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ASPIRATIONAL NATIONS: LANGUAGE, INTIMACY, AND TWENTIETH-CENTURY CARIBBEAN CULTURE

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Introduction

In postcolonial theory and literature, vernacular language has simultaneously symbolized the resistant pride of decolonial movements and has represented the long repressed inner voice of the colonized. Indeed, in much anticolonial writing the two phenomena are staged in relation to one another. In anticolonial narratives produced in the throes of decolonization and at the vanguard of postcolonial theory, thinkers like Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, and Ngugi wa Thiong'o asserted that the truly revolutionary voice overcomes colonial domination precisely by speaking in its own unique idiom, not only challenging and ultimately overcoming colonial rule, but also presenting a new alternative for collective identification among a people.[1] In the aftermath of decolonization (and indeed even as anticolonial movements were underway), scholars have adeptly identified the potential pitfalls of this revolutionary optimism, ranging from the native bourgeoisie's split service to global financial institutions and the new nation to the problematic essentialism that often accompanies nationalism to the capacity of oppressive forces to take on new forms after the end of colonization.[2] Nevertheless, the optimism and revolutionary insights of the postcolonial moment stage a political attachment to the possibility of widespread, collective social engagement through a shared experience of marginalization under colonialism and its attendant oppressive structures.

[1] See, for example, Fanon, "This is the Voice of Algeria;" Ngugi, *Decolonising the Mind* 13-5, 23-5; Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism,* 51-2.
[2] See Hall, "When was the 'Post-colonial'?" 247-50; Lee, "Introduction," 8-9; Shohat, "Notes on the Post-colonial" 104-7.

The aim of this dissertation is to articulate the transformative potential attributed to vernacular language in the decolonial era and the ruptures within the affective intensities attributed to language. I trace the anticolonial affects attributed to language through the concept of intimacy, due to its semantic ability to describe emotional states and the bonds of familiarity that tie subjects together. Intimate narratives abound in postcolonial theoretical and literary discussions of language politics. Postcolonial authors, critics, and politicians have consistently described major, European language use as a repressive tool of psychological domination, and minor language use, by contrast, as a symbol of a common, indigenous culture that uniquely represents the national spirit of the colonized. These affects then are evidence of the destructive quotidian influence of colonialism, touching the lives and psyches of the nation. Language and cultural change thus emerge as necessary components of overturning colonialism. This dissertation demonstrates that this idealized unity was in fact unevenly experienced and only partially descriptive of anti- and postcolonial life. Indeed, the diversity of forms of both colonization and decolonization suggest the problems of theoretical models that posit the revolutionary potential of minor language use.

"Aspirational Nations" investigates transitional moments for the uses and meanings of vernacular language by looking to a range of scenarios in the mid-twentieth century Caribbean in which vernacular and standard languages gain prominence in movements for national political change. I study two national contexts within the Caribbean basin through political crises and their aftermaths to demonstrate the range of ways that vernacular and national language gained significance in response to political crises. However, while the figures studied in this dissertation aspired to systemic shifts

rooted in the quotidian affects and experiences of language, their own attachment to the transformative potential of vernacular language did not account for the ruptures within the society these figures presumed to represent. The first case of this comparative study falls squarely within the era of decolonization: the British West Indies' transition to independence first as a federated state, the West Indies Federation (1958-1962), and ultimately as independent nations. As the region moved through these diverse national forms, vernacular language and culture were deployed to express the solidarities that underwrite nationalism. Vanguard novelists, poets, and playwrights of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s began to use vernacular language in their writing to formalize a new Caribbean culture independent of European influences. I specifically refer to George Lamming's 1960 collection of essays, *The Pleasures of Exile*, archival documents from the BBC radio program *Caribbean Voices* (1943-1958), and the periodical publications of its successor, the Caribbean Artists' Movement (CAM). CAM ascended to prominence alongside a socialist turn in Caribbean politics which gave rise to the Caribbean Festival of the Arts, a pan-regional festival designed to celebrate Caribbean culture and inspire regional solidarity in resistance to the forces of global capitalism. In each instance, vernacular art's reference to the shared experiences of local daily life was assumed to express collective sentiment and construct national identity in the new countries. However, vernacular literature often registered conflict over the cultural and national identities subjects were asked to embrace. Indeed, while authors, scholars, and politicians turned to West Indian vernaculars to express solidarity among Caribbean subjects, Caribbean cultural consumers did not always identify with the social and national forms language was called upon to articulate.

The second case examined is independent Haiti in the midst of the Duvalier dictatorships. Despite achieving formal independence from France in 1805, Haiti has struggled and continues to struggle for cultural and political autonomy due to a structural reliance on the global north. François and Jean-Claude Duvalier, who ruled successively from 1957-1971 and 1971-1986 respectively, notably continued the long established state practice of extracting resources from and systematically dispossessing the poor, but their excesses were novel in degree and in kind. In the early years of his dictatorship, François Duvalier imprisoned or brutally murdered citizens suspected of even the most discreet dissent to his regime. After his father's death, Jean-Claude Duvalier instated a new economic order of liberalization, producing an economic crisis that spurred unprecedented migration. To express populist desire for change, Haitian writers and activists began producing in the vernacular Haitian Creole spoken by all the country's people as opposed to the French spoken exclusively by the ruling classes, symbolically and linguistically addressing the entire country as a unified public and rejecting the terms of the ruling elite. Indeed, though French is the primary language of public discourse in Haiti, linguists estimate that only 5-10% of the population is fluent in French. Discourse in Haitian Creole is linguistically accessible to, and thus inclusive of, the entire Haitian Population. I turn to Haitian novelist Frankétienne's literary production in Haitian Creole through his 1975 novel, *Dezafi*, and his 1978 play *Pèlin Tèt*, to view the ways Haitian Creole critiques of the Duvaliers could express a uniquely Haitian experience of anti-Duvalierism. Each piece represents resistance to the regimes in a language seen to be broadly accessible to and representative of the Haitian nation and its diaspora. And yet, despite the purported linguistic accessibility of these texts, the unity they proclaimed in

their plotting and in their language of address was a fiction disrupted by the different affective responses of Haitians living in diaspora and the limited accessibility of literary text within Haiti. Nevertheless, affective investment in Haitian Creole's potential to transform Haitian society persists. I conclude my study by examining a new state institution, the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen, which is charged with promoting the Haitian language in the country. This chapter examines the aspirations of the Akademi to empower Haiti's people through language use as compared to the Akademi's political force both within and without Haiti.

My exploration of and intervention in these cases disrupts scholarly interpretations of minor language use in the public sphere. I challenge the confidently proclaimed correlation between minor language use and counterhegemonic discourse by arguing that language's capacity to represent marginalized life that spans private experience and engaged public participation is aspirational, flagging deep investments in robust and holistic systematic change. Through the close examination of literary text, historical context, and archival research, this dissertation demonstrates that minor language texts both self-reflexively comment upon their own limitations in describing national life and draws upon historical and archival sources that demonstrate public ambivalence with regard to minor language use.

I. Intimacy: A Useful Category for Linguistic Analysis

Scholars of nationalism and postcolonialism have long asserted a strong connection between vernacular language and national life. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* has done foundational work in the humanities describing the ways that the technologies of print culture and their use of vernaculars correlate to the rise of

nationalism. By Anderson's account, print culture in the national language produces the imagined nation by uniting a group of people unknown to one another through forms like the newspaper.[3] Anderson's account of nationalism reminds us that the ties that bind national communities together do not arise organically. In their essay "What is Minor Literature?" Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari deemphasize the vernacular as such, but do argue that minor literature is always collective, marked by the political.[4] Each text emphasizes the unique relationship between language and a communal imaginary.

Sociologists and anthropologists of language have approached language use as formative through the repressive means of power structures. Pierre Bourdieu, in his collected work *Language and Symbolic Power*, points to the ways in which state power and market pressures exert their authority (both symbolic and practical) to establish linguistic norms. Deploying these means to create a single linguistic community "is a product of the political domination that is endlessly reproduced by institutions capable of imposing universal recognition of the dominant language, is the condition for the establishment of relations of linguistic domination."[5] Bourdieu analyzes institutions that structure the state's relationship to its subjects (for instance schools, courts, laws) to exert the dominance of a single language. However, Bourdieu does not simply describe this as the prioritization of a single language; he implies the submission of subjects to this linguistic system through his use of the term "domination." Language thus becomes a repressive instrument of power, implying that those who do not wield the dominant language are secondary to and repressed by these relations.

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[3] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 33-6.
[4] Deleuze and Guattari, "What is Minor Literature?" 17-8.
[5] Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 46.

If Bourdieu's remarks focus on institutions of control, language's dominance exerts pressure across a range of social experience. The concept of ideology permits an exploration of the ways that a dominant language determines social conditions by looking to subjective and highly localized instances and to broader systems in which one's use of language (eg in elements such as fluency in the dominant language, accent, or acquisition of sociolinguistic markers) determines the trajectories and social placements of subjects. In other words, though language is regularly used in seemingly low stakes and apolitical contexts, it is constantly shaping subjects' placement in society. Nevertheless, subjects do not always reject the conditions that perpetuate their own marginalization—in this case, the use of a dominant language to which they have limited or no access. As anthropologist Susan Gal writes,

> Power resides as well in the ability of some ideologies to gain the assent or agreement even of those whose social identities, characteristics, and practices they do *not* valorize or even recognize… In this sense, some ideas and practices are 'dominant,' not simply because they are produced or held by dominant groups, but because their evaluations are recognized and accepted by, indeed partially constitute, the lived reality of a much broader range of groups.

Gal then describes a kind of oppression by consent, in which the hegemony of a particular language has come to determine the lived experience of a linguistic minority to such a degree that imagining another way of structuring the linguistic world (itself indistinguishable from the entirety of lived experience), much less openly contesting hegemony, is impossible.

While these accounts attest to the social and material effects produced by language use in society, this dissertation examines two cases in which the turn to national language as a vehicle for ideological reorientation signals a specific political trajectory from colonization to independence. Recent scholarship on the problems of colonialism

has been marked by a turn away from national cultures towards categories such as World Literature[6] or global literature in English or French,[7] this global turn occurred primarily in the aftermath of decolonization when the nation as an institution and its cultures had lost their veneer as potentially transformative venues for social action. As Dipesh Chakrabarty notes, "[anticolonial and postcolonial criticism] have also been separated by the political geographies and histories of their origins. After all, the demand for political and intellectual decolonization arose mainly in the colonized countries among the intellectuals of anticolonial movements."[8] While postcolonial critics like Partha

[6] See, for example, the October 2016 PMLA special issue on *Literature in the World*. While essays like Rajagopalan Radhakrishnan's "World Literature, by any other name?" critique World Literature for constructing a world into which certain texts are incorporated, Radhakrishnan's critique serves to advocate for an even greater openness of approach to texts that eliminates not only national language categories but World Literature as a category as well. This trend is not, however, uncontested-critics like Emily Apter have criticized World Literature for failing to attend to texts in their linguistic specificity. See Apter, *Against World Literature*.
[7] Simon Gikandi describes this turn away from the nation, arguing "It is in this sense that the nation becomes both the form that structures modern identities and the sign of their displacement and alienation… recognition of the ambivalent role nationalism plays in the construction of culture, and the insistence that culture can actually flow between national boundaries, undermines one of the key terms in the narrative of modernity—the assumption that cultures are, by their nature, national in character." (Gikandi, "Globalization and the Claims of Postcoloniality," 634.) The turn to Global Anglophone literature as a method for studying texts thus posits the flexibility of national culture, privileging texts and reading methods that represent subjectivities produced by hybrid, global forces. The Global Francophone turn is expressed in somewhat different terms. The trajectory in French studies, while sharing with the global Anglophone turn a commitment to the increasing irrelevance of national borders, is influenced by its own disciplinary and political context. For instance, the shift from "Francophone" literature to "Littérature monde en français" signaled by the 2007 manifesto, "Pour une littérature monde en français" is often rhetorically marked by a shift to a model of inclusion of all French language texts under the same rubric, rather than the Anglophone interest in charting the flows of globalization. See Thomas, "Decolonizing France."
[8] Chakrabarty, "The Legacies of Bandung," 45.

Chatterjee have highlighted the Eurocentric implications of nationalism,[9] anticolonial nationalist movements nevertheless orient themselves toward an idealized voice of the people perceived as a conduit for the rejection of colonialism and often for new forms of egalitarianism in the postcolonial nation.

Theories produced during anticolonial moments contribute to debates on language as a tool of ideological formation by addressing the psychological and psychosocial impact of vernacular language's relegation to minority status under colonialism. Frantz Fanon vividly describes the imprisoning psychological effects of the colonizer's language and culture on the colonized, distinguishing them from linguistic minorities who do not live in colonial conditions:

> Aux Antilles… la langue officiellement parlée est le français ; les instituteurs surveillent étroitement les enfants pour que le créole ne soit pas utilisé… Donc, apparament, le problème pourrait être le suivant : aux Antilles comme en Bretagne, il y a un dialecte et il y a la langue française. Mais c'est faux, parce que les Bretons ne s'estiment pas inférieurs aux Français. Les Bretons n'ont pas été civilisés par le Blanc.[10]

Race and colonization have produced a unique psychological experience of linguistic minority, in which a minor language is experienced psychologically as inferior. And yet, as Gal notes, colonized or otherwise marginalized subjects do not necessarily reject these institutions that degrade them. Thus, psychological liberation from feelings of inferiority is a critical component of Fanon's program for anticolonial liberation in *The Wretched of the Earth.* Embracing non-European culture is a necessary antidote to European

[9] See, for example, Chatterjee, "Nationalism as a Problem in the History of Political Ideas."

[10] In the Antilles… the official language is French; instructors closely monitor students so that creole is never spoken… So, apparently, this is the problem: In the Antilles as in Brittany, there is a dialect and then there is French. But that's wrong, because Bretons don't think themselves inferior to the French. Bretons were never civilized by the whites. Fanon, *Peau noir,* 22. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are original and my own.

dominance and its oppressive affects. By and large, the aspirations of anti-colonial nationalism are charted onto a linguistic trajectory in which nations and their subjects are newly capable of embracing the alter hegemonies that language synechdochally represents as they free themselves from imperialism.

Fanon's writing on language, culture, and colonialism usefully draws our attention to the psychological and affective elements of colonization. It is precisely the affective and institutional marginality of language that leads to its intimate quality. Indeed, as public institutions like the school and the state are the domain of imperial language, the private domain of the home becomes linked to the vernacular. Kenyan theorist and writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o famously describes the psychological imprint of the English language by tracking language use from school to the world beyond its walls. When children in the colonial education system reached a certain age, they were required to switch from instruction in their first language to English, corresponding to what Ngugi describes as a separation between the rich and diverse affective landscape of home life and the cold, doctrinaire classroom. Rey Chow, in her 2014 monograph, *Not Like a Native Speaker: On Languaging as a Postcolonial Experience* enthusiastically affirms Ngugi's claims, referring to her own experiences as a schoolchild in Hong Kong:

> Precisely because Chinese culture was devalued (even as things Chinese were visibly and audibly present everywhere in the colony), it became, for the colonized, a lesson in none other than the continual, disciplined *objectification* of an intimate part of themselves. This process… should be recognized as the condition a priori of the postcolonial scene of languaging.[11]

Marginal language becomes intimate both in its relegation to the private sphere and its capacity to represent a personal world of experience the colonial language cannot.

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[11] Chow, *Not Like a Native Speaker*, 45.

Within postcolonial literature, autobiography, and theory, scenes of the colonial school like the ones cited above abound as representations of the ideological process by which colonized subjects are psychologically and politically formed. Invariably, the colonial language is used alternatively to humiliate and alienate colonized children. Children who fail to appropriately perform colonial language are ridiculed by their instructors, and yet freely abandon this hard learned skill when they return to their neighborhoods, playmates, and families, free from the colonial gaze. Patrick Chamoiseau's *Chemin d'école* is certainly representative of this phenomenon, as are scenes in Ngugi's *Decolonising the Mind.* The protagonist of Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy* recalls memorizing William Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" in school in the Caribbean, fantasizing about chopping the heads off of nodding daffodils foreign to her daily experience. In *L'amour, la fantasia,* Assia Djebar presents a more ambivalent image: as a young Muslim woman living in colonial Algeria, her education in the French language both liberates her from social worlds in which women are confined to the home and alienates her from aspects of her culture and community. Despite their diversity, across these narratives we see a divide between public life represented by the imperial schoolroom, in which colonial culture is imposed as an alien force, and the return to an uncensored self in the intimate context of home life. Language use both produces affects, as with the schoolmaster who shames the child for using her first language, and becomes a symbol for affective context, as the child at school abandons the uncensored self but regains it when she returns to the cultural world of her everyday life.

Though these narrative descriptions dramatize personal experiences of language, they occur among an entire society of colonized subjects suffering similar forms of

marginalization through the apparatuses of the state. Thus, intimate psychological experiences of linguistic marginalization come to form a social world shared by colonized subjects. The intimate and the collective are linked through the experience of colonization; the shared life world of the colonized belittled by the colonizer because both intimate and collective finally emerges as public when anticolonial struggle and nationalism becomes a mass movement. Fanon's writing on anticolonial struggle in *Wretched of the Earth* treats social transformation as an extension of the personal psyche, and vice versa:

> Decolonization… focuses on and fundamentally alters being, and transforms the spectator crushed to a nonessential state into a privileged actor… It infuses a new rhythm, specific to a generation of men, with a new language and a new humanity. Decolonization is truly a creation of new men. But such a creation cannot be attributed to a supernatural power: The 'thing' colonized becomes a man through the very process of liberation.[12]

Fanon's description of decolonization tacks between the personal and the collective, creating new men among an entire generation. Indeed, As Elizabeth Povinelli has noted, Fanon's description of anticolonial liberation requires both the dissolving of barriers among subjects engaged in anticolonial struggle, and a profound psychological reorganization that transpires at a personal level.[13]

Thus, in accounts like Fanon's, the intimate aspects of language take on a public dimension. Postcolonial struggle requires the formation of a public that is both aware of the collective nature of its material and social oppression, and collectively transformed into a unified actor, an emergent nation. National language often came to play a substantial role in symbolizing national and psychological independence from

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[12] Fanon, *Wretched*, 2.
[13] Povinelli, *The Empire of Love*, 230-1

colonialism. As such, many novelists, poets, and playwrights of the decolonial period turned away from colonial languages to write in the local vernaculars that colonialism had suppressed through state institutions. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Kateb Yacine, and others began to produce politicized, nationalist work in local vernaculars both as a rejection of colonialism and as a nation building project.

Minor languages and cultures have subsequently been valorized for their capacity to express the unique struggles of marginalized peoples and to voice opposition to majority culture and its repressive manifestations. The editors of the collected work *Nature and Context of Minority Discourse* argue that "for many minorities, culture is not a mere superstructure; all too often, in an ironic twist of Sartrean phenomenology, the physical survival of minority groups depends on the recognition of its culture as viable."[14] The work of the cultural critic, then, contributes to the physical survival of minority groups by instigating the critical work of recognition: "The very differences that have always been read as symptoms of inadequacy can be reread transformatively as indications and figurations of values radically opposed to those of the dominant culture."[15] Culture is not merely a secondary phenomenon of structures of domination, it is the means of domination itself. And, therefore, cultural resistance to dominant culture intervenes in the systems and structures of marginalization.

II. From Colony to Postcolony: Caribbean Trajectories of Nationalist Aspiration

Within the Caribbean, the relationships to pre-colonial culture and independence movements provide an important frame in which to understand language politics and nationalist movements. The Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean largely did not gain

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[14] JanMohammad and Lloyd, *Nature and Context of Minority Discourse*, 6.
[15] JanMohammad and Lloyd, *Nature and Context of Minority Discourse*, 8.

independence by way of decolonial nationalist trajectories that violently rejected Europe, either culturally or politically. With the exception of Haiti, none of the countries of the Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean have undertaken populist struggles for revolution that have ended in independence. The former French colonies of Martinique (Fanon's birthplace), Guadeloupe, and Guyanne are still part of the French state, and have never undergone a struggle for national independence.[16] While England's former colonies in the Caribbean are independent, they won independence through a series of laws peacefully negotiated in English parliament. Though a number of violent protests took place across the Anglophone Caribbean preceding the independence movements of the 1950s and 1960s, none of them explicitly demanded independence. These include the Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865, during which Jamaicans took up arms against English colonizers in protest of the Queen's decision not to allocate Crown lands to struggling Jamaican farmers. Nevertheless, the movement's leaders articulated their petitions from a position of loyal subjectivity to the empire, rather than demands for autonomy in the form of independence.[17] In the 1930s, protests against living and labor conditions in a number of the British West Indies often became violent, and many scholars consider these protests nascent independence movements.[18] In response, the British government

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[16] In 2009, Guadeloupeans instigated a protest movement in France's Caribbean territories that contested the territories' ambivalent place within the French nation, for instance the high price of European goods sold in the region despite the generally lower pay received by residents in the territories. And yet, these protests moved between national inclusion and cultural separatism, addressing the means by which the territories are included in the French republic while simultaneously using pan-African symbols in their protest strategy. See Bonilla, *Nonsovereign Futures.*
[17] Perry, *London is the Place for Me*, 32.
[18] Duke, *Building a Nation*, 100, 292 n84; Gray, *Radicalism and Social Change in Jamaica,* 20-1; Parker, *Brother's Keeper*, 21-3. Duke's account inscribes the labor rebellions within larger transnational struggles for black freedom; however, reading West

established a commission to investigate and make recommendations for improving institutions like education and health care in the West Indies. These protests ended in the continuation of British rule until after the end of the Second World War, and with the full support and even encouragement of the British government.[19] When the West Indies did gain independence, they did so via peacefully negotiated transfers of power, first to the region as a Federated entity, and later to individual nations. By and large, independence did not emerge from the West Indian populace's demands, but was the product of the theories and political projects of Caribbean intellectuals, coupled with England's own readiness to be rid of its colonies.

Haiti might seem an unexpected point of comparison given its radically different relationship to decolonization. The Haitian revolution is often described in superlatives. "One of the great revolutions of the modern world,"[20] it was "the largest slave revolt in the history of the world, and the only one that succeeded."[21] A revolution born of genuine populist engagement and participation, the Haitian Revolution has been romanticized by scholars, including the Trinidadian black radical and anticolonial activist CLR James, whose *Black Jacobins* famously and searingly told the Revolution's history. The Revolution's legacy nevertheless did not produce a state liberated from the oppressive structures of colonization, nor did that state continue the Revolution's populist participation. Rather, from independence onward, the Haitian state replicated many colonial models, most notably the relative disenfranchisement of the poor and the

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Indian events through international frameworks continues in precisely the scholarly trend this dissertation hopes to interrupt: reading a wealth of anticolonial movements through a single anticolonial framework.

[19] Lewis, *The Growth of the Modern West Indies*, 354.

[20] Fick, *The Making of Haiti*, 1.

[21] Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, 1.

extraction of resources from them by the elite.[22] Either as cause or effect, Haiti maintained a cultural and intellectual relationship to France, its former colonizer. Taxes collected from the peasantry were used not to develop Haiti's education system, but rather to furnish elites with luxury goods imported from France. This allocation of funds reveals the Haitian dependency on France in a number of ways. The willingness of Haitian elites to devote the country's resources to perpetuating an idealization of French culture arose from or perhaps instigated a lack of concern for the majority of Haitian people. In turn, infrastructure ranging from schools to manufacturing facilities was never fully developed. This in turn perpetuated elite intellectual and cultural dependency on France. With no schools or production of goods in Haiti, Haitians looked to Europe for higher education and consumer goods (which, naturally, only the elite few could afford). Much of nineteenth century Haitian literature largely imitated European forms and styles. The novel considered to be Haiti's first, Emeric Bergeaud's *Stella*, tells the story of the Haitian Revolution, but its protagonists are named Romulus and Remus after the founders of Ancient Rome, to name but one example. All was composed in the French language, rather than in Haiti's vernacular Haitian Creole. Thus, though Haiti successfully expelled its European colonizer, it did not achieve the full social and psychological revolution Fanon calls for.

If the trajectories of these Caribbean independence movements are more ambivalent than those proposed by prominent voices in postcolonial theory, the region's vernacular languages reflect this. When enslaved Africans from diverse language groups were brought to Caribbean colonies, those African languages largely died out, but the

[22] Trouillot, *State Against Nation*, 71.

contact among speakers of those languages and European slave masters produced unique linguistic forms that varied across the region. In the Anglophone Caribbean, enslaved people spoke nonstandard forms of English that certainly were marginalized during and after slavery. Similarly in the Francophone Caribbean, distinct languages developed, spoken primarily among the black enslaved and their descendants. Thus, Caribbean colonies were left with a linguistic legacy that bears traces of the colonial encounter and the colonizer's tongue.

The cases examined in this dissertation sit at the crux of political moments in which oppressive systems are contested and new forms of nationalism appear on the horizon. Authors and state actors use vernacular languages to intervene in moments of political crisis or transition, aspiring to produce popular public engagement through the vernacular's capacity to refer to intimate life and a common experience. As my discussion of theories of language and nationalism has demonstrated, this kind of connection underscores much of the writing on language and collective identity. However, to track the gaps between the expectations and desires of writers and state actors and the responses and lived realities of a population, I describe the transformation language comes to represent as aspirational. My understanding of intimacy as aspirational is much indebted to Lauren Berlant's work. In her introduction to an edited volume entitled *Intimacy*, Berlant frames intimacy not through the institutions through which we are accustomed to encounter it (such as the couple or the family), nor through its common sense meaning of innermost or private, but rather through its second order effects: the aspirations it represents, the optimism it engenders. Berlant writes that intimacy is "an aspiration for a narrative about something shared, a story about oneself and others that

will turn out in a particular way…People consent to trust their desire for 'a life' to institutions of intimacy."[23] In the context of this work, the national community and the state are the narrative about something shared and the institutions of intimacy that will create meaningful and robust lives.

David Scott has articulated the aspirations to postcolonial statehood and the narratives of overcoming that accompany them as anticolonial romance in his *Conscripts of Modernity*. Scott argues that theories produced during the era of anticolonial struggle often took on the narrative form of romance: "They have tended to be narratives of overcoming, often narratives of vindication; they have tended to enact a distinctive rhythm and pacing, a distinctive direction, and to tell stories of salvation and redemption. They have largely depended upon a certain (utopian) horizon toward which the emancipatory history is imagined to be moving."[24] By Scott's account, current critics fall into two major traps when approaching these romances, both stemming from a common source: either critics appropriate them wholesale, neglecting to attend to the historicity of those narratives, or critics find fault with narratives based on terms and problems produced in our own historical moment. Scott primarily undertakes this task by reading CLR James' *The Black Jacobins* with an eye to its formulation of the problem of modernity, produced for James' own anticolonial moment through a reading of the Haitian revolution. Scott thus attempts to recuperate James by claiming the Haitian revolution as romance produced a necessary critique for its time.[25] One might similarly

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[23] Berlant, *Intimacy*, 1.
[24] Scott, *Conscripts*, 7-8.
[25] Scott, *Conscripts*, 130-1. In later chapters of the book, Scott goes on to discuss James' relationship to the political disappointments discussed especially in Chapter Four of this dissertation, again, not trouble the kind of question James asked for his time, but rather

say, per Scott, of the cases examined in this dissertation that their aspirations were of a moment, and thus the right answers to questions of national independence posed by their historical context. However, through the concept of aspirational intimacy I intend to demonstrate that *even in the moment of their writing*, these uses of language did not correlate to the national publics they assumed. I am then pointing to a more fundamental disjuncture between the problem of anticolonial movements and the answer provided through postcolonial languages.

This aspirational notion of intimacy and its ultimately uneven affects in the practice of Caribbean nation formation challenges not only prominent interpretations of the role of vernacular language in nationalist struggles, but appositional accounts of an (ambivalently) idealized intimacy the Caribbean has come to exemplify in recent scholarship. Creole cultures have been celebrated by writers and critics and indeed, by Caribbean states[26] precisely because they defy national paradigms that romanticize nativism or privilege indigeneity. Creole languages are identified as emerging at the point of violent and intimate contact between Europe and Africa through the Atlantic slave trade. Édouard Glissant celebrates Caribbean creoles precisely because the meeting of Africa and Europe destabilizes a filiative quality of language, one that is invested in perpetuating itself at the expense of other languages and cultures. Glissant describes the Caribbean as a locus in which an idealized deracinated, non-reproductive culture has become manifest:

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debating its relevance for ours. I see my work as undertaking the former task, rather than the latter.

[26] A nationalist motto of Trinidad and Tobago, "All ah We is One," uses creolized orthography to articulate its diverse background. Jamaica's national motto, "Out of Many, One People" repeats the same sentiment in standard English.

> La terre antillaise ne pouvait devenir territoire, mais bien terre rhizomée. Oui, la terre martiniquaise n'appartient, en absolu raciné, ni aux descendants des Africains déportés, ni aux békés, ni aux hindous ni aux mulâtres. Mais ce qui était une conséquence de l'expansion européenne (l'extermination des Précolombiens, l'importation de populations nouvelles) est cela même un nouveau rapport à la terre : non pas l'absolu sacralisé d'une possession ontologique, mais la complicité relationnelle.[27]

Relation, arguably the central concept in Glissant's theoretical oeuvre, is here exemplarily expressed by the unrootedness of Caribbean history and life. In Glissant's work, Relation represents an intimate encounter with the other which consists in approaching the other not as a knowable and masterable entity, but in their opacity. Implicit in this openness to the other is Glissant's contrast between what he calls the root and the rhizome (a term borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari). While the root is grounded in a filiative and reproductive history, the rhizome is not localizable to a single place or tradition. Like the rhizome, Relation requires the acknowledgement that other beings, while products of a unique and unknowable elsewhere, are linked. The multiculturalism of the Caribbean, born of the tragedy of the massacre of indigenous Amerindian populations, provides the literal grounding for this idealized Relation.

And yet, unrootedness as an ideal is complicated by the real nationalist struggles for independence in the colonized world. While Glissant's investment in rejecting rooted identity in favor of opaque relation is intended to propose an alternative to the ideologies that gave rise to colonialism, it leaves anticolonial nationalism or indeed any other collective struggle with little to stand on. The kind of intimacy Glissant describes

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[27] The Caribbean land could not become a territory, but rather a rhizomatic land. Indeed, the earth is not the rooted possession of either the deported Africans, nor the white colonizers, nor the Hindus, nor the mulattoes. But precisely that consequence of European expansion (The extermination of the Pre-columbians, the importations of new populations) is a new relationship to the land: not the sacred absolute of an ontological possession, but relational complicity. Glissant, *Poétique de la relation*, 161.

overlooks not only collective nationalist intimacies born of shared social context, it neglects real collective struggles in the Caribbean he describes. Indeed, while nationalist movements in the Caribbean were complicated by uneven national intimacy, this was not necessarily the ideal diversity that Glissant describes.

In a similar vein, Lisa Lowe also identifies a form of intimacy in the Caribbean suggested as a challenge to liberal humanism that gave rise to colonialism. Though Lowe's scholarship is primarily in East Asian and Asian American studies, her book *The Intimacies of Four Continents* turns to the Caribbean as a privileged site for exploring the intimacies of modern capitalism and their others. Indeed, the premise of Lowe's book is that the marginal intimacies of colonialism produced the privileged intimacies that became the foundation of Western personhood.[28] Returning to Brathwaite's account of the intimacies between colonists and their enslaved caretakers is an illuminating example. Lowe seeks to foreground an alternative definition of intimacy that challenges the supremacy of the monogamous couple form and its imbrication with the establishment of the liberal subject. Her definition of intimacy has three interrelated prongs, all of which are traced through the Caribbean. First, she defines intimacy as a relationship between Europe and the globe that led to the conditions that made modern humanism possible. Colonialism produced the savage and unenlightened others against which Europe would define its own liberal humanism.[29] Second, she demonstrates that the autonomy of the private sphere breaks down in the Caribbean through the kinds of relations that arose in slave and plantation societies, which dissolve traditional distinctions between the private and the public sphere, as seen in relationships between the enslaved and white colonizers.

[28]Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, 19-20.
[29] Lowe, "The Intimacies of Four Continents," in *Haunted by Empire*, 193.

Indeed, the permeability of work and home was continually demonstrated by the presence of slave labor in all of Caribbean society.[30] The profits of colonialism in turn gave rise to the bourgeois sphere in Europe that made domestic marriage a more privileged form of intimacy. Finally, Lowe describes the contact of four continents (North America, Europe, East Asia, and South Asia) in the Caribbean as intimate, producing a radical mixing of cultures.[31] Like Glissant's, her work treats the Caribbean as an abstract ideal, rather than as a location in which struggles for local autonomy are waged.

Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant explicitly tie the kind of idealized creole intimacy described by Lowe and Glissant to creole languages in their *Lettres Créoles*. Published in 1991, the text is both literary history of the Francophone Caribbean and an evaluative, often theoretical assessment of literature produced in the region. The book's authors are interested both in providing a narrative history of writing in the region and providing a theoretical understanding of literary production in the Caribbean, drawing together components of the region's history to suggest certain literature as particularly representative of Caribbean aesthetics. Of creole languages, the book's authors write, "La langue créole. La plus jeune, la plus ouverte, car elle surgit avec la conscience plus ou moins claire de l'existence de toutes les langues du monde."[32] Creole languages are marked by the same kind of contact that tacks between close acquaintance

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[30] Lowe, "The Intimacies of Four Continents," in *Haunted by Empire*, 195-5. Lowe goes on to describe at some length the relationship between racial categorization as a tool used to structure divisions within both traditionally private and public aspects of Caribbean society, particularly after the arrival of indentured laborers. Chinese laborers, for instance, were seen as providing a barrier between black formerly enslaved subjects and the white ruling class.

[31] Lowe, "The Intimacies of Four Continents," in *Haunted by Empire*, 202-4.

[32] The creole language. The youngest, the most open, because it emerges with a more or less clear awareness of the existence of all the world's languages. Chamoiseau and Confiant, *Lettres Créoles*, 51.

and globality. And yet, unlike Glissant, this globality is local to the Caribbean in such a way as to not totally undercut the importance of national community. In their manifesto *Eloge de la créolité*, the authors of *Lettres Créoles* use the language of authenticity and inner knowledge to describe creole literary production, referring specifically to the work of Frankétienne: "L'écrivain haïtien Frankétienne se fit, dans son ouvrage *Dézafi*, le forgeron et l'alchimiste tout à la fois de la nervure centrale de notre authenticité : le créole recréé par et pour l'écriture. En sorte que fut *Malemort* et *Dézafi*… qui, dans leur interaction déflagrante, débloquèrent pour les nouvelles générations l'outil premier de cette démarche de se connaître : *la vision intérieure*."[33] Bernabé, Chamoiseau, and Confiant echo some of the postcolonial theorists cited above by linking language with interior vision and authenticity (though their terms have become passé), both qualities associated with intimacy. In conjunction with their assertions on creole's worldliness, we see emerging a vision of the language that spans intimate self-knowledge and intimate contact with the globe.

For Lowe, the Caribbean intimacies of four continents are idealized for their capacity to destabilize the liberal humanist forms of intimacy that rely upon and perpetuate systems of global capitalism. And for Glissant, the ideals of Relation, an intimacy produced by the radical otherness of beings, are produced by Caribbean history. It is precisely this idealism ascribed both to intimacy and to the Caribbean as its privileged locale that I destabilize in my dissertation by examining language use.

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[33] In his novel *Dézafi*, the Haitian writer Frankétienne is the blacksmith and the alchemist of the central nerve of our authenticity: creole recreated by and for writing. Such that it was *Malemort* and *Dézafi*…freed the most important tool of self knowledge for new generations: interior vision. Bernabé, Chamoiseau, and Confiant, *Eloge de la créolité*, 23.

The arguments I have traced propose, alternatively, a direct and engaged politics of liberation that take non-European culture as a psychological point of departure, and a capacious, creolized Caribbean as model for anti-imperial relations. All rely upon intimacy to construct idealized, antiliberal forms of relation through culture. Ultimately, though, these forms of relation are aspirational. Indeed, the gap between the theorists of decolonization and the postcolonial celebrations of creole culture demonstrate this trajectory. When Caribbean nations ultimately did not produce the radically transformed national cultures foreseen by the era of decolonization, postcolonial critics revisited language and culture to suggest a new generation of ideal socialities that were specifically anti-national, open, and hybrid. These newer theoretical trends, both in the Caribbean and beyond, tend to efface the nationally oriented movements that the objects they analyze describe. Rey Chow's exploration of postcolonial languaging cited above represents this trend by neglecting the nationalist trajectory Ngugi describes in *Decolonising the Mind*, instead arguing that the melancholy loss of indigenous culture is ultimately a productive mode for critical activity.[34] Chow seems to overlook the nationalist struggle that Ngugi describes, a decidedly unmelancholic embrace of origins not lost, but placed at the center of collective political endeavor.

This dissertation follows neither Ngugi's confidence regarding the vernacular's capacity to enact meaningful change, nor Chow's reformulation of Ngugi as mourning a lost relationship to a sense of self. Nor does it turn to the Caribbean to provide a model or metaphor for global intimacy, as Lowe and Glissant have. Rather, it casts light on the formation of national literary culture to describe both the intensity of authors' and

[34] Chow, *Not Like a Native Speaker,* 47-60.

politicians' aspirations to collective politics and their inability to achieve these goals. Though remarkably different historically, the two national literary contexts examined in this project converge around a troubled relationship between anticolonialism and national culture. Both cases reveal states in which the psychological and institutional rejection of colonialism and the development of intimate national sentiment have not followed the trajectories posited by theorists of anticolonialism. I examine the gaps between Caribbean uses of local vernaculars and the societies in which those vernaculars circulated. The authors and state institutions studied in this dissertation use language to portray a national intimacy that was in fact aspirational. Tracing the aspirational nature of this discourse fundamentally questions the supremacy of the anticolonial nationalist affects that have come to underwrite postcolonial theory.

The first chapter discusses George Lamming's 1960 book of essays, *The Pleasures of Exile*, composed in the early years of the West Indies Federation. The book's diverse collection of essays establishes a distinctly pan-Caribbean tableau, moving from a summary of CLR James' 1938 history of the Haitian Revolution, *The Black Jacobins*, to explorations of the Caribbean relationship to English literary history through allegorical retellings of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, to his own experience living among Caribbean migrants to London in the 1950s. Lamming offers an unconventional reading of the relationship between Prospero and Caliban, arguing that the Prospero's language is not only an oppressive tool, but a pleasurable gift available to Caliban for creative use beyond cursing. Lamming claims, "Caliban is his convert, colonized by language, and excluded by language. It is precisely this gift of language, this attempt at transformation which has brought about the pleasure and paradox of Caliban's exile…

Yet Prospero is afraid of Caliban. He is afraid because he knows that his encounter with Caliban is, largely, his encounter with himself."[35] By staging the encounter between colonizer and colonized as an encounter between two individuals in intimate contact around language, Lamming is able to attend to the seemingly contradictory grouping of colonization, pleasure, and exile, indicating a range of concurrent attachments, rather than an exclusive rebellion against the state operated oppressive phenomena of colonization. While Lamming uses the metaphor of an individual relationship to describe a cultural, and thus more commonly shared experience, the scale of the private, individual intimacy allows him to more effectively communicate the complicated attachment he describes.

When introducing his book, Lamming informs the reader that it is "a dialogue between you and me."[36] Lamming obliquely frames this dialogue as a pedagogical confrontation with the colonial past and its present, the presentation of a "value which you must learn."[37] Lamming's suggestion that conversation is a form and a model for decolonization and national formation foregrounds intimate contact as an anticolonial mechanism. This intimate conversation is not staged between strangers, but rather explores the shared history of colonizer and colonized. However, the conversations the text stages are continually disrupted. Through Lamming's attempt to uncover the ghosts of England's colonial past and his exuberant presentation of West Indian solidarity, the text is interspersed with accounts of misunderstandings in conversation and indifferent

[35] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 15.
[36] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 12.
[37] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 13.

interlocutors. The text's project of an anticolonial affective transformation is thus ultimately ambivalent.

The second chapter moves to Duvalier era Haiti to describe Haitian Creole's unique capacity to express the Haitian experience of the Duvalier regimes. While Lamming's description of exile's pleasures usefully complicates many postcolonial accounts of language as a state instituted method of domination, it flattens a range of creole linguistic experience through the articulation of a generalized category produced through the experience of exile. By looking to Duvalier era Haiti, I examine physical exile as a privileged status that produces a particular form of pleasure free from the political urgencies of life under dictatorship. These urgencies were in part manifested as a need for public discourse, which applied pressure to an author's relationship both to language and its publics. Frankétienne's 1975 novel *Dezafi* was not only the first novel written in Haitian Creole, it was one of the first literary texts published in the Duvalier years that criticized the regime (though only metaphorically). The text draws heavily upon another source of cultural intimacy within Haitian life, Haitian Vodou, by constructing its plot around a Vodou *bòkò*, a malevolent priest, named Sintil who is capturing people in villages near to his *hounfò* and transforming them into *zonbi*. Unlike the sinister representations of zombies in American television and B movies, in Haiti the *zonbi* is a pitiful creature, a human who has been deprived of an animate soul but nevertheless remains physically alive. *Zonbi* have neither memories nor free will and, in *Dezafi*, are used as slave labor in Sintil's rice fields. Scenes of violence and terror in the novel evoke the Tontons Macoutes actions against the Haitian peasantry, and the passive *zonbi* are widely read as a representation of Haitians living under the Duvalier regime. At

the novel's end, one of the *zonbi* is liberated. Subsequently he leads an uprising that ends in Sintil's murder and the liberation of both the *zonbi* and the terrified villagers.

Through these familiar and highly local cultural tropes, Frankétienne's novel expressed a profoundly intimate form of dissent. First, because any public discussion of the horrific crimes committed by Duvalier was violently repressed, suffering under the regimes was a personal experience rarely acknowledged collectively. Second, Frankétienne composed the novel in a marginalized language and cultural context unique to and definitive of Haiti, drawing upon intimate cultural forms to express dissent by invoking the unifying potential of highly specific Haitian contexts. However, the book's audience was limited, and while much of the intelligentsia celebrated it, its political content was only obliquely addressed. In addition to commenting repeatedly on the limited audience of the novel throughout *Dezafi*, Frankétienne subsequently published a French version of the book in 1979, *Les Affres d'un défi* that maintained the plotting and characters of *Dezafi* but differed profoundly in its aesthetics. As Frankétienne's language use shifts away from a Haitian audience, the book loses much of the intimate context and urgency of writing produced for a readership with direct experience of the regime. The chapter demonstrates the kind of understanding that can be assumed among a circumscribed group of readers, as was the case with readers of the Haitian Creole *Dezafi*. Such sociocultural intimacy does not, however, necessarily produce the kinds of public response a text might aspire to.

The third chapter shifts to media not encountered on the page, but rather through performance and aurality. The chapter primarily queries the relationship between national intimacy and diaspora, but it also responds to an issue set up in the first two chapters: that

of limited reading publics in the Caribbean. In the first part of the chapter, I examine the BBC radio program *Caribbean Voices* (1943-1958). Broadcast by the BBC World service from London to the Caribbean, the program featured literature written and read by Caribbean writers. The program's white, metropolitan editor Henry Swanzy established the policy controversial among many West Indian listeners of using West Indian readers for broadcast. What's more, Swanzy favored literature that made use of West Indian vernacular in broadcast. The program centralizes West Indian identity through the use of vernacular language and voices, but that this identity itself was a source of conflict within the West Indies. I examine letters written by the program's editors and scripts of radio broadcasts to demonstrate that many of the program's listeners protested these editorial policies, preferring more broadly comprehensible readers from metropolitan England. The linguistic regionalism projected by the show was in fact a product of West Indian coteries resident in London at the time.

The second part of the chapter studies Frankétienne's 1978 play in Haitian Creole *Pèlin Tèt*. While still a veiled critique of the Duvalier regime, *Pèlin Tèt* more directly represents dimensions of the regime's crimes, though it transpires in the Haitian diaspora. The play consists exclusively of a dialogue between two Haitian migrants in an unidentified city, an economic migrant called Piram and a political migrant named Polidò. Throughout the play, Polidò attempts to engage Piram in an analysis of his own working class false consciousness, expressed through desires to accumulate enough money in diaspora to retire in luxury in Haiti. Piram cares little for the conditions that produce his poverty, both in Haiti and in the diasporic city where we works long hours in a factory. Polidò's efforts to incite a spirit of social critique in Piram represent, again, a

veiled desire for Haitians to act against the Duvalier regime. The play was performed both in Haiti and the diaspora, and its plotting demonstrates the interconnectedness of the two populations. Indeed, Polidò's fear of political repression follows him outside of Haiti where he knows supporters of the regime are active. Piram, too, risks working himself to death in diaspora rather than suffering in poverty at home. These political continuities suggest unity between Haiti and its diaspora, just as language affectively addresses audiences both in the country and beyond. However, rather than uniting the two populations, the play registered the fractures of diaspora precisely through its use of Haitian Creole. A language of lived experience on the island inspired nostalgia on the North American continent. In both the chapter's cases, then, language falls short of authors' aspirations to cultural unity.

The final chapter examines the relationship between vernacular language politics and the state in the independent Anglophone Caribbean and Haiti, tracing some of the disappointments following the political transformations artists were calling for in the first three chapters. The Anglophone cases in chapters one and three examine texts that project an aspiration to a pan-Caribbean independent state, the West Indies Federation, which fell apart in 1962. The Haitian examples in chapters two and three call for a transformation of Haitian society to begin with the overthrow of the Duvalier regime. While Jean-Claude Duvalier was removed from office in 1986 in a populist coup, the broader social changes called for by the movement that ended the dictatorship never fully came to fruition. Ironically, the two cases studied in chapter four again demonstrate an investment in language and culture as transformative elements in Caribbean society. The cases in chapter four differ from the previous examples in that culture is seen not as a foundation

for national unity, but rather for political and economic autonomy under global capitalism. Though these phenomena seem to venture into the scientific dimension of the social sciences, for artists, politicians, and even economists the social domains of language and culture were seen as materially transformative elements in Caribbean society. In the 1960s and 1970s in the Anglophone Caribbean, the Caribbean Artists Movement, a working group of Caribbean artists who aimed to theorize and promote Caribbean culture, and the New World Group, a cohort of leftist economists and social scientists working at Caribbean Universities, collaboratively promoted Caribbean art as the region's best bulwark against neo-imperialism. The second section of the chapter addresses a contemporary organization, the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen. The Akademi aspires to protect the linguistic rights of all Haitians to have all aspects of public life made available to them in Haitian Creole, one of the nation's two official languages. Currently, the French language overwhelmingly dominates official state discourses and services, effectively preventing the Haitian people from participating in government and many other domains of public life. The Akademi claims that making public services, most notably education, available in Haitian Creole will psychologically and materially empower Haiti's poor. Texts produced in association with the Akademi aspirationally endow language with the capacity to shift Haiti's position in the global economy.

The project thus introduces a new critical stance through which to approach the role of language in the study of nationalism, colonization, and globalization. By reading literary and critical texts alongside archival documents, history, and state policy, I examine texts engaging with the affective dimension of vernacular language through a wider lens. This methodology is not intended to locate, or suggest that it is possible to

locate, a true value or meaning of language politics in postcolonial societies. Rather, this range of objects demonstrates the necessity of scholarship that engages a diversity of textual genres to provide an account of its primary questions. This dissertation's intervention, then, thickens the decolonial account of language politics by demonstrating the aspirational and affective quality of much literature and criticism, enabling and even requiring a new mode of examining the intellectual trends that inform contemporary scholarship.

Chapter One: Multivalent Anticolonialism: *The Pleasures of Exile*'s Plural Intimacies

"England lay before us, not as a place, or a people, but as a promise and an expectation."
George Lamming, *The Pleasures of Exile*[1]

George Lamming's *The Pleasures of Exile,* published in 1960, was written as the Anglophone Caribbean was emerging into a new, postcolonial era. Published seven years into his exile in England, and two novels into his successful literary career, the book is Lamming's only non-fiction collection; both Lamming and his native Caribbean were in moments of transition. In 1960, the Anglophone Caribbean had begun formal decolonization and was governed by a partially independent state, the West Indies Federation. Though Federation was under the British crown, it combined several West Indian islands in a single centralized government capable of making laws and distributing funds supplied by the British government, all the while maintaining Britain's power as executive authority through the authority of a governor general.[2] This political form undertook a number of major changes that significantly reordered the national identities of West Indian peoples. Not only were West Indians no longer English, they were nationally joined to other islands of which they often had little or no knowledge, much less a common sense of national solidarity.

Lamming and many of his cohort were actively working to create and promote literature that expressed a distinctly West Indian aesthetic. This was undoubtedly

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[1] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 212.
[2] Lowenthal, *The West Indies Federation*, 49. Though the governor general was to be advised by a council appointed by the West Indian elected Prime Minister, the constitution described many cases in which the Governor General must defer directly to the crown, without seeking the input of his councilors. See Mordecai, *The West Indies*, 39.

bolstered by formation of the West Indies Federation, and throughout *Pleasures* Lamming refers to the unifying potential of pan-Caribbean culture. Despite the large-scale political movement independence signified, Lamming's text attends to the highly interpersonal interactions that underwrite national formation by examining the quotidian intimate relationships that form the basis of national solidarity. Indeed, Lamming's West Indian identity emerges from the wellspring of friendship and conversation. Much of the work of *Pleasures* is in extending this conversation to the public through the medium of the text, perpetuating the intimate bonds of national unity. And yet, *Pleasures* departs significantly from both the literary trends commonly associated with decolonization and the theoretical contributions of many of his contemporaries in that it looks both to subjects from the colonial territory and subjects from the decolonizing homeland as intimate interlocutors in decolonization. While theorists like Fredric Jameson and Benedict Anderson describe the nationalist metaphor inherent in decolonial literature that constructs new nations as the unique addressee of the postcolonial novel,[3] and Frantz Fanon and Ngugi wa Thiong'o narrate the rejection of European culture that accompanies decolonization,[4] Lamming's text communicates both his formation as a writer in the Anglophone literary tradition, *and* as a contributor to a new national literature. Indeed, for Lamming, England and the West Indies were unthinkable without one another. It was in England that Lamming synthesized his West Indian identity, and where West Indian and English politicians conceived of the region as a single independent political unit. As

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[3] Anderson, *Imagined Communities* 26-32; Jameson, "Third World Literature in the Age of Multinational Captalism," 69.
[4] Ngugi, *Decolonising the Mind* 26-30. It is difficult to point to a single passage in Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* expressive of this idea, as it is the foundation for the entire work. However, Fanon's infamous description of colonization as a Manichean struggle is certainly one.

such, Lamming's decolonial conversation is multivalent, as he engages both the British colonizer and the newly independent West Indian in conversation.

