Haitian Diaspora Impact on Haitian Socio-Political and Economic Development

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Abstract........................................................................................................................................4

Chapter 1: Introduction...................................................................................................................6

Topic ........................................................................................................................................... 6

Justification/Rationale ................................................................................................................ 7

Thesis..........................................................................................................................................11

Theoretical Framework / Literature Review..............................................................................11

Research Design..........................................................................................................................24

Variables ...................................................................................................................................26

Methodology .................................................................................................................................26

Chapter Outline............................................................................................................................27

Chapter 2: Relevant Historical Overview ..................................................................................29

Haiti.............................................................................................................................................29

The Colony ...................................................................................................................................29

The Revolution ............................................................................................................................31

American Occupation ...............................................................................................................37

The Duvalier Regime ..................................................................................................................39

Phase One ....................................................................................................................................39

Phase Two ....................................................................................................................................40

Phase Three ..................................................................................................................................41

Haitian Diaspora (1960s – Present)..........................................................................................42

Chapter 3: Haitian Diaspora in the United States .......................................................... 46

Remittances: The Economic Impact on Haiti ..........................................................................50

Migrant Organizations and Associations ..............................................................................53
Abstract

There is a new perspective developing within the international community on Diasporas and their potential to assist in the development process of their country of origin. The discussion began from the realization that transnational flows of remittances from sending countries (core) to receiving countries (periphery) increasingly surpass donor contributions to developing countries. The argument further discusses different socio-economic strategies to use when diasporic communities residing in developed countries (core) are assisting their homeland (periphery).

This paper will look at the Haitian Diaspora in the United States and its active transnational link to Haiti. Since the days of post-Duvalierism, the Haitian Diaspora has actively participated in the developmental process of the country. Remittances are no longer the only way in which the Haitian diaspora assists. Seemingly there has been an increase in transnational activity via political and socio-economic organizations and associations.

However, the addition of the Haitian Diaspora as a major force in Haiti’s development process (as seen in the last 10 years) is uncertain. It is doubtful because the divided social structure of Haitian history, has transplanted into Haitian diasporic communities. The social construct of Haitian émigrés in the United States and their active role in politics and social-development affects the Haitian democratic and developmental process.
Looking at how the Haitian Diaspora political and non-political organizations and associations operate, it becomes apparent that the fractured social class structure within the diaspora is divided by socio-economic status. Although a unified Haitian Diaspora has proven to be a strong lobby (i.e., swaying American policy and collective remittance contributions) the factions that exist beyond that have implications on sustaining the efforts taken on by the diaspora.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Topic

In 1990, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide called upon the “tenth department” to help rehabilitate Haitian development beyond remittances. Since then, what has the impact of the Haitian Diaspora on Haiti’s development been like? Has that impact fared positively or negatively in Haitian development? Although the Haitian Diaspora heeded Aristide’s request in the early 1990’s to assist in Haiti’s development beyond remittances, its participation and contributions have impacted Haitian development negatively. This negative impact is evident in two ways: 1) The fragmentation in class structure that existed and exists in Haiti today has been transplanted into the Haitian Diaspora society within the United States, and 2) This fragmentation can be seen in the way in which organizations and associations of the Haitian Diaspora are created and interact.

An explanatory analysis of the social construct of Haitian émigrés in the United States will clarify why this group has negatively affected Haitian development. This analysis will concentrate on the Haitian contemporary diaspora (foreign-born) - those who began migrating to the United States in the early days of the Duvalier regime. The first part of this paper, will give a brief historical examination of the colonial society in Saint-Domingue, the Haitian revolution, and the period that followed until Francois Duvalier came to power to illustrate the deep-rooted class fragmentation in Haiti. The migration of Haitians will begin to explain how the social/class divisions that exist in Haiti were recreated in the United States. The second part of this paper will concentrate
on the Haitian Diaspora in the United States. Leaning on ethnography\(^1\) approaches of immigration as a transnational process\(^2\), the study will explain the way in which each wave of the Haitian Diaspora settled in the United States and retained social and class fragmentation. The third part of this paper will specifically take a look at how the Haitian Diaspora has maintained social and class divisions through group associations within the United States. In conclusion, this explanatory thesis will show that the fragmented social structure of the Haitian Diaspora existing in the United States affects the way in which diaspora associations function thereby affecting Haitian development negatively.

