order

The *Revolisyon 1986* culminated in the negotiation and subsequent creation of a new constitution in March of 1987 by referendum in both French and Kreyòl, recognizing the plurality of Haitian experiences, identities, beliefs and ideologies. Following the de-colonization of Africa and the Caribbean starting in the 1950s well into the 1980s, and the rise of the feminist as well as the Black and Brown Power movements in the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s, and after decades of U.S. biopolitical and economic warfare against Soviet influence and presence in the Americas, social movement actors in Latin America struggled to end dictatorial regimes. They demanded the redistribution of wealth as well as the inclusion of previously invisibilized populations. Global governance institutions echoed their call for multi-cultural democracy. The new world superpower shifted its international policies away from supporting anti-communist authoritarian governments. Moreover, inter-national institutions such as the United Nations urged Latin American nation-states to legally acknowledge their African diasporic and Indigenous communities. In the formulation of their own major national legal ground rules, Latin American and Caribbean states imported and appropriated key Anglo-Eurocentric standardized constitutional items (Frankenberg 2013) as well as other special laws. Latin American nations (including Haiti) promulgated new constitutions (Brazil in 1988, Colombia in 1991, Paraguay in 1992, Ecuador in 1998, Peru in 1993, Venezuela in 1999, among others) or introduced important amendments to their existing constitutions (Argentina in 1994, Mexico in 1992, and Costa Rica in 1989) in order to reflect the new disposition. Moreover, as mentioned above, English-speaking Caribbean colonies gained their independence and adopted new constitutions (Jamaica in 1962, Barbados in 1966,

Grenada in 1974, St Kitts and Nevis in 1983, among others).<sup>27</sup> As such, the uneven economic and cultural exchange of commodities that takes place between the Global North and Global South was maintained.

The ‘New World Order’s promotion of constitution- and institution-building as a measurement of progress and stability offers social movement actors the opportunity to actually “employ legal tools and concepts in the articulation” (518) of alternative definitions of land, development and production relations (Meszaros 2000). PAPDA leaders all invoke the Constitution in their denouncement of state dysfunction and in light of what they are calling the Occupation. Social movements do not define themselves outside of the systems of power. In fact, they are integral components of a cultural and political system and, in turn, they utilize culture and politics to frame and effectuate change (Johnston and Klandermans 1995; Melucci 1995). A movement’s success thus depends on its ability to appropriate symbols and meanings of the larger system in order to build itself and gain power to reshape the larger cultural and political order. In Chapter III, I first provide a historical overview of Latin American constitutions before and after the neoliberal multi-cultural turn. I focus on the national as well as international processes that produced the Haitian Constitution of 1987. Since the *Revolisyon 1986*, social movement actors cite constitutional articles to support their claims to self-government, equality, and popular rule. As such, I analyze the varying conceptualizations of sovereignty, democracy, and citizenship in the text. Constitutions are discursive productions that do not always reflect the material realities and needs of the populations

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<sup>27</sup> In the case of the postcolonial English-speaking Caribbean, however, the constitutions are replicas of the United Kingdom’s, directly imposed by the metropolis itself (Barrow-Giles 2010).

they propose to govern. Rather, they represent an assemblage of good intentions and idyllic visions of the nation-state. Instead, they regulate which bodies belong to the nation and are assigned specific rights by the state. The new document complemented the long-standing colonial legal codes that manage commercial exchange, rural development, civil and production relations, and criminal infractions. Accordingly, I examine the Constitution against the Commercial, Fiscal, Rural, Civil, Labor, and Penal codes in order to highlight discrepancies in the Law as well as to emphasize the modern capitalist foundations of all these legislations. Throughout the chapter, I demonstrate that constitutions serve as testaments of a nation-state's capacity to be "modern" and to "develop." In fact, I submit that they are a requirement to entry and recognition in the modern global interstate order.

### **Before and after the Neoliberal Multi-cultural Turn: Constitutional History of Latin America**

In response to the dominant economic system that had engendered dependence and corporeal violence, further distancing people from the state and politics, social movement actors in the Global South sought to integrate the majority of people into the nation-state, ultimately, building a new citizenry (Gargarella 2013). In Haiti, the anti-Duvalierist radicals identified the *Revolisyon 1986* coupled with the global turn to democracy as a political opportunity to advance an alternative vision of modern development. Albeit a compromise between the revolutionaries, pro-Duvalierist conservatives, and liberal technocrats, the Constitution of 1987 promised to establish a new order based on national sovereignty and equality. It acknowledged the existence and granted rights to populations previously discounted by the state. "Transferred" Euro-American constitutional elements

were contextualized and assigned specific meanings to reflect local epistemologies and conditions. Thus, I argue that Latin American and Caribbean constitutions are not simple (re)productions of Western legal texts. Rather, they are (re)constructions and adaptations of these Western models of governance.

Constitutions are thus developed in order to deal with the basic social, political, and economic problems identified by national actors (Gargarella 2013). Much like other 19<sup>th</sup> century Latin American constitutions, the previous constitutions of Haiti mirrored the preoccupations of the leaders. They were crafted to prevent the potential return of French colonials to restore slavery by restricting foreign land ownership.<sup>28</sup> Decision-makers selected a conservative constitutional response that concentrated authority in one leader with exceptional political powers, essentially serving as an army general prepared for eventual battle. Undoubtedly echoing the sentiments of the formerly enslaved, the public figures at the time remembered only too clearly the colonial and revolutionary past. Individual autonomy was foregone to privilege and to the insurance of collective self-government, according to the visions and needs of heads of state and their advisors. Nevertheless, while they opposed territorial re-occupation, they willingly invited the Catholic Church to educate and “civilize” the population (Greene 1993). These leaders were unable to rupture completely with the colonial order, adopting French (or Western) structures and institutions. As the first Black republic of the modern world, there were no other alternative models from which to draw.

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<sup>28</sup> There are some exceptions, namely Henri Christophe’s Constitution of 1811 that bestowed rights to foreigners as nationals alike.

In contrast, the constitutions assumed in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Latin America and including Haiti revealed different anxieties and concerns. Integration in the modern world necessitated the development of commodities exchangeable on the global market, which Latin American leaders made possible through legal instruments such as national constitutions. With a new international order emerging at the end of the 19th century into the next, independent Latin American countries exported their primary goods to and, in turn, imported finished goods from industrialized centers (Gargarella 2013). The old colonial pact between Latin Europe and America had shifted in favor of England. However, the First World War initiated by Europe against itself diminished its hold on the American region, making way for the U.S. to rise as the new hegemonic power. The establishment and subsequent strengthening of unions in the Global North precipitated the outsourcing of labor opportunities to countries in the Global South governed by military dictatorships and liberal democracies offering their marginalized populations as a disposable un-syndicated labor pool in return for short-term profit for their economic and political elites. In the mid-1910s, the U.S. militarily intervened in Panama, Mexico, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Haiti, ensuring its own economic growth through the promotion of liberal policies.

The world economic crisis of 1929-30 brought an end to the “neoliberal order” (Gargarella 2013: 105) during which Latin American states assumed an interventionist role in the economy by controlling the production and distribution of resources, namely import substitution that involved the local manufacture of goods. Some states passed constitutional reforms guaranteeing labor rights and social services in order to contain social radicalization in the periods leading up to the Cold War (Gargarella 2013). Others

relied on repressive force to contain their working classes. In contrast, during the Great Depression, Haiti was occupied by the U.S., establishing the nation-state's dependence on foreign commodities. During the 1960s, the Duvalierist regime only intervened to facilitate the plundering of public coffers by a fraction of the dominant classes rather than the development of commodity production and of the economy (Dupuy 2007). It ostracized Haitian technocrats and quashed syndicalist activities. Latin American dictatorial regimes enjoyed impunity and support to exercise corporeal and political violence against any opposition during the bipolar struggle for world domination between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

By the 1970s, Western countries began to experience declining economic growth rates, rising inflation, as well as high unemployment. The Fordist model of mass-assembly production of standardized goods had failed to capture the diverse tastes and needs of a heterogeneous consumer population (Harvey 1991). Moreover, manufacturing industry had moved abroad. The U.S. administration of Ronald Reagan devised the “Washington Consensus” to restructure Latin American and Caribbean economies through the liberalizing policy reforms of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), as well as the Caribbean Basin Initiative that sponsored de-investments from the public sector to support private-sector expansion and production almost solely for export. By the 1990s, the Latin American import-substitution model was replaced by “industrialization by invitation” (Dupuy 2007: 50). In response to the political unrest that ensued the U.S. economic crisis, the U.S. government facilitated the creation of new markets in Latin American and the Caribbean to flood with its commodities.

The application of the new model coincided with the U.S. promotion of human rights and liberal democracy in the postcolonial world, as well as the announcement of the Second United Nations Development Decade. Marxist and Liberation theologians throughout Latin America, supported by Diasporas in the Global North, recognized the opportunity to contest dictatorial regimes and to demand democratic governance. A decentralized but coordinated movement, organized around new identity politics, unified against Duvalier demanding land redistribution, agrarian reform, jobs, and workers' rights as well as a balance of power between the different branches of the state. The transformation of the state ushered in by the *Revolisyon 1986* highlighted the profound institutional crises that stemmed from the dysfunctional execution of the Duvalierist constitution. The new Constitution of 1987 then discursively ruptured the nation-state from its authoritarian past and instead advanced a rights-based system of checks and balances. However, "no institution is created ex nihilo; new institutions always retain remnants of their past selves" (Negretto 2013: 4). Complementing the "progressive" document, are the various legal Labor, Civil, Penal, Rural, Fiscal and Commercial codes transplanted directly from mid-19<sup>th</sup> century colonial France.

During the 1970s and well into the 1980s, precipitated by the United Nations Decade for Women and for Disabled Persons, and the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, countries in the American Global South were encouraged (or rather pressured) to recognize the existence of these international treaties. The worldwide application of constitutional charters of rights facilitated the transfer of political authority to key national and international economic actors, thereby reconfiguring the role of the state. The focus on rights and individual autonomy permitted the rise of transnational



neoliberalism (Anderson 2013). Since the early 1990s, international development agencies directly dispense funds to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) headed and supported by non-local staff in order to circumvent state corruption (Schuller 2007), in effect privatizing access to public services. I submit that constitutionalism's sole emphasis on the operations of the state limits the document's function as a check on political power. Postcolonial constitutions do not account for this global shift, rendering their state and populations vulnerable to unbridled capitalist enterprise. The postcolonial state's negligence to curb neoliberal encroachment points to the incongruity between the transferred or transplanted Western legal items and models and postcolonial materialities.

Constitutional change can also occur without a formal re-writing of the entire document (Negretto 2013). In the last decade, several Latin American and Caribbean states passed anti-terrorism laws modelled along the lines of the American Patriot Acts emphasizing financial security through transparency in operations and transactions (Barrow-Giles 2010). Barrow-Giles (2010) contends that these globalizing "acts undermine fundamental rights in the Caribbean as these pieces of legislation pose possible threats to civil liberties" (7). Furthermore, the aggressive privatization of public (state) services by corporations (often extra-national) deepened the neoliberal turn of postcolonial democracies, further subjecting national populations to the rule of entities free of public accountability (Anderson 2013). The "process of the globalization of law" (Gargarella 2013, 169) reflects the hegemonic organization of the international legal order still predicated upon the colonialist desire to "civilize" and "modernize" the other (Tohidipur 2013). Constitutions serve as testaments and demonstrations of a nation-

state's capacity to be "modern and to develop". In fact, they are a requirement to entry and recognition in the modern global interstate order.

### **Sovereignty and the Rule of Law in the Postcolonial Nation-State**

A modern nation-state is premised on the practice and maintenance of sovereignty, which entails the determination and governance of the social, political, cultural, and economic relations within a bounded territory or land. A national constitution then is a formal declaration of this independence and power. The preamble of the Haitian Constitution of 1987 (as well as Article 1) proclaims its objectives:

"To constitute a socially just, economically free, and political independent Haitian nation; To establish a stable and strong state, capable of protecting national values, traditions, sovereignty, independence, and vision".<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, Article 263.1 states that "No other armed body [forces] can exist on national territory." However, postcolonial states have not been able to perform sovereignty as have their former colonial metropolises. Rather, postcolonial sovereignty has been challenged repeatedly with territorial occupations, economic and political domination, as well as cultural encroachment. Many postcolonial studies theorists grapple with the concept of sovereignty, claiming that the assumption that nation-states can be insular is absurd (Agnew 1998, Agnew 2009, Alarcon et al. 1999, Appadurai 2003, Diener and Hagen 2010, Goldberg 2002, Grewal and Kaplan 1994, Inda 2000, Ong 1999, Ong 2006, Kelly and Kaplan 2004, Sklair 2002, Youngs 2000). Borders and states are social constructions (Hansen and Stepputat 2006, Kim-Puri 2005, Mitchell 1999, Spivak 2010). The circulation of capital, goods, and people between the former metropolises (the

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<sup>29</sup> Please note that all articles have been translated from French to English by author.

core) and their former colonies (the peripheries) dismantle the illusion and reveal that contemporary global processes are the extension of colonial and imperial practices. In fact, some theorists claim that Empire is the dominant form of geopolitical ordering of the world today (Finnemore 1996, Hardt and Negri 2001, Steinmetz 2005).

Hardt and Negri (2001) define Empire as a network of various politically and economically powerful nation-states that function as a conglomerate to ensure that world order is maintained. The Empire operates as a multi-sited and multi-faceted unit that ensures that peace is upheld in order for its interests to be preserved. The project of Empire is simple; it seeks to continually strengthen globalized capitalism. Hardt and Negri (2001) argue that the Empire attempts to design and implement a world beyond geographically constructed borders. The era of Empire is marked by a de-centered and de-territorialized form of rule. Hardt and Negri (2001) note that the Empire is comprised of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Christian missionary groups, the UN peacekeeping troops, the G-8, and the U.S. military as well as the economic and political elites of peripheral (postcolonial) countries. In the dissertation, I extend the concept to include the rest of the G-20, of which Brazil is one.<sup>30</sup> Brazil's ascent as a developed nation-state was consolidated through its successful ongoing occupation of Haiti. It demonstrated its ability to serve as a security force in the American region. Thus, the Empire does not reveal itself everywhere in the same ways. Grewal and Kaplan (1994) contend that hegemony is expressed and manifests itself differently in distinct places on the

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<sup>30</sup> Brazilian peacekeeping troops were the first UN troops to be introduced to Haiti after the removal of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004, six years before the January 12, 2010 earthquake.

geopolitical map. Hegemony is scattered, plural and inter-constructed through local and global relations of power.

In contrast to the notion of Empire, other scholars argue instead for a re-conceptualization of sovereignty that assigns more agency to postcolonial nation-states by redefining the state itself. Transnational, postcolonial, and feminist scholars contend that the state's authority has never been complete (Agnew 2009, Mitchell 1999, Ong 1999). Instead, they affirm that there is no central abstracted commanding state. Power is circulated and exercised by various individual and organizational actors located at varying sites. Effective sovereignty is therefore not premised on fixed territorial delimitations. Postcolonial political and economic elites champion and profit from the operations of international development agencies and global governance institutions. Thus, I maintain that the postcolonial state manages sovereignty by controlling the movements of capital, humans, technologies, ideas, and goods in order to satisfy transnational corporate interests. Sovereignty is a tentative and always emergent form of power and order.

In 1991, Catholic priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide campaigned under an anti-imperialist and anti-U.S. populist platform. With the support of more than the majority of the population, he became the first democratically elected president of Haiti. Marxists and Liberation theologians led the *Revolisyon 1986*. They interrupted the Duvalierist “pact of domination” (Dupuy 2007: 30), an already unstable balance of power between state rulers, the local capitalist class and the U.S (and other core powers). Less than one year into his term, Aristide was escorted privately and safely into exile to the US (Dupuy 2007). Albeit the requirement of neutrality imposed on the military by constitutional

article 265, CIA-trained General Raoul Cédras as well as Chief of Police Michel François deposed the president. To maintain sovereignty, the state has to be willing and able to defend at least its territorial borders. To accomplish sovereignty, all state institutions have to be organized under one ultimate commander, in this case the president who embodies sovereignty. Article 138 precisely declares “The President of the Republic is the guarantor of national independence and of territorial integrity.” During his tenure in the 1970s, the young Jean-Claude Duvalier de-centralized dictatorial control with the creation of a University-educated cabinet government and with the relegation of more power to the army, thus autonomizing the authority of different spheres of the state. I argue that postcolonial experience of sovereignty is marked by a fractured state. In almost every Latin American country throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, instead of securing the executive, the armed forces have at times arrogated the latter’s function. In every case, military dictatorships often abetted by paramilitary groups unleashed unbridled violence against perceived as well as resolute opposition.

Aristide spent the next three years (1991-1994) lobbying the U.S. government to place Haiti under severe sanctions with the aim of ousting the illegitimate and undemocratic military government. The U.S. ceased bilateral trade of goods with Haiti, provoking a food shortage crisis, subsequently resulting in an exodus of “boat people” to Miami, and others on planes to New York, Boston, and Montreal. In 1994, Cédras folded to U.S. pressure and was securely accompanied to Panama (Dupuy 2007). With the assistance of U.S.-led multinational UN “peacekeeping” troops, Aristide was reinstated

as the President of Haiti.<sup>31</sup> His homecoming was guaranteed under the condition that U.S. global capitalist projects would resume (Dupuy 2007). Having signed the Paris Accords, he agreed to implement structural adjustment programs as well as to privatize certain key public sectors.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Aristide disbanded the army. Unable to supplant the clientelistic rapport between Cédras and his loyal officers, he enlisted the troops to train new police forces.<sup>33</sup> I argue that by levying the defence of his UN army, Aristide privatized national sovereignty. Thus, postcolonial sovereignty is dislocated from public viewpoint and experience. Instead, it is possessed and wielded by individual and networks of economic and political elite actors.

In 2000, Aristide was re-elected even after many contestations of the voting results. His opposition had grown: with the assistance of the International Republic Institute, the European Socialist International, as well as certain Latin American Christian democratic parties, some members of his newly-formed party *Fanmi Lavalas*,<sup>34</sup> former allies from his first term, neo-Duvalierists, centrists, as well as social democrats forged an anti-Aristide political alliance named the *Convergence Démocratique (CD)*.<sup>35</sup> The elite-led coalition *Groupe des 184*, dejected army men, former paramilitaries, and former pro-Aristide *chimès* also collaborated in the effort to oust Aristide for the second and final

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<sup>31</sup> The UN mission to restore Aristide to power was named the United Nations Mission in Haiti

<sup>32</sup> Aristide did not honor his agreements and instead stalled all neoliberal applications during the remainder of his term. See for more information: <http://www.ipsnews.net/1996/01/haiti-aristide-calls-for-donor-compliance-on-paris-accord>.

<sup>33</sup> The UN mandates were renewed under the presidency of Préval and well into Aristide's second term.

<sup>34</sup> *Fanmi Lavalas* stands for Lavalas Family. *Lavalas* is kreyòl for avalanche or shower.

<sup>35</sup> French for Democratic Convergence.

time (Dupuy 2007). The CD went as far as declaring and establishing a parallel administration. Aristide also lost support from leftist organizations. By then, Aristide had developed a rhizomatic approach to demonstrating his divine authority. Unable to trust the police, he relied on an armed network of primarily young urban unemployed lower-class men, known as the *chimès*,<sup>36</sup> as a counterforce to intimidate and at times eliminate dissenters. Moreover, in response to several coups d'état attempts, Aristide contracted a San Francisco-based firm to provide his personal security (Dupuy 2007). Thus, a fractured state reconfigures sovereign power into a range of informal sovereignties (Hansen and Stepputat 2006). I maintain that without a unified governing body, political and economic elites privatize and commodify sovereignty.

A few months after the celebration of Haiti's bicentennial, a Brazilian-led United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was issued to neutralize the armed Aristide-supporters as well as to supervise new elections. The mediation meetings between Aristide and his opposition orchestrated by the Organization of American States (OAS) as well as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) had failed, the CD having been unwilling to compromise with the elected government. Aristide grudgingly departed for Central African Republic and the US-handpicked Haitian diasporan Gérard Latortue was named Prime Minister. The latter praised Aristide's armed opposition as national heroes and recruited their services to complement the MINUSTAH in identifying and eradicating Aristide devotees in preparation for new elections (Dupuy 2007). Article 268.3 only legitimizes force utilized by the state. It asserts: "The Armed Forces have the monopoly over the manufacture, import, export, use and possession of war [military]

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<sup>36</sup> Kreyòl for "Angry men"

weapons and ammunition, as well as war material.” Thus, the sovereign state defends its monopoly over violence. However, in practice, the fissured clientelistic postcolonial state forfeits this entitlement. I submit that its use of violence is both extra-legal and mercenary regardless of its executors.

In 2006, René Préval was voted in for a second term to continue the implementation of the neo-liberal policies prescribed by the international community that both he and Aristide had managed to stall. Préval’s presidency was stained most importantly by his inaction during the devastating earthquake that occurred in January of 2010 during which over 200,000 people died. He did not issue an official statement; his government stopped working for several days. Instead, U.S. President Barak Obama made the announcement and outlined an emergency plan. The disaster presented itself as yet another point of entry for increased international presence. More UN troops as well as innumerable non-governmental social and religious organizations rushed to save Haiti. Additionally, the Interim Commission for Recovery (ICRH) chaired by former U.S. President Bill Clinton was instituted to coordinate reconstruction efforts (Podur 2012). The Haitian nation-state’s inability to “develop” legitimizes foreign intervention. Postcolonial sovereignty is inextricably linked to the modernizing project. Territorial sovereignty is reserved for the old metropolises.

The most recent president-elect Joseph Michel Martelly (2011-present) has declared Haiti “Open for Business.” He promises to stabilize the country for foreign investments.<sup>37</sup> He repeatedly expresses the controversial desire to re-instate the Haitian army to provide security (not against the occupation already underway) and to maintain



order (of the population). Martelly claims the MINUSTAH will not leave until then.<sup>38</sup> In late 2011, the state signed a contract with the Vietnamese firm Viettel to “modernize” telecommunications service in Haiti. Viettel now controls 60% of what used to be a national phone company.<sup>39</sup> In late 2013, the U.S.-urged law sanctioning money laundering and the financing of terrorism was finally passed. It took the better half of the year for its ratification; certain senators and deputies voiced concern about the law infringing on national sovereignty. Martelly is currently delaying senate and municipal elections for over two years. His opposition in Congress suspects that the President is stalling until January 2015 when the mandates of the last standing members will end. Martelly will then be able to rule by decree.<sup>40</sup> As such, I argue that Martelly seeks to unify the different spheres of the state under his sole direction. A strong state can better regulate sovereignty. A centralized state can better coordinate modernization and development.

### **Fictions of “Sovereignty”: Democracy and the Postcolonial Nation-State**

A more nuanced definition of sovereignty allows for a more complex understanding of the practices of power. Power is not solely located within dominant groups (Spivak 2010, Puri 2004, Scott 1990). Resistance is also a deployment and practice of power. In de-centering the state from my analysis of sovereignty in postcolonial Haiti, I highlight other

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<sup>37</sup> See for more information: [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/michel-martelly/haiti-invest\\_b\\_1260540.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/michel-martelly/haiti-invest_b_1260540.html)

<sup>38</sup> See for more information: <http://www.economist.com/news/americas/21588085-michel-martelly-pushes-ahead-reviving-army-who-needs-them>

<sup>39</sup> See for more information: <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-3757-haiti-telecommunication-natcom-era-begins-today.html>

<sup>40</sup> See for more information: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-29785846>

national actors' political subjectivities. Social movements also participate in shaping the socio-cultural, economic, and political relations on the local as well as the national level, thereby extending citizenship from government partisans to the entire population. The Constitution of 1987 was adopted by referendum, the result of popular mobilizations for the establishment of the rule of law, democracy and equality. Article 4 expressly states: "The national motto is Liberty-Equality-Fraternity."<sup>41</sup> Both the Preamble and Article 19 cite The Universal Human Rights Declaration of 1948 as a key foundational document upon which the constitution rests. No specific privileges are allowed based on class or gender status. Article 18 guarantees all Haitians equality before the law. However, the popular process that had led to the creation of a new legal text was not institutionalized. Amendments through referendum are prohibited in Article 284.3, the result of what Samba (2012) calls "*une sorte d'apartheid endogène silencieux*" (33).<sup>42</sup> In their regulation of an indeterminate number of dealings, constitutions always contain procedures that hinder change (Negretto 2013). While the preamble declares the constitution a tool "to implant democracy, which entails ideological pluralism and a political alternative and to affirm the inviolable rights of the Haitian people," the participation of the non-literate popular masses, representing more than 50% of the total population,<sup>43</sup> has been limited to voting in elections. The political and economic elites have cartelized the legislative, judiciary, and executive processes.

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<sup>41</sup> The amended Constitution of 2011 ensures the representation of women in decision-making spaces. See below for discussion.

<sup>42</sup> Translation from French to English: "a kind of silent endogenous apartheid."

<sup>43</sup> The recent Haitian Census of 2003 reports that now less than 50% of the popular is non-literate.

Democracy is not synonymous with popular sovereignty, in which the people are in direct control over the government. Instead, Post (2006) argues, “democracy presupposes a different kind of equality” that requires “only those forms of equal citizenship that are necessary for the project of collective self-determination to succeed” (32-33). Thus, democracy is compatible with important forms of status subordination. In other words, democracy is not predicated on the political participation of all members of the nation in state affairs. Article 245 states:

“Economic freedom is guaranteed as long as it is not opposed to social interest. The state protects private enterprise and seeks that it develops under the conditions necessary for the growth of national wealth in order to ensure the participation of the greatest number for the benefit of this wealth.”

The individual self-determination of specific said modern citizens, in this case the economic and political elites, regulate the collective common good on behalf of the un-modern non-citizens. For example, article 245 encourages “the formation of production cooperatives in rural and urban areas” in order, of course, “to promote the accumulation of national capital to ensure continuous development.” The cleave between production and capital points to the Haitian nation-state’s strategy to “develop” and “modernize” with workers under the leadership of capitalists. During his inaugural speech, current President Martelly affirmed that he wanted to create

“a Haiti where the middle class will grow, because the middle class is the economic engine of a country, a Haiti, where a change in our mindset will allow us to enter in the modern world... I ask the international community, to have confidence in me, you'll find another leadership, a good partnership, within the respect of each other, with good governance, transparency and honesty. This is a new Haiti, a new Haiti open for business now” ...<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> See for more information: <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-2957-haiti-inauguration-important-moments-of-the-speech-of-michel-martelly.html>

The elites designate themselves as the appropriate intermediaries between the rural non-literate populations and the global. Thus, I argue that democracy is also linked to modern arrangements of capitalism. The post-Fordist push for the liberalization of postcolonial markets relied on this particular conceptualization of democracy. The “Washington Consensus” served as a prescription plan for the development of capitalism and republican democracy in the American Global South.

Though the Constitution of 1987 does not espouse a specific economic system, Articles 36 and 24 respectively guarantee the protection of private property and individual liberty, key components of capitalist enterprise. The Labor Code explicitly states in Article 1 that its objective is “to harmonize relations between Capital and Labor.” Even though constitutional articles 35.3. and 35.4. and Labor Code articles 225 to 253 grant workers the right to unionize, and constitutional article 35.5. the right to strike, Labor Code articles 203 to 210 aggressively limit the legal duration of strikes, and Labor Code articles 211 to 217 offer corporation owners the option of the lock-out as a retaliatory measure. Furthermore, the Fiscal, Commercial and Civil codes offer more safeguards to capitalist interests. Article 3 of Book I Section 7 of the Fiscal Code states that “income tax is at the charge of the employer.” While the Constitution forbids tax evasion in Article 219, Article 10 in Book III’s section on industrial parks of the Fiscal Code exempts them from exportation taxes and Article 21 exonerates Free Zones from taxes for up to 15 years. Finally, the regulated minimum wage for industrial and commercial workers has always been set absurdly low: in 1984, at 15 gourdes or

approximately \$0.33 for an eight-hour day; and in 2009 at 200 gourdes or approximately \$4.56 per day;<sup>45</sup> ensuring that all profit be held by the investing corporations.

In contrast, the constitution does not recognize informalized economic spaces. Domestic employment (of adults as well as children) is glossed over in constitutional article 35.6. The commercial activities of the *chany*, the *kawotchoumann*, the *machann fresko*, the *machann ak bak*, the *machann griyo*, and the *madan sara* (among others) are discounted. The *chany* walks through residential neighborhoods ringing his bell to announce his presence and readiness to shine shoes every morning. At every major intersection, the *kawotchoumann* patch flat tires. The *machann fresko* parks his shaved ice cart in the city center on hot days. The *machann ak bak* sets up her wooden briefcases of candy and soda in front of or across from school gates. The *machann griyo* returns to her corner every night to fry up some pork and plantains for her regular customers. The *Madan Sara* travel atop loaded trucks across mountain ranges to collect local produce from rural farmers and to deliver them to “market” women or supermarket managers in larger towns and cities. I submit that these traveling markets undermine the state’s ability to regulate the circulation of people, goods, and ideas. These self-employed entrepreneurs do not neatly fit the dichotomy of production and capital.

### **Contradistinctions in Postcolonial National Identity and Citizenship**

Starting in the 1970s, Latin America and the Caribbean (as well as the Global North) witnessed the proliferation of social movements organized around both class- and identity-base politics (Escobar 1992). The multicultural turn produced new constitutions

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<sup>45</sup> See the official national gazette *Le Moniteur* for more information. Note that these official publications of wages do not cover agricultural workers.

that afforded recognition and assigned rights to Afrodescendants and Indigenous communities in Brazil, Colombia, and Ecuador among others. In the case of Haiti, the Constitution of 1987 revealed non-dominant groups whose identities and issues were absconded behind a universal conceptualization of citizenship. The new constitution pluralized national identity by incorporating regional, class, and gendered diversity. However, race and ethnicity remained un-questioned dimensions. As such, I argue that unlike the rest of Latin America, Haiti experienced a quasi-multicultural turn. In the following section, I analyze the Constitution of 1987's definition of formal citizenship through a discussion of nationality, urban vs. rural, race and language, and family as well as substantive citizenship with a discussion of gender, age, ability, religion, information, education, health, and justice.

#### *Nationality: The Polity Imagined and Concretized*

Formal citizenship delimits which people or groups of people constitute membership and subsequently belongingness to the polity (Holston 2008). Non-Haitian nationals or foreigners are restrained in their exercise of political rights and property ownership. Thus, establishing legal recognition by the Haitian nation-state guarantees certain privileges reserved for citizens, members of the nation living within the confines of its geographical space. Constitutional article 56 threatens to oust any foreigner who interferes in the political life of the country. Nevertheless, in Article 55, foreigners are afforded the right to real estate provided that they reside in Haiti. Articles 55.1 and 55.2 specify the limits of property ownership by foreigners. The latter cannot be proprietor of more than one home in the same municipality nor can they engage in the leasing of property. They are,

however, allowed to own real estate to satisfy additional commercial, agricultural, religious, humanitarian and educational needs. Finally, Article 54 affirms that foreigners benefit from the same protection as afforded to Haitians before the Law.

Transnational, postcolonial, feminist, and diaspora theorists argue that the nation extends beyond state boundaries (Appadurai 2003, Laguerre 1998, Laguerre 2005, Clifford 1994). Neoliberal globalization produced new waves of migration of Latin American and Caribbean citizens to the American Global North (Alvarez et al 1998, Davis 1999, Escobar 1992, Escobar and Alvarez 1992, Hamel et al 2001, Margheritis and Pereira 2007). In 1996 and again in 2001, the U.S. tightened its immigration laws, limiting certain social and civil rights exclusively to U.S. citizens. In response to these caustic political restrictions and subsequent social and economic marginalization, Latin American and Caribbean diasporic nationals opted for naturalization to retain rights and benefits from the U.S. In turn, most Latin American and Caribbean states loosened their citizenship laws in order to accommodate their migrant population (Escobar 2007, Glick-Schiller 2004, Schmitz 2004, Silva 2010). Latin American and Caribbean diasporic migrants contribute to the strengthening of their homeland through their participation in transnational networks of communication, trade, and remittances (Bailey et al. 2002, De la Torre and Sanchez 2012, Laguerre 2005, Trouillot 2000). Latin American and Caribbean states rely on the diaspora most significantly as lobbyists to influence U.S. foreign policy in the homeland. Thus, transnational migration changed the relationship between the state and citizenship. While modern citizenship was affixed to a specific territorial space, late 20<sup>th</sup> century migration has de-territorialized and subsequently re-territorialized the nation-state outside geographical borders (Appadurai 2003, Clifford

1994, Davis 1999, Escobar 1992, Escobar 2007, Glick-Schiller 2004, Hamel et al 2001, Laguerre 2005, Margheritis and Pereira 2007, Schmitz 2004). Most importantly, in order to remain linked to its diaspora in the Global North, most Latin American and Caribbean states re-negotiated their graduated sovereignty by collapsing nationality into citizenship.

Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century Haiti was marked by the dictatorship of the Duvaliers, the flight of mostly educated and professional Haitians to the American Global North, the rise of “boat people,”<sup>46</sup> the dismantling of Haitian civil society, and the re-building of a transnational Haitian civil society through the inclusion of the Diaspora (Laguerre 1998, Trouillot 2000). The most recent Census of Haiti states that 30.5% of families report at least one member living outside of Haiti, among which 65% emigrated to the U.S.<sup>47</sup> Following former Haitian president Jean Bertrand Aristide’s acknowledgement of Haitians living abroad as members of the “10<sup>th</sup> department,”<sup>48</sup> Haitian identity was discursively recognized as fluid and multifaceted (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 1990). Haitian diasporic identity thus served as an example of the disentanglement of nationality and citizenship (Labelle 1999). Many Haitians in the homeland rely on the diaspora for remittances and, consequently, for their survival. The inclusion of these diasporic people into the national imaginary is a strategy to protect and preserve the nation itself. The diaspora introduces another important element in the theorizing of nation, sovereignty, and citizenship. The diaspora disturbs and re-arranges the naturalized borders of the

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<sup>46</sup> Boat people are primarily lower and working class urban and rural Haitians who board rafts and attempt to reach the shores of the U.S.

<sup>47</sup> See Haitian Census of 2003

<sup>48</sup> At the time, Haiti was divided geographically into 9 different departments. Since 2003, the Department of Nippes was added to Haiti, thus relinquishing the Diaspora now to the 11<sup>th</sup> department.



postcolonial nation, re-defining sovereignty and challenging state-based notions of citizenship.