In this chapter, I will attend to the importance of conversation as a linguistic form effecting a political and cultural transition in Lamming's description of the West Indian artist. The form of Lamming's text, described as "a dialogue between you and me,"[5] repeatedly depicts the transformative potential of language and culture in ending colonialism and encouraging national feeling. The dialogue that Lamming instigates is undoubtedly an anticolonial one, but the "you" he addresses is alternately the colonizing British subject and the colonized West Indian one. The dialogues represented in the narrative and indeed the form of dialogue itself foreground interpersonal affect in processes of decolonization, acknowledging the parallel significance of the colonized's relationship to the colonizer and to the emergent nation and casting the colonized as a critical interlocutor, rather than a silenced subaltern. Lamming's text is remarkable in that the seemingly conflicting positions of the emergent independent nation and the colonizer are collapsed into a single you, in a textual dialogue with Lamming's "me." Lamming's description of the imbrication of these two positions demonstrates how their intimate contact with one another through the process of colonization has significantly formed each, and that though colonization should be undone, the mutual formation of colonizer and colonized is not a relationship to be rejected. Language is not figured simply as a tool for producing decolonization, but as a representation of the imbrication of colonizer and colonized. At the same time that Lamming encourages the production of distinctive West Indian art, he describes the English language as a gift.

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[5] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 12.

Lamming's text is valuable precisely for its descriptions of the multivalent experiences of colonization. Though the economic exploitation and cultural denigration of colonialism have been harmful, by Lamming's account they cannot be separated from the productive fruits the English language brings to bear in the colonized writer. Eve Sedgwick's notion of "besideness" serves as a critical point of departure for framing precisely the kind of affective world Lamming describes:

> *Beside* permits a spacious agnosticism about several linear logics that enforce dualistic thinking: noncontradiction of the excluded middle, cause versus effect, subject versus object. Its interest, however, does not depend on a fantasy of metonymically egalitarian or even pacific relations… *Beside* comprises a wide range of desiring, identifying, representing, repelling, paralleling, differentiating, rivaling, leaning, twisting, mimicking, withdrawing, attracting, aggressing, warping, and other relations.[6]

Sedgwick's extensive list of relations serves as a useful reminder of the wide range of affects traversed by the colonized and the colonizer. In its agnosticism towards binaristic formulations, "beside" pushes us to think beyond those categories. What's more, the point of departure for Sedgwick's affective range is "beside." Lamming's text takes the proximity of subjects as its point of departure. While London, his exilic home, is certainly one locus of proximate relation, Caribbean diaspora leads Lamming to stretch spatial definitions of beside. In other words, the new national configuration of the West Indies Federation creates a group that might bring disparate populations, both across the Caribbean archipelago and in exile in the metropole, into new proximities of feeling.

Lamming's descriptions of flexible and multivalent encounters between a range of subjects in a new situation stands in stark contrast to one of the most famous scenes of

[6] Sedwick, *Touching, Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity,* 8.

colonial encounter, that of Frantz Fanon and a white Frenchman in *Black Skin, White Masks'*s "The Lived Experience of the Black Man":

> J'arrivais dans le monde, soucieux de faire lever un sens aux choses, mon âme pleine du désir d'être à l'origine du monde, et voici que je me découvrais objet au milieu d'autres objets. Enfermé dans cette objectivité écrasante, j'implorai autrui. Son regard libérateur, glissant sur mon corps devenu soudain nul d'aspérités, me rend une légèreté que je croyais perdue et, m'absentant du monde, me rend au monde. Mais là-bas, juste à contre-pente, je bute, et l'autre, par gestes, attitudes, regards, me fixe. [7]

Fanon's phenomenology is rooted in the dynamic possibility of encounter. Indeed, he looks to the Other as a method for uncovering his own subjectivity, using the capitalized O to represent the Other's fully realized subjectivity and autonomy. But, in Fanon's description, racism as a relational mode both refuses to grant the (lowercase o) other's subjectivity and reifies the other not simply as object, but object with a fixed and certain definition resulting from racist epistemologies. Not only does Fanon's scene of encounter end in reification and stasis, it is unidirectional. The unfolding and intimate conversation Lamming instigates is, in Fanon's account, foreclosed by the white racist's inability to engage with the other as a fully feeling, thinking, and acting subject, thus barring the black man from both his own self knowledge and capacity to (a/e)ffect. Indeed, this stasis in Fanon's account of colonial relation is precisely what spurs the necessity for violent revolution described in *The Wretched of the Earth.*

In many ways, Lamming serves as a foil to Fanon. Born in colonized Caribbean islands, descended from former slaves, educated by metropolitan standards in elite

[7] I came into the world, eager to give meaning to things, my soul full of desire to be at the world's origins, but I found myself an object among other objects. Trapped in this crushing objectivity, I begged the other. His liberating gaze, sliding over my suddenly smooth body, returned me to a lightness I thought I had lost, and taking me out of the world brought me back into the world. But just as I reach the other side I stumble, and the other fixes me with his gestures, his attitudes, his gaze. Fanon, *Peau noir*, 88.

colonial institutions, migrants to metropolitan Europe as young adults pursuing careers, both men encountered the state apparatuses of colonialism as both repressive and advantageous forces. And yet, their descriptions of the relations arising from those forces could not have been more different. As Fanon sought out political solidarity not in his native Martinique, but with the Front de Libération Nationale in Algeria, he distanced himself both from any identification with the French *or* his black Caribbean countrymen. What's more, Fanon's stridency harmonizes with the form of revolutionary struggle in which he and the FLN engaged. Indeed, violent revolutionary conflict between colonizer and colonized in Manichean conflict characterizes Fanon's work, and has perhaps, as Henry Louis Gates, Jr. argued, overdetermined postcolonial studies.[8]

Lamming's experience as a migrant to England during the experimental reign of the West Indies Federation provides the explanation for his multivalent affections, both via growing national solidarity with his fellow West Indians, and regular contact with the elites of the British literary world. West Indian migrants encountered many of the contradictions of British imperialism in their daily lives.[9] Given that they were born within the British Empire, they were British citizens, though racism and colonial policy prevented them from accessing many of the benefits of citizenship (such as access to prominent posts in the British army, full inclusion in the British political process, or representation in cultural definitions of Britishness like snowy Christmases and a fondness for pints of bitter). Thus, not only did governmental bodies exclude Caribbean

[8] Gates, "Critical Fanonism."
[9] Lowenthal, *The West Indies Federation*, 86; Perry, *London is the Place for Me*. Perry's work extensively traces this phenomenon primarily through manifestations of British racism ranging from limited access to jobs and housing (referred to at the time as the color bar) to displays of violence.

subjects from the full rights of citizenship, the racist actions and feelings of white Britons demarcated colonial migrants as “other” to the national self.

Critics of Lamming have in many ways often overlooked such ambivalences by tacitly deferring to Frantz Fanon’s model of colonization as a Manichean struggle. On one extreme end of the spectrum, Supriya Nair argues in *Caliban’s Curse* that Lamming saw literature as playing a fundamental role in the formation of anticolonial politics and history. As such, she ascribes a teleological and explicit intervention in the decolonizing process to Lamming’s work, claiming that “Each of his novels is a militant intervention into a particular phase of colonialism.”[10] Nair’s emphatic description of Lamming’s work as “militant” overlooks the aesthetic and political negotiations present as much in Lamming’s writing as in the movement for decolonization. Subsequently, she attributes to Lamming’s writing a clear rejection of aesthetic forms and identities received via colonialism. The teleological narrative she describes overlooks the ambivalence and indeterminate nature of each phase of colonialism and decolonization. Indeed, the unfolding saga of Federation serves as a reminder that the phases of colonialism in the British West Indies were quite particular, and developed in unpredictable fits and starts.

On the other end of the spectrum, recent critics have been more willing to draw out Lamming’s attachment to the Anglophone literary tradition. Beginning with Simon

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[10] Nair, *Caliban’s Curse,* 14. I include Simon Gikandi’s *Writing in Limbo* and Imre Szeman’s *Zones of Instability* in the category of works that heavily weight their analysis of Lamming towards a thrust for independence. Both authors, as evident from their titles, make more analytic space for the uncertain nature of Caribbean anticolonial politics. Indeed, Szeman argues that the West Indies as nationally configured by the Federation was only ever a space imagined in London (Szeman, *Zones of Instability,* 80-97). Gikandi stresses the “historical anxiety and ambivalence” (Gikandi, *Writing in Limbo*, 35) that haunts Caribbean writing. However, I find that each of these monographs is weighted towards interpreting Lamming as politically unequivocal, even if his texts are densely polyvocal.

Gikandi's *Migrant Modernisms*, scholars of the Anglophone literature of the 1940s and 50s have increasingly commented on the complicated relationship between anticolonial writers and the modernist tradition. Gikandi's account of this influence emphasizes the schizophrenia resulting from the creolization of European modernist influences and Caribbean traditions. However, J. Dillon Brown has productively outlined the liberatory potential of literary modernism at the origins of Anglophone Caribbean writing. Given modernism's ties to continental European cultural elitism, Brown boldly prioritizes affiliations between the Caribbean and Europe: "For these early West Indian authors, modernism was not, as postcolonial criticism sometimes assumes, merely an alien literary force to be rejected, but a potentially liberatory aesthetic with strategically useful cultural connotations."[11] Brown's analysis differs significantly from the claims of critics like Nair in his willingness to stress the connections between the Caribbean and British literature. My argument refuses to weight its analysis towards either interpretive pole. Rather, the indeterminate and shifting nature of West Indian decolonization is reflected specifically in *The Pleasures of Exile.* I focus on this book of essays for precisely that reason.

Thus, multivalent intimacies describe the aesthetic and political priorities expressed in Lamming's work. Formed by both English literature and Caribbean culture, inviting his English readership and his Caribbean countrymen into dialogue, Lamming extends the stories of his world to an ambivalent project. While the dream of

[11] Brown, *Migrant Modernisms,* 6-7. Belinda Edmondson's *Making Men* echoes Brown's claims regarding the formative influence of European thought on Caribbean novelists such as CLR James, VS Naipaul, and Lamming. Edmondson is more strident in her denunciation of these literary affiliations, and their privileged and masculinist role in forming postcolonial Caribbean nations.

anticolonialism and its manifestation in the West Indies Federation remains the enduring aspiration of Lamming's work, this work, and its writer, cannot but be polyvocal.

I. Filiation in Crisis

Describing the poetry of TS Eliot in "A Way of Seeing," George Lamming could have easily been citing critics of his own work: "His meaning has movement. And when you're looking here, it has moved there" (*Pleasures,* 64). While Lamming was politically and stylistically influenced by the modernists, in his own work Lamming's mobile meanings can be attributed to his efforts to speak plurally, addressing a host of "yous" at different moments within his text. Both his writing and his politics were born of a moment in which it was exigent to address multiple audiences within his literary and critical production. This relationship to the modernists, and Lamming's multiple interlocutors within his text, demonstrate the crisis of filiation described by Edward Said in *The World, The Text, and the Critic*.[12] Like (and importantly unlike) the modernists Said describes, Lamming found himself in a cultural moment in which it was impossible to reproduce the English cultural standards that had shaped his colonial education, but he was unable to produce new, meaningful literary work in his native Barbados. Unlike the modernists Said describes, though, Lamming's relationship to tradition and canon was marked both by the weight of colonial relation, and the fruitful potential of canonical figures like Shakespeare and the modernists, whose attunement to speech and literary revolt inspired Lamming's career.[13]

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[12] Said, "Secular Criticism," 16-24.

[13] In *The Pleasures of Exile*, Lamming draws a connection between Shakespeare's attunement to the "music of the earth" and the similar aspirations of the West Indian novel (Lamming, *Pleasures*, 45). In early letters to Frank Collymore from his teaching

This crisis in filiation is attributable precisely to the decolonial moment in which Lamming was writing. In it, the British were troubled parent, contemporary literary community, and venue through which to achieve political and cultural freedom. In referring to his colonial education, Lamming writes,

> The *myth*…is deeper and more natural. It is akin to the nutritive function of milk which all sorts of men receive at birth. It is *myth* as the source of spiritual food absorbed, and learnt for exercise in the future…It begins with the fact of England's supremacy in taste and judgment: a fact which can only have meaning and weight by a cutting down to size of all non-England. The first to be cut down is the colonial himself.[14]

Lamming frames English culture as received in the most intimate fashion: as a child receives milk from a mother. And yet, English cultural supremacy is mythic, implying simultaneous supernatural grandiosity and untruth. Further, the myth serves to belittle the colonial. The dichotomy of English culture figured as an originary and nutritive force and as deceptive myth encapsulates Lamming's ambivalent relationship to his own literary moment, and frames the kind of theoretical, ideological, and affective work *Pleasures* undertakes.

Lamming describes the work *Pleasures* undertakes through conversation, as we have seen above. This conversation takes place through one of the book's central tropes and a substantial representation of English culture: that of Shakespeare's Prospero and Caliban. Both the relationship Lamming narrates and the source from which it is derived work towards an unraveling of the myth of English supremacy. By retelling Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Lamming rewrites the work of *the* English canonical writer. The relationship between Caliban and Prospero has been utilized extensively as a

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post in Trinidad, Lamming referred to an interest in the literary revolt of Wordsworth and TS Eliot (cited in Brown, *Migrant Modernisms*, 18).

[14] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 26-7.

metaphor for the colonizer and colonized. As Rob Nixon has observed, from the 1950s to the 1970s, African and Caribbean colonized writers began "to unearth from *The Tempest* a suppressed narrative of their historical abuse and to extend that narrative in the direction of liberation."[15] And yet, Lamming's use of *The Tempest* departs both from Shakespeare and from anticolonial trends. Contrary to Shakespeare's and Nixon's abused Caliban, Lamming's Caliban uses Prospero's language "not to curse our meeting."[16] Lamming's rewriting of Shakespeare articulates an ambivalent anticolonial position. While the author manipulates one of the most canonical writers of the English language, his edition of Shakespeare's story dissipates the antipathy Caliban feels for Prospero. Nevertheless, simply negating Shakespeare's formulation of the antipathetic curse does not suggest a sympathetic alternative. However, where content is equivocal, form more clearly suggests an active position. Lamming wrests authority from Shakespeare by altering the text, but in doing so he removes the violent rejection of colonial language. Lamming's Caliban, then, asserts his authority without spurning the authority figure.

While Lamming does not by any means efface the oppressive history of colonialism in his text, his emphasis on the proximity between Prospero and Caliban describes a mobile range of experience that Nixon's "historical abuse" risks overlooking. Criticism on Lamming's deployment of the Prospero and Caliban trope is extensive and varied,[17] but generally focuses on the colonial allegory that is undoubtedly described in

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[15] Nixon, "Caribbean and African Appropriations of *The Tempest*," 558.
[16] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 15.
[17] The overwhelming majority of these readings follow Nixon in asserting that Caliban is an anticolonial figure, eg. Dalleo, *Caribbean Literature and the Public Sphere;* Joseph, *Caliban in Exile;* Nair, *Caliban's Curse.* Some, such as AJ Samoes da Silva, identify Lamming as anti-colonial in his political investments, but accuse him of an elitism that prevents full commitment to the truly peasant novel he espouses.

the two figures. However, allegorical readings of the relationship tend to overlook precisely what is relational about the figure. By reading Lamming's text through the generalized and abstract positions implied in an allegorical interpretation, rather than attending to the emergent relation visible at the level of the scene, critics tend to neglect the ambivalent and shifting detail in Lamming's descriptions.[18] In bringing the analytic tools of affect theory to readings of both the metaphorical and personal scenes of colonization and exile Lamming describes, the fits, starts, and ambivalences of colonization and decolonization can be registered more sensitively.

Two details that emerge in the local context of the scene are Prospero's internal emotional conflict over colonialism and his subsequent vulnerability. Prospero's proximity to and dependence upon Caliban render Prospero vulnerable, resentful, and deeply attached to the other that has come to be constitutive of his being. Lamming devotes an essay of *The Pleasures of Exile* to a reading of CLR James' *The Black Jacobins,* a groundbreaking history of the Haitian revolution that details the role of European capitalism in the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean. Commenting on James's portrayal of violent torture and abuse of slaves in colonial Saint Domingue, Lamming shifts the focus of his analysis to Prospero's affective world. Unlike the slave owners of James's historical narrative, Lamming's Prospero cannot undertake the same destructive

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[18] There can be no doubt that Lamming's text is an allegory for colonial relation. I mean to attend to an aspect of *The Pleasures of Exile* that I consider one of its crucial and often overlooked modes. One of the features that makes Lamming's texts difficult to read is their polysemy; in different instances Prospero and Caliban are individuals, in others they are representations of social phenomena resulting from colonialism, in others yet they specifically address the phenomenon of exile. This reading is in no way intended to be exhaustive of these different modes; however, it does hope to better illuminate a significant lacuna in scholarship on Lamming, and also an overlooked mode in postcolonial studies more generally.

actions against enslaved persons: “But Prospero dare not dynamite Caliban; for there is one slave only, one pair of hands that labour. To murder Caliban would be an act of pure suicide. But Caliban is more than his source of food as we shall see. Caliban haunts him in a way that is almost too deep and too intimate to communicate.”[19] Lamming turns his attention to the concert of pressures that move Prospero’s relation to Caliban, rather than emphasizing the material component of their relationship; Caliban’s laboring hands come to the fore of the scene, rather than the food that they produce. These hands evoke Caliban’s capacity to touch and shape the shared world of the two men, such that destroying them would be to destroy their common reality, and indeed Prospero himself. This interdependence and proximity gives rise to the shifting relations and responses resulting from being “beside.” By referring to Caliban’s haunting of Prospero, Lamming reminds us that both past and future form the intimate relation between the two figures. Caliban thus forms Prospero’s relation to his world as a present and unfolding scene, an indeterminate affective response in which the past is uncannily present and the future rests in the other’s hands.

Prospero as a narrative figure conveys an intimate haunting that is bound up in more collective forms as well. Ashis Nandy, a postcolonial critic particularly concerned with the psychology of colonization in his work *The Intimate Enemy,* helpfully glosses the lie that haunts not Prospero, but the English- a lie made manifest in the colonial encounter. Citing EM Forster, Nandy speaks of the

[19] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 99. Significantly, Lamming shifts the scene from one of generalized and uneven populations in conflict (masters and slaves) to two interconnected subjects. While Lamming’s model is not historically accurate, it opens up a new lens of analysis.

> 'underdeveloped heart' in the British which separated them not merely from the Indians but from each other. This underdevelopment came both in the form of isolation of cognition from affect-which often is a trigger to the 'banal' violence of our times-and in the new pathological fit between ideas and feelings. The theory of imperialism did not remain an insulated political position in Britain; it became a religious and ethical theory and an integral part of the cosmology.[20]

Ironically, the displacement of feeling necessary to continue colonial relation gave way to a new order of feeling matched to colonialism's reality. Indeed, the affective reality of colonialism is irreconcilable with its claims to justice and humanity. Thus, the heart must be hardened to neglect the affects resulting from the colonial relation, and cognition must be warped to reconcile itself to the colonial lie. While Nandy identifies the negative psychological impacts on England during the colonial period, Lamming's text describes the residual haunting of the contradictions Nandy establishes. If the British in the colonial period must separate and realign cognition and affect, Lamming's account deploys affect to haunt cognition. The feeling displaced by underdevelopping the heart persists in its haunting return, providing the key to working towards decolonization. Not only is the attempted dominion of cognition over affect unsuccessful, affect's return bears new dimensions.

While Prospero and Caliban are symbols from British literature that Lamming uses to haunt the British reader, the hardened heart and the uncanny return of affect transpires in Lamming's own life not on Prospero's island, but in a pub, where he and a white English friend talk about English racism. Lamming describes his friend's

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[20] Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy,* 34. Leela Gandhi's recent work on early to mid-twentieth century ethics in England provide a rich and detailed historical account of the "pathological fit between ideas and feelings" which Nandy describes. Gandhi's historical and philosophical account is a helpful reminder of the ways in which affect informs politics. See Gandhi, *The Common Cause*.

expectation that the two men, despite differing experiences, will have the same perspective on race. When Lamming dares to disagree with his friend,

> I am sooner or later confronted with a charge which says: 'You have a chip on your shoulder.' It is made with such authority, with such apparent regret, that my friend anticipates silence or a denial from me…He uses a form of rebuke which gently suggests my fall from a certain standard of concurrence in matters which civilized men feel no need to speak about. The current phrase is 'talking one's language'…when the subject is Race, naturally the whole matter is excluded as being no part of our agenda for serious talk… We are, by the ideal nature of our relationship already outside the order of such barbarous irregularities.[21]

The friend attempts to forestall any unexpected encounter by foreclosing the possibility of talk. His own verbal paucity is supplemented by tone, through which authority and an implied disappointment in Lamming couple with the dismissive notion that Lamming's concerns are the product of an outsized, biased reaction to issues of race. The friend wishes to avoid engaging with Lamming's way of seeing. However, this attempted evasion demonstrates the affects nascent within the hardened heart. By directing Lamming away from a confrontation, the friend avoids the indeterminacy of examining differing feeling about race. Such a confrontation would invariably bring the realities of racism to his doorstop.

What is remarkable in the scene, though, is how little language is used in the communication Lamming describes. The friend makes a trivial comment, one that becomes trivializing by the manner in which it is delivered. Lamming refers to the authority of the friend's tone, easily envisioning the scene his friend is attempting to stage and the worldview such a scene will perpetuate. In a scene in which so little is said, Lamming refers to the agreement the friend wishes to elicit as "talking the same language"-a language in which the black subject cannot in fact speak, one in which the

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[21] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 74.

monument of British culture and civilization speaks through the bodies of two differently raced British subjects in communion. In an effort to dictate to him both the nature of British racism and the terms of their mutual civilization, he precludes Lamming's "capacity for experience," his "particular way of seeing."[22]

And yet, the friend's efforts are ultimately thwarted when Lamming does, in fact, speak. Indeed, unlike the frozen Fanonian subject, Lamming refuses the silent position to which he has been consigned. Lamming describes the affective jolt that follows from his refusal to mirror an English understanding of racism and colonialism:

> He is horrified if I say that his equality, on the evidence of his charge, is an abstract equality. It does not grow from a felt recognition of my capacity for experience, my particular way of seeing. Unfortunately for him, it is not possible to dismiss me by branding me ignorant of his world, for that world is also a part of mine… He will now try to drop the whole matter by asking, 'Can I press you to have another drink?'"[23]

By Lamming's account, the friend is faced with his own imbrication in a racist system when presented with Lamming's world of experience. Indeed, Lamming claims that the British friend is unable to refute Lamming's claims that the British treat black subjects with racial bias because the two men share the same world. Rather, Lamming's subjective world of experience overwhelms the friend's abstract notions of equality. Indeed, the friend's conceptions of his own world appear reordered when confronted with Lamming's different experience of their shared reality. His recognition of Lamming's experience is partial, however—he awkwardly attempts to change the subject. Lamming presents us with the transformative capacities of not only conversation, but affect. First, Lamming's descriptions of his lived experience affect his friend's understanding of the

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[22] ibid.
[23] ibid.

world. And second, the friend is unable to articulate a response. Indeed, when confronted with a reorienting notion of himself and his relation to the world, words fail.

Lamming claims that his friend's affective response to the encounter demonstrates the contradiction between ideas and feelings. Contrary to Nandy's description of the hardened Englishman, this scene describes affect's resistance to being instrumentalized to support a particular intellectual understanding of the world. Indeed, the conversation reveals the effects and phenomena of being "beside," as Sedgwick would have it. The two subjects move in response to one another in ways that do not suggest a clear trajectory towards a particular affective or argumentative end. The friend does not articulate this movement directly, but rather demonstrates it through his attempts to shift away from the discomfort of his own self-understanding. And yet, his movement indicates a realization and response to Lamming. Furthermore, the possibility for this encounter both with one another and the racial dimension of their shared experience is a direct result of being spatially beside one another. As the friend is pulled in the direction of encountering Lamming's and his own experience of race, conginitive understanding finds itself in conflict with the shifting affective self.

This affective motion reverberates beyond the scene in the pub. Lamming refers to a number of sites of contact acting upon his friend's relation to the frame of his own self-understanding. From spectacular events such as the Notting Hill riots, during which young white Londoners violently attacked black Caribbean migrants in the Notting Hill neighborhood, to the quotidian scenes of daily Tube rides and Caribbean popular music,

scenes accrue to affect the friend's self-understanding in relation to race.[24] While the scene in the pub is a particular manifestation of Sedgwick's notion of "beside," the friend finds himself "beside" other subjects, and in an expansive network. The scene in the pub is not a representation, but a node of the growing tensions of racism in England. Significantly, Lamming attends to conversation as a mode capable of rendering shifts in English understanding perceptible. By engaging in conversation, interlocutors become mutual players in the unfolding of one anothers' self-understanding, an intimate mode of engagement. Significantly for Lamming, the individual conversation is informed by and reverberates beyond the local scene in which it transpires. In other words, London, as a city in which black and white subjects are newly configured "beside" one another, enters the scene in the pub, though it may seem apart. The intimate relationship between the two friends thus resonates with the racial tensions of a society in which black subjects are routinely ignored, black homes are attacked—and at the same time, black music "has made a most welcome invasion of the English spine."[25]

Importantly, Lamming's book itself reflects on race in a public form that resonates beyond the conversation. More than narrating scenes of conversation, Lamming considers the book itself as a conversation. In his introduction to the book, Lamming states:

> This book is based upon facts of experience, and it is intended as an introduction to a dialogue between you and me. I am the whole world of my accumulated

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[24] Perry, in *London is the Place for Me*, discusses the ways in which the Notting Hill riots unsettled Britain's sense of national pride in advocating and expressing racial tolerance. This phenomenon can be traced from the abolition of the slave trade, during which Christopher Leslie Brown has argued that England accrued moral capital by fighting African slavery, to Britain's war with Nazism during the Second World War. See Perry, "'Race Riots' and the Mystique of British Antiracism," *London is the Place for Me.*

[25] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 77.

> emotional experience, vast areas of which probably remain unexplored. You are the other, according to your way of seeing me in relation to yourself.[26]

Intimacy is articulated both as the world of experience of a speaking subject called "me," and that subject's efforts to engage a subject called "you" in that world of experience. Thus, intimacy is the collision of a foreign subjectivity perceiving a seemingly whole world of experience. Conversation becomes the form through which this world of experience and the other's perception of it might come into contact. While not a pacific mode of encounter, conversation as Lamming describes it requires a full immersion in the other's world of experience.

Significantly, the book is the medium that allows for this immersion in the other's world of experience. The book thus becomes a medium that allows local intimate scenes to circulate publicly. The book addresses a "you" that is both general through the fact of the book's open circulation, and specific through Lamming's reference to the singular moment of relation that the book engages with its reader. Lamming insists upon the public nature of the intimate scene; the conversation is not only open to any interlocutor, it is publicly visible. Yet, the conversation remains intimate in its concern with the interaction between writer and reader, a process that is dynamic and dependent on the world of experience of each. It is through conversation that the text attempts to become worldly, in Edward Said's sense of the term: "Texts are worldly, to some degree they are events, and… they are part of the social world, of human life, and of course of the historical moments in which they are located and interpreted."[27]

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[26] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 12.
[27] Said, *The World, the Text, and the Critic,* 4.

Lamming's own particular form of exile, his experience of migration to England, is instigated by his desire for an audience for his literary work. Thus, to migrate for Lamming is to escape literary solitude, and indeed to become worldly by virtue of being read. One of the pleasures of Lamming's exile is his ability to enter into new social worlds. It bears remarking that pleasure is an affect profoundly neglected both by scholars of Lamming and by postcolonial studies. While many postcolonial theorists remark upon the pleasures taken by the colonizer at the expense of the colonized, pleasure as a mode of feeling available to the colonized is neglected, or generally considered as something enjoyed despite the colonizer's efforts, and even as an act of subversion. In her reading of Lamming, Helen Tiffin describes Prospero's gifts as "seem[ing] to offer pleasure… but it in fact occlude the facts of the present and true meaning of the Empire."[28] Such a statement intentionally ignores Lamming's own theorization of the ambivalence and fruitfulness of language. While the colonial encounter, in both its textual and unmediated forms, produces vulnerability, pleasures accompany attachment, and particularly in a writer seeking a reading audience.

And yet, the pleasures of readerships are a substitute for Lamming's desired engaged nationalist Caribbean public. In "The Occasion for Speaking," one of the book's most famous essays, Lamming writes at length of the irrelevance of the West Indian novel in the West Indies. Citing peasant illiteracy, middle class indifference, and an education system that treats reading as an exercise to be mastered for an examination, Lamming claims that West Indian novels are little more than "handy broomsticks that the new nationalist will wave at a foreigner who asks the rude question: 'What can your

[28] Tiffin, "The Novels of George Lamming," 59.

people do except doze?'"[29] Rather than seeing the West Indian novel as an expression of and engagement with nationalist culture, the politician sees it only as an example of intellectual labor. As such, the West Indies has become an unliveable, even destructive place for West Indian novelists; Lamming describes the West Indies as a "lonely desert of mass indifference."[30] The lack of audience for the West Indian writer is thus framed as loneliness, an absence of intimacy. This leads to a characteristically mixed response in Lamming: "This may be the dilemma of the West Indian writer abroad: that he hungers for nourishment from a soil that he (as an ordinary citizen) could not at present endure. The pleasure and paradox of my own exile is that I belong wherever I am."[31] The pleasures of readership are thus ambivalent ones. Nevertheless, exile is framed as both a pleasurable and necessary state, because it provides the author with an audience. And, as I have argued above, this audience is also desired for its ability to enter into the particular conversation the author needs: the discussion of colonial history necessary to decolonization.

And yet, the ambivalence of Lamming's exile is not simply a result of West Indian indifference; the pleasures of the colonial encounter in the metropole are equivocally described. Lamming narrates Caliban's response to Prospero as similarly ambivalent in its violent tendencies. While "Caliban plots murder against Prospero," this is "not in hatred, and not in fear, but out of a deep sense of betrayal."[32] Caliban's response to Prospero is explicitly named, unlike Prospero's, but Lamming retains much of the uncanny haunting Prospero experiences through the term "betrayal." Betrayal

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[29] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 46.
[30] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 41.
[31] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 50.
[32] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 14.

refers to an antecedent understanding or implicit promise that gains a new affective significance when it is broken or unfulfilled. Because it is unfulfilled, the promise haunts the betrayed subject. Lamming refers to this implicit trust and betrayal in other places as a "lie.[33]" Like a betrayal, a lie is preceded by an assumption of truth. Not only are these contemporaneous states grounded in past attachment whose traces they bear, they describe the trajectory of a relationship that is more than merely contractual. Betrayal and lying mark not only an intention to truthfulness, but refer to a broader range of affective desires for a mutually sustaining and intimate relation of equals. This desire, its disappointment, and the mutual recognition of its disappointment bind Prospero and Caliban together in intimate recognition, but one whose future is importantly open. While both plot murder against each other, Lamming does not describe murder as the only future that awaits them.

And yet, the length to which Lamming goes to describe past betrayals establishes the affective ground for the construction of decolonization. Lamming indeed sees this gift not only as an opportunity for a reckoning, but for a shared future:

> I am a direct descendent of Prospero worshipping in the same temple of endeavor, using his legacy of language-not to curse our meeting-but to push it further, reminding descendants of both sides that what's done is done, and can only be seen as the soil from which other gifts, or the same gift endowed with different meanings, may grow towards a future which is colonized by our acts in this moment, but which must always remain open.[34]

In this passage, the mausoleum of British literature becomes, instead, a temple of literary endeavor, one in which Prospero and Caliban worship side by side. This quotation is much beloved by Lamming scholars, who largely focus on his rejection of British literary

[33] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 157.
[34] ibid.

history without attending to his investments and attachments to that same tradition.[35] Significantly, the figure frames literary history as a relation between two individuals. The figure becomes literal in Lamming's reference to his own artistic practice. Lamming's description emphasizes first, that language and literary history are a gift. Language is the gift that provides an opportunity for the conversation Lamming demands, and also is the occasion for new *literary* creation. While Lamming calls for these relational and literary forms to be new and open, he significantly highlights that the origins of colonial relation cannot be undone. Rather than calling for a (impossible) process that would erase the history of colonization, Lamming demands an open approach to the future that both parties must enter together.

What's more, the book performs the future Lamming articulates as conditional. Though he states that "the same gift endowed with different meanings *may* grow towards a future," (emphasis mine) he is already colonizing that future by endowing Shakespeare's play with different meanings. Though blasphemous, his writing is not a curse, but rather a contemporary gesture into both the past and future of literary tradition. Lamming alters the interpretation of canon texts, affecting a literary past which has been used to destructive ends in colonial education. Rewriting the past via literary canon transforms the present under Lamming's feet, in that Lamming writes himself into the contemporary literary scene as an inheritor of a literary tradition, one that he also becomes capable of shifting by writing himself into future versions of the canon. He thus forms the indeterminate future, modifying his own statement on the future's contingency.

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[35] See Hulme, "Reading from Elsewhere," 229; Mukherjee, *What is a Classic?* 121; Nair, "Caribbean Ecopoetics," 178; Nixon, "Appropriations of *The Tempest*," 558.

Despite colonial efforts to devalue non-Western languages and literary forms, Lamming demonstrates that literary history and future are well within the colonized writer's sphere of influence. In other words, colonization of the West Indian imagination is not a total process, but rather a dynamic conversation in which both literary history and future and shaped by the colonial voice. Indeed, conversation is the very form by which this shaping happens. If both have been touched, both have also touched one another. Not only are Prospero and Caliban engaged in a conversation determined by both interlocutors, the conversation is prompted by the mutually acknowledged necessity of decolonization. Both desire an end to colonialism, and each depends upon the other to end the colonial relationship. Lamming insists that this relationship originates in a shared history that continues to determine the contemporary moment, and thus necessarily influences the future. Lamming's text fully animates the ways in which Prospero and Caliban are beside one another through his use of the conjunction "and" to describe the conversation that colonizer and colonized must enter into. And yet, he also repeatedly calls for an encounter that would free Prospero and Caliban from the past that binds them, without ever precluding a shared future between them. Prospero and Caliban are thus bound to one another through a history that has constituted them both, and that they cannot erase, but rather free themselves from the limitations it has imposed on both.

II. Emergent Affiliations

If intimate conversation with Britain and British subjects constituted Lamming's model for undoing colonial ties, West Indian nationalism, too, was formed through personal connections with other West Indians. Indeed, as Lamming was composing *Pleasures* alongside a cohort of celebrated West Indian migrants, the West Indies

Federation was at its apex, briefly ruling over a number of Caribbean islands. However, though Lamming experienced a shared sense of West Indian culture in London, West Indian national identity was a particular problem for the West Indies Federation, given that each island had its own distinct history and identity.[36] However, *Pleasures* depicts conversation and close contact among diverse West Indians as organically producing a shared and affectively rich sense of being West Indian. In Lamming's narrative West Indian identity arises like an organic compound, a combination of latent elements awaiting the right circumstances to emerge in a new form. In many ways, England as a geographical and political space provided the opportunity for West Indians to meet, frequently resulting in relationships (both political and affective) that ultimately gave rise to West Indian identity and decolonization.

Indeed, coming into contact both with West Indians from unfamiliar locales and often hostile Britishers (many of whom referred to all West Indians as "Jamaicans") created a unique catalyst for identity construction. Through the relationships West Indians formed with one another, they began to think of themselves as a cultural unit that provided the grounds for a common national identity. These intimate attachments were self-perpetuating as West Indian identity in turn fostered new relationships. In other words, West Indian identity transformed from a product of intimate friendships to a force

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[36] In addition to the recent scholarly trend among literary critics such as Édouard Glissant and Kamau Brathwaite to celebrate the mobile interconnectedness of the Caribbean, historians and sociologists have also attended to the modern Caribbean as a space that defies national boundaries. For instance, Charles V. Carnegie's *Postnationalism Prefugured: Caribbean Borderlands* discusses the limits of national identity in Jamaica, as well as the transnational migration among Caribbean islands and pan-Caribbean solidarity movements, notably Garveyism. I do not wish to deny these politically significant ideological and material points of connection; rather, I intend to discuss Federation specifically as a political form that did not resonate with the majority of the population it unified.

productive of friendship and, consequently, national identity. Once again, to be "beside" was to experience affective shifts that registered in larger scale attachments. London's role in this equation is not to be underestimated. The city provided the venue in which migrants encountered one another, the hostile new world they navigated as a collective entity,[37] and ultimately the political space in which West Indian Federation was constructed and implemented. As historian Gordon Lewis notes in his thorough history of the modern West Indies, after the initial Montego Bay Conference that began discussions of Federation, the two subsequent conferences were held in far-off London.[38] Ironically, as Federation's formation grew temporally closer, the location of its negotiations grew ever more spatially distant. London thus formatively influences West Indian statehood and its nationalist forms.[39] Indeed, the metropolitan location of this national form ultimately proved limiting to its success. Thus, subjects who migrated to the metropole experienced and created the West Indian identity Lamming describes, projecting it back to the Caribbean.

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[37] Kenyatta Hammond Perry's *London is the Place for Me* provides an excellent historical discussion of the formation of West Indian subjectivity in partial response to unanticipated British racism. Chapter Four, "Are We to be Mauled Down Just Because We Are Black?" particularly sheds light on the grassroots political and cultural formation of West Indians living in London.

[38] Lewis, *The Growth of the Modern West Indies,* 353.

[39] Notably, London was neither the only destination for West Indian migrants nor was England the only nation that played a formative role in West Indian decolonization. West Indian migrants in the United States (and black Americans involved in organizations like the NAACP) actively supported Federation. I attend to England in this chapter for a number of reasons, the most significant among them England's historic and formal role as colonizer. However, works like Eric D. Duke's *Building a Nation: Caribbean Federation in the Black Diaspora* and Jason C. Parker's *Brother's Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean* demonstrate the formative influence of the United States in debates over Federation, both as a site of West Indian community and a political influence in the politics of decolonization.

Lamming readily celebrates exile for the new intimate attachments it engenders (both to other subjects and the identity categories that then come to describe those moments of relation). Exile provides the opportunity to think of oneself as part of a cultural and political whole independent of England. Attachment to the West Indies Federation as a political form follows from its ability to represent a deeply held political and cultural dream: that of a Caribbean society independent of colonial rule. However, the political fantasy of Federation requires a willed forgetting of the exile that produced it. Consequently, Lamming's London experiences of pan-Caribbean attachment are projected onto the West Indies.

Though Lamming might have initially migrated to London to find an audience for his writing, what he found was a community that in turn shaped the direction and significance of that writing. While the West Indian novel's inspiration is, according to Lamming, looking down to the West Indian peasant experience rather than across the sea to England,[40] West Indianness itself as an organizing category emerges specifically within England. Indeed, upon arriving in England, Lamming notes an immediate shift in identity among the men who travel with him:

> It is here that one sees a discovery actually taking shape. No Barbadian, no Trinidadian, no St Lucian, no islander from the West Indies sees himself as West Indian until he encounters another islander in foreign territory. It was only when the Barbadian childhood corresponded with the Grenadian or the Guianese childhood in important details of folk-lore, that the wider identification was arrived at. In this sense, most West Indians of my generation were born in England.[41]

In the passage cited above, isolated intimate memories and experiences are found to share common features, producing community. This intimacy is not the result of long personal

[40] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 39.
[41] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 214.

acquaintance, but rather the immediate discovery that experience is not private, but collective. By identifying common folk traditions, as well as the experiences that result from these cultural forms, these men from disparate West Indian locations both identify a shared history and form new emotional bonds with one another. What's more, these emotional bonds and shared histories produce new self-understanding. I use self-understanding here to signal both the affective composition of the self, and the broader cognitive, and even structural, maps which can make that affective composition manifest (such as a common history, a national identity, or a governmental form). In many ways, Lamming's statement refers to a broader African diasporic aesthetic and critical tradition famously articulated by Paul Gilroy as the Black Atlantic. Like Gilroy's Atlantic, Lamming describes Atlantic crossing as a framework that invites the reconfiguration of Afro-diasporic cultural and political ideas and forms in recurring historical moments.[42] Though West Indian identity is forged only when subjects find themselves grouped together in England, the histories of childhood and folklore provide the basis for shared identity. These antecedent moments refer both to memories and experiences produced by local encounters, and also to a longer ancestral history accessed via folklore. Importantly though, Lamming does not explicitly name an identity or history that is assumed based on racial similarity; rather, he identifies the activation of a shared identity via cultural forms recognized when Caribbean populations come together.

When Lamming narrates the scene in which shared cultural forms are recognized, identity emerges through the circulation of affect. Yet, both in the passage cited above, and in his narration of the scene in which he arrives in London among West Indian

[42] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 15.

migrants, Lamming's descriptions are grounded in an unanticipated emotional response: "We were on our way to London; and everyone felt fine. The old emigrants, men who were returning from holiday, were putting the amateurs through their paces… it was that instinctive return to our respective roots that made for a different kind of confidence. The Boys had now turned the coach into a West Indian occasion. They joked; some sang; and the experiences of childhood were always on the agenda."[43] Lamming indicates that conversation and sharing, and their attendant human contact, produce West Indian identity. The coach is not a West Indian occasion until the intimate sharing of songs, jokes, and common childhood memories begins. He describes both the past and the future, by way of personal and cultural history and a new West Indian identity respectively. While the cultural roots of different subjects in the train car are described as originating in separate islands, the new confidence the men discover together is collective. However, it is significantly born of encountering other West Indians in London and enacting a particular social form, the "West Indian Occasion," which must be produced by the Boys. Nevertheless this collective confidence is local to a scene of West Indian experience. It is intimate in its availability to only those who share the circumscribed space of the train car.

The dynamic interrelations of the train are most immediately evident in the exchange of shared cultural forms. However, Lamming also identifies the formative affective influence of the old emigrants. The affective recognition among the emigrants refers not only to West Indian experience, but repeated patterns within exile itself. The new emigrants reiterate a familiar scene of ignorance that marks them as belonging to a

[43] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 214.

recognizable group. By repeating the old emigrant's own ignorance upon their arrival in England, the new emigrants replicate a pattern of relation that allows for the continuation of West Indian identity as consistent and recognizable.[44] It is precisely the old emigrants's response that marks the new emigrants as belonging to a community; by putting the amateurs through their paces, the old emigrants signal their investment in and identification with those same men. The new emigrants become conscripts of the West Indian occasion; they are not legible as West Indian until the older emigrants read them as such. Through the authority of the old emigrants, all men return to their respective roots now identified as a point of commonality among them. It is thus not the erasure of difference, but the concurrence of unity and individual pasts that generates the intimate gestures of the newly formed group, the Boys.

The kind of migrant scene that Lamming describes has been extensively remarked upon following the recent scholarly interest in the transnational as a mode of analysis in the humanities and social sciences. Scholars across diverse fields have commented upon the new kinds of social organization resulting from the increased ease with which bodies, ideas, and capital traverse borders.[45] Within the Caribbean specifically, scholars have

[44] While my reading is primarily concerned with the affective stances assumed and replicated in this scene, West Indians in London were actively involved in creating institutions that would promote West Indian interests and indeed, formed a West Indian identity. For instance the West Indian Students Union published a cultural newspaper, in addition to sponsoring educational opportunities such as reading groups and advocating for a West Indian University. Importantly, this Student Union was formed by men who would become the major leaders in the West Indies Federation and subsequent Caribbean politics, such as Forbes Burnham, Michael Manley, and Errol Barrow. Chamberlain, *Empire and Nation Building*, 186.

[45] It is beyond the scope of this project to provide an exhaustive review of the literature on transnationalism as a phenomenon. Some critical texts include Cassanova, *The World Republic of Letters*; Hardt and Negri, *Empire*; Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*

commented upon the migration of prominent cultural figures such as Lamming, VS Naipaul, CLR James, and Edgar Mittelholzer from the Caribbean to England. As noted in the first section of this chapter, these writers were often conflicted about migration. Many felt a strong and often nationalist attachment to the Caribbean, while simultaneously craving the opportunities and recognition their work received in England.[46] Nevertheless, given that Lamming's migration to London was both voluntary and undertaken among friends and colleagues, his use of the term "exile" to describe his experiences of an emergent sense of identity and strong intimate friendships in London does not seem to correspond to scholarship on exile. Rather, exile is characterized by isolation, both from cultural solidarity and personal intimacy. Though exile has been used to describe a number of different states, separation from, rather than discovery of, local and national identity underwrite historical and contemporary understandings of exile. As Edward Said reminds us in his evocative description of Palestinian exiles, "Reflections on Exile," "exile originated in the age old practice of banishment."[47] Said thus claims that exile is a forced condition, one in which return is similarly forcibly prevented. From this practice of exclusion, the nation is able to establish its boundaries of inclusivity. Lamming was

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vols 1-4. I give a brief review of a constellation of concepts central to my analysis of Lamming below.

[46] See Brown, *Migrant Modernism,* 19-20; Gikandi, *Writing In Limbo,* 34-5; Nair, *Caliban's Curse,* 19-20; Pouchet-Paquet, *The Novels of George Lamming,* 44-5; Szeman, *Zones of Instability*, 73. VS Naipaul and Edgar Mittelholzer are notable exception to this statement. Both were quite happy to leave the Caribbean permanently, and held little regard for its culture.

[47] Said, "Reflections on Exile," 181.

not forced to leave his home by threat of physical violence, either from the state or civil society, and while he does express a desire to return, he choses not do so.[48]

Furthermore, the issue of an exile's exclusion from the nation is particularly ill suited to the case of West Indian migrants to London. Lamming's relation to nationalism is highly complicated-as he notes upon his arrival in England, "Our colonial status condemned us unfortunately to the full rights of citizenship. In no circumstances could we qualify for deportation. There was no going back."[49] While Lamming and his West Indian cohort were estranged from the islands of their birth, by virtue of colonialism and Caribbean subjects' temporal and geographical remove from any other form of identity, their national identity was only thinkable through relation to England. And yet, ironically London for Lamming marks the beginning of a West Indian identity, producing a sense of being alienated from a homeland while one is legally at the heart of empire.

Disregarding the question of nation and rights, even more tempered accounts of exile foreground the notion of solitude, either resulting from a loss national identity or individual intimates.[50] Lamming's description of London, on the contrary, is full of deep affective bonds. In addition to the transformative scenes on the train, Lamming describes navigating London as a struggling writer and a young man as transformed by the presence of friends. Echoing the intimate ship's berth and the train car, the boarding

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[48]The question of choice is not to be taken lightly in the case of the colonial subject. As Ngugi wa Thiong'o has argued in *Moving the Center: The Struggle for Cultural Freedoms*, the question of chosen exile is particularly fraught for the colonial intellectual whose only educational opportunities are available by way of the metropolitan center. As the previous section of this chapter argues, Lamming's intimate attachment to British cultural institutions differs importantly from Ngugi's own literary and political activities. For a thorough treatment of the histories and debates surrounding the term exile, see Kaplan, *Questions of Travel.*

[49] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 212.

[50] Kaplan, *Questions of Travel*, 28.

house room Lamming shares with three other men comes to be a site of transnational identification forged in personal relationships. Lamming and his friends collaboratively and mischievously share resources and insights as they navigate London. Lamming's relationship with Sam Selvon becomes a constant undercurrent of his descriptions of life in London, a confrère in writing and a financial support in times of difficulty. Lamming recounts of his early days in London that "It was about this time that I really got to know Selvon; for he is an extremely gentle man, and his modesty makes for misunderstanding what he really is. I learnt then… that he had a great generosity of heart"[51] which leads Selvon to give Lamming the coat off his back. However Selvon is mischievous like the Boys, demonstrated by his skill as a master at the invention of clever nicknames[52] and the antics the two men undertake together at the boarding house where they live. The two men board with two African migrants to London, a Ghanian medical student and a Nigerian the men refer to as Mate. Through this assemblage, the West Indian connection represented by Selvon and Lamming's friendship gains a pan-African dimension.

While Lamming has left behind both his native Barbados and attachments that span scales, from his mother to his village to his island, as he depicts in his first novel *In the Castle of my Skin*, *Pleasures* rarely mentions pining for people left behind. When Lamming does describe attachments to the Caribbean, they are abstract. His descriptions of London, however, are full of detailed scenes like the one cited above. London is narrated as a place of deep affective bonds, both to individuals and to the West Indian identity that emerges through those individuals. Lamming describes a collective identity that is generated and maintained through a group's connection to a common place,

[51] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 223.
[52] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 220.

articulated in a different, shared locale. Thus, diaspora more fittingly applies to Lamming's navigation of cultural relocation and the community attachments that accompany it.