**Justification/Rationale**

The research question I expect to answer is placed within the broader context of international relations, development, and transnational migration. In 1949, Haiti, an under-developed country (a third-world country) was amongst the countries to open its doors to the development community (the United Nations) allowing development advising through economic strategies. However, a 1950 coup in the politically unstable country ended this venture, and all development aid was abruptly withdrawn from Haiti.

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\(^1\) Ethnography is defined as the scientific description of the customs of individual peoples and cultures. (Oxford American Dictionaries).

Development in Haiti has continually been impeded through the decades, making “Haiti one of the most dependent countries in the world.”³ Haiti has repeatedly ranked amongst the least developed countries within the global community. Unable to meet the basic standards of development, scholarly discourse prompted the international development community to shift from finding new theories of development to finding out why models of development are not effective.

As early as 1955, scholars such as John R.P. Friedmann viewed economic development theories as having “certain general problems of planning” that would require that these theories be “explored sufficiently.”⁴ Friedmann thought it important to focus largely on analyzing the underlying social structures of a state system. In Development Planning in Haiti: A Critique of the U.N. Report (1955), Friedmann conveys that the development strategies of the UN Report failed to acknowledge the “social order of Haitian life.”⁵ He outlined four issues that he felt need to be addressed to begin assessing developmental strategies: 1) Whose interests are relevant in leading to economic development? 2) Are proposed measures estimated for future needs of the country? 3) To what extent is development induced by popular participation? And 4) Is there an objective structure?

Elaborating further, Friedman begins with the contrasting class system that arose in Haiti. This, he argues, was not considered when “a mission had been invited to Haiti to draw up…a comprehensive framework… for the policy it advises the government to

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⁵ Ibid, pp.39
apply in endeavoring to promote the economic development of the country.  

Friedman emphasized that in order to engage developing countries with development strategies there is a need to look at the socio-historical aspect of the state. In Haiti’s case, “a successful program of economic development should ideally achieve some accommodation of the interests of both the elite and peasantry.” Friedmann argues that by not understanding the social implications of the development program for Haiti, any development-planning strategy would “greatly weaken the effectiveness” of economic development. Friedmann also emphasized local participation stating, “local participation can be a powerful instrument for affecting social and economic change democratically…creating a built-in permanence.”

With Friedmann’s claims my argument begins to take form. Friedmann’s emphasis on class structure is vital, as it highlights the need to account for a country’s social structure when formulating development strategies. In Haiti’s case, the economic development strategies that were implemented did not benefit the whole, but only a certain few. Advisers did not understand or care to understand the country’s complicated social order. Soon after the implementation of these strategies a coup occurred, which could very well indicate that there was a class or social struggle. This also suggests there may have been a weak government in Haiti, susceptible to infighting within its own ranks, and incapable of quelling social unrest.

Continued instability in Haitian governance during and after the Duvalier regime once again shifted discourse in the 1980s and early ‘90s. Topics on Haiti changed from

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why development aide is not assisting Haitian development to a more historical analysis of why problems in Haiti persist. These discussions did not offer solutions or recommendations to Haiti’s *problematique*, but gave origin to two perspectives on the Haitian dilemma: 1) Haiti’s history, politics and social culture and social structure, and 2) external factors; Haiti and France in the early nineteenth century and relations between Haiti and the United States in the twentieth.\(^7\)

The prolific discussion around both of these perspectives could be seen as an indication that Haiti’s problems are complex in nature. Disagreements on these perspectives between Haiti-born scholars and non-Haitian scholars and between neo-liberals and populists continue over the root causes of Haiti’s problem and possible solutions.\(^8\)

In recent research on development and migration, scholars have started to shape discussion about Haiti within the context of its diaspora. With over 535,000\(^9\) foreign-born Haitians in the United States alone, the force of the constant transnational movement is impressive. Although much of the early scholarship around Haitian Diasporas has been looked at through an anthropological lens (ethnography), the post-Duvalier era and a more open socio-political environment have changed that. A large and ever-growing population within the U.S., the Haitian Diaspora has proven to have significant impact in


\(^8\) *Ibid*, p 212.