Prior to the new constitutional amendment of Articles 12 to 15 in 2011 allowing dual citizenship of diasporic people of Haitian descent, the Haitian Diaspora circumvented its disenfranchisement in the homeland by utilizing its position in its western hostland to influence and shape the political landscape of Haiti (Laguerre 2005). Moreover, certain members of the nation straddled both the homeland and the diaspora. They are what Ong (1999) terms “flexible citizens,” transnational individuals who navigate multiple sites of legal citizenship in order to accumulate capital. Transnational Haitians held multiple forms of legal belongingness through the official status of their spouses and/or their children. Many members of the political and economic elites of Haiti hold U.S. American or European Union passports. These individuals constitute what Sklair (2002) terms a “transnational capitalist class” that functions outside of the geographical and legal borders of nations.

The Haitian Diaspora is located in the interstices that link the international, the national, and the local. Neoliberal migration demands the use of a transnational framework to understand the dialectical processes that shape people's everyday lives. The simultaneous occupation of multiple spaces and sites of diasporic “citizens” highlights the inherent contradictions that order the modern world system of nation-states. These extra-territorial nationals challenge traditional notions of sovereignty and citizenship in both their homeland and hostland countries, demanding an extension of rights and benefits from both states. Moreover, the hierarchically differentiated diaspora further disturbs the binary between power and resistance. Diasporic “citizens” do not all share

the same interests. Additionally, they have variegated access to power in each national context. Boyard (2012) brings our attention to the plight of Haitian diasporic peoples living in the Dominican Republic whose campaign for Dominican citizenship has been severely impaired by the new anti-Haitian constitutional amendment.<sup>49</sup> Thus, the diaspora, a feature of both the international and the national, highlights the contentious interests and practices that compete to re-arrange the movement of capital, goods, ideas and people.

*“Moun lavil” vs. “Moun andeyò”:<sup>50</sup> A Fractured Polity*

As discussed above, the urban vs. rural divide permeates national narratives and practices. The people’s referendum sought (unsuccessfully) to address and rectify the inequality. The constitutional preamble commits the state to “strengthen national unity by eliminating all discrimination between the urban and rural populations.” In Article 87.4, the constitution calls for the de-centralization of state structures, institutions, and services as well as industrial de-compartmentalization in order to ensure the development of the rural. Moreover, Article 247 recognizes agriculture as the “principal source of national wealth and guarantor of the well-being of the populations and of the socio-economic progress of the Nation.” However, the Constitution of 1987 never overtly mentions farmers, not even as workers. Articles 35 to 35.6 define workers as employees of private or public institutions. In the Labor code, agricultural work (farming) is regulated

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<sup>49</sup> See for information on the most recent anti-Haitian Dominican legislations: <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/children-haitian-descent-dominican-republic-barred-school-article-1.1754213>

<sup>50</sup> Translation from Kreyòl to English: “City folks vs. Country folks”

separately (in Articles 372-388) from work taking place in agricultural (transformation/manufacturing), industrial and commercial establishments. The legal distinction between manufacturing and farming is an iteration of the urban vs. rural divide. Instead, the constitution and the various codes continue to re-produce the historical opposition between the un-modern and under-developed agricultural countryside and the modern and developed industrial city.

The Civil and Commercial Codes regulate exchange between capitalists; the Rural Code deals with peasants as sharecroppers. Constitutional article 248 created a special national institute for agrarian reform “to benefit those who actually work the land.” However, the Constitution of 1987 does not provide an agrarian vision nor does it state the specifics of this said “benefit.” Constitutional article 39 affords rural inhabitants “the right to pre-emption for the exploitation of the private domain of the State situated in their locality.” In other words, peasants are granted squatting rights. Rural peasants are encouraged to relate to land outside of the paradigm of private ownership. Differentiations between land ownership and land occupancy reify the separation and apposition of the modern legal right to private property and individual liberty by mostly urban-based elites against the sanctioned cooperative use of under-developed “private” state property by rural populations. Serving as intermediaries to national as well as international markets, deeded land owners (including the state) regulate and manage the trading process. The marginalization of the rural from the Haitian legal imaginary thus also precludes it from exercising its residents’ individual constitutional right to sovereignty. The privatization of the law, leading to the under-development of rural areas and populations, contradicts the constitutional promise to expand both formal

(membership and belonging) and substantive (rights and duties) citizenship to include inhabitants of the countryside. It is precisely against this discourse and practice of exclusion that social movements confront national elites.

A racialized class order underpins the divide between the “modern” and the “underdeveloped.” The colonial legacy was exacerbated by the U.S. Occupation (1915-1934). The U.S. Marines concentrated the seat of power in the capital with the “mulatto” elites, distancing all state structures and institutions from the rest of the “black” population (Laguette 1998). The Revolution of 1946 overthrew “white” supremacy and made way for the ascendancy to power of the Noirist dictator François Duvalier. Haiti continues to be imagined as biopolitically and monoculturally “black.” Constitutional article 215 identifies Haitian ancestry and beliefs to be derived from Africa. The Haitian nation-state has always been imagined as deeply rooted in an African identity (Desmangles 1992, Fleurant 2004, Trouillot 2000). African-descended slaves represented the majority in Saint Domingue.<sup>51</sup> Unlike in Latin America, the Haitian revolutionary wars ousted and killed most white colonialists. Nevertheless, while the dominant discourse may laud blackness, persistent colorism stratifies Haitian society. Color serves as a demarcation for class differences. Lighter skin affords greater social and even economic advantages (Labelle 1987, Laguette 1998, Trouillot 2000). As opposed to other Latin American and Caribbean nations, Haiti experienced a quasi-multicultural turn. Neither the revolutionaries, the pro-Duvalierist conservatives, nor the liberal technocrats challenged the racial and ethnic identity of the nation. In contrast, Indigenous and Afro-descendant movements struggled with state agents for decades to gain some official

recognition in Latin American constitutions and special legislations (De la Torre and Sanchez 2012, Rahier 2012). While previous Latin American constitutions had recognized their indigenous ancestry, most projected a white-mestizo identity onto the national imaginary; Afro-descendants did not figure as “an ingredient” in what Rahier (2012) calls “the ideological biologies of national identity” (1). Beginning in the 1990s and again in the 2000s, the Latin American dominant discourse on national identity shifted from “monocultural mestizaje and ‘invisibility’ to multiculturalism and state corporatism/co-optation” (Rahier 2012: 3).

Language is also a marker of the nation-state’s geo-political racialized order. The Constitution of 1987 is the first since Haiti’s independence to recognize *Kreyòl* as a common language and as one of the two official languages of the country in its Article 5. Even a linguistic academy is promised to ensure the development of the *Kreyòl* language in Article 213.<sup>52</sup> 42.2% of the total Haitian population have no level of schooling, 54.7% of which live in the rural areas.<sup>53</sup> French is the primary language of schooling. Thus, no access to education denotes no exposure to, let alone mastery of French. Ironically, the Rural Code (among others) has yet to be translated from French into *Kreyòl*. Moreover, according to Berrouet-Oriol (2012), the newly amended Constitution of 2011 has not been, as had the original Constitution of 1987, transformed into *Kreyòl*, further marking the language’s superficiality in the legal imaginary and serving in effect as a “*coup*

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<sup>51</sup> Prior to the independence, Haiti was called Saint Domingue by the French

<sup>52</sup> It was not until 2011 that efforts to put together an *Akademik Kreyòl* materialized. See for more information: <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-4094-haiti-culture-the-academy-of-haitian-creoleissues-challenges-and-prospects.html>

<sup>53</sup> See Haitian Census of 2003

*d'état*" (141) against the Kreyòl language. The difficult conciliation of urban and rural, "mulatto" and "black", and French and Kreyòl point to the tensions between transferred Western concepts and legal items with the lived experiences and the multiple identities of Haiti's populations.

*The Polity (Re)produced: Women and the Family*

As discussed in Chapter IV, feminists were among the leaders of the *Revolisyon 1986*. They ensured the inclusion of gender equality in social movement demands. In turn, in Article 17, the Constitution of 1987 affords civil and political rights to all Haitians 18 and above irrespective of their sex/gender. The amended Constitution of 2011 added to the preamble a special clause on women's rights ensuring "a representation in positions of power and decision-making that is in accordance to the equality of the sexes and gender equality." Even though all-male signatories had redacted the original body of legislation, women's citizenship could not be disregarded. Women had already been enfranchised in previous constitutions and bestowed different gender-based rights in special legislations. For example, both women and men can file for divorce according to Articles 215 and on of the Civil Code. Most importantly, Article 279 of the Penal Code recognizes and punishes rape. Moreover, Article 3 of the Labor Code proclaims the equality of all workers and abolishes discrimination on the basis of sex. Article 9 promises special protection to working mothers in order to ensure the safe birth of her child. These protections are enumerated in articles 316 to 331 under the title "Women's work." In 1995, returned President Jean-Bertrand Aristide created the *Ministère à la Condition Féminine et des*

*Droits des Femmes (MCFDF)*<sup>54</sup> and named then director of *Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn (SOFA)*<sup>55</sup> Louise-Marie Déjean as its first minister. Lastly, as I will discuss in Chapter V, after 14 years of feminist pressure, the newly amended Constitution of 2011 added Articles 17.1 and 31.1. requiring the application of the 30% quota of women at all levels of national life, including political parties. Despite these victories and privileges, the Haitian feminist movement continues to struggle against other discriminatory state policies such as Article 262 of the Penal Code that criminalizes abortion. Without the significant presence of women in decision-making spaces, other pressing feminist issues such as domestic violence and sexual harassment still remain to be engaged by the patriarchal state.

Women's rights are not limited to their individual bodies. They are also linked to their position in the family. The Constitution of 1987 recognizes the family as the fundamental basis of society in Article 259. Article 262 promises a Family Code, which has yet to be formulated. Article 133 of the Civil Code defines marriage as an act between a woman and a man and the Decree of October 8 1982 renders spouses equal in a marriage. On the other hand, constitutional article 260 acknowledges forms of domestic relationships other than those constituted within traditional marriage as legitimate families. This imprecise conceptualization of "family" attests to the diversity of household arrangements, some woman-headed and mono-parental, often including multi-generational and extended members. According to the most recent Haitian Census of

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<sup>54</sup> Translation from French to English: "Ministry of the Feminine Condition and Women's Rights"

<sup>55</sup> Translation from French to English: "Solidarity of Haitian Women". SOFA is one of the founding members of PAPDA

2003, 53% of households are headed by women; 43.6% are enlarged families composed of extended family members.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, bigamy is criminalized according to Article 288 of the Penal Code. The elusiveness of the constitutional article 260, nevertheless, helps to obscure other prevalent conjugal practices in Haiti such as polygamy and *plasaj*,<sup>57</sup> as well as same-sex partnerships. 53.6% of unions are *plasaj*, and 2.7% are polygamist.<sup>58</sup> The inconsistency continues to fuel the current Haitian feminist movement's confrontation with the state (See Chapter V for more discussion). Prior to the new 2012 "Responsible Paternity and Filiation" law, the Civil Code distinguished children born in wedlock ("legitimate") in Article 293 from children born out of wedlock ("natural") in Article 302.<sup>59</sup> The highly contested articles permitted paternal repudiation, thus relinquishing all parental responsibilities to the un-married or adulterous mother. I argue that the nation-state uses the trope of family to emphasize a single historical origin of the nation and to help naturalize racialized, gendered, and sexualized hierarchies within the nation. Feminist theorists maintain that the 'separate spheres' of the postcolonial nation-state are premised on gender binaries and heteronormativity. In order to guarantee the re-production and maintenance of the postcolonial nation-state, under the guise of nationalist fervor and the preservation of pre-colonial "traditions", the economic and political elites define appropriate embodiments and performances that draw from colonial constructions of respectable gender and sexuality (Alarcon et al. 1999,

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<sup>56</sup> See <http://www.ihsi.ht/pdf/ecvh/ECVHVVolumeI/Population.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> *Plasaj* is kreyòl for cohabitation.

<sup>58</sup> See Census of 2003

<sup>59</sup> See for more information: [http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article12704#.VID5LjHF\\_3c](http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article12704#.VID5LjHF_3c)



Alexander 1994, Alexander and Mohanty 1997, Alexander 1997, Barraclough 2003, Chatterjee 1993, Grewal and Kaplan 1994, Marchand and Runyan 2000, Mayer 2000, McClintock 1991, Patil 2009). Thus, these elites delimit which bodies exist within and which exist outside of the homogeneous imaginary that is the postcolonial nation-state. These bodies are assigned belongingness according to their usefulness to the nation-state. Gender and sexuality are not incidental but rather are central to the development and implications of the nation.

*The Vulnerable Polity: Status and Rights of Children, Domestic, the Elderly, the Disabled*

As a member and a product of the family, children are ensured protection and access to love, affection, understanding, and moral and material care from their father and mother according to constitutional article 261. Children are also mentioned in Article 35.6., which limits the minimum working age and refers to special legislations regulating the work of minors. The laws figure in the Labor Code. Article 10 proclaims a child's right to professional development and primary education. The right to education is echoed in the Decree of December 8, 1960 that obliges parent(s) or guardian(s) to school their child(ren). Article 73 sets the age limit for apprenticeship or professional instruction at 14. While the Constitution, in its modern self-projection, does not specifically allude to the *restavèk* system,<sup>60</sup> Articles 341 to 371 of the Labor Code outline the rights and protection of the "*enfants de service*."<sup>61</sup> The 2003 Census captures this class of children, estimating them at 0.8% of the total population. Bracken (2006) notes that the number of *restavèks* is steadily growing in Haiti as poverty worsens. In spite of the studies, the state

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<sup>60</sup> Translation from Kreyòl to English: "to stay with"

complied with international dictates by passing the Law of June 5, 2003 that abolished the few protections afforded to restavèks by the Labor Code, thus further marginalizing these children.

A restavèk is a child slave whose body is transferred from the possession of her parents to the receiving family. He or she usually comes from a large family from a poor rural peasant community where education is scant and inaccessible to her and her siblings. In most cases, a restavèk is a girl whose services are preferred by the receiving family because of the traditional feminine tasks she is expected to perform as well as her perceived docility. The education of girls from rural families is not considered a priority (N'Zengou-Tayo 1998). The restavèk system is most prevalent in the cities, particularly the capital. Most parents, under the assumption that life in Port-au-Prince is better, send their children to foster families in hopes that the children will prosper and return to their rural communities to lift the family out of poverty. The adoptive family is usually a single-parent home led by a mother who struggles to provide for her biological children and requires help for the good functioning of her household. Since the mother cannot afford to employ a nanny or servant and cannot rely on an absent husband's participation, she is forced to enlist the services of someone in greater need than she. Often, the restavèk's services are extended to the sexual pleasuring of the men in the family. The female host parent does not represent a source of relief. Rather, it is often she who perpetuates violence against the restavèk, protecting her rapist sons. Most restavèks remain in servitude into adulthood. Those who escape servitude fall prey to the streets

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<sup>61</sup> Literally translated from French to English: "children of service"

and a life of crime and violence. Some become prostitutes, some join rebel armies, some become mendicants.

While Article 4 of the Labor Code prohibits forced labor, the Law of September 10, 2001 interdicts all corporal violence against children, and the Decree of August 15, 2002 forbids the prostitution of children, *restavèk* children continue to experience violence on a regular basis far from the reaches of state agencies like the *Institut du Bien-Etre Social et de Recherches (IBSR)*<sup>62</sup> that was created expressly to protect children from abuse. Galtung (1990) refers to these acceptances of abuse of children and women and inequality between the classes and genders as cultural violence. He defines culture violence as “those aspects of our culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (291). Through cultural violence, perpetrators of child slavery are able to maintain the system that forces parents to separate from their children in pursuit of a better life for them away from their rural communities. Without a culture that permits violence against marginalized groups, the system of *restavèks* would not have survived centuries after the official abolition of slavery in Haiti.

Poverty and structural violence are determinants of contemporary forms of slavery (Herzfeld 2002). Farmer (2004) defines structural violence as “violence exerted systematically- that is indirectly- by everyone who belongs to a certain social order” (294). As such, extreme poverty foment systems of slavery. Interestingly, it is the poor themselves who rely on *restavèks* as status symbols but more importantly as a support system for their families. The practice of child slavery in Haiti has declined among the

small upper class of the country and on the contrary has grown among the poor Haitians, especially those living in Port-au-Prince's slums (Bracken 2006). Gurr's (1970) theory of relative deprivation offers a partial explanation for the perpetuation of the *restavèk* System by lower class Haitians. Relative deprivation is defined as “a perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and their value capabilities” (24). In other words, people are not able to reach the living conditions they desire because of social restrictions. The ownership of *restavèks* serves to mark a level of privilege within the lower class. However, the system does not only exist to reinforce materialistic pursuits, it endures as a result of the lack of support afforded to poor parents- often single mothers- who struggle to work in order to provide for their families and are consequently unable to tend to household chores. I offer Bourdieu's (1990) “symbolic violence” to understand the lower class' participation in the perpetuation of oppression. The power of symbolic violence is drawn from the ability to involve the oppressed in their own destruction. The *restavèk* system is a problem understood to be limited to lower class people, an issue that does not require the immediate attention of officials burdened with the task of accommodating more privileged members of Haitian society.

Another group of people, often ignored and absconded by statistics measuring formal market relations, are domestic servants. In addition to the constitutional article 35.6. that makes mention of them, Labor Code articles 254 to 265 describe the “*gens de maison*”<sup>63</sup> as a special category of workers, outside of the regulated market. The Code offers no specific guidelines for their hire and treatment. Instead, they are subject to their

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<sup>62</sup> Translation from French to English: “Institute for Social Well-Being and Research”

<sup>63</sup> Literal translation from French to English: “people of the home”

employers' arbitrary decisions to abuse, overuse, and dispose of them. Without education and without the possibility of acquiring "legitimate" employment, these vulnerable populations are forced to accept these conditions.

The disabled are another protected category in the Constitution in Article 32.8. While the 1987 version referred to them as "handicapped", the amended version of 2011 defines them as people with special needs. Specific rights, however, are not assigned. It was not until 2007 that a *Secrétairerie d'Etat à l'Intégration des Personnes Handicapées*<sup>64</sup> was created under the auspice of the Ministry of Labor through the support of the Brazilian government.<sup>65</sup> The subsequent Law on the Integration of Handicapped Persons that would protect people with special needs from discrimination in society at large among others was voted by the Chamber of Deputies in 2010 but has yet to be published in the official national gazette *Le Moniteur*, thus rendering the law ineffective.

Finally, in constitutional article 260, the elderly are recognized as an integral component of the family in need of special protections. Constitutional article 48 promises them a civil pension as a right and not a favor. However, with unemployment rates as high as 9.4%,<sup>66</sup> most of the population work outside of the formal market, and a debilitating social security system, the elderly receive no support from the state. These kinds of malfunctions in the socio-political structure of Haiti are precisely what concern social movement actors.

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<sup>64</sup> Translation from French to English: "State Secretariat for the Integration of Handicapped Persons"

<sup>65</sup> See for more information: <http://www.haitilibre.com/article-2492-haiti-societe-des-projets-pour-les-handicapes.html>

### *Other Rights and Freedoms of the Polity*

In addition to acknowledging and granting special and protective status at least nominally to the identities listed above, other rights are conferred to the general population by the Constitution of 1987 as well as the newly amended version. Constitutional article 22 recognizes citizens' right to decent housing, education, nourishment and social security. These civil liberties are designed to guarantee equality in the polity. In this section, I will review and analyze the right to information and education, health, the freedom of religious affiliation, and finally the right and access to justice.

Section F comprised of constitutional articles 32 to 32.7. and 33 guarantees free education at all levels including preschool, kindergarten, primary, secondary, and tertiary at the expense of the state indiscriminately to all, as well as a massive literacy campaign to bridge the divide between the rural and the urban. While the Constitution does not endorse a Haitian-specific curriculum, it encourages in Chapter V articles 208 to 212 the maintenance of an autonomous University, and the creation of research centers in order to advance academic education and practices that serve the needs of national development. Neither versions of the Constitution specify a preference for the language of instruction. However, the Constitution's mention of the need for the establishment of a Haitian Academy supposes a "scientific" underdevelopment of the Kreyòl language and therefore unofficially legitimizing French as the lingua franca of education. Coupled with the right to education is the right to information. Constitutional article 40 makes it mandatory for the state to publicize all legal texts "through media broadcast, print and television, in Kreyòl and in French." As mentioned above, the new Constitution of 2011 has yet to be

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<sup>66</sup> See Haitian Census of 2003

translated into Kreyòl essentially making active both versions at the same time, the 1987 serving a creolophone population and the 2011 a French-speaking one.

Constitutional article 23 renders the state responsible for the creation of health centers and facilities. However, to date, there is only one public hospital in the country; the others are private, many of which are operated and managed by foreign doctors and nurses. Access to health is in effect privatized, increasing the vulnerability of already impoverished and marginalized populations.

Constitutional articles 30 to 30.2 regulate religious freedom. As per Article 30, all forms of religious practices are acceptable. Moreover, Article 297a of the Constitution of 1987 repealed the anti-superstition laws passed under former President Elie Lescot in 1935, thus lifting the prohibition against vodou. In consequence, adherents constructed vodou as a religion rather than an individualized family-based system of beliefs and practices. 2.1% of the population reports itself vodouisant.<sup>67</sup> The “vodouisant” thus emerges as a separate category of religious identity, a modern derivation of a non-western concept. Vodou is not simply a religion; it is a system of organizing life that derives from the African traditions of the Fon people of Dahomey that adapted to the colonial context through the incorporation of Native Amerindian and French religious and cultural elements to provide an alternative reality to slaves and maroons (Desmangles 1992). Vodou de-centralizes power, provides an alternative construction of gender and sexuality, and most significantly assigns agency to women. After the Revolution, in order to suppress visible expressions of “tradition” that would hinder the Haitian nation-state from joining the ranks of the more “civilized” and “modern” European nation-states,

postcolonial elite men banished vodou. As an anti-patriarchal heteroflexible practice, it threatens western supremacy (Gilbert 2001).<sup>68</sup> Following the 2010 earthquake, many Christian evangelicals pointed to vodou as the source of Haiti's ills, singling out and orchestrating attacks against vodouisants. The recently amended Constitution of 2011 repealed Article 297a causing great concern among vodouisants. In turn, President Martelly has defended the annulment of that article under the basis of its obsolescence since all religions receive equal protection under Haitian law.<sup>69</sup>

Finally, in response to the indiscriminate Duvalierist application of violence, Article 20 of the Constitution of 1987 (as well as the newly amended version) abolishes the death penalty. Moreover, prisoners' human dignity is protected in Article 44.1. Duvalierist prisons were designed to break dissenters by denying them access to food and proper sanitation and space. Patrick Lemoine, a survivor of the dictatorial regime, recounts his experience in *Fort-Dimanche* where he was placed in a cell with at least five other political prisoners with no toilet. Additionally, paramilitary penetration of the home during the Duvalier regime was rampant. In turn, the Constitution grants civilians the right to self-defense on their property assuming they have authorization to carry a weapon. Lastly, article 207 to 207.3. established the Office of Citizens' Protection to safeguard citizens from all forms of abuse by the state itself. The newly amended Constitution added an article (207bis) affording special attention to women's complaints.

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<sup>67</sup> See Haitian Census of 2003

<sup>68</sup> The *manbo* and *oungan* (respectively the female and male authorities who enjoy equal status) are the leaders of the community, the interceptors and translators of the divine (the lwa), the guides of their followers (Fleurant 2004).

<sup>69</sup> See for more info: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/gina-athena-ulyse/defending-vodou-in-haiti\\_b\\_1973374.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/gina-athena-ulyse/defending-vodou-in-haiti_b_1973374.html)



The Constitution was also designed to curtail potential retaliation against Duvalierists. For example, Article 46 exempts a suspect or witness from testifying against him/herself as well as parents up to the fourth degree of consanguinity or second degree of marital alliance; Article 51 prohibits the law from having a retroactive effect, unless it is favorable to the accused. In order to avoid civil war, social movement actors (as well as the population who participated in the referendum) accepted the condition to grant adherents to the old regime these special immunities, and ultimately to accept the latter's circumventing of justice.

## **Conclusion**

The imposition of the Anglo-Eurocentric concepts and practices of democracy and liberal capitalism to postcolonial Latin America and the Caribbean was made possible by the transfer of constitutional and other legal items as well as territorial and economic occupation throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and well into the next. Following the decolonization of the Caribbean and the multicultural turn in Latin America, American postcolonial states adopted new constitutions or amended their existing constitutions to recognize the identities, ideologies, beliefs, and practices of their diverse populations. Thus, Latin American and Caribbean constitutions are not simple reproductions of a one-size-fits-all model of development. They are adapted to fit, at least nominally, the material realities of their specific nation-state. In Chapter III, I de-center the state from my conceptualization of sovereignty and power in order to emphasize the national and international actors that participate in the arrangement of local order. In Haiti, the failure of the Duvalierist constitution coupled with the quasi-cultural turn in politics produced a

plurality of social movements that utilized the momentum of U.S. and U.N.-prescribed democratization to demand a new social contract. The 1987 Constitution was ratified in both French and Kreyòl by popular referendum. As discussed above, the urban vs. rural divide is acknowledged and struck down, gender-based and family rights are granted and finally, education and religion rights (among others) are guaranteed. However, the clientelistic fractured state did not implement sustainable change for the larger population, and instead maintained the privatization of sovereignty for economic and political elite individual and corporate actors. In fact, the state utilized legal and extra-legal force to manage sovereignty on behalf of transnational interests. The push for democratization and human rights by global governance institutions coincided with the promotion of the “Washington Consensus” that permitted the Empire to further consolidate its power in the postcolonial nation-state. Furthermore, the globalization of the law transferred political authority to extra-national entities such as multinational corporations and NGOs. Democracy and constitutional order are thus based on capitalist development. As such, certain forms of inequality between different members of the polity are tolerated and even required. The modern capitalist urban elites elect themselves against the under-developed rural peasants as the agents of development. While claiming to represent and protect all its citizens, postcolonial constitutions are tools of the transnational capitalist class.

## CHAPTER IV: PAPDA

### Strategic Alliances: Coalition-building and the NGOization of Social Movements

In 1991, the Haitian armed forces deposed and exiled the first democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Unabashed by the military state repression, social movement actors condemned the coup d'état and called for a return to constitutional order. Democratization had been stalled; the victories of the "Revolisyon 1986" short lived. In 1994, Aristide returned to power backed by the U.S.-led United Nations Mission after having signed the Paris Accords. He deployed his personalized external army to circumvent the local political process that non-violent organized radicals had not been able to command. Furthermore, his homecoming indicated his commitment to the implementation of the "Washington Consensus" in Haiti. As a consequence, social movement actors retreated from electoral politics into civil society and distanced themselves from Aristide as well as his opponents. Over several months, leaders of more than twenty social movement organizations (SMOs) met to deliberate on concrete next steps. By 1995, only the nine ideologically related SMOs remained and agreed to cement their network into a centralized platform that would synchronize one inclusive nationalist popular movement. With the financial assistance of Oxfam-Great Britain, they established a non-governmental organization "Haitian Platform of Advocacy for an Alternative Development" (PAPDA) from which to express their grievances but most significantly, from which to submit their proposal for an alternative to the current neoliberal orderings of the Haitian state and economy. As a separate entity from its founding organizations, PAPDA's assigned role is to publically serve as a unified voice of Haitian social movements. Drawing on

Marxist and feminist narratives, PAPDA articulates the vision of an alternative modernity through discursive productions such as position papers and articles, its leaders' presence and participation at varying local, national, and international social and political forums, and their political education projects in both urban and rural contexts. Utilizing the funds acquired through their non-profit status, the coalition seeks to control the dominant narratives of resistance, and in turn to shape civil society as well as the broader politico-cultural system.

In Chapter IV, I assemble testimonies from PAPDA executive staff and originating leaders as well as their printed and on-line publications in order to trace the its transformation from a social movement network into an NGO through its nineteen years of fieldwork as a coalition. As such, I first chronicle PAPDA's (pre)-history and describe the founding member-organizations in order to examine their connections to one another and to the anti-dictatorial and democratic Revolisyon 1986, their motivations for forming the platform, as well as their position in the Haitian power structure. I draw attention to the class and gender composition of their respective leadership, which I submit constitutes what I appropriate from Bhabba (1990) and call the "Third Space." I discuss the coalition's objectives to inform and train the popular masses, to push a "gender equality" agenda, as well as to establish international alliances. Secondly, I analyze PAPDA's negotiation of its NGO status with its extra-national funders. I contend that 21st century nationalisms are transnational projects. Moreover, despite its professionalization and bureaucratization, PAPDA was not co-opted nor de-politicized. Next, I evaluate the competing currents of nationalism that underlie the platform. As such, I focus on leaders' understandings of tradition and modernity as well as their

discursive construction of an alternative modernity. Moreover, I evaluate coalition decision-making processes. I argue that despite the unrestrained tensions between leaders, the coalition's unified voice remains intact. Fractionalization would weaken PAPDA's bid for the control of civil society narratives and advocacy work. I then discuss PAPDA's local and international collaborations in the anti-globalization movement for food sovereignty as well as its ascent as a legitimate political actor over two decades. I highlight one example of PAPDA's solidarity economy "experiments" in Limonade to assess social movement praxis. Finally, I close with a brief overview of the coalition's next steps. Social movements are constantly in formation as new political opportunities and threats arise.

As discussed in the introduction, globalization produced its own spaces of resistance. New Haitian social movements are conjoined with the larger transnational anti-globalization movement that promotes local subsistence (or food sovereignty) over "sustainable" development. These translocal nationalist movements invoke their constitutions to denounce the neoliberalization of their national economies and the foreign infringement on sovereignty, democracy, and local traditions. They then appeal to their respective state and successively to international financial institutions as well as transnational corporations. In order to sustain the struggle for social change, local social movements coalesce to pursue and obtain extra-national financial resources. SMOs that register and behave as NGOs can gain national as well as international legitimacy. They aspire to become political actors that intervene in the national as well as international public sphere. As expected, the competition for recognition engenders antagonistic conceptualizations and practices of nationalism. The professionalization of social

movements further entrenches the hierarchies that emerge in SMOs between more visible self-appointed leaders and symbolic members. Moreover, the bureaucratization of SMOs also mirrors the spatial distancing between the urban and the rural. While NGOized SMO headquarters are located in the capital, their fieldwork takes place in the rural areas for the most part. The reification of the urban vs. rural divide in social movement work underpins the antagonism between some SMOs.

These disagreements among leaders do not, however, cause movement fragmentation. The social ties and ideologies that link SMOs to one another as well as their shared vision for an alternative development contain competing discourses and keep members welded. Leaders also constantly engage in auto-critique within their respective organizations as well as in coalition space. Furthermore, the political threats against which SMOs maintain opposition sustain group cohesion. In fact, neoliberal dangers motivate social movements to aggressively implement their own alternative economic models. Much of social movement work takes place outside of the Port-au-Prince public sphere. The state's "under-development" of rural areas enables social movements to "experiment" with community-owned businesses or solidarity economies. As such, I submit that through collective enterprise, social movement leaders regroup and organize individual bodies and lives into mobilizable alternative collective identities.

### **Legacies of *Revolisyon 1986*: "New" Social Movements**

The foundation of PAPDA in 1995 is a direct response to the miscarriage of the *Revolisyon 1986*. A new progressive constitution as well as the election of Aristide were not sufficient conditions for democratization. Instead, the state was fractured and the

status quo of violent rule maintained. Aristide's restoration to power unleashed a multi-national annexation of the political process as well as the economy. Disillusioned, social movement organizations renewed their resolve to continue movement-building *andeyò* away from the state. Rural inhabitants constitute the *potomitan* <sup>70</sup> of the nation as managers of agriculture, or as indicated in Article 245 of the Constitution of 1987, the "wealth of the nation."<sup>71</sup>

### *The Precursor to PAPDA*

All of my interviewees pointed to William from CRAD (see information below) as the movement historian. He humbly rejected the title. He was concerned about not remembering specific dates but recalled very well the emotions behind the initiative,

When Aristide came back, we experienced a strong neo-liberal offensive, where nothing was clear and the white [foreigners] had invaded the country, many of the superpowers invaded the country, and then the neo-liberal projects were launched much like they [NGOs] are doing now with their social programs... So there were many people on the left, well I can say that there were many sectors of the left who in '89 with the fall of the wall in Berlin had already begun to shift to the right. They started to talk about 'political entrepreneurs' and other concepts... But this same sector that had shifted to the right came to associate with the resistance in '91 but they bounced back with the same right-winged orientation in 1994... There was a fragmentation on the Left... given that Aristide came back with the white [people], you see. At that point, he was under the control of the whites, and we felt we were losing the space. In fact we started losing our strength since his return. So we saw the necessity to at least have one discourse. That's where the alliance was born. We were all there. SOFA, CRAD, ICKL, you see. All of us who were already strong. MITPA was very strong too, very active back then. And we saw the need to get together so we can be stronger, so we can have a certain representation, so we can do certain things, so we could have an entity that was really doing things that would contribute to the construction of another type of economy in the country, another type of society using another framework, another

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<sup>70</sup> Kreyòl for: backbone. It refers to the mid-post around which vodou ceremonies are held. It represents the connection between the realm of the spiritual and the human.

<sup>71</sup> See Chapter III for constitutional analysis.

perspective, you see. Anti-neo-liberal. You see? And with this framework, and that's why we did this, so we can talk, offer another discourse in a much stronger way... because we had all been very engaged even before '89...<sup>72</sup>

Aristide's homecoming exposed the plurality of the Left. There were many currents vying for the control of civil society. In the months leading up to November of 1995, several social movement organizations convened formally to collectively identify the causes as well as the potential solutions to the socio-economic and political crisis in Haiti. They pointed to the neoliberal policies implemented by Jean-Claude Duvalier in the 1980s and their deleterious effects on national production. Marc from ICKL (see information below) situates PAPDA's roots in the "underground" struggle against Duvalier,

Well, I have to say... There is a certain socio-political ideological family that had banded together many times. Because when you look at PAPDA, you will see that in the end there is a group of people for one reason or another that had been fighting together for a long time...under Duvalier, clandestinely, and after Duvalier, etc. So these were people, or groups of people who always had a certain socio-political practice. So when you're doing something like this, you can't just open up to anyone. You have to of course find people who are in your political family, your ideological family or more or less with whom you have a perennial guarantee for what you want to accomplish.... So we never did something...besides, the enemy, he won't do something haphazardly. He won't take just anyone so we should not act like the biggest democrats and open up to just anyone... So for us and I think it is a good rule or principle that I would say is crucial to the maintenance of the life of something. That does not mean that you will stay closed off forever...<sup>73</sup>

As mentioned above, just nine shared a similar vision for an alternative (see Table 1).