And yet, when Lamming elaborates on the diasporic identity of the Boys on the train by narrating fictional scenes of childhood, these memories transpire in and refer to the West Indies. In addition to representing the link between childhood and regional identity, these scenes are a metaphor for the West Indies and the diaspora that has created it. In one, Lamming narrates a conversation among four characters. The first three, Singh, Bob, and Lee, tell an English lady the story of the Tribe Boys, echoing Lamming's description of the group in the train car as "the Boys." Through the figure of the three boys and the story they tell, Lamming assembles the entire ethnic history of the Anglophone Caribbean.[53] Collectively, Lee, Bob, and Singh narrate the Bandit Kings' theft of the island of San Cristobal from the Tribe Boys, slowly killing them off with guns and disease. The children adopt the Tribe Boys' story as their own, and indeed the Boys are the inheritors of the island. What's more, they tell the story to a white English lady, bringing the figure of the colonizer (in a passive, patronizing, and feminized form) to the scene.

Like Lamming's narration of scenes between Prospero and Caliban, the Tribe Boys represent the Caribbean as a whole. The racial diversity of the three characters stands in for the different populations brought to the Caribbean to perform forced labor: Bob, who represents the enslaved Africans brought to Caribbean from the 17th to early

[53] See also Gikandi, *Writing in Limbo* 105; Nair, *Caliban's Curse* 17; Szeman, *Zones of Instability* 81. Notably, none of these authors comment on the role of the English lady in their commentary on the Boys as national allegory.

19th century; Singh, who represents Indians who came to the Caribbean as indentured laborers following the abolition of slavery in 1838; and Lee, who represents Chinese workers brought to the Caribbean as indentured laborers in the mid to late 19th century. The Island of San Cristobal is then a composite Caribbean local where Lamming can stage his representation of Caribbean history and the unified identity it has generated. Despite the ethnic diversity of the three boys, they speak in an unidentified but uniform Caribbean dialect, suggesting cultural unity. The interplay of their individual voices further suggests this unity, as they contribute seamlessly to the same tale, picking up each others' narrative threads. The boys, completing their tale, express their own place in the fictional island made to represent the entirety of Caribbean history: "Then the Lady asks, 'This really happened?' And the island of India replies: 'Right here in San Cristobal.' And the island of Africa replies, 'An' may happen again.' And the island of China reples, 'Only in a different way.'"[54]

Lamming's metaphor describing the boys as the Islands of China, India, and Africa figures the three non-white populations of the Caribbean as part of a single diasporic entity. He brings the three locations from which the Caribbean's non-white population originated into the Caribbean archipelago. By reformulating Africa, India, and China as islands, Lamming incorporates each population into an archipelago in which each population remains distinct, though incorporated into a larger Caribbean whole. In other words, the archipelagic formulation allows Lamming to preserve the "here" of the Caribbean, which gives form to the Boys' identity, and the "there"s from which they originate. Significantly, while the Lady represents another island, that of Great Britain,

[54] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 22.

she herself is not included in the archipelagic roll call. And yet, the Lady provides the occasion for the story's telling by her presence and her question, standing aside from it at the same time that she invokes it. In turn, the Boys are eager to be heard.

Thus, the West Indian experience Lamming expresses (that of dislocation followed by (re)discovered cultural affinities in a new location) transforms the history of African migration into a model relevant to the experience of other ethnic groups, and indeed to the Caribbean itself. Importantly, this new, open African diaspora also demonstrates the ways colonial economies and politics brought disparate populations together via the same system by accounting for a cultural commonality determined by the process of migration and the forces of global capitalism as opposed to a single cultural origin. Lamming's description is thus a representation of what Lisa Lowe has described as the intimacy of four continents: "This involves considering scenes of close connection in relation to a global geography that one more often conceives in terms of vast spatial distances. It means drawing into relation with one another the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean and the development of colonial modes of biopolitical violence in Asia that sought to replace African enslaved labor with Chinese 'free' labor."[55] Lamming fictionally constructs real emotional bonds resulting from a shared experience of global capital (as the impetus for migration to the Caribbean) and a common local context expressed through dialect.

Much like the confluence of migratory patterns terminating in the Caribbean islands, diverse Caribbean subjects' migration to England leads to the intimate contacts that produce Lamming's account of connections among Caribbean subjects. Not only the

[55] Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, 18.

shared cultural past described in the train car, but indeed the formative influence of the old immigrants (or historical patterns of migration) inspire identification among West Indians. As both Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy have claimed, diaspora and its resulting cultures are forged in the process of relocation and identification with new subjects and cultures. Hall describes this as "the process of unsettling, recombination, hybridization and 'cut-and-mix'-in short, the process of cultural *diaspora-ization*."[56] Thus, both the Tribe Boys who maintain their discreet identities as the islands of China, Africa, and India and the Boys of the West Indian occasion rearticulate their collective identity precisely through the process of relocation and remixing of cultural identity.

And yet, Gilroy's and Hall's accounts of diaspora do not entirely align with either the nationalist trajectories of the diasporic subjects that Lamming describes, nor with alternative accounts of diaspora that similarly tie diasporic identities to a nationalism external to the place diasporic subjects live. As we have seen thus far with Lamming's account of West Indian identity and decolonization, West Indian diaspora in London pointed towards an emergent West Indian state. The Boys are an anachronistic fiction intended to help chart the latent West Indian identity onto a Caribbean past. Lamming's efforts to construct the origins of a multicultural West Indian identity is less invested in the open creole quality of Caribbean culture foregrounded by authors like Édouard Glissant or the cut and mix composition of "diaspora-ization," than it is in providing grounding for a West Indian national future.

Lamming's description of the Caribbean subject in exile and aspirations towards a diverse West Indian identity opens up a diasporic category beyond the narrative of

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[56] Hall, "New Ethnicities," 447.

African slavery and the Middle Passage to include populations subjected to related but distinct forms of displacement. Once again, Lamming turns to personal experience to illustrate his metaphor, celebrating his friend and colleague Samuel Selvon as the representative West Indian subject. Selvon was of South Asian descent, though his most famous novel, *The Lonely Londoners,* narrates the lives of black West Indian and African migrants to London, and is narrated in the idiom Lamming describes. Accordingly, Lamming holds Selvon up as an example not only of the ideal West Indian writer, but as an example of black and South Asian intimacy within the Caribbean:

> Selvon is the greatest, and therefore the most important, folk poet the British Caribbean has yet produced… What holds Selvon and myself together is precisely what could hold Indians and Negroes together in Trinidad. It is their common background of social history which can be called West Indian: a background whose basic feature is the peasant sensibility.

Selvon's writing and Lamming's relationship with Selvon are manifestations of what he describes as a shared social history and resulting sensibility. Lamming names shared social history and class, alluding to the brutality of underpaid labor in the form of indenture and slavery. However, these commonalities do not necessarily produce the affinities the two men feel for each other. Rather than explicit class solidarity or even a shared cultural background, Lamming points to "sensibility," foregrounding the personal and affective roots of national solidarity. Thus, real intimacies between Caribbean subjects gesture towards a national connection whose origins are close, interpersonal connection.

In this regard, Lamming's account optimistically responds to critiques of the diasporic and migratory identity formations described by scholars analyzing his historical moment. Both Roderick A. Ferguson and Stuart Hall describe the ways the terms "Black"

and “African American” have come to eclipse a host of minority experiences in the United States and England, respectively. Ferguson and Hall also do not open their analysis beyond the black experience, however. While Ferguson focuses on Caribbean and African migrants excluded from US narratives of African American history and culture, Hall speaks of the diverse array of black populations in England that are frequently subsumed under a single cultural definition of blackness. And both scholars replicate the very terms that they critique, Ferguson by proposing a method of oppositional, globally oriented critique still named African American, and Hall by suggesting “ethnicity” as a more capacious alternative to “black.” Both scholars remain within frameworks whose point of departure is African descent. By including a number of racial and ethnic identities in his description of West Indian sensibility, Lamming opens up the possibility for political forms that are shaped by affective affinities, and thus open to the breadth of the West Indian population.

The emergent nature of affective affiliations importantly harmonizes the urgency for political solidarity described by academics. While Stuart Hall expresses concern over “how a politics can be constructed which works with and through difference, which is able to build those forms of solidarity and identification which make common struggle and resistance possible but without suppressing the real heterogeneity of interests and identities,”[57] Lamming’s account of an experience shared by the newly formed West Indian scene demonstrates the real emergence of such forms of community. Indeed, in attending to the scene, one finds the urgencies identified by political discourse are already being met in communities joined by affect.

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[57] Hall, “New ethnicities,” 444.

And yet, despite the attention Lamming pays to the ethnic and historical diversity of the Caribbean, the particularities of the African diaspora come to dominate his account of Caribbean sensibility. Lamming compares Selvon to Papa, Lamming's godfather, on whom the character Pa in Lamming's first novel *In the Castle of my Skin* was modeled: "There is, for me, some deep bond between Papa's dead hands and Selvon's living generosity."[58] What's more, Papa is described as "peasant and alive,"[59] much as the "peasant sensibility" unites Selvon and Lamming. Strong intimate links are drawn between Papa, Selvon, and Lamming, incorporating the three characters into an affiliative family structure via the synechdoche of Papa's hands; this family structure is established by strong affective ties rather than geneology. Indeed, the fictional Pa of in *In the Castle of my Skin* is in many ways the emblematic figure of the community Lamming describes in the novel. However, this community is explicitly black. What's more, Pa is inhabited by the voice of the African ancestors in the novel. While talking in his sleep, Pa speaks for the collective experience of the African enslaved: "The silver sail from hand to hand and the purchase was shipped like a box of good fruit. The sale was the best of Africa's produce… I make my peace with the Middle Passage to settle on that side of the sea the white man call a world that was west of another world."[60] The spirit inhabiting Pa clearly speaks of the African slave trade, rather than the sea crossing of marginalized or forced laborers (which might express a more general West Indian experience). Pa is explicitly a representation of a collective black history.

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[58] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 229.
[59] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 228.
[60] Lamming, *Castle,* 210.

When we compare this conflation of Selvon and Pa to the description of the three Boys discussed above, two competing ideological attachments emerge in Lamming's work. Both express intimate ties among a diverse body of Caribbean subjects, but Lamming's own experience of these ties resulting from the lived experience of diaspora leads him to overlook critical components of Caribbean reality. On the one hand, the conflation of Selvon and Pa attempts to establish sensibility as the basis of cultural unity in the Caribbean, as I argue above. This sensibility, as Lamming describes it, privileges black experience and history. On the other, through the figure of the three boys, Lamming demonstrates an ideological attachment to the ethnic diversity of the Caribbean, using three figures equally involved in the telling of Caribbean history. However, figuring the Caribbean population as equally East Asian, South Asian, and African is far from accurate. According to data from the 1960 census, in Lamming's home island of Barbados, only 11 residents of the island's 232,000 were identified as "Chinese," while 464 were identified as "Indian."[61] 195,000 were identified as "Negro." The vast majority of the Caribbean islands were similarly inhabited by a black majority, with two exceptions: Trinidad and British Guyana.[62] Trinidad and British Guyana have historically had larger South Asian populations than the other islands, though other islands have certainly been formed by migrants since they were initially colonized by Europeans and populated by African slaves after the decimation of indigenous populations. What is striking about Lamming's description of San Cristobal is that it does not represent his home, or indeed anywhere else in the Caribbean. Rather, the three boys

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[61] *Barbados: Population census 1960 v3*, part D, tables 3-1 and 3-2.
[62] The 1960 census of Trinidad and Tobago reported that 358,600 of its population of 828,000 was "Negro," 302,000 was "East Indian," and 8,400 was "Chinese."*Population Census 1960, Trinidad and Tobago v2,* tables 5-1 and 5-2.

as symbols of the Caribbean allow Lamming to describe a society that is multiethnic, but monocultural: "They might have come from different parts of the world. Yet they speak the same idiom, live the same history, and have obviously agreed on making a little money out of her."[63] Not only are the boys culturally and historically united (as their shared idiom demonstrates), they form a mischievous collective. Lamming deploys the figure of the Tribe Boys to create an affective impression of childhood intimate unity. Childhood friendships often evoke bonds based on an immediate affective reaction, rather than socially conditioned responses to the background of another. Lamming's use of the allegory aspirationally constructs Caribbean nationhood as a natural, unselfconscious affinity among subjects who are not formed by their differences, but come together by virtue of their similarities.

Lamming's description of the multiethnic, monocultural Caribbean is, however, conditional and aspirational. Not only is the Caribbean not the diverse population that Lamming describes, the harmony depicted among the Boys, and between Lamming and Selvon, was far from representative. While Lamming and Selvon acknowledge and come together over their common Caribbean background (by Lamming's account), their friendship was not representative of the contemporary Caribbean. In reality Trinidad and British Guyana were in the midst of political conflict rendered volatile by racial divisions. In Trinidad, the rise of the People's National Movement (PNM) led by socialist historian and political leader Eric Williams emphasized an Afro-Creole narrative of the nation's past. This narrative paid lip service to the island's diversity, but called for the forging of a unified national identity that too often negated the distinctive features of non-Afro-Creole

[63] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 18.

cultures.[64] British Guyana was undergoing its own ethnically charged political turmoil in the 1950s. After the largely socialist People's Progressive Party (PPP)[65] won 18 of 24 seats in the House Assembly due to its biracial leadership's ability to transcend the Guyanese racial divide, the British government declared a state of emergency in British Guyana that suspended the constitution and brought British military to the island. Following the state of emergency, the PPP split into two factions divided along racial lines, with Forbes Burnham leading the black People's National Congress and Cheddi Jagan taking control of the now the Indo-Guyanese People's Progressive Party. Lamming was traveling on assignment from *Holiday Magazine* in Trinidad and Guyana in 1956 during these periods of unrest. Thus, Lamming would have observed the divisive potential of racial difference within distinct Caribbean nations.

These aspirational scenes arise as England's West Indian colonies were in the midst of forming the Federation. The West Indies Federation would be charged with governing a diverse array of islands within the Caribbean, in addition to the ethnic diversity within each individual island. Lamming's text demonstrates his own attachment to the prospect of Federation through the types of representational figures he establishes. Not only does he conceive of pacific relations among West Indian subjects through the three boys and his own relation with Selvon, he demonstrates an investment in the West Indian novel as a form (of which Selvon's work becomes the primary example). *The Pleasures of Exile* expresses Lamming's investment in the West Indies not only through these imagined scenes of relation, but through Lamming's dissatisfaction with the region.

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[64] Brereton, "All uh we is not one," 221.
[65] Notably, the British Guiana legislature was very much opposed to Federation, and indeed never took part in Federation, further complicating Lamming's idyllic representation of West Indian unity. See Mordecai, *The West Indies*, 42.

This dissatisfaction stems from the general indifference in the West Indies to the aesthetic movement Lamming considers to be so crucial.

What's more, Lamming frequently selectively conceals the formative influence of England both in his understanding of West Indian identity and in his aesthetic work. The collapsing of Selvon into Pa as archetype of the (black) West Indian experience is all the more interesting because it departs from Lamming's own self understanding. Lamming does not describe himself as the descendent or inheritor of Pa's legacy. Rather, in contrast to Selvon as folk poet, Lamming is a self described "living room poet,"[66] a poet who has received enough financial and cultural success to be granted access to the elite spheres of British culture. Though Lamming describes himself as united to Selvon through their "peasant sensibility," this sensibility is removed from the context it claims to represent, and aspires to address. What's more, both Selvon's prose style and his symbolic connection to Pa distinguish him as more effective in representing a peasant sensibility. Lamming nevertheless establishes a second set of relations. If the fictional Pa, the real Papa, and the real Selvon are people to whom Lamming is affiliated by way of personal and aesthetic attachment, Lamming positions himself as the inheritor of the West Indian tradition, both within and beyond it. While this peasant tradition is romanticized and idealized, it is not adequate to Lamming's project.

The particular West Indian identity Lamming writes into being is thus a product of the diaspora aspirationally projected onto the West Indies in the anticolonial moment. West Indian identity becomes decidedly selective—it is forged in London's migrant communities and sometimes elides or excises the particularities of West Indian

[66] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 71.

local(e)s.[67] While Lamming aspires to a larger West Indian solidarity nascent in intimate friendship, doing so requires a rewriting of the details of both that individual's, and the Caribbean's, history. Rather, what Lamming describes are the emergent social groupings and feelings encountered in diaspora. Lamming's description of West Indian experience crumbles precisely as it moves away from the English context in which it is discovered. Indeed, while the harmonies and solidarities Lamming describes might emerge within England, they cannot be successfully projected back to the Caribbean itself. *The Pleasures of Exile* is marked by an ambivalent celebration of the unique intimacies that emerge in exile, and lingering attachments to the Caribbean that pull Lamming to falsely generalize its claims to a foreign context.

While *The Pleasures of Exile*'s essays articulate a desire for literature that will be transformative in establishing West Indian independence, they express a new category of self understanding and belonging. This new category is beside the English and their cultural institutions, and the affiliative bonds and uncanny histories encountered through the emergent category of the West Indian. Thus, West Indian is a category emergent within the particular circumstances and affects of diaspora.

Coda: You and Me

As J. Dillon Brown has productively noted in *Migrant Modernisms*, much of the difficulty in Lamming's writing can be attributed to an effort to effect a new way of

[67] The formation of homogenous identity away from the original location of a diasporic population is a curious inversion of the general phenomenon Khachig Tölölyan describes in his introduction to *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*: "[The nation state] always imagines itself as a land, a territory, a place that functions as the site of homogeneity, equilibrium, integration… in such a territory differences are assimilated, destroyed, or assigned to ghettoes, to enclaves demarcated by boundaries so sharp that they enable the nation to acknowledge… the difference between itself and what lies over its frontiers." (Tölölyan, "The Nation State and its Others," 6)

seeing and interacting with the world. To my view, this way of seeing is grounded in the emergent category of West Indian. According to Brown, "it is this carefully thoughtful approach to otherness that Lamming's difficulty aims to inculcate in his readers, in relation to his books themselves, as well as to words, attitudes, and gestures encountered in the world."[68] I have argued that moments of dense intersubjective relation operating through language within Lamming's texts have modeled a method in line with the one Brown describes. What Brown usefully points out, though, is that Lamming's texts themselves do more than represent the kinds of dense intimacy that he wishes to convey to his readers; as conversation the text becomes the point of departure for an intimate bond. In other words, in addition to narrating intimate conversations in *The Pleasures of Exile*, the text itself is a conversation that creates intimacy between author and reader. In the opening pages of *The Pleasures of Exile,* Lamming introduces the Haitian Ceremony of Souls, which he claims is an effort to bring back the voices of the dead. The description lays out Lamming's intention of animating the lost past, instigating a first form of conversation, "a dialogue between you and me."[69].

This dialogue is not only a figure of the book, but the book itself begins a dialogue. However, the "you" of the dialogue has been a source of some disagreement among scholars, and Lamming himself equivocates on the point. While Lamming claims his ideal audience is the West Indian peasant,[70] he also acknowledges that his only readership is in England.[71] Consequently, some seize upon the more clearly articulated of Lamming's positions, that his exile was spurred by an absence of a West Indian audience

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[68] Brown, *Migrant Modernisms,* 94.
[69] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 12.
[70] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 42, 47.
[71] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 42-3.

and that his readership is English,[72] others identify Lamming's clear regionalist and nationalist motivations, and indeed his optimism regarding a new generation of authentic, indigenous West Indian writers. [73] Both of these analyses ignore the flux of Lamming's prose. This feature is frequently remarked upon as characteristic of his fiction, but overwritten by scholarship on his critical essays. Indeed, writing on *Pleasures* endeavors too often to glean a univocal argument from his polyvocal text. I argue, with Brown, that Lamming "address[es] both sides of the colonizer/colonized divide."[74] The fact of this double address is, in and of itself, far from extraordinary; moving beyond the violent reality of colonialism requires both a break with the colonizer and solidarity among the colonized. Lamming's contribution lies in his attention to conversation as a transformative mode through which this address can happen.

In some ways, Brown's reading ignores Lamming's refusal even to name the generalized categories of "colonizer" and "colonized," or even "West Indian" and "English" in his invitation to dialogue. Instead, Lamming attends to the multiple potential categories that organize experience and understanding: "I am the whole world of my accumulated emotional experience, vast areas of which probably remain unexplored. You are the other, according to your way of seeing me in relation to yourself."[75] The unexplored dimensions of experience in fact emerge in conversation, and only through attention to these emergences can new political attachments and detachments take place. Lamming stages an encounter that is local to two individuals, but one that is not uninflected by or pertinent to social dimensions. Each encounter will necessarily be

[72] Dalleo, *Caribbean Literature*, 155, 160-1.
[73] See Nair, *Caliban's Curse*, 21; Simoes da Silva, *The Luxury of Nationalist Despair*, 12.
[74] Brown, *Migrant Modernisms*, 89.
[75] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 12.

shaped by the other's understanding of Lamming's "me," as well as the other's self-understanding, and the other's understanding of the relationship between them. What's more, these conversations reverberate to a wider public, and indeed to national politics. While all of these positions are subject to a host of differences, ranging from race to national origin to class to gender, Lamming refuses to name them, leaving open the possibility of conversation. The book as conversation seeks to effect localized changes that might vibrate across a social field. While formative experiences shape the individuals coming to the text, Lamming looks to the host of emergent factors that take place in an intimate encounter.

If the "you" Lamming addresses is implied as a single interlocutor by virtue of the conversational mode he claims, that conversational mode is in part thinkable by virtue of the position Lamming occupies. Writing from London, Lamming was in fact engaged in conversation with West Indians and Britons on a daily basis, both in the individualized contexts of pubs and living rooms, and in larger cultural contexts like the ICA. Lamming's social position as a successful writer guaranteed that his book would be read both in England and by the cultural elite in the Caribbean (and indeed, beyond-the Kenyan postcolonial novelist and critic Ngugi wa Thiong'o was notably profoundly shaped by his reading of *In the Castle of my Skin*). Given the magnitude of this audience, Lamming's "you and me" is marked by the optimism of a writer assured of his audience.

In this regard, Lamming was not representative of the West Indian subject entangled in decolonization. Not only is Lamming singular by virtue of his literary success, he speaks both as a migrant to the metropolitan center, and a writer more generally. Thus, the tools available to him, and indeed his way of seeing, differ

significantly from other West Indian migrants, West Indian writers remaining in their home countries, and the peasants for whom Lamming claims to speak. If you and me is an available relational mode only when one is assured of a you, the me with whom you relate determines the contours of that relation as well.

And yet, if Lamming fails to or choses not to say we, it is in part because such a term was politically unavailable both to the type of project he embarks upon and the moment within which he writes. First, he addresses both English and West Indian writers, with similar goals of shifting perspectives regarding literary tradition and their attendant structures of power. Writing both to shift notions of English supremacy and canonicity and West Indian practices and policies related to literature, no single we could encompass these diverse subjects. If we look at these relationships in light of Sedgwick's category of "besideness," these positions attract and repel each other in different moments, forming multiple collectives and singularities. It is possible thus to envision multiple wes, none of which fully represents the totality of Lamming's project.

Not only Lamming's project but that of a unified Caribbean more generally was ultimately a failed aspirational intimacy. Two years into the West Indies Federation, the experimental form of governing the region was already beginning to fall apart as Jamaica, followed by Trinidad and Tobago, gained independence in 1962. While the Federation, and Lamming's figure of the three Boys, expressed an ideal of unity, the region was in fact marked by complicated demands for political attachment and separation. What's more, the Federation was still governed by the British Empire, forming a complicated unit within, and apart from, Great Britain. In this proliferating terrain of political possibility, perhaps the only mode available for meaningful identification is with an

individual you. And yet, the you he addresses remains a tenuous aspiration. While he speaks to affect changes in reading and seeing, the you's response remains veiled and undetermined.

Chapter Two: From Silence to Speech: Frankétienne's Languages of Protest in Duvalier's Haiti

"The confrontation between languages in a colonial education... positions the colonized subject in an interesting, if perpetually conflicted, ontological situation in which there can be no pure linguistic practice." Rey Chow, *Not Like a Native Speaker*[1]

Frankétienne's novel *Dezafi* was heralded as a landmark in the history of the Haitian language when it was published in 1975. As the first novel written in the national language, in many ways *Dezafi* responded to the call of the Haitian Indigéniste literary movement of the 1920s for authors and artists to express the rich cultural tradition of Haiti's poor, rather than continuing to produce imitations of French aesthetic forms. Since the American Occupation, the Indigéniste movement advocated for the valorization of Haitian cultural forms typically denigrated by the elites of Haitian society, spanning from the folk arts of Vodou song and dance to the creation of literary works expressive of the Haitian peasant quotidian. While authors and artists responded to this call, the Haitian language was nevertheless remarkably absent from this massive moment of Haitian cultural production. Utilizing not only the images, forms, and aesthetics of the Haitian quotidian, *Dezafi* valorized Haitian culture by virtue of its composition in a language many Haitians themselves considered incapable of conveying complicated ideas.[2] Many Haitian intellectuals both inside and outside Haiti celebrated the novel for its unprecedented contribution to not only a national, but regional political and aesthetic need. Frankétienne himself frames the novel as not only profoundly local, written with the rural Haitian in mind, but rife with implications for the third world more generally,

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[1] Chow, *Not Like a Native Speaker*, 37.
[2] Fleischmann, "Entrevue avec Frankétienne," 18-9.

demonstrating its globally minded context.[3] Frankétienne thus transforms the terms of Caribbean literary production, addressing a distinctly local audience by virtue of the language in which his novel was composed.

However, the distinctly Caribbean readership for Frankétienne's novel was expanded when four years later in 1979 he published *Les Affres d'un défi*, a novel featuring the same characters, locations, and plot as *Dezafi.* The most immediately evident difference between the two novels was language-*Les Affres* was written in French. *Les Affres* preserved the original novel's Haitian context, a narrative arc that not only took place in rural Haiti but centered around two deeply engrained cultural practices, Vodou and the tradition of cockfights. However, in widening the novel's audience through a shift in language, the novel underwent other transformations to increase its accessibility to a global audience. In addition to a glossary defining many of the novel's locally specific terms (relating largely to Vodou, Haitian foods, and flora and fauna), the novel's terms and imagery are exaggerated in *Les Affres;* the prose of *Les Affres* becomes more explicit in an effort to communicate to the global reader.

Dezafi and *Les Affres* thus stage a problem of audience distinct to the multilingual writer, particularly when one of the languages in question is marginal. While *Dezafi* makes a boldly national gesture by circumscribing a text's audience to an essentially exclusively national audience, *Les Affres* demonstrates the worldly gesture of publication. As we have seen with Lamming, the conflicting motivations of producing in a particularly national literary context and addressing a wider world of readership are common among colonized writers. However, unlike Lamming Frankétienne wrote not

[3] ibid, 22, 24.

from an open cosmopolitan metropolis, but from a Caribbean island under the violently repressive dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier. Under Duvalier's presidency, Haitians were forbidden from voicing any kind of dissent in public, and often feared speaking out even in private. Furthermore, Haitians known to be hostile to the regime were often afraid that upon leaving Haiti, they would be barred from reentering. The narrative of *Dezafi* represents a similar muteness and fear of reprisal through the allegory of the *zonbi*, who have been stripped of their animate soul and cannot speak or act freely while under the spell of the evil *bòkò*, or preist. The text is thus a commentary on the silent world it inhabits. Publishing in French, Frankétienne's text is not a reflection of quotidian experience, but a gesture beyond the confines of a society with not only a limited reading population, but limited public discourse writ large. Frankétienne's multilingual literary production then expresses two elements of the same problem: the desire for worldliness beyond the confines of Duvalier era Haiti, and the desire for engaged public discourse with the nation. The two texts cannot be conceived of as merely additive; they do not accrue towards a complete authorial expression, but rather give different forms to a single aesthetic problem.

Dezafi and *Les Affres* thus require us to consider not the imbrication of two cultural traditions, but rather the distinct forms of expression language unlocks for the multilingual author. In this chapter we will see the ways colonial language, local culture, and national political urgency determine the forms these distinct linguistic expressions take. If *Dezafi* is a novel that communicates via intimacy, *Les Affres* must intimate, drawing the reader into a context with which she cannot be presumed to be familiar. Both strategies allow Frankétienne to gesture beyond the profound isolation resulting from

totalitarianism. Speaking from a distinct moment in Haitian history, Frankétienne speaks in multiple first person plurals to enact multiple literary communities, which both contain and exceed each other.

I. "Nou pale ak tèt nou"

In Haitian Creole, the pronoun "nou" can stand in for a number of referents. While it is a homophone for the French first person plural pronoun "nous," in Haitian Creole "nou" can be used to refer to a first person plural referent (corresponding to the English "we"), a second person plural referent (corresponding to the English "y'all"), a second person *singular* referent (corresponding to the English "you"), or a first person singular referent (corresponding to the English "I"). No other pronoun in Haitian Creole can have multiple referential meanings. One of the distinct and most commonly used narrative voices in *Dezafi* speaks exclusively as "nou," often describing its relationship to an ambiguous group referred to by the third person plural pronoun "yo." Over the course of the novel, the "nou" narrates passages that describe its experiences of silence, hunger, cold, and loneliness in densely descriptive language. This group of passages lacks named characters or locations, but despite this apparent lack of specificity, themes, figures, and narrative arcs recur and develop. For instance, the "nou" narrator searches over the course of the novel for a pregnant woman bearing its child. It struggles towards breaking its own silence to denounce the "yo" that physically tortures it. Mirroring the pronoun "nou" itself, the "nou" narrator can be read as a representation of three distinct figures: first, the fictional villagers of the two towns represented in the novel's more detailed and concrete narrative arc (or "nou" in its second person plural significance); second, the non-fictional Haitian people living under the Duvalier dictatorship ("nou" in its first person

plural significance); and a narrator that self-reflexively analyzes its own speech ("nou" in its first person singular significance). The ambivalence of this pronoun is representative of the text's own ambivalent gesture. Though it both metaphorically and directly addresses a Haitian readership by way of the language, images, and quotidian experience known to that readership, the vast majority of Haitians were illiterate, rendering the text's intimate plural "nou" at best an uncertainty and at worse a fiction. While the text attempts to mobilize the Haitian language and the Haitian quotidian towards cultural transformation rooted in experience of Duvalier's repression of public speech, its gesture is incomplete.

In many ways, the two plural "nou" of the novel, the characters the novel describes or the Haitian people the novel addresses, are made one and the same in the text's allegory. These characters are the residents of a village who have been turned into brain dead, slave like *zonbi*[4] by a tyrannical Vodou priest. This group of characters is widely considered to be representative of the Haitian people under the Duvaliers.[5] François "Papa Doc" and Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier ruled Haiti in notoriously brutal successive dictatorships, beginning with François Duvalier's democratic election in 1957, and his transfer of power to his son at his death in 1971. Jean-Claude Duvalier ruled Haiti until he was overthrown in a popular coup in 1986. Both Duvaliers were

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[4] See below for a full description of the *zonbi.*

[5] Dominique, "Questionner *Dezafi,*" 27, 28; Douglas, *Frankétienne and Rewriting*, 38-9; Meddard, "Pour une lecture de *Dezafi,*" 66; In "Écriture-mitrailleuse et réveil des consciences dans *Les Affres d'un défi* de Frankétienne," Baraoui calls the "ils" and "nous" "deux protagonistes" (93). Alessandra Benedicty treats the "nous" narrator of *Les Affres* at greater length in her article "Narrational Devices, Discources of Emancipation," but largely limits her analysis to the French text. This metaphor of zombification under Duvalier is not unique to Frankétienne, and has been cited by Laënnec Hurbon as a social metaphor for the incomplete deaths undergone by disappeared and unmournable Haitians under the Duvaliers. Hurbon, *Le barbare imaginaire,* 294.

notorious for sucking resources out of the Haitian people and dramatically censoring the population, forebidding any discourse that might be perceived as counter to the regime. Those who transgressed this censorship were secretly murdered or imprisoned semi-permanently. The Haitian people thus came to live like the soulless but animate *zonbi* of Haitian legend: alive, but unable to speak or act autonomously.

While the reading of the "nou" as describing collective Haitian experience is critical to understanding the novel, it does not account for the affect generated by the first person significance of the "nou." First, it does not analyze the effect of the first person plural on the reader. The predominance of the first person in the multiple meanings of this pronoun places the reader in an immediate identification with the speaker, finding herself both to be included in the speaking voice and directly addressed by an interlocutor speaking of itself in the singular. As Émile Benveniste notes, the pronouns "I" and "you" only have meaning in the instance of their utterance, given that they refer to no fixed entities independent of the unique moment they are used in discourse.[6] It also fails to account for the first person singular significance of the pronoun, that of the author uncertain if he speaks only of himself or with a larger community. Indeed, even this fear of solitude is indicative of a form of intimacy. The "nou" voice is the basis for a textual encounter between reader and narrator that is specific and highly local, as well as among the disparate and divided "nou" potentially latent in the Haitian populace.

As demonstrated by many critics of the novel, the "nou" can most immediately be read as referring to the novel's fictional villagers, if we are to assume separation between the world of the narrative and the world of the reader. The "nou" passages are

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[6] Benveniste, "The Nature of Pronouns," 218.

interspersed within the more concrete narrative arc of *Dezafi.* This narrative describes life in two rural Haitian villages, Bouanèf and Ravi-n Sèch. The inhabitants of these two villages live in perpetual fear of a *houngan*, or Vodou priest, named Sintil, who is using a poison to transform villagers into *zonbi*. To become a *zonbi*, an individual must first ingest poison, causing her to fall into a temporary state resembling death. After the individual has been buried, Sintil kidnaps her body and imprisons her in his *hounfour,* or Vodou temple. While the zombified body eventually becomes reanimated, the *zonbi* has no memory of her identity or past, and cannot think freely or independently. Robbed of agency, she joins the uniform mass of *zonbi* who can only respond to orders with an affirmative "Oui Ouan!" Sintil uses this army of human labor to work in rice fields.

The description of these villages takes the form of a series of narrative episodes centering around distinct pairs of named villagers either living or originating in Bouanèf and Ravi-n Sèch. One set aids Sintil in his project of turning villagers into *zonbi* and putting them to work in his rice fields. These are Sintil himself; his assistant Zofè, who is physically ruthless in his treatment of the *zonbi*; and Sintil's obedient daughter Siltana, who feeds the *zonbi* and falls in love with a *zonbi* named Klodonis. Another set, Jéròm and Alibé, live in Bouanèf, where Jéròm spends all day hiding in Alibé's attic in fear of Sintil. Another pair, Kamélo and Filojèn, travels the countryside attending the cockfights from which the novel takes its name. Two sets of characters are only tangentially related to Sintil's reign of terror. One set consists of a young restavèk and her uncle,[7] Rita and Jédéyon, who live in Ravi-n Sèch. Jédéyon barely leaves his home and spends his days

[7] Restavèk is a term used to describe domestic workers in Haiti, most of whom are young girls from the countryside sent to live with wealthier families. Rita repeatedly refers to Jédéyon as "tonton," or uncle, but this might simply be a term of respect, or even an oblique reference to the Tontons Makout given Jédéyon's oppressive relationship to Rita.

berating Rita and drinking rum while Rita works diligently, reminding the reader she is nevertheless a child as she daydreams of escaping with a mythical Haitian mermaid, Lasirèn. Another set revolves around Gaston, a young man who lives in Bouanèf with his aunt Louizina before leaving for Port-au-Prince to look for a better life. He is sorely disappointed, out of work and alone, before he catches a minister, the pastè Pi-n Kris having sex with one of his parishioners. In exchange for secrecy, pastè Pi-n Kris becomes Gaston's protector, feeding him and clothing him with ill got American goods.

The "nou" narrator often describes events featuring the named characters, for instance episodes of physical violence taken out on the *zonbi*, the villagers' fear of speaking in the face of Sintil's reign of terror, and the cockfights that Sintil organizes.[8] The "nou" narrative sections are characterized by two different typographical and punctuation styles. One of these is typed in short, plain text phrases separated by backslashes. These passages describe the cockfights, or *dezafi,* organized and dominated (often unfairly) by Sintil, describing the roosters' attacks, the exchange of bets, and the interactions among people observing the fights:

> Anglagan kòk-la pran toua éspant / véyé move jou / …nou rété bèkèkè dépi lontan / yo toujou aplim déyé ploum / …machi-n lanfè moulin zo kakòn jénou grin-pronminnin / kou zétoual file tèt-nou viré / youn flonn move lidé téké sèvèl-nou /

[8] Both the figure of the *zonbi* and the cockfight are recognizable and even mythic cultural forms associated both with Haitian masculinity and the Vodou *houngan*. Frankétienne's tactic of drawing on national myth and its recognizable symbols to awaken a national movement recollects Margaret C. Gonzalez's description of Spanish authors during the Franco years utilizing the symbols of national myth to both evade censors and draw on collective sentiment. See Gonzalez, *Literature of Protest: The Franco Years,* 12. Similarly, Junot Díaz's use of Dominican *fukú* to explain the Trujillo dictatorship draws on national myth and magic to explain what seems otherwise inexplicable. See Hanna "Reassembling the Fragments," 502.

> fouya-pòt ranmasé youn plot paròl lanvè / télédjol ponpé / sou ki pié pou nou dansé /… nou pa réponn pou sévi témouin.[9]

Through its punctuation, the variety of themes it addresses, and the ambiguity of its pronoun usage, the passage suggests several readings. It can first be read as an aural snapshot of the inside of a *gagè,* or space in which cockfights are held. The passage opens with a description of a cockfight, detailing the attacks given and received by the animals. As the vocabulary and descriptions move away from the cockfight, the text continues in the same style of punctuation, short fragments separated by backslashes. Further, there are no breaks in the text. Both of these devices suggest narrative continuity, implying that the narrative episode has not left the space of the *gagè.* Within this continuous space, the backslashes suggest different voices, or breaks in audibility. The density of text on the page evokes overlapping voices and the violent nature of the cockfight, conjuring up a chaotic and amplified aural space,[10] particularly considering that the phrases are not continuous. The absence of quotation marks and en dashes suggests that neither a conversation nor a monologue is being reported. The passage's numerous figures, and the seeming lack of connection among them, evoke snippets of anecdotes that one might overhear walking around a room filled with men having conversations. Each usage of the "nou" pronoun can therefore be read as a quotation of an individual speaking in the first person. The reader thus finds herself among a disparate

[9] "Right at the start the cock takes three blows / watch out for cheating / …we've kept silent for a long time / they're always brutal about their bets / …demonic car grinds the vagrant's knees and ankles / falling stars everywhere we turn / tons of terrible ideas strike us / a busybody gathers some coded news / gossip abounds / which foot can we dance with /… we don't speak up as a witness" *Dezafi,* 73.

[10] This phenomenon of multiplying voices also evokes the ways in which dictatorship silences the individual voice. Critics have noted a similar tactic in Díaz's *The Brief and Wondrous Life.* See Hanna, "Reassembling the Fragments," 505.

body of “nou”s made animate and present as a singular entity by the use of pronoun and Frankétienne’s formal devices.

Given Frankétienne’s impressionistic and symbolic writing style, the passage lends itself to a second, figurative reading. The “nou” can be read as a narrative voice speaking in the plural, rather than the singular. The voice thus describes a collective experience, rather than a number of disconnected individual statements.[11] In this second reading, the different sentences describing self-imposed silence accrue to convey a sinister atmosphere in which one must carefully guard one’s speech. Read alongside the gossip’s attention to snippets of information, the paranoid silence described seems justified. The casual violence of the car crushing knees and ankles, accompanied by a merciless agentive “yo” (they), lends a directed physical component to the terror expressed by the “nou”’s proclaimed refusal to speak. While the merciless “yo” is, on the one hand, specifically directing its attention to the bets it has made, the “grin-promminin” is anonymous, lending an arbitrary character to the violence described in the passage. Along with the ambient nature of gossip, accompanied by the narrative structure of overheard conversational snippets, the arbitrary violence conveys a strong paranoia. Anyone could be listening, and violence can strike at any time.

The “nou” thus also coheres around a group collectively affected by the paranoia of surveillance and arbitrary violence. Though initially defined by a shared physical

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[11] This type of collective generated as a result of terror evokes Hannah Arendt’s description of totalitarian regimes binding together a populous by way of an “iron band of terror,” in which a regime creates unity in a population by way of its totality realizable only by complete and unifying terror. Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism,* 479. Similarly, Nancy describes the way that communities that have collapsed into unity lack a being-in-common, moving from the play of exposure resulting from co-presence to a single and uniform model of being lacking individuality. (Nancy, *The Inoperative Community,* xxxix)

location, the "nou" coheres in this second reading around an affective response to shared circumstances, amplified by proximity in a physical location. The speaking "nou," as both a group of singular entities and a singular collective, vacillates between speaking and veiling its speech, communicating only its own fear of speaking its mind, gently feeling for the "fouya-pòt." The fluctuation between the desire to express oneself and fear of the interlocutor, accumulating in an ambivalent solidarity of surveilled people and collective fear of transgression generated by uniform terror, demonstrates the intimacy of a shared climate of oppression, in which speakers know without stating that words said to the wrong person can be deadly. Any speech, then, comes to represent a form of trust and vulnerability put in a person with the capacity to denounce you. This climate simultaneously prevents a verbal communication and enables an unarticulated affective one. In her account of the rise of Nazism *Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt describes the way that terror inspired by the totalitarian regime negatively creates forms of unity by destroying individuality along with loneliness.[12] Frankétienne articulates an oppressed community's modes of resistance that inhere in both in his novel's plotting and in the very publication of the novel as allegory of oppression and resistance. In the passage cited above, the unity of terror under a totalitarian regime also generates a shared dissatisfaction with that regime, one so universally known that it is constantly affectively present. This collective affect is always under the surface, in a potential state in which it can become mobilized as an explicit challenge to the totalitarian regime.

The dense and cacophonous space of the *gagè* lends a certain irony to the frightened self-censorship of the men inside it. While the presence of others opens up the

[12] Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism,* 478.

possibility of being overheard, it also floods the aural space with a multiplicity of voices that become difficult to trace. In contrast, the other "nou" passages are recounted in a typographic style that is less dense, characterized by longer sentences and greater spacing between lines or paragraphs of narration. This contrasting style communicates a hushed quality indicative of both fear of being overheard and intimacy of communication to a singularly chosen and proximate listener, exposing the speaking voice in a direct mode of address absent from the public "nou"'s utterances. Rather than a barrage of phrases set apart only by backslashes, there are frequent line breaks between paragraphs of text, or even partial lines of text laid out as in poetry. The spaciousness of the typography and the poetic voice itself indicate a hushed quiet:

> *Sitèlman nou pale lan dòmi, nou djoké rèv nou. Ositou, nou koupé faché ak pròp tèt-nou. Yo tòdjé min-nou. Pou nou pa rélé, nou kouri ralé kò-nou; tokay-nou pran plas la.*
>
> *Kounié-a, nou aprann rété bouch klouré. N-ap chèché sou ki pié pou nou antré lan ron, sou ki pié pou nou dansé. Yo fè babako, nou pa manjé; nou kinbé dan séré. Nou pa pale; nou pa di anyin, pou yo pa mété pasé ginyin. Nou aprann viv andan nou. Sèlman, nou louvri jé gadé tazantan, limié travèsé kò-nou pakanpak.*
>
> *Ki non-jouèt choual galipot?*[13]
>
> *Lenmi détripé-nou san kité kras*
>
> *Nou réponn san pale*
>
> *Vlingbinding*[14] *pran lari*
>
> *Tou timoun kaché anba dra.*[15]

[13] An evil mythical figure that, in some stories, eats children.

[14] Vodou secret societies that worship the "red" or wrathful *lwa*; characterized by violent practices. Laënnec Hurbon has reported stories from Haitians claiming that such secret societies roamed the streets at night freely under the Duvalier regime. Hurbon, *Le barbare imaginaire,* 189.

[15] We've talked so much in our sleep, we've cast a spell on our dreams. In consequence we've broken it off with ourselves. They twist our hands. So as not to cry out, we make a run for it; our double takes the place. Now, we learn to shut our mouths. We're looking for a way to enter in, a foot to dance on. They put out a feast, we don't eat; we keep our

In this passage, the "nou" narrator speaks in a chain of continuous sentences and seems to recount three distinct narrative episodes, set apart both typographically and (to some extent) in content. The first is figurative, revolving around the tension between staying silent and speaking. The narrator is doubly removed from its world, given that he describes himself as being replaced by a double and as living inside himself. While the experience of waking life must be repressed, the narrator is most vocal while sleeping. This splitting of self is both liberating in that it allows the narrator to escape the painful reality of existence and maddening, as the narrator indicates frustration or even anger with itself.

The second episode, however, casts the "nou"'s silence as an act of resistance to efforts to elicit speech. Following the violent behavior of "yo" in first paragraph, the feast "yo" set out connotes malicious intent. And indeed, the closed teeth that refuse both food and speech appear prudent and cautious, rather than cowardly. As Hannah Arendt has argued, the unknown inward life of the individual is just as threatening to totalitarianism as outright denunciation.[16] Rather than leaping into a struggle unprepared, the speaker seeks out balance insinuated by dance. While living inside himself corresponds to sensory deprivation resulting from shutting himself off from the world, when "nou" opens his eyes, he is bathed in light. The image is both physical and extremely spiritual; visually illuminated, the "nou" turns from the darkness and incorporeality of his closed

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teeth shut tight. We don't speak, we don't say anything so they don't exaggerate. We learn to live inside ourselves. We sometimes open our eyes to see, the light traversing our entire bodies. What is the Galipòt's nickname? / The enemy disembowels us without relenting / We respond without speaking / The *Vlingbinding* take to the street / All the children hide under their sheets. *Dezafi,* 158-9.

[16] Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism,* 430.

and interior life to a body flooded by warming light. The "nou" describes his experience as both inwardly turned and lifeless, and physically and sensorially permeated. Frankétienne's depiction of the inwardly turned mind evokes Jean-Luc Nancy's description of the relationship between the intimate self and community in *Inoperative Community.* Nancy describes exposure (the foundation for community) as the turning of the intimate, inward facing self to the outside world,[17] much like the *nou* narrator in the scene above. However, Frankétienne's narrator is shut within its own mind, as fear of the outside prevents the formation of any community under totalitarianism.

While the third episode is sparser, it reinforces the pervasive fear of the earlier sections by giving form to the cruel "yo." The typography visually aligns "*lenmi*" and "*Vlingbinding*," creating an association between the physical brutality of "*lenmi*" (and by extension, the "yo" of the first paragraph) and the spiritual evil and violent actions of the Vodou sect. The pairing of physical and supernatural cruelty lead to a pervasive harmfulness which neither the inwardly turned mind nor the physical body can escape. The phrases aligned on the right of the page indicate a question asked and the response given. Following the preceding paragraph, "nou"'s speechless reaction seems to be an act of resistance rather than one of cowardice. Importantly, the "nou" emphasizes response, rather than silence, in the passage. The children hiding underneath their sheets draw on the mythical nature of the *choual galipòt,* but the image also affiliates itself the image of the "nou" speaking in its sleep and living inside itself.

While the narrative context of the novel suggests that these descriptions are fictional, they also can be read as representative of the broader experience of the Haitian

[17] Nancy, *Inoperative Community,* xxxvii-viii.

populace under the Duvalier regime. Not only is "nou" an ambivalent pronoun in Haitian Creole, Ravine Sèche and Bois Neuf are both real villages in Haiti-albeit in completely different *départements*, separated by numerous geographical barriers. The passages describe many aspects of life under the Duvalier regime, including repressive violence, fear of speaking directly (or indeed saying anything short of outright endorsement) about the regime, offers of rich reward for collaboration, and moments of partial consent to and even collaboration with the regime that lead to a misrecognition of self. As Michel Rolph Trouillot has argued, the Duvaliers exacted an ambiguous form of consent from the Haitian populace not by demanding statements of support from the Haitian people, but by forebidding Haitians to "*pale mal,*" or speak ill, of the regime.[18] As a result, many Haitians would either choose silence, or make ambiguous statements that could not be interpreted as outright criticism.

While the "nou" narrator certainly describes self-censorship, the ill intent and violence of an oppressor, and offers of reward recognizable in the Duvalier regime, the messages require deciphering. Loosely connected metaphors and associated images, and passages joined less by narrative then they are by recurrent themes and aesthetics, generate a virulent but impressionistic denunciation of the Duvaliers. More than describing the self-censorship, terror, and deprivation lived by Haitians during the Duvalier years, *Dezafi* renders an affective representation of these experiences precisely *because* it codes its message in metaphor and ambiguous speech. By presenting the passage set in the *gagè* as overheard conversations, the narrator evokes the feared informant; during this period shoe shiners, as well as friends and family, could pass

[18] Trouillot, *Haiti: State Against Nation,* 188-9.

information to the *tontons makout.*[19] By referring to this figure throughout the text, the pervasive paranoia of the period comes alive for the reader whose daily experience it draws upon. What's more, both passages reveal the various aspects and effects of silence on an oppressed people. The tightly shut teeth that neither eat nor cry out are not a sign of cowardice, but rather, a refusal to accept the financial rewards promised by the Duvaliers, or to utter words that were constantly available for manipulation at the hands of authorities. Indeed, under Duvalier, political discourse was completely emptied of meaning as vocal support of the Duvaliers increasingly came to signify the securing of power rather than any genuine political sentiment. Trouillot suggests an episode in which a thief fleeing the scene of a crime cries out "Long Live Duvalier!", knowing that his pursuers would risk being perceived as antigovernment in chasing after him.[20] Trouillot sympathetically acknowledges that Haitians could not have spoken out against the regime so easily as Haitians living in he diaspora might have suggested,[21] but I would like to extend his argument to state that such resistance would not have been meaningful given the manipulation of political meaning in the context of state censorship, where offenders were guilty by virtue of their punishment, rather than the political crime committed.[22] Rather than suggesting that writers under Duvalier had to chose between speech in exile and silence at home, Frankétienne suggests a much more complicated form of daily resistance.