<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?id=770#1>
Haiti. So much so that social scientists from international relations and development have begun to take notice.

**Thesis**

The transnational activity that the Haitian Diaspora partakes in today has created an array of discussion around their assistance in the development of Haiti. This thesis will argue that Haitian Diaspora participation and contributions to Haiti’s development have impacted Haitian development negatively. Negative meaning the added presence of the Haitian Diaspora in Haitian affairs has impeded (1) government cohesion to secure its post-Duvalier democratic transition, and (2) impedes the government’s ability to become a more responsive system of governance.

**Theoretical Framework / Literature Review**

A dependency analysis will be employed to explain diasporic relations to Haitian development. The focus on Haitian development and Diasporas is supported in both the development literature within the dependency theory and general literature on Haiti.

“The dependency theory is rooted in long intellectual traditions reflecting upon the dependence of Latin American countries on foreign political and economic powers.”

Although it is recognized as essentially developing from two different frameworks,

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Marxist and structuralist, the former is recognized as the tradition from which dependency arose.\textsuperscript{11} It is also acknowledged that Andre Gunder Frank provided the most influential dependency analysis with his work on “dependence” and “development of the underdeveloped.”\textsuperscript{12}

In, \textit{The Origins of Dependency Analysis}, Joseph L. Love recounts the progression of the dependency framework. Love acknowledges Andre Gunder Frank’s contribution to dependency analysis with his seminal work on “dependence” and “development of the underdeveloped,” however; he provides a thorough explanation on Furtado, Sunkel, and Cadoso’s early structural contributions to the dependency framework.

Love begins with Raul Prebisch, a structuralist economist, who first introduced the Centre and Periphery concept in 1949, which stated that between these two elements a process of unequal exchange occurs.\textsuperscript{13} This process of unequal exchange revealed negative features intrinsic in the Periphery’s economy, thereby impeding development in the periphery. In the 1950s, the UN Economic Commission of Latin America (ECLA) took the concept of “periphery and core” and implemented economic development policies in Latin American countries to assist in development. Import-substitution industrialization (ISI), as these policies were collectively called, became the topic of debate amongst scholars when countries that had implemented these policies were not developing. The failing trajectory of these policies broadened the focus from purely economic analysis in development to include social issues or structure of imbalance.

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\textsuperscript{12} Andre Gunder Frank Official website. March 2011
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, pp145
\end{flushright}
Celsio Furtado ‘historicized’ the analysis, by looking at the fundamental differences (features) between Core and Periphery, thus departing from formal economic analysis.\textsuperscript{14} With the inclusion of the historical process, core and periphery analysis began to take into account ‘social and political viability as an essential criterion when attempting to set and meet realistic development targets (Love, 1990). On the side of social viability, ‘income inequality among social classes became a practical indicator. Moreover, Osvaldo Sunkel’s criticism on ‘agricultural performance’ uncovered more problems in ISI policies that inhibited the development of periphery countries. More specifically, these problems were the persistent rather than diminishing dependency on the foreign trade sector, unemployment or underemployment in both urban and rural sectors, and the apparent concentration of income in the upper income brackets.\textsuperscript{15}

On the viability of political criterion, an analysis of the agrarian reform program of the Eduardo Frei government of Chile resulted in a tendency toward political polarization in the countryside and beyond.\textsuperscript{16} In this case, it showed that implementing ISI policies in the periphery would eventually yield political difficulties.