They were: *Association Nationale Des Agro-professionnels Haitiens (ANDAH)*,<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Interview with William in CRAD office in May, 2013

<sup>73</sup> Interview with Marc in ICKL offices in May 2013

<sup>74</sup> French for: National Haitian Association of Agro-professionals



founded in 1956; *Institut de Technologie et d'Animation (ITECA)*, in 1979;<sup>75</sup> *Centre de Recherches Action et de Développement (CRAD)*, in 1983;<sup>76</sup> *Institution Culturelle Karl Lévesque (ICKL)*, founded in 1986;<sup>77</sup> *Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn (SOFA)*,<sup>78</sup> in 1986; *Mouvman Inite Ti Peyizan Latibonit (MITPA)*, 1992;<sup>79</sup> *Regroupement des Organisations de Promotion du Développement (Inter-OPD)*,<sup>80</sup> *Fondation Haitienne pour le Développement Economique et Social (FONHADES)*,<sup>81</sup> and *Collectif Haitien pour la Protection de l'Environnement et le Développement Alternatif (COHPEDA)*.<sup>82</sup> They agreed that leftist movements lacked coordination and that rural associations needed more training. Each SMO has its own mission and its specific target demographics. All but two openly declare themselves socialist and only one is a feminist organization. But fundamentally, they all profess to fight for the national common good and, specifically in favor of the popular masses. None acknowledge a specific religion. And all incorporate a “gender equality” dimension to their work. Unfortunately, in the dissertation, I do not focus on each individual institution’s history (except for SOFA’s in Chapter V). However, I do provide a brief overview of each organization in relation to PAPDA below.

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<sup>75</sup> French for: Center for Action Research and Development

<sup>76</sup> French for: Institute of Technology and Animation

<sup>77</sup> French for: Cultural Institute of Karl Lévesque

<sup>78</sup> French for: Solidarity of Haitian Women

<sup>79</sup> Kreyòl for: United Movement of Small Peasants

<sup>80</sup> French for: Grouping of Organizations for the Promotion of Development

<sup>81</sup> French for: Haitian Foundation for Economic and Social Development

<sup>82</sup> French for: Haitian Collective for the Environmental Protection and Alternative Development

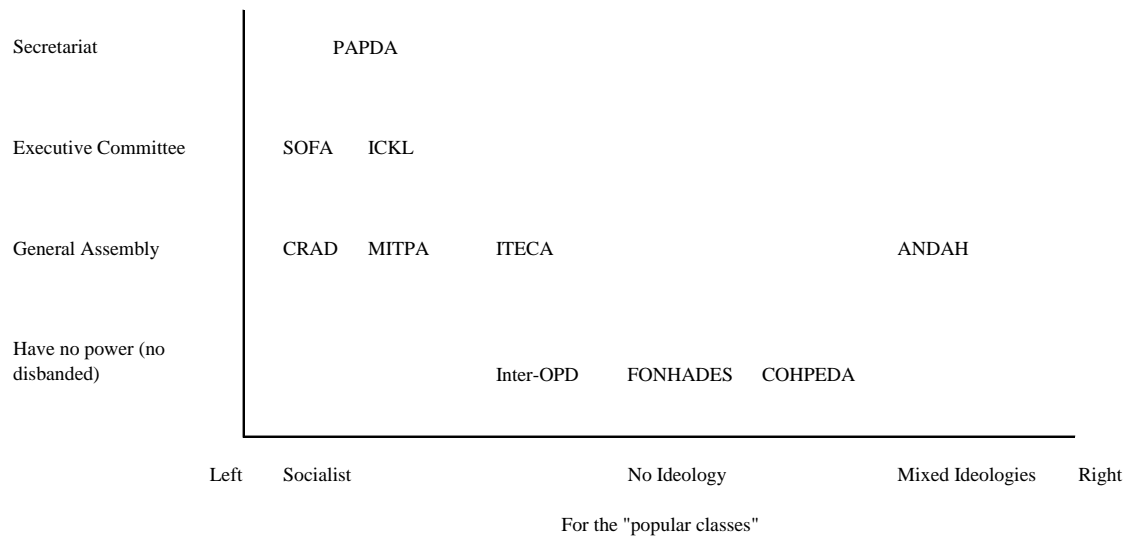


Table 1. Organizational Chart of PAPDA

ANDAH was created at the eve of the Duvalier dictatorship and quickly steered to fit state interests. After the *Revolisyon*, the Left gained control and did not recede even during the coup d'état of 1991. Even though its constituency has remained ideologically divided, the Association maintains a leftist agenda. The professional association of agronomists conducts agricultural research and proposes agrarian solutions that favor national production. ITECA was founded by religious and professional Catholics to promote and defend the rights of peasant organizations. Combining liberation theology and Paolo Freire's popular education model, the Institute seeks to raise social consciousness and to train local leaders. ICKL is a political think tank that also provides institutional support to low-income rural community associations to equip them with the necessary skills to lead their own advocacy. Similarly, CRAD utilizes popular education methods to run workshops with peasant groups as well as on community radio stations on alternative economies, the valorization of the Kreyòl language and vodou, as well as

women's rights. Members of CRAD in turn founded the feminist organization SOFA and the peasant organization MITPA. Both MITPA and SOFA adhere to CRAD's approaches. The micro-credit organization FONHADES, the environmental group COHPEDA, as well as the think tank platform Inter-OPD disbanded shortly after PAPDA's creation.

The founding organizations are led by men and women who, according to Chenet from ITECA, are "petit-bourgeois,"<sup>83</sup> well-educated professionals. Among them are lawyers, economists, sociologists, and agronomists. I am inclined not to dismiss these representatives as either mere usurpers of subalternity. Instead, I submit that they are facilitators and translators of the local and the global, the link between civil society and the state. In fact, they constitute a distinct hybrid that straddles both a privileged and disenfranchised position, what could be appropriated from Bhabba (1990) and be called the "Third Space." Like in any translation, some meanings are lost. Moreover, as all leaders stressed and as stated in its mission statement on its official website, PAPDA "essentially endeavors to reinforce the capacities of our country's social movements especially in regards to their capacity to intervene on the political and social stage."<sup>84</sup> The platform was founded precisely to narrow the gap between leaders and members.

These organizations concluded that alliances should be cemented and a tool developed to insure the dissemination of information and training. Marc expounded,

And in this ambiance where there were different platforms and there was a group of people and institutions that were thinking through the matter to figure out what we should do to effectively help the different populations. Especially to help the

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<sup>83</sup> Interview with Chenet at ITECA offices in November 2013

<sup>84</sup> See [www.papda.org](http://www.papda.org)

popular masses in general understand their social, economic, political situation today in regards to the market being opened, etc. Make sure everyone understands what neoliberalism is, what the difference is between liberalism, which is an essential part of the capitalist system, and neo-liberalism that was added to the system. So it was in this spirit that a group of people sat down together to form PAPDA...<sup>85</sup>

Social movement organizations could not rely on the dominant media to reach their constituencies. Marc sees PAPDA as this “tool,”

Well the radio... Besides, when you take the radio in Port-au-Prince, as soon as you are by *Le Lambi* in Mariani, you don’t receive Port-au-Prince radio anymore. As soon as you leave Saint Marc, you can’t receive Port-au-Prince radio anymore. That means that the people in the rural areas and in the provinces, they are under-informed so that is why PAPDA was designed to do complementary work in relation to all its member-institutions, where it would concentrate on advocating for food sovereignty...<sup>86</sup>

With most of the country in isolation, PAPDA is forced to physically traverse rough terrains to reach the most vulnerable and forgotten populations. Food sovereignty fundamentally anchors the coalition. The other axes of concern like the foreign debt, agricultural credit, free zones, agricultural modernization, market access, and the preservation of tradition are all linked to it.

These SMOs also declared a commitment to gender equality. Carole from SOFA emphasizes this as a distinctive feature of the platform,

We saw in the formation of PAPDA a sort of forum, a mixed space that could channel a movement towards the construction of an economic alternative. That was our motivation to join...<sup>87</sup>

As I argue in Chapter V, 21st century postcolonial nationalisms present a gender-inclusive agenda as a result of the long involvement of women as members in social

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<sup>85</sup> Interview with Marc, May 2013

<sup>86</sup> Ibid

movements and their eventual ascent as leaders. A “new” nationalist project could not ignore the instrumental role of women’s organizations in the *Revolisyon*. Furthermore, it could no longer recycle the old patriarchal tropes that informed previous waves of nationalism.

Another important dimension of the coalition was to forge alliances with the international Left. Camille from PAPDA accentuated the forum’s commitment to this project,

In our diagnostics when we were establishing PAPDA in 1995, we noted that one of the obvious problems that we have is isolation. It is an isolation that functions in two ways. That means at the international level, no one knows about Haiti. So the quarantine that had been put in place by France and the other western powers had worked well. No one knows about Haiti. They really don’t. It is total ignorance. Even among those who are professionals of history, even the folks who study slavery and revolutionary processes, they don’t know the country’s history. They don’t know what happened, etc. So, additionally, Haitians also have in general a deformed vision of the world and of others. So it’s a double difficulty that always plunges us into solitude. They don’t understand us. But we too in defining our strategies, we are often clumsy on this issue of our relationship with the international, with the issue of international solidarity. So it’s a double difficulty. When we were thinking through what the emergence of an alternative in Haiti should look like, we said that essentially we wanted to be able to overthrow this double difficulty. You see ? That’s why within PAPDA, we decided that one work priority we had was to weave relations with movements, with international movements that share our vision, our analysis, that have almost the same critique of globalization, and that want to build alternatives...<sup>88</sup>

In engaging the international, PAPDA seeks to overcome the distrust that exists between Haitians and the rest of the world, a distrust that is the result of Haiti’s forced and self-imposed seclusion. Thus, leaders resolved to form a coalition with a secretariat that would oversee the coordination of its member-organizations as well as the larger popular

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<sup>87</sup> Interview with Carole in SOFA offices in April 2013

<sup>88</sup> Interview with Camille at PAPDA offices in November 2013

movement, develop new local as well as global networks, enlist new member- and allied- organizations, and interface with the larger public as well as the state. They did not endeavor to create a parallel state. Instead they aspired to connect the popular rural masses to the “authorities.” By doing so, they could create a rural civil society that intervenes in the Port-au-Prince public sphere to influence policy-making on development. As a result, they decided to found the platform as an NGO, capable of receiving funds nationally as well as internationally to sustain these long-term goals.

**The NGOization of Haitian Social Movements or “Turning their weapons against them?”<sup>89</sup>**

The formalization of PAPDA was made possible by the financial provisions of Oxfam-Great Britain.

So when Oxfam decided to reinforce, support all initiatives that went against the Accord de Paris, it was really organic for all the organizations to find themselves together because they were already on the political scene protesting the Accord de Paris. You see ? It was really organic, very organic. There were no... Well, we could say that they chose the people who had already been working together... You see ? It was [Oxfam] that launched the question. It encouraged the creation of the platform. It worked with many [SMOs] to constitute the platform... So clearly, I could say that it [Oxfam] permitted us, it financed the process in the beginning. It financed it in the beginning...<sup>90</sup>

Started as a war relief committee in 1942, Oxfam-GB became synonymous with alternative development work by the 1960s. After evaluating the limits of the impact of its social service programs, the NGO shifted to include advocacy work to its mission. It understood poverty to be an artificial production, the result of failed state policies. In addition to dispensing funds to local NGOs and social movements, Oxfam-GB directs a debt relief and forgiveness campaign against the IFIs (Jennings 2008). PAPDA founders

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<sup>89</sup> Quote from interview with Ricot from PAPDA

highlighted the instrumental role Oxfam-GB played in facilitating the meetings as well as the subsequent creation of coalition. The international NGO already had a working relationship with ICKL and SOFA. It offered social movement organizations a new political opportunity as well as mobilizing resources. And in turn, PAPDA provided coalition members with direct access to the international stage. Carole confirmed,

This is a platform that was able to put SOFA in a dimension... we are very present, we are on stage all the time thanks to this platform... So there is this permanent coalition, you know, this permanent solidarity that is there and that makes it that we are always together and that gave us, which permitted us an increase in our strengths that can also change the power relations with the common enemy that we are fighting. That is capital....<sup>91</sup>

As a result of Oxfam's history of transnational alternative development and effective advocacy, local social movements became visible. They were able to disturb global discourses of development on Haiti, at least among other members of the transnational anti-globalization movement.

First used in 1945 in the United Nations Charter, the concept "non-governmental organization" or NGO designates groups of people registered as independent of government control that do not seek profit nor public office (Willetts 2002). As such, non-governmental organizations are often conflated with civil society, thus located outside of the state apparatus. The first official NGOs were established in the Global North primarily to offer social services to the devastated peoples of Europe after World War II. With the announcement of the UN Development Decade, many of these northern NGOs turned to the newly declared developing and underdeveloped world to extend their work. The move coincided of course with the U.S. and U.K. push to liberalize Latin

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<sup>90</sup> Interview with Allen from ANDAH

American as well as newly independent African and Caribbean economies. The post-Fordist shift in the capitalist commodity chain further transnationalized capital, goods, labor, people, ideologies, political strategies, and resources. During the period of democratization, international human rights NGOs assisted local social movement in denouncing state violence and pressured their respective state as well as the rest of the “international community” to intervene.

Many leaders today accredit the coup d'état years (1991-1994) with the decapitation of the movement. Others accuse the NGOization of the popular movement with the return of Aristide. In Haiti, INGOs rose with the emergence of “new” identity-based social movements, aiding in the co-optation and de-politicization of some organizations.

Cilencieux explains,

The consciousness that folks had to think through, to make decisions, to advocate during the 1991 to 1995 coup remained, even if faintly until 2000. Are you there with me ? But as a result of the imperialist analysis of social movements, they created NGOs that had been involved in other world wars. They [the imperialists] used NGOs as a weapon. Are you there with me ? In order to weaken the people in the struggle they were leading. Well let me tell you that during this period of time, it is true that we were welding together, there are some that have remained welded, but because of all the NGOs in the country, especially following the coup in 1991 until 1996, the people started resisting. Do you understand me ? During the period starting from 96 to reach the 2000s, well many NGOs penetrated the population with a series of projects... So people developed a different vision. They were more concerned about their individual economic things than the overall situation of the country and their need to do advocacy work. And I must tell you sincerely, the people have remained welded, but their ideas have changed. Are you there with me? This other idea... Back in the day, people used to to be willing to travel, to spend their own money on transportation in order to attend meetings. Do you see? They used to organize themselves. They would also take care of their own food. But nowadays, even before the person begins the journey to the meeting, s/he must know if there is money for transportation available, is there food available. Are you there with me ? So this means that they way the struggle used to be in the beginning let's say from 86 to 90 is something else.

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<sup>91</sup> Interview with Carole from SOFA



From 96 to the 2000s, we began to realize how people used to be, well their behavior had changed. Are you there with me ? Their behavior has changed... Their conditions have become more difficult, that's true. But the old consciousness is not longer here today... Today, you will note that there are more organizations, but less advocacy. There are fewer struggles for change. Because the organizations, people form organizations to find a project, to find a little project. That's what's in style. Albeit this shift, there are many people who have remained committed to struggling for social change...<sup>92</sup>

The proliferation of international NGOs in the Global South is a consequence of the “Washington Consensus.” As of 1995, international donors bypassed the state to instead fund INGO-led development work in Haiti (Schuller 2007). The return of Aristide engendered the “Republic of NGOs.” Civil society was inter-nationalized; INGOs supplanted the debilitated state in the lives of their constituencies. In effect, INGOs appointed themselves intermediaries between the local state and the “grassroots” or “indigenous” people. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, NGOs mobilized public opinion; but even before the turn of the century, they had become partners of government (Lang 2013). Local voice was usurped and replaced with Western discourses of development.

On the other hand, as Cilencieux highlighted, some social movement organizations remained “welded.” In this case, some SMOs strategically registered as NGOs in order to establish legitimacy and receive financial resources. According to Ricot, PAPDA is such a tool for leftist SMOs,

There is a reality that we must face. We are facing two problems. One is the problem of popular mobilization and the reinforcement of the capacities of the popular movement. But you cannot do that work if there are no resources, if you do not acquire these resources to do the work. So in order to acquire these resources, there is a part of your time that has to be reserved to finding and consolidating these resources that one needs. And the second aspect is the fundamental work of popular mobilization, the reinforcement of social movements and the dynamics of the struggle that need to be maintained. In this case, I cannot say that PAPDA

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<sup>92</sup> Interview with Cilencieux from MITPA

does it as it should, that it is exempt from critique. But I believe that we combine both. Because at the beginning, there was important work on training and information, on the construction of alternatives, there had been less demanding partners on the question of reporting so we were able to allot 90% of our time to the field. But more and more, we have acquired partners that have become more demanding that take us away from thinking through a particular mobilization. Instead, we thinking through the mobilization partially and spend the rest controlling paperwork. So now should we go back to being a scattered group and not construct this mechanism that serves as an avant-guard to our work and must find resources to support this work, I don't know. Should we at this moment give up, PAPDA ceases to exist? We are all social movement folks. So if there is no PAPDA and we are putting together a collective action... In order to do a collective action, there is no institution that will give me Ricot resources to do a mobilization. It [the institution] requires a structure. It requires an organization that will be responsible for reporting and that is responsible for whatever happens with the financing... In order to put together a conference, you need photocopies. Can I just show up somewhere to say, I need photocopies, Oxfam give me money or so and so give me money for that ? One is forced to constitute oneself as a group that will shape itself, develop mechanisms of operation, and create a structure that is capable of making this request. But when you bring forth your request, the organization that provides the funds won't simply say 'here you go, do whatever you want with it'. It tells you 'here is what I want you to do with the funds'. Can you tell the person that you won't submit reports ? If you don't provide the report, that will mean that you are not a credible partner. So you won't find the funds to do it [the work]...<sup>93</sup>

Founding leaders viewed themselves as more authentic and genuine representatives of social movements. As such, they formed PAPDA in order to gain and maintain the trust of their international allies. PAPDA distinguishes itself from other NGOs through their funding sources and their political aims, "PAPDA is not an NGO; it is a foundation... It would be quite difficult [crazy] for it to be an NGO,"<sup>94</sup> Ricot laughed. In contrast to the international NGOs in Haiti, PAPDA utilizes its status to strengthen its nationalist agenda,

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<sup>93</sup> Interview with Ricot in March 2013 in PAPDA offices

<sup>94</sup> Ibid

It is not a contradiction as long as, first of all, in general the resources that are liberated, in a lot of cases, I am not talking about classic NGOs- classic NGOs are doing imperialist work- but the alternatives ones in general, it is because 'alternative' is a part of its name. You see ? It is normal that there exists solidarity between different peoples. You see ? So it's not imperialist money. It is money that come from the Global North countries where there are class contradictions to battle, the same way that had been done throughout history... If this relationship is not well managed, it is dangerous... Of course the ideal would be not to need it. But I think that... well, if we look at histories of struggles, of global liberations, there is no liberation struggle that can triumph without at some point using the resources of the dominant. You see ? The weapons that served in [the Revolution of] 1804, they were weapons taken from the French... You must take the system and turn their weapons against them. And that's what we are doing in some ways. That what has to be done... Domination deprives the dominated of resources...<sup>95</sup>

The coalition continually attacks international non-governmental organizations operating in Haiti, denouncing the latter as the cultural and social arm of the Occupation. In 2004, after the poorly attended international bicentennial celebration of Haitian independence from France, U.S.-backed elites orchestrated the second removal of president-elect Jean-Bertrand Aristide. An international commission led by Brazilian UN peacekeeping troops was quickly deployed in Haiti in order to ensure political stability. While the contributions of the collaboration between the Haitian state and the International Community had yet to yield satisfactory results to the Haitian population, the disastrous earthquake supposedly increased Haiti's need for outside assistance. Again in 2010, more UN troops were solicited and over 1,200 non-governmental organizations flooded Haitian society.<sup>96</sup> Unlike these other NGOs, PAPDA is Haitian-led and boldly pronounces itself as an alternate route to neoliberal capitalist development.

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<sup>95</sup> Interview with Camille from PAPDA

<sup>96</sup> Transnational human rights groups like Oxfam International, and IOM (International Organization for Migration) count among these NGOs.

Some PAPDA members noted that the coalition's dependency on international funds has NGOized it. On its website, PAPDA presents its organizational structure. It reads, "The Secretariat is led by an Executive Director, who currently has a staff of eight cadres specialized in the fields covered by the programs. Currently the Secretariat team is composed, among others, of a senior economist, 2 agronomists, a social worker, a psychologist, an administrator, 2 secretaries 2 two support staff, a cooperating Belgian specialist in communications and tropical agriculture also participates in the work of our team."<sup>97</sup> Over time, the platform took the shape of an organization. Becoming a legitimate funding favorite requires more than just "paperwork." Professionalizing and bureaucratizing operations are also key to increasing legitimacy. Chenet claims that these processes strayed PAPDA from its original function,

We never saw PAPDA back then when it was being constituted- and this has been greatly debated in the assemblies- as a space that would fall into operations. But it became that, which is a deviation, an institutional drift. Additionally, life, life, institutional life as such and a dynamic that mobilizes different organizations or institutions, that life has weakened. There is another preoccupation, you see ? And finally we are afraid that it [PAPDA] fails to take into account national problematics, national problematics at the detriment of certain big international questions. That means we still have a lot of work to do to build a Haitian-specific vision, a truly national project, a popular project, truly national, and to research an alternative truly adapted- without closing ourselves, without folding unto ourselves, without isolating ourselves, but without allowing the big international questions that now have, now have more weight in the advocacy work that we are doing...<sup>98</sup>

Members long for greater communal life, which PAPDA was designed to foster. Instead, it carried out its mission by conducting their "experiments." Some members attribute the other "preoccupation" to a mandate imposed by the international. Chenet argues that

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<sup>97</sup> Visit [www.papda.org](http://www.papda.org)

<sup>98</sup> Interview with Chenet from ITECA

PAPDA's appropriation of international movement narratives obscures local experience and practice. He maintains that outward focus prevents the emergence of a truly nationalist agenda.

Others view 21st century nationalisms as a transnational project. Resistance to integration in the anti-globalization movement further isolates local social movements while global development projects erode state sovereignty. Camille dismisses these antiquated concepts of nationalism,

That's the effectiveness of the colonial discourse. First of all, we think of ourselves as something separate, completely different than all the rest. That is false. It is true that all people have their specificities. But we are not completely separate, completely aside. And we always think that we are the worst off country in the world, the poorest country on earth, etc. So, it's the 19th century construction of the colonial discourse that has been passively reproduced by the Haitian elites. So until we come out, until we deconstruct this colonial discourse, we will never be able to transcend it. And this colonial discourse impeded us from establishing relationships with other peoples. To me, this is one of the fundamental ruptures that must take place, this rupture with the colonial discourse...<sup>99</sup>

Neoliberal globalization shrunk the world and made it possible for local social movements to exchange stories, experiences, and strategies, as well as plan and follow through with transnational non-violent collective action. By contributing to the global dialogue, social movements re-shape the global discourses of development that otherize and even inferiorize Haiti and its inhabitants.

Global North allies often demonstrate solidarity by funding Global South NGOs, which in turn distribute these resources to non-incorporated local associations. In the case of PAPDA, Marc insists that these money transfers are the result of ongoing negotiations between the local organization and its donors,

We have to put in our minds the principle that derives from peasant wisdom which says ‘If the inside is no good, the outside will not flourish ». We believe that the point of departure, the determining aspect is ourselves. It is inside. But that does not prevent that we have contact with international organisms, etc. that with dignity want to be our partner. That’s what we do in PAPDA and ICKL, which is why we are borderline indigent because we don’t not enter just anywhere. This means that we won’t agree no matter how much money someone is giving us for that person to dictate where we go. They do not dictate anything to anyone. We do projects, we discuss together, etc., and we agree on what we are doing. They [the international funders] can suggest an idea that helps me to understand since we have national, local experience, and maybe they have international experiences in various locations. They can say ‘we saw this things in Mali, and this other thing in Guatemala’ and on ours ide we see if we can appropriate it to ourselves. But there is no ‘what was done in Guatemala’ in advance [of discussions]. We won’t enter this thing [partnership], we will never enter it... We are exposed to everything but it is truly a partnership. Partnership means that two equal people sit down and discuss. One helps the other progress until maybe both ideas become one...<sup>100</sup>

PAPDA does not simply amass funds from any source. Rather, it selects from its international networks the organizations or foundations that correspond with its worldview. PAPDA’s programs are supported by the Belgian Catholic NGO *Entr’Aide & Fraternité*, the Dutch Catholic NGO Cordaid, the U.S. Anabaptist NGO Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the U.S. Jewish NGO American Jewish World Service (AJWS), and the U.S. foundation Grassroots International. The boards of these Global North entities are peopled by members of the Euro-American transnational capitalist class. They finance community-based collective projects like the Notebook of Demands I will be discussing in the next chapter. Moreover, PAPDA receives short-term monies from the World Social Forum and Jubiléé Sud for travel expenses to attend international gatherings. However, PAPDA does not rely only on external support. It publishes studies and sells them to the larger public at less than a one-way bus fare. Most of them are

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<sup>99</sup> Interview with Camille from PAPDA

distributed at no cost to the membership base of PAPDA's local collaborators. PAPDA also conducts research and produces analytical documents for other organizations. Finally, it collects membership fees, which are based on a sliding scale and dependent on organizational budgets. On several occasions during its 19-year operation, PAPDA staff have had to survive months without salaries. While PAPDA is willing to bargain with its international allies, its members contemplate strategies to auto-finance the movement.

### **Competing Nationalisms and Decision-making in Coalition**

Coalition work involves synthesizing different leadership styles and personalities as well as positions and tactics into one harmonized structure. In this section, I analyze leaders' shifting conceptualizations of the tradition/modernity binary to show the ideological cohesion as well as diversity within the coalition. Additionally, I discuss the tension between different leaders of PAPDA's member-organizations regarding the coalition's dependency on the international. Lastly, I explore members' discontent with the decision-making process that foreshadows a potential re-formulation and re-foundation of the platform.

#### *Between "Tradition" and "the Traditional"*

Social movements emerge in order to change the dominant cultural system (Ray and Korteweg 1999; Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Kriesi 1995). As such, they construct narratives about the past as well as project the future (Benford 2002; Davis 2002). They mythologize the past in order to frame the present and point to specific targets as the determining force behind the unwanted change. In this mythological past, PAPDA

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<sup>100</sup> Interview with Marc from ICKL

locates the original essence of Haitian-ness. Carole distinguishes the primordial past from the present,

It's the difference between « the traditional » and tradition. Tradition refers expressly to a cultural identity, a proper identity, an identity that permits us to combine an identity-based savoir-faire, a proper patriotic and national savoir-faire, a savoir-faire linked to our culture, to our proper culture, etc. « The traditional » which is a traditional of the political kind is completely different. You understand ? So when we address this matter in our field of intervention which is of course a feminist field, a socialist feminist field and that permits to put forward both the preservation of what should be preserved and at the same time to gang up against the system. Because patriarchy is old but it is not tradition. Similarly capitalism is old but it does not emanate, it is not an emanation of the people, meaning it is not the popular way of life, you see. So you have tradition that emanates, that is the emanation of the popular masses, meaning a reclamation of historical roots, historical things. For example, we in Haiti are engaged in the struggle, in a struggle to preserve our traditional values that we inherited from the *Indians* whom we were, that we inherited from the slaves from Africa whom we were... We came with our own way of life, our own culture, we have to preserve that but at the same time our struggle is a struggle essentially so that the traditional patriarchal or capitalist system does not come erase what we have as wealth because you must differentiate between the wealth of tradition that comes from our cultures, our ways of life, our cultural references that come from our elders, from our parents, etc. And what comes to us from the bourgeois oligarchy that produces different values, even if they are old, they are not our values, they are not popular productions, productions of the proletariat....<sup>101</sup>

The European impact on Haitian culture is synonymized with capitalism and patriarchy.

On the other hand, the Native and African contribution is lauded. The Haitian nation-state is bio-politically and monoculturally constructed as “black.” Social movements do not stand outside and are not always oppositional to the cultural system but on the contrary are very much an integral component of it (Escobar 1992; Alvarez et al. 1998). Hence, PAPDA does not challenge the dominant racialization of the nation-state. Nevertheless, in light of the color binary that has historically divided the country geographically, socially, politically, and economically, PAPDA attempts to renew pride in the African



constituent of Haitian identity. It points to the development of capitalism in Haiti as the source of a polarizing and exclusionary racial practice. Instead, the pre-capitalist Natives and Africans are idealized as more egalitarian with greater concern for the environment.

Like Carole, Cilencieux from MITPA also accuses capitalism of deracinating Haitian identity and alienating peasants from their customs,

It's a struggle against acculturation. So it's all about what's in style. There are many ways folks used to dress, they don't do that anymore. Even though it holds so much of society's knowledge. The way that folks used to eat. For example, back in the day people use to eat popped corn. Now they want to eat corn flakes. There are many things, people don't eat them anymore. It's what was brought [imported] to them they find more important. When you take for example, people have grapefruit, they have oranges, they have those fruit at home. But now when you visit a peasant, instead of taking these fruit, instead of taking them, and making some juice, s/he is only satisfied, when s/he is able to offer you a Coke. Only then will s/he be satisfied. So in this way, we have to raise people's consciousness so that they can value their own culture. People don't eat corn anymore... People don't know how to use corn. Nowadays, they don't use it anymore. Instead, they want what has been imported to them, they don't do those things anymore. The way that people behave, and our dances as well. Nowadays, they don't do that anymore. There are many things we used to use, they don't use them anymore. What they know how to produce is no longer important... Folks don't work the land anymore. They carry bags around on their backs, selling cold water and other cold drinks in the streets. Meanwhile national production, all those things, they are disappearing. Regarding acculturation, it has been a real issue. But up until today, well the folks in the peasant movement are fighting to figure things out...<sup>102</sup>

Underlying PAPDA's axiomatic campaign on "Food Sovereignty" and the promotion of national production is the concern for the preservation of traditional peasant customs. In lieu of conventional pastimes and mores, Haitians now prefer international processed and pre-packaged goods. With little capacity to transform primary sources into manufactured products, Haiti has heavily relied on the importation of processed foods to offer an

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<sup>101</sup> Interview with Carole from SOFA, April 2013

<sup>102</sup> Interview with Cilencieux from MITPA, November 2013

increasing population. It is the dependency on foreign commodities that PAPDA seeks to dismantle and instead to restore traditional agricultural practices. Allen from ANDAH explains,

We still encourage family-based agriculture. For a simple reason, because the social relations, the economic relations, they are very different than when you enter into massive production that are based on salary relations, which means classic relations of exploitation. We are not down with that. You see ? Family-based agriculture is the best model for establishing healthy relations between people...<sup>103</sup>

According to PAPDA, subsistence farming protects individual autonomy and human dignity in contrast to market relations that oppress. Family-based agriculture then directly defies the culture-ideology of consumerism that hinges on a global commodity chain (Sklair 2006). Such a perspective seeks to de-commodify food by re-linking people to land and eliminating their addiction to manufactured imported GMO goods.

The subsistence perspective is grounded in a profound respect for land and the environment in general. While PAPDA's environmentalist member-organization no longer functions, deforestation and pollution remain central issues in PAPDA's advocacy work (see Chapter VI for more discussion). Nevertheless, Carole finds the environmental focus wanting,

No one is taking care of it. The environmental question has to be a fight of expert people but also a peasant fight. Inside PAPDA, there exist organizations that are responsible for developing an analysis on the Haitian peasantry like ITECA, CRAD, MITPA that work with peasants but the environmental aspect is missing. And that's unfortunate. Even at the level of PAPDA's secretariat, there is this big fight for food sovereignty but you don't feel in their discourse nor in the dynamics of their activism, you don't feel the environmental aspect. SOFA as well, we address the question but sporadically. For example, recently we had a general assembly for SOFA in March 2012, and that was the question on the agenda. Because the women of the base, the peasant women were expressing their

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<sup>103</sup> Interview with Allen from ANDAH in his personal offices in May 2013

worries....For example, the women of [Department of] Grand'Anse brought this problem up point to the intervention of certain aggressive NGOs like CARE. There are many NGOs that intervene in the regional provinces and come with their own food policies, etc. and that introduce in those regions new ways of life, another vision of life, how to eat, and they come with products coming from outside and they are the ones who promote Dominican production... So this question was definitely on the agenda...<sup>104</sup>

The green movements that had proliferated across Latin America and of course the Global North (Jennings 2008) barely took off in Haiti. Instead, local social movements folded the environmental component into their larger discussions on food sovereignty. In what follows, I discuss PAPDA's attempt to introduce the environment as a new frame through which peasant organizations can further trace the effects of capitalism on Haiti's ecological, socio-cultural, political, and economic landscape.

Despite PAPDA's defense of national production, it does not encourage isolation. Like other anti-globalization movements, PAPDA is also committed to making another world possible. As discussed above, PAPDA actively engages movements of people outside of Haiti. Marc insists that,

It does not mean that we have a visceral traditional attachment to some things. Anything related, anything that makes change possible, we will join. But of course, we will fight against the things that need to be eliminated...We think that anything that can ameliorate people's lives, or the life of an entire class, especially the peasant, the worker class, we will encourage them. So if we have the means to provide electricity without hurting the environment, we will do that. It would be like someone saying they don't need to learn how to read either. Because when we were born, we did not know how to read. Or someone saying that back in the day, the slaves didn't know how to read. Should we not learn how to read because we didn't know how to back then? If someone enters this fork in the road, s/he enters wrongly. Of course, we are not going to get caught up with some sort of developmentalist mentality and believe that today we should be like France, England, and the United States. Besides, we can't reach them because we

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<sup>104</sup> Interview with Carole, April 2013

cannot replicate what they did to reach their level... We wouldn't do those things either, we don't want to do them. We are not going to wage wars nor look for slaves, etc... Because all those rich countries became rich off the back of the countries they impoverished over time. This means that we make the effort to adopt what helps the masses move forward, without getting caught in the consumerist aspect... So everything that helps people live today in dignity, like a person, etc... It would be like saying that we don't need planes because there were none back then. You would be lying to yourself because every day, you ride in a car... You see ? So I am not going to go in blindly looking-backwards, nor am I going to enter a developmentalist approach and instead of helping the country, I adopt a crooked route where we enrich a few, by kicking out old money to empower another minority...<sup>105</sup>

The platform endorses practices that center on the well-being of the “popular masses” as a class. PAPDA envisions its work as an equilibrium between tradition and modernity. In fact, I argue that Haitian social movements promote and practice an alternative modernity. They refute the international discourse on development that hierarchizes different modes of life and project a linear model of capitalist progress unto the world. Instead, social movements advance a different model of modernity based on the combination of what they understand as their traditional as well as western values.