[19] Trouillot, *Haiti: State Against Nation*, 168-9.
[20] Trouillot, *Haiti: State Against Nation*, 179.
[21] Trouillot, *Haiti: State Against Nation*, 180.
[22] Trouillot, *Haiti: State Against Nation*, 166. In her description of Totalitarian regimes, Hannah Arent similarly describes the way that "freedom… has lost its distinctive mark because the consequences of its exercise are shared with completely innocent people" (*Origins of Totalitarianism,* 433).

Frankétienne's performative use of language thus intimately communicates an act of resistance not fully tangible outside of Duvalier era Haiti. Indeed, people not living in a surveillance state of the sort Frankétienne describes would not have the same affective response to a narration of overheard conversations. Even Frankétienne's manipulation of language through metaphor and obscure referents would be differently affecting to a reader living in an age of censorship and double speech. The text mimes an experience that the Haitian reader during the Duvalier years would recognize in herself, generating a sense of mutual understanding with the anonymous narrator and indeed, author. In an interview with Ulrich Fleischmann, Frankétienne stated, "J'ai écrit *Dezafi* de la perspective d'une lecture de la réalité haïtienne, par le peuple haïtien…je peux vous dire que *Dezafi* se situe dans ce milieu [de littérature engagée]."[23] It is worth noting that even though Frankétienne's creolophone audience was not exclusively located within Haiti, the text's affective devices would register differently with a reader living in Haiti than with a *diyaspora.* This is particularly important given the tendency of those living in diaspora to criticize their countrymen and women not actively speaking out against the regime.

Despite the collective evoked by the narrative's use of "nou" to describe widespread experiences of terror under the Duvaliers, the novel often self-reflexively refers to the potential singular referent of the pronoun "nou." Indeed, the novel expresses its own awareness of limited readerships within Haiti. In moments of *Dezafi*, the

[23] I wrote *Dezafi* from the perspective of a reading of Haitian reality, by the Haitian people… I can say that *Dezafi* is within the realism of engaged literature. Fleischmann, "Entrevue avec Frankétienne," 24. A comparison can be seen with Junot Díaz's writing style in *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao,* in which the author not only utilizes Spanish and American slang, but refers to cultural myths and common historical experiences surrounding the Trujillo regime.

speaking “nou” seems to describe Frankétienne’s writing style, suggesting that the “nou” takes on its first person singular meaning, referring to Frankétienne himself. The “nou” speaker describes its own speech in terms of obscurity and its misapprehension: “*Nou plédé babié. Nou palé ak tèt-nou. Paròl-nou viré tèt anba, lan youn tan kaliko. Kilès ki tandé sa nou di? Kilès ki chèché konprann sa nou vlé di? Yo pito di nou manké pliziè fèy; yo présé fèmin bouch nou.*”[24] The “nou” speaker describes its speech as foggy and difficult to understand. Phrases with multiple significances are used in order to perform this fogginess; “Nou palé ak tèt nou” can mean alternatively “I’m talking to myself,” or, “I’m a little off my rocker.” The speech described is thus easily dismissed, either because it is attributed to insanity, or because it is not directed at anyone. Indeed, “yo” dismisses “nou” for precisely this reason. The text conveys meaning not through the denotative meanings of the words, but through its multiplicity. This multiplicity of meaning both enacts the phenomenon the speaker describes, and draws upon an experience of the reader. Thus, the affective possibility of the line far exceeds the literal meaning of the words. While multiple meanings are a frequent tool in literary language, Frankétienne’s use of multivalent writing is directly concerned with the thin line between between silence and speech, sense and non-sense. Given that the only acceptable political speech was pro-Duvalier, the content of nonsensical speech emerges as an act of resistance in its refusal to succumb to fear of the regime. In *Dezafi* and Duvalier era Haiti more generally, words can be meaningful for their enactment of the problem of speech as much as for their denotative content.

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[24] “We continually babble/gripe. We talk to ourselves. Our speech is turned around, in foggy weather. Who hears what we say? Who tries to understand what we want to say? Instead they say we’ve got a screw loose, they hurry to shut our mouth.” *Dezafi,* 12.

The necessity of silence and veiled discourse cannot stifle the narrator's hunger for conversation and comprehension. The question "*Kilès ki tandé sa nou di?*" followed by "*Kilès ki chèché konprann sa nou vlé di?*" demonstrates not only that the speaker wishes to be heard (expressed directly by the verb "*tandé*"), but that the message he conveys needs not only to be sought out, but to be deciphered-someone must "*chèché konprann,*" or seek to understand, what the "nou" wants or intends to say. Evidently the narrator seeks to welcome an interlocutor into the coded world of its speech, but this requires the listener to seek out the meaning of the speech. However, the speaker's question is left unanswered. No interlocutor but the "yo" character responds, who endeavors to stifle the speech, despite its nonsensical character.

This question thus shifts the emphasis of a model common in the Francophone Caribbean for oral literature. Many oral literary exchanges, from riddles to stories, begin with the storyteller proclaiming, "*Krik*!" The audience then affirms that it is ready to listen, responding, "*Krak!*" The "nou" narrator of *Dezafi*, and the author implied in this ambiguous pronoun, can be seen as engaged not in the copresence of audience and orator often associated with this model, but in the vulnerable ambiguity of address without response. The narrator is left in a vertiginous state of uncertainty. Not only does the novel speak in highly metaphorical abstract language and suffer the burdens of censorship and a cultural emptying of linguistic meaning, it faces the challenges of addressing an impoverished and largely illiterate society.[25] Not only is the population largely illiterate, whatever formal schooling Haitians have received has been in French. Haitian Creole is undoubtedly the language of the Haitian nation; linguists agree that all Haitians are

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[25] Lamarre, "*Dezafi,* le premier roman créole de la littérature haïtienne," 150.

inevitably exposed to Haitian Creole over the course of their lives (often despite the best efforts of their parents, if they are raised in elite families).[26] However, as Joseph Lamarre states in his article praising *Dezafi* for its groundbreaking introduction of Haitian Creole into the world of written literature,

> Étienne[27] n'a pas réussi à nous convaincre que le véhicule employé…ait pu conduire sa pensée jusqu'au peuple. En effet, le peuple haïtien est composé de 80% analphabètes. Des 20% qui savent lire, le cinquième lit peut ou ne lit pas du tout. De cette poignée qui reste, la moitié s'oppose à l'écriture créole ou discute sur les différentes méthodes d'écriture. La dernière moitié composera donc le nombre d'haïtiens qui ont pu avoir lu ce superbe roman.[28]

Frankétienne himself once again can be read as the "nou" narrator, unsure if he is speaking to himself.

The problems of audience indeed haunt many postcolonial authors, and as Lamming reminds us in *The Pleasures of Exile* lead to the migration of many colonized writers to the metropole. Frankétienne's text provides insight not on the migrant writer's alienation from the homeland, but rather on the experience of staying in a country that is inhospitable to print literary production. *Dezafi's* "nou" performs these problems, both acting as if another is present to receive the text by virtue of its publication and dwelling on its own possible silence. Of course, *Dezafi* differs from much peripheral writing in that its concern with readership and accessibility is also a concern with censorship. *Dezafi* tacks between the political and aesthetic urgency of its own publication and its limited

[26] Dejean, "Diglossia Revisited: French and Creole in Haiti," 191.
[27] Frankétienne's given name was Franck Étienne, and he has published both as Frankétienne and Franketyèn, according to the new Haitian orthography.
[28] "Étienne has failed to convince us that his chosen method is capable of delivering his message to the people. 80% of the Haitian population is illiterate. Of the 20% that can read, a fifth of those read little or not at all. Of the remaining fistful, half are either opposed to writing in Creole or disagree about its orthography. The other half are the Haitians who could have read this superb novel." Lamarre, "*Dezafi,* le premier roman créole," 150.

audience and potentially dire consequences should the author's discourse be deemed too critical.

At this point, to analyze *Dezafi*'s success in generating a public I could turn to newspaper and journal publications reviewing and responding to *Dezafi,* or the critical attention it has received since its publication from prominent Caribbean literary theorists and academics. Indeed, given Michael Warner's insistence that publics are formed through continued conversation among multiple texts, this analytic trajectory would be most in keeping with his model. However, this analysis would strip *Dezafi* of its most affecting characteristic, and reduce its formative potential to one that privileges the visibility of audience response. The desperate silence and isolation the book expresses is mirrored in the fact of publishing in a largely illiterate society. Indeed, to publish a novel in Haitian Creole mimics the isolation, silence, and uncertainty of belonging that the "nou" narrator articuates. It is precisely the indirect rendering of this experience of isolation, *even in the form of the text itself,* that grants *Dezafi* the affective presence to form a public in a moment when only Duvalierist publics were possible.

Critics of the text (most recently Rachel Douglas and Kaiama Glover, but also Raphaël Confiant, Joseph Lamarre, and Maximilien Laroche) have argued that the novel, though specifically responding to Duvalier era oppression, makes a generalizable claim about the importance of political struggle and engagement (as opposed to *zonbi*-like complaisance) in repressive political climates. The novel ends with the villagers of Bouanèf uniting to unseat Sintil's reign. After the novel's climax, in which Siltana gives Klodonis salt to revive him to conscious life, Klodonis extends the gesture to the other *zonbi*, and along with the villagers of Bouanèf they hunt down and kill Sintil. The critics

listed above claim that the novel can and should be read as politically applicable beyond the context of Duvalier Haiti, generally encouraging an awakening of intellectual engagement as a form of resistance to oppression. Indeed, the text gives many indications that it is advocating not for a struggle localized to overthrowing the Duvalier regime. Both before and after the *zonbi's* and villagers's liberation, the novel repeatedly emphasizes the ongoing and endless nature of struggle; the phrase "*Dezafi pa jamn fini*"[29] amplifies earlier statements like

Travay-nou pa fini
Travay nou pa ka fini
Travay nou panko ka fini
Travay nou p-ap janm fini
Nou fèk karé travay.[30]

The transformation of the *zonbi* is thus a metaphor for collective and ongoing struggle for liberation. The universal implications of such quotations are not to be neglected. Nevertheless, *Dezafi* conveys a particular political moment experienced by Haitians, aesthetically rendering an intimacy specific to a time, place, and experience. Through Haitian Creole and its unique grammatical affordances, used in combination with typography and stylistic variation representative of the burdens of censorship lived by the novel's (potential) Haitian audience, *Dezafi* addresses an intimate public.

II. "Nous parlons à nous mêmes"

Given the profoundly local language, material and affective style in which *Dezafi* is narrated, the text seems to be unique to its context. I have been describing the feelings produced by linguistic and literary mechanisms particular to a circumscribed world of

[29] *The Dezafi is never over. Dezafi,* 265.
[30] *Our work is not finished. Our work cannot be finished. Our work cannot yet finish. Our work is never ending. We have just entered the struggle. Dezafi,* 199.

experience familiar to the reader intimacy. Frankétienne's creation of a second text, *Les Affres d'un défi,* written in French in 1979 and containing the same characters, context, and plotline as *Dezafi,* profoundly complicates and perhaps even challenges *Dezafi*'s cultural value as the first instance of a novel written in the Haitian idiom. The creation of the second text moves beyond the intimate locality of its predecessor, undercutting *Dezafi*'s unique status as a Creole novel by suggesting its message can and should be rendered for a foreign audience. Nevertheless, *Les Affres* cannot be read as an equivalent text. The narrative cannot assume that its reader shares the experience of quotidian life in Haiti. However, this shift does not render *Les Affres'* readerships less intimate, but rather changes the aesthetic and affective modes through which it produces intimate readerships. For instance, while the Haitian Creole "nou" intimates a description of indeterminate collective experience, the French "nous" through its denotative meaning (only ever the first person plural in French) and choice of language describes a public that draws Haiti together with the globe. This gesture is expressive of and creates a global public, but also indicates the significance of French language production to a Haitian literary project, particularly during the repressive and isolated years of the Duvalier dictatorships. *Les Affres* and its context are a reminder that for Frankétienne transcending the confines of Duvalier era Haiti remains an artistic practice,[31] one that reformulates the aesthetics and intimacies of the French text.

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[31] Frankétienne has described his literary practice as an effort to escape the confines of Duvalier era Haiti: "J'ai effectivement vécu un enfermement qui était source d'angoisse existentielle, une angoisse qui a rejailli sur l'écriture. C'est au moment où je ne pouvais laisser Haïti j'accomplissais des voyages imaginaires… J'ai fait tous les voyages parce que l'enfermement était systématique en Haïti." (Essentially, I was confined, which was a source of existential anguish, an anguish that burst forth in writing. Just when I couldn't

Les Affres is marked from its beginning by the connection to *Dezafi*. A paratext to *Les Affres* announces, "Issue de la même matrice féconde et toute brulante de 'Dézafi,' cette oeuvre ne doit pourtant pas être abordée comme une traduction de ce roman créole."[32] The paratext ambivalently unites the texts through the figure of the *matrice*, inviting comparison and preventing either text from being considered a primary or original version. Despite the paratext's proclamation, many of the passages in *Les Affres* could be read as direct translations of corresponding passages in the twinned Haitian Creole novel, and the novels' plots are identical. Thus, the relationship between the two texts exceeds the limits of translation not because their words or plotting are so altered as to render them fundamentally different, but because of the language in which each was composed. The paratext and novel together theorize language as a form of aesthetic creation that supersedes the meaning of words on the page. In other words, the history, context, and experience of a language alter meaning more than the syntactical significance of words. The paratext goes on to claim that the novel is, for its author, "une nouvelle expérience dans son interminable quête à travers les vastes forêts de la poésie et de l'art."[33] These characters are brought to life by different textual tools ranging from the language in which their stories are animated to the stylistic devices that shade our engagement with each text.[34] Syntax itself will determine a different form of engagement

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leave Haiti, I undertook imaginary voyages…I made these voyages because confinement was systematic in Haiti.) Chemla and Pudjol, "Entretien Avec Frankétienne," 114-5.

[32] Issuing out of the same burning and fecund womb as *Dezafi,* this novel should nevertheless not be treated as a translation of that creole novel. *Les Affres,* i.

[33] An unending quest accross the vast forests of poetry and art. *Les Affres,* i.

[34] Mae-Lyna Beaubrun refers to this distinction as a difference between "structure profonde" and "structure de surface." She, however, takes a much broader approach to the "structure profonde," analyzing not only narrative detail but semiological

with the text-even in closely related languages it is difficult to find perfect equivalents in translation.

Yet, language alone does not exhaustively account for the range of devices Frankétienne uses to alter the aesthetic experiences of each text. Frankétienne modifies each novel's style by way of non-syntactical methods such as typography and formatting.[35] Writing in French for a heterogeneous audience, Frankétienne modifies the expressive range of the text in writing for an audience he cannot assume shares his local context. While these changes affect the descriptive detail used to render an unfamiliar landscape and culture legible, their implications produce a different affective and aesthetic experience of the text. A shift in language, and the context of the readership that language addresses, affects the conceptual significance of the novel. It also affects the author's relationship to his work. In attempting to convey a similar concept, the lived experience of the reader and the text's global audience determine the way text communicates.

Frankétienne's expansive artistic practice also demonstrates the author's engagement with the French language by producing a second oeuvre of a single artistic concept. While many Francophone authors write in French in order to reach a global audience, *Les Affres* invites us to consider the artistic craft such creation requires and enables, even when writing in the language of the colonizer. Frankétienne uses the French language in a manner all his own. His use of poetic device, innovation at the level

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correspondence between the two texts, ultimately identifying them as more or less identical in their "structure profonde." Beaubrun, 28-33, 46.

[35] Given Frankétienne's artistic production in painting and in poetry, the graphic component in his work is not to be underestimated. For more on this trend in Frankétienne's other written works, see Jonassaint, "Beyond Painting or Writing: Frankétienne's Poetic Quest."

of linguistic form, exploration of obscure or obsolete vocabulary, to name only a few techniques, represent a fully formed artistic relationship to the language he uses. As Pradel Pompilus noted in an article on *Les Affres* and *Dezafi,* "On ne recontre dans *Les Affres d'un défi* ni le régistre, 'créole authentique,' ni le régistre 'créole francisé.' L'explication de ce fait me paraît aisée : Quand Frankétienne entend utiliser le créole, il écrit *Dézafi* d'un bout à l'autre en langue nationale."[36] Indeed, the inventiveness of Frankétienne's prose often produces understandings of the Haitian quotidian that *Les Affres* describes. Though novel uses Haitian Creole terms when describing particular local phenomena (such as food, flora and fauna, Haitian holidays, and Vodou ceremonies), frequently literary devices such as metaphor or alliteration render an experience of place. The novel's conscientious and consistent use of the French language, as compared to many Francophone Caribbean novelists who insert creole dialogue and phrases into their French language texts, indicates an engagement with a universalizable Haitian scene.

At the same time, the use of a global language to describe a local scene dramatizes the tension between the global and the local. Given that a shared quotidian cannot be assumed, *Les Affres* must communicate via exaggerated stylistic devices, as compared to *Dezafi'*s subtlety. *Les Affres* is thus more confined to the page, less capable of a dynamic play with the reader's daily affective landscape. This comes through particularly when *Les Affres* expresses the *matrice*'s aesthetic and political denunciation of the Duvalier regime to a global audience. In undergoing the linguistic shift from

[36] One encounters neither "authentic creole" nor "frenchified creole." The explanation seems simple to me: When Frankétienne intends to write in creole, he writes *Dezafi* from start to finish in the national language. Pompilus, "Registres de language," 112.

Haitian Creole to French, *Les Affres* conveys its message and the political urgency of its allegory in a distinct affective mode, through the use of bold typeface and a proliferation of linguistic descriptors to dramatize the experience of life under the dictatorship. If the immediacy of shared experience is lost as the text moves to a global audience, the text gains the capacity to circulate in the globe, a liberty prohibited for many Haitians considered to be dissenters of the regime. *Les Affres* aspires to a form of global engagement that shifts the significance of its intimate publics. Language is deployed to generate an aspirational world descriptive of, and yet beyond, Duvalier era Haiti.

This type of stylistic shift is often theorized as automatically problematic for the postcolonial author. Either requiring the author to assume an inauthentic voice or opening up the text to the exoticizing gaze of the European outsider, writing in European languages is sometimes described as an insurmountable problem in postcolonial literature. In his essay on the issues of writing in both French and Creole, Raphaël Confiant proclaims a distinct problem for the Caribbean author describing Caribbean daily reality in a European language:

> Comment décrire un cocotier? Comment dire qu'une plage de sable blanc est belle? Cocotier et sable blanc, tout le paysage antillais en final de compte, ont été réifiés par le discours exotique européen… Le drame pour moi, écrivain antillais, c'est que ni le cocotier ni la plage de sable blanc ne sont éxotique dans mon vécu quotidien.[37]

Confiant's remarks make a number of important assumptions. First, he begins with romantic and clichéd images of Caribbean landscape. While palm trees and white

[37] How to describe a palm tree? How to say that a white beach is beautiful? Palm trees and white sand, the entire Antillian landscape has ultimately been reified by exotifying European discourse... the tension for me, as an Antillian writer, is that neither the white sand beaches nor the palm tree is exotic in my lived daily experience. Confiant, "Questions pratiques d'écriture créole," 172-3.

beaches might form part of Caribbean reality, so do dusty, deforested hills, smoke from fires making charcoal, wandering goats, and insects. Second, he denies the Caribbean novelist any potential to transform the French language by creative usage. Frankétienne's use of French in *Les Affres* challenges Confiant's statement by way of a highly personalized usage of the French language deployed to describe a Caribbean lived experience that spans a range of affects and scenes, never once falling into a reified discourse. Through punning, assonance and alliteration, and poetic formulation, Frankétienne manipulates the French language, demonstrating a desire to enter into a French creative tradition and to thus form the language by way of his own creative influence.

Frankétienne uses the French language with the range and sensitivity of a poet. Frequently, this poetic attention is visible in the mobilization of French terms to unrecognizable ends. For instance, the narrator describes the faces of the *zonbi* held in Sintil's *péristyle* reverts to metaphors of French orthographic markings and punctuation: "**Fantômes muselés, nasillant au-dessous du silence, les zombis ont le visage défiguré, des yeux vitreux, des paupières en accent circonflexe, un nez apostrophe, des oreilles envirgulées, des levres entreguillemets. Zofer leur interdit de parler même pendant leur sommeil**."[38] Frankétienne uses an extended grammatical metaphor in order to describe the faces of the *zonbi* who are, ironically, deprived of language. He transforms the word for comma, *virgule*, into an adjective to modify *Oreille*. "Entreguillemets" both describes the look of two sets of lips, and describes the lips as

[38] Muzzled phantoms, breathing nasally under the silence, the zonbis have deformed faces, windowy eyes, eyelids in a circumflex accent, an apostrophe nose, commaed eyes, lips in/of quotation marks. Zofer forbids them from speaking, even in their sleep. *Les Affres,* 122.

being put in quotation marks. This mirrors the function of both lips and quotation marks, which mark an individual's speech. This type of poetic description that directly comments upon the function of language itself, a clever and emotionally resonant description, while simultaneously insisting on a collaborative and open relationship to language by rendering familiar linguistic tools strange. However, this particular set of images develops the narrative and makes an aesthetic point through tools specific to the French language. All of these markings are used in writing, and therefore more alien from a Haitian peasant's quotidian, and what's more, not all of them are used in Haitian Creole. For instance, an *accent circonflexe,* the form used to describe the *zonbi*'s eyelids, is not used in Haitian Creole orthography. Thus, Frankétienne uses linguistic forms specific to French to describe a locally Haitian concept: the *zonbi.*

In many ways, the *zonbi* could fall under Confiant's category of the Caribbean image reified in an exotic figure by virtue of a French gaze, both historical and contemporary.[39] However, the *zonbis* of Frankétienne's novel are characterized primarily by their helpless silence, foregrounding the evacuation of voice from the human. Indeed, Frankétienne's *zonbi* more closely resembles life under totalitarian state described by

[39] Laënnec Hurbon describes the stereotypes regarding African slaves in the new world and their connections to Vodou in *Le barbare imaginaire*: "les préjugés [étaient] diffusés au XIXe siècle par les récits des voyageurs européens et américains sur les rapports essentiels entre vodou, sauvagerie, cruauté, et despotisme : le duvaliérisme, dictature sanguinaire, serait là, avant la lettre, dans l'être même du vodouisant." (The stereotypes of the essential relationship among Vodou, savagery, cruelty, and despotism were dispersed in 19th century travelogues of European and American travelers: Duvalierism, bloody dictatorship, were there, *avant la lettre,* in the Vodouisant himself.) Hurbon, *Le barbare imaginaire*, 285. Thus, Hurbon's argument invites a reading that Saintil as Duvalierist oppressor confirms many stereotypes regarding colonial barbarity. However, the helpless *zonbi* shifts the image of barbarity from the Haitian people to the select few. Indeed, Hurbon notes the reasons for the cultural associations between *chanpwèl,* or evil bands of Vodouisants, and the tontons macout. See *Le barbare imaginaire,* 282, 294.

Hannah Arendt than any exoticized stereotype: “Total domination, which strives to organize the infinite plurality and differentiation of human beings as if all humanity were just one individual, is possible only if each and every person can be reduced to a never changing identity of reactions… eliminating… spontaneity itself as an expression of human behavior.”[40] This passage thus plays off the strange and the familiar: the *zonbi,* in a form unrecognizable to a French reader, is described with familiar concepts distinct to the French language, at the same time that those figures are deployed in a new context. The author himself uses a language (French) to describe the *zonbi* that is generally separated from the rural context in which *Les Affres* is set*,* destabilizing Confiant’s notion that only one language (Haitian Creole) and only one form (orality) are capable of representing a local figure. Frankétienne both reworks the French language and foreign concepts of the *zonbi,* bringing together the recognizable and the strange in a figure that both invites the reader (Haitian or global Francophone) into the novel’s context and reminds her of her distance from it. At the same time that a familiar context provides a familiar point of reference for the reader’s interaction with the novel, the unfamiliar elements of the novel’s world are made accessible via textual devices. Indeed, the reader’s vulnerability to the text is another intimate mode established on a distance to be crossed by the available proximity of language.

In a similar gesture, the text uses alliteration and assonance in the French language to animate the Haitian quotidian. Specifically, he uses these devices to describe a recurring character in the novel, the *marchande de fritures,* as she prepares a common Haitian dish, *griot:* “Attentif à tous les bruits, Philogène ferme les yeux, humant de temps

[40] Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism,* 438.

en temps, auprès de la marchande de fritures, l'odeur des grillots épicés qui grésillent dans la graisse bouillante."[41] The scene described is very much a part of the Haitian "vécu quotidien," though it lacks any of the exotic significance Confiant describes. Women selling fried food (including *griot* and *banann peze,* among others) are extremely common throughout Haiti. Though this scene might be unfamiliar to a non-Haitian reader, the frequent repetition of the "gr" sound in French mimics the noise of food frying in boiling oil, making the scene more fully sensory. Importantly, the French "r" is a sound unused in Haitian Creole. A sound often exploited to humiliate Caribbean French speakers is here deployed to welcome French readers into a Caribbean scene; indeed, as Fanon famously describes in *Peau noir, masques blancs,* a Caribbean man or woman's intelligence was judged by their use of French, and often more specifically, their ability to roll their rs.[42] The use of language in the passage is highly ambivalent, in that it refers to the power structures that surround the text's local context and its readership but plays with them. On the one hand, the reader is potentially unfamiliar with the scene described in the text and thus in some way unable to consume its narrative. The reader is thus vulnerable to the text; she could easily be shut out of the text's world depending on the text's opaque foreignness. Indeed, the narrative style of the novel is often disjointed and surreal, making descriptive gestures like this all the more altruistic in a text that is so difficult to navigate.

The text also comments on its own marginal position outside of hexagonal French letters by mobilizing a sound often used to shut Caribbean speakers out of elite discourse.

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[41] Attentive to every sound, Philogène closes his eyes, occasionally breathing the smell of spiced meats crackling in boiling fat as he stands next to the woman selling fried things. *Les Affres,* 148.
[42] Fanon, *Peau noir,* 16.

Even the play between the written text and the aurality it invites plays on histories of intellectual marginalization. In a written, rather than oral, context, the Caribbean author's potential inability to make the sound vanishes, potentially masking his difference and granting him access to an elite literary sphere. Furthermore, he takes on writing, considered the standard for literary value in a European intellectual economy that specifically denigrated the oral traditions of colonial peoples. And yet, the text slyly asserts its distinct Caribbean tradition by retaining a trace of orality. While the sounds of the words give the textual scene a life it would not otherwise have, and one that is specific to Caribbean literary traditions of *oraliture,* this aural phenomenon is dependent upon a European voice. Both the text and reader must move into contexts that fluctuate among familiarity, unfamiliarity, and even hostility, but ultimately lead to a complex rendering of historical and contemporary dynamics. At the end of the day, the text aims to communicate.

While the text refers to the history between France and its colonies, it also assumes a different knowledge in the Haitian reader than the Francophone one. For all of the linguistic play in *Les Affres,* in many cases, the novel's sprawling verbosity does not preserve the aesthetic hush of *Dezafi.* The typography and formatting are much less varied in *Les Affres*; though there are moments in which lines breaks or indentations are unusual in their placement, sections of text are in a much more consistent paragraph form. While many of the same formats and typographical devices are used in both texts, for instance the use of bold, italic, and plain fonts and backslashes, frequently passages in *Dezafi* and *Les Affres* will be written in different fonts or formats. Take for example the following passage from *Les Affres,* written in bold typeface, with no line breaks:

> **Bourgeonnement et débordement de nos douleurs. Nous traînons une indéfinissable croix enveloppée de haillons énigmatiques. Javelots et flèches à nos trousses. Nos fesses aiguillonnées pour la précipitation. / La lune horriblement criblée de cicatrices. Stigmates de la variole et tâches de rousseur comme autant de pustules et de furoncles lumineux ponctuant la lèpre amère de la nuit. Mais, dans quel labyrinthe s'est entortillée notre mémoire ? / Nous pourrions choir de vertige aveugle, s'il advient que nous goûtions avec trop d'appétit aux fruits verts de la colère.**[43]

The corresponding passage in Haitian Creole contains almost identical semantic material, but is written in italics and in a different format:

> *Doulé-nou fè tiyon*
> *N-ap trinnin youn koua tchaka*
> *badé ranyon*
> *Katchoupi-n dèyè-nou*
> *Maché-présé lan fif-nou*
> *Lali-n takté kodinn*
> *Lali-n gravé vèrèt*
> *Nuit-la long anpil*
> *Min, koté mémoua nou yé?*
> *Nou lan tchouboum, si nou kouté kòlè-nou.*[44]

Even typographically, the French passage is heavy handed. The bold typeface and lack of space excessively articulate the passage's affective range from sadness to anger. The use of adjectives in the French also makes explicit what must be read between the lines of the Haitian Creole. Where the Haitian Creole text simply describes the moon as freckled and pockmarked, the French text lists a number of different kinds of markings modified by adjectives. Not only is the moon described as "horriblement criblée de cicatrices," these

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[43] Budding and overflowing of our pains. We drag an undefinable cross wrapped with enigmatic rags. Lances and arrows in our coffers. Our thighs prodded to speed us up. / The moon terribly riddled with scars. Stigmatas of pockmarks and freckles like so many luminous pustules and boils punctuating night's bitter leprosy. But, in what tortuous labrynthe does our memory twist itself? / We could collapse from vertigo if we tasted the green fruits of anger too eagerly. *Les Affres,* 127.

[44] Our sorrows overflow / We drag a crushing cross/misery / covered in rags / A pain behind us / Urgency in our rear / Freckled moon / Pockmarcked moon / The night is very long / But where is our memory? / We are in a predicament if we obey our anger. *Dezafì,* 180.

marks are described as conveying light in a manner that is both grotesque and hopeful in its interruption of night's leprosy. Further, each passage describes anger very differently. While the French passage describes a reaction to emotion metaphorically, the Haitian Creole is direct. The use of metaphor demonstrates a need to mobilize imagery external to the emotion itself to convey its force. In the Haitian Creole text and the historical context in which it is situated, the text can assume not just that the reader comprehends, but that she registers the affective force the passage wishes to convey with no metaphorical apparatus.

These two passages also demonstrate one example of the extensive textual additions made to *Les Affres.* The numerous descriptive elaborations are even more pronounced in many sections of *Les Affres.* This difference in style can be attributed to the shift in readership between *Dezafi* and *Les Affres.*[45] As I have argued above, communicating to a global Francophone audience requires opening certain references and context within the novel to readers likely unfamiliar with Haiti. Many of these contextualizing gestures go beyond the work of explaining; the aesthetic of *Les Affres* is, as we have seen, in many ways exaggerated in its proliferation and augmentation of terms and images. However, this augmentation does not directly correspond to a greater affective impact in the text. In the two passages cited above, the descriptive language used in *Les Affres* certainly increases the syntactic weight of each image. The reader is given more adjectives and repeated reformulations of the same images, leading to an

[45] When *Dezafi* was republished in 2002, it contained similar additions to those made to *Les Affres*. However, the 2000 version of *Les Affres* published by French house Jean Michel la Place contained no noticeable additions to the original 1979 version. I would argue that *Dezafi's* 2002 rewriting corresponded to a change in the Haitian political climate, and that *Les Affres'* consistant material reflects the ambiguity of the global audience it addresses.

increase in the quantity of the text and more material guiding her understanding of that text. However, by refusing to give as much material to determine the reader's understanding of the text's images, *Dezafi* relies on the reader to interpret and animate the text's images. When the narrator says "*Nou lan tchouboum si nou kouté kòlé nou,*" he does not need to tell his reader that the fruits of this anger are not yet ripe; indeed, anti-Duvalier revolution had not yet reached any critical mass, though individual efforts had been made (to disastrous consequences).[46] The vertiginous abandon of revenge is *felt* by the reader in Duvalier era Haiti that must be explicitly stated for a global reader of French. The Haitian Creole text thus speaks by way of an assumed context shared by the reader and the author. That is not to say that Frankétienne's artistic practice in French is impeded by his reader's ambiguous context. The formulations used in *Les Affres* are both densely descriptive metaphors and fascinating manipulations of French. *Les Affres* relies more on syntactic material in French to generate an aesthetic experience of the text.

In addition to the descriptions included in the novel itself, *Les Affres* draws its reader into its world by way of a paratextual glossary at the novel's end. Not only does the glossary offer definitions of terms commonly used Haitian life (such as the names of foods, plants, and animals), it glosses concepts that would be unfamiliar to or misinterpreted by the non-Haitian reader. The term *zonbi* is exemplary; while many non-Haitian audiences would have encountered *zonbi* in popular culture, their significance in Haiti would not necessarily be familiar to the global reader. Indeed, many of the terms defined not only facilitate the reader's surface understanding of the work, but allow the reader to access the symbolic meaning of many of the text's Haitian components.

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[46] Trouillot, *State Against Nation,* 155, 169, 221.

However, it again demonstrates the distance between the novel's and the reader's contexts, affecting the reader's experience of the text. While *Les Affres*, on the one hand, preserves a Haitian context (and even insists upon its specificity) in the French text, on the other, the work demonstrates its own efforts in becoming legible to a global audience. The novel both assists the reader's encounter, and reminds the reader of her distance from the text's world.

While Frankétienne's decision to create a new text in French was motivated in part by an aesthetic relationship to the French language, the text's increased circulation was a factor as well.[47] To describe the text's ability to both effect its own worldliness and comment on its positionality is to shift postcolonial discourses around language and power. The possibility for an author to generate a broad public by writing in a European language is undeniably a result of histories of domination. European languages are spoken, written in, and read globally because European empires used language as a tool of dominance during (and after) colonialism. Yet, if we consider language use as a tool to enable the process of creating publics, language untethers itself from a single hegemonic national identity and becomes a tool for unanticipated and emergent publics that are diverse. Indeed, many French language authors asserted this in a publication in the French paper *Le Monde* in 2007, in an open letter entitled "Pour une littérature monde en français." The authors insist that the term "francophone" has become obsolete given the worldliness of the French language: "l'émergence d'une littérature-monde en langue française consciemment affirmée, ouverte sur le monde, transnationale, signe l'acte de décès de la francophonie. Personne ne parle le francophone, ni n'écrit en francophone. La

[47] ibid, 34.

francophonie est de la lumière d'étoile morte. Comment le monde pourrait-il se sentir concerné par la langue d'un pays virtuel?"[48] The authors of the letter are mutually concerned with their own universal relevance as French language authors as with their own general claims to the French language. Language that transcends any single, circumscribed national identity does not imply a common history, culture, or attendant form of belonging, but simply common access to a system of signification. To address a public in French could include a left bank Parisian professor, an Algerian refugee in Montreal, a Haitian exile in Miami, a college student in Sydney-the possibilities are limitless.

However, Frankétienne's text is constantly navigating the distance and proximity between its context and its readership by way of the language in which it is written. As we have seen in George Lamming's description of seizing Prospero's language in order to enact anticolonial relation, in Frankétienne's prose too the author writes in the colonizer's language to effect a particular kind of relation. Despite the accessibility of colonial language, the relation it forms cannot be entirely divorced from histories of colonialism. As with Lamming's text, Frankétienne uses language itself to comment upon the relationship between the Caribbean and the world through language, seeking to sustain a worldly dialogue that is nevertheless aware of the positionality of its interlocutors. However, if Lamming's relation to the colonial other in exile is one of proximity, or of being "beside," to revisit Eve Sedgwick's formulation, Frankétienne's

[48] The emergence of a World Literature in the French language consciously affirmed, open to the world, transnational, signs the death certificate of Francophonie. No one speaks Francophone, nor writes in Francophone. Francophonie is the light of a dead star. How could the world be concerned with the language of a virtual country? "Pour une littérature monde en français."

Les Affres is distinct for its spatial distance from a public addressed through imperial language. Indeed, Frankétienne's writing in French, both through its literary technique and through the author's description of his own isolation within Haiti, should be read as an effort to bridge distance rather than the emergence of types of relation due to proximity.

Les Affres also provides an important critique to the assumed historical preoccupations of Caribbean writing. One can hardly open a text about postcolonial Caribbean writing without encountering an argument regarding the Caribbean novelist's urgent desire to record history from below, and the burdensome historical implications of writing in the same language used to destructively record history against the marginalized Caribbean subject.[49] *Les Affres* is distinguished by its lack of concern with a history pre-dating its principle narrative action. Though critics have argued that the novel's central metaphor is not limited to Duvalier era Haiti,[50] it certainly stems from that specific political circumstance. We must take the novel's point of departure to be a contemporary

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[49] Notable examples include Chamoiseau and Confiant, *Lettres Créoles,* 68-74, 81,161,179; Chancé, *L'auteur en souffrance,* 2-5; Glissant, *Poetic Intention,* 31-2, 174 and *Poétique de la relation,* 24-8, 73-5.

[50] Indeed, many critics have used the language of "slavery" broadly to describe the oppressive situations narrated in the novel. In an article in the Haitian periodical, *Le petit samedi soir* entitled "Dezafi krazé défi", Togiram claims that "DEZAFI Frankétienne-nan doué déplotonnin, gayé tout-tan nan tout kouin, non tout rékouin pou triyonf nètakolé pèp ayisyen, lang ayisyen ak triyonf tout lòt pèp, tout lòt lang ki anba grif grobòkò ki refize bay sèl é continue ap voyé fouètkach pou zonbi kab toujou rété zonbi, pou gin dejouranjou plis zonbi." (Frankétienne's DEZAFI should unfurl, be dispersed in all corners and small places four the total triumph of the Haitian people, of the Haitian language and the triumph of all other people, all other languages in the talons of a great *bòkò* who refuses them salt and continues to whip them such that *zonbi* might always remain *zonbi,* that each days there are more *zonbi.*) (11)

political crisis, as opposed to the haunting absence of subaltern histories.[51] *Les Affres* comments upon its position and context and their attendant histories of linguistic marginalization while simultaneously enacting a global gesture. Frankétienne's text is intimate in its use of textual devices and global language to draw the reader near to a foreign world.

III. Language, Text, and Plural love

"Nous vibrons d'amour depuis longtemps, d'un amour pluriel."[52]

Thusfar, I have analyzed the ways that writing in a local and a global language produced singular forms of expressing an urgent dissent to the Duvalier regimes and expressed aspiration to intimate recognition among distinct communities defined by language. And yet, the paratext to *Les Affres* indicates that the two texts address not only overlapping audiences, but one another. Though each constitutes a complete work, Frankétienne's paratextual description of the *matrice* suggests a common origin of the two texts. The exceptional aspect of *Dezafi* and *Les Affres* is not only that they mobilize distinct aesthetics and forms through the vehicle of language in order to intimate to distinct audiences, but rather that the two texts do so in concert, or as part of a single project identified through their common origin in the *matrice*. Written in the same

[51] Chancé vastly generalizes the aims and predicament of the Caribbean writer, claiming "Le narrateur et l'écrivain ont la vocation de témoigner, de consigner les H/histoires retrouvées. Mais ce project confine à l'utopie, car, dans ces terres d'esclavage, l'écrit est synonyme de discours du maître, il suggère immédiatement le Code noir, le 'Régistre' du négrier." (The narrator and the author are called to testify, to record recovered H/histories. But this project is only possible in a Utopia, because in these countries of slavery, the written word is synonymous with the master's discourse, it immediately suggests the Code Noir, the slave ship's log.) Not only does Chancé's account neglect written forms such as Haitian constitutions, antiracist anthropologies, and nationalist novels, it confines an author's communicative urgencies to the tragic. Chancé, *L'auteur en souffrance,* 4-5.
[52] We have long vibrated with love, with a plural love. *Les Affres,* 69.

political moment, and described by the author himself as progeny of the same womb, the two texts, their audiences, and the affordances of the language specific to each produce an intermittent term that is the relationship between the texts, bringing them together by virtue of their shared origin and their response to one another and separating them by virtue of the need for a second text.

The task then remains to understand the texts as a single entity through the *matrice*. The Vodou *lwa* of the *marasa,* or divine twins, model this conceptual unity and splitting.[53] However, the splitting described by the *marasa* differs significantly from the split Homi Bhabha deploys to describe colonial mimicry.[54] Rather than a split productive of excess that defines the colonized as never quite becoming the colonial, the split between the *marasa*, and between the Haitian Creole *Dezafi* and the French *Les Affres,* is one that defines the relationship between them, allowing each to be separate while acknowledging their coherence. Both the Vodou *lwa* and twinning itself are of great significance, in many ways representing the organizing cosmology of Vodou.[55] The *marasa* represent many of the binaries that govern human existence: life and death, human and divine, physical and metaphysical. Not just the two halves of a binary, the twins also represent the limits of the binary and the boundary that divides two terms. The

[53] Other Frankétienne scholars have commented on the importance of the *marasa* to Frankétienne's text, but analyze different components of the *lwa.* See for instance Confiant and Chamoiseau, *Lettres Créoles,* 177.
[54] Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man," 122-3.
[55] Indeed, the mysterious simultaneity of unity and splitting is one of those most central elements of Haitian Vodou. As Alfred Métraux has mentioned, the *marasa* are sometimes considered to be more powerful even than the *lwa*: "Dans le pantheon vaudou, une place priviégiée leur est reserve à côté des grands 'mystères.' D'aucuns prétendent même que les *marassa* sont plus puissants que les *loa*" (In the vodou pantheon, they have a privileged place among the great 'mysteries.' Some even claims that the *marassa* are more powerful than the *loa*.) Métraux, *Le Vaudou Haïtien*, 129.

marasa thus represent the unity of these seeming binaries, demonstrating that a binary exists only because of its division, a critical element of its terms. As Maya Deren noted, "In Voudoun one *and* one make three; two *and* two make five; for the *and* of the equation is the third and fifth part, respectively, the relationship which makes all the parts meaningful."[56] To extend this analysis to the multilingual author is to understand *Dezafi* and *Les Affres* as each being produced because of their difference, the linguistic boundary between them. Simultaneously one, two, and three, they are first one text because of their single creative origin. Second, they are two texts by virtue of the fact that each generates a meaning all its own. And finally, they exist precisely because of a third work, the boundary between them.

As one textual world, or a single womb capable of multiple creations, *Dezafi* and *Les Affres* certainly transmit the same message through the same metaphor, and indeed stem from the same political urgency. The single textual origin warns against the dangers of passivity and silence in the face of terror, demonstrates the importance of individual and collective action to this end, and ambivalently describes a revolution catalyzed not by collective action, but by an individual already embedded within the terrorizing regime. The textual origin is explicitly Haitian, mobilizing the figure of the *zonbi* in its local sense (as opposed to the popular understanding of zombies put forward in novels and Hollywood films like *I Walked with a Zombie* and *The Serpent and the Rainbow*). The text is also distinctly Haitian by virtue of its inspiration. If the text is motivated by a desire to describe and decry the intolerable conditions of the Duvalier regime, it stems from a single political crisis. For all of the differences discussed in this chapter, the single

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[56] Deren, *Divine Horsemen*, 41.

origin of the text is crucial to understanding the motivation of the texts' differences, and the creation of the two texts in the first place.

As we have seen, the texts are double in so far as each is inadequate to the overarching and singular aesthetic aim. The boundary between them is both the tension that gives rise to the second text and the dependency of one text on the other. To borrow Jean-Luc Nancy's formulation, the two texts are the "avec" of being singular plural: "l'un/l'autre: ni 'par,' ni 'pour,' ni 'en,' ni 'malgré,' mais 'avec.'"[57] Nancy describes a relationship that is contingent, but does not prioritize or privilege one term of the relationship. Indeed, though the shortcomings of one text (its inability to communicate to a global audience, for instance, or alternatively its loss of intimate immediacy) might suggest that one text is privileged-that *Les Affres* exists "pour" [for] granting a global dimension to *Dezafi*, or that *Les Affres* exists "malgré" [despite] its loss of *Dezafi*'s intimate immediacy. Frankétienne's paratext forecloses such prioritizing. Notably, "avec" [with] is also not "et" [and]. In other words, being singular plural is not additive, but rather contingent. The texts depend upon each other in part because each contains an inadequacy to which the other responds. Thus, rather than sequential additions to a single whole, the texts depend upon one another for their being. Then, the relationship between the texts is what allows each to exist. Indeed, neither part alone would generate the whole, which suggests not only the importance of each part, but of the relationship between the two.

Subsequent editions of the text have been published, including a 2000 reissue of *Les Affres,* which contains no significant changes to the 1979 edition, and a 2002 issue of

[57] One/the other: neither "by," nor "for," nor "in," nor "despite," but "with." Nancy, *Être singulier pluriel,* 55.

Dezafi which is significantly different from the 1975 original. The 2002 edition of *Dezafi* is formed by its own political moment, both in the linguistic history of Haitian Creole and the related political history of the Haitian nation.[58] Freed from the censorship of the Duvalier regimes, the 2002 edition of *Dezafi* is dense and loud, perhaps even more so than the 1979 version of *Les Affres*. Frakétienne uses a variety of font sizes in the 2002 *Dezafi*, none of which is small, amplifying the volume of the text and abandoning the restraint characteristic of the 1975 text. The text is also considerably longer than the 1975 version of *Dézafi*, taking advantage of free expression but perhaps also clamoring in increasing desperation as the decades following Jean-Claude Duvalier's removal from power saw not Haitian sovereignty and empowerment, but political intervention by the United States and an increasing economic reliance on foreign aid.

However, despite the abundantly clear changes to the 1975 *Dézafi*, in 2002 Frankétienne gives no paratextual notice that such changes have been made. While the 1979 version of *Les Affres* consciously theorizes its relationship to its predecessor, the 2002 version of *Dezafi* only informs the reader that, "cet ouvrage a été composé selon les règles de la nouvelle graphie créole haïtienne."[59] The text further masks the nature of its relationship to the 1975 original by excluding it from a paratextual list of titles "Du même auteur."[60] The list includes the 1979 publication of *Les Affres*, but does not mention its 2000 reissue. (The 2000 reissue is not discussed here because it contains no

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[58] Additionally, a theatrical version of *Dezafi* combining the French and Haitian Creole versions of the novel was performed in 2015 at the Théâtre le Tarmac in Paris. While an interesting contribution to the ever-growing canon of *Dezafi,* I do not consider this production relevant to my discussion given that Fankétienne was not involved in its writing or production.

[59] This work was composed according to the rules of the new written form of Haitian Creole. *Dezafi* [2002], 6.

[60] From the same author. *Dezafi* [2002], 4.

significant difference from the 1979 original.) Where the paratext to the 1979 edition of *Les Affres* undercuts any notion of a source text, the edition of *Dezafi* published in 2002 attempts to position itself as the definitive issue of Frankétienne's *matrice*. The original publications thus constitute a unique formation for a variety of reasons. Not only were the 1975 version of *Dezafi* and the 1979 version of *Les Affres d'un défi* were both published during the presidency of Jean-Claude Duvalier, a political event that has been demonstrated to be crucial to the conceptualization of the work, any discussion of earlier versions falls out of the 2000 and 2002 publications of the text. Thus, the relationship between the two Duvalier era texts forms an entity unique in Frankétienne's canon, despite his consistent practice of rewriting.

The relationship between the texts is thus one of simultaneous contingency. Frankétienne's work posits a distinct position in postcolonial literature. The relationship between *Dezafi* and *Les Affres* stages a postcolonial literary context in which a text addresses multiple audiences, describes multiple experiences, and engages multiple affects. This multiplicity in and of itself is unremarkable; but Frankétienne's works propose that the relationship between these works generates and alters the meaning of each. For two literary and linguistic cultures to be "with" one another, neither can be primary, or derivative. Frankétienne's texts are radical for their ability to stage the simultaneity of two languages both available for artistic expression.

And yet, as we have seen, language choice affects the creative manifestation of these two interrelated texts. In other words, the languages do not produce the same text written with different words; the texts comment upon the worlds in which each language exists. The relationship of mutual interdependency between the texts is thus not to be

considered a utopian gesture towards the infinitely open expressiveness of the multilingual and its mobile forms of relation. While the argument I have traced does indeed agree with Édouard Glissant that "le dit de la Relation est multilangue,"[61] Frankétienne's work is grounded in a local urgency that Glissant's errant Relation does not entirely accommodate. Frankétienne's turn to the globe and to the local originates within a specific conflict that calls for multiple and interdependent forms of engagement—a local expression of dictatorial oppression and a global escape of that oppression. While Glissant does not deny the local specificity of an individual author's voice, in prioritizing Relation and *errance* he insists that that locality must be uprootable, or globally and universally accessible. Perhaps the inadequacy of Glissant's argument is its failure to recognize that writers living an internal exile, like Frankétienne, have overlapping priorities. The plural loves of the multilingual author are mobilized by locality and globality, tied both to the immediacy of a local they cannot escape spatially, politically, or affectively, and the necessity of imagining a world beyond. Neither *racine* nor *rhizome*, Frankétienne's texts can neither deny their locality nor fully embrace it.[62]

As each text addresses a public unavailable to the other, the existence of this double textual entity is, like the *marasa* itself, highly ambivalent. At the same time that each text attempts to unite an intimate public, the existence of the two texts is alienating. The existence of two texts, which we are instructed not to think of as translations of one another, points to the insufficiency of each text on its own. In using both languages the author wishes to be both global *and* local; present *and* absent; known *and* unfamiliar.

[61] The speech of Relation is multilingual. Glissant, *Poétique de la Relation*, 31.
[62] Kaiama Glover identifies this tension between the local and the global as one of the driving forces in the Spiralist literary movement founded by Frankétienne, Jean Claude Fignolé, and René Philoctète. Glover, *Haiti Unbound,* 25.