To further formulate the dependency framework, Furtado elaborated on an earlier contention that development and underdevelopment were linked.\textsuperscript{17} These two processes, Furtado claimed, were historically associated and therefore, underdevelopment could not

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 154
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 156
\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 158
be a phase in the passage to development. Moreover, Furtado introduced the element of social class. He argued that class struggle had historically been the engine of economic growth in the West, and therefore, since labor is unorganized in the Periphery, above all in the rural sector, the process fails to work there.

Love credits Fernando Henrique Cardoso as playing a major role in moving the dependency perspective towards an analysis of social relations. Furtado’s collaborative work with Enzo Faletto also contributed an important element in the ‘mutual interests among social classes across the Centre-Periphery system. More specifically, the interests of the bourgeoisie in the Centre (and by implication, those of its proletariat) overlapped those of the bourgeoisie of the Periphery. The historical and the social elements introduced by Furtado and Sunkel further developed the basic tenets of the development theory formulated.

Culminating with Frank’s dependency analysis, the fundamental premise of the dependency theory includes four basic elements to initiate an explanatory breakdown of the world system: 1) characterization of modern capitalism as a Centre-Periphery relation between the developed, industrial West and the underdeveloped, agricultural Third world, 2) Adoption of the system-wide historical approach and therefore rejection of the modernization theory, 3) hypothesis of unequal exchange as well as asymmetrical power

19 *Ibid*, pp. 157
20 *Ibid*, pp. 159
21 *Ibid*, pp. 159
relation between center and periphery, and 4) Non-viability of a capitalist path to development based on leadership of national bourgeoisies.\textsuperscript{22}

To further illustrate that the unequal trajectory of the periphery and core affected society, politics, and the state at the periphery, Andre Gunder Frank’s work in 1969 emphasized a historical look at the periphery and center together. He examined economic dependency as a consequence of emerging relationships among political–economic formations, which were brought into being as capitalism expanded.\textsuperscript{23} Frank posited that the most important fact about any nation has been its relations with other nations; therefore any observations of contemporary society must be explained in terms of their historical relations to other societies.\textsuperscript{24}

Borrowing the concept of ‘internal colonialism’ from Mexican political scientist, Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, Frank hypothesizes that there is a link between ‘internal colonialism’ and that of ‘metropolis-satellite’ relations.\textsuperscript{25} Internal colonialism as defined by Casanova occurs whereby industrial and political Centers within the satellite exploit their dependent regions through fiscal and exchange policies, and by draining off capital and talent.\textsuperscript{26}

The significant trajectory of the dependency framework can be closely related to the way in which Haiti, as a satellite, has fared in the world system in terms of ‘underdevelopment.’ Haiti’s well-documented history as a colony (Saint Domingue)

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\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 401
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 157
\end{flushright}
offers the initial dependency notion of centre-periphery relations. Internal colonialism is seen in post-revolution until modern-day Haiti.

Haiti experienced evolutions that twice have left it in the periphery: first, the centre-periphery relationship with France, and then, the centre-periphery relations of Haiti (post-revolution) with the United States. Moving forward a century after Haitian independence, in 1915 the core-periphery relationship was fortified with the occupation of Haiti by the United States. This link cultivated not only the centre-periphery relationship, United States and Haiti, respectively but also a metropolis-satellite relationship. As dependency theorists suggest, political inequality manifested in non-democratic governments in the peripheral is maintained with the economic, political, and sometime military support of the elites in the centre countries.27 Furthermore, Frank’s metropolis-satellite proposal is the modern-day relationship that exists between the United States and Haiti. The notion of metropolis-satellite can also be seen in the migration of Haitians to the United States (core). Diaspora transnational activity (between the US and Haiti and vice versa) takes place on a constant basis, which in turn further expands and perpetuates the metropolis-satellite relationship.

As an innovative interpretation of the world of development and underdevelopment, the dependency theory did attract criticism. Sociologists Friedmann and Wayne assessed Frank’s interpretation of the model and found that a more Marxist approach to dependency would suffice to clarify several “problems” that they found were consistent in Frank’s argument. This difficulty they found was apparent once one moves beyond those historically observable consequences of the dependency relation within

individual satellites or dependencies (Friedmann 1977:402). This problem was more pronounced when it came to 1) bilateral relations, 2) a hierarchically ordered set of roles, and 3) the product of relationships (Friedmann 1977:402).