Peasant movements recognize that the modernization of agricultural tools and techniques is key to Haiti's development. Cilencieux commented,

Well today, the world, the world is one planet. You there with me ? Well if the world is one planet, you can't sit around doing the same old things that you used to do in the 19th century, 20th century while you are now in the 21st century. So it's completely normal, it is completely normal that what you used to do back in the days evolves when you look out in the world... For example in Haiti, since we existed, we used to see people with machetes, with ratchets up until today. They wait for rain. So today, we believe that if we are fighting, we have to fight for other new techniques that permit us to ameliorate the way we farm for example... It's to see if we can mix the traditional system that we had with modern elements so that we can produce something better without denying our own production for imported goods... We won't rebuke how we used to do things, how we used to cultivate.. but we must still see how we can marry the new technologies with what

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<sup>105</sup> Interview with Marc-Arthur, May 2013

we had before in order to produce something new that ameliorates people's social, economic, and cultural conditions...<sup>106</sup>

Thus, while PAPDA rejects capitalist orderings of the nation-state, it does not discard all modern inventions. In fact, leaders understand the importance of integrating the world system. Local social movements have to contend with the global. Food sovereignty obliges voluntary compromises with tradition. Allen argues,

We always said that we could not defend organic agriculture in Haiti. No, we might not be able to defend it even though we know that subsistence farming is the most productive, the most beneficial but we cannot defend it. Because we have obligations nowadays that surpass the production of organic farming... Because today, we have to increase our productivity... If we only farm with organic fertilizers, we won't produce enough to do what we need to do... We have to relativize what we do every time. You see ? Let's take rice in the Department of Artibonite for example. If today, you want to increase your production of rice in Artibonite and you only distribute organic fertilizers, you won't be able to yield the 5 tons, 6 tons, 8 tons that you need. We have to feed the entire country so using only organic fertilizers won't allow us to do so. But there are nuances on this matter. You see ? We will never agree on artificial agriculture...<sup>107</sup>

Haitian social movements vehemently oppose the state-sponsored multi-national corporate push to farm using GMOs in favor of traditional organic or at least quasi-organic agricultural production. Hence, social movements generate movement narratives that frame the past as "healthy" and the present as sullied. As such, they propose a future that marries sentimentalized tradition to restrained modernity. However, despite the cohesive re-imagining of the past, coalition members vary on the viability of comprehensive organic production. These nuances between organizations within PAPDA bring attention to awkward decision-making processes.

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<sup>106</sup> Interview with Cilencieux, November 2013

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Allen, May 2013

*Too many “roosters crowing:”<sup>108</sup> Decision-making in Coalition*

Coalitions are usually temporary assemblages of movements around a single or series of related events. Most often, they disperse once the particular campaign is exhausted.

However, in the case of Haiti, the lack of democratic procedures maintains social movements in the offensive and therefore continues to catalyze them into collective action. Moreover, what holds true for ephemeral coalitions holds true for longer-lasting ones: the coordinating body eventually seizes the direction of the collective process.

Chenet from ITECA confirms the trend,

Generally, platforms transform themselves and impose themselves like another institution. This is not new and not specific to PAPDA. It was the case for many others that I knew that have now disappeared. It’s a structural distortion of the medium...<sup>109</sup>

His observations were also echoed by William, Allen, and Carole. The latter reinforced this auto-critique,

This is classic in all countries and in Haiti especially that when you have a makeup like this, a platform composed of many instances, many institutions, that each has its own fields of intervention, that has its own programming, etc., there is a time issue that is going to arise and since we had put in place a secretariat, it will have the tendency to take over... The secretariat goes faster than we do. You know ? Camille plans extraordinary events and we have 15 things to do and 15 conferences [to attend]. At the same time, we have to be overseas and in Haiti, you know. We are so solicited that we have to make a choice to not be present in this or that activity that PAPDA is leading, you understand. But even though we are not present physically, we are present because we share the action, we share the point of view, we share ideology...<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Quote from interview with Chenet

<sup>109</sup> Interview with Chenet, November 2013

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Carole, April 2013

Carole links the diversity of coalition members and time as fundamental factors in the transformation of the platform. However, the scarce availability of members does not hinder the secretariat's work. Charged with the task to coordinate the larger popular movement and consequently to reform dominant social movement and civil society narratives, PAPDA aggressively launched discursive as well as programmatic campaigns, sometimes without the input of all its members. Allen explains,

That means that if PAPDA has an initiative it wants to take and it sends a note to ANDAH, it sends a note to SOFA, and another, to await our reactions. But we may take one month, two months, and we do not react. So the structure cannot function with such long delays. It is a real problem that we know and that we live. When you are in this kind of situation that you have to wait two months, and no initiative is taken, well the structure will collapse if it does not try to take this initiative by itself. And that's a reality. It is a reality. So that means that every time you are in this situation, that you have to consult your members and your members when you consult them do not react and you are waiting... So it's a bit, it's a dilemma... It's a dilemma that we try to live with...<sup>111</sup>

Coalitions are loose formations and consequently can derail from founders' original concept. The detachment of coalition members can either lead to its collapse or to the coordinating body's autonomy. In this case, members' disengagement animates the secretariat to move forward with the coalition's mission, but never without the approval of the coordination and direction committee members ICKL and SOFA.

As per Carole, the latter remained attentive to PAPDA's development,

We feel very comfortable because as part of PAPDA's direction... Well sometimes we do not fulfill our obligations in relation to this vigilance that we should have all the time in PAPDA's actions and programming. We are not always available... But we play our fundamental role which is precisely to ensure that PAPDA as a platform is itself vigilant on this issue of gender equality in all the programming it conduct, which is not done 100% of the time. I remember once or twice, we [SOFA] were forced for example to speak out when PAPDA for example produces documents, it's not always obvious that this [gender

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<sup>111</sup> Interview with Allen, May 2013

equality] concern is included, is taken into account, a real concern for gender equality. Because gender equality will only be obtained through action. This is a struggle for us as well but since we work exclusively on the matter, all of our activities are oriented towards women, for women, by women, is done with women in relation precisely to this equality struggle. But PAPDA as an organization, as a mixed structure, it's not obvious...<sup>112</sup>

As Carole mentioned earlier, SOFA joined the alliance as a member of the same “ideological family.” By 1995, Haitian social movements had expanded to include women’s needs and issues as an additional frame through which crisis diagnoses and strategic advocacy were constructed (see Chapter V). The *Revolisyon* had engendered a proliferation of women’s and feminist organizations. As William noted,

many things we take for granted now, before it was a struggle. You see? For example, putting together a women’s organization, now it’s very simple to set up a women’s organization. You see? But back then, during that period of time [*Revolisyon 1986*], during that period, it was a struggle because one had to explain theoretically, ideologically, politically why a separate women’s organization should exist...<sup>113</sup>

I argue that new nationalist movements in the 21st century have been compelled by their feminist constituencies to integrate a critical gendered framework to their work. SOFA ensures that PAPDA upholds its commitment to gender equality and to women’s advancement.

The nature of PAPDA’s mission has been repeatedly questioned. Chenet synopsized the purpose of PAPDA, “The idea, it was not to have an additional institution. The idea was to have a secretariat that would permit us to deepen the

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<sup>112</sup> Interview with Carole, April 2013

<sup>113</sup> Interview with William, May 2013



problematic, promote it but only to the service of the actions led by different institutions.”<sup>114</sup> He faults the members as well as the secretariat for PAPDA’s shift,

We are not exempt from the problems of chieftaincy (*chef-rie*). We would rather be the general of a non-existing army instead of serving as the sergeant of a winning army. So we prefer to be the general of an army that does not exist. And finally, we will win no wars. You see ? We are not exempt from all of that. ‘I feel good if I am the chief, the only rooster crowing.’ This is true for the traditional sector as well as the sectors that claim to be alternative...Is this a Haitian particularity ?! At least it is a heavy tendency. It is a heavy tendency that becomes paralyzing. And counter-productive from every point of view, every point of view. Secondly, the spirit of compromise, that’s a learning process. It’s a learning process. I don’t have to agree with you on everything. I am not able to agree with you on everything. You see ? But I can agree with you on the minimum to do. But this minimum, we must do. And we must do it well. You see ? The spirit of compromise... I always say this. I write it, I say it...<sup>115</sup>

Hence, coalition work entails the management of multiple “chiefs.” Social and ideological ties bring groups together (Dyke and McCammon 2010); however, I argue that differing personal as well as organizational interests of leaders can disconnect them from the common agenda. In fact, most PAPDA members no longer recall the same original aim of the platform. In contrast to Chenet, Marc assured that the initial meetings never set clear limitations for the coalition secretariat,

So, it’s not... We do not dictate anything to PAPDA. Because the executive has a certain independence in relation to the member-institutions. But it is required to walk the line set by the general assembly and under the direction of the administrative council... Well, it’s a kind of evolution... Because PAPDA wouldn’t be satisfied with just speaking over the radio...<sup>116</sup>

PAPDA could not rely on even alternative media to diffuse its message. Instead, it had to devise different methodologies to push the coalition’s agenda. These

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<sup>114</sup> Interview with Chenet, November 2013

<sup>115</sup> Ibid

<sup>116</sup> Interview with Marc, May 2013

discrepancies in members' recollection of PADA's *raison d'être* engender disgruntlement among them. PAPDA's creation resulted from a multiplicity of visions reflective of the plural composition of the platform. Additionally, members' neglect of their instrumental role in the guidance of the coalition blurred the secretariat's function. In turn, members further withdrew themselves "in their little kitchen."<sup>117</sup>

In fact, in their respective kitchens, PAPDA members have started to contemplate a new transformation of the coalition. Chenet foreshadows the change,

I think that founding members are going to have to face and they have already started to face a new imperative today, which is to work, to demand a certain, I don't know if this is the appropriate word, but a re-foundation of PAPDA. You see ? We have to lead a re-foundation of PAPDA, to re-define a bit its institutional contours, to determine where we are. Because the idea, the idea remains essential. PAPDA cannot be involved in programming. Otherwise, it becomes another institution. An additional institution. You see ? PAPDA was supposed to be an instrument, a tool at the service of its members. So that's it, that's a process that we have to initiate soon. There is no alternative to this. There is no alternative to this, to this process of re-foundation...<sup>118</sup>

Cilencieux confirms this brewing development. His concern, however, goes beyond the internal dynamics of the coalition. The re-foundation of the entire movement is what he finds important,

Normally, we have already started this discussion to determine how PAPDA's members can sit down again together. We have not yet had this big debate. But there are already conversations on how PAPDA's members can sit down to analyze certain things, to figure out how we can re-orient PAPDA. And in this vein, there are discussions that have started to determine what we can do with the different organizations that exist across the country... There are conversations that have started within PAPDA, with different organizations as well to see if we can get together to to orient ourselves towards something else. Because, as I said,

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<sup>117</sup> Interview with Camille, November 2013

<sup>118</sup> Interview with Chenet, November 2013

we have started to think this through inside our organizations, inside PAPDA because we all are culpable. All of us will lose in the end. Because if we don't orient ourselves towards something else, well the way you see the country heading, as I said before, everything people used to need, things that God created, natural things that people need to live have become commodities that people cannot find them anymore.. And we are so busy thinking... If social movements don't figure out what to do to orient themselves towards another type of politics, well say what you want... We had said we wouldn't get involved in politics... Are we just going to give everything up and all we do is think ? We will never decide to orient ourselves towards something else. I think it is important and necessary for us to figure out how we can realistically move towards something else...<sup>119</sup>

The crisis within PAPDA reflects a larger movement pattern. While Haitian social movements have made some small gains (see section below), they have not successfully altered the political process and in turn the dominant cultural system. Movement adherents have thus begun to overtly question old strategies. Traditionally, Haitian SMOs have remained “a-political” and have avoided electoral politics. Some PAPDA members oppose this position. In fact, Chenet rejected the appellation,

Ok there are elections coming. Ok, we agree, these are elections under occupation. They are going to be organized, they will be realized with or without us. What's the correct position to take ? What is the... We should continue to be spectators ? Or should we nevertheless look to develop or to put in place an electoral policy ? And of course, the popular masses will always participate... And after, we will complain about the state, lamenting the situation and the brand of the state... We still want to keep... We are very sensitive, you see. We are very sensitive about our political virginity that does not exist. The virginity that we want to preserve, it is quixotic. It's not about virginity. It's simply about non-engagement. In fact, it's about inaction. How can you pretend to preserve a virginity that does not exist. 'I am not in this, I was never in this action'. So what were we in finally ? We were at home living off our salaries, which are not that significant but still appreciated in this milieu and that comes from the international...<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Interview with Cilencieux, November 2013

<sup>120</sup> Interview with Chenet, November 2013

While they openly seek to affect the public sphere, Haitian social movements conceive of themselves as pre-political and outside of partisan politics. On the contrary, Chenet finds that elections are a ripe opportunity to mobilize the popular classes in order to control the political process and to finally establish a democratic government,

We denounce Martelly. Ok. But who gave us Martelly ? We can always talk about the domination, the occupation, we agree. We say that the foreigners imposed Martelly. But that cannot be the only explanation. Because we have always, we also had foreign domination during the 80s, 90s. So back then during these conjunctures, it would have been impossible for them to impose Martelly. So there is a problem here. So now we agree... Yes, it is the foreigner that imposed this. But the foreigner did not come with his baton to place Martelly on the [presidential] seat. There was a considerable level of mobilization coming from the youth in the neighborhoods, in the *bidonvilles*. Are we present in the shantytowns as a popular movement, as social movements ? There are 300 shantytowns that surround Port-au-Prince with 1.6 million people. How many of us are present in the shantytowns, concretely ? In fact, these young people in the shantytowns are left to themselves...<sup>121</sup>

PAPDA's geopolitical demarcation of the movement excludes *bidonvilles* in Port-au-Prince. The reification of the urban vs. rural divide in social movement work disregards the growing mass of urban youth in the capital and other large cities. The upcoming 2016 elections present a political opportunity to revamp the larger popular movement through the recruitment of new urban-based constituents as well as the integration of old local leaders and members into new collection action.

Social movement literature identifies political opportunities or threats, as well as social ties and shared ideologies as key elements in the formation of social movement coalition (Dyke and McCammon 2010; Bandy and Smith 2005). However, external threats and common ideology do not guarantee group cohesion. I argue that SMO leaders' personal and organizational interests weaken and can even truncate coalition

work. Disparate understandings of coalition goals and decision-making processes can produce sullen “chiefs,” and in turn, fractionalization or re-foundation of the coalition. Fortunately, Haitian social movements opted to renew their alliance and consequently to revamp the larger popular movement. Nevertheless, they remain divided on which strategies are appropriate for such an endeavor. Some challenge PAPDA and its members’ “a-political” status and call for social movement involvement in the upcoming elections specifically to recruit new membership from the increasing urban-based populations in Port-au-Prince. Too many SMOs concentrate on rural populations and in consequence abandoned the youth of the *bidonvilles*. Frank noted that geographical segregation results from lack of funding specifically geared towards urban programming.

### **19 years of Fieldwork: 1995-2014**

Platform leaders never deny their positionalities. In fact, one of the founding principles of the coalition is to accompany the popular masses by transferring resources. Informing and training are the cornerstone of PAPDA’s mission. Its work is centered around two axes: food sovereignty and alternative integration. In the following section, I discuss PAPDA’s work over the last two decades, both locally and regionally. I specifically focus on a women’s collective in Limonade that serves as a successful “experiment” of solidarity economy. Throughout the section, I situate PAPDA’s sub-regional initiatives within larger political processes, namely the national elections as well as the transnational anti-globalization movement. I underline the links between PAPDA’s presence on the international stage and the development of local campaigns. Finally, I point to PAPDA’s

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid

recognition as a legitimate national actor, as well as its struggle to control the dominant narratives of social movements.

PAPDA launched its first thematic campaign in 1997 on “Food Security.” Aristide had just stepped down to transition power over to René Préal. The latter immediately conceded to the privatization of several public companies like the national flour mill *Minoterie d’Haiti* and the national cement plant *Ciment d’Haiti*; as well as permitted the establishment of the first Free Zones on cultivable land. Social movement leaders wanted to ensure that resistance would not dwindle. PAPDA developed an Alternative Integration Program to mobilize the base and to gather data about peasant organizational as well as sub-regional agricultural needs. As Marc noted, social movement leaders sought to clarify neo-liberal globalization for the popular masses. The platform assists them in their formulation of their demands and recommendations. Frank from PAPDA insists that advocacy work cannot be dissociated from fieldwork,

When we select a pilot area, it involves a series of actions towards a type of experimentation, a type of action that serves us as an example to fuel our advocacy. The objective of the pilot for us, it’s that there are actions being done, being done on the basis of alternative construction, you understand. And these alternatives are supposed to help us fuel our global advocacy work. This means that the advocacy work that we are doing at the global level is not that of an intellectual in an office. These are things firmly grounded in a reality. It is something fueled by local processes. You understand ? A dialectic...<sup>122</sup>

As such, PAPDA established sub-regional organizational networks. It established *Kòdinasyon Òganization Rejyon Latibonit (KORELA)*<sup>123</sup> in the Department of Artibonite;

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<sup>122</sup> Interview with Frank at PAPDA offices in November 2013

<sup>123</sup> Kreyòl for: Coordination of the Artibonite Region

revived the former *Kòdinasyon Òganizasyon Rejyon Sidès (KORS)*<sup>124</sup> in the Sud; as well as collaborated with *Kòdinasyon Òganizasyon Rejyon Nip (KORENIP)*.<sup>125</sup> The campaign aimed to shift movement narratives. SMO leaders framed food as a human right and promoted the consumption of local staples as a defense of Haitian cultural patrimony. Social movement organizers aimed to construct an alternative national identity. In 1999-2000, the Integration Program was instituted in the Nord. The “Food security” campaign was launched in conjunction with a farming NGO Veterimed as well as community-based organizations *Asosyasyon Pwodiktè Lèt Limonad (APWOLIM)*<sup>126</sup> and *Asosyasyon Fanm Limonad pou Developman Agrikòl ak Atizana (AFLIDEPA)* in the Nord.<sup>127</sup> There, PAPDA “experiments” with solidarity economies. Both associations collectively own plots of land, gardens, as well as transformation facilities. In the following section, I evaluate AFLIDEPA’s work.

In 1998, PAPDA solicited the collaboration of the Cuban *Asociación Nacional de Agricultores Pequeños (ANAP)*<sup>128</sup> to set up expert teams of Cuban and Haitian agronomists to cogitate on organic agriculture with a special focus on the rice-producing Department of Artibonite. In 1999, PAPDA joined the transnational platform *Jubilée Sud* to denounce the practices of the IMF and the World Bank. PAPDA served on the coordinating committee of *Jubilée Sud-Amérique* for ten years. Locally in turn, PAPDA

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<sup>124</sup> Kreyòl for: Coordination of the Sud-Est Region

<sup>125</sup> Kreyòl for: Coordination of the Nippes Region

<sup>126</sup> Kreyòl for: Association of Milk Producers in Limonade

<sup>127</sup> Kreyòl for: Limonade Women’s Association for Agricultural and Artisanal Development

<sup>128</sup> Spanish for: National Association of Small Farmers

initiated a public policy campaign around the foreign debt. Thus, local and global activism are intimately linked. In fact, they are interdependent. In other words, 21st century postcolonial nationalists rely on their international allies to counter global governance institutions and to consolidate their respective nation-states.

In 2001, Aristide was newly elected. That year, PAPDA participated in the “First Forum on Food Sovereignty” in Havana,

And when we got back from the forum, from this meeting on food sovereignty, we changed our ‘Food Security’ program to ‘Food Sovereignty.’ We started producing brochures, you understand? And produced brochures, materials that would assist us in publicizing, in promoting this concept. We led seminars, mobilized assemblies, organized radio shows, you understand, around this concept to popularize the concept of ‘food sovereignty.’ And we emphasized the difference, you understand, we helped to differentiate, I could say de-mystify, you see, the concept of ‘food security’ that had been co-opted by the international, I could say the international financial institutions. It is a co-opted concept. And in order for us to be clear, we produced reference documents so that the community-based organizers could keep working, so the struggle could continue...<sup>129</sup>

As a result of the inter-national gathering, PAPDA adopted a new frame in order to further distance the grassroots solutions it proposes from state projects. Frank remarked that the concept of “Food security” was appropriated and de-politicized by the state, thus no longer capturing what alternative groups advocated. Activist discourse is often usurped by governing agencies to influence or control civil society narratives (Baker-Cristales 2008). Accordingly, transnational SMOs disassociated themselves with the concept of “sustainable development” promoted by the international financial institutions (IFIs) to instead espouse the concept of “Food sovereignty” and local subsistence (Jennings 2008). PAPDA and its allied-organizations demand agrarian reform. Through

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<sup>129</sup> Interview with Frank in PAPDA office in November 2013



print, broadcast, and digital media, PAPDA re-focused the frame. The coalition continues to vie for command of movement as well as civil society narratives.

That same year (2001), PAPDA participated in the first World Social Forum in Brazil. PAPDA sat on the forum's international council for twelve years. New local elections as well as global opposition to the IFIs re-galvanized social movement actors to re-mobilize members. International political opportunities encourage local mobilization (Viatori 2007; Lauer 2006; Kriesi et al. 1992). PAPDA also led a delegation of 80 people to Santo Domingo to the Assembly of Caribbean people (ACP). It subsequently hosted the Third Assembly in 2003 in Cap-Haitien during which attendees visited the historical mythical site of *Bwa Kayiman*<sup>130</sup> and paid tribute to the transcendent figure of Boukman who sparked the Revolution of 1804. Global South social movements aim to re-shape the kinship politics (Patil 2008) that reify the discourse of development that hierarchizes people and nation-states. PAPDA seeks to overturn what Camille calls the "double difficulty" that isolates Haiti by inviting international allies to directly experience the country. Consequently, PAPDA creates its own political opportunities in order to influence the dominant national and well as transnational movement narratives.

On the local level in 2003, PAPDA assisted peasant associations in establishing *Mouvman Revandikatif Pèp Latibonit (MOREPLA)*.<sup>131</sup> Over the next five years, they advocated for the cleaning and maintenance of the canals, subsidies on fertilizers, designated parking areas for farming machinery, as well as the integration of a social

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<sup>130</sup> Bwa Kayiman in the Department of Nord, a few miles from Cap Haitian is the site where a Vodou ceremony took place in 1791 and ignited the Revolution of 1804. The Jamaican-born Boukman made the call that night (See James, C.L.R. 1989. *The Black Jacobin*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Vintage Book Edition).

<sup>131</sup> Kreyòl for: The Artibonite People's Advocacy Movement

movement organizer in the Development Office of the rice-producing Valley of Artibonite. PAPDA also joined other local networks such as the National Platform for Food Security (*PFNSA*) and contributed to the preparation of the National Plan for Food Security that the Ministry of Agriculture's national council on food security (*CNSA*) was charged to develop. The policy proposal was submitted in 2006 to Parliament but has yet to be ratified.

Frank then offered a counter-example of a successful campaign,

Another big win I can mention in terms of mobilization was the establishment of *INCAH*, the National Institute of Haitian Coffee, which was a big win for us. Why? Because I can say that the campaign we had been running with our partners... For example, we [PAPDA] joined a coffee platform, we led a campaign on the issue of coffee. And our work yielded the creation of the Institute as a result of our big mobilization on Champ-de-Mars... It echoed throughout and President Aristide invited us to come discuss the matter... We went, we discussed. We discussed, we discussed. And finally, he promised, he guaranteed us that the Institute would be put in place and the coffee fund created. Today, the Institute does exist; it has been working since. The Coffee Fund exists but... We had worked to ensure that the network of producers would be integrated into the coordination of the Institute. But until today, the institution has not played the role it was designed to play. It has not satisfied the peasant community, you understand...<sup>132</sup>

PAPDA was able to secure a seat at the table of the state when Aristide invited the coffee platform to negotiate. However, not surprisingly, the *Institut National de Café Haïtien* (*INCAH*) was quickly corporatized. Scholars on black and indigenous social movements in Latin America caution against state co-optation of social movements (Rahier 2012; Viatori 2007). In fact, they argue that state rapprochement decapitates movements.

The second removal of Aristide followed in 2004. The UN Mission headed by Brazil deployed troops to maintain order. A diasporic Haitian was approved by the U.S.

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<sup>132</sup> Interview with Frank, November 2013

to govern in the interim. In 2005, PAPDA figured among the many social movements that constituted the Hemispheric Social Alliance (HSA). The Pan-American coalition orchestrated the defeat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreements (Saguier 2007). On the local level, social movements mobilized around the upcoming elections. More specifically, PAPDA organized an advocacy campaign for “Participatory Democracy and the De-centralization of Territorial Collectivities” to reinforce local power. Since 2001, PAPDA expanded its national legitimacy and visibility through its involvement in successful global actions. As such, PAPDA emerged as a political actor in the Port-au-Prince civil society. Most importantly, the coalition set the foundations for the rise of a rural civil society capable of intervening in the Port-au-Prince public sphere.

In 2007, Préval was re-elected and re-instated subsidies for fertilizers. That same year, PAPDA published a study in Kreyòl on the Economic Partnership Accord, which leaders identified as a “European Union tool for free trade”<sup>133</sup> that would open Haiti’s already dependent economy to European products. The text also proposes protectionist recommendations to the state. PAPDA also produced in French another analytical report on Haiti’s agrarian crisis in which they traced the history of Haiti’s peasant movements, defended national production, and shared peasant perspectives on politico-economic decentralization.<sup>134</sup> In 2008, the platform put out a booklet in French on the country’s food and environmental crises, urging the state to adopt protective policies.<sup>135</sup> That same

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<sup>133</sup> Text title. Original Kreyòl title: *Akò Patenarya Ekonomik (APE): Yon zouti mache lin pou Inyon Ewopeyèn*

<sup>134</sup> This analytic report was entitled “*La question agraire Haïtienne et les Revendications paysannes actuelles*” or “The Haitian agrarian question and current peasant demands.”

<sup>135</sup> The booklet is entitled “*Crise alimentaire et les défis de la relance agricole en Haïti : Quelles réponses aujourd’hui ?*” or *Food crisis and the challenges of agricultural revival in Haiti : Which answers today?*”

year, food riots erupted. The economic crisis in the U.S. caused a food shortage in dependent Haiti. Nevertheless, in 2009, Préval signed the APE.<sup>136</sup> That same year, PAPDA conducted research action workshops with peasants in Artibonite to assess the region's needs. The information was submitted to state officials.<sup>137</sup> Therefore, PAPDA serves as a transcriber of local social movement needs. Unable to rely on privately-owned media, social movements construct counter-narratives to present first-hand accounts of their analyses, their work and demands, as well as their recommendations.

In 2010, the Haitian capital and neighboring cities and towns were struck by a devastating earthquake. PAPDA immediately took a public position on the “reconstruction,” pointing to the incident as an opportunity to rupture with the neoliberal system that had manufactured Haiti's underdevelopment.<sup>138</sup> PAPDA views the disaster as an extension of entrenched occupation. It also demands a moratorium on neoliberal takeover. More specifically, PAPDA denounced the Hope Law I and II that denied workers an increase of the minimum wage.<sup>139</sup> Additionally, the platform pushed its alternative vision of development based on organic farming as well as national production.<sup>140</sup> While the Empire exploited the earthquake as an opportunity to cement

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<sup>136</sup> See for more information: <http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article9075#.VFG0ovnF-cs>

<sup>137</sup> The report is entitled “Eskperyans Refòm Agrè a nan Vale Latinonit la” or “Experiences of agrarian reform in the Valley of Artibonite”

<sup>138</sup> PAPDA published its position in the following “Politiques publiques en Haiti: A quand la rupture avec la dépendance?” or “Public Policy in Haiti: When will we break from dependency?”

<sup>139</sup> The text is entitled “Lwa Hope: Yon menas pou bon jan travay” or “Hope Law: A threat to good jobs”

<sup>140</sup> The booklet is based on fieldwork in PAPDA's experimental pilot zones. It is entitled “Zouti Peyizan” or “Peasants' tool”.

neoliberal capitalism in Haiti, social movements promoted popular sovereignty and democracy.

Despite PAPDA's continued work, social movement activities decelerated. Frank notes that social movements experienced a downturn from 2007 up until the earthquake. He attributes it to the entente between international development NGOs and the state. Nevertheless, he drew my attention to the gains of the Haitian popular movement, notably international exchanges with SMOs in the Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, Venezuela, and Brazil. PAPDA is also a member of the Committee for the Abolition of the Third World Debt (CADTM) as well as the World Forum for Alternatives (WFA). These translocal connections yielded the first agro-ecological school in one of PAPDA's pilot zones, Cap Rouge, led by an agronomist trained in Cuba. PAPDA also receives support from Global North allies in the Netherlands, Belgium, and the U.S. These translocal relationships permit the transfer of resources to support various programs. With inter-national sponsorship, local social movements developed a rural civil society and established collective economies.

*"Another world is possible:" Solidarity Economies in Limonade*

On March 26, 2013, AFLIDEPA publically unveiled its new peanut butter transformation center and seed bank. The induction celebrated the lives and work of organizational members. In the presence of their allies and funders, Limonade residents as well as their family members, the women's collective declared its independence from external donations and renewed its commitment to food sovereignty. Also in attendance were their youth whose enlistment- at least nominally- guarantee movement longevity as well as

community development. The inauguration of the store firmly marked AFLIDEPA as a *potomitan* of the town. I was first introduced to the collective during my travels with Ricot to the Department of Nord when I began my preliminary doctoral research in late 2010. I was able to witness the different phases of the construction as well as the subsequent inauguration of the center. In the following section, I describe the organization's structure and ideological foundations. I highlight AFLIDEPA's relationship to PAPDA. Moreover, I provide an overview of the collective's programs and their effects on women's lives and families. As discussed above, most of social movement work takes place outside of the public sphere. Collective identities are not constructed simply to mount and implement advocacy campaigns. They also serve to create and maintain economic alternatives. While Haitian social movements have barely altered public policy, they have established solidarity economies. I argue that these successful "experiments" in turn reinforce collective identity-making, function as surrogates of the state, and finally demonstrate that "another world is possible."

AFLIDEPA was founded in January of 2004 by six women members of the milk-producing collective APWOLIM. The separation was not the result of discord; the two organizations continue to work closely together (see Chapter VI for more information). Moreover, AFLIDEPA remains a "shareholder" in APWOLIM's *Lèt a Gogo Limonade*, which distributes milk in local schools. The collective is coordinated by one volunteer, Olga, who also functions as secretary and treasurer. Today, AFLIDEPA membership has risen to 484 adult women and 325 young women ages 9 to 17. Most recently, leaders

started *Sous Espwa Limonad (SEL)*<sup>141</sup> for the collective's children 5 and over. "I don't count families [in the membership numbers]," Olga explained, "but when a woman has an economic activity, it is in fact the entire family [that benefits]."<sup>142</sup> There are various committees that oversee different activities and projects; management, education, and health to name a few. The collective attends training workshops run by their national and international supporters, namely PAPDA. In turn, it shares its methodologies and ideologies with other local organizations.

AFLIDEPA is nevertheless cautious about making alliances,

We too, we don't need anyone dictating anything to us. Because this [organization] is ours. We have our own objectives, we know what we want. We don't want to mismatch what we believe, our acronym and all. We find that PAPDA has not come to dictate anything to us. It asks us what we want, what we have to do and in turn it offers us what it can. This is why we have stayed friends. Because we can find people who come with projects. But it's not about projects just for the sake of projects. But we want a sustainable project. We don't want for someone [a funder] who wants to be visible to provide us with an activity that becomes a trap. This funder drops a project in our hands and as soon as it is available, we run to take it... And this is precisely what could make us ugly as an organization. We don't see things that way. We want to stay beautiful as an organization. And that will only happen if we don't accept projects that will become burdens. If we do not match a certain kind of activity, we won't do it. We won't do it. We always look at ourselves in the mirror before we take something... We can say that PAPDA has always remained in the line of vision in which we believe. And we have stayed in the line in which PAPDA believes. This is why we are friends...<sup>143</sup>

As discussed above, movement collaborations are most successful when members share common ties and ideologies. While AFLIDEPA does not pronounce itself socialist as does PAPDA, the two organizations nevertheless believe in the same collective project,

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<sup>141</sup> Kreyol for "Source of Limonade's Hope"

<sup>142</sup> Interview with Olga from AFLIDEPA, November 2012

<sup>143</sup> Ibid

that of building solidarity economies. They both express the same commitment to food sovereignty as well as women's development. AFLIDEPA carefully selects its partners. It took several years to pool together resources from the right funders in order to build the manufacturing center. As discussed above, local alternatives are made possible by international allies. I argue that Haitian social movements do not neatly fit in the local vs. global dichotomy. Instead, they point to the linkages and interdependencies that inform the anti-globalization movement.

In addition to peanut butter, AFLIDEPA produces pastries as well as fruit preserves. It also fabricates accessories such as sandals, purses, belts, necklaces and earrings with solid waste and string. However, the organization's *chwal batay*<sup>144</sup> is agriculture "to kick out foreign milk,"<sup>145</sup>

Some women in the "*manman bèf*"<sup>146</sup> program want to put together a pamphlet or a presentation on it. Because we engage our work and activities to make them durable. That's maybe what's missing in this country is the sustainability of activities. Whether in animal husbandry or gardens, activities must be sustainable. So that beyond the partner, the activity does not fail...Because we do something we call "*Pase Kado*".<sup>147</sup> *Pase Kado* is: we [the organization] gives a person [a member] three goats, which is how we start, we give three goats and these three goats need to be returned. The person returns them [the goats] once her original have had offspring by giving them to next member. This means that even if a partner ceases to be in the field, the activity will continue within the organization. We do this [*pase kado*] with everything... chickens. We do it with goats, we do it with cows, we do it with the gardens. So if you have a garden activity, you have beans, you give a woman 4 pots of beans to plant. After she plants, she harvests them and we do follow-ups since we put in place a follow-up team. So when the beans have been harvested, not only does the person have beans to eat, she also has some to sell, as well as to return to the organization to benefit another

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<sup>144</sup> Kreyòl for: battle horse

<sup>145</sup> Quote from interview with Olga from ALIDEPA

<sup>146</sup> Kreyòl for: mother cow

<sup>147</sup> Kreyòl for: Passing on the gift



[member]... Currently, we have a woman who had a cow, the cow allowed her to buy land, with the cow she bought land. On the land, she made a garden... She bought some land and made a garden. And now, she has built a house in which to live. All that to say, or to show you that cows do a lot, a lot, a lot... They bring about change in people's lives...<sup>148</sup>

Invoking the traditional *konbit* <sup>149</sup> methods of work, AFLIDEPA seeks to counter a western liberal assumption of individualism by establishing solidarity economies. The organization invites in women with opportunities for personal economic growth, then engages them in a collective process of wealth sharing. The collective uses a “credit” system by which the receiving member eventually becomes the “lender” to the next. Olga assured that,

Collective gardens create solidarity between people because they have to farm together. They have to harvest together, which means... I was witnessing the vibes the other day, it was an extraordinary ambiance... 35 women planting yams, talking. I could really feel... They were eating together, I could feel, they were bonding. We shared our problems, and how to solve them. This means that one can truly feel that these gardens, these collective gardens make people tighter, tighter, make people think together. So... Because they spend their entire day together...<sup>150</sup>

The organization endeavors to change women's rapport to one another by fostering the conditions from which collective identities can be formed and the group can be easily mobilized into collective action. Concomitantly, these economic activities empower members to engage in their own development rather than waiting for the state and relying on short-term NGO projects. PAPDA does not only inform and train. It also facilitates the

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<sup>148</sup> Interview with Olga on CRAPS grounds, November 2012

<sup>149</sup> Kreyòl for: group of people working together

<sup>150</sup> Interview with Olga

implementation of its vision of an alternative development. I submit that solidarity economy “experiments” are expressions of social movement praxis.