Creating *marasa* texts is the method by which such an effect can be achieved; and yet, it subjects author, reader, and text to an awareness of its own partiality. At the same time that a single urgency, to speak to a public of the conditions of life under Duvalier, produced both texts, neither readership nor language of production could itself respond to this urgency. The world of the novels vibrates with its author's multiple selves.

Conclusion: The Double Exile

Remaining in Haiti, unlike many of his compatriots and colleagues, Frankétienne nevertheless lived his own forms of exile. Though *Dezafi* expressed the intimate dimension of repressed discourse and coded speech necessary in Duvalier era Haiti in the terms and language that comprised daily life, its textual medium rendered it inaccessible to, and thus somewhat exiled from, Haitian publics. Exiled from public life in Haiti, Frankétienne traveled by way of a language that expressed the suffering of Haitians living under Duvalier, but lost the same immediate contextual understanding of its Haitian language twin. Both languages gave life to movement beyond the limitations of Duvalier era Haiti. At the same time that both languages defy dictatorially imposed limitations by mobilizing discourse, they originate within a decidedly bounded geographical and discursive space. Indeed, the aspiration to global and unbounded discourse stems from the real limitations of a political climate in which to speak directly would mean death, and to leave would be to leave permanently. Thus, the mobility romanticized not only by Lamming, but by Frankétienne's Francophone compatriots (from fellow Haitian exiles such as René Depestre and Dany Laferrière to the notorious Martinican *errant* Édouard Glissant) comes into focus not merely as a privileged position, but one that deeply determines an artists's relationship to language and culture.

At the same time that Frankétienne's decision to stay in Haiti limited his ability to openly articulate a response to national life, it required new styles and forms capable of both intimating and conveying an aspiration to intimate publics. Both texts intimate to every reader by way of language, and by the reader's response to each novel's urgent public address. Indeed, as the reader becomes "nou(s)," she, too, is inscribed within Frankétienne's text. And yet, *Dezafi*'s limited range as text in Haitian society remains a foreclosed aspiration. While European languages are widely accessible and thus generate new expressive modes available to broad readerships, the Haitian public Frankétienne addresses in his Haitian language work is still unformed. Though pleasures result from textual exile, either lived physically or through the text as avatar, these pleasures emerge as only a partial fulfillment or substitute for political and aesthetic aspirations as yet unanswered: those that demand the response of the people.

Chapter Three: Proliferating Publics: Diaspora and the Aurality of Caribbean Aesthetics

"Sentiments, whose greatest force is in their ability is to ignite intimacy into a political state and turn locality into a staging ground for identity, have become spread over vast and irregular spaces as groups move yet stay linked to one another."[1] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*

Lamming and Frankétienne's print expressions of nationalist sentiment uniquely enacted through language are riddled with each author's self-awareness of the limitations of any print project. In *The Pleasures of Exile*, Lamming describes the British West Indies in the 1950s as, "a mass of people who were either illiterate, or if not had no connection to literature since they were too poor or too tired to read; and on the other hand a colonial middle-class educated, it seemed, for the specific purpose of sneering at anything which grew or was made on native soil."[2] Similarly, Frankétienne's 1975 novel in Haitian Creole *Dezafi* self-reflexively comments on its own absent audience through the babbling narrator who doubts whether his words are heard. Each author was thus troubled by the conflict between the intimate aspirations of his aesthetic project and its inaccessibility to a wide Caribbean public. To move beyond these limitations, Caribbean writers of the mid-twentieth-century turned to literary forms that suspended the specific problems of print culture by turning to aural genres and media. Language freed from its textual moorings transforms public discourse into a live poetics of presence.

In addition to bypassing problems of literacy, sound evoked a range of affective responses unavailable to print. The sounds of regionally specific linguistic forms,

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[1] Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," 41.
[2] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 40.

creolized Englishes in the British West Indies and Haitian Creole in Haiti, enacted public discourse in local speech forms both reflective of and accessible to populist public formations. Through this anti-elitist evocation of the linguistic forms ordinarily relegated to intimate life, Caribbean writers aspired to new solidarities that incorporated the breadth of Caribbean experience into the public sphere.

Not only did populist language democratize discourse, aural media of radio broadcast and theater enacted the process of travel that posed yet another set of distinct challenges to the formation of national Caribbean collectives: the migration of Caribbean subjects. Mass migration from Haiti in the 1970s and 1980s and from the Anglophone Caribbean in the 1950s fragmented populations in the moments when collective action became most urgent. Indeed, the BBC radio program *Caribbean Voices* crossed the Atlantic, drawing together literature penned by authors living on either side of the ocean and creating a collective voice through the radio program. Frankétienne's play *Pèlin Tèt* both thematized diasporic crossings from Haiti to North America and enacted those crossings as actors performed the play on either side of the diaspora. Aural media thus created intimate audiences of listeners consuming a collective image of themselves performed through language. Indeed, language rendered literature's audience self-selecting in each case—only speakers of Caribbean vernaculars could understand these performances.

The two cases I examine in this chapter foreground sound in each author's efforts to generate publics responsive to and therefore representative of robust national feeling. The first is a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) radio program broadcast from London to the Caribbean between 1945 and 1958 entitled *Caribbean Voices*. Caribbean

writers living in both the Caribbean and in London sent their writing to the BBC to be read on the air. The program encouraged the use of vernacular forms in Caribbean literature. However, the program's broadcast of these vernacular forms highlighted the division between the Caribbean local in which vernacular culture originated and the metropolitan context from which the program was broadcast. Thus, geographic and, as we shall see, cultural difference disrupted the unifying potential of Caribbean language.[3] While archival records of the show's broadcasts and correspondence concerning the program document the central role that sound played in this literary moment, sound recordings of the program no longer exist. Thus, to arrive at a theory of sound's role in generating literary publics through Caribbean voices, my analysis relies exclusively on these written archives. Nevertheless, the archive examined in this chapter includes not only scripts of the broadcast, but letters between writers, editors, and listeners. The extent of this archival material permits an analysis that extends beyond the unidirectional airwaves that broadcast only from London to the Caribbean, unlocking the Caribbean participation in the formation of this medium.

Frankétienne's 1978 play in Haitian Creole *Pèlin Tèt* [*Head Trap*][4] similarly traversed diasporic ruptures, using the Haitian Creole language in an effort to span the

[3] The absence of this archive certainly belongs to a pattern of devalorizing the performative in the Global South, as detailed by Diana Taylor in *The Archive and the Repetoire*. While Taylor stresses the transgressive potential of a living, embodied archive of performance under colonialism, *Caribbean Voices* presents a different case. The artists who contributed to *Caribbean Voices* and their listeners actively sought to inaugurate an absent Caribbean tradition, one grounded in the ephemeral voice. Thus, while Taylor's book elucidates the power dynamics in which *Caribbean Voices's* absent archive is inscribed, we must also note the artists' desire for an archive, as opposed to the transgressive performativity Taylor celebrates.

[4] Typically, *Pèlin Tèt* has been translated as *The Noose* in English. However, I have chosen *Head Trap* because it more thoroughly encompasses the mind games and false

divided Haitian population.[5] Both through its use of Haitian Creole, a language spoken by all Haitians, and its plotting, *Pèlin Tet* frames the problems that spurred the Haitian diaspora, namely poverty and political oppression, as experienced both in Haiti and abroad. My analysis relies largely on the text of the play and on a number of reviews written in Haitian publications that circulated in the diaspora and in Haiti. These secondary sources describe the experience of the play's spectators, and reveal some of the affects that surpass a textual rendering of the play. Therefore, both literary analysis of the play and some accounts of the site specific affects of the play's performances in Haiti and abroad allow me to draw conclusions regarding the role of diaspora in the play's affective resonance. While both the historicized account given in this chapter and the ephemeral quality of performance prevent me from fully analyzing the embodied affects of *Pèlin Tèt,* the textual archives I examine nevertheless provide an account of *Pèlin Tèt*'s site and sound specific affects.

Sound, in each case, emerges as the representation of a specific locale and as an effort to redress the distances separating Caribbean communities. While *Caribbean Voices* aspirationally addressed a West Indian public that transcended differences among islands and the distance of exiles, *Pèlin Tèt* turned to theater to unite Haitians living

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consciousness depicted in the play, rather than giving excessive attention to Piram's suicide attempt at the end of the play. Pèlin is "trap" in Haitian Creole, and tèt is "head." Also of note is that Frankétienne's play is very closely based on a play entitled *Emigranci* by Polish writer Slawomir Mrozek, published in Polish in 1974 and in French in 1975.

[5] *Pèlin Tèt* has been subject to spotty archivization. Many audio recordings of the play have been made, dating to the plays initial performances in the late '70s and to its more recent performances in the '00s. I have not encountered a video recording of the 1978 performances of the play in my research, but scholars frequently refer to the wide popularity of audio recordings of *Pèlin Tèt* in the Haitian diaspora. I have heard one such recording, released by Antilles Mizik on CD, but the CD and its liner notes contain no indication of when the play was performed. Ultimately, I have not been able to observe a live theater production of the play.

under the Duvalier regime and those who had fled it. Intimacy plays a distinct role in the formation of diasporic Caribbean publics. The first arises in the public's response to aesthetic attempts to generate regional or national unity. In *Caribbean Voices* and *Pèlin Tèt*, voice and language specifically were intended to mobilize regionally specific knowledge stemming from Caribbean daily life. Language draws on a wealth of local experience. For instance, Haitian Creole, and particularly Frankétienne's use of the language, draws upon a catalogue of folk knowledge including riddles, proverbs, and puns. Thus understanding Haitian Creole requires not only a lexicon of cultural information, it requires the spectator to interpret the interpersonal dynamics surrounding language. Similarly, the coteries that influenced *Caribbean Voices* called for representations of local life, which were frequently local dialects. The specificity of local life and language evoked shared experiences of Caribbean listeners. Thus, the publics of *Caribbean Voices* and *Pèlin Tèt* were called to respond to aesthetic work reflective of a local, personal experience. Indeed, these publics were premised on that experience. Language was thus deployed as a kind of shibboleth, a method by which a community might recognize itself. At the same time, however, these linguistic projects were invested not only in collective recognition, but inspiring collective affect.

For both Frankétienne and Lamming, these public addresses are tied up in their larger political and world making projects. Lamming's involvement in *Caribbean Voices* aspirationally performs a regionally inclusive Caribbean public that could move towards decolonization. Frankétienne's *Pèlin Tèt* inserted itself into the bleak expanse of the Duvalier regimes in Haiti. While the two dictators (François and Jean-Claude Duvalier, who ruled successively from 1957-1986) violently and brutally stifled all public

resistance to the regime, Frankétienne nevertheless ventured an opening for anti-Duvalier discourse in the play. Frankétienne and Lamming both demonstrate an overwhelming investment in political forms, intimate attachments awaiting the response of a public. Each public address intimates a profound attachment.

Looking comparatively at *Caribbean Voices* and *Pèlin Tèt* as two models of public address among Caribbean diasporas demonstrates the overlapping attempts to use the vernacular as an intimate medium capable of forging nationalist publics, even among diasporic populations. However, ultimately the use of the vernacular was unable to account for the diversity of those populations. Aurality plays a critical component in these foreclosed publics. In each case, language is called upon to generate a public through language's intimate particularities. In each case, we can trace gaps between the public an author imagines through his use of language, and his public's response through its relationship to that language.

I. Articulating Exile: The BBC's *Caribbean Voices*

The BBC radio program *Caribbean Voices* was a catalyst for Caribbean Literature in the post-World War Two era. Not only did the program provide a venue for Caribbean writers to gain public attention for their work, catapulting the region's most celebrated writers to international fame, it consciously reflected on and cultivated Caribbean literature as its own unique aesthetic tradition, distinct from England. The program thus undoubtedly effected institutionalized literary culture in the region, but it also registered significant disagreements over the literary culture it claimed to represent and promote. While many artists worked in the standard and elite English linguistic register of their education and their literary models, a growing contingent began to compose in the

Caribbean's diverse vernacular forms. Comments made on the program and letters among the program's editors framed these two approaches as oppositional. The accented voices of readers for the program were also a critical point of contention among Caribbean audiences, as the program favored the readers for broadcasts who themselves had Caribbean accents. This set the program apart from the typical BBC broadcasts in the region, read by English men and women. Through both linguistic register and regional accent, the voice became a synechdoche for a contested cultural identity in the British West Indies. While some of the region's authors and listeners, and non-Caribbean critics, favored regionally marked voices, many authors and listeners in the Caribbean preferred voices that reflected standard English norms. This contention was a constant topic of commentary and conversation on the program.

These tensions were reflective of the state institutions that housed them. As the historical and institutional origins of *Caribbean Voices* reveal, the program was a product of its time. While it was firmly ensconced within an imperial institution, the BBC, it was strongly shaped by non-European people and aesthetics. However, broadcasting to the Caribbean as a single region presented editorial challenges. The diversity of West Indian culture posed barriers to the cultural unity *Caribbean Voices* suggested. As we have seen in Chapter One, a diverse array of languages and cultures existed within the British West Indies. These disparate islands were rarely considered as comprising single entity apart from imperial administration and diasporic community in London. Nevertheless, *Caribbean Voices* endeavored to portray the British West Indies as a single cultural entity by way of its broadcasts to the diverse listening publics in the West Indies. These broadcasts were created by imperial administrators and a strong and influential cohort of

West Indian writers resident in London. Despite the region's diversity, the affordances of radio broadcasting and the critical orientation of *Caribbean Voices* addressed the British West Indies as a single public.

If radio is effective precisely for its ability to generate instantaneous publics regardless of geographical distance, the British Empire certainly used it to this end in the early days of the BBC.[6] The BBC's Colonial Service began as an attempt to draw disparate Britons throughout the empire together through radio's unique ability to bridge geographical distance. Critically, radio also brings public life into the private sphere.[7] The BBC specifically broadcast national symbols like the chimes of Big Ben to the empire to generate a sense of participation in and connection to metropolitan national life. The intimacy of shared cultural experiences inflecting these national symbols was thus charged with bridging the distance between colony and metropole. Initially, the imagined BBC listener was not a colonial subject, but imperial agents dispersed throughout the empire.[8] As the Colonial Service developed, the BBC became increasingly aware that its potential listeners were not only white colonial subjects far from the homeland, but colonized listeners who were also British subjects and played a role in imperial life.

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[6] For more information on the history of the BBC, see Briggs, *The BBC: The First Fifty Years*; Scannell and Cardiff, *A Social History of British Broadcasting*; Gillespie and Webb, *Diasporas and Diplomacy: Cosmopolitan Contact Zones at the BBC World Service, 1932-2012*; and Rush, *Bonds of Empire.*

[7] See Cardiff and Scannell, "Broadcasting National Unity," esp. 161. The terms "public" and "private" have a vexed history in which feminized spaces and forms of discourse have been dismissively classified as "private," denying their interconnection with the explicitly public sphere of the marketplace, nation, and state. Radio incorporates these spaces treated as separate.

[8] See Robertson, "'It is a real joy to get listening of any kind from the homeland': BBC Radio and British diasporic audiences in the 1930s" in *Diasporas and Diplomacy:Cosmopolitan Contact Zones at the BBC World Service*. What's more, radio sets were prohibitively expensive for the majority of colonized populations.

Especially during the Second World War, the BBC became aware of its global audience and the interconnection of its empire. As Britain's colonies contributed soldiers to the war effort, colonial subjects flooded into London, and were subsumed within the common cultural forms that symbolized an imperial war effort, like the British Armed Forces and media entities like the BBC.

This historical moment gave rise to the BBC's first efforts to generate broadcasts specifically for the West Indies. *Calling the West Indies* was the first BBC program designed specifically for a West Indian audience. It began as a handful of segments produced specifically for the West Indies at the behest of two West Indians living in London, Una Marson and Rudolph Dunbar. Marson and Dunbar claimed that these programs would boost West Indian morale during the war.[9] During World War Two, Marson specifically sought out West Indian Royal Air Force (RAF) soldiers to record messages to be broadcast to the Caribbean. The program's origins can thus be traced to an effort to solidify imperial unity during the war, notably through the intimate ties between individual soldiers and their loved ones. Under Marson's direction, the program also took on a markedly cultural dimension. The West Indian Party segment frequently featured music and poetry from the region drawn from Marson's West Indian acquaintances in London. As the Overseas Service expanded, ultimately four programs per week were being broadcast for the West Indies specifically. One of these was *Caribbean Voices*, initially under Marson's direction. *Caribbean Voices* showcased Caribbean literature, featuring poetry, short fiction, and the occasional radio play written by Caribbean authors. When Marson left the program in 1946, Henry Swanzy took over

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[9] Rush, *Bonds of Empire*, 175.

and made it his particular mission to support the development of a unique, West Indian literary culture.

Through radio technology, *Caribbean Voices* was able to simultaneously address the Caribbean as a public by broadcasting to the entire region at a single time, every week.[10] The program thus endeavored to generate a comprehensive West Indian public articulated within the British Empire. The program was the first effort to generate the empty, homogenous time that allows subjects of a nation to think of themselves as united, as described by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities*. Anderson claims that the newspaper was a fundamental development towards a people's ability to conceive of itself as a nation, because, "the newspaper… creates this extraordinary mass ceremony: the almost precisely simultaneous consumption ('imagining') of the newspaper-as-fiction… each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion."[11] *Caribbean Voices* inaugurated a new imagined community in that West Indians from different islands were not accustomed to thinking of themselves or each other as recipients of the same communicative address. Before the program, print publications[12] in the region were divided by island. Thus, a Jamaican might easily imagine other Jamaicans reading the *Jamaica Gleaner*, fittingly

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[10] Individuals shows were occasionally re-broadcast outside of the canonical time slot by local stations. Nevertheless, the BBC itself broadcast the program at the same time each week.

[11] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 35. While Anderson mentions radio in a footnote, he does not dedicate any significant analysis to its role in creating national publics.

[12] At the time, local radio broadcasting was quite rare in the Caribbean, and the primary media consumed were print. For more on the history of radio broadcast in the Caribbean, see Alejandra Bronfman, "Birth of a Station: Broadcast, Governance, and the Waning Colonial State."

named according to the community within which it circulated. Alternatively, *Caribbean Voices* addressed islanders as subjects of the British Empire.[13] West Indian writers for and listeners to *Caribbean Voices* wrote amid the West Indian transition to independence through Federation discussed in Chapter One, and, as with Lamming's descriptions in *The Pleasures of Exile*, West Indians were at the time were politically intermediary subjects of both the British Empire and a new state transitioning to independence.

The program thus addressed them not as a public of British subjects, but rather a distinct West Indian public with its own cultural forms and interests. Contributing to the West Indian focus of the program, Swanzy notoriously and controversially preferred using West Indian readers to English ones in broadcasts. Swanzy's decision indicated an aesthetic investment in the West Indian voice as cultural medium for West Indian art. Removing the English voice as intermediary between colony and metropole generated a new aural economy in which West Indians both performed and received radio's address. Swanzy and many other commentators on the program expressed hope that this aural economy would generate new cultural identity. *Caribbean Voices* aspired to a third imagined community, one which united local, island identities in a regional collective

[13] Letters between Glady Lindo, the Caribbean local editor for *Caribbean Voices*, and writer Sam Selvon reveal a pronounced connection between local new periodical publications and the radio show. In several letters from 1947-49, before Selvon left Trinidad for London, Lindo writes to Selvon requesting that he advertise *Caribbean Voices* in the *Trinidad Guardian*, or reprint scripts of the show in the paper. While it was common practice for the *Guardian* to publish the BBC radio schedule, Lindo writes particularly of *Caribbean Voices*, "Except for the daily programme details published by the "Guardian" I shall have no means of drawing the attention of Trinidadians to [Swanzy's *Last Six Months* review]." (Box 6, Folder 604, Sam Selvon Collection. West Indiana Collection, UWI St Augustine.) National print publications thus played a pivotal role in the promotion of *Caribbean Voices* as a pan-regional endeavor.

that stopped short of larger imperial ones.[14] Nevertheless, Swanzy's own English voice intervened, both in its editorial decisions and in the oral contributions Swanzy made to each broadcast. England, too, remained the locus of editorial policy and even of West Indian identity, as we have already seen in Chapter Two.

Prior to Swanzy's revolutionary editorial decision, BBC listeners across the globe were accustomed to hearing a relatively uniform British accent in BBC broadcasts. The voice was one of many imperial institutions invested with the task of making the absent empire present. However, such symbols claim to represent not just one cultural facet of a society or empire, but what in Weberian terms might be called its ideal type, more a symbolic distillation of a concept nevertheless deployed as a model than a representative figure. In contrast, Swanzy's editorial efforts favored contributions that represented the unique qualities of Caribbean life. Additionally, Swanzy's preference for using Caribbean readers to record pieces for broadcast shifted not only the content, but the medium of the voice to represent the Caribbean to itself. Swanzy's efforts thus disrupted the BBC's practice of projecting empire through a standard representation of English culture, distilled in the medium of the voice.[15]

While *Calling the West Indies* had featured Caribbean readers, a direct representation of popular Caribbean life, as art, was quite unprecedented in the region. By selecting pieces representative of daily life in the Caribbean for broadcast, *Caribbean*

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[14] Literary scholar Lawrence Breiner has argued that this new consciousness enabled the conceptualization of the West Indies Federation (Breiner, "Caribbean Voices on the Air"). Glyne Griffith has made similar comments in "This is London Calling the West Indies: The BBC's *Caribbean Voices*."

[15] Unfortunately, the recordings of *Caribbean Voices* no longer exist. In the early days of radio broadcast, tape was extremely expensive and frequently reused after recorded programs had been broadcast.

Voices transformed a regional broadcast from a representation of empire (whose ideal type was tied to British nationalism) into a representation of life that was unequivocally Caribbean. One such example of the Caribbean quotidian is the short story, "Taxi, Mister," by Trinidadian writer Daniel Samaroo Joseph. The story depicts the monologue of a taxi driver taking passengers from San Fernando to Port-of-Spain. The driver narrates events on the road, frequently interrupting himself:

> Look that fella dey stopping me. Ah better pick him up. He never to get nothing to carry him down after this. Wha happen friend? Whey you going? Town? Dollar. …You know is after eleven already? Dollar or you see your skin they till morning. Okay. See you then. Tha is the trouble with-wh happen? Why he don't make up he mind? Come quick, pal. Put your grip in the trunk. It could open, the lock break. Make yourself small inside dey, close the door easy. Dey we go. You see for yourself, friend, you find out it don't make no sense to hang round they whole night.[16]

The taxi driver's narration draws the radio listener into the narrative, addressing her as if she were a passenger in the taxi. Not only the narrative mode, but the language used by the taxi driver directly addresses the listener. The driver speaks in a mode reserved for casual interactions, using non-standard English grammar and phrasings. Thus, the literature touted as representative of the region by a cultural arm of empire directly interpellated listeners on terms generated within the islands. The story also addresses a public that extends beyond Trinidad. It is not written in a dialect that would be incomprehensible to a pan-Caribbean public. While not written in standard or high English, the story does not use idiomatic expressions that are so local as to be alienating, or the French based patois spoken by some Trinidadians. At the same time, the piece, especially when read by a West Indian voice, gives an unmistakably Caribbean sense of

[16] Joseph, "Taxi Mister," *Caribbean Voices* Scripts, Vol. 5. West Indiana Collection, UWI St. Augustine.

place-one much more familiar than the typical BBC broadcast. Such a story brought West Indians into a public representation not of an imperial identity whose detail excluded them, but a specific local one.

While the program favored literary work that represented Caribbean life by way of the Caribbean voice, editorial pieces on the program more often relied on the commentary of the English cultural elite. While Swanzy hosted some roundtable or panel discussions featuring Caribbean writers, the majority of critics invited to give extended, solo editorial remarks were from England. Thus, while the aesthetic representation of the West Indies instated the West Indian voice as its authority and aspired to a West Indian community, critical or high literary sanction still came from the metropole. As Lamming himself states, "When the exile is a man of colonial orientation… he has to win the approval of Headquarters, meaning in the case of the West Indian writer, England." [17] Early in Swanzy's tenure as editor of the program, he invited a number of English critics to give short addresses in a series entitled, "What I hope to see from the West Indies." The program, in its very title, addresses the region as a single entity, and one with a shared literary culture. The series also envisions a single West Indian literary destiny, acknowledging the aspirational nature of its formative discourse. And yet, the "I" projecting its aspirations onto the West Indies is grammatically open, not marked by any explicit national or cultural position. Tellingly, however, the role was most often filled by a prominent metropolitan literary critic. Arthur Calder-Marshall, an English novelist and frequent critical contributor to the show, articulated a connection between West Indian literary material and solidarity:

[17] Lamming, *Pleasures,* 24.

> The second point I'd like to give you for today. Not only your links with the past. But your links with one another; not just Barbadian, St. Lucian, Jamaican, and the rest. But West Indian. Can you… or rather will you… think big enough to speak not for yourself, but for the Caribbean… You are separated not by difference of interest, but by the sea… what I'm waiting for, what you're waiting for is a writer who is not St. Lucian, St. Kittsian, Jamaican, Trinidadian, or Barbadian; but a West Indian, whose imagination crosses the seas, to capture your common destiny.[18]

Calder-Marshall's critique projects a single interest and destiny onto the Caribbean. The nature of this destiny is not revealed, and similarly, its benefits are not articulated directly. This presumed commonality is in tension with another prerogative articulated by Calder-Marshall and other critics on the show: the aesthetic expression of everyday life in the Caribbean. Earlier in the same broadcast, Calder-Marshall calls not only for "your landscape, the streets you live in, the words to paint the pictures of your everyday life," but claims that "literary task number one" should be "a really serious history of every West Indian island."[19] By Calder-Marshall's account, the specificity of the West Indies should be accounted for, only so that it might be surpassed through a yet unrealized literary and political unity. Local specificity was not seen as an impediment, but rather a critical component, of regional unity. The story "Taxi Man" achieves this affect: broadly accessible throughout the region, it nevertheless depicts local Trinidadian life.

Writers themselves, perhaps heeding Calder-Marshall's call, engaged in the formation of this regional literary movement, all the while acknowledging its aspirational and yet unrealized status. An excerpt from Lamming's 1954 novel *The Emigrants,* read on the air October 4, 1953, utilized both language and plotting to represent affect's ability to generate this idealized unity in diversity. The excerpt transpires among a group of men

[18] Feb. 1, 1948. Box 20946, Folder 3, *Caribbean Voices* Archive. BBC WAC.
[19] ibid.

who are making the transatlantic passage from the Caribbean to England. Lamming's third person narrator first describes, in standard English, the intimate ties that have developed among the men on board the ship: "The dormitory was their temporary abode. It was like a home... They had come together without effort or invitation, exchanging confidences, telling stories about their life in their respective islands and asking questions about the passengers whom they weren't likely to encounter."[20] Lamming uses the doubly intimate contexts of the actual bedroom and the figurative home to describe the attachments that have developed among the men. This intimacy is circumscribed—not only have the men formed a group, they maintain its boundaries by talking about people who are not likely to become a part of it. Lamming describes the men's diverse yet comparable experiences of life on their respective islands as a formative part of the intimacy among them. Difference is thus the foundation for a new sense of community.

Lamming depicts one such conversation, in which the men's regional dialects and cultures emerge. Following a debate on the comparative beauty of the Caribbean islands, the Barbadian among them makes a controversial statement: "What was unchallengeable was that Barbados had the best standards of education. The Grenadian objected… 'Is only because you Bajans was always under the English you get this idea 'bout you got more education than anybody else.'"[21] The conflict between the men represents the difficulties *Caribbean Voices* itself faced. *Calling the West Indies* was criticized in its early days for disproportionately featuring Jamaican writers, failing to represent the

[20] Lamming, "Extract from George Lamming's Novel," *Caribbean Voices* Scripts, Vol. 12. West Indiana Collection, UWI St. Augustine.
[21] ibid.

region as a whole.[22] Swanzy frequently cited the island of origin of writers featured on a *Caribbean Voices* broadcast, and apologized when he had given inadequate attention to a particular island.[23] Regional differences among the islands, reflected in their own relationship to England and to each other, sowed potential discord within the emergent West Indian home. These regional differences would have been reflected in accent were a group of Caribbean men to have the debate. However, Lamming himself read the entire piece on the show, resulting in an aural uniformity at odds with the scene narrated. What's more, his Barbadian accent is particularly Anglicized. We are left to wonder how he might have navigated the regional and class positions presented in the dialogue's subject matter. The story's conflict is interrupted by another passenger called the Governor, potentially ironically referring to the queen's appointed representative in the Crown colonies and the last vestige of British control in the federated West Indies: "'Lemme tell all you something. Education or no education, the whole blasted lot o you is small islanders… I know Kingston like I know Port-of-Spain, ol' man, like the palm o my hand, an' I say the whole lot o you is small islanders, O.K.?' The men were quiet. 'So from now on,' the Governor ordered, 'Doan lemme hear any more bullshit 'bout small island an' big island… All you down here is my brothers.'"[24] The Governor establishes himself as a pan-regional unifier, professing an equal acquaintance with the largest two West Indian cities and condemning the other passengers for being "small islanders," a term whose most prominent meaning is rural ignorance and backwardness. However, the Governor tries to dispel the talk of small and big islands. He inscribes himself within a

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[22] Rush, *Bonds of Empire*, 194.
[23] See, for instance, Swanzy, "The Last Six Months," Feb 18, 1951. Box 20946, Folder 6, *Caribbean Voices* Archive. BBC WAC.
[24] ibid.

greater collective with the other men through the language of brotherhood. While this most immediately applies to the local intimacy of the ship's cabin, the term has political resonance. Though the differences among these men register as a source of potential discord, the unifying rhetoric of the Govenor draws them all together. What's more, Lamming's neutral West Indian accent smoothed over the differences the narrative describes. Despite their linguistic and cultural differences, the men understand each other, and are ultimately united in a symbolic regional unity.

The formation of a pan-regional unity Lamming describes and its attendant echoes of the emergent West Indies Federation establishes the foundation for the anticolonial publics Raphael Dalleo describes in *Caribbean Literature and the Public Sphere*. Specifically discussing the 1940s and '50s, Dalleo argues that Caribbean publics thrive under "modern colonialism,"[25] in which European governmental presence in the colony provides Caribbean subjects with a meaningful force against which to position themselves, all the while representing the interest of the majority of marginalized colonial subjects eager for liberation. *Caribbean Voices*'s articulation of a cultural identity distinct from England certainly fits this mould. However, the publics generated through *Caribbean Voices* are perhaps more complicated than those Dalleo describes. Dalleo's impressive comparative analysis of the Caribbean does not account for failed efforts to

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[25] See Dalleo, *Caribbean Literature,* 5, 69-121. Dalleo has a chapter on *The Pleasures of Exile* which, notably, is not in his section on modern colonialism, but rather on "Postcoloniality and the Crisis of the Literary Public Sphere." To my view, Dalleo's category of modern colonialism more aptly describes the political contexts I discuss in this chapter. *Caribbean Voices* was broadcast before the postcolonial period, and *Pèlin Tèt* was performed in an era of anti-authoritarian political struggle. Both artistic contexts thus generated a counterpublic that nevertheless represented a significant view within popular opinion.

bridge the divisions that cut between Caribbean islands, and between the home and the diaspora.

Though Lamming's fictional regional unity in diversity appears successful, *Caribbean Voices'* parallel mission encountered a number of obstacles resulting from the very diversity they attempted to subsume. Writers who used dialect in their literary creation frequently grappled with translating local dialect for their listeners, sometimes incorporating translations into the pieces themselves. Authors whose characters used terms or phrases in Trinidadian patois, for instance, would frequently repeat those words or phrases translated into standard English. Such acts of translation both endeavor to intimate the local specificity of the piece to the listener, but they are simultaneously alienating, demonstrating the listener's distance from the author's local context and aesthetic vision. In a radio play written exclusively in dialect, George Spense incorporated translation into the plotting of his narrative. Spense stages a conversation among two Jamaican women, Muddah and Janie, and Mattie, a Trinidadian migrant to their town. The play includes idiomatic expressions that the characters must gloss for one another and presumably the audience:

> MUDDAH: Well me chile, yuh dear sister Janie didah tell me bout yuh from salt fish didah shingle 'ouse. Ah is propa glad to get interduced to yuh, an' ah jes 'ope dat yuh is nat one a dem young ooman dat kyant tek tellin.
> MATTIE: An wen dem didah use salt fish to shingle 'ouse ina Jamaica, Janie?
> JANIE: Dat is jes' a Jamaica sayin', Sister Mattie. Muddah mean seh dat ah didah tell 'er bout yuh from long time. Oonu no 'ave dis edicational sayin' ina Trinidad?
> MATTIE: We no 'ave none likah dis one, Sister Janie.[26]

Muddah tries to draw Mattie into community by using local conversational forms, indicating Mattie's inclusion in local life with an idiomatic expression. This effort at

[26] *Caribbean Voices,* August 13, 1950. Box 20946, Folder 6, *Caribbean Voices* Archive. BBC WAC.

intimation stops short when Mattie fails to understand regional speech. While Muddah tries to bring her into an inside exchange, that very effort excludes her by demonstrating her outsider status. While Mattie does not understand the idiomatic forms used by her Jamaican friends, she indicates that she too has her own distinct local lexicon, claiming that in Trinidad they have no expressions like the one described. Listeners of the radio program find themselves bewildered like Mattie until Janie, the literary avatar of the author Spense clues them in. While the inclusive gesture attempts to facilitate communication, it flags the absent intimacy that translation must remedy. For local intimacies to become transnational, they require an alienating translation.

Efforts to overcome diversity through generic Caribbean sound, brotherhood, and translation were literary tricks possible only on the radio. More often local life separated Caribbean communities from one another, strengthening intra-island identity rather than pan-regional identity. Within the region, accents and dialects were occasionally mutually incomprehensible to West Indians, and migration was too infrequent to provide most Caribbeans with unifying figures or translators. In other words, the radio's ability to overcome distance was contingent upon its medium and the fiction of narrative. When the Jamaican critic Gordon Bell commented on a story in dialect written for *Caribbean Voices*, he framed dialect as a problem not only for radio broadcast, but for West Indian unity:

> One of the ironies of West Indian sociology is the isolation in which men of the colonies live. Even with the radio, ninety-nine out of every hundred Barbadians have never heard a Jamaican speak… out of the discussion arose such questions as: 'Is Jamaica moving towards a literature of her own written in the vernacular of the country?' 'How far would such a literature be West Indian?' 'Will language,

> which is the essential and vital link among homogenous peoples, prove in this case to be a barrier instead?'[27]

Critically, Bell claims that language corresponds to intimate social ties, and where such ties are lacking, languages become incomprehensible. Within the Caribbean, local linguistic forms are seen not only as a barrier to pan-regional mutual comprehensibility, but social harmony. Isolation is equated with lack of access to sound, and language is seen as the glue of a homogenous people. An independent Jamaican national literature would form, therefore, as an effect of difference in dialect.

Bell's comments sketch some of the limitations of *Caribbean Voices*. Critically, Bell refers to Barbadians not having heard Jamaicans speak, even with radio. Not only did many Caribbean subjects not have access to radios, the voices broadcast on those radios were not always representative of any particular island's speech. In a letter to Henry Swanzy dated August 28, 1948, Frank Collymore, the Barbadian editor of the literary journal *BIM* advised Swanzy to chose readers for the program whose accents would not alienate too many of his listeners:

> Most of my friends still complain about the quality of the Voices. Woolford and Hendriks are, as you note, extremely good, but there are occasions where listeners find it very hard to understand what is being read. Each W.I. island has its own peculiar accent, and the stronger the accent, the greater the risk of the voice being almost incomprehensible. There is no standard W.I. accent; therefore I think the solution would be to select those that approximate most nearly to the English pattern. In the pronunciation of vowel sounds especially. I can understand Barbadian easily, no matter how raucous, but I confess that Jamaican is far more difficult to follow than the most extreme Cockney.[28]

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[27] *Caribbean Voices,* May 23, 1954. Box 20946, Folder 12, *Caribbean Voices* Archive. BBC WAC.

[28] Frank Collymore Letter to Henry Swanzy, Aug. 28, 1948. Box 1, Folder 2, *Caribbean Voices* Correspondance. West Indiana Collection, UWI St. Augustine.

Collymore's description of the Caribbean relies upon England as a point of reference through which regional comprehension becomes possible. First, he suggests that the best way to draw a region of listeners around the program is with an English sound. Second, to illustrate his point, he describes the incomprehensibility of Jamaican dialect by referring to a London dialect. By comparing Cockney and Jamaican, Collymore flattens the difference among British regionalisms, describing the English term in the comparison as clearer to his ear. Importantly, Collymore's suggestions are framed as an effort to facilitate mutual comprehensibility among the islands. Thus, his comments intend to advance a collective regional project. However, such a project requires the removal of regional specificity, and a promulgation of implicit colonial values.

For the largely middle class radio listeners in the Caribbean, accent and dialect not only posed problems to comprehensibility, but registered issues of class. Like many of the intellectuals of his generation, Collymore promoted the study of dialect. He published several editions of a glossary of Barbadian dialect,[29] and as he states somewhat self congratulatorily in the letter cited above, understood the most "raucous" Barbadian. The populist proto-nationalism of his generation's intellectuals shines through in such a statement. However, this opinion was not shared with the greater middle class of the region. In her history of the West Indian relationship to Britishness, Ann Spry Rush describes the desire among upwardly mobile West Indians to consume and project an image of the West Indians that closely adhered to English notions of respectability: "It was not unusual for listeners to express concern that West Indian speakers on the BBC broadcasts sound educated and cultured… In a 1948 letter about W.A.S. Hardy, one

[29]Collymore, *Notes for a Glossary of Words and Phrases of Barbadian Dialect.*

reader complained that Hardy's 'atrocious' accent was not that of an 'educated West Indian.'"[30] The listener had class-based expectations regarding the appropriate sound of the Caribbean voice broadcast to its people. The comment further demonstrates the extent to which the voice was a synechdoche for culture, both for West Indians hewing to British derived standards and those cultivating aesthetic standards indigenous to the West Indies. In the citation Rush provides, the voice generates an affective charge when it refuses to conform to standards of middle class respectability. Despite the familiarity of regional accent and dialect, the voice threatened to reveal an intimate part of West Indian culture that some listeners did not want publicized.

Furthermore, while dialect might have been recognizable and markedly local to all West Indians, it was not always representative of their own daily interactions. This would have been particularly noticeable to some listeners of *Caribbean Voices* whose friends and colleagues read for the show. In a letter to Henry Swanzy, Gladys Lindo, a subeditor for Caribbean voices responsible for contact with writers and the press in the region, expressed this dissatisfaction with West Indian Voices:

> Although Vivian Virtue may be a competent poet he is not a good reader. The pronunciation of 'little' as "lickle" while typically Jamaican did not sound particularly pleasing over the air. Similarly "swahrms" for 'swarms' struck somewhat of a jarring note… to be fair to Vivian Virtue I must confess that I do not think that he is any worse than the majority of your West Indian readers but this opens up a new topic, that of using English rather than West Indian voices, which I will not belabour.[31]

Lindo's complaint arises from a distinction between the language of daily life and the language of the radio, describing vernacular as appropriate only to the context of typical

[30] Rush, *Bonds of Empire*, 192.
[31] Gladys Lindo to Henry Swanzy, Sept 3, 1951. Box 1, Folder 9. *Caribbean Voices* Correspondance. West Indiana Collection, UWI St Augustine.

Jamaican life. Lindo marks the segregation of Caribbean language along class lines, with educated British standards appropriate for some domains (like the radio or literature, more generally) and "typical" Jamaican standards as appropriate for others. This is not simply a matter of classist preference, but reveals the actual segregation of society which *Caribbean Voices*'s promotion of regional speech ignored. Considering that the reader, Vivian Virtue, was both middle class and educated, Lindo's dissatisfaction with Virtue's reading implies that his Caribbean accent rang false in her ears. (Indeed, she assigns blame to the reader rather than the text for the use of vernacular.) Virtue was himself Jamaican, and he and Gladys Lindo knew one another from the social circles of educated, middle class Kingston. His reading would have been an uncanny return of a familiar voice. His pronunciation was an affected choice, rather than a habitual and genuine speech pattern with which Lindo was familiar. While Lindo claims she does not intend to belabor the issue of the Voices, she has nevertheless addressed it, demonstrating that it is still an unresolved point of contention-one on which Swanzy had the last controversial word.

Like accents originating from the specific regions and lower classes of Caribbean society, pieces written in dialect were not universally and enthusiastically embraced by the West Indian populace.[32] Ironically, George Lamming himself denigrated Swanzy's interest in dialect before he migrated to England. In a letter to Henry Swanzy dated May 17, 1948, Gladys Lindo informed Swanzy, "[Lamming] also finds fault with your love of the 'barborous dialect for which Mr. Swanzy seems to have a sharp eye and an approving smile, and which I have noticed is never absent from those stories which are read.' …It is

[32] See also Cobham, "The *Caribbean Voices* Programme," 146.

true that the majority of the better stories that pass through my scrutiny here are of 'low life.'"[33] Lamming's opinion changed so dramatically that he was using representations of dialect in his own writing less than a year after composing the letter Lindo cites. However, he expressed an opinion not uncommon among West Indians. Not only was the use of local dialect considered problematic, West Indians expressed displeasure at Swanzy's preference for stories of local life. In a letter to Swanzy dated April 3, 1948, Lindo writes, "They felt that they were limited by the requirements of 'Caribbean Voices' in that it was necessary to have a West Indian atmosphere in contributions. They appreciated the point you made in your talk that this was not necessarily 'topographical,' but was that writers wrote better about what they knew best, but nevertheless felt it a restriction on their talents."[34] These comments demonstrate the extent to which West Indian writers considered Swanzy's preferences when composing pieces for the show. However, though Swanzy's expecations did not reflect West Indian writers' own literary aspirations, his enormous influence as editor of *Caribbean Voices* formed regional literary trends.

Swanzy was not ignorant of differing opinions on the appropriate direction for West Indian literature. The correspondence between Swanzy and his West Indian colleagues reveals a lively exchange between the colony and metropole, which *Caribbean Voices* attempted to bridge. The correspondence is, significantly, a

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[33] Gladys Lindo to Henry Swanzy, May 17, 1948. Box 1, Folder 9, Caribbean Voices Correspondence. West Indiana Collection, UWI St Augustine. In another surprising letter from the same time period, Frank Collymore suggests to Sam Selvon, "Again let me congratulate you on the short story; I think it is excellent. Have you sent it to the BBC? But perhaps they may think it's not W.I. enough." (Collymore to Selvon, March 9, 1949. Box 6, Folder 611, Sam Selvon Collection. West Indiana Collection, UWI St Augustine.)
[34] Gladys Lindo to Henry Swanzy, April 3, 1948. Box 1, Folder 9, *Caribbean Voices* Correspondence. West Indiana Collection, UWI St Augustine.

representation of this public discussion among a group of intimates. Collymore relays conversations he has had with his friends to Swanzy, bridging particular regional debates over the show and the distant institution of the BBC. Similarly, Lindo relays West Indian opinion on the show to Swanzy. While Glyne Griffith has argued in his article "Deconstructing Nationalisms: Henry Swanzy, Caribbean Voices and the Development of West Indian Literature" that Swanzy's influence ironically deconstructed colonialist and bourgeois attitudes expressed by Lindo and her peers,[35] Collymore's and Lindo's letters show that Swanzy's aspirations were discordant with the aesthetic self-styling of many Caribbean subjects. While Lindo and Collymore's letters demonstrate what could be called bourgeois attitudes, they also describe an affected performance of Caribbeanness constructed post-facto via the program, in addition to real problems of comprehension in the Caribbean. Were it not for these native informants, Swanzy might well have been ignorant of problems in comprehension. Collymore and Lindo provided links between the larger literary publics of the West Indies and London. Swanzy's strongly articulated aesthetic for the region highlighted the distance between London and the Caribbean.

While the correspondence demonstrates a collaborative artistic conversation, Swanzy's influence on the show is legible both in the tone of the letters, in which Lindo self effacingly addresses dissatisfaction with editorial choices, and the changes authors made to their writing styles in response to his critical preferences. The program, both as a

[35] See Griffith, "'This is London Calling the West Indies,'" and "Deconstructing Nationalism." Swanzy's influence on the program has been something of an obsession to critics and Caribbean writers alike. See Lamming, "A Way of Seeing" in *Pleasures of Exile*, Figueroa, "Becoming a Caribbean Man," and Nanton, "What does Mr. Swanzy Want?"

public medium that broadcast to the Caribbean's writers and a private correspondence between the West Indies and London, bridged two articulated entities. In its anatomical sense, articulation is a jointed structure, one in which discreet entities are joined, but at a point of separation. In other words, these competing notions of the appropriate form for *Caribbean Voices* demonstrate an articulation not only among the islands, but between England and the West Indies. Significantly, the voice was the primary point of contestation in these debates. Accent and vernacular more than any other topic provide both the source of conflict and the means (both as medium and as a symbol of regional culture) by which these articulations met.

While the region's visions for the program differed from Swanzy's, they nevertheless saw themselves as engaged in a single endeavor. To borrow Pierre Bourdieu's formulation, *Caribbean Voices* staged a conflict of numerous subjects within a literary field bounded by conflicting axes of influence that in fact superseded those actors. One distinct pole was Swanzy's anti-bourgeois "art sociale,"[36] an effort to depict not the forms that were most palatable to the masses, but rather art that critically portrayed the social reality of the Caribbean. On the other were Caribbean subjects, writers, and audiences, who clamored for art that presented an image of themselves that fulfilled their own fantasies of the Caribbean collective. Both poles were overwritten with distinct forms of power. Swanzy was the gatekeeper to literary success in the Caribbean, through *Caribbean Voice*'s overwhelming prestige in the region owing to its metropolitain origins. He also assisted many Caribbean writers in winning fame in England, where they might gain access to publishing contracts with major British houses

[36] Bourdieu, *Les Règles de l'art*, 107, 109.

and reach audiences through BBC Home Service programs. Ironically, Swanzy promoted not art that supported the status quo, but rather the experimental and insurrectional literary art of the day.

Caribbean readers, on the other hand, clamored to consume and *produce* the bourgeois norms that Griffith condemns. Indeed, this pole was overwritten with power itself, given that those West Indians who had mastered bourgeois British culture had been, and continued to be, the subjects who had access to social and political authority in British society and beyond. These competing poles within the literary plane exerted multidirectional influence on the Caribbean literary sphere. And yet, the publication history of Caribbean novelists demonstrates that Swanzy's vision for West Indian literature exerted an outsized influence. The most prominent writers of the period remain the most widely read Caribbean writers today. Among them, only VS Naipaul can be said to have distanced himself from the Caribbean literary sphere. All the same, Naipaul's most famous work, *A House for Mr. Biswas,* depicts the Caribbean quotidian (though not in flattering terms). The others, George Lamming, Kamau Brathwaite, and Derek Walcott, have been read as the champions of a distinct Caribbean literary tradition and aesthetic. *Caribbean Voices* was a shared project, but it was comprised neither of a single vision, nor a multiplicity of voices collectively debating the aesthetic and social issues of their day. It was not, in other words, a Habermasian public, but an articulated one, in which discourse circulated in two discreet regions joined by critical debate.[37]

[37] Notably, the federated and articulated publics of *Caribbean Voices* were not the only extent aural literary outlets in the region. In addition to the live poetry performances described by Kamau Brathwaite in *History of the Voice*, Jamaica produced its own rival literary program to *Caribbean Voices.* Lindo mentions the program in her letters to Swanzy, but the program ultimately does not prove a threat to *Caribbean Voices*: "Radio

These articulated poles of Caribbean cultural life were complicated by migration to England. Increasingly, the literature of the Exiles came to be the literature of *Caribbean Voices.* Migration began to perpetuate itself as the Caribbean's most famous writers migrated, and became even more successful in England. As Lindo wrote to Swanzy in December of 1950, a few short months after Lamming and Selvon arrived, "From the schedule it is apparent that 'Caribbean Voices' would hardly be able to keep going without the West Indian exiles in London. But it is, of course, due to the programme's popularity that all of these are camping on your doorstep."[38] 1950 was a watershed moment in the migration of Caribbean writers to London. Selvon and Lamming famously arrived in England on the same ship in May of 1950. VS Naipaul was also resident in the British Isles at school at Oxford. They followed Edgar Mittelholzer and Roger Mais, who had left the Caribbean much earlier. But only after 1950 do Lindo's letters begin to mention the dichotomy between the West Indies and the exiles.

If the literary migrants came to England in search of greater opportunities to work as writers, Swanzy played a crucial role in this migration as the editor of *Caribbean*

Jamaica started their 'Voice of Jamaica' last night and while it was a good opening programme I do not think that you need fear any competition. Their fees particularly for short stories are lower than ours and they make no difference between payment for published and unpublished work… ninety percent of submissions are much more appalling than ours and come mostly from writers at present unknown and destined to remain so. Their first program had a poem of Eileen Cooper's, a short story by L.A.M. Bridge both of which were first read in 'Caribbean Voices'… They are to be on the air for half an hour every fortnight but I doubt if the material will permit them to keep this up though they are inviting submissions from other islands." Glady Lindo to Henry Swanzy, June 2, 1953. Box 1, Folder 10, *Caribbean Voices* Correspondence. West Indiana Collection, UWI St Augustine. Lindo refers to the program again on Sept. 5, 1952, remarking that *Caribbean Voices* received more submissions that the Jamaican program, and again on Dec 30, 1952, noting that the competitor had closed down.
[38] Lindo to Swanzy, Dec. 2, 1950. *Caribbean Voices* Correspondance, Box 1, Folder 9. West Indiana Collection, UWI St. Augustine.

Voices and as a well-connected figure in the London literati. Swanzy referred to his own unease regarding his and London's influence on the migrants on air in August of 1951, acknowledging both London's literary cultural influence and its great distance from the Caribbean in principle and in geographical fact. On one of his semi-annual critical reviews of the show, a series entitled "The Last Six Months," Swanzy opens the program by celebrating the reception of Mittelholzer's latest novel and Lamming's success reading his work at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London (which Lamming famously chronicles in *The Pleasures of Exile*).[39] On the air, Swanzy ruminates that these events might not seem fitting material for the program:

> Of course, it's possible that I have no right to mention these events in a survey of our programme, since they have nothing directly to do with it. There are however one or two links which seem worth mentioning, apart from our general interest in bringing the work of West Indian writers before the eyes of a wider audience. The first of these links is personal. Several of the writers now in London would not perhaps have come if it had not been for the programme. I have often felt rather uneasy at this influence because it lures many away to a land which at the moment is not at all easy for the whole craft and tribe of writers and would-be writers.[40]

Swanzy recognizes and tries to alert Caribbean authors to the financial struggles awaiting them upon migration to England. His statement reveals a personal discomfort-while the allure of migration was ostensibly an effect of the program's success, Swanzy himself was often explicitly asked to find work for the recent migrants. Collymore and Lindo repeatedly wrote to Swanzy over their nine-year correspondence alerting him to new migrants arriving in London. These arrivals had a direct impact on Swanzy's editorial decisions. Swanzy privately described to Lindo his own inclination to help the writers with whom he was directly acquainted: "So far as the new schedule is concerned, you

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[39] Lamming, *Pleasures*, 57-65.
[40] August 19, 1951. Box 20964, Folder 7. *Caribbean Voices* Scripts, BBC WAC.

will observe a certain rhythm between England and the West Indies. I must apologise that so many of the names seem to come from people already in residence here. One does have a certain impulse to help struggling writers in the metropolis."[41] Swanzy's comments to Lindo demonstrate the impact of another form of intimacy on the program. Those authors personally acquainted with Swanzy received a special treatment, one that profoundly affected public literary culture. The intimate correspondence between Swanzy and Collymore and Swanzy and Lindo also had an impact on broadcasting decisions. Thus, while the publics generated by *Caribbean Voices* attempted to effect regional intimacy, they were themselves influenced by the intimate contact among a smaller number of Caribbean subjects.

Swanzy's correspondence with both Gladys Lindo and Frank Collymore, and his comments on the air, show the articulation between the West Indies and the exiled community of writers in London, and among the islands of the West Indies themselves. The organizational structure and aesthetic priorities of *Caribbean Voices* demonstrate that colony and metropolitan diaspora were both joined and distinct, and indeed the program represents the unfolding nature of that relation. Beyond merely representing this articulated relationship, the program attempted to create a Federated group of distinct entities. However, the poles of influence that shaped the program had a profound affect both in Federation as a project and *Caribbean Voices'* own contribution to that project. As we have seen, Swanzy's own priorities for the program had an outsized influence on literary production, leading to literary work that reflected his vision for the region. As the show increasingly consisted of West Indian authors in London, an intimate echo chamber

[41] Swanzy to Lindo, July 30, 1954. Box 1, Folder 9, Caribbean Voices Correspondance. West Indiana Collecion, UWI St Augustine.

emerged, one in which the authors most frequently featured on the program were speaking to each other and Swanzy, and less and less frequently their colleagues abroad.

The program's structurally articulated entities were representative of contemporary political struggles and their attendant national identities. While many residents of the Caribbean thought of themselves as British subjects and inhabitants of their particular territorial home, few residents of the region thought of themselves as "West Indian" or "Caribbean." Colony and metropole and the distinct West Indian territories were articulated together and against one another as the West Indies moved towards postcolonial independence and its attendant national cultures. The West Indies Federation particularly was comprised of a number of articulated entities. The short-lived governmental form united the British West Indies (excepting Guyana, Bermuda, Belize, the Bahamas, and the British Virgin Islands) in a Federated political whole that was tied to the British Empire, but possessed its own legislative body. Unlike many of the decolonization movements of the mid-twentieth-century, such as those taking place in India, Ghana, and Algeria,[42] the Federation did not advocate for its independence by way of radical separation, but rather by linking together a series of discreet islands in a new political entity distinct from its European colonizer. Thus, Federation both joined a series of articulated islands, and was itself articulated within the British Empire.

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[42] Here, again, Fanon serves as an illuminating interlocutor with Lamming. In "This is the Voice of Algeria," an essay in *A Dying Colonialism*, Fanon richly describes the phenomenology of radio listening in Algeria before and during the Algerian war. In Fanon's anticolonial Algeria, the radio is transformed from a medium of colonial domination into a link to Algerian anticolonial warfare as the FLN attempts to broadcast stories of its activities against the French colonizers. *Caribbean Voices*, on the other hand, represents the complicated imbrication of colony and metropole as a microcosm of the cultural and political struggle between independence and the intimate history shared by England and its West Indian colonies.

Caribbean Voices attempted to bridge a number of discreet literary circles in the Caribbean and abroad. The program endeavored to join these communities by generating a collective vision of West Indian culture. However, the sutures in this projected regional culture quickly revealed themselves as some Caribbean listeners protested the image of themselves being broadcast from London-or failed to understand it at all. The cultural image crafted by the program ultimately represented not a transregional collective, but the work of an intimate coterie of writers and critics broadcasting their vision to the region.

The articulation of colony and metropole I have been tracing in my discussion of *Caribbean Voices* is thus not entirely adequate to describe the junctures in mid-twentieth-century West Indian culture. London and the Caribbean are defined against one another, but they are also essentially joined through literary cohorts, nationalist projects, and the intimate attachments that underlie both. *Caribbean Voices* projected these attachments as a singular vision of the region to the Caribbean. However, unlike the coteries who shaped the program, *Caribbean Voices* registered the differences among West Indians articulated within the Caribbean itself. The program thus tried to join articulated Caribbean publics and Caribbean literary coteries via intimate affects circulating among those cohorts. But, the West Indies Federation, the state extension of *Caribbean Voices'* intimate endeavors, failed after only four years. Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago quickly claimed independence, and the rest of the region followed suit. Thus, the program's intimacies failed to generate a nationalist attachment to the West Indian state.

II. “M a ede ou”: *Pèlin Tèt* and Diasporic Intimacy

If the auralities of *Caribbean Voices* were protested and interrupted by conflict over the voice, the vernacular in Frankétienne’s *Pèlin Tèt* turned to an established oral tradition of theater performances in Haitian Creole to represent a particularly Haitian struggle, the historic divide between the rich and the poor. Thus, as opposed to the aspirational cultural unity aural language is made to perform in *Caribbean Voices*, the vernacular used in *Pèlin Tèt* already referred to a widespread and familiar component of Haitian society. Furthermore, unlike many spaces of public address in Haitian society, there was a longstanding tradition of theatrical performances in Haitian Creole. Unlike *Caribbean Voices,* the populist language of *Pèlin Tèt* followed an existing artistic tradition and faced fewer social barriers. Robert Cornevin, in his sweeping history of Haitian theater *Le théâtre haïtien: Des origines à nos jours* states, “Le théâtre est le domaine où le créole a trouvé le moins d’opposition. Bien avant 1804, on traduit, on écrit, on représente les pièces en créole. Immédiatement après l’indépendance, on joue des drames en créole. On ne s’est jamais arrêté de produire des œuvres théâtrales en créole.”[43] Cornevin’s comments importantly highlight that theater has historically been a widely accepted venue for Haitian Creole to be spoken, despite the opposition it frequently faces in society. While all Haitians speak Haitian Creole, it is not considered a formal language, and in the upper echelons of Haitian society, French is almost universally preferred. Cornevin goes on to attribute Haitian Creole’s privileged status in theater to theater’s oral aspect by way of a metaphor of intimacy: “Personne ne songe à

[43] Theater is the domain in which creole has faced the least opposition. Well before 1804 plays were translated, written, and performed in creole. Immediately after independence, plays were acted in creole. We have never stopped producing theatrical work in creole. Cornevin, *Le théâtre haïtien*, 202.

s'en offusquer, parce qu'après tout, le théâtre reste un genre 'oral' et qu'une représentation théâtrale est une fête de famille. Et quelle est la fête de famille haïtienne où les cousins, lorsqu'ils sont invités, vont se tuer à ne parler que le français ?"[44] Cornevin's comments ascribe a shared intimate role to Haitian Creole and theatrical performances, which accounts for their natural harmony. By virtue of theater's oral medium, it belongs to the intimate, family domain, one in which Haitian Creole is spoken. To speak only French is a sign of excessive and improper effort in the relaxed and joyous environment of the family gathering.

The play itself enacts an intimate mode both in its use of Haitian Creole and in the play's plotting. The play is an extended conversation between two Haitian migrants in a North American city, presumably New York. One, Piram, is an economic migrant working long hours in an American factory to support his large family in Haiti. The other, Polidò, is an intellectual who fled threats from the Duvalier regime. The two characters maintain a sustained debate over the merits of Polidò's abstract and intellectualized relationship to the world, and Piram's sensual and embodied experience reflected in his dreams of living the good life in Port-au-Prince, juxtaposed with the physical duress of the manual labor performed in diaspora to achieve this dream. The play's subject matter is dark and difficult, but the historic Haitian divide between the educated elite and the marginalized poor that the two men represent is ultimately bridged as they reveal their attachment to each other over the course of the play by sharing the

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[44] No one dreams of being offended, because at the end of the day, theater is an oral genre, and a theatrical performance is a family event. And what is a Haitian family gathering where the cousins, once invited, kill themselves over speaking French exclusively? ibid.

intimate details of their lives. The audience, too, participates in this intimate spectacle in part through the language in which it is written.

The play was more than just a commentary on Haitian class divisions that prevented the country from collaboratively working towards a better future. The play's setting in the Haitian diaspora[45] reflected upon a second division within Haitian society: between Haitians who remained in the country and those who had left. After a first major wave of political immigration in the 1960s during which Haitians fled the violent repression of François Duvalier, the 1970s saw social and economic liberalization after François Duvalier named his son Jean-Claude successor to the presidency for life. While Jean-Claude Duvalier eased political repression under international pressure, his liberal economic policy led a to a steep rise in the cost of living for the poorest Haitians, resulting in a surge in economic migration. Haitians at home and abroad maintained financial and affective ties, but migration caused a pained separation between the two parts of the population. *Pèlin Tèt* articulates political and affective continuities between Haiti and its migrant populations, describing a cross-class unity capable of challenging the widespread oppression of the Duvalier regime. The play's plot crosses this division both in its narrative and its medium, portraying Haitians living in abroad in performances

[45] The use of "diaspora" to describe Haitian migrants in the late 1970s is something of an anachronism. At the time, migrants in New York referred to themselves as a "koloni" or "kominote", indicating that they thought of themselves as the co-inhabitants of a space, rather than a collective displaced Haitian people (Buchanan, *Scattered Seeds*, 173-4). The term "diaspora" became current in the late 1980s, and has shaped much of the contemporary discourse on Haitians who reside outside of the country. Nevertheless, in a review of *Pèlin Tèt* cited in this chapter, a Haitian critic resident in Montreal claims that the play reveals the drama of the diaspora (see footnote 72, Narcisse "*Pèlin Tèt* à Montréal," p. 14). Nevertheless, I will try to use the term sparingly.

on both sides of the Atlantic. This transatlantic affective mobilization relies on the well-established role of Haitian Creole in intimate life to overcome distance.

To recognize the play's cultural cues, understand its plotting, and laugh at its jokes, spectators must acknowledge a vernacular and social context shared with the actors and the rest of the audience. The play did not simply replicate intimately familiar discourse to address its public; it also mocked the familiar, highlighting the absurd elements of an intimately known culture with local insight that demonstrated both the play's and its audience's recognition of culture's underbelly. Despite its serious subject matter, *Pèlin Tèt* opens with an episode that draws upon a particularly vulgar, but extremely familiar mode within Haitian discourse: the double entendre. Piram assails Polidò with a lengthy story about how he claims to have spent the day. What begins as a simple exploration of a New York train station quickly turns into a liaison with a wealthy American woman:

> Piram. - Polidò, sa ou tandé-a. Mwin krazé kalòj-li; mwin pété zizyé-li. (*Piram ap griyin.*)
> Polidò. – Sispann griyin dan-ou non.
> Piram. – Rémò k'ap satouyèt-mwin konsaa wi. Mwin blijé ri lè mwin sonjé an ki posisyon krapodin mwin pété fal toutrèl-la.
> Polidò. – Kibò minm?
> Piram. – Lan youn twalèt andan trin-an; youn twalèt roloy prémyé klas.[46]

When Polidò calls Piram's bluff, the vulgar hilarity continues:

> Li pa minm fè rimay gadé-ou. Toutrèl-la pasé vole sinnésòf. Li pa manké pèdi youn plim. Youn moman apré, ou antré lan youn piswa al soulajé anbativant-ou. Sé pa lan youn tawlèt koté ki gen bèl poflé, mi plaké ak mozayik, séramik, karo

[46] Polidò, listen to me. I crushed her birdcage; I cleaned out her insides. (*Piram is grinning.*) Polidò. – Stop smiling so big. Piram. – Memory can touch me like that, yes. I have to smile when I remember the twisted position I gutted that turtledove in. Polidò. – Where then? Piram. – In a bathroom in the train; a nice first class bathroom. *Pelin Tèt,* 15.

> fayans, papyé dékoratif. Ou antré lan youn vyé piswa piblik koté tout irinwa, tout krépin bouché ak pòy sigarèt.[47]

The extended metaphor of the woman as bird and its sexual undertones are representative of double entendre typical in Haitian speech. The sexually explicit nature of the conversation, while not appropriate for polite society, would have been uproariously funny to the audience, both for Piram's sexual bravado and Polidò's mockery of his friend. To laugh at the scene would have signaled a collective willingness among audience to abandon the formalities of polite society, embracing the "fête de famille" that Cornevin describes. Such a balance between pleasurable familiarity and embarrassment at the inappropriate can be categorized under Michael Herzfeld's formulation of cultural intimacy, "the recognition of those aspects of a cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality."[48] The scene occurs early in the play, setting an unpretentious tone by willingly taking on pleasurable discursive modes not welcome in formal contexts.

Though published only three years later, both the medium and discursive style of *Pèlin Tèt* are notably stylistically very different from *Dezafi*. As we have seen in Chapter Two, in *Dezafi* Hatian Creole's social specificity granted it an intimate register in which Frankétienne could obliquely communicate the pained repressions of the Duvalier dictatorship, performing the silence of the Duvalier years both through its style and its

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[47] She didn't even start to look at you. That turtledove flew away safe and sound. She didn't even lose a feather. A little while after, you went into an old pisser to take care of yourself. Not a toilet with flowerpots, tiled floors, ceramic toilet, square patterns, wall paper. You went into an old public toilet, where all the urinals, all the grills are stuffed with cigarette butts. *Pèlin Tèt*, 19.

[48] Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy*, 3.

very medium, the print text. Though written only three years later, *Pèlin Tèt* engages a different political and discursive moment, and subsequently a different medium and its attendant shift in affordances. By 1978, when *Pèlin Tèt* was first performed, Jean-Claude Duvalier had begun to allow the liberalization of public discourse. This transformation was notably spurred by Jimmy Carter's 1976 election to the Presidency of the United States and his subsequent advocacy for human rights. Such liberalization created a climate in which political critique was newly possible, and the terrified silence of François Duvalier's presidency seemed to lift. Consequently, the repressed critiques of the Duvalier regime obliquely stated in *Dezafi* become far more direct in *Pèlin Tèt. Pèlin Tèt* instead speaks in accessible language, and performances of the play created a physical space to generate widely accessible live publics of critique of the regime. If we recall the hushed scene of the *gagè* in *Dezafi* in which constant fear of being overheard prevented direct discourse, *Pèlin Tèt* emerges as a space of radical aurality, a theatrical sphere in which discourse was *intended* to be heard. From the outset, Frankétienne engages this exaggerated and even festive theatricality through the vulgar story. Indeed, beyond the muted pages of a book, the representation of the *gagè* becomes an actual physical space in which publics gathered. *Pèlin Tèt* does not speak to itself; by virtue of its medium it addresses a collective "nou." Notably, the author aspires to publicness in both texts, albeit through different affective and aesthetic techniques. In both cases, Haitian Creole is the necessary vehicle for public affect, though discourse and medium affect the kinds of publics that each object generates.

When *Pèlin Tèt* was first performed in Haiti in 1978, the play received an enormous amount of public attention. After its first performance on July 6, 1978 at the

Rex Théâtre in Port-au-Prince, Frankétienne and the play's two actors, François Latour and Roland Dorfeuille, received menacing phone calls from the Duvalier regime, and the play was not performed again for two weeks. However, as scholar Bryant Freeman writes, "Nouvel la pito te simaye. Twòp moun te vle asiste mèvèy sa a. Kifè, vè finisman mwa jiyè 1978 la, yo te jwe l twa fwa deswit: yon jedi-vendredi-samdi. Antou, gen trantwa (33) seyans nan Reks teyat. Apre, yo te jwe l disèt (17) fwa ankò: dabò Okay, Okap, epi Jakmèl."[49] Freeman notes a public frenzy surrounding the play, one so notable that it even surpassed Jean-Claude Duvalier's efforts to silence it. Indeed, both enthusiasm for the play and Duvalier's efforts to repress its performances stemmed from the play's distinctly Haitian subject matter. In one of only two academic articles written about the play, Marianna Past claims that the play's depiction of the diaspora addresses universal global themes of poverty and marginalization, and even language.[50] However, this reading overlooks the effects of locally situated spectatorship, the circumscribed audience for plays in the Haitian language rather than the more globally accessible French, and the specificities the of Haitian diaspora as a historical phenomenon. The play attempts to use the intimacies of the Haitian language to specifically speak to a Haitian people divided by migration and longstanding class conflict. The play's two characters work both within the play's narrative and as cultural figures to establish Haiti as continuous with its migrant population.

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[49] The news spread. Too many people were eager to attend this marvel. Thus, by the end of July 1978, they had performed it three more times: a Thursday-Friday-Saturday run. Additionally, 33 performances took place at the Rex Theater. Then, they performed it 17 more times: in Aux Cayes, in Cap Haïtien, and Jacmel. Freeman, "Introduction," *Pèlentèt* (2002).

[50] Past, "Articulating Conflict in a New York City Basement: The Global Stakes of Pèlin Tèt," 79.

After performances of the play were ultimately stopped, the play's actors went on to perform for several weeks in a number of North American cities with large Haitian populations. Both the subject matter and language of the play reflected the lived experiences of Haitians living in Haiti and in the North American diaspora. However, parallel enthusiasm on both sides of the diaspora did not translate to parallel affective responses. Diaspora determined each audience's response to the play, as Haitians at home registered an emergent anti-Duvalier public, and Haitians abroad confronted the ruptures in Haitian community produced by diaspora and the continuing patterns of social division (such as those between the rich and the poor) that had continued in diaspora. Theater and particularly the play's transdiasporic performance history thus undercut the intimate encounter suggested by the play's plot. While the play's medium and subject matter suggested continuities between Haiti and North America, the experience of both spectatorship and the lived reality of the diaspora ultimately drew affective lines between the two populations.

As the same actors performed the play on both sides of the divide, the embodied dimension of theater physically suspended the distance between Haiti and the migrant communities by suggesting continuity among the disparate performances. And yet, the unique experience of a particular theater performance troubled the continuity suggested by a set of traveling performances. Indeed, a theater audience is in part determined by that group's collective presence for a unique performance, making each audience a kind of distinct community. On the one hand, these live collective spaces reinforced the sense of Haitian unity latent in the play's message and choice of language. On the other, as affect amplified in embodied spaces separated by the diaspora, Haitians' experience of

the play was overdetermined by their own geographical locale. Thus, the intensity of geographically situated affective experience deepened the divides between Haiti and its diaspora.

The play establishes a sense of continuity through its plotting, revealing that the problems its characters fled in Haiti did not necessarily end upon leaving the country. One of the clearest problems that led Piram to leave Haiti is his own economic marginalization. Like many economic migrants, Piram dreamed of the prosperity that awaited him in New York. However, upon migrating, Piram's relationship to American life sours. In one of the play's most famous scenes, Piram explodes in his frustration with New York, climactically declaring, "Mwin anvi wè anpil mouch!"[51] Piram's desire to see flies ironically turns the presumably undesirable into a locus for nostalgia. Not only does Piram's statement reveals his own disillusionment with American society, it provokes a conflict with his educated roommate. Polidò reprimands him for reminiscing about the dirty side of Haiti: "Ou mande mwin pou mwin sonjé posésyon ravèt ak mouch sou pil fatra, pandan mwin branché sou lòt kozé inpòtan, pandan léspri-mwin anboulatcha ap travay sou késyon séryé."[52] Polidò rebukes Piram for his love of the low, and also sets himself apart from the embodied memories Piram entertains by referring to his own abstract meditations on serious questions.

The conflict that follows goes beyond specific dissatisfaction with New York and confronts the long standing division between the rich and the poor in Haiti. Piram's retort levels a working class critique against the elite of Haitian society, accusing Polidò of a

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[51] I want to see flies! *Pèlin Tèt,* 24.
[52] You tell me to remember lines of cockroaches and flies on piles of garbage, while I'm trying to move on to important topics, while my troubled mind is working on serious questions. *Pèlin Tèt*, 25

false consciousness achieved through artificial language: "An-han! Pa gin plas lan lespri-ou pou sonjé mouch ak ravèt. Nannan sèvèl-ou trò pròp pou sonjé pil fatra ki badé lakou kay-nou. Min, gin plas pou sonjé bèl fraz rétorik filozofi djòl pwinti."[53] Significantly, Piram claims that language prevents Polidò from facing his origins. While Polidò claims that Piram refuses to tackle larger, more serious issues, Piram criticizes Polidò for denying that he, too, comes from a country full of flies and trash, despite the lovely and clean rhetoric with which he tries to fill his mind. Significantly, Piram claims that language alienates Polidò from memory and culture. The "bèl fraz" of Polidò's intellectualism have shut out the shared experience of Haitian life, foreclosing cultural intimacy and severing his ties to Haiti. Critically, the problem the men discuss demonstrates that social divisions are continuous from Haiti to its diaspora.

*Pèlin Tèt'*s portrayal of continuity between Haiti and its diaspora serves in part to correct misconceptions among Haitians still in the country and those living in diaspora. *Pèlin Tèt*'s representation of diaspora forces Haitians at home to account for social similarities between the imagined paradise of the global north and their own contemporary reality. Indeed, both diasporic Haitians and those living in Haiti were unprepared for the similar shadows the Duvalier regime cast on the two countries. Piram's nostalgia for the Haitian quotidian tinges the audience's lived reality with strange affective valences. While Piram replicates an image of the Haitian quotidian through reminiscence, this recognizable scene is disrupted by the affective intensity of nostalgic memory. This is perhaps the representative affective experience of diaspora—diasporic

[53] Mmhmm! There's no room in your mind to remember flies and roaches. It's too clean in your mind to remember the piles of trash that filled up the *lakou* of our home. But there's room for fine rhetorical phrases of sharp tongued philosophy. *Pèlin Tèt*, 25.

populations cathect culture with meaning only partially available to the home population. These nostalgic memories cling to symbols of poverty that are presumably the entire motivation for the migrant's departure. Not only have the conditions diaspora intended to escape become sites of nostalgia, *Pèlin Tèt* recasts North America as a modern dystopia in which working migrants work themselves to the bone and save so diligently that they cannot enjoy pleasures as simple as cigarettes or beer. These images run counter to the expectations of family left behind in Haiti, and by extension the Haitian theater audience. Piram describes his family's impression of his life in New York as starkly opposed to the hardships of his relentless work schedule and the small basement apartment the two men share: "Vin krétyinvivan ki konnin m-ap boulozé bayila lan paradi Nouyòk, k-ap tann mwin tounin ak lavi étènèl pou yo tout… Adjé!"[54] By granting the Haitian population this vision of itself and of the migrants abroad, the play endeavors to reveal that the United States is yet another realm in which the poor work like dogs, and are treated as such: "Ou té mèt férayé lan twa djòb, bouriké vinnkatrè sou vinnkat, ou p-ap janm kinté lan jwèt-la."[55] Notably, Frankétienne uses a verb form for Haitian Creole word for "donkey," *bourik,* describing Piram as a pack animal, evoking scenes of Haitian peasant life in his description of a New York factory. According to Paul Dejean's 1978 study *Les Haïtiens au Québec*,

> L'implacable obligation non seulement de subvenir à ses propres besoins ou à ceux de sa famille immédiate mais de soutenir de vieux parents ou des parents plus ou moins proches restés là-bas, le poussera à fournir un temps de travail dépassant de beaucoup la moyenne ordinaire de 45 heures hebdomadaires. Ces

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[54] Twenty souls who think I'm having fun in the paradise of New York, who are waiting for me to return to make heaven on earth for all of them. My God! *Pèlin-Tèt,* 46.

[55] You've been working hard in three jobs, like a mule, for twenty-four hours a day, you're not even in the game. *Pèlin Tèt,* 53.

> heures supplémentaires, rarement payées comme telles, contribuent à multiplier les profits de l'entreprise au détriment du travailleur.[56]

Pèlin Tèt reveals that contrary to the Haitian imagination, the United States was not a land of modern ease and luxury.

Describing the economic continuities between the lives of Haitians at home and in the diaspora, *Pèlin Tèt* traces the impact of the Duvalier regime across the water to the United States. This serves not only to correct misconceptions in Haiti about American paradise, but to remind Haitians that even abroad, their lives are continually haunted, materially and affectively, by the Duvalierist violence that caused them to leave. Piram's relentless work in New York and his self-deprivation in order to save money for his family is only a displaced version of difficult economic conditions in Haiti. What's more, his labor is a direct effect of the Duvalierist economic policy that has impoverished his family. In *Haiti: State Against Nation,* Michel Rolph Trouillot describes the crippling effects of Jean-Claude Duvalier's self purported economic revolution:

> It was the peasant, weighed down by export and local market taxes, and the poor urban dweller, burdened by consumer fees, who paid most of the cost of the Duvaliers' 'economic revolution'…inflation caused a drop of 20 percent in real wages between 1981 and 1986. That is, of course, for those who actually worked. In fact, these figures provide only a limited view of the crunch experienced by the lower classes, the peasantry, and especially the new lumpen swelling the slums of Port-au-Prince and the major provincial towns.[57]

The fictional Piram represents an increase in Haitian migration to the United States in the wake *Jeanclaudisme*, the economic strategy implemented by Jean-Claude Duvalier

[56] The worker's relenteless obligation to meet not only his own needs and those of his immediate family, but those of aging relatives or more or less distant relatives who stayed over there, push him to work far more than the average 45 hours per week. These supplementary hours are rarely paid as such, and serve the profits of the employer to the detriment of the worker. Dejean, *Les Haïtiens au Québec*, 76.
[57] Trouillot, *Haiti, State Against Nation*, 214.

through contracts with US manufacturers. Duvalier *fils* invited US manufacturers to open light assembly factories in Port-au-Prince, made all the more attractive by Haiti's cheap labor force. However, the jobs created by this new industrialism were both few and unstable. Those Haitians who lived in the urban center where they might access such positions were affected by the frequent job turnover resulting from the temporary nature of many of these projects. Peasants fell victim to an unpredictable export market and a dramatic increase in the price of imports, controlled by corrupt officials who further depleted incomes from coffee, cacao, and sisal and taxed goods imported from the US.[58] Frankétienne's depiction of Piram's migration is thus an image of the failed promises of a revitalized Haitian economy, and an implicit critique of Duvalier's failed policies.

Pèlin Tèt not only portrays connections between home and diaspora by contrasting nostalgic affects with the harsh realities of economic migration, it examines continuities between political repression at home and abroad. Piram's foil is Polidò, a political exile, who lives in the same marginal conditions in diaspora, despite having seemingly escaped the regime's menace. In response to Piram's bafflement at Polidò's residence in a low income New York apartment as an educated and presumably wealthy man, Polidò explains, "Dizon mwin té gin vwa krapo; mwin pa té chanté minm jan ak zandolit."[59] Polidò speaks in metaphor, describing himself as an aberrant toad amid a choir of Duvalierist assent. Polidò's indirect style of discussing his relationship to the regime continues as he describes the violent repression of citizens. While Polidò never describes torture he himself has suffered at the hands of the regime, he does ruminate extensively on all of the kinds of torture Piram could sustain: "Yo ta mèt limin anpoul

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[58] See Trouillot, *Haiti, State Against Nation*, 209-216.
[59] Let's just say I had a toad's voice, I didn't sing like the bad guys. *Pèlin Tèt*, 46.

300 wat lan fontinn tèt-ou, raché zong-ou ak pins, vidé plon bouyi lan trou dan-ou, touyé pòy sigarèt lan grinn jé-ou, grajé plapyé-ou ak bròs klou, tchaktchak lang-ou ak zégyui, ou pa t-ap janm palé."[60] This supposedly hypothetical description of scenes of torture evokes the cruelties suffered by prisoners at Fort Dimanche, the Duvalierist prison that housed political dissenters and anyone who fell in the regime's bad graces. Polidò thus obliquely exposes the political torture practiced in Haiti, which he himself has fled.[61] Discussion of violent acts taken out against political dissenters is notably absent in *Dezafi*. These explicit discussions of the regime's violent activities are nevertheless indirect. Polidò does not refer to the *tontons makout* directly; he rather refers to them as "Yo" (them) or as "zandolit," a generic term for a menacing figure (though one frequently used to refer to government henchmen).

If Polidò is not explicit about his opposition to the regime, there are both diagetic and extradiagetic explanations. Outside of the play's narrative, Frankétienne himself was pushing the limits of acceptable discourse in the play. Despite liberalization, publicly criticizing the Duvalier regime was a bold act, and ultimately Frankétienne ceased performances of the play under threat of imprisonment. Though Frankétienne was under threat in Haiti, the play's diagesis suggests that masking political speech is still necessary even outside of Haiti, as Polidò's oblique reference to his political activity reveals. Polidò

[60] They could put a 300 watt lightbulb in front of your forehead, tear out your nails with plyers, pour boiling lead in your cavities, put out cigarettes in your eyes, scrape the soles of your feet with nails, cut up your tongue with needles, you would never have spoken. *Pèlin Tèt*, 43.

[61] Frankétienne's discretion becomes all the more evident when compared to the corresponding passage in Mrozek's *Emigranci.* While Mrozek's character AA, corresponding to Frankétienne's Polidò, explicitly asks XX/Piram if he has been interrogated by the authorities, Frankétienne omits this line of dialogue. The rest of the conversation adheres closely to Mrozek's version, even replicating the metaphor of "singing" for political consent.

discloses that he fears the repercussions of sharing his past with Piram. When Piram asks why Polidò has been so cautious, he confesses,

> Mwin gin doutans ou kapab alé répété.
> Piram. – Répété vyé paròl vanté, paròl télédjòl-ou yo? Ou gin lè bliyé m-ap travay dépi size-di-matin pou size-di-swa. Koté mwin pran tan pou m-al rapòté kwélékwékwé?
> Polidò. – Ou a vann kalbas-la lan dans sérémoni kwètmakwèt.[62]

Both the physical threat and the psychic anxiety of the regime have followed Polidò into exile. Physically and economically, the Duvalier regime's impact negatively affects Haitians both within the country and in migrant populations. To Haitians at home, this suggests new points of solidarity with Haitians living abroad and signals that their struggles would not end by fleeing the country. Further, it generated a new imperative to end the regime, given its wide-ranging impact on all Haitians. The transformative space of theatrical language, and the representation of loved ones living and suffering in the diaspora, inflected this new imperative with an urgency driven by affect.

Despite the play's broad condemnation of the regime and the corresponding threat to anyone surrounding it, *Pèlin Tèt* drew favorable public response from the Haitian press. According to an article by Max Vallès in *Le petit samedi soir*, a leftist weekly publication that pushed the limits of anti-Duvalier reporting, "Pèlin-Tèt a battu tous les records des pièces de théâtre populaire."[63] Vallès's description of the play as "théâtre populaire" indicates that Haitians from a wide swath of social classes came to see the play. Theater, as a medium consumed in the presence of other people, generated a rare

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[62] I have a suspicion that you could denounce me. Piram. – Repeat some old talk, your gossip? You seem to be forgetting that I work from six in the morning to six at night. Where would I find time to repeat nonsense? Polidò. – You'd sell my secret in a deal with the devil. *Pèlin Tèt*, 47-8.

[63] Pelin Tet broke all records for popular theater. Vallès, "Pèlin Tèt: Théâtre Populaire," 26.

public space in which Haitians could gather in a collective act of defiance against the regime. While the public eagerly consumed the play, Vallès also noted that critical commentary on the play was sparse. One can only assume that, despite the play's run of performances, many Haitian critics considered it too risky to comment on a play so directly critical of the Duvalier government and the endemic problems of Haitian society. Those critics in Haiti who did write about *Pèlin Tèt* extended public discourse surrounding the play, explicitly celebrating its radically realist portrayal of Haitian social problems. Indeed, another critic, Eddy Pierre, suggested in *Le petit samedi soir* that the play might serve as a call to arms: "Il est encore temps (même s'il urge) que le rêve devienne réalité. Si le rêve indispensable d'organisation politique, de réflexion, d'humilité, de tolérance, de travail-obscurs et patients est fait dès maintenant, il surgira à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur d'autres Pyram [sic] et d'autres Polidor [sic] aux visions nouvelles."[64] Pierre's comments anticipate the transformation of political aspiration into action, describing a timely urgency surrounding a political dream. Pierre uses the play as an opportunity to describe revolutionary organization and practice that will produce transformative figures the play models. And yet, they delicately refuse to call for a movement to oust Duvalier or any of his specific policies. The mild mannered language of the critique serves as a reminder that Haitians at home still lived in fear, severing them from the free discourse of their compatriots outside the country. Nevertheless, like the play itself his comments link Haiti and its diaspora in a single struggle represented by

[64] It is now time (even as it becomes urgent) for dream to become reality. If the crucial dream of political organisation, reflection, humility, tolerance, work-elusive and patient-begins immediately, other Pyrams and Polidors will emerge with new visions, from the interior and the exterior. Pierre, "Pelin Tet: une impasse," 26.

Piram and Polidò's mutual collaborative promise, "M a ede ou."[65] Pierre claims that the play's dream extends to Haitians resident in Haiti and abroad, and inscribes the whole of the Haitian population within its political message.

Despite this encompassing portrayal of Haiti's political and economic suffering, the play's impact was felt very differently in the United States and Canada than it was in Haiti. Rather than awakening diasporic Haitians to the interconnection of socioeconomic problems in the United States, the play itself became cathected with the hopes, dreams, and attachments of diasporic Haitians concerning their homeland. Not only was the play's revolutionary message portentous of a changing political climate in Haiti, bringing hope for return to the country, its use of Haitian Creole created an intimate public around the theater. After the play was shut down in Haiti, Latour and Dorfeuille performed the play in the United States and Canada on a four-week tour in January and February of 1979. Advertisements in the New York published Haitian periodical *Haïti Observateur* indicate that the play was performed in New York on January 14, in Montreal on January 21 and 22, in Boston on January 27, and in Miami on January 28,[66] before a second run featuring performances in Montreal on February 3, New York on February 4, Boston on February 10, and Miami on February 11.[67] Subsequent to these live performances, audio recordings of the play continued to circulate in the diaspora.

Following the play's Montreal performance, Daniel Narcisse wrote for *Haïti Observateur*, "Les interventions de Piram, d'une sincerité si profonde, nous tombent sur le corps comme un fouet lacérant notre chair meurtrie, notre cœur mis en lambeau par

[65] I will help you. *Pèlin Tèt,* 64.
[66] *Haïti Observateur* 5-12 January 1979, p. 16.
[67] *Haïti Observateur* 2-9 February 1979, p. 3.

l'oppression dans la lointaine patrie. Sur la scène, c'est le drame émouvant de toute la diaspora qui se joue."[68] Narcisses's description of the play is violently emotional, yet the source of the emotion fluctuates between Haiti and the diaspora. It is both the migrant's experience that produces suffering and empathy for oppression transpiring in Haiti. And yet, the affects he describes arise abroad. Narcisse describes the diaspora as already wounded, suffering new pains from the violent reality of Piram's words. Narcisses describes the diasporic audience suffering to think of the oppression transpiring in Haiti, but Piram's lacerating sincerity supposedly represents the diaspora itself. Despite the play's plot, which transpires in the diaspora, the play is experienced as a representation of Haiti as much or more than a representation of the diaspora. The play is, first, a glimmer of anti-Duvalier discourse circulating within Haiti, one which would have filled diasporic audiences with the hope of eventual return. Second, the medium of theater undoubtedly contributed to the audience's affective response; the presence of Haitian actors performing a play also staged and seen in Haiti at great risk mirrors the diasporic audience's own spectatorship. Performances of the play abroad are thus heightened by empathy for those still in Haiti, at the same time that they exacerbate wounds inflicted by the audience's distinct experience of migration. *Pèlin Tèt* is affective in the diaspora both for its ability to represent the pains of exile, and for its evocation of Haitians still living under the regime.

Narcisses's review did not neglect the role of language in this emotionally charged performance: "La pièce, véritable monument du créole, à ébranlé toute assistance

[68] Piram's profoundly sincere comments fall upon our bodies like a whip lacerating our wounded flesh, our heart torn apart by the oppression in our far off homeland. On stage, the drama of the entire diaspora plays out. Narcisse, "*Pèlin Tèt* à Montréal," p. 14.

par sa ferveur patriotique et l'actualité de la problématique débattue. La haute poésie de ce langage vernaculaire dans la bouche de Piram ou de Polidò, sublime à faire pleurer, n'a pas fait perdre de vue le vécu quotidien, la rêve gigantesque des émigrés."[69] To an audience of exiles, *Pèlin Tèt* linked migrant viewers both to patriotic attachments to Haiti and their own daily life in the diaspora. The language of the play in the embodied mouths of Polidò and Piram is described as profoundly charged with affect as to bring the listener to tears. Sociolinguists have extensively researched the particular role that Haitian Creole plays, both in the diaspora and in Haiti. However, according to Flore Zéphir's 1996 Sociolinguistic study *Haitian Immigrants in Black America: A Sociological and Sociolinguistic Portrait*, migration and the new influence of US race politics affected Haitian migrants' views on language. Zéphir argues that migration was a great equalizer for Haitians, stripping them of whatever prestige they had acquired in Haiti and grouping them with black Americans regardless of the particular shade of their skin color. By Zéphir's account, a new ethnic pride develops among Haitians living in the US, and Haitian Creole emerges as the symbolic marker of their cultural and ethnic background.[70] Zéphir claims that "[Haitian Creole]… has emerged as an ethnic symbol that has a bonding function."[71]

Thus, both the plotting and the language of the play address a public in a mode that calls for bypassing traditional divisions within Haitian society both at home and abroad. The play's narrative represents such a cross class allegiance, and the play

[69] The play, a real creole masterpiece, rattled the entire audience with its patriotic fervor and the timeliness of the issues it addresses. The high poetry of its vernacular speech in Piram or Polidò's mouth, so sublime as to make you cry, did not lose sight of daily life, the enormous dreams of emigrants. Narcisse, "*Pèlin Tèt* à Montréal," p. 14.
[70] Zéphir, *Haitian Immigrants in Black America*, 106-7.
[71] Zéphir, *Haitian Immigrants in Black America,* 107.

addresses the audience as a Haitian public by virtue of its language. Following the status of Haitian Creole in Haiti, migrants too attempted to establish elite class status in migration by way of their knowledge of French. As Susan Huelsebusch Buchanan wrote in her 1980 ethnography of Haitians in New York City,

> Another dimension along which status is judged or evaluated is level of formal education received in Haiti… ability to speak good, fluent French is indicative of a solid education and high social status… French derived norms of behavior are associated with high status... such conduct involves… reserved deportment and demeanor and proper language, ie French on occasions which require it.[72]

As we have seen, *Pèlin Tèt* directly transgresses high status expectations for reserved comportment and demeanor, and of course, the use of French. While the raunchy discourse of *Pèlin Tèt* could have been a deterrent to the elite, it could also have been seen as an invitation to abandon reserved social comportment, an invitation to partake in the affects and modes of the intimate sphere publicly. If *Pèlin Tèt* refuses the reserved discourse of people who cannot be intimates because of social class, it addresses the entire audience as its intimates. The play's singular discursive mode also treats the audience as an undifferentiated collective, rather than vetting audience members for sophistication by using inaccessible language.

Despite the play's turn to indigenous Haitian culture to touch an ethnic and national vein across wide swaths of the community, it in fact revealed the divisions between populations living in Haiti and in the diaspora by producing distinct affects in each population. While Haitians within the country came to *Pèlin Tèt* as a representation of the liberalization of Haitian society and a potential opening for anti-Duvalier mobilization, to Haitians living in diaspora the play was like a missive from the distant

[72] Buchanan, *Scattered Seeds,* 194-5.

homeland, cause for nostalgia and a reflection on diasporic community. Indeed, the play's aspirational depiction of conversation's reparative potential remains within the fiction of theater. As Buchanan reports, class divisions originating both in Haiti and in the United States divided Haitians along class lines: "Whereas the ideology of community exists as an ideal to be achieved, the social reality of the Haitian situation in New York City reveals a stratified population which has transplanted the traditional ascriptive system from Haiti."[73] The persistent social class divisions in the United States were but one way in which the utopian message of *Pèlin Tèt* only aspirationally described a new form of sociality among diasporic Haitians.

This is not to say that language played no role in empowering impoverished, marginalized Haitians to political action. In many ways, it was the Pirams of Haiti that ultimately led to Jean-Claude Duvalier's flight from power. Relying on radio broadcast in Haitian Creole to spread the message, beginning in 1984, poor Haitians in Gonaïves began protesting the elevated price of food, quickly shifting their critique to Duvalier himself. These protests grew in size and intensity until Duvalier ultimately left Haiti on February 7, 1986. However, unlike the friendship between Piram and Polidò, this populist movement indicated neither an allegiance between the rich and the poor, nor a genuine reorganization of the economic, political, and social landscape in Haiti. Indeed, Duvalier is reported to have left the country with heavy US support, and millions of dollars in cash.[74] Once Duvalier had left office, class warfare reigned in Haiti. By Trouillot's account, the wealthy were condemned as complicit in Duvalierism, and at the height of the protests groups of citizens established roadblocks to prevent the wealthy from

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[73] Buchanan, *Scattered Seeds*, 173-4.
[74] Trouillot, *Haiti, State Against Nation,* 226.

reaching their suburban homes or requesting money for passage.[75] Both in Haiti and its diaspora, the gap between the wealthy and the poor remains a defining obstacle, and these elements of the population have yet to effectively combat social divides. *Pèlin Tèt* describes an ideal of unity as yet unachieved in Haiti.

Finally, the intense affective response of the Haitian diaspora does not correlate to dense solidarity with Haitians living in Haiti. Even in 1978, Paul Dejean wrote of the Haitian population in Quebec, "Nous laissions entendre, au seuil de notre ouvrage, que beaucoup d'Haïtiens installer contre leur gré hors de leur pays n'y rentreront sans doute jamais définitivement."[76] Though diasporic Haitians actively participate in life at home by sending economic remittances, and even putting pressure on the governments of their adoptive homes to take on different policies of engagement with Haiti, they have settled abroad. These efforts to engage in political life outside of the country certainly challenge traditional concepts of nationalism, as scholars such as Michel S. Laguerre and Susan Glick Schiller and George Fouron have argued, suggesting instead that regular transnational attachments constitute long distance nationalism[77] or transnational politics.[78] But, the uneven position of Haitians on either side of the diasporic divide reveals the difficulties of these extra-state political and economic attachments. While migrants to the global north are able to generate the funds that make life at home possible, migrants are separated from the live affective and political spaces of the home, ranging from the potential collective movements following from watching a play with

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[75] Trouillot, *Haiti, State Against Nation,* 227-8.
[76] I will let it be known that it is a founding argument of this work that many Haitians who have settled outside of their country against their will never return permanently. Dejean, *Les Haïtiens au Québec*, 108.
[77] Schiller and Fouron, *George Work up Laughing*, 4.
[78] Laguerre, *Diaspora, Politics, and Globalization.*

other citizens to the live protests that contributed to Jean-Claude Duvalier's departure from Haiti.

And yet, the affective resonance of the play revealed the latent potential in meaningful solidarity across destructive divides. Populist language and the aural dimension of theater drew upon the collective national intimate idiom as it addressed and debated historic class divides. Recognition of and participation in this Haitian idiom would have been true on both sides of the diaspora. However, the physical location of spectators had a profound impact on their own intimate investments in the play. To Haitians living at home, the play and its language use facilitated an open community in which Haitians could collectively consume anti-Duvalier discourse. The language of the play both brought spectators into the intimate contact with the play's actors and each other, as well as making the play accessible to all members of Haitian society. The play aspired to trace connections and solidarities with Haitians in diaspora by depicting Duvalier violence's effects abroad, ultimately generating a pan-diasporic network of political critique. In the Haitian diaspora, the play's images and language both called for new social bonds and allegiances in diaspora, and evoked the diaspora's longing for Haiti through its use of Haitian Creole and the physical presence of Haitians engaged in political struggle at home. The reciprocal, "M a ede ou"[79] exchanged by Polidò and Piram at the end of *Pèlin Tèt* resonates profoundly in Port-au-Prince and in New York, and while its affects are linked, they are not continuous. Imagining a fractured and wounded national community divided by the Atlantic amplified the affects of *Pèlin Tèt.* The play thus both succeeds and falls short of its efforts to unify Haitians. While both populations

[79] I will help you. *Pèlin Tèt,* 64.

are affected by the play's depiction of Jean-Claude Duvalier's transatlantic impact, each leaves the play with a distinct affective response to its message, importantly shaped by its own global placement. The play ultimately demonstrates disjunctures within diaspora.

Conclusion

Though aural media overcame some barriers to Caribbean public formation encountered in print media, diaspora interrupted the publics formed by *Caribbean Voices* and *Pèlin Tèt.* The nation language forms broadcast on *Caribbean Voices* revealed contentions among West Indians as to what kind of image should represent the emergent nation to the world. Indeed, the diverse perspectives on this question foreshadowed the divisive conflict that would dissolve the West Indies Federation. Rather than calling up intimate national bonds, public vernacular language use demonstrated the articulated communities of West Indians in diaspora and at home. *Pèlin Tèt*'s publics rallied around the intimate scene of anti-Duvalier discourse, but diaspora generated site specific attachments to the play's language, to its politics, and among its spectators.

By tracking the publics formed around language, we have seen that language is vested with aspiration to meaningful forms of community. In the cases studied, however, the diversity of attachments that language generates leads to fractures in the larger communities and publics it aspires to. Affect, while mobile, contagious, and sticky, is profoundly uneven. In other words, while language's intimacies registered among West Indians and Haitians at home and abroad, diaspora amplified the differences among listeners' responses to a single phenomenon. Nevertheless, diaspora was a critical component of language's significance. In both cases cited above, language is invested

with significance precisely because of its ability to draw upon the intimacies of Caribbean subjects in a variety of spaces.

Ultimately, across the distances of diaspora, affect proliferates, generating a noisy and contested public. Caribbean subjects responded to the specificity of their situation, their relation to their immediate community, and their relationship to a single national space imagined through language. While language generates and draws upon intimacies, these intimacies ultimately undermine the communities language imagines.

Chapter Four: New States, New Worlds: The Promise of Culture in the Postcolonial Caribbean

> "Thus peripheral societies are characterized by a permanent tension between the centripetal forces of the state and the centrifugal forces inherent in dependency."
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> Michel Rolph Trouillot, *State Against Nation*[1]

Following the ebullient optimism of radical social change like independence or the departure of a dictator, the British West Indies and Haiti were faced with the hard realities of global structures beyond formal colonization that perpetuated many of the oppressive circumstances independence, it was hoped, would mitigate. Postcolonial statehood ultimately resulted in disappointment, as new leaders prioritized pressures from the global north over the demands of Caribbean subjects, or as in Haiti, the radical populism of Jean-Bertrand Aristide elected after the end of the Duvalier years ended abruptly in a US backed coup. These political disappointments produced cynicism and uncertainty towards newly formed states that seemed ill equipped or unwilling to prioritize the demands and wellbeing of Caribbean subjects. Confronting these ongoing struggles, national culture attained new prominence as a productive strategy for rendering transformative futures. The broad array of social actors engaged in the promotion of local culture, ranging from artists to economists to political leaders, demonstrated a significant commitment to vernacular culture as a necessary element of political and economic autonomy. Indeed, disillusionment following political change led to an even bolder promotion of non-European culture through the creation of state programs that promoted vernacular culture. In the post-Federation Caribbean and in post-Duvalier Haiti, thinkers

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[1] Trouillot, *State Against Nation*, 23.

and politicians once again turn to vernacular culture as a tool to insulate vulnerable Caribbean nations against hegemonic dominance. In this chapter, I examine the movement from political disappointment back to vernacular culture. In addition to analyzing the affective force demonstrated by this seemingly repetitive turn to the cultural, I evaluate the involvement of the state in cultural movements.

Projects linking the state and national culture mobilize local and marginalized culture as a symbol of the state's commitment to the populations who have, despite formal independence from a colonizing power, continued to be subject to exploitative relationships with other state and non-state actors from the global north. In efforts to overcome these exploitative relationships, artists, academics, and governmental institutions utilize representations of marginal society to symbolize the nation itself in relation to global economic and political forces that exert decentralized control over formerly colonized countries. States ultimately turned to the cultural politics of minor language and culture as grounds for change that might free the Caribbean from its lingering dependence on the global north. The state's incorporation of symbols of marginality into official policy flags an awareness to the people's own articulation of its identity, including its experience of marginalization. The state therefore uses cultural symbols to indicate a response to intimate experience, producing a new proximity between the state and its people.