Most importantly, the business venture affords women the chance to become independent through the available economic opportunities of the region from which they were previously excluded,

The *manman bèf* program, this is something in which we are greatly interested. Because before- I will give you a little history lesson... before women didn't use to raise cows. It was men in Limonade- I don't know about other places- but in Limonade it was men who raised cows. But now women are integrated correctly in animal husbandry and there are many women who shepherd the cows. They take them to drink water, they take them to eat, and then take them back home. So this is something very exciting for the organization...<sup>151</sup>

There are currently 224 cows in circulation; and 14 young women were recently integrated in the program. As such, AFLIDEPA disrupted the occupational sex segregation. However, the collective continues to uphold the heterosexual ordering of the peasant family. The day before the inauguration of the center, as I prepared the *kasav ak manba* refreshments with AFLIDEPA members, I inquired about their husbands. They women assured me that their men were supportive of the organization's work “provided that dinner is on time every day.”<sup>152</sup> AFLIDEPA does not espouse explicit feminist ideologies. In Chapter V, I examine the politics of Haitian feminism.

Parents in the organization are urged to involve their children in their economic activities. More educated youth can help their parents balance finances and, in turn, better appreciate the family's situation. AFLIDEPA aims to create well-rounded young members,

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid

<sup>152</sup> Quote from AFLIDEPA member, March 2013

We don't just take the children... But we mentor them in all ways, in sports, in agriculture, animal husbandry, in all AFLIDEPA activities. These children are there to ensure continuity since we [adult members] have noticed that times are modern, there are other things that are increasing and coming. So we are trying to orient them in it so that we may save them so that they may become a resource for the country- I won't only say Limonade- but for the country...<sup>153</sup>

The collective offers its younger members what it terms "credit" to pursue higher education, especially in accounting, veterinary medicine, and agricultural technique. Students sign contracts that indebt them to render services to AFLIDEPA upon graduation. The organization also encourages its youth to develop physical strength and discipline through the practice of Judo offered by Center for Research and Action on Social Problems (*CRAPS*) (that lends its grounds for collective meetings). Additionally, AFLIDEPA conducts workshops on women's reproductive health. It also embraces and engages pregnant teens in their programming. For the girls of SEL, the collective subsidizes and monitors their schooling. It also provides classes on cleanliness and behavior. The organization disciplines the bodies and lives of their members. Every year, AFLIDEPA honors a woman of Limonade who is at least 100 years old to recognize her achievements and contribution in building the town. Since 2012, the collective has been cogitating on better ways to integrate their disabled members. The organization fosters community life by recognizing and engaging the vulnerable members of society.

Local social movements seek to alter the dominant cultural system. More than simply challenging public policy, they also work to establish successful alternative "experiments" that marry practice with theory. In order to establish their economic independence, these social movement organizations paradoxically necessitate extra-

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<sup>153</sup> Interview with Olga

national funding. Nevertheless, these economic advantages bring about social change. In fact, these processes are mutually constitutive. Members' lives are transformed; and social relations re-arranged. Local social movements function as development agencies in areas abandoned by the state.

## **Conclusion**

At the end of 2013, PAPDA members met for the third time to agree on the methods that would systematize the process to best foster exchange and commitment between “chiefs.” Phasing out economic dependency on even their most progressive northern allies is a major concern for southern social movements. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these local movements ceased the political opportunity to form an NGO in order to sustain their work. PAPDA members were instrumental in the realization of the short-lived *Revolisyon 1986* and persevered together during the coup d'état years. In 1995, with the financial assistance of Oxfam-GB, nine SMOs established PAPDA as an “a-political” foundation with the goal of coordinating the popular movement through information and training. The coalition distinguishes itself from other civil society organizations, particularly those installed by what its leaders call the Occupation. PAPDA- as well as its member-organizations- claims its informed insider knowledge of Haitian culture and practices as authentic. While 21<sup>st</sup> century postcolonial nationalisms may negotiate with extra-national forces, they never cease to be protective of their borders.

Social movement coalitions emerge from networks of social movement actors and organizations that share common ideologies and agree on the appropriate strategies and tactics for collective action. PAPDA was formed by SMOs previously engaged in

collaborative work during the *Revolisyon 1986*. These organizations identified the “popular masses” as their constituencies and endeavored to inform as well as train them. These SMOs also committed themselves to the translation of rural peasant needs to the state as well as to the international community, thus expanding civil society outside of Port-au-Prince. They espouse the same alternative vision for Haiti’s development and promote the establishment of solidarity economies. Supported by extra-national funding, the coalition is run by a secretariat that leads many discursive as well as programmatic campaigns for the protection of national production, as well as traditional values. PAPDA also connects local social movements to one another as well as to the larger anti-globalization movement in order to reverse what Camille calls the “double difficulty” that Haiti faces. The secretariat’s increasing autonomy, however, raises concern among certain members, highlighting the diverse personal as well as organizational interests of leaders. Nevertheless, in Chapter IV, I demonstrated that political threats maintain group cohesion even when coalition members compete for the control of decision-making processes. At the eve of their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, PAPDA members have called for a re-foundation of the coalition, and subsequently a re-imagining of the larger popular movement. More specifically, they seek to counter the NGOization of the coalition through auto-finance.

CHAPTER V : “Lit Fanm la se Lit tout Mas Pèp la”  
Between Civil Society and the State: Haitian Feminists (Re)define Nationalism (1915-2015)

On October 16, 2013, led by feminist organization *Solidarite Fanm Ayisyen (SOFA)*,<sup>154</sup> 129 women gathered in the Legislative Palace in Port-au-Prince, Haiti to hold symbolic parliamentary sessions. Performing as the executive body, leaders of SOFA, its feminist allies *Kay Fanm*<sup>155</sup> and *Enfofanm*,<sup>156</sup> PAPDA and ANDAH<sup>157</sup> presented their proposal for laws favorable to the inclusion of women in decision-making spaces and the protection of women's rights.<sup>158</sup> Taking into consideration the international conventions and accords signed by Haiti on women's rights,<sup>159</sup> these recommendations resulted from the “popular consultation”<sup>160</sup> of women in all ten departments by the coalition of feminist organizations, National Advocacy Coordination for Women's Rights (CONAP).<sup>161</sup> In the presence of and with the support of the presidents of the National Assembly and the Chamber of Deputies as well as of many political party representatives, civil society

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<sup>154</sup> Kreyòl for “Haitian Women in Solidarity”.

<sup>155</sup> Kay Fanm is a feminist organization in Haiti that provides social and legal services to women and families victims of conjugal and sexual violence. Kay Fanm is Kreyòl for “Women's Home”.

<sup>156</sup> Enfofanm is a feminist institution in Haiti, mostly dedicated to preserving women's history. The paperwork of the first feminist organization *Ligue Feminine d'Action Sociale (LFAS)* established in 1934 is housed in its offices. Enfofanm is Kreyòl for “Information on Women”.

<sup>157</sup> ANDAH is a founding member-organization of PAPDA.

<sup>158</sup> SOFA leaders Carole Pierre-Paul Jacob and Marie Soudnie Rivette acted respectively as the Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment. Kay Fanm's Yolette Andre Jeanty and Enfofanm's Clorinde Zephir served respectively as Minister of Women and Minister of Health. PAPDA's Ricot Jean-Pierre and ANDAH's Allen Henry performed respectively as Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Territorial Planning.

<sup>159</sup> International conventions include the Inter-American Convention for the Prevention, Sanction, and Elimination of all Forms of Violence Against Women (also known as Belem do Para) ratified in 1996.

<sup>160</sup> Concept developed by Haitian social movement actors. Refer to the previous Chapter V for an example of such a process.

members,<sup>162</sup> and international allies including diasporic Haitian politicians and activists, these women called for a more representative and “truer”, thus “popular democratic,” system. With no female presence in the Senate and only 5 out of 99 Deputies, women’s experiences and issues are not included in the national agenda. While they constitute over 50% of the population and are often heads of households,<sup>163</sup> their voices continue to be marginalized in party politics and discarded by government. In addition to making claims to citizenship, the initiative sought to raise other women’s consciousness on their roles as political actors and shapers of the nation. Utilizing the backdrop of World’s Food Day, the symbolic parliament of women emphasized the necessity for Haiti to disengage from neoliberal policies that hinder food sovereignty. Likening women’s concerns to the nation’s, these social movement leaders publicly called for the institution of state feminism, a collaboration between civil society and the state. By representing women’s diverse gender- and class-based interests, these national feminists sought to re-define the realm of what is usually understood as “the political” to encompass both “public” and “private” issues.

In Chapter V, through a historical sketch of the Haitian Feminist Movement, I discuss the co-constitution of feminism and nationalism. I first situate the emergence of Haitian feminist consciousness in the struggles against the first U.S. Occupation of Haiti (1915-1934). I then examine the articulation of Haitian feminist thought from its birth

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<sup>161</sup> CONAP stands for *Coordination Nationale de Plaidoyer pour les Droits des Femmes*.

<sup>162</sup> Other women’s and feminist leaders from *Fanm Tèt Kole*, *Fanm Saj*, and the *Asosyasyon Fanm Soley D Ayiti (AFASDA)* as well as previous ministers of the Ministry of Women were invited and served as deputies and senators.

<sup>163</sup> See Haitian Census of 2003

after the removal of U.S. troops through the suffragist movement. After having contributed to anti-Occupation struggles, Haitian women were dismissed from official postcolonial decision-making spaces. Recognizing that patriarchal hegemony is scattered globally, reinforced by racist discourses, and implemented in capitalist practices, postcolonial women developed strategies to gain power by collaborating with temporary as well as long-term national and international allies, women and men alike. Backed by international dictates, western-educated elite women in particular utilized their family and social connections to demand and acquire rights from the state to enable their autonomy (Sanders 2013; Carillo and Chinchilla 2010; Ehrick 2005). Next, I analyze the transformation of the Haitian Feminist Movement during the dictatorial Duvalier regimes, focusing on its resurgence and radicalization during and following the “Revolution of 1986.” In 1995, in response to the failures of the proxy Haitian state, eight activist organizations formed the coalition PAPDA in order to coordinate a nationalist movement in response to the further westernization of Haitian ‘traditions and mores’ by indorsing the ‘small peasant’ as the quintessential embodiment of Haitian-ness. As discussed in Chapter IV, SOFA was among PAPDA founders, and central to the establishment of the foundation as a feminist alliance. “New” nationalist movements in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century apply a critical gendered framework to their diagnosis of national challenges and incorporate women in leadership positions. Nevertheless, as I argue in Chapters III and IV, these movements continue to uphold the imagined heterosexual foundations of the nation and the family. As such, I submit that patriarchy is not reversed but instead “modernized.” Moreover, a few months prior to the establishment of PAPDA, the Haitian state created the *Ministère à la Condition Féminine et aux Droits des*



*Femmes*,<sup>164</sup> the result of a SOFA-led march demanding a separate governmental agency dedicated to women's rights and advancement. SOFA leaders often served as ministers, pushing their nationalist agenda while they continued their grassroots engagements. In the following chapter, I investigate Haitian feminist negotiations of their roles as state officials and social movement leaders. To complete a feminist reading of the last 100 years of Haitian nationalist movements, I provide an interpretative analysis of SOFA's contemporary methods of organizing across gender, and class (color and language) as well as national borders. Using my formal interviews with SOFA leaders and informal conversations with members, my participant observation in their marches, talks, and celebrations, as well as their visual and textual productions I collected during my fieldwork between 2010 and 2013, I discuss the varying strategies Haitian feminists have developed in order to construct themselves as legitimate national actors.

### **Between Black Internationalism and Haitian Nationalism: Redressing Elite Masculinities**

In July 1915, 330 U.S. Marines landed in Port-au-Prince under acting President Woodrow Wilson, officializing Haiti's first U.S. Occupation. Between 1911 and 1915, six Haitian presidents were assassinated or exiled while in power. Instability threatened U.S. economic interests in Haiti. Moreover, the U.S. sought to eliminate the German and French struggle to control the decentralized nation-state (Plummer 1988). Before the U.S. had officially joined the Allied Forces during World War I, it had already begun mediating European affairs in its own backyard. Securing control of the Americas was crucial to U.S. ascendancy as a world superpower. The Roosevelt Corollary to the

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<sup>164</sup> French for "Ministry of the Feminine Condition and Women's Rights".

Monroe Doctrine was expressly formulated to respond to European aggressions on their former American colonies, rendering the U.S. a proxy for colonial rule. Dollar Diplomacy guaranteed the domination with the U.S. government guaranteeing loans and supporting other investment projects initiated by U.S. bankers and industrialists (Renda 2001). By the mid-1910s, the U.S. had militarily intervened in Panama, Mexico, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Honduras. The dollarization of Latin American and Caribbean economies fostered competition rather than solidarity, further preventing state collaboration in the American postcolonial world. By indebting new nation-states, the U.S. funded its imperialist project and established itself as the center of what Hardt and Negri (2001) call “the Empire.” Furthermore, Wilson’s Moral Diplomacy complemented well his predecessors’ foreign policy approaches, providing the contemporary trope to the civilizing missions that framed European conquest of Asia, Africa, and the Americas. The paternalistic discourses that juxtaposed the free world led by the U.S. and the underdeveloped and un-modern in need of assistance and order served to justify U.S. interventions in Haiti (Renda 2001).

At the onset, the U.S. Occupation privileged lighter-skinned and upper-class Haitians, further exacerbating color tensions that had divided the first black nation since inception (Labelle 1999; Schmidt 1995). However, in 1918, the U.S. dissolved the Haitian Constitution to institute Jim Crow Laws, disempowering western-educated elite men. White soldiers enacted the same unbridled violence on Haitian bodies that they had on U.S. blacks. Following the U.S. Civil War, promises of emancipation were curtailed by segregation and continued disregard for black life. The U.S. South thus served as training grounds for U.S. occupations of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Unsurprisingly, an armed peasant resistance movement ensued with the Cacos led by Charlemagne Peralte and Benoit Batraville. After years of guerilla warfare, Peralte was captured and killed by U.S. troops, his body nailed to a door and put on public display (Plummer 1988). That same summer of 1919, race riots erupted throughout the U.S. during which blacks were indiscriminately lynched. White supremacy manifested itself through the denigration of black men's bodies in both national contexts.

Following the decapitation of Peralte's armed uprising, elite men developed different strategies of resistance. Their rights and privileges eroded, they sought to restore their rule of the nation. They formed nationalist organizations to lay claim to sovereignty and to demand the removal of U.S. troops (Renda 2001). Of particularly interest and importance is the *Union Patriotique (UP)* founded in 1915 under the leadership of George Sylvain. In the UP magazine as well as Haitian newspapers *Le Courrier Haitien*, *Le Nouvelliste*, *La Patrie*, and *La Nation*, elite men attempted to counter racist discourses that de-humanized and inferiorized Haitians by foregrounding the personalities of their most educated men, thus demonstrating their civilized intellect and merit to self-determination. Nationalist politics allowed these men to accomplish masculinity (Connell 1987). The anti-Occupation narrative, nevertheless, was not only produced by male leadership. Their wives participated in igniting the movement as well, having been alarmed by the Occupation's targeted violence against women and girls. They were concerned with the protection of the most vulnerable populations, poor women and children discarded by the state and the occupying forces. Casting U.S. soldiers as deviants, the anti-Occupation movement framed them as barbarous and unfit for rule (Sanders 2013).

Elite women were also instrumental in producing the UP reports on U.S. abuses in Haiti: a collection of testimonies of Haitian families, evidence amassed during their fieldwork conducted in Port-au-Prince and in rural areas. Furthermore, utilizing their status as mothers of the nation, UP women leaders like Eugénie Malbranche-Sylvain, Alice Garoute, and Thérèse Hudicourt went door-knocking accompanied by their daughters to raise the necessary funds for the UP delegation to the U.S. Congress (Sanders 2013). Exploiting dominant views on women as non-threatening and non-militant, nationalist women were able to mobilize resistance (Nagel 1998). While their critical contributions were obscured by the masculine public representation of the UP, women's presence and leadership on the ground galvanized people from all classes. Additionally, although these women did not pronounce their specific concerns as feminist, they nevertheless guaranteed the inclusion of women's experiences within the UP's nationalist agenda.

Having campaigned against Wilson and the U.S. Occupation of Haiti, then presidential candidate Warren Harding appeared as a potential ally of the UP. However, upon the delegation's arrival in the U.S. in 1921, the recently elected Harding denied audience to UP delegates, including future Haitian President Sténio Vincent, who instead met with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) President W.E.B. Dubois, National Secretary James Weldon Johnson, and National Treasurer Addie Hunton (Jean-Louis 2014; Sanders 2013). Resistance leaders lobbied prominent U.S. black elite men for assistance, invoking their shared African ancestry. In both national contexts, black men were infantilized and denied self-governance. Liking material conditions in Haiti to the U.S. South, U.S. black men attempted to garner

support against the Occupation. Through their bilingual newspaper Good Will,<sup>165</sup> black men translated their respective oppressions to one another seeking to redress their elite masculinities (Jean-Louis 2014).

Following these initial meetings in 1922, prominent U.S. black feminists such as Mary Church Terrell, Addie Hunton, Mary McCleod Bethune as well as Haitian-American feminist Theodora Holly and Haitian activist Mme Charle Dubé founded the International Council of Women of the Darker Races (ICWDR) to decry the racist foundations of the gender-based violence experienced particularly by Haitian women and children under the U.S. Occupation (Sanders 2013). With the leadership and vision of close friends of Addie Hunton, the wife of Occupation observation delegate, Harriet Gibbs Marshall, and the daughter of Haitian diplomat and educator, Rosina Jean-Joseph, an elite network of black women established in Haiti in 1926 *L'Oeuvre des Femmes Haitiennes pour l'Organisation du Travail* <sup>166</sup> in order to promote family- and community-based economic sustainability (Sanders 2013). These women were specifically concerned with restoring black female respectability and traditional Christian family values.

Over almost two decades of Occupation, a black international consciousness emerged against white patriarchal supremacy that gratuitously exercised organized violence on black bodies to protect and further capitalist interests both in the U.S. as well as in Haiti. Jim Crow Laws undermined the black family, assaulting feminine propriety and injuring masculine authority. Consequently, elite U.S. black and Haitian men and

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<sup>165</sup> The newspaper was produced in both French and English.

<sup>166</sup> French for “Work of Haitian women for the Organization of Labor”.

women engaged in the transnational struggle to dismantle these structural impediments and to re-claim their humanity. Professing their adherence to western gendered norms, they sought to demonstrate their capacity for correct “modern” behavior. Black nationalisms rested on gender regimes that disturbingly mirrored white patriarchal supremacist practices. However, women’s complicity with nationalism created opportunities for them to equip themselves with the necessary tools to sustain their families as well as to engage the formalized economy successfully. Through education and communal work, these women forged inter-national as well as cross-class relationships and developed gender-based understandings of their racialized conditions. Through transnational collective action, emerged a feminist consciousness.

Over twenty years of Occupation, the U.S. installed administrations to guard their political interests. The seat of government was centralized in Port-au-Prince, crippling regional autonomy and strengthening the urban/rural divide that currently underlies Haitian governance. The U.S. Marines professionalized the army, thus seizing command of organized violence. They built key roads that facilitated U.S. economic activities, namely to protect the Haitian American Sugar Company (HASCO) and *Société Haïtiano-Américaine de Développement Agricole (SHADA)*<sup>167</sup> (Renda 2001; Laguerre 1998). The U.S. troops were finally removed in 1934, the Haitian state having agreed to U.S. financial stewardship until 1941 after which control would be turned over to the Haitian National Bank under the directorship of the U.S. until 1947. That same year, Haiti finished paying its independence indemnity to France, a debt that was transferred to the

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<sup>167</sup> French for “Haitian-American Society for Agricultural Development”

U.S. at the turn of the century under the application of the Dollar Diplomacy policy (Plummer 1988).

### **Birth of a New Nation: The Co-Constitution of State Nationalism and Feminism**

In 1930, in preparation for the retreat of the occupying forces, the U.S. allowed the election of a Haitian president, the “mulatto” UP leader Sténio Vincent. Two years later, a new constitution was adopted, repealing Jim Crow laws (Smith 2009; Renda 2001). The new body of legislation, however, restricted citizenship to men. While fundamental to the success of the dis-occupation movement, particularly as members of the UP, women were nevertheless denied the right to personhood in the new Haitian nation. In response to the set back and betrayal, former UP women leaders enlisted their daughters, now the first generation of professional Haitian women, to found in 1934 the first Haitian feminist organization *Ligue Féminine d’Action Sociale (LFAS)* (Sanders 2013; Narcisse 1997).<sup>168</sup> As mentioned above, UP women integrated their daughters in their activism work during the Occupation, radicalizing the next cohort of women. UP leaders such as Alice Garoute understood the necessity and benefits of all-women’s spaces as sites of empowerment and articulation of resistance. By collaborating with younger and more educated women like Haiti’s first woman lawyer Madeleine Sylvain, daughter of UP founders George and Eugénie Sylvain, these proto-feminists sought to demonstrate women’s ability to intervene in public affairs using state jargon. Seeking state recognition and national legitimacy, elite women utilized their family and social ties to register their organization with the government.

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<sup>168</sup> French for “Women’s League for Social Action”.

In 1935, LFAS published the first issue of their French-language magazine *La Voix des Femmes*<sup>169</sup> (Sanders 2013). Feminist denounced what Faria (2011) calls “the elision of women” from the state. In addition to requesting political rights that mostly benefited married women from the property-owning class, they also represented cross-class concerns. They founded in 1943 a community center *Le Foyer*<sup>170</sup> from which elite women organized urban working class women through literacy and training programs (Verna 2001). They were also instrumental in securing public education for girls, particularly those living in rural areas. The feminist proposal for legal reforms was the culmination of fieldwork research on women’s lives outside the capital conducted by LFAS member, Haiti’s first female anthropologist Suzanne Comhaire-Sylvain (Sanders 2013). These collected testimonies highlighted state distance and neglect of civil society, particularly in the rural areas. The elite-led LFAS recommended education as a social equalizer. In addition to challenging gender divides, feminists also confronted class hegemony. As such, I submit that the LFAS acted as a link between the rural and the urban, the private and the public. Its operations fuzzied the strict demarcation of citizenship specified in the 1932 Constitution. Haitian feminist organizing and action folded the private into the public sphere.

Haitian elite women’s access to resources afforded them mobility within the country as well as outside of its geographical borders, for leisure as well as education. Of particular consequence is Madeleine Sylvain’s personal and professional trajectory, which reveals her connections with other elite women in the U.S. and Canada as well as

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<sup>169</sup> French for “Women’s Voice”.

<sup>170</sup> French for “Home”



Latin America and the Caribbean. Between 1935 and 1940, she represented Haiti on the Inter-American Women's Commission, the first inter-governmental agency established to ensure recognition of women's human rights among the Organization of American States (OAS) member-countries. From 1936 to 1938, she worked on and completed a Master's in Sociology at the private U.S. women's college Bryn Mawr, from which she also received her PhD in 1941. From 1947 to 1949, she was a visiting professor at the historically black Fisk University in the U.S. (Sanders 2013; Narcisse 1997; Corvington 1991). Participation in inter-national all-women's spaces further politicized elite Haitian women, leading to the development of a Pan-American women's identity and an international suffragist movement. U.S. corporeal as well as structural violence in black America, Latin America and the Caribbean in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century had provoked nationalist reactions, especially from women. Local gender regimes were consequences of U.S. paternalistic policies. Women's elision (Faria 2011) from the state thus served to redress postcolonial masculinity (Patil 2009). Additionally, Haitian feminists were further emboldened by the new United Nations Charter, which declared women's and men's equality at the close of the World War II. Ironically, the same mechanisms of control deployed by the Empire such as the UN made transnational women's activism possible.

In 1946, the new government of Dumarsais Estimé convened the 48<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Assembly to deliberate on women's eligibility for citizenship. Assemblymen formed two factions: on one hand, the "light-skinned" or "mulatto" communist and socialist elite men who vehemently supported gender equality; and on the other, the "black" middle-class "nationalists" who opposed women's suffrage. The latter denounced the feminist movement as an imperialist production while the former

constructed it as a legacy of Haitian independence heroines (Sanders 2013). Biologizing the Haitian nation-state as “black,” the *noiristes* <sup>171</sup> dis-authenticated “mulatto” elite women from the national imaginary. By excluding these particular women, they also called into question the legitimacy of their “mulatto” male counterparts. In the aftermath of the “Revolution of 1946,”<sup>172</sup> assemblymen had congregated to quell feminist agitations but, most importantly, to fight for hegemonic masculinity. Noirist leaders had designated themselves as true nationalists, capable of accurately representing the interests of the larger poor “black” urban and rural classes. Expressed through their ideological positionings, men struggled for power and control by substantiating or repudiating the “mulatto” elite-led feminist movement. I contend that assemblymen fought to define the contours of Haitian-ness by situating feminist belongingness inside or outside the nation.

LFAS members, in attendance during these negotiations, retorted by writing *La Femme Haitienne Répond aux Attaques Formulées contre Elle à l'Assemblée Constituante, 1946*,<sup>173</sup> in which they defended their nationalism, highlighting their contributions in the consolidation of the nation-state. Grounding their entitlement to citizenship in their empirical studies of women’s lives across color and class lines, feminist reactionaries demonstrated their commitment to a nationalist project that incorporates a diversity of cultural practices. Like “black” masculinist nationalists, elite feminists adopted a protective stance towards the disenfranchised classes. Both groups reified the urban/rural divide, an extension of their western capitalist conceptualization of

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<sup>171</sup> Noirism refers to the black power movement that developed in Haiti as a response to the marginalization of black working classes people during the U.S. Occupation.

<sup>172</sup> During the Revolution of 1946, the “mulatto” president Elie Lescot, a favorite of the U.S., was deposed.

progress as located in the city or capital, thus beyond the countryside. Through education, they proposed to emancipate the marginalized, thereby forging modern Haitian citizens. “Black” masculinist and feminist nationalists, however, differed in their imagination of a new nation. While the former envisioned a homogeneous collective space, the latter underscored the plurality of experiences and relations that comprise the Haitian nation. Thus, I argue that feminist nationalists generated narratives that reflected the concerns of women and families around the country, moving beyond the “black” nationalist ideological rhetoric.

“Black” nationalist men’s rejection of women’s political ascendancy incentivized the formation of a Haitian women’s coalition. “Mulatto” elite and “black” middle-class women’s interests aligned against patriarchal repression. LFAS members joined the labor party *Mouvement Ouvrier Paysan’s (MOP) Bureau d’Action Féminine* <sup>174</sup> led by Carmen Jean-François, wife of MOP founder Daniel Figiolé, to establish the *Comité des Droits de la Femme* <sup>175</sup> that orchestrated the First Women’s Congress in 1950 (Sanders 2013). The bilateral relations between U.S. black and Haitian women during the U.S. Occupation shifted to include women from other occupied and controlled territories, giving way to a transnational women’s movement. In the presence of their international fellow feminists, Haitian nationalist women exposed their fight for legal recognition. Having validated their feminist positionalities in their Réponse, they attempted to further shame retrograde male leaders by asserting their extra-national backings. Following the

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<sup>173</sup> French for “Haitian women respond to the attacks against them at the National Assembly, 1946”.

<sup>174</sup> French for “Movement of Workers and Peasants’ Bureau of Feminine Action”.

<sup>175</sup> French for “Committee for Women’s Rights”.

demonstration, Estimé's administration granted women the right to vote. However, the legislation was not ratified until the elections of 1957 under the provisional presidency of Joseph Neumours Pierre-Louis. The overthrow of Estimé following the Women's Congress in 1950 as well as the tumultuous regime of his successor Paul Eugène Magloire had deferred implementation of the law. The subsequent exclusion of women during the official announcement of the upcoming elections rekindled feminist fervor. In 1956, the LFAS successfully filed a lawsuit against the municipal government of Port-au-Prince. In early 1957, Madeleine Sylvain posed her candidacy for Senate (Sanders 2013). I argue that the acquisition of legal status transformed women into national actors, capable of taking control of the state.

### **Terror, Maroonage, and the Color Divide: State Feminism and Women's Extra-national Organizing**

François Duvalier won the 1957 presidential election. Rooting the marginalization of Haiti's poor "black" masses in the usurpation of republican democracy by "mulatto" elites, Duvalier campaigned as a noirist promising the installation of a dictatorship by the "black" middle class (Smith 2009). Duvalier enlisted the support of Rosalie Bosquet's group *Faisceau Féminin*<sup>176</sup> in order to target votes from the newly enfranchised base of women. Moreover, Duvalier claimed to embody the spirit of revolutionary leader Jean-Jacques Dessalines and mirrored his style to that of vodou *Gede* spirit, *Baron Samedi*.<sup>177</sup> Himself an ethnologist, he recognized the dominance of vodou traditions in the lives of the majority (Johnson 2006; Nicholls 1996). In order to ascend to power, Duvalier

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<sup>176</sup> French for "Feminine Torch".

<sup>177</sup> Gede (spirit, deity) are linked to death. Baron Samedi is the ruler of the graveyard.

courted the masses by offering them inclusion in the national imaginary as well as access to material wealth. In 1958, following the publication of her denouncement of Duvalier's regime, Yvonne Hakime Rimpel of the LFAS was brutally attacked and raped in her home. Equating himself both to the state as well as the nation, Duvalier declared all dissenters enemies of Haiti, consequently monopolizing all use of legitimate violence (Trouillot 2000).

Women were not exempt from corporeal violence and imprisonment (Trouillot 2000). Previous to Duvalier's dictatorial terror, nationalist men as well as the state sought to preserve female propriety. More specifically, "mulatto" elite women enjoyed the safety of their homes. However, women's protective status as wives and mothers was suspended following their enfranchisement. As new political actors, female opponents presented a threat to the stability of the Duvalier regime. Women function as the *potomitan*<sup>178</sup> of their families and homes, and therefore of the nation (N'Zengou-Tayo 1998). Nevertheless, women's political and social positionings are distinct. Women's bodies continue to represent male and family honor. Thus, I submit that the gendering of state violence then served to de-politicize civil society and abate resistance by humiliating turbulent women and emasculating dissenting men. Conversely, defenders of Duvalier's power were awarded social and economic privileges, facilitating the maintenance of a business class of "mulattos" and the ascendance of a strong "black" middle class (Nicholls 1996).

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<sup>178</sup> Haitian for "pillar".

Duvalier's mercenaries, the *Volontaires de la Sécurité Nationale (VSN)*,<sup>179</sup> commonly known as the *Tonton Makout*,<sup>180</sup> were primarily composed of urban and lower class "black" men who exercised targeted violence with impunity. Additionally, to augment their social status, they competed for mistresses, usually women outside of their social rankings whose bodies represented wealth and afforded them capital (Neptune-Anglade 1986). Duvalier also ensured that all military forces reported to him directly, creating competition and paranoia among his subordinates (Nicholls 1986). In addition to penetrating the home to rape and beat as well as incarcerating his opponents, Duvalier ordered the public execution- sometimes televised- of men and women. These broadcasts of mutilated bodies were eerily reminiscent of Jim Crow practices both in the U.S. as well as Haiti. Strathern et al (2005) explains "that the power of ideas regarding terror does not rest solely on the events of terrorist actions... but also on the great multiplications of reactions to these acts and the fears that these acts arouse in people's imagination" (9). Familial, friendly, religious, and social ties became politicized. Witnesses and victims of state terror became complicit in their own policing in order to shield their families (Charles 1999). Self-censorship became a survival tactic, leading to a break in transgenerational knowledge (Sanders 2013). Duvalier's "new patriarchy" co-opted feminist discourse, expunging the LFAS from the national collective memory. Duvalier named Rosalie Bosquet (also known as Madame Max Adolphe) chief of the prison *Fort-Dimanche*<sup>181</sup> and later on chief of the VSN. Utilizing the iconic legacy of

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<sup>179</sup> French for "Volunteers for National Security."

<sup>180</sup> The militiamen were named after the Haitian mythological figure of Tonton Makout who kidnapped children in a gunnysack to be eaten.

independence heroine Marie-Jeanne, he instituted a form of state feminism that re-defined correct female militancy as devoted to his rule. I submit that under Duvalier, existed competing notions of femininity and masculinity that served to authenticate national belonging.

Finally, Duvalier disbanded all unions and broke down all forms of political associations, causing a schism within civil society to incapacitate it from breaching the state. Evoking U.S.-produced “Red Scare” narratives, Duvalier ascribed communist qualities- whether applicable or not- to his opposition to further justify his terroristic policies. His totalitarian governance secured U.S. capitalist interests in Haiti. During the Cold War, the U.S. encouraged and supported right-wing take-overs of Latin American and Caribbean countries, especially in light of the 1959 Cuban Revolution (Dupuy 2007). Likening himself to the Haitian nation and the state, Duvalier accumulated personal wealth that he in turn distributed to his patrons (Smith 2009; Trouillot 2000). In this case, nationalism was not about preserving sovereignty but rather about allegiance to one figure, Duvalier. Those concerned with democracy and the common good were branded Soviet operatives, outside agitators. Loyalty to Duvalier ensured inclusion in the nation, access to state-controlled resources, and exclusive rights to citizenship.