I will elaborate on two instances in which academics, artists, and state institutions promote language and culture as remedies to the state's failure to represent and advocate for its people. In the British West Indies, after states won independence piecemeal rather than as a federated entity, the new governments faced global political and economic super

powers that undermined their recently acquired sovereignty. In the years immediately following independence, leaders who had professed their commitment to the working class and poor of the Caribbean like Jamaica's Alexander Bustamante, a charismatic labor leader turned Prime Minister, and Triniadad's Eric Williams, an intellectual who authored the iconic *Capitalism and Slavery*, a strident economic and historical critique of the period, showed their own susceptibility to global superpowers. Prominent economists, artists, and politicians voiced their dissent, proposing alternative political and economic models for the state that stressed developing Caribbean autonomy. Culture was at the center of and the foundation for these models. With firm cultural foundations, these leaders claimed, the region would be less dependent on the global north. In the 1960s and 1970s, the periodicals *Savacou*, a cultural journal produced by the black radical Caribbean Artists Movement, and *New World Quarterly*, a leftist publication out of the University of the West Indies, both advocated for and practiced third world cultural autonomy and collaboration they envisioned as the foundation for global change. Each publication repeatedly emphasized the importance of adopting pan-Caribbean and pan-African cultural identity as the foundation for resisting the economic hegemony of the global north.

While these endeavors in the Anglophone Caribbean looked across the region and the globe to empower their nations, Haitian governmental projects aimed at combatting national and global exploitation of the poor have taken a much more national and nationalist form. In recent years in Haiti, the politics of language have taken on a new importance in the national sphere. After a long history of the state's failure to represent its people, in 2015 the government instituted a new group, the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen,

which attempts to redress the government's historic use of language as a tool for disempowering the Haitian majority. More than simply identifying language as one of a range of problems, including voter fraud, poor infrastructural development, and taxation that takes money from the poor without redistributing it through social services, the Akademi's creation attempts to remedy the state's failures of its people by ending its exclusive use of the French language. The government historically has operated entirely in French, a language that the overwhelming majority did not understand. Proponents of the Akademi have claimed that the country's endemic poverty can be attributed to this marginalization of the vast majority of the people, causing both material and psychological effects in society. The problem has been tied to systemic issues such as an elitist and racist attitude among the Haitian ruling class, resulting in an unwillingness to invest in the Haitian people because of a preference for all things French. The use of Haitian Creole in public life, it is argued, will lead not only to a genuinely participatory democracy, but to a newly empowered Haitian people that might revitalize Haiti's economic life both at home and in the global economy.

Not only do these political and cultural projects claim that cultural change will instate a newly meaningful relationship between the nation and the state that represents it, they attempt to chart new relationships between countries of the global south and the forces that have dominated them in late capitalism. Autonomy is sought by way of a turn to the authentic, the minor, the marginalized. Collective empowerment through these intimate expressions of self, culture, and the collective are seen as a means of resisting neo-imperialism. As Raymond Williams notes in *Marxism and Literature,* "The most interesting and difficult part of any cultural analysis, in complex societies, is that which

seeks to grasp the hegemonic in its active and formative but also its transformational processes. Works of art, by their substantial and general character, are often especially important as sources of this complex evidence."[2] In the Caribbean, and indeed other marginalized cultures, often counter hegemonic expressions celebrate a form of perceived authenticity, adding a self-sameness to forms of resistance that endow them with affective import. The chapters of this project have traced culture's counterhegemonic assertions, comparing the limited range of influence in political transitions to the meaningful social ties artists aspire to effect. This final chapter looks beyond culture's traditional practitioners to state institutions to investigate their turn to culture as an anchor for meaningful and transformative autonomy.

The movements that did turn to the marginal cultures of the Caribbean construct a particular vision of intimate ties among a nation of subjects and between that nation and the state. Previous disappointments and failures on the part of the state are attributed to its imitation of Western forms. However, by returning to the realities of the people symbolized in their culture and language, radical Caribbean political movements construct an image of a state and a world in which all subjects might feel themselves to be a vibrant part of national life.

I. A Third Way: Cultural Solidarity in the post-Federation Caribbean

The failure of the West Indies Federation led to significant political fractures in the region, as states reckoned with their own incapacity to reach consensus regarding their shared political future. Voicing a coy jab at the debacle, in 1962, the preeminent Calypsonian Mighty Sparrow wrote a piece expressing regional disenchantment with the

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[2] Williams, *Marxism and Literature,* 113-4.

ideal of unity touted, but ultimately undone, by political elites. Sparrow's crooning turns to a contentious growl as he wryly attends to the ironies of Federation's dissolution: "Well they want to know why Jamaica run away from the federation / Jamaica have a right to speak she mind that is my opinion / And if you believe in democracy you'll agree with me."[3] The calypso, a genre historically associated with double entendre intended to highlight irony and hypocrisy, here mocks both the irony of a single island's destruction of a united entity, and the vicissitudes of democracy more generally. Federated states found themselves unable to practice the accommodation of dissent upon which collective endeavors rest. When Jamaicans voted to leave Federation, the foundations of collectivity crumbled due to one participant's unwillingness to accept the structures of a collaborative venture. Sparrow continues, voicing the region's response to this decision in the chorus repeated four times over the course of the song: "But if they know they didn't want federation / And they know they don't want to unite as one and only one / I say to tell the doctor you're not in favor don't behave like a blasted traitor / How the devil you mean you ain't federating no more." Sparrow expresses disillusionment not only with the collective project of Federation, but specifically with Caribbean leaders identified as "traitors." The calypso thus indicates the sense of general political disillusionment in the Caribbean post-Federation.

This disillusionment with Caribbean leaders perceived as traitors did not end with the breakup of Federation. As the region's islands gained independence individually, freedom from colonialism proved less autonomous and transformative than these new nations might have hoped. Larger states like the United States and Canada continued to

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[3] Mighty Sparrow, "Federation."

exert influence on the region stemming from the Caribbean's need for capital to develop services and resources that had been under imperial responsibility, its reliance on imports for many of the goods it consumed, and its reliance on Western markets to purchase the raw materials it produced.[4] Early political leaders and parties who had risen to power promising a brighter social future for their countries in part through their involvement with major labor protests preceding World War II, for instance Eric Williams of Trinidad and Tobago or Alexander Bustamante and the Jamaica Labour Party he led, did not always produce the hoped for changes. Disappointment with political and economic order led to a regional interest in culture's transformative potential. Returning to the regional collaboration Federation had failed to implement, thinkers of the New World Group and Caribbean Artist's Movement advocated for greater regional unity under economic and political pressures emerging following independence. The New World Group was comprised of a loose configuration of Caribbean academics, primarily economists and social scientists across the region. Lloyd Best, a Trinidadian economist, Jamaican economist Norman Girvan, and the radical Guyanese historian Walter Rodney were all leaders and active participants in the group through the organization of talks and conferences and through the group's major publication arm, *New World Quarterly.* These thinkers proposed that the Caribbean's best strategy for protecting the interests of its people against global behemoths upon which they were nevertheless economically reliant was through regional cooperation. Despite these scholars' training in the social sciences,

[4] This reliance on Western nations to purchase and produce raw materials was perpetuated by Western nations. For instance, Jamaica's efforts to develop the infrastructure necessary for processing bauxite ore were impeded by the American markets that had more to gain from buying and processing bauxite ore themselves. See Parker, *Brother's Keeper*, 103-4.

they viewed culture as a unique tool through which to inspire the regional cooperation and self-reliance upon which a transformed economy would depend.

The New World Group took an active interest in collaborating with Caribbean artists taking on the mantle of regional unity through the Caribbean Artists Movement (CAM). CAM initially began in London to facilitate contact among Caribbean artists England, but quickly grew into a movement that crossed the Atlantic. Like the networks of writers linked through *Caribbean Voices*, CAM sought to cultivate cultural projects that were expressive of the region's unique culture, rather than derivative of English models. However, while the writers of *Caribbean Voices* had been conflicted about the appropriate aesthetics for their Caribbean movement and moment, as a movement CAM was more univocal in its embrace of radical politics and its rejection of Europe. In seeking out this indigenous voice, the artists involved with CAM turned both to regional culture in the Caribbean and to the pan-African movements of the 1960s and 1970s in order to foster a culture distinct from European influence. These artists and intellectuals of the period claimed that Caribbean sovereignty could never be achieved before a collective Caribbean identity freed from colonial ideology was forged. Though one appeared explicitly cultural and the other explicitly political, the CAM artists and the members of the New World Group both framed their ideas and projects in terms of resistance to neo-imperialism inspired by and rooted in Caribbean and African populist cultures. In both movements, and via collaboration between the movements, culture was called upon to represent, and even provide the foundation for, unified Caribbean political action inoculated against the pressures of neocolonial forces. Culture was seen as so central to Caribbean autonomy that the organizers of the New World Group reached out

to members of CAM both formally and informally to incorporate the arts into the New World Group. Kamau Brathwaite, the Barbadian poet, and Marina Maxwell, a Trinidadian active in the dramatic arts, are two examples of active organizing members of CAM sought out by the New World Group as collaborators.[5] Brathwaite shared early drafts of his trilogy *The Arrivants* penned in the 1960s with the New World Group's Sunday seminars on Caribbean arts,[6] and Maxwell organized seminars on arts in the Caribbean.

These movements privileged the psychological, social, and cultural as a response to the disappointing course of postindependence politics. Indeed, despite many of the political concerns of thinkers involved with the New World Group and CAM, the radical intellectuals and artists of the post-Federation Caribbean were intentionally avoidant of direct political action. The turn to culture as a vehicle for social change can be read as an extension of this disenchantment with institutionalized politics and marks an investment in art as a transformative public mode where institutional politics and the state had failed. In an issue of *New World Quarterly* celebrating Guyanese independence in 1966, CLR James used the opportunity not to expound on the successful political struggles and future of the newly independent state, but to express culture's meaningful potential for transformation as compared to the emptiness of politics. Comparing the Caribbean region to other decolonizing countries, James notes the region's unique potential to generate strong solidarity among its people: "With community of language rather than potpourri, Nigeria and Ghana would have been quite other than they have been… Our common history, advanced languages, and the mass media are the basis of Caribbean unity. Not a

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[5] Walmsley, *The Caribbean Artists Movement*, 194-9.
[6] Walmsley, *The Caribbean Artists Movement*, 41.

flock of politicians running around and bleating about federation, West Indian economic unity, a West Indian common market, etc, etc."[7] James's theorization of Caribbean unity uses language to index genuine community. While the language of the people signifies collective identity and transformative political potential, political discourse makes promises that have not been kept, and furthermore, maintains distance from the truly unifying language spoken among the people. James's fraught relationship with the Prime Minister of Trinidad, Eric Williams, sheds light on his dismissive comments on West Indian political efforts to effect regional unity.

Though James had placed great faith in Williams' ability to lead Trinidad and the West Indies into meaningful independence, Williams' change of position on the Trinidadian harbor on the country's Chaguaramas peninsula revealed the scope of western capital's influence even among the radical leaders of the decolonizing West Indies. The harbor had been the home of a United States naval base since 1940, and the removal of the American base from Chaguaramas was a symbolic component of its new establishment as the capital of the West Indies Federation. In a 1960 essay expressing unequivocal support of Williams, "A Convention Appraisal," James writes,

> When he says West Indian nationalism, he speaks from deep down. When he says a strong Federation and a West Indian national economy, he speaks from roots almost as deep…. The whole has culminated in the struggle over Chaguaramas. When he says that he will break the Chaguaramas issue or it will break him, it is not a phrase. It expresses the whole life-experience of a man, exceptionally gifted in ability, character and power of will. The speech at Arima, *From Slavery to Chaguaramas*, should be read and re-read by all who, for whatever purpose, wish to understand Dr. Williams.[8]

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[7] James, "Tomorrow and Today," 112. Notably, the special issue was edited by George Lamming who, as readers of this dissertation will have learned, is neither Guyanese nor a politician.
[8] James, "A Convention Appraisal," 343.

At the time, Williams had advocated to establish Chaguaramas as the capital of the West Indies Federation. Not only did Williams throw himself into the campaign in negotiations with the United States and United Kingdom, he frequently used the base as a symbol of lingering colonialist challenges to West Indian sovereignty during his popular public lectures at Woodford Square in Port of Spain, Trinidad. However, in negotiations with the United Kingdom and the United States, though the US surrendered four fifths of its land holdings at Chaguaramas, Williams did not succeed in fully removing the Americans from the base. Indeed, no definitive departure date for US forces was established, and the possibility that Chaguaramas might serve as the capital of the West Indies Federation became impossible.[9] In exchange, the United States was to provide serious aid to Trinidad and Tobago for infrastructure projects such as the construction and repair of roads.[10] This treaty was a major turning point in the prospects for Federation's success, and the origins of a rift between James and Williams.[11] The empowering platform Williams had used to galvanize Trinidadians at Woodford Square thus appeared not as the unifying discourse spoken among the people, but empty blathering removed from the concerns that mobilized a unified Trinidadian public. Clearly disillusioned with the promise he had formerly attributed to Williams, by 1966 James appeared thoroughly disenchanted with politicians in the West Indies.

If Chaguaramas itself was not the proximate cause of Federation's failure, it provided a ready symbol for a growing postcolonial political disenchantment in the West

[9] Parker, *Brother's Keeper*, 137-9; Ryan, *Eric Williams,* 223-4. For a full treatment of the Chaguaramas conflict in broader Caribbean and global context, see Parker, *Brother's Keeper*, ch5.
[10] ibid.
[11] Ryan, *Eric Williams*, 228-9.

Indies. James's turn to culture was in fact representative of the intellectuals of the 1960s and 1970s post-federation Caribbean. Indeed, the issue of *New World Quarterly* in which James published his critique of Williams is emblematic of the period. The issue was edited by George Lamming, clearly a man of letters and not a politician or social scientist (as were the founding members of the New World Group). In addition to political and theoretical pieces, the issue contained stories and poems. Beyond the issue celebrating Guyanese independence, members of the New World Group explicitly articulated their approach to their activities in the journal as apolitical as a result of their disenchantment with West Indian politicians. The journal commented in extensive detail on political and economic developments in the region, its express purpose being to provide a forum for discussion rather than to effect specific policy change. Lloyd Best claimed that remaining free from political attachments was in fact the only way for the journal and its movement to maintain the journal's integrity in the eyes of its readers and the Caribbean population broadly:

> Paradoxically, and contrary to what the activists believe, authentic contact between a Group which is operating out of the intellectual system and the rest of the population means staying 'out of politics.' To be politically effective, **New World** cannot conduct its business with an eye to what effect its words and deeds have on the power structure in general and on its own support in particular.[12]

Free from obligations to please the general population or foreign nations, *New World Quarterly* could publish radical commentary on a political sphere which had disappointed it.

In the writings of the New World Group, culture emerged as a domain in which Caribbean subjects might express their aspirations to populist regional unity and

[12] Best, "Whither New World," *NWQ* 4:1, 4.

collective transformation. Desires for regional economic cooperation and resistance to Western imperialism were translated into cultural cooperation and refusal of Western cultural forms. Culture was alternately touted as an extant source of regional solidarity and a resource to develop before a meaningful political and economic transformation could occur. Revisiting the Chaguaramas disappointment in a 1967 conference talk, Lloyd Best undertook a thought experiment in which Chaguaramas had been stood up for by the Trinidadian people with broad Caribbean support. Had such political action taken place, "the Caribbean would have emerged from the struggle as morally and politically integrated as it has always been culturally… thanks to sugar, mercantilism, and imperial domination."[13] Lloyd Best's sentence is ambivalently constructed such that it can be read two ways. A first reading seems to imply that sugar, mercantilism, and imperial domination have generated historical cultural integration. Yet, the contemporary role of those three elements in the Caribbean region has produced a second reading. The second reading suggests that a moral and political integration could potentially result from the effects of sugar, mercantilism, and imperial domination in the contemporary Caribbean plagued by neo-imperial influence from the United States. Had Caribbean nations united to resist the contemporary influence of these forces, a new political unity might have resulted from the factors that have already produced cultural unity. Domination has been a consistent force in the Caribbean world, and it has left the trace of radical political potential already manifest in cultural integration. The political register of cooperation remains to be actualized.

[13] Best, "Independent Thought and Caribbean Freedom," *NWQ* 3:4.

The grammatical modes in Lloyd Best's analysis of the Chaguaramas situation reveal ambiguities in the relationship between culture and politics. While Caribbean culture exists in an indicative present, Caribbean politics belongs to an unreal past conditional. Lloyd Best's analysis clearly indicated a relationship between politics and culture, and yet while politics has failed to inhere in Caribbean nations, culture has come into the world uninhibited. However, Frantz Fanon, in *Wretched of the Earth*, argues that true national culture is only ever born of extant political struggle: "Sooner or later, however, the colonized intellectual realizes that the existence of a nation is not proved by culture, but in the people's struggle against the forces of occupation."[14] Fanon and Best's analyses both posit the necessary link between politics as material reality and culture. Indeed, while Fanon claims that true national culture is only ever the result of national struggle, Best sees potential political action and struggle as an unrealized manifestation of the greater unity already articulated through culture.

If politicians were susceptible to influence and expectation that limited their ability to govern based upon the ideals of Caribbean autonomy, culture appeared to be a domain in which the influence of colonialism could be resisted. Indeed, members of the New World Group and CAM argued that culture could escape and critically analyze the destructive forces of colonization, and that consequently a politics grounded in autonomous culture might prove more resistant to Western influence. Artists and intellectuals of the period repeatedly insisted that the only way out of structures of dependency was to encourage intellectual and cultural traditions that turned away from European dominance. A continued inferiority complex in the face of Western culture was

[14] Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 159.

identified as the major impediment to true independence. Though Lloyd Best expressed conviction that Caribbean cultural integration provided a model for regional political integration, reverence for the West prevented culture from having its potentially transformative effect on the region. As the editors of *New World Quarterly* expressed in the introduction to one of their first issues, published in 1965:

> In this process of transition, the Caribbean stands alone-faced, as it is, with the problem of launching on this sea of change without ballast-without benefit of cultural solidity which has given meaning and direction to transformation in other societies. Based on wholly imported and ethnically diverse populations, territorially small, economically, politically, and culturally enslaved, Caribbean communities have traditionally stood on the periphery of North Atlantic civilization, dependent as much for their ideas and views as for their consumer goods.[15]

The critical problems in the Caribbean quest for independence cited by the editors of *New World Quarterly* which originate within culture, radiating out to the political and economic. By this account, identity and history structure the economic and the political, rather than the other way around. Furthermore, identity and history are treated as independent variables that can be altered by the artist and the critic to produce changes at the political and economic level. Culture is thus given a privileged place in the Caribbean search for sovereignty.

The New World Group advocated for and attempted an alternative hegemonic cultural formation. Raymond Williams, in describing hegemony and points at which it is contested, has three helpful insights for understanding this particular Caribbean political moment. First, hegemony is a form of domination manifest through an entire social system delimiting the kinds of lives available to subjects. Hegemony works through a range of resources available to it, from the state to relationships with other subjects. It is

[15] "Editorial Statement," *NWQ* 2:1, 1.

thus useful for describing the ways in which seemingly abstract and distant structures like the global economy affect seemingly personal experience. The connection between the local level of lived experience and the abstract forces of global power lead Williams to a second useful intervention. Precisely because of these diverse points of intersection hegemony is constantly being contested, asserted, and reinstated.[16] And third, culture and particularly works of art play a distinct role in the means by which counter hegemony enters the social world.[17]

The New World Group's close association with the Caribbean Artists Movement provided a method for altering these relations of cultural dependency. In an introduction to *Savacou* published in 1971, Kamau Brathwaite described the transformation of artistic production in the Caribbean as an essential precursor to genuine political change: "We find, then, a psycho-cultural rather than a specifically missiled political movement in progress. Political action, if and when it comes, will be shaped and informed by basically indigenous pressures and models. But one has to sink into the life of the people… before this kind of awareness, the vision of consciousness, becomes possible."[18] Much like Lloyd Best, Brathwaite identifies culture as the necessary predecessor to indigenous regional politics. Indeed, once cultural identity comes to reflect the Caribbean public, all politics will naturally respond to their formative influence. The psycho-cultural problem Brathwaite identifies consists in psychological unwillingness or inability to turn to the Caribbean masses for a true regional sense of self. Such a formulation suggests that indigenous culture constitutes a sphere somehow immune to the corrupting influences of

[16] Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 112.
[17] Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 114.
[18] Brathwaite, "Forward," 7.

European hegemony, ignoring the interaction between political and economic structures and cultural ones Williams attends to. Brathwaite suggests that solutions to the region's political dependency are already manifest in the region through the problematic use of the term "indigenous." In other words, while Williams suggests a constant interaction between counter hegemonic formation and hegemony, Brathwaite proposes a retreat into culture that will determine political direction.

In the same issue of *Savacou*, Marina Maxwell claims that intellectuals psychologically divided between their elite European cultural and intellectual formation and their true Caribbean roots have ignored the region's "unconscious artists": "Our unconscious artists then, externalized some of the real elements of our culture… We, the schizoid artists, torn between our education and our instinct stand outside the *hounfor* as the ceremony continues despite us."[19] In Maxwell's account, intellectuals have ignored the extant cultural counter hegemony in the Caribbean, manifest less in explicit expressions of regionalism or challenges to the current order than in traditional cultural symbols. Maxwell's metaphor of the *hounfor*, or temple in Haitian Vodou practice, describes a cultural movement independent of European influence. This particular symbol of populist Caribbean culture allows Maxwell to evoke a pan-regional identity that extends even beyond the islands of the former British West Indies to its Caribbean neighbors and indeed to the African origins of the Vodou belief system. What's more, the allusion to Haitian culture evokes an independent spirit that ended colonialism and established political and cultural autonomy. However, the role of the "unconscious artist" in Maxwell's imagined Caribbean future is somewhat unclear. If indeed indigenous art

[19] Maxwell, "Towards a Revolution in the Arts," 20-1.

has persisted, somehow immune to the forces that corrupt the schizoid artist, it seems not as of yet to have had the transformative social effects that Maxwell envisions. The meeting of the unconscious and schizoid artists is somehow critical to this movement. As in Brathwaite's narrative of psycho-cultural movement, marginal cultures exist in a sort of primitive vibrancy that requires contact with intellectual elites to become a truly transformative movement. While both accounts consciously acknowledge the role of power in determining the course of social movements, they also maintain a certain elitism that treats marginal culture as somehow static, apolitical, awaiting transformative contact.

Haiti and West Africa are critical elements of this construction of a pure, indigenous origin through which Caribbean radicals could imagine alternative cultural futures through a non-European past. Brathwaite's poetry of the period establishes a Caribbean link to Africa via Haiti to express the liberatory potential of the aesthetics and spirituality of a generalized blackness, posed in distinction to European hegemony. Throughout Brathwaite's trilogy *The Arrivants*, which consists of three books of poetry published in the late 1960s and then as a collection in 1973, he narrates African scenes that are linked through the broad temporal scope of the poems to what appears to be a Caribbean present. In one poem Brathwaite refers to Vodou via a song to the *lwa* Legba sung at the beginning of all Vodou ceremonies. Legba is the *lwa* of crossroads and doorways, and is invoked at the beginning of Vodou ceremonies in order to open the barrier between this world and the supernatural world of the *lwa.* In his poem, "Negus," in the final book of the trilogy, *Islands* (1969), before calling to Legba the poem's speaker denounces the current postcolonial state of affairs in the Caribbean. The speaker depicts the limited freedoms of independence in global capitalism as stunted, limited, and

predetermined forms of national life. Building upon single repetitions of the phrases "it," "it is not," and "it is not enough," the poem's stanzas culminate in dystopian visions of freedom: "It is not enough / to tinkle to work on a bicycle bell / when hell / crackles and burns in the fourteen inch screen of the Jap / of the Jap of the Japanese-constructed / United-Fruit-Company-imported / hard sale, tell tale tele- / vision set, rhinocerously knobbed, cancerously tubed."[20] The metonymies of global capitalism interrupt the trajectory of a morning commute, as both the sounds evoked in the poem and the sounds of the poem's language drag the reader back and forth across an erratic soundscape. From the tinkling of the bell to the crackling of a distorted television set to the punctuating repetition of "Jap," the reader is overwhelmed by the scene's visual and sonic spectacle.

In the final two stanzas of the poem, the repetition of the pronoun "it" shifts into a forceful assertion of an "I" demanding more than the inadequate scenes described in the first half of the poem. "I" is the first line of the following three stanzas, and in each is followed by the imperative, "must be given words." The immaterial nature of words provides a meaningful alternative to the ultimately inadequate objects (televisions and bicycle bells) and forms (labor) of global capitalism. The subsequent stanzas, in contrast to the first part of the poem, draw upon natural imagery and all gesture towards a creative future. The speaker tacks between the present and future: "I / must be given words so that the bees / in my blood's buzzing brain of memory / will make flowers, will make flocks of birds, / will make sky, will make heaven, / the heaven open to the thunder-stone and the volcano and the unfolding land."[21] The stanza suggests that words are even more meaningfully material than the possessions listed in the poem's early stanzas, as words

[20] Brathwaite, *The Arrivants*, 223.
[21] Brahtwaite, *The Arrivants,* 224.

release the catalytic element of bees residing both in the speaker's living blood and in his memory. Transformative words are thus critically linked to some memory, though one located primarily in the body. Like the unremembered Africa, history lives on in the black body.

And yet, the distance from African origins marked by the Middle Passage and its continuation in contemporary forms of global capitalism impedes the transformation the speaker demands. At the end of the poem, after the speaker voices his dreams for organic transformation, Brathwaite invokes the song to Legba used to begin Vodou ceremonies: "Att / Att / Attibon / Attibon Legba / Attibon Legba / Ouvri bayi pou' moi / Ouvri bayi pou moi."[22] Echoing and modifying the "It" that began the poem, the song to Legba suggests that non-western Caribbean spiritual practices might offer a connection to the African past and a correction to the inadequate prospects of global capitalism. The song calls upon Legba to open the door between the world of the *lwa* and the world of humans, providing the opportunity for contact between humans and the *lwa.* The poem's references to memory invite a reading of the song as both an invocation of non-Western Caribbean spiritual practice and reference to an African spiritual past. The song to Legba is thus itself the words of memory and the transformation that might unleash the poet's potential. Furthermore, if we take the song's spiritual import as not simply a literary device but a recitation that produces effects (as in a Vodou ceremony, in which the song is not symbolic but rather an effective device by which to commune with and revere the *lwa*), a literal reading of Brathwaite's poem requires us to treat the poem itself as opening the gates between this world and the next, between humans and the *lwa.*

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[22] Brathwaite, *The Arrivants*, 224.

Brathwaite thus writes to remedy Maxwell's illustration of the intellectual shut out of the Vodou ritual. The openings and invitations of these Vodou references compound peasant culture and pan regional culture, indicating that connecting with the customs of the peasantry will in fact open up broader regional unity that Federation had not achieved. However, this unifying culture does not simply look down to the ignored West Indian peasantry, it looks across the sea—not to Europe, but to Africa:[23]

> After the drought, post-Federation, when all hopes subsided in uncertainty, new forces are gathering, a slender line still, but it is the first, fine trickle of blood. Throbbing at the center of this network of blood is the drum, our African identity, our consciousness of being and of being a vital part of the Third World. It is a time of restructuring, in our arts as in our politics. As usual, the unconscious artist points the way-he speaks in reggae, in pan, in his own tongues.[24]

In response to the political uncertainty following Federation, Maxwell proposes a cultural solution. She places the "unconscious" artist at the vanguard of this cultural revolution. Thanks to this working class prophet, the revolution is already underway: "What I want to point to at once is the parallel between our political awakening and search for meaning through the concept of the Third World, and what is happening already in the arts of the Caribbean."[25] Maxwell expresses hope that independence would inaugurate a pervasive Caribbean autonomy already emerging in the arts, but as yet unrealized in politics. However, independence led to new kinds of economic dependence that precluded the transformations economists were calling for in the pages of *New World Quarterly.* Where

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[16] Here I paraphrase Lamming's quotation addressing the innovations made by the West Indian novelist in "The Occasion for Speaking": "Unlike the previous governments and departments of educators, unlike the businessman importing commodities, the West Indian novelist did not look across the sea to another source. He looked down at what had traditionally been ignored. For the first time the West Indian peasant became other than a cheap source of labour." Lamming, *Pleasures,* 38-9.
[24] Maxwell, "Towards a Revolution in the Arts," 19.
[25] ibid.

economic transformation seemed a futile struggle against powerful and amorphous systems, culture at least was available as a symbol of populist participation in public life that leftist intellectuals could identify as part of their own project.

The counter hegemonic assertions of the artists of CAM and the affiliates of the New World Group did crystallize in meaningful social change in the 1970s, as political regimes articulating resistance to the outsized pressure from the global north were voted into power. Thus, the political, economic, and cultural critiques voiced in the pages of *Savacou* and *New World Quarterly* found expression in official and unofficial state discourse and policy. Elected in 1972, Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley's policy focused on cultivating a more egalitarian Jamaica, both within the country by granting the poor greater access to resources and political participation, and outside the country's borders by wresting some economic autonomy from the global north.[26] Manley's commitment to serving Jamaica's poor and ending economic dependency marked a break with his political predecessor, the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) candidate Hugh Shearer. During the late 1960s, while members of the New World Group were calling for greater regional autonomy, Shearer's administration protected the Jamaican status quo: dependency on foreign capital.[27] Criticisms of the Shearer administration's policies from members of the New World Group and other radical academics were met with political control, including censorship, the revocation of passports of radical intellectuals like

[26] Payne and Sutton, *Charting Caribbean Development*, 68-70.
[27] Gray, *Radicalism and Social Change in Jamaica*, 196-200; Rose, *Dependency and Socialism*, 230, 239.

George Beckford, and repression of protest that erupted after Beckford was sent out of Jamaica.[28]

Manley won power in the country in part through appeals to the population that critiqued Shearer's policies by demonstrating awareness of the economic suffering and extreme poverty of many Jamaicans. Indeed, unlike Shearer, Manley referred to the popular terms in which such suffering was articulated, making use of Rastafarian phrases and rhetoric, promising political forms of social equality that derived their affective resonance from anti-western, pan-African philosophies. Not only did Rastafarian rhetoric draw upon some of the same ideologies as the New World Group and CAM, there were explicit links between the movements, as *Savacou* published poetry by Rastafarian and dub poets like Bongo Jerry and Linton Kwesi Johnson. In a rich account of the political meanings of Rastafari and reggae and in Jamaican culture, Anita M. Waters describes the symbols explicitly used by Manley to link his own policies with the complaints of the working poor. Quoting a subject interviewed for her book, Waters writes, "Michael was everybody's hope… the masses… thought of him as Joshua, who would lead them across the river Jordan to defeat the Pharaoh Shearer."[29] Waters notes that Joshua is a meaningful figure to Rastafarians and to black protestants throughout the black diaspora who identify with enslaved Israelites. Through the rhetoric and massive affective import

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[28] Gray, *Radicalism and Social Change in Jamaica*, 130, 137-8; Rose, *Dependency and Socialism*, 243.

[29] Waters, *Race, Class, and Political Symbols,* 118. Waters's book provides a rich archive of material in support of my claim, ranging from Manley's display of the "rod of correction," a rod given Manley by Haile Selassie I and seen as a method for driving out poverty and "beating down Babylon" (a reference to a popular reggae song) to Manley calling himself a "sufferer's man" (again drawing on Rastafarian language) to the musical bandwagons featuring popular reggae protest artists, in which Manley's photograph was featured on posters alongside those of the musicians performing.

of histories of racial suffering, the Manley campaign elicited nationalist feeling that entrusted its well being to a state promising to break with the structures that had oppressed it.

Both the analytic and philosophical insights and the lexicon of Rastafarianism contributed to this political intimacy. Lauren Berlant has helpfully described intimacy "an aspiration for a narrative about something shared, a story about oneself and others that will turn out in a particular way…People consent to trust their desire for 'a life' to institutions of intimacy."[30] The nation extends such a promise to its subjects, establishing a common bounded cultural and historical space that also ensures protection and continuity into a people's shared future. As Berlant claims in *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City*, a state is particularly adept at generating popular support when state leaders and institutions of can name the nation's suffering.[31] Utilizing the discourse of reggae music and its expression of the suffering of Jamaica's black poor, Manley articulated a national complaint as a state priority. Culture indexed a proximity between the suffering the poor had withstood under Shearer's premiership and the Manley government's promises for a new social order, uniquely bridging the aspirations of the people and the state.

Like Manley, Forbes Burnham of Guyana sought to resist Western imperialism. Burnham's political rhetoric and policy encouraged greater Caribbean cooperation as a method for countering the economic power of Western imperialism, in addition to a national socialist politics. Though Guyana initially did not join the West Indies Federation due to protests from Burnham's erstwhile ally, Cheddi Jagan, when Burnham

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[30] Berlant, *Intimacy*, 1.
[31] Berlant, *The Queen of America*, 1-9.

was elected as prime minister he immediately began to advocate for regional cooperation. Burnham even undertook post-West Indies Federation endeavors to create a new Federated Caribbean state, ranging from the Dominica Agreement, which never coalesced in concrete political unity, to the Caribbean Free Trade Agreement (Carifta) and its antecedent, the Caribbean Community (Caricom). As a part of his interest in creating united Caribbean community, Burnham also called for and hosted the first Caribbean Festival of the Arts, or Carifesta.

Carifesta was the result of Burnham's interest in promoting the kind of regional cultural autonomy the New World Group and CAM theorized. The official publication of the Guyanese National History and Arts Council, *Kaie,* ran an article on Carifesta, which claimed, "Government is seeking to awaken a new identity in the mass of people and to promote indigenous forms of art."[32] Carifesta originated in 1966 and 1970 meetings of Caribbean writers and artists hosted in celebration of Guyana's independence and formation as a Cooperative Republic, respectively. CAM was extensively represented at both meetings. CLR James and George Lamming both appeared at the 1966 conference, while Brathwaite, Andrew Salkey, Sam Selvon, John LaRose, and Wilson Harris all appeared at the 1970 conference.[33] Salkey, a Jamaican novelist and playwright, had been a formative member of CAM along with Brathwaite. Selvon and Harris were both celebrated novelists, though neither had quite attained the same fame as Lamming. LaRose ran the publishing house New Beacon Books in London, which aided in the

[32] Quoted in Walmsley, *The Caribbean Artists Movement,* 271.
[33] Walmsley, *The Caribbean Artists Movement*, 211-2. Andrew Salkey published a diary of notes taken during his trip to Guyana for the Writers and Artists Convention, entitled *Georgetown Journal*, that chronicles interactions with Caribbean artists, politicians, and interviews with Guyanese reflecting on the state and future of their country.

publication of *Savacou* and many other works of Caribbean literature published during the 1960s and 1970s. The Caribbean Writers and Artists Coventions included lectures and cultural events such as choral performances, art shows, and literary events.

At the end of the 1970 convention, Forbes Burnham arranged for a meeting of participant writers and artists to form a plan for Carifesta, which had been proposed for 1971.[34] The Festival was hosted for the first time in Guyana in 1972. The festival focused not only on the Guyanese masses, but on Caribbean and even Latin American culture more generally. In Burnham's address at the opening of Carifesta, the media arm of his political party *New Nation* reported him as saying, "Guyana… decided to take on the 'big task' of hosting Carifesta not for the sake of 'exhibiting extravagance but as part of the Guyanese commitment 'to Caribbean independence, to the concept of the Caribbean as a nation, to the right of the Caribbean to speak out to the world not as a satelite (sic) or as the appendage of other nations but as one single nation.'"[35] Burnham's vision for contesting a world order in which the Caribbean continues to suffer from its secondary status to global super powers necessarily entails thinking of the region as a *nation*—not simply a state, but a unified people characterized by shared affective ties and cultural identity. In a speech delivered at the end of Carifesta, Burnham explicitly drew the connection between resisting neo-imperalism and cultural independence: "In the same way that so many of us believe that our problems are going to be solved by going cap in

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[34] Walmsley, *The Caribbean Artists Movement*, 216.
[35] "Carifesta and C'bean Nation," 1. It should be noted that *New Nation,* the paper from which quotations related to Carifesta '72 were drawn, was the official paper of Burnham's political party, the People's National Congress, and therefore contain a partisan bent. The quotations cited here should not be taken as historical fact, but rather as illustrations of affective investments in a particular vision of the relationship between culture and politics.

hand to the capitals of the developed nations, even so many of us believe that anything to do with art or culture or even history must come from those same capitals."[36] Carifesta, instead, directed Caribbean attention towards its own forms or art and history, rather than towards European and American models that dominated the economic and political scene as well as the cultural.

And yet, all of the movements for cultural independence organized by the state specifically orchestrated and staged regional culture for the people's consumption. Unlike the Rastafarian culture and reggae music Michael Manley drew upon in his electoral campaign Burnham designed Carifesta to promote regional identity. Much like Federation and *Caribbean Voices* of the decades prior to Carifesta, the Caribbean Artists Movement, and the New World Group, efforts in the late '60s and early '70s too originated not from a popular feeling of regional nationalism. Each group was nevertheless profoundly concerned with including and even prioritizing the cultures and struggles of marginalized subjects and groups, even to the point of romanticization. Marina Maxwell's celebration of the unconscious artist is one such example. And yet, the "unconscious" poor of the Caribbean were not necessarily culturally or politically invested in the projects proposed by the intelligentsia and governments of their country. One article in *New Nation* entitled, "Carifesta is Money," provides a different perspective on the economic advantages of cultural solidarity: "CARIFESTA gad one meaning fa me padna… and da is money so said a pavement vendor who, along with some of his business comrades, was discussing the benefits which Carifesta will bring to the small

[36] "Special on Burnham's Speech," iv.

man."[37] Despite Burnham's insistence that Carifesta's programming should include broad swaths of the nation's population, the street vendor's statement effaces the cultural element of Carifesta, claiming that it is exclusively an economic opportunity. Here, the use of unconventional spelling to indicate the regional speech patterns and class position of the street vendor ironically flag local culture as precisely outside of the formalized realm constructed for its celebration. Nevertheless, the street vendor fulfills the second order priority of Carifesta: creating regional economic opportunities independent of Western capital or influence. The article goes on to describe the different commemorative goods Caribbean artists were producing to sell to visitors, such as t-shirts with "Carifesta '72" or the Carifesta logo painted on to them. The article makes note of the fact that many participants will be travelling by air, and advises craftspeople to take this into consideration when designing memorabilia for the event. The article also suggests that selling goods to visitors might provide the extra pocket change necessary to attend the performances at the festival. This bit of optimism reveals the exclusive dimension of the festival: it is available primarily to those who can afford the time and disposable income to attend its events.

The utopian projects intended to advance a new counter hegemonic Caribbean unity were only truly successful in the venues that promoted them, failing to take root and permanence in the region as a whole. Though Carifesta celebrations continue to this day, the promise of political transformation through cultural unity has not delivered lasting results. Rather, its most stable artifacts attest to the isolated and elite character of the domains in which this state sponsored culture ultimately operates. The volume of

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[37] "Carifesta is Money," 1.

Caribbean literature commissioned for Carifesta '76 hosted in Manley's Jamaica, *Carifesta Forum*, demonstrates that Federation was only practicable in the pages of a compilation of literature. The book itself draws upon the work of authors who, while representative of a broad range of Caribbean countries, appear in an uncentered collection rather than as a representation of underlying unity. The book's editor, John Hearne, attests to the difficulty of creating a Caribbean anthology given the region's diversity: "To extract, in brief, from carefully wrought, tighty [sic] cohered statements, examples of thought that would constitute a recognizable Caribbean whole… A compendium of inquiries into the collective experience of a region can easily degenerate into an embarrassing party where the band keeps striking the first notes but where nobody asks anybody else to dance."[38] In contrast to Burnham's Caribbean Nation, Hearne conservatively refers to the basin as a region. Hearne warns against the potential missteps of the editorial tasks he undertakes, and does not proclaim his own success in this undertaking. Indeed, Hearne's preface seems almost to protest too much—in describing the potential outcomes of compiling a transregional anthology, he in fact describes a state of affairs in which Caribbean voices can not be brought into coordinated harmony.

Indeed, Carifesta has adapted to the ongoing difficulties of imagining Caribbean unity. The festival has continued, though irregularly, since its original occurrence in Guyana in 1972. Documents posted to the Caricom website's Document Library indicate that the regional organization is committed to continuing the festival, but that enthusiasm for it has waned in the 1990s. An inflight magazine published just before Carifesta VIII in Surinam claimed, "Whether because of a change in regional spirit or a flagging of

[38] Hearne, *Carifesta Forum*, viii.

early optimism, it's generally agreed that the later Carifestas have lacked some crucial elements that animated the festivals of the 1970s."[39] As the magazine's comments are not rooted in any concrete research, these assertions can hardly be taken as methodologically grounded evidence of a social phenomenon. However, the comments describe a correlation between the popularity of the festivals and the sense of regional unity. The twenty-first century manifestation of Carifesta thus is marked by its earlier iterations, revealing its emptiness by comparison to the perceived optimism of yore.

Instead, regional investment in Carifesta indicates a growing concern not with regional integration, but the economic viability of the program. Keith Nurse, a consultant formerly affiliated with the University of the West Indies Consulting, was hired by the Caricom taskforce on Carifesta and gave a presentation in 2004 that detailed necessary steps for the revitalization of the festival. Nurse outlines the festival's "Vision Statement" and its "Mission" early in the document. The vision statement is "To position Carifesta as a world renowned Mega festival of Caribbean cultural and artistic excellence, that brings economic benefits, unites the region, and excites the people."[40] The program's mission statement is, "To stage a mega multidisciplinary roving festival that develops Caribbean arts and culture."[41] Already in the transition from the Vision Statement's far-reaching and aspirational framework to the mission statement's immediate concerns, regional unity has been abandoned. Indeed, Nurse's plan attends much more to the infrastructural necessities, audience enjoyment, and economic outcomes of the program than to the ultimate goal of regional unity. Most of his recommendations are oriented towards

[39] Cited in Nurse, "Carifesta Strategic Plan," 16.
[40] Nurse, "Carifesta Strategic Plan," 5.
[41] ibid.

achieving economic outcomes. For instance, Nurse suggests selecting programming for Carifesta by requiring a streamlined screening process for applicants who wish to participate. In recommending a rubric for evaluating these proposals, Nurse's criteria are as follows: "Type of performance. Track Record of the performance. Target market/audience. Size of cast or band. Technical support required (e.g. sound, light and stage). Budget for the performances. Expected ticket sales."[42] None of these criteria in any way refer to the qualitative cultural content of the programming. Rather, Nurse suggests that performances be evaluated on their potential to generate revenue and draw an audience. No criteria related to regional unity or Caribbean cultural identity are suggested.

Ultimately, Caribbean culture as an alter-hegemonic force becomes stripped of its ideological potential, the component seen to pose a genuine alternative to the regnant hegemony in the region. Culture becomes a method by which to generate income in the region, which while independent of Western cultural models, is not inscribed within a larger project of regional autonomy. And yet, there remains a regional attachment to promoting Carifesta as a symbol of Caribbean identity and solidarity. Whether it be an indicator of a lost optimism or a profitable expression of artistic excellence, Carifesta demonstrates a lingering attachment to symbols and forms of regional intimacy that finally end the ills of colonialism, be they cultural, psychic, or economic. The Caribbean's cultural producers continue in the conviction that the expressive capacities of non-European regional culture will transform Caribbean reality.

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[42] Nurse, "Carifesta Strategic Plan," 34.

II. Between the Nation and the Globe: The Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen

In many ways, the recently decolonized countries of the Anglophone Caribbean were liberated and burdened by the particular historical and economic condition of decolonization in the mid- to late twentieth century. As new nations expected to adhere to Western political and economic pressures, independence was not so independent as it might have originally seemed. But, as we have seen, emerging from the shadow of colonialism opened up utopian horizons unmarred by the disenchantments of national history. National culture in the Anglophone Caribbean was a screen on which various political and collective longings played out, borrowing from a variety of histories and presents to best envision a repertoire of political futures.

Two centuries of independence have generated a compendium of political disenchantments in contemporary Haiti. As Michel Rolph Trouillot has argued, a foundational predatory relationship between state and nation lies beneath all of them, one in which not only the material resources, but persistent national attachment to the Haitian state have been voraciously consumed by the *gwo manje*, the wealthy and powerful who thrive off of the small. Struggles for national liberation in Haiti are thus burdened by the political memory of earlier politicians who claim to represent the nation, tainting the kind of transformative or utopian visions common among other countries living under a more clearly identifiable repressive external force (ie, a colonizer). In Haiti, the leaders utilizing populist culture to mobilize affective investment in promising a new future fall under the shadow of history. Populist national culture has appeared fleetingly in the public sphere when the state, or those aspiring to state power, most needed the poor. As early as the Haitian Revolution, populist culture was utilized in an effort to gain the

population's trust. Two of the earliest known written examples of Haitian Creole are addresses to the Haitian masses during the Haitian revolution. The first was issued by French officials Leger Félicité Sonthonax and Etienne Polvorel and warned the formerly enslaved of the retribution Maroons would face for rebelling against the French army.[43] The second was issued by Napoleon, falsely promising those in revolt that they were welcome, as Frenchman, to partake of the republican peace and prosperity brought to the island by General Leclerc.[44] The Haitian Creole language, in these instances, served as more than a simple instrument to ensure that the masses comprehended the French government's missives. Their use of the vernacular flagged a promise of proximity between the French state and its distant colony, one which suggested a willingness to incorporate the black rebels into French republicanism.

Postindepence, instances of Haitian Creole and Haitian populist culture in public discourse were rare.[45] The American Occupation of Haiti (1915-1935) resulted in the first Haitian constitution that made legal mention of language, declaring French the country's official tongue. This period also saw a new interest in the liberatory potential in the rural and non-European culture of the Haitian people. The Haitian intelligentsia turned to indigenous culture as a method for resisting the foreign occupation. The anthropological movement of Indigénisme originating in the work of Jean Price-Mars celebrated the rural folk culture of Haiti with particular attention given to Haitian Vodou. From Indigiénisme, the more radical Noirisme of François Duvalier was born. Duvalier rose to power not on a politics of empowering Haitian peasants by referring to culture as a means of counter-

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[43] Valdman, *Le créole*, 100-1.
[44] Cited in Jean-Baptiste, "Kreyol nan literati politik ak literati ofisyel," 17-18.
[45] Valdman, *Le créole*, 104.

hegemonic critique, but rather a century and a half of *ressentiment* resulting from the wealthy *mûlatre* elite's exploitation of the rural poor. *Noirisme* and Duvalier's ascent to power transformed the cultural valorization of the peasantry into demands to wrest political representation from *mûlatre* hands. Duvalier thus relied upon political feelings of marginalization and oppression among the peasantry in a political climate generally sympathetic to populist national culture to win an ultimately oppressive power.

And yet, despite Duvalier's manipulation of populist culture in his ascent to and maintenance of power, Haitian Creole was not a critical component of his *noiriste* branding. Like all Haitian presidents before him, Duvalier largely addressed the nation and conducted state affairs in French. The literary priorities of Frankétienne and a cohort of his contemporaries illimuninate some of the features of this irony. The literary movement Frankétienne and two Haitian authors René Philoctète and Jean-Claude Fignolé began, Spiralisme, was remarkably cosmopolitan in its orientation. As Kaiama Glover has noted, Spiralisme challenges the postcolonial canon by formulating not a distinct third-world identity, but rather encompasses the entire globe in its theory of life as part of a non-linear, productive cycle.[46] And yet, Frankétienne undertook an undeniably Haitian project by writing his great anti-Duvalier oeuvre, *Dezafi*, in Haitian Creole. Furthermore, *Dezafi* depicts a menacing side of indigenous Haitian culture; in the novel Vodou is not a force for healing and community, as it is among most Haitians who serve the *lwa*, but the malevolent work of a *bòkò.* To embrace Haitian Creole but vilify Vodou can be read through the exploitative Duvalier's abuses of Haitian culture.

[46] Glover, *Haiti Unbound*, xi-xii; xxi.

Though *Dezafi* did not affect the movement that ended the Duvalier dictatorships, Haitian Creole played a clear role in the movement's success. When the poor that brought François Duvalier to power ultimately precipitated the downfall of his dynasty, the press's mass communication in Haitian Creole was critical to national anti-Duvalier mobilization and organization. The radio programs Haiti Inter and Radio Soleil both reported on protests in Gonaïves that began as responses to high food prices and the murder of several school children during a political protest ultimately led to widespread demands for Jean-Claude Duvalier to leave the presidency.[47] In this transformative political moment, Haitian Creole was invested with a sense of political force due to the people's mobilization with and through its resources. Indeed, not only did Haitian Creole provide a resource through which a mobilized Haitian population could spread information and organize itself, it represented the collective empowerment of a largely dispossessed Haitian populous.

When Jean-Claude Duvalier was forced to leave Haiti on February 7, 1986, the nation faced the overwhelming task of forming a new government after the bitterly repressive and exploitative Duvalier years. Though the series of temporary leaders put in place after Duvalier's departure represented political interests that often perpetuated the Duvalierist program, an extraordinarily democratic constitution was written. Like the politicians and movements that had preceded it, the new Haitian constitution recognized Haitian Creole's unique capacity to symbolize the nation. However, unlike any previous government, the 1987 Constitution declared Haitian Creole the national language: "Sèl lang ki simante tout Ayisyen ansanm, se kreyòl la. Kreyòl ak franse se lang ofisyèl

[47] For more, see Chamberlain, "Up By the Roots," Bonnardot and Danroc, *La chute de la maison Duvalier*, 17-8, 45, 48, 193.