After the announcement of Duvalier’s presidential tenure for life in 1964 and following the naming of his son Jean-Claude as his successor in 1971, many middle income families opted to exile their children, especially their daughters to New York, Miami, Montreal, Paris, and Kingston. Immigration laws in those respective countries

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<sup>181</sup> Fort-Dimanche is a former prison in Port-au-Prince, Haiti notorious for torture and murder during the Duvalier regimes.

then favored the movement of educated professional Haitians who sought to maroon corporeal violence and submission, at least temporarily (Verna 2005). Many continued, however, to hope for eventual repatriation. The constant influx of Haitians to the Global North yielded diasporic communities often living in the same neighborhoods, enabling the circulation of information about the homeland and the re-constitution of Haitian civil society outside national borders. Haitian scholar Georges Anglade introduced the notion of Haiti's "10<sup>th</sup> Department" (1990), arguing that the mass exodus of Haitians to the Global North transnationalized Haitian identity (Laguerre 2005). Contrarily to the claims of Wade (1997) on ethnicity, Haitian identity is not bound by geographical boundaries. Nevertheless, diasporic experience is also shaped by hostland conditions. In the U.S., Haitians lived through segregation and joined the Black Power Movement. In Canada, they marched for French Quebecer autonomy. In France, they supported the Algerian Revolution and African decolonization. Even as delegates of the noirist Duvalierist state in Zaire,<sup>182</sup> Haitians were impressed by the independence movement (Charles 1999). Their participation in or witnessing of these anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movements further radicalized them. They developed a transnational black consciousness that disturbed the Haitian "mulatto-black" binary, allowing them to better situate Duvalier's regime within a racialized global capitalist order. Haitian diasporic identity thus illustrates the disentanglement of citizenship and nationality (Labelle 1999, Glick-Schiller and Fouron 1990). In fact, I maintain that it highlights the co-formation of multiple forms of belongingness, citizenship, and nationalism pronounced at various geographical scales and times.

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<sup>182</sup> Zaire is now called Democratic Republic of Congo since 1997.



These gendered migrations to distinct locations produced different gendered consciousnesses (Malher and Pessar 2006) as Haitian women acquired more education and greater financial freedom, experienced discrimination as a result of their immigration status, developed a diasporic identity, and encountered and co-organized with Global North women. In 1973, Rally of Haitian Women (RAFA) was created in Montreal and Union of Patriotic Haitian Women (UFAP) in New York by socialist and anti-imperialist adherents. Many of these organizational founders were political exiles, former members of clandestine leftist parties in Haiti (Charles 1999). Violence and maroonage had dismantled the “private,” galvanizing Haitian women into political action to defend their right to their hostland cities, to raise awareness about Duvalier’s targeted violence against women, and finally to face the paternalistic arrangements of their homes, families and organizations. In 1975, the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace was issued during the International Women’s Year following the UN announcement of the Decade of Women. Diasporic Haitian Marxist feminists relied on these global discourses to normalize their demands for women’s human rights in Haiti under the Duvalier regime. Diasporic location provided the safe space from which to organize the removal of Duvalier and in turn to shape the homeland’s political sphere (Laguerre 2005). Thus diasporic movements are not signifiers of the de-territorialization of nation-states as purported by Appadurai (2003). Diasporas do not obligatorily exist against the state or outside of it (Clifford 1997; Gilroy 1995). They can serve instead to consolidate it (Laguerre 2005).

The diasporization of gender struggles marked an important shift in Haitian women’s transnational organizing. Haitian women now situated in the diaspora could

directly petition their hostland governments as well as international agencies like the UN to influence their homeland. Their previous reliance on U.S. and Canadian women and feminists to frame and defend their fight against gender oppression declined. Instead, Haitian diasporic feminists enlisted the support of their fellow feminists as needed, distancing themselves from homogeneous and universal claims of womanhood. Much like U.S. Black, Indigenous, and Chicana feminists, they emphasized cultural differences in the formulation of their feminisms (Collins 2000; Miheuah 2003; Hurtado 1997). In consequence, no longer was there only one “mulatto” elite-led Haitian feminist movement as in the case of the LFAS in the 1930s on. Instead, the transnationalization of gender struggles produced a plurality of Haitian feminisms differentiated by geographical location, class and social status, language and education.

In 1971, François Duvalier quickly amended the Constitution to reduce the age requirement for presidency in order to place his 19-year old son Jean-Claude as his successor before his imminent death. The young inexperienced Duvalier neglected to oversee and sufficiently entice his paramilitary forces, leading to an increase in unchecked violence as well as a disgruntled base (Trouillot 2000). Furthermore, the election of Jimmy Carter, champion of human rights, to the U.S. presidency shifted the superpower’s foreign policy in Haiti. The impunity the Duvaliers had enjoyed during the height of the Cold War period had waned. Carter encouraged the democratization of the Haitian political process, thus legitimizing a diversity of claims to citizenship by new social movement actors.

### **“New” Feminisms: “Revolution of 1986,” Coup d’Etat, and Alternative Development**

As discussed in Chapter IV, the Catholic Church was instrumental in the overthrow of Jean-Claude’s government. While attempting to provide social services to the poor, often in rural areas, Church leaders experienced first-hand the deleterious consequences of Duvalier’s power on poor peasants. Armed with liberation theology rhetoric, they built community centers that re-grouped dissenters who later initiated anti-Duvalier movements. Women, previously recruited to serve male members, developed a distinct gender identity during the mobilizing period (Charles 1999). I contend that the Catholic Church served as a site of empowerment for some peasant women. Others found their voices in community-based peasant organizations like *Tèt Kole*,<sup>183</sup> which promoted vodou and women as the potomitan of the struggle. By 1986, women had integrated all types of religious, cultural, and political groups as decision-makers. More importantly, they had instituted autonomous women’s groups from which they fought for their gendered as well as class-based rights. By the time Jean-Claude was removed, a separate women’s movement was already structured. After the termination of the Duvalier regime, diasporic feminists returned to Haiti, further pluralizing the movement (Charles 1999).

On April 3, 1986, 30.000 women representing over fifteen women’s and feminist groups and organizations marched in the streets of Port-au-Prince demanding gender equality.<sup>184</sup> Following their participation in the removal of Jean-Claude on February 7 of that same year, both homegrown and diasporic feminists demonstrated to ensure their full

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<sup>183</sup> Tèt Kole Ti Peyizan (TK) is a federation of farming collectives that is affiliated with PAPDA. TK organized two (2) of the retreats discussed in the previous chapter.

<sup>184</sup> Consult SOFA’s Marie-France Joachim’s historical sketch of the Haitian feminist movement at <http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article13878#nb3>

political insertion in the post-Duvalier nation-state. Drawing from their previous experiences of state-sanctioned violence as well as their marginalization in anti-Duvalier movements both in Haiti and in the diaspora, these women called for a “true democracy” inclusive of all national members. As I discussed in Chapter III, the new 1987 constitution was ratified affording women full citizenship. Nevertheless, women’s rights to their own bodies did not figure among legal reforms. Issues linked to reproduction such as rape, abortion and divorce remained within the purview of the masculinist state. Furthermore, women’s socio-economic preoccupations were eclipsed by state-sponsored international mandates to develop and modernize the Haitian economy, thereby ceasing traditional familial agricultural practices on which peasant women’s autonomy rests.

The Haitian Women’s Movement apportioned these struggles into various women’s and feminist organizations in the capital as well as in rural areas, the result of distinct gendered and class-based motivations and interests. Geographical and environmental differences shape gender consciousness. In Port-au-Prince, women’s groups clearly identify as feminist contrarily to those located in the rural. Most often, the former contingent includes diasporic women. Women’s varying positionalities inform their organizational foci and rhetoric, their contact with state structures, and finally their recognition as “ingredients in the biological ideologies of national identity” (Rahier 2012: 1). The proliferation of new women’s and feminist groups indicated a fundamental change in the Haitian Women’s Movement (Manigat 2002; Racine-Toussaint 1999). Women with different class-based needs directly represented their distinct concerns to the state as well as to other social movement actors. Nevertheless, albeit their distinctive

gender beliefs, these organizations and associations of women continued to co-organize to effectuate change within the state and civil society.

On February 22, 1986, a group of homegrown as well as diasporic feminists formed Solidarite Fanm Ayisyen (SOFA). The organization's Executive Director Lise-Marie explained:

A group of women who used to work together in literacy programs and were involved in the movement to expel the dictator realized during their work that women had a lot of problems. So they decided to sit down together to think through the woman problem and to take action to defend women's rights. And this is how they started the organization. Since SOFA has evolved. Laughter. SOFA was a small group of women but it has evolved in the same direction that it had begun. At the onset, there were more peasant women during the initial meetings than any other women. Well, this is how SOFA has remained.<sup>185</sup>

Having worked together in Church-sponsored literacy programs as well as anti-Duvalier political groups, these women recognized gender inequality as a transversal national issue. They identified patriarchy as an intersectional oppressive structure to capitalism in Haitian women's lives. SOFA aspired to reform the state "with its alms cup"<sup>186</sup> to be responsible and accountable to its constituencies. State failure to educate and provide services to the "masses," and in particular women, allowed for the permeation of western Christian capitalist ideals and the dismantling of traditional modes of thought and action such as the *konbit*<sup>187</sup> and vodou. SOFA purported that women's sovereignty over their bodies would result directly from the state's defense of national cultural, economic, political, and territorial borders. Women's full access and partaking in decision-making

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<sup>185</sup> Interview with Lise-Marie from SOFA in October 2010 in her offices.

<sup>186</sup> Expression utilized by SOFA leader Olga Benoit during interview on October 2010.

<sup>187</sup> Kreyòl for "a community of people coming together for one common goal".

spaces would then ensure a rupture with the “big swallow the little” system.<sup>188</sup> Rallying women from all class and geographical sites, SOFA declared itself a populist socialist feminist organization with the slogan “*Lit fanm la se lit tou mas pèp la.*”<sup>189</sup>

After a year of planning, empowered by the ratification of the new Constitution of 1987 but dissatisfied by the lack of reforms to the Penal, Civil, and Labor codes, SOFA made its public debut on November 25, 1987 with a march against violence against women, a campaign that remains its “*chwal batay.*”<sup>190</sup> Lise-Marie expounded:

It took us almost one year to select the best orientation for the organization to truly make it a feminist organization, to truly make it a popular organization. That means one that intervenes, that acts on the class problems as well, in the interests of the people, in the interests of women from the popular masses; and at the same time, that mobilizes the many women who wanted to change society. We spend an entire year figuring out the best structure, the best way to implement our vision. So on November 25th, which is the international but especially the regional day for mobilization against violence against women, sex-specific violence. So this was a pretext for us to come out. It is during this occasion... and at the same time, it was in the context of many other organizations, many people in society in different sectors who were attempted to organize. We noticed that there was a lot of mobilization on the problematic of woman. But we also noted that there was one aspect that people did not touch. This was the aspect of violence against women. We on the other hand thought it was important in addition to women’s demonstrations such as the April 3 one to incorporate this debate within society. We had to bring it up. This is why we chose November 25 of 1987 when we initiated the struggle against violence against women in Haiti. It was also the day that SOFA publically came out. We had taken several public positions without really identifying ourselves as SOFA. You see? So since then... many people were out to cut our heads off, men like women. Laughter. Men and women! Even the women’s organizations that had already been founded by then, they said “O! O! Where are these women getting this from? This is a “petit bourgeois” concern, this issue of violence against women has been imported. Haitian women need jobs, they need money”. You see? Well we were very convinced that it was in fact a major problem. It was a

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<sup>188</sup> Translation from Kreyòl. Expression refers to the capitalist system.

<sup>189</sup> Kreyòl for “Women’s struggle is the struggle of the entire people”.

<sup>190</sup> Kreyòl for “battle horse”.

big problem. We moved forward with it. So when I say we came out, we did not just launch a show. We launched a debate.<sup>191</sup>

While other women's groups mobilized women around their immediate needs, SOFA focused on the systematic violation of women's human rights. For the organization, violence against women is the materialization of hegemonic masculinist state narratives and practices in interpersonal relations. At first, SOFA's feminist agenda was rejected, denounced as "imported" and "petit bourgeois" by society at large including other women's and leftist organizations. The critique points to the class and status of its spokespeople. SOFA leaders are fluent French-speaking educated middle class women whose mastery of state jargon sets them apart from the majority of Haitian women. Moreover, their opponents argued that women needed jobs and their gendered experiences in the home were inappropriate and irrelevant to national public concerns. Women's issues were subsumed in their class position.

Comprised- as of 2010- of over 10,000 members dispersed throughout 7 out of 10 geographical departments,<sup>192</sup> SOFA regroups peasant as well as urban working class and socio-professional women. SOFA branches are mostly present in the same areas its founders had organized literacy and anti-Duvalier campaigns. However, additional cells formed upon local women's requests. Scarce organizational resources, the remote location of certain communities, and the difficulty of navigating unpaved roads have limited SOFA's reach. Functioning as a surrogate of the state in most of these locales, the central nucleus- representing only 5% of the membership- serves as cadres to the other

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<sup>191</sup> Interview with Lise-Marie in October 2010

<sup>192</sup> SOFA has branches in the southern departments of Sud-Est, Grand'Anse, Ouest, and the northern departments of Plateau Central, Artibonite, Nord-Ouest, and Nord.

women, reinforcing local cells with resources and through popular education. Located in Port-au-Prince, it organizes a general assembly every three years during which elections for the general, departmental, communal, and sectional coordinators take place. The rest of the members are required to participate in action-oriented committees. Each committee corresponds to one of SOFA's axes of engagement: violence against women, women's health, women's political participation, and finally the feminization of poverty.<sup>193</sup> Through their active partaking in organizational activities, what they call "doing feminism," members acquire a feminist identity. SOFA seeks to create a transversal gender category of "woman" by assembling women with varying class-based identities and including both rural and urban specific issues within one framework.

Following the first democratic election of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1990, social movement organizations (including SOFA) that had supported his ascendance to power anticipated anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and pro-woman structural reforms from the new head of state. Beginning in 1991,

We took advantage of that period to launch an education campaign to sensitize people on the problem of violence against women. So you will notice that during this period, we were thinking through this issue with our members. We were also discussing this issue with other women's organizations as well as men's organizations. And we did this using as I said earlier using popular education methods.... And it was unbelievable to note the suffering of Haitian women. This means that the person may not have been able to express the violence committed against her as gender-based violence but once you sat down with her, you discovered the reality she was testifying about the horror, the suffering that she lived since she was a child. It was a challenge to pose this question. You see? So we led this struggle. And 20 years later, one can note that the issue of violence against women is commonplace. You see?<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> The last two axes were added to SOFA's agenda in 2000, the latter the result of SOFA becoming a member of the World March of Women that same year.

<sup>194</sup> Interview with Olga from SOFA in October 2010



SOFA volunteered to provide educational workshops for other women's groups and other civil society organizations on women's human rights and their systemic experience of violence. They also collected and framed the testimonies of survivors, often women unable to clearly articulate their abuse as gender-based violence. Employing television spots as well as posters to expose these occurrences, SOFA sought to raise the consciousness of Haitians at large on conjugal violence as well as other sexual violence women confront. SOFA aimed to normalize and integrate its message into the national discourse. On March 8, 1991, also International Women's Day, citing the UN Decade for Women,<sup>195</sup> SOFA led a demonstration in the streets of the capital demanding the institution of a ministry dedicated to women's issues. In the tradition of previous Haitian women's movements, these feminists applied global pressure to shame their government into action. Global South women's movements have historically relied on this strategy to transform the political landscape of their own countries (Lebon 2010), by re-defining the "political" in order to enable a greater sphere of activity (Weiss 1999). Not surprisingly, the organization encountered opposition from society at large including other women's groups. "Haiti does not have any money for that!" their adversaries exclaimed. "These women are a bunch of housewives!"<sup>196</sup> Feminist concerns were discredited as middle class women's angst, disconnected from the economic realities of the majority of women.

A few months after the protest, President Aristide was deposed by the U.S.-backed Haitian military and police force, terminating all promises for a democratic Haiti.

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<sup>195</sup> The UN Decade for women (1975-1985) had just ended.

<sup>196</sup> Interview with Lise-Marie in October 2010

The inflammatory Marxist discourse of “the little priest”<sup>197</sup> had threatened U.S. capitalist hegemony in Haiti and the Caribbean region. Reminiscent of Duvalier’s tactical use of the Tonton Makout, the military enlisted the services of a camouflaged paramilitary group *Front pour l’Avancement et le Progrès Haitien* (FRAPH)<sup>198</sup> to penetrate the home of Aristide supporters to beat, rape, and murder them as well as to dismantle social and political organizations to hinder any potential antagonism. More specifically, “Women’s bodies became a battlefield,”<sup>199</sup> maintained SOFA Violence Against Women coordinator Olga Benoit. She explains that women testified that their aggressors often named them during the act of rape. These survivors were attacked by their own neighbors and acquaintances. Moreover, these assailants plundered women’s homes, which in many cases functioned as a storage for their merchandise. Often women’s private sphere operates as a site for their public informalized economic activities (Yuval-Davis 2002). Thus, I submit that the institutionalization of gendered violence altered interpersonal relationships between women and men living in the same communities. Powerless disguised men, often otherwise unemployed, endeavored to fracture women’s relative autonomy.

SOFA feminists “took our responsibility before history. We said we had to do something. We mustered up our courage. We launched a systematic campaign to denounce the criminal act against women as well as the large population. We took our

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<sup>197</sup> Before his presidency, Aristide was a priest. A liberation theologian, he transformed his pulpit into a revolutionary podium. Due to his small stature, he was often referred to as the little priest.

<sup>198</sup> French for “Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti”.

<sup>199</sup> Quote from Olga’s interview in October 2010

pilgrimage baton with us everywhere we went”<sup>200</sup> to raise awareness and condemn organized violence against women both nationally and internationally. They circulated press releases, demanding a return to constitutional order. Assisted by the Boston Law Clinic, leaders collected testimonies of survivors to present to the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights.<sup>201</sup> They also ensured that the U.S.-media broadcast these women’s stories masking their identities. SOFA leaders took advantage of their access to the international stage to expose and shame the military state. They also engaged women in collective therapy through theater, song, and dance. Furthermore, SOFA feminists provided direct individual services to victims. With the support of MADRE<sup>202</sup> and the facilitation of CRAD,<sup>203</sup> they offered psycho-social accompaniment to victims and established medical clinics in Martissant<sup>204</sup> and *Cité Soleil*.<sup>205</sup> They also helped women re-constitute funds and find new homes. In response to the crisis, SOFA temporarily suspended its organizational policy against giving individualized support.

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<sup>200</sup> Interview with Olga in October 2010.

<sup>201</sup> The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (ICHR) is an autonomous organ of the Organization of American States (OAS).

<sup>202</sup> MADRE is an international women’s human rights organization. For more information, consult <http://www.madre.org/>

<sup>203</sup> CRAD is one of the founding organizations of PAPDA.

<sup>204</sup> Martissant is a commune of Port-au-Prince.

<sup>205</sup> French for “Sun City”. Cité Soleil is one of Port-au-Prince’s largest working class neighborhoods populated by people who moved to the capital during the rise of the factories.

***“Yon sèl dwèt pa manje kalalou.”*<sup>206</sup> Re-strategizing and Coalition-building**

In October 1994, having offered Raoul Cédras exile to Panama, U.S. President William Clinton led a multi-national UN military contingent to accompany deposed Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide back to Haiti to complete his term. The previous international embargo placed on Haiti after the coup produced new waves of migration of non-literate black urban and rural working class people to the U.S. arriving on the shores of Miami on makeshift boats (Laguerre 1998). Upon his return, Aristide granted feminists the Ministry of Women, naming SOFA’s 2007-2011 Executive Director Lise-Marie Déjean as its first minister. He subsequently disbanded the Haitian Armed Forces, loyal to his opponents, to allow for the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMH) to train a new police force. Aristide also signed with the Paris Accord,<sup>207</sup> thus conceding to international economic dictates to intensify Haiti’s importation of foreign goods, thus declining national production.<sup>208</sup> The new direction disenchanted social movement actors, some previously sympathetic to his election, causing them to re-group in order to evaluate and re-strategize their rapport with the Haitian state as well as the inter-national community. Many consequently retreated from traditional party politics to strengthen their alternative work. Of relevance to the dissertation is the formation of the PAPDA coalition, which I discussed in detail in Chapter IV. A nationalist response to Clinton’s military occupation of Haiti, PAPDA is the only mixed-gender platform with an explicit

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<sup>206</sup> Kreyòl saying, literally translated “One finger cannot eat okra”, which refers to teamwork and coalition-building. Okra is a slippery vegetable.

<sup>207</sup> The Paris Club is comprised of Global North countries that provide development loans to ‘Third World’ countries. The Club is intimately linked to the International Monetary Fund. Consult <http://www.clubdeparis.org/> for more information.

<sup>208</sup> See Introduction chapter for more details.

attention to women's issues. Of particular importance to the chapter is the integral role played by SOFA in the creation of PAPDA as well as in the operation of the Ministry.

The Ministry of Women afforded feminists the political opportunity to infiltrate the state, to use its resources to the service of women, to implement their demands, and finally to re-shape the national discourse on women and their bodies. Social movement and feminist scholars argue that state recognition often smothers grassroots radicalism (Rahier 2012, Ehrick 2005). A seat at the state table requires compromise. However, the Haitian state's inability to produce more than symbolic wins for women did not lead to SOFA's co-optation. Even as officials, feminists straddled the line between the state and civil society. The organization continued its work in the field and was not simply subsumed into the state apparatus. Haitian women's issues are not just linked to their reproductive capacities and functions but also to their roles as leaders of their families. While dominant narratives and legal texts infantilize and marginalize them, women are often heads of mono-parental households. Consequently, the state's (mis)management of the economy directly affects these breadwinners and their ability to provide for and to protect their children. Housing, food, and fuel prices as well as school fees are fundamentally women's issues. As workers, small business owners, and farmers, women are concerned with the defense of national production. The state's invitation of foreign governance and the resulting overture of Haitian markets to U.S., European, and Dominican goods threaten women's control of their land as well as their economic and corporeal autonomy. As demonstrated throughout the chapter, foreign military interventions in Haiti lead to an increase of violence against women from occupying men as well as emasculated national men. SOFA remained radicalized and denounced "The

1994 Occupation.” Since, its leaders have resolved to abstain from any electoral endorsements: “Politicians are dirty and submissive to western foreigners. We don’t consort with them”.<sup>209</sup> They argue that party politics create individual responses to oppression at the detriment of collective action.

In order to push their feminist nationalist agenda, SOFA established coalitions with other social movement organizations locally as well as internationally. In 1995, SOFA formally cemented its political alliances with other Marxist groups as the sole feminist organization among the founders of PAPDA. Engaged in organizing work both individually and organizationally since the “Revolution of 1986,” these social movement actors gathered to develop a common space from which they could strategize collectively, collaborate across organizations, and publically pronounce themselves against the military as well as the socio-economic occupation of Haiti. During our interview in April 2013, SOFA leader Carole Pierre-Paul Jacob attempted to re-count the origins of the platform through the stories she pulled together from Anne-Marie Coriolan, SOFA and PAPDA founding member, deceased in the January 12, 2010 earthquake. SOFA leaders joined to ensure a gendered dimension and the integration of women’s perspectives and issues to the Marxist analysis advanced by the nationalist network. As U.S. black feminist Patricia Collins (2000) puts forth, black women experience distinct forms of oppression from other women as well as from black men as a result of their intersectional gendered, racialized, classed, and sexualized positionalities. Analogously, Haitian feminists recognize that gender as well as the class-based matters of women are

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<sup>209</sup> Quote from interview with Olga Benoit from SOFA in October 2010.

singular to them. A nationalist project initiated even by the most well-intentioned men could not represent women's interests without the latter's presence and input.

During the previous nationalist mobilizations discussed in Chapter V, women created their own auxiliary caucuses within male-led and -dominated organizations. Feminist theorists critique nationalism and nation-state building as always being dangerous to women (Alexander 1994; Chatterjee 1993; McClintock 1991). However, in the case of PAPDA, women – more specifically feminists- were key players in its constitution. SOFA's collective memory of women's long history of political organizing and subsequent erasure as well as its development as an assertive autonomous popular feminist movement prepared its watchful leaders to serve as co-decision-makers with allied men. These new nationalist men were transformed by SOFA's (and other women's organizations') consciousness raising campaigns. Instead of otherizing or rejecting feminism as did their predecessors, they publically affirmed their own feminist affinities. Secondly, social movements are influenced and shaped by and against globalized discourses (Guidry et al 2000). In order to construct themselves as legitimate interlocutors of the state, social movement actors in the Global South often appropriate and localize international "modern" declarations. In light of the Ministry of Women's and SOFA's participation in the Fourth International Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995,<sup>210</sup> postcolonial nationalist men demonstrated their "modernity" by incorporating female counterparts to the nascent movement. Most importantly, SOFA's feminist agenda amended rather than disrupted the gender binary premised on a presumed inherent heterosexual setup of the family and the nation. While Pierre-Paul Jacob expressed

personal solidarity with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) groups organizing in Haiti, she categorized their issues as other to SOFA's. Alternative sexual identity politics fall outside of the Haitian Marxist feminist and nationalist paradigms.

Following the advocacy campaign led by the feminist foundation Enfofanm during the 46<sup>th</sup> Legislature, the Haitian Parliament ratified the Inter-American Convention for the Prevention, Sanction, and Elimination of all Forms of Violence Against Women (also known as the Belem Do Para Convention) in 1996. Drawing from the win, feminist organization Kay Fanm coordinated with other Haitian and international women's groups an International Symbolic Tribunal Against Violence Against Women in Haiti in November of 1997. The resulting committee followed up with the Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis to issue an order in 1999 for judges to accept medical certificates of rape produced by licensed doctors.<sup>211</sup> Since the "Revolution of 1986," a network of feminist-identified organizations developed around the collective defense of women's human rights. However, it was not until April 3, 2003 that SOFA, EnfoFanm, Kay Fanm, *Fanm yo La*,<sup>212</sup> and *Fanm Deside Jacmel*<sup>213</sup> established a unitary platform CONAP. The coalition spoke out against the deployment of new UN troops in

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<sup>210</sup> 2010 Executive Director Lise-Marie Dejean attended this conference as the Minister of Women.

<sup>211</sup> After two years of intense negotiations, René Préval dissolved the Parliament for its resistance to confirm its Prime Minister nominee Jacques Edouard Alexis. SOFA had to pursue its demands directly with the executive body. For more information, consult <http://articles.latimes.com/1999/mar/26/news/mn-21254>

<sup>212</sup> Kreyòl for "Women are present". Fanm Yo La is a feminist organization dedicated to reforming electoral politics.

<sup>213</sup> Kreyòl for "Decided Women of Jacmel". Fanm Deside Jacmel is a community-based feminist group in Jacmel.



2004,<sup>214</sup> citing an increase in gendered violence. The transition period provided an opportunity for CONAP to re-introduce previous un-addressed feminist demands to the state. In 2005, the Ministry of Women published a decree criminalizing rape. In 2006, the principle of 30% quota of women on electoral ballots was voted into law after more than six years of struggle initiated by Fanm Yo La in 2000 after the first election of the largest number of women into office.<sup>215</sup> Historically, Haitian women's activism work has always been collaborative. Through the unified front of CONAP, the feminist movement further established itself as an autonomous women's movement.

Of all the members of the CONAP coalition, SOFA offers the most radical analysis of women's oppression. Its leaders argue that capitalist success in Haiti rests upon the exploitation of women's productive as well as (re)productive labor. Popular liberation is therefore indistinguishable from women's emancipation. For them, democracy is not limited to activities in the public sphere of government; it is a participatory pluralistic and communal expression of the people's will. On the other hand, liberal feminist organizations attribute gender inequality to retrograde laws and mores that can be reformed. For them, democracy is intimately linked to the protection of individual private property rights including women's rights to their own bodies and the equal access to capitalist market economies as producers (and consumers). Nevertheless, these differing currents of Haitian feminist thought converge that while women are the potomitan of society, they continue to be sidelined by the masculinist state. Thus, Haitian feminists aim to develop a separate category of "woman" around which they can

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<sup>214</sup> The UNMH that accompanied Aristide in 1994 was replaced by several other missions and finally culminated into a much larger deployment in 2004 upon the request of both president-elect Jean-Bertrand Aristide as well as his political opposition.

politicize women into collective action to seize control of the state. CONAP merges its members' agenda into one singular programme calling for the revision of Haiti's regressive Civil, Penal, and Labor codes, which includes the de-penalization of adultery and abortion, the criminalization of rape and conjugal violence, the formal recognition of *plasaj*,<sup>216</sup> the implementation of "responsible paternity,"<sup>217</sup> and finally the regulation of domestic servitude.<sup>218</sup> CONAP leaders seek to re-define womanhood (and family) outside of the confining binary that conjoins, opposes, and hierarchizes men and women. Haitian feminists built CONAP across ideological lines, accentuating women's individual subjectivities in order to dis-locate "woman" from Christian middle class conceptions of family by proposing and negotiating laws that assign and protect women's economic, social, and political rights.

Haitian feminists share a long history of women's organizing across class, color, and language nationally and transnationally with U.S. black and Canadian as well as other Caribbean and Latin American feminists. In 2000, SOFA joined the World March of Women initiated by the *Fédération des Femmes du Québec*<sup>219</sup> by including the "feminization of poverty" as an additional axe of engagement to its activist fieldwork. Inter- and intra-national circulations of men to offer their labor for wages has led to the feminization of poverty, particularly outside in the rural "underdeveloped" areas (Gilbert

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<sup>215</sup> In 2000, 167 women were elected in varying electoral posts out of a total of 2037 candidates.

<sup>216</sup> Kreyòl for "civil union". According to the most recent census, only 8% of women are married.

<sup>217</sup> 'Responsible paternity' refers to the official recognition of children out of wedlock by married fathers. This law was finally passed most recently in 2012.

<sup>218</sup> Laws assigning rights to domestic servants were voted on in 2009.

<sup>219</sup> French for "Federation of Quebecker Women".

2001). SOFA is also a member of the *Comite de America Latina y del Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer (CLADEM)*,<sup>220</sup> the Assembly of Caribbean Peoples (ACP),<sup>221</sup> the *Convergencia de Movimientos de los Pueblos de las Américas (COMPA)*,<sup>222</sup> and of the *Red de Salud de las Mujeres Latinoamericanas y del Caribe*<sup>223</sup> among others. Women's movements have always been transnational albeit hierarchical. Global North feminists often relied on imperialist tropes that abase colonial and postcolonial masculinities in order to demonstrate their nationalist loyalty and ensure their inclusion as political actors in the capitalist expansionist project. Their "colonialist stance" (Narayan 1997: 43) prevents the formation of effective coalitions with Global South women whose specificities and voice are often diminished to privilege imperialist feminist prescriptions against patriarchy (Mohanty 2003). Conversely, postcolonial women's movements utilize international mandates to exercise their own political agency in the consolidation of their nation-state. They take advantage of globalized spaces like the United Nations conferences and produce their own Global South networks in their struggle for sovereignty over their land and their bodies. It is important to note the shift in Haitian feminist transnational linkages with other women's movements. Haitian feminists

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<sup>220</sup> Spanish for "Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights". CLADEM is a network of women's organizations dedicated to fighting for women's human rights with a critical and feminist vision of rights. For more information, visit <http://www.cladem.org/>

<sup>221</sup> The ACP is a gathering of social movement organizations and groups in the Caribbean concerned with the transnational capitalist management of their goods, resources, and people. It re-groups unions, farmers, women's groups, students, youth, etc.

<sup>222</sup> Spanish for "Convergence of People's Movements of the Americas". COMPA is space of collective articulation and learning from practices of resistance and struggle that is multi-sectorial, autonomous, pluralist, hemispheric, and democratic. For more information, visit <http://www.lacompa.org/>

<sup>223</sup> Spanish for "Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network". The Red de Salud is a network of feminist organizations dedicated fighting for women's reproductive health. For more information, consult <http://rsmlac.blogspot.com/>

modified their historical alliances with U.S. black and diasporic Haitian women whose current geopolitical positionalities and re-production of the discourse of development in their dealings with national Haitian women distance their respective movements materialistically and ideologically.

During our interview in October 2010, Benoit clarified the organization's two-prong strategy. The first is to take public positions around their aforementioned axes through activities (i.e. sit-ins, protests) and discursive productions (i.e. press releases) as well as advocacy conferences with state officials (i.e. symbolic assemblies). The second is to act concretely- unlike project based INGOs and service organizations- by offering popular education seminars and basic healthcare and by launching collective enterprises. For example, SOFA sponsors women-run grain mills in Ennery,<sup>224</sup> Marchand Dessalines, Saint-Marc,<sup>225</sup> and Plaisance<sup>226</sup> as well as apparel factors in Martissant. SOFA does not extend credit to individual women. Their vision of solidarity economic practices, they expect, could replace the Haitian capitalist state model. Unfortunately, these collective systems rely on subsidies from international donors given the precarious economic conditions of the economy. Oxfam-Great Britain,<sup>227</sup> Trocaire,<sup>228</sup> and MADRE are among SOFA's greatest benefactors. Benoit expressed her ambivalence about SOFA's dependence on these neoliberal exchanges: "Women have needs and those needs require

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<sup>224</sup> Ennery is a municipality of Gonaives in the Department of Artibonite in the north of Haiti.

<sup>225</sup> Saint-Marc is a city in the Department of Artibonite.

<sup>226</sup> Plaisance is a city and town located in the Department of North in Haiti.

<sup>227</sup> Oxfam-Great Britain provided the initial support funds for the formation of PAPDA as well.

<sup>228</sup> For more information on Trocaire, visit <http://www.trocaire.org/>

funds”.<sup>229</sup> With these funds, SOFA was able to inaugurate 21 women’s day shelters in four departments that provide medical and legal references, escorts as well as juridical counsel.<sup>230</sup> Benoit informed me that these *sant douvanjou* <sup>231</sup> receive over 1,000 women per year. SOFA collects data on the women who use the center’s services in order to generate every six months a statement on violence against women with recommendations to the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Public Health, The Ministry of Justice and Public Security, both Chambers of Parliament, and other relevant government agencies, university departments, and civil society organizations. Benoit explains that SOFA “not against inter-national collaboration”,<sup>232</sup> but the international is differentiated. For the 2010 World March of Women, SOFA held a national workshop with women from all ten departments around four fields: common good, peace and de-militarization, financial autonomy, and violence against women. Attendees expressed a clear opposition to MINUSTAH’s presence,<sup>233</sup> asserting that “Occupation” further intensifies gender-based violence. These feminists rejected the “hastily cooked” <sup>234</sup> plan devised by the U.S.-led multinational military-backed republic of NGOs after the earthquake without popular consultation. They also disputed the presidential appointment of the U.S.-financed populist candidate Joseph Michel Martelly in 2011.

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<sup>229</sup> Quote from interview with Olga Benoit of SOFA in October of 2010.

<sup>230</sup> There are four centers in the Department of Sud-Est, six in the Department of Grand-Anse, eight in the Department of Artibonite, and three in the Department of Ouest. Most are located in small communities. SOFA established centers in areas where cell leaders had the organizational capacity to run them.

<sup>231</sup> Kreyòl for “Before the day Center”.

<sup>232</sup> Quote from interview with Olga Benoit in October 2010.

<sup>233</sup> United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) commenced in 2004 when president-elect Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his political opposition requested the presence of the UN to serve as a referee.

In February 2013, on their anniversary, SOFA women marched from their local Port-au-Prince office to the Ministry of Women in the company of PAPDA coordinator Frank carrying banners, posters, and quilts and shouting: “Down with impunity! Down with Rapists! Down with corruption”! In late 2007, SOFA had agitated for the prosecution of 120 Sri Lankan, Pakistani, and Uruguayan UN troops accused of sexually abusing minors.<sup>235</sup> The Prime Minister at the time, Jacques Edouard Alexis, instead conspired to uphold the perpetrators’ diplomatic immunity. Additionally, in late 2012, the provisory president of the Provisory Electoral Council Josué Pierre-Louis, former Minister of Justice and close friend of the Haitian president, allegedly raped a government assistant Marie Danielle Bernadin in her home.<sup>236</sup> The victim eventually defected for fear of retaliation. Once the women reached the Ministry, they demanded an audience with the minister chanting: “Violence kills women. With violence, all women fall”! Minister Yanick Mézile did not show but instead sent members of her cabinet to speak to the crowd. Linking interpersonal to institutionalized violence, SOFA decried the impunity enjoyed by officials of Martelly’s state and the military occupation. The feminists also sought to shame the Minister for her complicity with the predatory state through her silence. They also wanted to remind her (and other women) that women with privileged status are not exempt from gendered violence.

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<sup>234</sup> Quote from interview with Olga Benoit in October 2010.

<sup>235</sup> For more information, see [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/7075866.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7075866.stm)

<sup>236</sup> Mr. Pierre-Louis helped Ms. Bernadin obtain her government position. SOFA as well as the *Réseau National de Défense des Droits Humains (RNDDH)* solicited the counsel of Mario Joseph from the *Bureau des Avocats Internationaux (BAI)* to ensure the prosecution of this case.



Figure 2. SOFA Celebration of 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Following the consultation meetings with women's, community-based, human rights, and popular education organizations, Haitian nationalist feminists organized the Symbolic Parliament sessions in late 2013 in order to denounce President Martelly's dismissal of elected municipals, his retardation of senatorial and other local elections, the

state's collaboration with the "Occupation," its refusal to officialize the domestic servitude, and electoral quota reform laws, its co-optation of the Ministry of Women, and its devastation of national production and traditional farming methods. Proposing to do politics differently by putting people before profit, Haitian nationalist feminists declared food a basic human right. While SOFA has historically avoided participation in electoral politics, its members chose at the most recent organizational general assembly meeting in 2010 to involve themselves at the local level. Sponsored by Belgian foundation *Entr'Aide et Fraternité*,<sup>237</sup> SOFA had launched its "Projet of Women Leaders" with the aim of putting into office at least fifteen SOFA women. However, Martelly's masculinist usurpation of governance continues to impede the nationalist feminist agenda. Women remain distanced from the state.

## **Conclusion**

In Chapter V, I collected and reviewed Haitian feminist leaders' testimonies of the history of the current women's movement. Women's participation in nationalist movements sparked the emergence of a feminist consciousness. In doing so, I situated the "new" feminist movement in the proto-feminist organizing of women during the anti-U.S. Occupation struggles of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Following the removal of the U.S. Marines from Haitian territory, nationalist elite men excluded women from the national imaginary by denying them full citizenship in the new post-Occupation constitution. Consequently, in 1934, nationalist elite women formed the *Ligue Féminine* in order to advance an explicit feminist agenda. Utilizing their social and personal ties to elite men,

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<sup>237</sup> This foundation also funded the retreats discussed in the previous chapter.



they lobbied the state and were granted certain economic rights. Moreover, early feminists invoked international mandates such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights to back up their claims. However, it was not until 1950 that they gained suffrage following a transnational women's meeting in Haiti during which they shamed retrograde men. The victory was short lived. The carnage unleashed by the dictatorial state of François Duvalier on all dissenters ceased overt social movement activities. Women like men were subjected to corporeal violence. However, women were specifically targeted with rape in their homes in order to dissuade them and their male counterparts from resisting authoritarian rule. In turn, many middle income families opted for exile mostly to countries in the Global North, laying the foundations of what would become Haiti's "10<sup>th</sup> department". The security of their diasporic location permitted them to organize transnationally against the Duvalier regime. Women's transnational organizing helped to produce the "Revolution of 1986". The current women's movement continues to employ the same strategies as the foremothers.

In the chapter, I argued that feminism can co-exist with nationalism. More specifically, I demonstrated that Haitian feminism developed alongside nationalist movements. Thus, feminism and nationalism are not always in opposition. In fact, Haitian feminism is a form of nationalism. As the socio-economic and political context changed, the nature of women's involvement in nationalist movements as well as the formulation of their feminist agenda varied. Women are no longer considered outside of the national imaginary. They (re)defined nationalism by re-positioning the private and the public as not mutually exclusive and binary but as complementary and unitary. In the absence of state and government, the family is a site of control (Gluck 1997). Traditional

women's activities provide the space for consciousness formation. Haitian feminists highlight women's leadership in the home to validate their capacity for public rule. Nationalism, nevertheless, is a gendered production. Haitian feminist nationalism continues to uphold a heterosexual arrangement of the nation, preserving the basic gendered modern order. Social movement actors struggle to balance their quest for sovereignty and their need to survive in an increasing globalized world by attempting to display their own "modernity." Nationalist movements are not bordered missions but in fact are transnational. 21st Century nationalists, therefore, are forced to include feminist issues at the heart of their movement. In order to be impactful, these male-led movements have to "modernize patriarchy" by integrating women's issues into their nationalist framework. The line between the "us" and "them" that characterizes nationalism, therefore, is unstable (Puri 2004). Nationalism is porous and flexible.

Additionally, in the chapter, I discussed the Haitian women's movement shared history with the state. I highlighted the feminists' use of their elite status (as upper-class, educated, and politicized mobile women), their extra-national connections and invocation of global mandates, and their empirically-based reports on women's cross-class experiences to negotiate and gain favors from the state. I also argued that the Haitian feminist movement has not been co-opted by the state as a result of the granting of no more than symbolic wins to women. Finally, I reviewed the transnational linkages between Haitian feminists and other women's movements, carefully underlining the global contexts in which they developed. The Haitian feminist agenda reflects women's local concerns about globalized white supremacist patriarchy.

## CHAPTER VI

### Rural Visions of Development: The Making of an Alternative National Identity

Three snapshots.

Snapshot One:           Limonade           April 4, 2013

The first meeting opened with a prayer. Everyone stood; only the believers bowed their heads. Olga thanked Jesus for the safe travels of all those present and asked him to assist us in our work over the next three days. “*Amen.*” The crowd followed suit. “*Amen.*” Olga then invited her listeners to breakfast: *lèt, kafe, chokola peyi, ze, kasav ak manba*.<sup>238</sup>

Smiling, she proudly announced that the peanut butter was a product of her women’s collective, AFLIDEPA. Our daily serving of yogurt in between meals was provided by the workshop co-organizer and host APWOLIM. Consuming locally-produced foods, Olga explained, protects us from genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) and from “acculturation.”<sup>239</sup> Our remaining meals of the day were also *manje kreyòl. Diri kole, poul peyi, leti, tomat, bannan peze* for lunch.<sup>240</sup> And *labouyi ak pen* for supper,<sup>241</sup> right before the closing prayer officiated by co-organizer Milien.

Snapshot Two:           Lacoma           April 11, 2013

The meeting room was set up with chairs forming a semi-circle around the facilitators’ table, which was draped with a large Haitian flag. On an adjacent table, a young woman carefully put on display her collective’s well-packaged hair pomades of carrot and ginger

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<sup>238</sup> Kreyol for: milk, coffee, hot chocolate, eggs, cassava and peanut butter

<sup>239</sup> Quote from interview with Olga in November 2012

<sup>240</sup> Kreyol for: Kreyol food, rice and beans, country chicken, lettuce, tomato, plantains.

<sup>241</sup> Kreyol for: oatmeal and bread

for sale. Attendees meandered in late. Nènè urged them to quickly take a seat in order to begin individual and organizational introductions. It was Sanmba's turn to intervene. He decried the shunning of the "peasants" from the nation who were further invisibilized and risked destruction with the advent of "modernity". He then pointed to education and religion as sources of the peasant's alienation from nature. "Young people don't work to work the land," he exclaimed. "They want to live in the city of Port-au-Prince so they can sit and work in offices." Sanmba then erupted into song. *1804 O! Esklav yo batay yo pran endepandans yo.* And the assembly responded. *1804 O! Esklav yo batay yo pran endepandans yo. Sa ki te la, se pa yo k rekòlte. Men yo ki pate nan batay la, se yo k ap remize.*<sup>242</sup>

Snapshot Three:      Petite-Rivière      April 18, 2013

As the break-out session groups re-convened into the larger gathering, some participants complained about the serving of spaghetti for breakfast as "inauthentic." "We should consuming rice, millet, or wheat that is produced in this region." One participant reminded the disgruntled crowd that they had not attended the workshop for the snacks. "These malicious NGOs have broken the back of social movements as a result of offering food to [poor] people in exchange for attendance. We are not here to eat." After the official debriefing, Ricot noted that women's issues were skirted. Some men reported that the women chose to sit outside of the group during the break-out discussions, even after being asked to speak up. Others argued that abstention confirmed that women are passive to development. Only one man, sporting a baseball cap with a Confederate flag, stood

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<sup>242</sup> Kreyòl for: 1804 Oh! The slaves took their independence. Those who had been present are not the ones who are benefiting. Rather it is those who did not fight who are retired.

apart from the chorus. “Women and men are different,” he clarified. “But they have the same capacities [to lead]”.



Figure 3. Workshop on Day 2 in Petite-Rivière

These three snapshots were taken at three different retreats during which community-based associations came together to address the inequalities that order their lives as peasants. In the spring of 2013, PAPDA convened local organizations throughout the northern region of Haiti to formulate a *Cahier de Revendication*<sup>243</sup> that would outline regional grievances and most importantly, list corresponding demands to the state. Another set of meetings would take place in the fall of 2013 in the South followed by a

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<sup>243</sup> Translation from French to English: Notebook of Demands

nation-wide convocation. PAPDA envisions the Notebooks culminating into multiple work sessions with Parliament in order to create just and appropriate laws that not only protect the rights of peasants as a special group, but also that aim to integrate rural populations in national decision-making processes. In light of the 2011 amendment of the Constitution of 1987, the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the MINUSTAH presence (2004-2014), the upcoming centennial of the first U.S. Occupation (1915-1934) and the impending 2016 elections, Haitian social movements call for a return to constitutional order and popular sovereignty. Supported by their international allies, they mobilize their members into collective action to demonstrate local capacity for autonomy and development. As such, they challenge dominant cultural norms by inscribing the rural into the national imaginary, thus proposing a more inclusive modernity.

As discussed in Chapter IV, PAPDA is engaged in a transnational campaign for food sovereignty that is the foundation of the local peasant movement. As such, PAPDA spent almost two decades re-organizing and re-mobilizing the social power of rural populations. In the chapter, I analyze three sets of three-day retreats that took place in Limonade,<sup>244</sup> Lacoma,<sup>245</sup> and Petite-Rivière,<sup>246</sup> during which thirty to forty women and men from community-based organizations in various cities and towns in the departments of Nord, Nord-Est, Nord-Ouest, and Artibonite gathered in April of 2013 to engage in a transformative process of co-learning and co-teaching. I attended these meetings a

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<sup>244</sup> Limonade is located in the Department of Nord. Organizations based in the Department of Nord and Nord-Est attended a joint retreat in Limonade

<sup>245</sup> Lacoma is located in the Department of Nord-Ouest

<sup>246</sup> Petite-Rivière is located in the Department of Artibonite. Organizations based in the Department of Artibonite as well as Plateau Central attended a joint retreat in Petite-Rivière.

researcher of social movements, independent of PAPDA. Nevertheless, that difference was blurred since I filled in where the facilitating team required help. In what follows, I discuss some examples. I shared sleeping quarters and meals with leaders and members; we exchanged ideas, stories, and snacks. For these workshops, Ricot solicited the assistance of Nixon and Nènè from the consultant facilitation group named Research and Support Group in Rural Areas (*GRAMIR*).<sup>247</sup> They used Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods to foster dialogue and to establish a common vocabulary among attendees. PAPDA (and GRAMIR) endeavors to produce notebooks of demands reflect the visions of rural populations for Haiti's development. Through this process, the facilitators expected to transform individual participants representing distinct associations into members of a movement.

In Chapter VI, I first analyze the local and global political opportunities PAPDA recognized. The upcoming anniversaries of Haiti's occupations as well as the power struggles between the political and economic elites make it possible for social movement leaders to emerge as guiding forces in the electoral process. Additionally, I examine the external and internal resources the platform mobilized in order to pull together these workshop forums. As I argued in Chapter IV, social movements in the Global South greatly depend on extra-national funds to operate. They also rely on the more educated adherents to serve as movement experts and leaders. Members provide their life histories and visions to movement building. Next, I discuss the intended domestic and foreign targets of the *cahiers*. As I maintained in Chapter III, the state is cartelized by a transnational capitalist class enabled by global governance institutions. Social movements

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<sup>247</sup> Translated from French : *Groupe de Recherche et d'Appui en Milieu Rural*

in the Global South denounce the pact between the state, the IFIs, and the MNCs. Then, I assess PAPDA's use of Participatory Action Research to facilitate the formulation of a nationwide *cahier de revendication*. More specifically, I focus on the negotiation of movement narratives and frames between the facilitating team and workshop participants. Participants developed their collective visions of departmental and regional development to share with their respective organizations. Facilitators coordinated exchange between different membership bases to produce the notebooks. I submit that leaders and members unevenly co-construct collective peasant identity. As such, I explore the processes by which activist leaders frame and shape collective identity and voice by contrasting dominant movement narratives to localized modes of thought on class and color, gender, language, and religion.

PAPDA first initiated the Notebooks process in 1997 and again in 2006. The first trial was interrupted to prioritize the reinforcement of organizations. As I discussed in Chapter IV, the platform spent the first decade "experimenting" with solidarity economies. In order to create cohesion between individuals with varying personal interests, PAPDA encouraged and accompanied local leaders in the construction of organizational collective identity through the practice of collective ownership. The second attempt to re-launch the process was completed but received no response when presented to the state. "Organizations had expressed their complaints without any coordination and without clear demands," Nènè explained.<sup>248</sup> In consequence, in 2008, PAPDA met with its local partners in the departments of Nord, Nord-Est, Nord-Ouest, and Artibonite to elaborate new strategies that would elicit state reaction. Tarrow (1994)



argues that while popular power emerges rapidly, it soon disperses. These social movement leaders did not hesitate to re-introduce the process to avoid movement diffusion. In order to build a movement, collective action against a specific opponent must be sustained. The organizers concluded that the *cahier* is a useful tool in articulating peasant claims and most significantly, in linking concrete action to these claims. That same year, PAPDA held its first workshop-forum in the Department of Artibonite. Soon after, however, activities were disrupted due to the platform's financial difficulties, the volatile political climate as well as the eventual earthquake in 2010. PAPDA would call again on these organizations at the beginning of 2012 to begin the *cahier* one more time.

### **Leveraging Opportunities, Mobilizing Resources, and Constituting Challenges**

Pointing to a breadth of political opportunities, PAPDA linked its local, national, and international economic as well as human capital to ignite a movement that decries the neoliberal artificialization of food and consequently, of the local traditions and mores that underpin peasant identity. As discussed throughout the dissertation, Latin American social movement scholars propose combining the varying approaches to the study of social movements (Oslender 2001; Alvarez et al. 1998; Escobar 1992). In doing so, they recommend a thicker description of “new” social movements that links “old” class-based and “new” identity-based politics. They argue that a more complex analysis should include information on movement origins and manifestations; methods of recruitment, mobilization, and retention; the construction and continual negotiation of collective identities; the rapport between social movements and their national politico-cultural

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<sup>248</sup> Quote from conversations during my travels with the facilitating team

system; and finally, the relationships between social movements and globalization. In what follows, I first unpack the various national as well as international political opportunities the coalition identified as favorable for collective action. Next, I examine the diverse material and cultural resources PAPDA mobilized to ensure the realization of the forums. Finally, I discuss the different national and global targets against which Haitian social movements rally and submit their demands.

Proponents of the Political Opportunity Structure (POS) approach maintain that social movements are products of their local political environment (Ray and Korteweg 1999; Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Kriesi 1995). 2014 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the MINUSTAH in Haiti. While there have been popular demonstrations against what PAPDA calls an “Occupation,” the state continues to renew the UN mandate. Without a national army and a debilitated police force, the current President Martelly fears that instability will deter foreign investment in a Haiti that is now “open for business.”<sup>249</sup> The MINUSTAH is charged to keep protests and rebellion at bay while the state finally implements the neoliberal policies that Aristide and Préval had dodged at least during their first terms. Linking the U.S. Occupation of 1915 to the current, social movements denounce national decision-makers for remaining passive to the erosion of national sovereignty. Invoking nationalist pride and drawing from collective myths and memories of the 1804 independence and the subsequent “infantilizing” occupations of 1915 and 1994, they attempt to raise the consciousness of the larger population. Furthermore, citing the *Revolisyon 1986* and the subsequent Constitution of 1987, social movements seek to demonstrate the effectiveness of popular democratic power in order to disparage

participation in a fraudulent and futile electoral process dominated by political parties estranged from their bases. Thus, movement leaders compete with other movements as well as the state for politico-cultural supremacy. Finally, with the promise of upcoming elections, as access to the fractured state expands, social movements endeavor to orient the population struggling to decipher a suitable candidate among the warring parties of the neo-Lavalas and the neo-Duvalierist. The conflict among political elites opens up the space for alternative narratives to emerge. In consequence, PAPDA strives to distance itself from the growing street takeovers of supporters of Aristide. The same political opportunities that created the emergent movement also produced complementary and competing others (Tarrow 1994). To disaggregate the conflation of self-naming leftist movements from the legacies of Aristide, PAPDA-affiliated social movement organizations aim to control the dominant narratives of resistance and to re-frame radical politics.

Backed by their extra-national allies, Haitian social movements are emboldened to direct their claims at the state and by extension, at development agencies and the foreign governments that preside over postcolonial authorities. The three aforementioned retreats were supported by two Catholic NGOs Cordaid from the Netherlands and *Entraide & Fraternité*<sup>250</sup> from Belgium as well as the U.S. foundation Grassroots International. These organizations amass funds from their respective government as well as private institutions and individuals. Their boards are presided by European and U.S. American business and intellectual elites. They sponsor social movement organizations in

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<sup>249</sup> See for more information on the state's "Open for business" campaign : <http://cfihaiti.com/>

<sup>250</sup> French for: Inter-Aid & Fraternity

their home countries and in the Global South engaged in the transnational struggle to make “another world possible.” More specifically, they finance “food sovereignty” campaigns and solidarity economies. As discussed in Chapter IV, these collaborators ensure the continuity of social movements by dispensing large grants and donations to organizations. Thus, local social movements derive their national legitimacy from the power of their international partners, resulting in the loss of movement autonomy (Viatori 2007; Lauer 2006; Kriesi et al. 1992). Nevertheless, these material resources combine with the socio-organizational expertise of leaders as well as the human and cultural contributions of members to set into motion and sustain a movement.

PAPDA solicited the consultation of GRAMIR to direct the forums in order to diminish its presence in the space as a commanding leader and instead to participate as a fellow member. They drew from the public history of political mobilization in Haiti, namely the *Revolisyon 1986*, to replicate successful strategies. “Collective action is not born out of organizers’ heads but rather is cultural inscribed” (Tarrow 1994: 18). Furthermore, the facilitators revised their previous attempts to create the Notebooks. They designed the workshops to further implicate attendees in the process. With the support of GRAMIR, PAPDA’s primary role was to coordinate the heterogeneous motivations and interests of partakers, and to translate local people’s articulation of their demands in Haitian Kreyòl as well as French using state-equivalent language. A “modular repertoire of contention” (Tarrow 1994) was deployed to counter the paternalistic discourses of development that marginalize rural populations.

Participants were selected from members of community-based associations with a long history of organizing with PAPDA, particularly through its program entitled

Alternative Integration Advocacy Program discussed in Chapter IV. These included organizations of agricultural producers, of women, and of youth, cooperatives and networks of cooperatives, peasant coalitions, and a few local representatives of the state in solidarity with the peasant struggle. Each organization invited and present was represented by one to three delegates. Each has over three hundred male and female members respectively- often with youth chapters- engaged in collective action such as collective farming and ownership of refineries. These meetings linked people knowledgeable of their distinct needs, often living in the same department but separated by mountains and rivers. These workshops regrouped people neglected and forgotten by the state.

POS scholars developed theories centered on the state, which they identified as the main target of social movements. Without the state, they argue, social changes will not persist (Jenkins 1995). The POS approach reifies the modernist assumption that nation-states are impermeable by not taking into account the international dimensions of social movements. NSM theorists, on the other hand, broaden their research scope to include the global (Porta and Diani 1999; Staler 1998). Local collective action needs to be analyzed alongside global processes (Cockcroft 2006; Edelman 2001; Hamel et al. 2001; Castells 1997). Moreover, the state is in itself a multidimensional target. As argued throughout the dissertation, the postcolonial state is comprised of national as well as international political and economic elites. The relationship is evidenced in Haiti by the ongoing cooperation between the state and the multi-national military as well as socio-economic foreign presence. Conversely, the “Occupation” provides social movements with direct access to the international stage. Social movement organizations point to the

state's complicity with extra-national actors resulting in the privatization of food production leading to food insecurity. PAPDA organized these workshops precisely around the problematic of food sovereignty.

As mentioned above, social movements utilize political opportunities and deploy resources to directly as well as indirectly challenge the state in addition to the international financial institutions and multi-national corporations. They overtly attack the state and global governance agencies, condemning the hegemonic development model that views the Third World as diseased and the rural as "unmodern." Thus, social movement actors counter the western expert catalog of identities that characterize the rural as backwards. "Social movements struggle over meanings as well as material conditions, that is, as cultural struggles" (Escobar 1992: 67). Located in rural areas, outside of the capital and subsequently marginalized from state structures, participants gathered to collectively imagine and actualize a coordinated development and to devise modes of communication with the state. As Oslender (2001) argues, identity-oriented movements are lodged in class-based struggles. The peasant identity marks a spatialized and racialized class location. The isolation of rural populations permitted organizations like PAPDA to infiltrate without state reprisal. Strategically, the platform built on the strong peasant identity associated with the countryside in order to mobilize members, and in the process, to re-affirm this identity as quintessentially Haitian and to present it as an alternative modern identity.

## **Co-constructing an Alternative National Identity: Tensions and Agreements between Movement Leaders and Members**

Social movements regroup distinct people with a diversity of needs, interests, and emotions. In order to mobilize them into collective action, social movement leaders organize these individuals around a particular identity. Social movements involve identity work (Reger et al. 2008). Identity is unstable and always in formation (Einwonher et al. 2008; Oslender 2001; Poletta and Jasper 2001; Bernstein 1995; Melucci 1995). Thus, movement leaders provide frames and narratives imbued with dominant and local cultural symbols in the attempt to forge and stabilize a collective identity. Storytelling is key to the process (Davis 2002). Movement leaders present an imagined past, construct a present, and project a future to build consensus and incentivize members into action. However, as argued in the introduction of the chapter, the making of a collective identity is a tense process. Participants in these retreats generally agreed with the political and economic frames presented by GRAMIR and PAPDA but resisted and debated some of the more polarizing socio-cultural ones. Hence, I submit that members and leaders co-constitute movement collective identity. In the end, they both identify the peasant struggle as one lodged in a larger class struggle between the *Grandon*<sup>251</sup> and land workers that engendered neoliberal environmental degradation and food dependency. In the following section, I explore the three retreats and the collective storytelling that ensued. I outline the basic schedule that was replicated at all sites during which I analyze the different movement narratives shared by workshop participants, emphasizing the ensconced class dimension of peasant struggles. Finally, I examine the negotiation

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<sup>251</sup> Kreyòl for: large land owner

process of movement frames between leaders and members. I underline their points of contention on certain socio-cultural practices and strategic plans for the Notebooks. I also discuss their points of consensus on economic and agricultural models in the formulation of the final demands.

In order to realize these workshop-forums, PAPDA pulled together the varying resources to which it has access. Made possible by international funding, PAPDA sponsored the events, managed local leaders' organization of logistics, and prepared GRAMIR for its intervention. In turn, local organizations promoted the workshops to their respective constituencies, made transportation as well as sleeping arrangements, secured meeting locations, and carefully planned the daily meals. In the Department of Nord, AFLIDEPA and APWOLIM were the principal organizers;<sup>252</sup> in the Nord-Est, *Kòdinasyon Peyizan Seksyon Kominal Ba-Maribawo (KPSKBM)*;<sup>253</sup> in the Nord-Ouest, *Tèt Kole Ti Peyizan Ayisyen (TK)*;<sup>254</sup> and in Artibonite, *Platfòm Revandikasyon Peyizan Latibonit (PREPLA)*<sup>255</sup> as well as TK. Together with PAPDA, these organizations selected other community-based associations to invite. Plateau Central was not represented due to a confusion in scheduling dates. GRAMIR's three-member team composed of an agro-economist, a sociologist, and a sanitation engineer had the charge of developing a methodological approach that would best guarantee participation. Finally, and most importantly, the success of the gatherings depended on the participation of

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<sup>252</sup> AFLIDEPA and APWOLIM were discussed in Chapter III

<sup>253</sup> Translation from Kreyol to English: Peasant Coordination of Communal Section of Lower Maribawo

<sup>254</sup> Translation from Kreyol to English : Small Peasants Unite

<sup>255</sup> Translation from Kreyol to English: Platform of Peasant Claims of Artibonite



members knowledgeable of their experiences and needs and deeply rooted in their identities as peasants. The heterogeneous assemblage of actors engaged in a process of consensus-building utilizing narratives presented by movement leaders and, with cultural frames leaders and members alike share. GRAMIR judiciously designed a program around key movement narratives. Each day reflected a focus on a particular construction of time: Day 1, of the past; Day 2, of the present; and Day 3, of the future.

Workshops took place as indicated in the snapshots in Limonade for organizations in the Nord and Nord-Est from April 4-6, in Lacoma for the Nord-Ouest from April 11-13, and finally in Petite-Rivière for Artibonite from April 18-20. The following schedule was replicated in all three locations with slight variations. None of the groups was able to complete the entire planned agenda as a result of prolonged debates on the verbiage of the demands, the stronghold of the Church on social movements, the role of women, the usurpation of popular power by NGOs and finally, participation in electoral politics. The missed session was entitled “Urban vs. Rural and The relationship between the State and the Peasantry.” Nevertheless, the final items of the agenda were broached during the different presentations, group discussions, and break-out sessions. It should be noted that the workshop in Petite Rivière was the least successful. The divergent ideological views of facilitators and participants hindered the process. Lastly, I ended up serving as a note-taker at Lacoma and Petite Rivière. I arrived with PAPDA and GRAMIR in Lacoma the afternoon preceding the first workshop day. One of the GRAMIR facilitators was scheduled to arrive early morning before the first session. He did not make it until the following day. Nènè asked me “Can you write quickly? In Kreyòl?” Ricot had already assumed the role of participant observer. I accepted to execute the task for the large group

report backs for one day. I ended up keeping the position for the remainder of the Lacoma workshops. When Nixon attempted to resume his role as note-taker, the participants complained that he was a slow writer and requested my return. The facilitators asked me to retain the recorder role in Petite Rivière.

Participants arrived in the late afternoon of the day preceding the events. Ricot and Nènè met with principal organizing leaders to finalize all event details. All attendees were housed in communal sleeping quarters in order to foster camaraderie. In Limonade as well as Lacoma, I roomed with Ricot, Nènè, and Nixon. In Petite Rivière, the principal organizers placed me in a room with one of the three female attendees. Each participant was provided with one twin bed and one set of sheets. Each was responsible for bringing his/her own pillows and other toiletries such as toothbrushes, soaps, and towels. Potable water was made available throughout the day for the entirety of the retreat. Water is an important commodity in Haiti and in particular, drinkable water in rural areas. Furthermore, participants were guaranteed electric power between sundown and midnight. Electricity as well is a scarce commodity. Sites were equipped with a small diesel-powered generator. Its use was reserved for all collective activities during the retreat. The workshops in Lacoma and Petite-Rivière took place on the same camp grounds. Only participants in Limonade had to travel from AFLIDEPA's meeting space and offices, the home of the main volunteer coordinator Olga, to APWOLIM's organizational center of operation.

### Retreat Overview

Each day began promptly at 8:00AM with breakfast. Participants received locally-produced and cooked food throughout the entire retreat prepared by members of the principal organizations. Sessions began at 9:00AM every day. During the three 12-hour days, participants gathered in one meeting space in a semi-circle facing several posters with full texts detailing facilitators' informational presentation. Additionally, there were flipcharts mounted on a wall or board on which their demands were recorded. All attendees were required to sign in every day. The underpinning purpose of these workshops was to move towards local responses to national problems. Consuming local foods is an integral part of the process. Workshop leaders explicitly invited participating organizations around the thematic of "food sovereignty." Frames help to diagnose the problem as well as to offer solutions (Porta and Diani 1999). Haiti's dependence on foreign goods causes food insecurity and subsequently transforms local pallet, thus disrupting cultural traditions. The frame linked the two key components of peasant struggle: national sovereignty and local production. The work day ended at 8PM. Days ended sooner in Petite Rivière due to group fragmentation.

### Day 1

On the first day, principal organizers Olga inaugurated the workshops with a prayer in Limonade, Sanmba with a song in Lacoma, and Premyo with a motivational speech in Petite-Rivière. Afterwards, participants introduced themselves and the association they represent and shared their aims for the meetings. Knowing who is present in the room helps to establish transparency, trust and accountability. Ricot and the principal

organizers defined their role as participant observers in the process and conceded to GRAMIR for the facilitation. Nènè then invited one volunteer to monitor participation, and another to restore energy to the group during these long work days through song and at times physical exercises. Prior to starting the presentations and workshops, participants developed ground rules to foster respect, effective communication, and cooperation. All participants were allowed to voice record all sessions unless otherwise indicated by an attendee. GRAMIR facilitators then went over the general workshop agenda for the three days.

In Limonade, some attendees complained about the long distance they traveled to reach the gathering sites as well as the heavy amount of the work proposed in the agenda. As noted above, many of them live in remote areas behind chains of mountains. In Lacoma, partakers questioned the purpose and effectiveness of the *cahiers*. They recalled the previous failure of the Notebooks. Nènè and Ricot acknowledged their aforementioned shortcomings and assured the assembly that the revised PAR approach would yield a clearer and more specific cahier. In Petite-Rivière, members expressed ongoing confusion about their role in these workshops. Since the very beginning of these encounters, disagreements on the identity-making process and movement-building surfaced. Facilitators emphasized the limits of their task in the participatory action research project. “Here, there are no teachers, there are no students. You did not come to a training,” Nènè affirmed. GRAMIR and PAPDA sought to maintain a neutral role.

During the first session, participants defined key words such as peasant, citizen, organization, consciousness raising, demand, mobilization, advocacy, citizen’s movement, and public policy. Benford (2002) argues that movement narratives function

to control participants' vocabularies of motives. Standardizing words and concepts fosters group cohesion and collective consciousness. Furthermore, it equips attendees with the necessary terminology to interface with the state. The Notebooks process also involves leveling members with leaders. In Limonade and Lacoma, attendees deferred to facilitators' definitions; some courteously requested clarification of concepts. In contrast, in the case of Petite Rivière, competing local leaders intervened after every word, encouraging immediate political action. More specifically, they urged participants to organize around electing a peasant or at least a sympathetic ally into local office to push public policy. In turn, GRAMIR reminded the assembly that the *Revolisyon 1986* was decapitated once it was institutionalized. PAPDA (and GRAMIR) and its allies refuse to participate in elections by proxy. Instead, they are committed to building social power. The antagonism over effective strategies lasted well into lunch time. Haitian social movement leaders vie for control of movement agenda.

The second session was an overview of Haiti's geographical landscape, with an emphasis on the particular department in question. Facilitators raised the discussion using the frame of sovereignty. They exposed Haiti's dependence on the U.S. and warned of a Dominican take-over of the national economy. Participants echoed the concern and affirmed their loyalty to Haitian produce. Facilitators also gave a quick nod to the 11<sup>th</sup> department, recognizing the diaspora as an integral part of the nation but also as what Nènè calls "*nèg nwè ti zòrèy*."<sup>256</sup> Social movement leaders recognized the economic and political causes of Haitian migration to other countries in the world. On the other hand, they fear the western influences of diasporized people on the socio-cultural and political

landscape of the country. Then, GRAMIR highlighted the natural resources of each department. Attendees from the Nord denounced shareholders ex-President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Hilary Clinton for supporting the erection of the Caracol factory on cultivable lands. Participants from the Nord-Est voiced alarm about the aggressive exploitation of gold by MNCs EuroAsian and Newmont Mining. In the Nord-Ouest, members pointed to the touristic potential of the department; submarine riches from the colonial period remain unexplored. In Artibonite, they clamored over the state-sponsored importation of U.S.-subsidized rice that weakens national production. Facilitators and participants alike expressed the need to recuperate them for the use and benefit of local communities. They addressed the need for land re-distribution, arguing that only an agrarian reform could create the necessary conditions for food sovereignty. Next, attendees were allowed one hour for lunch, to stretch, freshen up, and make phone calls.

Attendees re-assembled when the “animator” summoned the crowd through song. “Join forces to continue fighting for Haiti.” In Limonade and Lacoma, attendees clapped along energetically. In contrast, these outbursts did not occur in Petite-Rivière. There, participants were less than enthused about bonding. Ricot remarked that members from Artibonite are more “political... They are more interested in debating. Some are here to recruit votes for their future candidacy for office.”<sup>257</sup> Very quickly, Petite-Rivière established itself as an outlier. In this case, social movement leaders questioned one another’s motivations and dedication to the social justice struggle. Then, participants were divided into two to three work groups for about 45 minutes to an hour. During the

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<sup>256</sup> Kreyol for: “blacks” with small ears (short-sighted blacks)

<sup>257</sup> Quote from informal conversations with Ricot during Artibonite retreat.

break-out sessions, groups discussed their infrastructural, social, economic, environmental, and political recommendations and demands to the state. The exercise permitted less vocal attendees to participate within a more informal and intimate setting. Each group designated one person to take notes of participants' discussions. Once the groups completed their tasks, they returned to the semi-circle to report back to me. Facilitators honed in on the verbiage of the demands. "What does 'very good' [hospitals, schools, etc.] mean exactly"? Nènè asked the group. He insisted that the previous failure of the Notebooks was due to the unclear and unspecific formulation of demands. Social movement leaders relied on their previous experiences to ameliorate the new *cahiers*.