Repiblik Ayiti."[48] Such a declaration of the language's status revolutionarily declares, first, that all Haitians are indeed united in national identity. Second, the constitution claims that only the language of the poor provides the grounds for this national intimacy. The new Republic formed after Duvalier's departure thus declared its marginal culture representative of the nation, uniting the Haitian people under the sign not of the elite, but of the masses. Ambivalently, French remains an official language of the country, though Haitian Creole is identified as the unique marker of national unity.

The constitution also called for a new cultural institution intended to support the language's new role. In Article Five of the Constitution, "Konsenan Inivesite, Akademi Kilti" the constitution declares, "Yo kreye Akademi Ayisyen. Li gen misyon pou li bay lang Kreyòl la jarèt pou li fikse epi pou li ba li tout mwayen lasyans pou li devlope nòmal."[49] This sparse article gives little indication of how the Akademi should function, nor what sort of role it would play within the state. Grouped under the chapter on the University and Culture, the Akademi is structurally grouped with intellectual and cultural affairs, rather than a section related to any legislative or executive authority that would allow it to protect or enforce Haitian Creole's status as official language. Instead, the language of the article suggests a more intellectual role for the Akademi, one which would rely on the work of linguists (as "tout mwayen lasyans" seems to indicate) and, given its placement in Article Five, the University.

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[48] The only language that binds all Haitians together is Creole. Creole and French are the official languages of the Republic of Haiti. Atik 5, Konstitisyon Repiblik Ayiti 1987.
[49] They create a Haitian Academy. Its mission is to support the Haitian language by codifying it and giving it all manner of scientific support so that it might become standardized. Atik 213, Konstitisyon Repiblik Ayiti 1987.

The Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen's origins lie in an institution that has held an almost sacred role in France for 350 years: The Académie Française.[50] The Académie Française's principle mission bestowed upon it by the French state is "de travailler avec tout le soin et toute la diligence possibles, à donner des règles certaines à notre langue et de la rendre pure, éloquente et capable de traiter les arts et les sciences."[51] Though the Académie Française today is unique within France and, arguably, the Francophone world, it was initially only one Académie in the midst of a cultural phenomenon. Beginning in the late sixteenth century, French scholars would gather in semi-formal groups called Academies to discuss topics of intellectual interest. Many of the early academies were not limited to particular topics, but rather discussed contemporary issues in a range of fields.[52] What has become the Académie Française was institutionalized by the Cardinal de Richelieu, an advisor to Louis XIII who played a significant role in the development of Ancien Régime statecraft. Richelieu became aware of a particular group that would meet privately after supper to speak about language and literature, and formally invited them to serve as an official body dedicated to the language's future under the state's

[50] It bears noting that the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen also has a Caribbean predecessor, the Académie Créole des Antilles (ACRA), which was founded in 1957 by Guadelopean civil servant and politician Rémy Nainsouta. According to Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant in *Lettres Créoles*, the ACRA was concerned largely with promoting Creole language and literary production. The ACRA differs significantly from the Académie Française and the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen in that it was never granted any official legal status-indeed, Guadeloupe and Martinique are a part of France. See Chamoiseau and Confiant, *Lettres Créoles* 105-11; Schnepel, *In Search of National Identity* 71-7.

[51] To work with all possible care and diligence to provide rules for our language and to render it pure, eloquent, and capable of addressing the arts and sciences. "Les Missions." http://www.academie-francaise.fr/linstitution/les-missions, accessed Nov 22, 2016.

[52] Viala, *Naissance de l'écrivain*, 17.

consecration.[53] At the time, France was faced with a growing reading public that, because new within French society, was largely formed by contemporary writers of the period.[54] Under the patronage system that gave visibility and means of subsistence to writers, the period's most celebrated writers often were present and active in the lives of political figures, the nobility.[55] Writers therefore played a significant role in political life, both among the elites and through their formation of a new public sphere. It was in this climate, and indeed with the mission of consolidating the unwieldy assemblage of languages and cultures in France and its burgeoning empire, that the Académie Française was born.[56]

With the creation of the Académie Française, literature and discourse gained an institutionalized place sanctioned by the state. However, the aims of this *rapprochement* were not articulated as political, despite the links joining state figures and the *gens de lettres* that peopled the Académie. The King's order to establish the Académie Française, the *lettres patentes*, open with a discussion of the civil wars that have consumed the King's energies and attentions. Citing the peace and prosperity that have followed in the aftermath of these wars, the *lettres patentes* turn to culture as a vehicle by which to improve the glory and virtue of France:

> Une des plus glorieuses marques de la félicité d'un État étoit que les sciences et les arts y fleurissent et que les lettres y fussent en honneur aussi bien que les armes, puisqu'elles sont un des principaux instruments de la vertu, qu'après avoir fait tant d'exploits mémorables, Nous n'avons plus qu'à ajouter les choses agréables aux nécessaires et l'ornement à l'utilité ; qu'il jugeoit que Nous ne pouvions mieux commencer que par le plus noble de tous les arts, qui est

[53] Carrère d'Encausse, *Les siècles de l'immortalité*, 18.
[54] Viala, *Naissance de l'écrivain*, 123-4.
[55] See, especially, Jouhaud, *Pouvoirs de la littérature*, ch 2, "Une Identité d'homme de lettres."
[56] D'Encausse, *Les siècles de l'immortalité*, 26.

> l'éloquence ; que la langue françoise, qui jusqu'à présent n'a que trop ressenti la négligence de ceux qui l'eussent pu rendre la plus parfaite des modernes, est plus capable que jamais de la devenir.[57]

Language is granted a privileged position not only within the French state itself, but in the state's projection of its glory to other nations. Of the King's comments on language, virtue is the only value attributed to language that stands to directly benefit the French people. The rest are primarily outwardly oriented, as the Arts and Sciences serve as a signal of France's prosperity. What's more, the French language is placed in competition with other modern languages. With civil and European war rumbling around and within the text of the *lettres patentes*, language becomes an extension of national solidarity amid the violent contests of war. The institution is a powerful national symbol consecrating a consolidated and historically sanctioned version of French culture.

The *lettres patentes* make the Académie Française a state institution, solidifying the link between national linguistic culture and the state. Pierre Bourdieu, challenging the objective and arbitrary symbolic status Ferdinand de Saussure famously attributed to linguistic signs, insisted that gestures like Richelieu's reveal that language never exists independently of social actors using it in social life. Critizing Saussure's explanation of language's geographical delimitation, Bourdieu claims,

> This philosophy of history, which makes the internal dynamics of a language the sole principle of the limits of its diffusion, conceals the properly political process

[57] One of the most glorious markers of a State's prosperity is that the sciences and arts flourish there, and that letters as well as arms are valued, because letters are one of the principle instruments of virtue; such that after having undertaken so many memorable exploits, nothing remains but for Us to add agreeable things to necessary ones and ornamentation to utility; [Cardinal de Richelieu] judged that We could find no better starting place than with the most noble of all the arts, which is eloquence, such that the French language, which has suffered from far too great negligence, might finally become the most perfect of the modern languages, as it is now more than ever capable of doing. "Lettres Patentes pour l'établissement de l'Académie Françoise."

> of unification whereby a determinate set of 'speaking subjects' is led in practice to accept the official language… Thus known and recognized (more or less completely) throughout the whole jurisdiction of a certain political authority, it helps in turn to reinforce the authority which is the source of its dominance.[58]

Rather than a language determining the limits of a political community, political institutions unify the populations they rule by regulating language use. The national centers that linguistically delimit political communities thus somewhat circuitously maintain power by force of their connection to the national language. Language thus becomes a self-reinforcing tool by which nations establish political authority and derive symbolic power. Many nations effect this relationship without organizations like the Académie Française or the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen, or even declaring a national language. The United States Constitution, for instance, does not declare English its national language. And yet, the document's composition in English symbolically establishes the language as national, and derives its authority from the now seemingly evident connection between the United States as a nation and the English language.

Nevertheless, instituting the Académie Française brought both a capacity to form public discourse and cultural prestige under the state's domain, formalizing the national role of culture and capitalizing on the cachet of erudition in mid-seventeenth century France. While the Académie Française certainly contended with Latin, the traditional language of intellectual discourse, by the time of its foundation French had become securely institutionalized in the operations of the state and even most of the domains of high culture. The state's creation of the Académie Française can be read as much as an effort to harness the vernacular and its literature's growing influence in society as to give the vernacular importance. Unlike the Académie Française, the Akademi Kreyòl

[58] Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 44-5.

Ayisyen's mission takes on the creation of an alternative hegemony, as opposed to the mutually reinforcing cultural hegemony effected by the French crown's adoption of an extant cultural form. Haitian Creole is not the language of elite culture and authority in Haiti, but rather the language of the marginalized. Bourdieu's explanation for the role of language in national life and the state's symbolic power thus takes a peculiar form in the Haitian case. Unlike the Académie Française, the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen intends to use linguistic symbolism against traditional structures of power. Since the constitution's call for the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen's creation, the institution has developed a central mission that, unlike the relatively neutral and scientific language of the constitution, recognizes the language's marginal position and gives the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen a more politicized role. The Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen's mission is to "Defann epi fè pwomosyon dwa lengwistik ak dwa kiltirèl tout Ayisyen."[59] Such a project attempts a symbolic rewriting of the state's relationship to its people by placing the national language at the center of state life through the language of rights. To revisit Trouillot's formulation, this entails a symbolic reconstruction of the broken ties between the nation and the state. While the Académie Française consolidated the authority of the French state as its national components threatened the crown's integrity, the Akademi Kreyòl Aysiyen attempts to bring the speakers of national language symbolically and practically into meaningful relation with the state.

[59] Defend and protect the linguistic and cultural rights of every Haitian. Bilten Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen 2, 2. Language rights as a relatively recent political concept could serve as a fascinating extension of this chapter, and could add to the scope of this dissertation. For more information on language rights, see *Language Rights and Political Theory*, Will Kimlicka and Alan Patten, eds.

The 1987 constitution's establishment of Haitian Creole as the national language declares that the long marginalized non-European culture is in fact the country's cultural foundation. Thus, the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen, though nominally derivative of its French predecessor, is in fact ideologically closer to the efforts of the Caribbean cultural movements of the 1970s. The national culture the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen consolidates comes to represent the country's historical marginalization, and promoting language culture emerges as a method for ending the country's chronic poverty and underdevelopment. Like the efforts of Carifesta, the Nonaligned Movement, and the editors of *Savacou*, the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen links Haiti's marginalized position in the world order to a psychosocial complex that valorizes French culture and denigrates all things Haitian. As Frénand Leger claimed at the national conference on the possibility of a Haitian Creole Academy,

> Pwosesis kreyasyon Eta-nasyon ayisyen an te koumanse ak yon pwoblèm sou idantite kolektif kiltirèl pèp ayisyen an ki ap pèsiste jouk jounen jodi-a. Èske Ayiti se yon peyi Kreyòlofòn oswa frankofòn? …Dapre nou menm, pwoblèm idantite sa a, se youn nan eleman esansyèl ki lakòz peyi d Ayiti nan eta li ye a. Se youn nan faktè ki lakòz soudevlopman sosyete a nan entegralite l, sa vle di nan domèn ekonomik, politik, jiridik, editakif, epi kiltirèl.[60]

Léger points to a problem of cultural uncertainty within the Haitian nation-state whose origins lie in a disconnect between nation and state. The Haitian nation is undoubtedly Creolophone, as any number of linguists has shown and the 1987 Haitian constitution asserts. The state has never adopted this as an official cultural policy, creating an

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[60] The process of creating the Haitian nation-state began with a collective cultural identity question of the Haitian people that persists today. Is Haiti a Creolophone or a francophone coutry? …We claim that this identity problem is one of the essential components of Haiti's contemporary state. It is one of the reasons that Haitian in its integrity is underdeveloped, that is to say in economic, political, juridical, educational, and cultural domains. Léger, "Pwomosyon Ekri nan lang Kreyòl," in *Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen*, 220-1.

environment in which state sanctioned national identity does not describe its citizens. However, in elaborating this gap between the state and the nation, Léger's description of Haiti's underdevelopment focuses not on the global factors that have contributed to its underdevelopment, but the state's inability to meaningfully represent the nation. Unlike the Anglophone thinkers discussed above, repressive cultural policy originates within the Haitian state rather than a neocolonial world order. Like the Académie Française, the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen turns to national culture as an instrumental component in the state's proper functioning.

Internal affairs play a large part in the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen's mission. Many of the organization's founding principles involve making the state more accessible to the Haitian masses long alienated from the government. By Trouillot's account, "The use of French as the language of power reinforced the peasantry's institutionalized silence."[61] Writing of the contemporary period, Trouillot has echoed the thoughts of many of his peers, stating, "The use of French in school and the court system denies majority participation."[62] Use of French over Haitian Creole has thus historically been implemented as a critical wedge between the state and the majority of the Haitian people, and the Haitian nation. The Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen claims that making state resources including legal proceedings, laws, and education available in Haitian Creole will smooth over the state's historic and contemporary abuses of its people. Among academics and activists most invested in the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen, the connection between the state's lack of infrastructural support for Haitian national culture and Haiti's underdevelopment is most frequently explicated through the example of national

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[61] Trouillot, *State Against Nation*, 87.
[62] Trouillot, "Haiti's Nightmare and the Lessons of History," 126.

education system. Even before the new constitution was written, in 1979 Haiti's minister of education, Joseph C. Bernard, announced a list of educational reforms that included making Haitian Creole the primary language of instruction and increasing the number of children enrolled in school by the year 2000. However, lack of political motivation prevented the implementation of the Réforme Bernard. French remains the primary language of instruction in Haiti today, and school enrollments are an ongoing struggle in the Haitian government. The Akademi has taken education on as a major rallying cry for its programs. As the Akademi's semi-annual bulletin articulates:

> Edikasyon la pou bay tout moun posibilite pou konprann mond lan pi byen, sa vle di, konprann sa ki pase deja, epi pèmèt li devlope kapasite pou yo reflechi pi byen, pou yo poze aksyon k ap itil sosyete kote y ap viv la. Edikasyon pèmèt moun goumen kont entolerans, enjistis ak tout kalite prejije ki kanpe an kwa pou anpeche pwogrè yon kominote. Men, eskè edikasyon sa a ka fèt nan yon lang majorite moun nan popilasyon an pa konprann?[63]

Both in this quotation and consistently across its materials, the Akademi expresses that transforming Haiti's educational system such that it operates in Haitian Creole, rather than French, will profoundly democratize the country. While education is given a prominent place in this transformative process, language is the critical element in this plan for social change.

At a conference that ultimately led to the establishment of the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen, Yves Dejean, a long standing advocate for the promotion of Haitian Creole in all sectors of Haitian society, told an anecdote lauding the native intelligence of Haitian

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[63] Education exists to give all people the possibility to better understand the world, in other words, to understand that which has already happened, and to allow them to develop the capacity to better reflect, to act in a way that is useful to the society they live in. Education allows people to combat intolerance, injustice, and all kinds of prejudices that block the road, inhibiting a community's progress. But, can education be undertaken in a language that the majority of the population doesn't understand? "Editoryal," Bilten 3.

children. Dejean's story draws upon the socio-affective dimensions of Haitian Creole to illustrate the failures of the Haitian education system with regard to monolingual children. While traveling in rural Haiti, Dejean encountered a young boy who embodied the unschooled wisdom of the Haitian peasantry:

> M ap pase devan yon ti kay nan mòn. Yon timoun ki te chita, leve kanpe li di m: bonjou tonton, mwen reponn li, epi mwen mande l kote papa w? -Papa m al debouche yon tou pou l bouche yon tou. –Sa pawol sa vle di? –Enbyen papa m prete yon kòb nan men yon moun. Dat la rive pou li remèt kòb la. L al prete yon lòt kòb pou l remèt premye kòb la. …Kote manman w? -Manman m al wete sa l pa te mete. –Ki jan? –Manman m se fanmsay, maten an yo vin kote l pou yon madanm ki an mal danfan. Li al wete yon pitit li pa t mete nan vant. …Se yon vale timoun ki tire kont konsa, pwofesè lekòl ap plede rele yo kreten paske pwofesè lekòl sèvi ak yon lang ki pa lang pi fò elèv lekòl ann Ayiti. Lang se zouti pou moun panse.[64]

Dejean's anecdote draws upon a number of Haitian cultural tropes to engage his audience's feelings in his analysis of the cultural and social politics of language. Dejean structures the anecdote around the telling of riddles, a widespread Haitian cultural practice used as a tool to sharpen the intellect of children (though the custom is no less delightful to adults). The use of national tradition and repertoire of folk knowledge thus invites the audience to recognize customs of its own home life in childhood, an intimate sphere of memory. However, the anecdote is mobilized to deepen the resonance of a directly political motive: criticizing the Haitian education system. Given that most

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[64] I was passing in front of a small house in the mountains. A child sitting there stood up and said to me: Hello uncle, I responded, and I asked him where is your father? –My father is unplugging a hole to plug up another. –What does that mean? –Well my father borrowed some money. The day has come for him to pay it back. He's going to borrow more money to pay back the first debt. …Where is your mother? –My mother's gone to take out what she didn't put in. –What? –My mother is a midwife, this morning they came to her for a woman in labor. She's going to take out a child she didn't put in the womb. …An impressive child can tell riddles like that, a school teacher would call him a dunce because a school teacher uses a language that's not the strongest language of school children in Haiti. Language is a tool of thought. Dejean, "Lang Kreyòl," 48-50.

Haitian children have poor access to formal schooling, the riddle is a communal tool of alternative education, but one that focuses on creative logic and skill with words rather than the formulaic rote learning that transpires in many Haitian schools. The riddle's function in society itself thus serves as a critique of the education system.

The anecdote's location, the *mòn*, or mountains, serve an important symbolic function in the anecdote's economy. A symbol of the richest repository of Haitian culture, the mountains are also the areas most poorly served by the state. In the Haitian lexicon the *moun mòn* signifies the poor rural dwellers with little access to education or wealth, and the term is considered derogatory-the *moun mòn* are perceived as uncultured yokels. And yet, the child from the mountains outsmarts Dejean, an educated academic, through his creative use of a folk form. After the child's impressive display of intellect drawing upon significant markers of Haitian identity, Dejean explicitly connects his anecdote to the cultural politics of language in the Haitian education system. Dejean tells us that the same child would be called stupid in schools because he does not understand the French used in the classroom. Dejean goes further, suggesting that the child's entire worldview, the culture that accompanies his native language, cannot be accommodated by Haitian schools. Having already evoked cultural memory and a national identity in his audience, this revelation takes on a personal dimension for the listener. Dejean's discourse also reveals the distance between the scholar-narrator and the indigenous knowledge of the folk he romanticizes. The audience can see itself both in the child and, as members of an educated elite, presumably in Dejean himself, identifying both with the child as a reserve of romanticized culture and with the academic estranged from this cultural history. The child becomes an emblem of a particular version of Haitian culture

Dejean's audience wishes to safeguard and promote. The child is a vision of those Haitians off of whom the elite of Haitian society have profited for generations, and he is also the bearer of authentic Haitian culture. He becomes a symbol for social revolution in which the country's unique national culture is its greatest asset and the key to its rejuvenation.

Though the nationalist and profoundly affective discourse illuminates the state's failures of its people and gestures toward the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen's potential to transform this historical pattern, the Akademi's cultural mission and its political status must be examined side by side. Three years after the conference, the Akademi's creation was approved by parliament, and signed into law almost a year later in March of 2014 by then president Michel Martelly. The *Lwa pou kreyasyon akademi kreyòl ayisyen an* shifts between sweeping ambition and limited political power. In Atik 6, the law spells out the overarching mission of the Akademi: "*Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen* gen pou li: a) pran tout dispozisyon pou tout enstitisyon leta kou prive fonksyonne nan lang kreyòl la selon prensip, regleman ak devlopman lang nan… ch) Pran tout dispozisyon pou ede popilasyon ayisyen an jwenn tout sevis li bezwen nan lang kreyòl la."[65] These aims could have extraordinary affects on the people's ability to participate meaningfully in public life. Not only would citizens be more assured of their ability to access the services the state at least claims to provide, public discourse would be newly accessible to the people. As long as public discourse transpires in French, only a small fraction of the Haitian

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[65] The *Akademi Kreyòl Aysisyen* will: a) do everything it can to the purpose of all state and private institutions functioning in the creole language according to the principles, rules, and development of the language… c) do everything it can to assist the Haitian population to receive all necessary services in the creole language. *Lwa pou kreyasyon akademi kreyol ayisyen an,* Atik 5.

population can engage with this discourse. But, if the state addressed the nation on terms the nation could comprehend, the state acknowledges its own responsibility to the nation. Such a shift could foster the people's sense of entitlement to representation by the state. By way of a single and accessible language, both the state and nation in principal acknowledge themselves as partners in a shared project. Extrapolating from Benedict Anderson's imagined community, nationhood becomes impossible when a people lacks forms through which to conceive of its own unity. Thus, the ability to ensure that all Haitian institutions turn to the public in Haitian Creole would be transformative in the way the nation's access to the state and to its own self-perception.

The Akademi's power to effect such change is more symbolic than legal, and as such tenuous. When the *Lwa pou kreyasyon akademi kreyol ayisyen an* describes the steps the Akademi will take towards achieving its mission, they seem somewhat thin. In the five different tasks outlined in Atik 12, "Nan akonplisman misyon li," each concerns the techincalities of the language itself and cultural recognition of changes made to the language:

> a) bay rekonesans piblik ak rezilta rechèch ak tout travay ki fèt sou lang kreyòl la… b) bay rekòmandasyon sou ankèt ak travay ki dwe fèt sou lang kreyòl la… ch) bay konsiltasyon epi sèvi referans sou sa ki konsene lang kreyòl la; d) bay rekòmandasyon sou sa ki nesesè sou jan pou yo sevi ak lang kreyòl epi sou travay ki dwe fèt pou lang kreyòl la kontinye sèvi popilasyon ayisyen an nan dekouvèt, nan kreyasyon, nan pwodiksyon oral oswa ekri.[66]

[66] a) Publicly recognize the results of research and work done on Haitian Creole; b) Give advice on research and work that should be done on Haitian Creole; c) consult on and serve as a reference for all that concerns Haitian Creole; d) Make recommendations about how to make use of Haitian Creole, and on work that should be done for the Haitian language to be used in discovery, in creation, in oral or written production. *Lwa pou kreyasyon akademi kreyol ayisyen an* Atik 12.

The final component of their power entails decision making, but only insofar as the internal organization of the Akademi is concerned.[67] These abilities have no real power to either effect state policy or hold the state accountable to its duty to the Haitian people to provide services in Haitian Creole. The law identifies the importance of increasing the circulation of Haitian Creole in public life, but does not give the Akademi measures to effectively do so.

The legislation also does not authorize any concrete policy steps to implement Haitian Creole's use in national life. The absence of concrete legislative action or planning renders it symbolic. As Louis-Jean Calvet notes in *La guerre des langues*,

> Lorsqu'un Etat… décide de prendre comme langue nationale une langue locale, cette décision sera considérée comme pratique autant qu'elle sera suivie d'une planification qui introduira cette langue à l'école, dans l'administration, etc, jusqu'à ce que la langue coloniale soit remplacée par elle dans tous les domaines de la vie nationale. Mais la même décision sera considérée comme symbolique, soit si elle n'est jamais appliquée, soit si elle ne peut pas l'être dans un premier temps.[68]

Given that the legislation does not provide any means to guarantee that the language be used in any domains of state life, it is symbolic. Indeed, both the creation of the Akademi and extant law and practice in Haiti mark the symbolic nature of Haitian language policy. Though Haitian law had already declared public education in Haitian Creole necessary under the Reform Bernard, and constitutionally declared Haitian Creole an official language, these legal measures have not resulted in significant changes in practice in the

[67] *Lwa pou kreyasyon akademi kreyol ayisyen an* Atik 12.

[68] When a State… decides to adopt a local language as a national language, that decision will be considered practical insofar as it is to be followed by planning that introduced that language in schools, in administration, etc., up until it replaces the colonial language in all domains of national life. But the same decision would be considered symbolic if it is never applied or if it could not be at first. Calvet, *La guerre des langues,* 156.

country.[69] The Akademi is not granted the power to enforce the existing laws, but rather undertake a series of symbolic actions and consider linguistic questions. In the absence of any ability to change policy or action, much of the transformative potential ascribed to the Akademi is not feasible given its capacities.

The Akademi is granted the authority to make recommendations about the language itself and to publicize the language and its use in Haitian society. Section D of Atik 12 particularly refers to culture. Calvet warns against putting too much faith in culture's ability to meaningfully shift language use in society: "Une langue ne se répand pas seulement parce qu'elle est le support d'une littérature, ce facteur est peu de poids aux facteurs économiques et politiques. Il a certes joué un rôle de premier plan dans l'expansion du français jusqu'au XIXe siècle, mais cette expansion, nous l'avons dit, n'atteignait que les élites."[70] As I have demonstrated over the course of this dissertation, the role of culture in a language's social prominence is often limited by either the role of a particular cultural form in that society or by the political and social commitments of the people to whom literature proselytizes. As we have seen in chapters one and two, absent readerships prevent the spread of Caribbean languages in textual media. Chapter Three demonstrated that the receptivity of an audience divided by diaspora and political attachments can prevent the broad collective affective response writers hope language will inspire. Though tied to the state, the Akademi risks falling into the same trap.

[69] Berrouët-Oriol, *Aménagement Linguistique en Haïti*, 74, 82.
[70] A language does not become widespread exclusively because it is used in literature, this cultural factor has little weight compared to economic and political factors. It certainly played a primary role in the expansion of French in the 19th century, but as we have said, this expansion only reached the elites. Calvet, *La guerre des langues*, 270.

Since its inception in December of 2014, the Akademi has undertaken cultural programming, and individual academicians have worked towards new regulations of the language, specifically in the domain of orthography. The Akademi reports on its activities in a biannual newsletter, "Bilten Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen." Thusfar, three have been made available online. The second Bilten, published in April of 2016, describes a number of cultural activities undertaken by the Akademi all to the ends of promoting the language. As the Akademi states in its first Bilten, published in October of 2015, "Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen (AKA) gen misyon pou li… fè tout sa ki nesesè pou li fè kreyòl la gen bonjan reyònman ak prestij nan je popilasyon ayisyen ak nan je lòt popilasyon yo."[71] However, unlike the prestige that the Académie Française has cultivated by including the most esteemed intellectuals writing in the French language in its ranks (indeed, one of Haiti's most famous novelists, Dany Laferrière, is a member of the Académie Française), the Akademi Kreyòl has no major literary or cultural figures among its membership. Given Frankétienne's foundational role in the literary history of Haitian Creole and his deep engagement with Haitian culture in his writing, his absence from the Akademi Kreyòl membership is striking. The Akademi's cultural promotion has consisted largely in holding events in Port-au-Prince and touring more remote regions of Haiti to discuss the role of Haitian Creole in Haitian society.

The Akademi's support of cultural events has included an official month celebrating Haitian Creole, in October of 2015, a celebration of the Jounen Entenasyonal lang matènèl (International Day of the Mother Tongue), and participation in a Haitian

[71] The Haitian Creole Academy's mission is… to do all that is necessary to give creole good standing and prestige in the eyes of the Haitian population and all other populations. Bilten 1, Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen.

book festival, “Foire International du livre Haïtien” (International Festival of the Haitian Book).[72] Describing the opening of the Mwa Lang ak Kilti Kreyòl la (Month of Creole Language and Culture), the Bilten largely focuses on the press conference held to promote the month, naming the different government ministers and important people present:

> Bò 10è nan maten, AKA te bay yon konferans pou laprès nan lakou Ministè Kilti a epi li te anonse tèm tout aktivite mwa oktòb la pou ane a ‘An nou travay pou tout sèvis vin jwenn nou nan lang nou!’ Nan konferans pou laprès la, Prezidan Konsèy Admministrasyon Akademi an, Misye Jean Pauris Jean-Baptiste, te li mesaj an kote li t ap mande tout Ayisyen pou yo santi yo fyè deske yo se yon pèp kreyòl. Apresa, li te prezante pwogram mwa lang ak kilti kreyòl bay medya yo. Bò 5è nan aprèmidi, nan ‘Ciné Théâtre Triomphe’ ki sou Channmas, Akademi an te lanse mwa lang ak kilti kreyòl la ofisyèlman nan prezans anpil patnè, pèsonalite politik ak senpatizan ki sòti nan diferan sektè.[73]

The opening of the event bears all of the markers of an official government event: sanctified in the building of the Ministry of Culture, with an official opening in the presence of important figures. The event thus self-consciously declares its own official status, reinforcing its thematic insistence upon Haitian Creole’s place within the Haitian state. The events also serve as a type of criticism. At the same time that the state is the official vehicle for the cultural event, it is also the institution most implicated in the month’s theme. The theme directly addresses the state’s failure to provide services to the Haitian population in Haitian Creole. The wording of the theme, however, is ambivalent--

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[72] Bilten 2, Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen.

[73] At 10 in the morning, AKA gave a press conference at the Ministry of Culture and announced the theme of all October’s activities: ‘Let’s work so that we can get all services in our language!’ In the press conference, the President of the Administrative Council, Mr. Jean Pauris Jean-Baptiste, read the Akademi’s mission while asking all Haitians to be proud that they are a creole people. Afterwards, he gave the media the program for the month of creole language and culture. At 5 in the afternoon, in the ‘Ciné Théâtre Triomphe’ on the Channmas, the Akademi officially launched the month of creole language and culture in the presence of partners, political figures, and allies from many different sectors. Bilten 2, Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen, 2-3.

"an nou" is a common expression in Haitian Creole, an invitation to collective activity. "Jwenn" can expresses finding and acquiring, but it implies a direct action on the part of the subject. The subject of the month's theme thus seems to be the Haitian people, who in the verbal construction of the phrase are charged with attaining the services the state should be providing. The nation must advocate for its rights, and the state once again places the burden upon it to do so.

As part of its advocacy, in February of 2016 the Akademi participated in a less diffuse form of public engagement. The Karavàn Nasyonal Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen aspires to visit each of Haiti's ten departments to promote the language: "Gen pou tèm 'Defans ak pwomosyon lang kreyòl, Dwa lengwistik ak kiltirèl an Ayiti. AKA gen pou li mache nan dis (10) depatman peyi a pou li chita pale, braselide ak tout kouch nan popilasyon an. Karavan sa a ap pèmèt AKA anpil prensipal misyon li ki se fè pwomosyon lang kreyòl, dwa lengwistik ak kiltirèl tout Ayisyen."[74] The Karavan Nasyonal develops methods for engaging the public that are more direct, fostering conversations with Haitians that ensure direct engagement with the public. By insisting that the Karavan will fulfull the Akademi's mission by promoting the language and rights of every Haitian, we might assume that in these conversations the Akademi will endeavor to remind Haitians that it is their right to access the state's protections and services in their native language, Haitian Creole. And yet, once again the mission is directed towards the people, not towards effecting change within the state. Such an orientation is revealing in at least two

[74] Its theme is "Protection and Promotion of the creole language, linguistic and cultural rights in Haiti." AKA will go through the country's ten (10) departments to sit and speak, brainstorm ideas with all strata of society. This Caravan allows the AKA to complete its principal mission which is to promote the creole language, linguistic and cultural rights of every Haitian. Bilten 2, AKA, 5.

ways. First, the burden implicitly falls on the people to fight against barriers imposed by the state, the body that should be protecting it. This is not to say the Akademi is not also engaged in petitioning the state to change its own policy. Indeed, one of the projects announced for 2016 is a "Kòlòk nasyonal sou sistèm jistis ak lang nan peyi a."[75] (Though again, the role of actual representatives of the judiciary system is far from clear.) Presumably, once informed of their constitutionally guaranteed rights, the people will then demand those rights from their government. Second, it reveals the scope of the Akademi's reach within Haitian society. The Akademi's ability to effect policy is largely limited to tasks like "promotion" and "recommendation." It has no power to regulate the actual operations of the government, and instead has turned its attention to the people.

Though outside the domain of policy, the Akademi's mission also requires it to "Sèvi kòm referans sou tout sa ki konsène estandadisasyon lang nan kit se nan peyi dAyiti kit se nan lòt peyi Ayisyen yo tabli."[76] In the 2016 Bilten, the Akademi reported that a conference had indeed taken place, in which diverse sectors of lettered Haitian society were asked to come together and comment on problems of Haitian Creole orthography: "AKA te reyini Akademisyen, Kad nan MENFP, Direktè lekòl, Pwofesè inivesitè, Tradiktè, Editè, Jounalis pou yo reflechi sou dives pwoblèm yo remake òtograf 1979 la bay nan esperyans yo fè epi sou fason yo kapab ofri popilasyon an yon pi bon òtograf k ap pèmèt timoun aprann pi byen ak pi vit lekòl."[77] The import of orthography is

[75] National colloquium on the justice system and language in the country. Bilten 2, AKA, 7.

[76] Serve as a reference in all things concerning standardization of the language, be it in Haiti or in other countries where Haitians live. Lwa pou kreyasyon Akademi Kreyòl, Atik 6e.

[77] AKA brought together Academicians, representatives from the MENFP [Ministere de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle (Minister of National Education

revealed both in the participants invited to the workshop and the ultimate ends of revising the orthography. Two major groups are represented among the workshop's participants: educators and people tied to the publishing industry. Education constitutes an outsized sector represented in the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen. Of the 33 academicians, 22 have been involved in pedagogy or education advocacy, ranging from developing and publishing scholarly materials in Haitian Creole (eg Jean Grégory Calixte, Pierre Michel Chery, Gesner Jean Paul, and Marie Jocelyn Trouillot), advocating for education in Haitian Creole (eg Michel DeGraff, Roy Odette Fombrun, and Roachambeau Lainy), or working directly with the MENFP (Ministère d'éducation nationale et formation professionnelle) and other components of the Haitian state (eg Emmanuel Michel Bazile, Maglore Adeline Chancy, Marie Rodny Laurent Esteus, and Michel Frantz Grandoit).[78] The presence of educators on the panel is but one manifestation of the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen's abiding concern for education. The participation of translators in the conference can possibly be attributed to the increased demand for translation into Haitian Creole following the 2010 earthquake: "Depi plizye dizèn ane, gen kèk misyon peyi etranje ki prezan nan peyi a ki egzije misyonè yo aprann kreyòl… Enstitisyon sa yo ak tout kalite ONG fè kreyòl tounen premye lang tradiksyon ann Ayiti, espesyalman tranblemann tè 12 janvyè 2010 la. Yo fè tradui tout kalite gwo dokiman an kreyòl."[79] Zéphyr alerts us to other extra-governmental

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and Professional Formation)], School directors, University professors, Translators, Editors, Journalists to reflect on diverse problems they have noticed in their experience with the 1979 orthography, and in what ways they might give the population a better orthography that would permit children to learn better and faster in schools. Bilten 2, AKA, 5.

[78] This information was gleaned from the Akademi's website, www.akademikreyol.net/akademisyen.php (accessed Sept. 14, 2016).

[79] For several years now, some missions from foreign countries present in the country have required missionaries to learn creole… those institutions along with all sorts of

institutions with a vested interest in Haitian Creole orthography: the NGOs and missionaries using the language perhaps more frequently than Haiti's own government and schools.

The call to standardize and promote the language's use in Haiti should be considered in concert with the growing presence of NGOs in the country. As Zéphyr notes, the influx of NGOs into Haiti in the wake of the 2010 earthquake generated a demand for documents to be translated into Haitian Creole. Notably, while pressure for the Akademi's creation gained traction among academics in 2008,[80] it was after the earthquake in 2011 that the conference was organized and legislation put in motion. Another uncanny connection between the Akademi and the NGOs that have come to play an indispensible role in the Haitian state is the Akademi's outsized focus on education, a domain of Hatian society that is increasingly privatized and also heavily influenced by NGOs. In an essay for *L'Aménagement lingiustique en Haïti*, Robert Berrouët-Oriol notes the outsized presence of NGOs in the Haitian education system: "Conformément à la vision des décideurs des *États généraux de l'éducation* de 1996 et des maîtres-d'œuvre du PNEF de 1997-1998, *le système éducatif haïtien aura donc été transformé en un ensemble de 'projets' autonomes contrôlés par des ONG du secteur de l'éducation (ou qui ont un volet éducatif) et les bailleurs de fonds internationaux*."[81] Education in Haiti

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NGOs made creole the first language of translation in Haiti, especially after the earthquake of January 12, 2010. They translated any number of large documents in creole. Zéphyr, "Èske yon akademi se yon kondisyon pou gen pwodiksyon syantifik nan yon lang?" *Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen*, 118.

[80] Govain, *Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen,* 15-6.

[81] In keeping with the vision of the decision-makers at the *General State of Education* in 1996 and the project managers at the PNEF [Plan national d'éducation et de formation (National plan for education and development)] for 1997-1998 *the Haitian education system will have been transformed into an ensemble of autonomous 'projects' controlled*

thus risks straying beyond the state's control as it increasingly becomes beholden to international organizations that fund it. The Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen, too, with membership heavily invested in the state of education in Haiti and in fact leading educational projects in Haiti, operates within the orbit of foreign aid.

While the array of roles played by international aid from non-governmental or state organizations is far too varied to make any generalizations regarding their efficaciousness or genuine engagement with the Haitian nation, aid organizations often serve to undermine the authority of the Haitian state in governing its own affairs.[82] Aid organizations sometimes neglect to coordinate their actions with those of the Haitian state, thus failing to serve Haiti in the ways determined most efficacious by the state. Aid also abets the state's absenteeism; as NGOs increasingly do the state's job, the state falls out of the circuits in which it should be engaged. Finally, NGOs are in no way beholden to the Haitian people. Given the recent and historic election fraud in Haiti, NGOs are not entirely to blame for this ongoing rupture between the state and its people. Thus, while some NGOs undoubtedly do responsible and valuable work, as non-governmental organizations they are in nature beyond any form of accountability to the Haitian people.

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by NGOs in the education sector (or with an education component) and the backers of international funds. Berrouët-Oriol, "Aménagement linguistique et didactique des deux langues haïtiennes," 112.

[82] In "NGO Failure and the Need to Bring Back the State," S. Akbar Zaidi outlines many of the problematic effects of NGO intervention in crises, including their accountability to donors rather than the population served (264, 8, 9). Increasingly, however, many NGOs are aware of this potential trajectory and are working to increase state resources as part of their aid efforts. Paul Farmer, founder of Partners in Health, has longed worked to establish resources that provide lasting infrastructure for a population in crisis. See Cancedda et al, "Strengthening Health Systems While Responding to a Health Crisis: Lessons Learned by a Nongovernmental Organization During the Ebola Virus Disease Epidemic in Sierra Leone."

Viewed in light of NGOs' role in creating demand for Haitian Creole,[83] the Akademi begins to appear less as a bridge between the state and its people than a sign of continued rupture.

Nevertheless, the standardization of Haitian Creole will certainly make Haitian language education more accessible to Haitian children and more easily used by the state in the creation of documents in its official language, but this end leaves a number of questions still open. If the Haitian state remains largely overwritten by organizations in which the Haitian people play no role, as we see above, education cannot lead to more robust participation in state life. Similarly, the current global distribution of capital, in which Haiti's primary commerce with the world consists in consuming foreign goods and producing light assembly to the rest of the world's profit, limits the kind of opportunity education might afford Haitians. Nevertheless, time and again the political and academic rhetoric around language use in Haiti makes claims to potential social transformation.

The Akademi's duties lie primarily in its work as a scientific organization; linguists with advanced knowledge of Haitian Creole have been charged with the responsibility of standardizing the language to the end of facilitating its spread in print culture and public discourse. The aspirations and affective resources of the Akademi's rhetoric time and again posit the transformational potential of Haitian Creole. While the former objective of the Akademi, the standardization of Haitian Creole, is certainly

[83] On an autoethnographic note, during summer advanced Haitian Creole classes taken at the University of Massachusetts, Boston in June of 2014, many of the students in my class were working for health nonprofits including Doctors without Borders and Partners in Health. Demand for Haitian Creole education in the United States comes at least partially from aid workers who will be providing services to the Haitian population. I cannot help but speculate that some demand for a standardized and easily teachable Haitian Creole comes from NGO workers themselves.

acheivable given its mission, power in the Haitian state, and resources, its ability to enforce public usage of the language has yet to be seen. The latter objective, the use of Haitian Creole in education and the resulting empowerment of the Haitian people, remains an aspiration charged with the affective potential outstripping its social reality. Amidst the economic forces and pressures applied to the Caribbean by the global north, in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century, Caribbean states have held firm to culture as one of the few symbols by which to refuse relationships of dependence. More than a domain in which Western influence can be temporarily suspended, states and artists also turn to culture to inspire intimate investments of national import. Culture first inspires national unity by providing experiential evidence of interconnection. Recognizing and participating in the same cultural forms can reveal commonality, and Frankétienne and Lamming aspire to demonstrate in the plotting and the circulation of their work. At a second order, the state's mobilization of national culture attempts to reveal its recognition of national identity and struggle, inviting the nation to entrust itself to the state's care for a more liveable future.

This chapter has traced the state's efforts to work for meaningful transformation in the global order through the valorization of minor culture. Indeed, European cultural hegemony is a profoundly visible and widely experienced sign of the comprehensive systematic marginalization of colonized peoples. However, the part is not the whole, and the political and economic subjugation of the third world even post-independence cannot be undone by alternative cultural hegemony. Rather, the state's turn to culture as a meaningful method for resisting the global north's domination of third world affairs demonstrates a reliance upon affect for maintaining power. While the state might not be

able to ensure social and economic transformation, by deploying the cultural symbols that form a meaningful part of national life, the state maintains its power by way of the promise for a new day.

Conclusion

This project examines a series of cases that amend scholarship positing that public use of a vernacular language leads to a robust sense of community among the marginalized speakers of those languages, tracking multiple ruptures within the idealized unity of national communities. By examining texts that make use of vernacular language and metatexts that theorize the ideological significance of vernacular language, I have shown that the vernacular's affective force is perceived in its capacity to refer to the common experience of groups marginalized by colonization, race, and class.

I have used the term intimacy to describe the vernacular's evocation of quotidian experience and a common social phenomenon of marginalization, affective phenomena that, because shared, produce a sense of collective history and common cause. The turn to intimacy illuminates the intense affects attributed to language in nationalist and postcolonial discourse, arguing that the affective significance assigned to language originates in its capacity to represent experiences of the quotidian marginalized by colonial systems that privilege both European culture and European peoples. To establish continuities between the intimate interpersonal and the intimate national public, the chapters of "Aspirational Nations" move from the circumscribed domain of the conversation to national and transnational movements. Each chapter contains examples of vernacular linguistic exchange projected onto the national or regional stage, such that the intimate immediacy of listening to another speaking the language of home is figured as a national and nationalist experience. The use of the vernacular, in other words, figures a nation of subjects as a profoundly close group of local interlocutors.

And yet, the figures examined in this project constructed a political fantasy more than they described a social reality. Intimacy thus also describes the way writers, critics, scholars, and politicians related to their visions for a transformed Caribbean public. Imagining a future in which Caribbean subjects are meaningfully engaged and sovereign in national life entails an aspiration to a kind of public sphere which language is presumed to figure. Lauren Berlant has argued that this attachment to a (national) future based in part on fantasy is characteristic of intimacy. My work rethinks the role of language in postcolonial theory through this aspirational definition of intimacy as not indicating a national future attuned and responsive to the nation's most pressing needs and desires, but rather a disproportional fantasy. Through this work, we learn how diverse manifestations of global capital disrupt the affects of nationalism, cultural solidarity, and political movements. Indeed, the chapters of this dissertation have studied cases in which migration resulting from uneven global distribution of resources, aspiration to prosperity signaled by European culture, and global financial institutions interrupt the nationalist visions of the authors and states studied. Feeling, then, is not irrelevant, but it is often willingly blind to these forces that work against it, perhaps even exploiting the affects produced by vernacular languages towards perpetuating the systems of domination marginal cultures endeavor to overcome.

The fact that globalization and colonialism gave rise to an uneven distribution of resources across the globe often profoundly mobilizes political movements, anticolonial or otherwise. Ironically, precisely this uneven access to resources is a preoccupation of vernacular (print) literature, which is at times self-aware of its own inaccessibility to the nation. As we have seen in *The Pleasures of Exile* and *Dezafi*, writers advocating for and

practicing vernacular forms self-reflexively remark upon the divide between their nationalist aesthetic aspirations expressed in print texts and the reality of the largely illiterate and impoverished societies in which they live. Be it the tension Lamming describes between the peasant source of his literary inspiration and the indifferent approach to reading in Caribbean society or Frankétienne's narrator metaphorically remarking that he is talking to himself to indicate that no one reads his books, absent readerships haunt these vernacular texts.

The uneven global distribution of resources leads to a second, related rupture in the affective potential of vernacular literature: migration and diaspora. Consistently across the texts studied, many of the ruptures between vernacular language texts and their audiences are produced by the affects of migration. As we have seen in *The Pleasures of Exile* and the radio broadcasts of *Caribbean Voices*, West Indian unity and its vernacular forms arose from migration to London. Identities and vernaculars indigenous to the Caribbean were too diverse and local to achieve the pan-regional aspirations of either the diasporic Londoners or the region's leaders working towards the creation of the West Indies Federation. Frankétienne's *Pèlin Tèt*, too, demonstrates the effects of place on an audience's relation to language. While performances of the play were well received both in Haiti and its continental North American diaspora, both the play's plotting and its language produced different affective responses. Haitians living on the island seized upon glimmers of anti-Duvalier public discourse forebidden in their daily lives, while diasporic Haitians were overwhelmed with nostalgia for the homeland.

While the uneven distribution of resources between global north and south accounts for social ruptures among the people of the global south, it also produces

aspirations to the good life of the (former) colonizer. Access to the colonizer's prosperity often required a mastery of colonial forms like standard European language, and the hegemony of colonial culture certainly gave European cultural life enormous value in the colonized mind. Emulating the language and culture of Europe thus in some ways mimes the continent's cultural and intellectual status, even if they do not themselves produce the resources associated with the global north (nor does Europe's dominant position in the global order signify actual superior culture). Accordingly, this project demonstrates that colonized or formerly colonized people do not always embrace vernacular forms that are associated with local and often impoverished life. As we have seen in Caribbean responses to the vernacular performances of *Caribbean Voices,* Caribbean subjects often objected to representations of the region that depicted local forms of English or folk culture. To simply describe these responses as the effects of cultural hegemony dismisses the conditions in which Caribbean subjects lived, including not only the necessary mastery of standard English to access prominent positions in the civil service or business, but the complicated national formation of colonial subjects. As Kennetta Hammond Parry and Ann Spry Rush have both demonstrated, English society and culture were a critical component of Caribbean identity before decolonization. Similarly, among Haitians, mastery of French is necessary to access social prominence and prosperity in the country. To denigrate such attachments to European culture, as militant strands of postcolonial theory often do, is to neglect the material conditions that determine and sustain those attachments.

The texts and contexts around which this dissertation is structured refer repeatedly to institutions beyond the text, specifically the nation and global capitalism,

and indeed this dissertation concludes that the nation and global capitalism are the source of the linguistic and cultural phenomena it analyzes. The final chapter particularly examines institutions that try to use vernacular language to amend the injustices of global capital. However, as both the example of Caribbean socialisms and their turn to culture and the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen demonstrate, larger structures limit the ability of cultural change to determine the course of a national economy. Furthermore, as the case of the Akademi reveals, such projects of cultural and economic empowerment are at times in fact the tools of global capital themselves, as well funded NGOs come to play a significant role in Haitian education and provide a market for Haitian Creole language instruction. Ultimately the presence of NGOs in Haiti prevents Haitian citizens from influencing the ways social services like education are administered.

This project's temporal span provides a framework through which to consider the continuing relevance of anticolonial language politics to current discussions of transnationalism and globalization in literary studies in concert with one another, demonstrating the interaction between cultural attachments produced through the colonial encounter and the global network of forces that influence the conditions of cultural production *and* political possibility. This is visible not only in the political forces that shaped regional politics, for instance the United State's support of Duvalier's presidency due to his decidedly anti-communist stance or the US's purchase of the Chaguaramas base during the Second World War, but in cultural ones. Indeed, though Lamming might express an investment in cultural recognition from London, material resources received from the Guggenheim Foundation in the United States supported his career. This project

ultimately provides an opportunity to think through the multiple sites through which anticolonial optimism is disrupted.

My discussion of the Akademi Kreyòl Ayisyen in particular suggests the explicit ways that the rhetoric of anticolonial language politics is in fact supporting an uneven distribution of global capital. If the Akademi's promotion of marginal language in fact stands to benefit NGOs providing services to the Haitian people in their own language, foreclosing the importance of engaging with a state in which they have some sort of legally protected say, then postcolonial language politics in fact have quite a bit to teach us about the connection between the anticolonial and global moments. First, counter hegemonic movements promoted by anticolonial thinkers have a lingering relevance in global culture, and indeed have been adopted by transnational organizations like NGOs. This insight can be brought to bear on current debates regarding language rights, actively debated in the political sciences but somewhat neglected in literary studies. And second, the presence of NGOs and transnational corporations in the global south, particularly in states like Haiti where they have come to override the state's authority, perhaps open up a space in which the state might yet hold some transformational potential to challenge global institutions.

Ultimately, this project produces insights that invite a range of future scholarship and contribute to work that is already underway. Work remains to be done on Caribbean thinkers' approaches to language in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. And, in the contemporary period, efforts to preserve local language in multilingual societies or otherwise marginalized linguistic groups suggest yet another way of understanding language's participation in social life. The insights of this dissertation

pertaining to intimacy, then, produce the generalizable intervention that vernacular language is often called upon to fulfill fantasies about social life, which shift with social conditions. It is hoped that this contribution will produce deeper reflection on contemporary mobilization of language politics and invite new methods for the investigation of language politics in earlier periods.

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