Day 1 in Petite Rivière ended after the assembly. Ricot closed out the meeting expressing his disappointment with the slow progress of the group:

"They are in a hurry. But everyone wants results. Everyone wants results. Everyone wants to see the State do. Everyone want to see that those who are responsible take... take... their responsibility. But no one is decidedly engaged. No one wants to give some time or run after him/herself to give him/herself discipline so we can move forward... We have to practice as Nènè said this morning auto-critique. We have to run after ourselves. We can say that it is true that capitalism, the international, and the state play a big role in this situation. But what about us"?

Ricot suspended his observer position and assumed a defensive tone. The members who left prior to the completion of the day had fragmented the collective process. Ricot questioned their commitment to social change in light of their passionate interruptions that delayed the sessions in the first place. The PAR approach had collapsed. PAPDA and GRAMIR were not able to steer the group into one collective mindset.

The third session of the day was a historical overview of global capitalist as well as class and color relations in Haiti with an emphasis on the peasant/townspeople divide.

Social movements construct myths, sacred narratives explaining how the world works (Benford 2002). GRAMIR presented a polarized past between French-speaking Christian white plantation owners and “mulatto” *affranchis* <sup>258</sup> against a nascent “black” Kreyòl-speaking vodouisant nation of small farming slaves. The alliance that was established between the affranchi and slave armies during the Revolution to oust white colonials and to end slavery was brief. The first armed struggle occurred in the North in 1801 when Moïse Louverture led a peasant army against his uncle, Toussaint. The “liberator” opposed land redistribution and favored the sharecropping system. The new Republic witnessed the rise of new “black” and “mulatto” political and economic elites against the formerly enslaved and marooned. The urban vs. rural divide emerged assigning different liberties under varying codes. The Civil and Penal codes regulated the city while a separate and unequal Rural Code governed the countryside. The national army was given the charge of overseeing plantations. The “new” agricultural forces (proto-peasants) were made the enemy and vodou was interdicted. Moreover, land was concentrated in the hands of these new Grondon. Already then, the state served its own privatized interests. In 1806, some of the formerly enslaved *demwatye* <sup>259</sup> in the South retreated to the mountains to own and cultivate land collectively after fighting for over a decade with the national army. In 1843, the Pike Army of the Sud presented what Nènè calls the clearest demands out of all of the peasant movements. The movement completely dispersed when peasants in the North and South were pinned against one another. The 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the globalization of the elites and the state. Foreign companies were granted

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<sup>258</sup> *Affranchis* were also known as *gens de couleur*. They were free ‘black’ and ‘mulatto’ people, the predecessors of the new elites



land on which to establish plantations. The U.S. Occupation centralized the economy in Port-au-Prince, further reinforcing the urban vs. rural divide. Charlemagne Peralte's peasant rebellion was choked. The retreat of the U.S. marines saw the birth of a three-decade long dictatorship that engendered Haiti's current dependence on extra-national capital and production. It was the literacy and consciousness raising campaigns of the 1970s by the Church, the peristyles, the schools, and the universities with rural and urban lower class populations that produced the *Revolisyon 1986*.

The historical construction of the peasant movement frames the actual peasant movement as a legacy of those in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Self-naming allowed workshop participants to draw boundaries around the peasant identity. Jenson (1995) explains that self-naming demonstrates a movement's choice of alliances and adversaries. In this case, Haitian social movements developed networks outside of their borders with peasant and feminist organizations as well as with religious, governmental, as well as non-governmental funding agencies. They also forged alliances with other national social movements, thus the creation of PAPDA. On the other hand, SMOs point to multi-national individuals and companies like Monsanto and industrial projects like the Free Zones as factors undermining Haitian sovereignty. They decry state neglect and distance themselves from party and electoral politics. They also denounce the anti-nationalist practices of political and economic elites. As such, the concept of class still underpins identity since identity groups seek distribution in addition to recognition (Oslender 2001). Haitian peasant social movements erect a strict separation between the land owning and

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<sup>259</sup> Kreyòl for sharecroppers

the land cultivating classes. In self-naming, social movements provide their targets with a coherent group with which to negotiate.

After the storytelling, GRAMIR invited attendees to confirm or challenge statistical stipulations about their region and to draw links between their own personal and community histories with those of others in the space. Participants from all three departments contested the state's claim that 10.5% of the rural areas has been electrically powered and that 16% have access to potable water.<sup>260</sup> They questioned the Institute of Haitian Statistics' methodology and data. Facilitators also encouraged women to rise above the silence. PAPDA is committed to the advancement of women. Its goal is to develop a gendered consciousness among all of its members. The assembly was then allowed one hour for dinner and to relax. The final session of the day was devoted to an evaluation of the day's work process and results. Participants shared their likes and dislikes and suggested improvements. Lastly, GRAMIR presented attendees the plan for the following day. Milien in Limonade from APWOLIM concluded the sessions with a Christian prayer; and Sanmba with another song in Lacoma. Members in Petite-Rivière continued their conversations as they lined up for dinner. At the end of the workday, everyone was free to leave the site if possible. As stated above, the generator ran until midnight every night.

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<sup>260</sup> See for more information: <http://www.ihsi.ht/pdf/ecvh/ECVHVolumeI/logement.pdf>

## Day 2

### *Limonade and Lacoma*

Participants staggered in; many had stayed up late arguing. In Limonade, a middle-aged man volunteered to do the prayer. He sang “*Dieu Tout Puissant*”<sup>261</sup> and followed up with a reading of Psalm 23. In Lacoma, members were ushered in with “*La Dessalinienne*.”<sup>262</sup> Ricot noted later that peasants from the Nord-Ouest were more “engaged.”<sup>263</sup> Before the sessions began, GRAMIR facilitators assessed the previous day’s work with attendees; finalized any pending discussions; and explored questions that came up during dinner the night prior. Religion and gender were key points of controversy at all three retreats. In Limonade, a participant’s proposal to include God as a “dimension” to the struggle was rebuked by the facilitators. “The fight is not in God’s hands,” Nènè declared. In Lacoma, members recognized that vodou beliefs underline peasant identity. They fingered Protestantism for the alienation of the youth from the land. As I discussed in Chapter IV, PAPDA as a platform does not espouse a particular religious identity. Social movement leaders endorse the constitutional recognition of freedom of religion. Following the recall, participants joined their respective break-out groups to continue working on their lists of demands. After the groups reported to the assembly, facilitators reprimanded them for neglecting to tackle women’s issues. They specifically urged women in Limonade who represented about ¼ of the attendees to speak up.

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<sup>261</sup> Christian song “God All Mighty !” sung mostly at funerals

<sup>262</sup> Haitian national hymn named after the slave liberator Jean-Jacques Dessalines

<sup>263</sup> Quote from informal conversations with Ricot, April 2013

The second session focused on the deforestation of Haiti. Here, GRAMIR offered a new narrative that complemented the primary one introduced on the first day. Facilitators presented a past of harmonious co-existence between Indigenous peoples of Haiti and nature. Next, they situated the current environmental degradation in the country's long history of monocrop plantations established first by the Spanish and then the French preceding the Revolution, preserved by the new post-independence elites, and finally exacerbated by American corporations even prior to the U.S. Occupation in 1915. Peasant identity is thus inextricably tied to a history of resistance. Leaders constructed Indigenous people, slaves and maroons, as well as *demwatye* as the predecessors of contemporary peasants. The latter strictly farmed only to meet their basic needs while Europeans and later on the "black" and "mulatto" Grandon exploited land for profit. Currently, the forest cover is at 1.5%. Without a protective state, natural resources were overused and land eroded, resulting in food insecurity. Break-out sessions followed the presentation. The romanticized historicization of the peasant identity transformed workshop participants. Identity functioned to empower them (Bernstein 1995). Members had previously internalized dominant discourses that pointed to them as the source of deforestation. The misinformation reinforced peasants as the enemy, further marginalizing them from the national imaginary. During the report back, many lamented state inaction. These reflections continued right through lunch.

The third session was a further exploration of the environmental emergency: the agricultural crisis. Here, GRAMIR focused on the more recent neoliberal turn of state policy and the national economy. Nixon used statistical data to ground his information and to maintain the confidence of his audience. "In the year 2011, the country imported

547.7 million dollars' worth of food," he affirmed. Facilitators highlighted Haiti's dependence on imported goods as a threat to family-based agricultural practices and organic production. Moreover, they emphasized the links between industrial parks and Free Zones with increased pollution and infrastructural disasters. Without the coordination of a popular state, multi-national corporations unapologetically dump chemicals into fresh water sources and cultivable lands and invite underpaid laborers to build make-shift shelter as a home. Then, participants were divided into groups to deliberate on the list of the demands that would not only attack the dominant values and practices of unbridled capitalism but also challenge the national (or urban) perception of peasants. Identity would be deployed for critique as well as education (Bernstein 1995).

Afterwards, members rejoined the larger group to discuss agrarian reform. They recognized that the re-distribution of land is fundamental to the preservation of traditional methods of farming as well as autonomy. Protecting national production would re-vitalize the peasantry. With too few local goods, regional and national markets are saturated with extra-national chemically-induced substances. "Modernity is another form of alienation and slavery," warned Nènè. Modernity here is synonymous with westernization. Food dependence erodes local organic production. The aim of these gatherings was to construct one collective mindset around key peasant issues such as artificial agriculture and farming cooperatives. Identity was the goal (Bernstein 1995). Hence, peasants resist the infiltration of genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) in their meals.

*Petite-Rivière: The Outlier*

On the second day, participants arrived late. After some deliberation, members agreed to pray together, each according to his/her faith. Then, after briefly recollecting the previous night's failures, Nènè immediately attempted to jump into his presentation of the global capitalist system and the class and color relations in Haiti. Not surprisingly, members quickly chimed in with more storytelling. They question GRAMIR's intentions with the workshop. "Where do you want to take us?" Nènè attempted to clarify the PAR methodology, insisting that the process depended on participant contribution. A young man requested to speak. He passionately condemned vodou attributing the country's ills to its black magic. Nènè calmly listened to him and concluded that freedom of religion is an individual right. It is precisely the role that facilitators play in the making of collective identity. They provide common frames in which divergent interests can merge. But most importantly, they demonstrate to members that their colliding viewpoints can co-exist and sometimes reconcile. However, participants in Petite-Rivière could not fully engage the process given the inequalities in their political education. Some members lacked considerable knowledge of history. They requested more details on the dynamics of the Revolution as well as post-independence. Others were eager to define the strategies to bring about social change. Nènè responded to all their questions then firmly directed members to their break-out groups. Without some political education, formulating the *cahier* in Artibonite was near impossible.

Prior to re-convening, a female member of PREPLA lashed out at the young male participant. It was not until after that the rest of the assembly understood what transpired. The young man had simply repeated the comments made during the break-out sessions

when the men, who were in the overwhelming majority, categorically rejected women's involvement in social movements. The debate went on for the better part of the afternoon. In this case, facilitators did not respond to these comments and instead moved on to other concerns. Here, they failed to use the moment to re-frame gender issues. As SOFA leader Carole explains: "Male leaders pay lip service to women's concerns; they do not approach their fieldwork using this frame".<sup>264</sup> GRAMIR and PAPDA were not able to reign in the herd. The group had already dwindled from the previous day and more abandoned the workshop even before the facilitators concluded. A participant closed with a biting remark, "Intellectuals are always telling the peasants what to do." GRAMIR's monopoly on information diffusion caused a rift between facilitators and local leaders. It imbued facilitators with too much guiding power and actually curtailed the PAR process. The Petite Rivière group did not demonstrate collective consciousness.

### Day 3

On the last day, Lacoma participants started the session with a movement song. *Peyizan yo ki nan peyi a, se sou lendepandans nou...Ti peyizan yo ki nan peyi a, se sou lendepandans nou.*<sup>265</sup> Peasants in the Nord-Ouest relate with the army of enslaved peoples who delivered the independence. They believe that they should have inherited the spoils of the war. Instead, they were segregated by the state. In Limonade, the third day began with a prayer. Local organizers in the Nord/Nord-Est set the tone for the meetings on the first day. While they stressed freedom of religion, they also assumed that the

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<sup>264</sup> Interview with Carole in March 2013 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti

<sup>265</sup> Kreyòl for: Peasants of this country, it is on our independence... Small peasants of this country, it is on our independence [that this country was built].

assembly was Christian. Next, GRAMIR used statistical information to make its final presentation on the lack of “Rural Access to Public Services” from the Republic of Port-au-Prince. While the Constitution guarantees rural populations certain inalienable rights, the state does not deliver them. Nixon introduced the concept of human rights to broach the dialogue. Social movement leaders depend on the dominant cultural and political symbols to ground their claims (Ray and Korteweg 1999; Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Kriesi 1995). They utilize relevant and familiar frames in order to mobilize members and to effectively enlist the support of the larger society.

Attendees then divided into the last break-out sessions. They re-convened in less than one hour. Nènè was stricter with time on that day. The second half of the day was spent reviewing all of the groups’ recommendations and demands to re-organize them under larger key points such as education, agriculture, infrastructure, and economy. Together, the entire group assessed which categories of development were neglected and/or unrefined during the first two days in order to complement them. Nènè encouraged female participants to raise their voice in order to ensure the inclusion of their particular human rights needs in the *cahiers*. In turn in Lacoma, the women in attendance personally charged me with the task. As discussed in Chapter II, my close relationship to PAPDA often blurred my status. Even though I was introduced as an independent researcher, social movement members in the rural areas associated me with the platform and assigned me decision-making power. In contrast, participants in Limonade called for an increase in the number of police officers to “securitize the country against drug



dealers.”<sup>266</sup> Social movement members attribute the corruption of local mores to ill-intentioned outsiders. Deviance from “tradition” threatens the stability of the peasant identity. In Petite-Rivière, Nènè reprimanded the attendees for their lack of progress on the Notebooks. The latter implored GRAMIR and PAPDA to organize another opportunity to complete the process.

### *Conclusion of Day 3*

PAPDA and the principal organizers explicated the following next steps. Participants would return to their respective organizations to share workshop and meeting content while GRAMIR puts together the Notebook. Once the Notebook is prepared (about a month later), attendees would receive their copy to review with their fellow members to adjust and confirm content. Once the Notebook is returned, PAPDA (and other departmental organizational hosts) would prepare the Great North meeting. GRAMIR then invited two volunteers to coordinate the distribution of the Notebook; to gather any corrections and additions; and to ensure that all attendees share the information with their organizations. Facilitators developed with participants a course of action to push the Notebook through the state. Some members in Limonade suggested to use Church networks to raise consciousness. Members in Lacoma expressed readiness to propagate the *cahier*. And finally, Petite-Rivière members recommended NGOs as possible funding allies to implement the work. Partakers from all three workshops timidly suggested organizing around elections. Nènè and Ricot attempted to re-focus these digressions by re-emphasizing the power of social movements and the risks of institutionalization. As I

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<sup>266</sup> Quote from a Limonade participant.

highlighted throughout the chapter, collective identity-making is a fraught process. Leaders- functioning in this case as facilitators- possess or at least are perceived by members to possess the power to make all final decisions. While participants were allowed to provide the content of the Notebooks, they were limited to the guidelines set by the facilitators. Finally, GRAMIR reviewed the details of the retreat for one final evaluation. Attendees were then gave feedback and made recommendations to improve the PAR process. After publicly recognizing and thanking the kitchen crew, Olga and Milien in Limonade concluded the workshops with a joint prayer and Sanmba in Lacoma with a song. *“Ayiti sa ki tounen timoun o! Ayiti ka granmoun pou tèt pou li. Oganizasyon yo, yo mache ansanm. Tout solisyon yo voye, jamè jwenn repons. Sel otonomi pou Leta genyen nan peyi pou fè l granmoun o”!*<sup>267</sup> The Petite-Rivière assembly just simply dissolved.

### Regional Meeting

The revised Notebooks representing the needs and demands of each department were compiled into one large regional Notebook. All of the representatives who attended the departmental workshops were expected to return in order to ensure continuity. Each notebook helps to tell diverse stories, experiences, and priorities within one geographical location. The notebooks are not simply an exercise to gather reflections but a tool by which distinct groups of people gather and engage the process of collective identity-making. In order to ensure follow-up of the work, a network of organizations and a

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<sup>267</sup> Kreyòl lyrics from an *Awozam* song: This Haiti that has become a child oh! Haiti can be its own adult. The organizations, they have worked together. Every solution they have sent [to the state], they never got a response. The country can only become an adult [or sovereign] when the state becomes autonomous oh!

committee were designated to put in place all of the processes necessary to realize first, a regional Great North forum, followed by workshops in the Great South, and finally a national forum on peasant demands that would bring together peasants coming from all parts of the country in order to launch and cement a comprehensive peasant movement. The Great North meeting took place after my doctoral fieldwork ended. The interruption in my research is a reflection of the limitations of anthropological work that only captures and re-constructs fragments of time and space.

## **Conclusion**

Social movement gatherings are sites of collective identity construction. Well-resourced national leaders mobilize local members within social networks to engage common issues in shared space using various incentives. As facilitators, they circulate cultural frames through which they attempt to standardize members' divergent identities and experiences. Using Participatory Action Research, PAPDA and principal organizers enlisted attendees in the democratic practice of power-building from the ground up. The method sought to capture more accurately the knowledge of participants. The latter were engaged in the process of analysis and interpretation along with facilitators. The approach further links scholarship with practice. While GRAMIR prepared overviews of Haiti's history, geography and politics, participants guided the process. Attendees were required to interact during the presentations with questions, comments, and concerns. They also formulated the list of their demands and recommendations themselves during the break-out sessions. PAPDA and GRAMIR's role is to translate these demands into full texts from spoken to written Kreyòl as well as French using state-sanctioned language. The

workshops helped to connect varying grassroots organizations working in the same department but usually separated by rough terrains. These networks were made possible by the funding provided by PAPDA's international allies in the transnational food sovereignty campaign. Themselves members of transnational networks of social movement actors, PAPDA leaders recognize ripe national as well as international political opportunities. As such, they locate targets and develop strategies and tactics to bring about material change. Haitian social movements recognized certain key historical and political moments such as the anniversaries of two occupations and more importantly, an expansion of access with the upcoming elections. As such, they target the state as well as multi-national corporations and financial institutions to submit their demands. As discuss in Chapter IV for example, Haitian social movement leaders finger U.S.-based and traded agrochemical and agricultural biotechnology multi-national corporation Monsanto for attempting to de-legitimize traditional un-regulated exchange of seeds by introducing chemically enhanced patented seeds.

The Notebooks captured the particularities of departmental and regional experiences and needs within their own geographical, historical and political trajectories. Participants began to imagine and understand themselves as members of a national collectivity. By crafting a collective history that connects enslaved Indigenous and African peoples, maroons, sharecroppers, and peasants, family-based agriculture and organic production, leaders sought to construct a distinct peasant identity imbued with historico-cultural symbols. These political processes, however, are embedded in cultural systems (Escobar 1992; Alvarez et al. 1998). As such, Haitian social movements are not only responses to closures as well as openings in the institutionalized political system, the

competition between political elites, and the authority of their international partners. They are also built and framed with and against dominant cultural symbols. I submit that PAPDA does not simply seek to integrate the political system; it also aims to disrupt the hegemonic discourses of development that “infantilize”<sup>268</sup> rural populations. Peasants are not un-modern; rather, they embody an alternative modernity. The process of assembling the Notebooks of Demands permitted a re-mobilization of social power, particularly the power of peasants to defend their rights, become more active and conscious of their responsibility in social transformation and finally to demonstrate the relationship that exists between the city (the capital) and the rural areas in the dynamics of country-wide development. The process of the Notebooks afforded local organizations the means to question local authorities on the nation-wide public policies they apply; to demonstrate that these types of policies do not allow them to make progress; and to insist on decentralization, participative democracy and respect of the realities and cultures of the territories in question.

Yet, members are not passive recipients of leadership dictates. Collective identity formation is a fraught process. In fact, it is a negotiation of varying and, at times, contentious interests and claims. These tensions are particularly salient when members propose strategies outside the ideological purview of the larger movement. Hence, leaders as facilitators are key to bridging these discrepancies through political education and consciousness raising during assembly meetings. Thus, collective identity is a co-constructed process in which both leaders and members exercise their respective agency to shape a common agenda. The process of assembling the Notebooks fostered

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<sup>268</sup> Quote from social movement music group *Awozam*’s song.

disagreement on frames and strategies. Facilitators encouraged groups to further explore women's issues during the break-out groups. The mostly male participants in Petite-Rivière scoffed at that recommendation. Facilitators privileged the grassroots work while most members viewed the upcoming elections as a political opportunity. The tension was particularly salient in Petite-Rivière where less than half of the actual agenda was realized due to some members' ongoing showcasing of knowledge and contrastingly other members' lack of political education. Thus, collective identity making is a co-constitutive but unstable process.

## CHAPTER VII: Conclusion

On May 1, 2014, several hundred workers rallied in the streets of downtown Port-au-Prince demanding a raise in minimum wage.<sup>269</sup> Among their organizers was the syndicate *Batay Ouvriye*,<sup>270</sup> an ally of PAPDA. The police retaliated with the use of bullets and tear gas in order to prevent the rowdy crowd from reaching the National Palace. These events were not televised. One of the first in a series of demonstrations, these marches are the result of popular resentment of the head of state whose attention is turned to his international “constituencies” rather than to Haitian citizens. Since then, protests have augmented, eventually causing Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe to step down from office in December 2014.<sup>271</sup> However, the undeclared compromise did not prove sufficient for supporters of ex-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide who continue to request the resignation of Martelly and the re-instatement of the ex-Priest.<sup>272</sup> Since the declaration of Martelly’s presidential victory by the U.S. Embassy in 2011, the population has continually questioned the legitimacy of his power. For months, Congress investigated his nationality.<sup>273</sup> As I discussed in Chapter III, while the diaspora figures in the national imaginary of Haiti, its members were denied citizenship. The exile of Duvalier’s victims to the Global North beginning in the 1960s produced diasporic communities and

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<sup>269</sup> For more information, see: <http://haiti-liberte.com/archives/volume7-43/Haitian%20Workers.asp>

<sup>270</sup> For more information, visit : <http://www.batayouvriye.org/English/Welcome.html>

<sup>271</sup> For more information, see: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2014/12/haiti-prime-minister-resigns-amid-protests-2014121482811917796.html>

<sup>272</sup> For more information, see: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2014/10/aristide-supporters-clash-with-haiti-police-2014101102052475831.html>

<sup>273</sup> For more information, see: <http://www.defend.ht/politics/articles/2432-haiti-president-martelly-decides-to-respond-to-questions-of-nationality>

transnationalized Haitian civil society. From their hostlands, these hyphenated Haitians organized with dissenters in the homeland against the dictator, engendering the “Revolution of 1986.” However, it was not until the 2011 Amended Constitution that they were granted political rights to directly shape the public sphere.

On another note, the claim to re-appoint Aristide is not uniform among all social movement actors. As I mentioned in Chapter IV, the Left is diverse and does not share the same vision for an alternative development. In particular, PAPDA founding member-organizations reject Aristide as an option, pointing to his muddled agenda that they assert led to the first and second military invasions of the UN respectively in 1994 and 2004. Nevertheless, PAPDA does support protestors’ demand for the removal of what its leaders call an “Occupation.” As I maintained throughout the dissertation, the January 12, 2010 earthquake served as a socio-political opportunity for the “Empire” (Hardt and Negri 2000) to further strengthen its hold on Haiti. Furthermore, the globalization of the law in the American Global South through the transfer of Anglo-Eurocentric legal concepts and practices, the promotion of human rights and democracy by global governance entities such as the UN as well as the imposition of the “Washington Consensus” permitted the reassignment of political authority to international actors and organizations. As such, popular sovereignty was circumvented. Both the literature on social movements and the postcolonial nation-state point to the fragility of sovereignty in the Global South.<sup>274</sup> In Chapter III, I advanced that the clientelistic fractured Haitian state upholds the privatization of sovereignty to benefit a transnational capitalist class. Thus,

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<sup>274</sup> Cockcroft, James. 2006. Imperialism, state and social movements in Latin America. *Critical Sociology* 32 (1): 67-81; Ong, Aihwa. 2006. *Neoliberalism as exception: Mutations in citizenship and sovereignty*. Durham: Duke University Press.



democracy and constitutional order do not require equality among citizens. Instead, they are predicated upon certain expressions of inequality between the urban “modern” elites and the rural “under-developed” peasants.

Dissenters also call for the announcement of new elections, denouncing the unconstitutionality of Martelly’s stalling of the process. While radical SMOs like PAPDA concur, they nevertheless refuse to participate in electoral politics controlled by an international machine. The position, however, is a contested one among the founding-member organizations of the platform. Some like SOFA encourage and train women to take local office. Haitian feminists have a long history of collaborating with the state in order to push gender-based policies. In Chapter III, I demonstrated that unlike some black and Indigenous social movements in Latin America, Haitians feminists’ rapprochement to the state with the institutionalization of the Ministry of Women did not decapitate the movement. The lack of change in women’s lives and material conditions preclude them from fully supporting and integrating the state. Other founding-member organizations like ITECA identify these upcoming elections as a ripe political opportunity to organize and mobilize the youth of Port-au-Prince slums who remain “unguided.” The platform’s sole focus on rural areas reifies the urban vs. rural divide that underpins the socio-economic and political ordering of the Haitian postcolonial nation-state.

As I submitted in Chapter IV, disagreements between “chiefs” within PAPDA draw attention to the contentious decision-making processes in coalition-building. Some like ITECA and ANDAH diffidently disapproved of the Secretariat’s use of executive power. Others like SOFA and CRAD underlined the difficulties in coordinating overwhelmed SMOs with their own respective agenda. Nevertheless, instead of

disbanding the platform, PAPDA leaders continue to deliberate on different ways to pragmatize their radicalism. Their ideological cohesion as well as the unstable political climate keeps them welded. Currently, leaders are meeting to re-found the coalition and to devise new methods to re-invigorate the popular movement in light of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the MINUSTAH presence in Haiti and now the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first U.S. Occupation (1915-1934).

PAPDA's reluctance to advance a candidate also stems from its recognition of the lack of preparedness of social movement members to assume commanding roles. In Chapter IV, I presented PAPDA's leaders in order to highlight the socio-economic differences between them and the constituencies they claim to represent. It is precisely this gap that social movement leaders seek to narrow by informing and training the "popular masses." I contended that these actors function as a "Third Space" (Bhabba 1990), translators of popular demands. Thus, platform leaders utilize their positionalities to accompany members in their intervention in the Port-au-Prince public sphere, thus establishing a rural civil society. Unfortunately, as I demonstrated in Chapter VI, the construction of collective identity is not smooth. In fact, it is uneven. While leaders and members may share common myths of origin and resistance, they disagree on the strategies and tactics necessary and appropriate to bring about social change. During the three sets of three-day retreats that took place in northern Haiti in April 2013 to formulate departmental *cahiers de revendication*, leaders utilized Participatory Action Research to push attendees to imagine and express their visions of an alternative Haitian modernity. They engaged dominant as well as regional cultural frames in their endeavor to normalize the diverse identities and experiences of members. Electoral politics, religion, and the

“woman question” remain disputed issues between movement facilitators and participants. While PAPDA recognizes the significance of vodou and promotes religious freedom and tolerance, it does not incorporate religion as a dimension to its work. Additionally, PAPDA leaders advance a pro-woman anti-patriarchal agenda.

In Chapter IV, I identified the roots of the platform in the *Revolisyon 1986*. I presented and analyzed the history, organizational machination, as well as the actions of PAPDA to highlight its Marxist and feminist underpinnings. In Chapter V, I emphasized women’s transnational organizing as instrumental in the success of the Revolution as well as the subsequent ratification of the 1987 Constitution in both French and Kreyòl by referendum that recognized a plurality of identities, beliefs, ideologies, and practices including gender-based and family rights. I argued that women’s participation in nationalist movements not only spurred the building of a feminist consciousness among women but also among their male counterparts. As such, I asserted that nationalism is not always dangerous to women as postcolonial feminists contend. Instead, in the case of Haiti, feminism and nationalism are co-constitutive processes. Yet, these “new” nationalisms do not disturb the heterosexual foundations of the patriarchal order. Instead, patriarchy is “modernized.” The growing LGBTQ movement, however, compels social movement leaders to rethink their previous exclusion of the issue. Camille from PAPDA assured me that he understands the need to integrate these “newer” social movements into the coalition. Further research is needed to assess LGBTQ organizing and coalition-building in Haiti.

Conversely, race and ethnicity are not explicit features of Haitian social movements. As I indicated in Chapters IV and VI, they do figure in movement narratives

about the past that erect a racial binary of Indigenous people as well as enslaved and marooned Africans against Europeans and their “mulatto” descendants. In Chapter III, I discussed the construction of race and ethnicity in the Haitian postcolonial nation-state. The 1987 Constitution imagines the nation as biopolitically and monoculturally “black.” I argued that, unlike the rest of Latin America, Haiti only experienced a quasi-multicultural turn. The pluralization of identity did not include race and ethnicity in Haiti as it did in countries like Colombia, Ecuador, and Brazil. Instead the Constitution recognized gender and geographic diversity. In Chapters III and IV, I linked social movements to the dominant socio-cultural and political system, pointing to their use of cultural and political symbols to bring about social change. I emphasized that social movements are not always in opposition to the state. More specifically, they do not challenge the homogenization of Haitian culture. Instead, in Chapters IV and VI, I showed that PAPDA advances movement discourses about the present that subsume the “old” racialized poles into class distinctions. “New” social movement leaders identify the current struggle for power as one between landless peasants and landowning *Grandons*. Consequently, while they may collaborate with other countries in the American Global South against global capitalism, they do not organize specifically around “blackness.” Haitian social movements have yet to join the transnational movement of Afrodescendants.

As mentioned above, Haitian SMOs developed and maintain inter-national associations in order to counter globalization. As I discussed in Chapter IV, social movement leaders around the world work in tandem not only to oppose the neoliberal plans of the “Empire” but also to propose and implement alternative economic models. They understand that in order to change the world, they must master the use of global

governance tools. As such, they participate in transnational spaces like the UN as well as construct new spaces such as the World Social Forum in order to strategize and plan collective actions worldwide. Moreover, inter-national alliances help to de-construct what Camille from PAPDA calls the “double difficulty” that Haitian social movements experience. Communicating and working with the rest of the world disrupts the discourse of development that isolates Haiti. The transnational anti-globalization movement envisions a “pluriverse” world of alternative modernities,<sup>275</sup> in which every nation is free to self-determine without abandoning its connections to other nations. Thus, I submitted that translocal exchange in the 21st century stretches the boundaries of postcolonial nationalisms. Global South social movements, however, are unable to outline exactly how the post-capitalist world of insular cultures will function. More specifically, they struggle to reconcile the urban vs. rural divide in the alternative vision.

With funding from their Global North allies, Global South social movement leaders have strengthened or put in place solidarity economies in rural areas. Of particular significance to the dissertation is the transnational campaign for food sovereignty. In Chapter IV, I focused on the successful execution in Limonade of a collectively-owned and –operated peanut butter processing plant and seed distribution center. Appealing to individual interests of the population, social movement leaders transformed recruits into members of a collective with shared responsibilities. These “experiments” are rarely carried out in urban settings. I also argued that the local and global dichotomy limits understanding the linkages and interdependencies between social movements from debtor

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<sup>275</sup> Escobar, Arturo. 2008. *Territories of Difference : Place, Movement, Life, Redes*. Duke University Press.

and indebted countries. Nevertheless, the anti-globalization movement is an uneven exchange and raises tension between local social movement leaders. The inequality is particularly troublesome for PAPDA member-organizations that admit that their work is curtailed by the NGOization of social movements or what Incite! (2009) terms the “Non-Profit Industrial Complex.” As I stated above, PAPDA is currently meeting to devise an effective plan to break the bonds of dependency with its partners in order to fully self-determine.

In response to the recent political unrest, Martelly has appealed to the U.S. to send in additional troops to secure his neoliberal plan to keep Haiti “Open for Business.”<sup>276</sup> Among those projects are the ex-U.S. President Bill Clinton’s peanut butter factories that threaten national production by solidarity economy organizations like AFLIDEPA that I profiled in Chapter IV. Backed by dominant narratives that construct Haiti and rural areas in particular as “un-modern” and undesirable, and Haitian people as poor and unproductive, Martelly and his international associates are able to justify foreign take-overs of Haitian markets. For example, during his numerous extra-national travels, the Haitian president was able to obtain contracts with the Vietnamese governments to import rice instead of privileging local production.<sup>277</sup> The move, of course, is ironic and bamboozling, being that Martelly has vehemently opposed the entry of Dominican products into the country.<sup>278</sup> Perhaps, he is attempting to de-stabilize the Dominican

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<sup>276</sup> See for more information: <http://www.haitilibre.com/en/news-8076-haiti-economy-visit-of-bill-clinton-important-economic-benefits.html>

<sup>277</sup> See for more information: <http://www.defend.ht/money/articles/economy/4308-two-more-shipments-of-rice-to-arrive-in-haiti-soon>

<sup>278</sup> See for more information: <http://www.dominicantoday.com/dr/local/2013/7/1/48135/Haiti-leader-admits-he-lied-to-ban-Dominican-poultry>

economy in light of his vision to turn Haiti into the next best tourist destination in the Caribbean.

The unrelenting friction between political and economic elites as well as the protests waged by varying social movements since the ascent of Martelly to the presidency have served as a political opportunity for PAPDA to emerge unto to public sphere as a potential leader of Haiti's development. However, PADPA's reluctance to engage formal politics has omitted its leaders from national decision-making positions. Instead, radical social movement leaders focus on building power with the rural "masses" in order to prepare the next generation of politically-educated nationalist trailblazers. Yet, as a result of the high illiteracy rates, the lack of state infrastructure as well as SMOs' dependency on external funds, the material conditions of social movement members have not sufficiently been altered. The thirty years' worth of organizing work since the Revolution of 1986 has been mostly limited to uplifting political consciousness. For example, domestic violence is now a public issue when just three decades ago, it was taboo to even discuss these matters outside the home. Social change occurs after long periods of organization and mobilization. Moreover, global capitalism demands that dissenters fight transnationally. Bringing down the juggernaut will take more than just one generation.

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## VITA

### MAMYRAH PROSPER

Born, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

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|-----------|--|
| 2001-2005 | B.A., Political Science and Africana Studies<br>Barnard College, Columbia University<br>New York, New York   |
| 2006-2008 | M.S., Conflict Analysis and Resolution<br>Nova Southeastern University<br>Fort-Lauderdale, Florida   |
| 2008-2012 | M.A., Global & Sociocultural Studies<br>Florida International University<br>Miami, Florida<br><br>Teaching Assistant<br>Florida International University<br>Miami, Florida |
| 2012-2015 | Doctoral Candidate<br>Florida International University<br>Miami, Florida   |

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