Friedmann and Wayne consider the dependency theory to lack analysis on how shifts of bilateral relations occur. However, in the case of Haiti this change can be justified in Haiti’s change from being a periphery of France to that of the United States. Their second argument on a hierarchically ordered set of roles is to ‘abandon relationships as the unit of analysis and to focus on the nation.’ However, this argument would negate the modern and intricate new units of analysis linking core-periphery states and which are becoming more important in the world capitalist system. For instance, migration as a new concept in development but not so new in practice, accounts for the way the core-periphery relationships are maintained. Furthermore, it helps to explain the extension of metropolis-satellite connection that exists by newly formed levels of analysis.

Concurrence with Friedmann and Wayne’s third argument on the product of relationships comes with the understanding that class relations are created first and then spatial relationships take place.

The dependence framework helps to explain class relations through historical analysis within dependent states as they are incorporated into a changing world capitalist system (Franck, 1972:30). In conjunction with the dependency school of thought this

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28 Since Haitian independence, its attempts to enter into the world capitalist system were abetted by European powers. Although ostracized by the international community the United States—who did not recognize Haiti until 1862-started traded relations with Haiti.
topic will look at the migration factor. Generally, migration of a labor force from periphery to centre becomes an important issue that affects the economic development, labor, and distribution of income, known as the international wage-labor migration.\textsuperscript{30} Others would call it \textit{brain-drain}. It follows that for the poor, international migration may be more certain and secure pathway to economic and social mobility than local opportunities.\textsuperscript{31} And although this paper will not concentrate on this issue, it is important to mention as it is one of the many reasons why Diasporas first decide to migrate and ultimately decide on if and how Diasporas will partake in transnational activities.

Randolph Bourne’s notion of \textit{transnationality} however is more closely linked to the way in which Haitian Diaspora in the United States relate to Haiti (their country of origin). \textit{Transnationality}, as it pertains to the Haitian Diaspora is: 1) The country itself where people of diverse cultural traditions meet is transnational (tradition/culture in both countries is a weaving of back and forth, 2) Impact on the relations between the United States and other countries is constant (in this case, the US is able to influence other countries due to the relationships maintained by foreign-born residents with their homelands.), 3) Transnational relationships turn the US into a center from which radiate linkages with satellite countries, and 4) The state is no longer the only or exclusive arena for the practice of citizenship.

Michel S. Laguerre takes Bourne’s concept one-step further by focusing on transnational activities partaken by Diasporas. He formulates his argument based on

\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 9
active Diasporas. This, Laguerre defines, is a diaspora that maintains its relationships with the homeland in real and not simply in symbolic terms.\textsuperscript{32} In this case the Haitian Diaspora fits this criterion and more specifically for its efforts in Haitian development.

How then does the Haitian Diaspora impede Haitian development? Migration has historically been considered a consequence of underdevelopment (class struggle). The historical class struggle in Haiti and the reasons and way in which migration of the Haitian Diaspora took place will begin to formulate the answer to this question. Eventually the way that the Haitian Diaspora settled in the United States and the way the diaspora functions will begin to highlight how the diaspora is impeding development in Haiti.

Discussions on Haiti come from two strains of thought 1) Haiti’s deeply rooted history of slavery, conflicting class structure, and military intervention in government are the causes for its cyclical condition of radical changes and fickle successes in development; and 2) A history of western intervention (French, Spanish, and US) are the cause for much of the lack of development, democracy, and Haiti’s place as UNDP’s human development index lowest ranking in the western hemisphere. Neither argument is more correct than the other. In fact, both arguments would be relevant within the debate of Third world development and conditions of the state to develop with the eventual push to the process of democratization.

The thesis will lend on the first argument. Literature based on looking at the historical conditions that Haiti came from has been plenty. Books, such as Haiti: Family

\textsuperscript{32} Laguerre, Michel S, Diasporic Citizenship: Haitian Americans in Transnational America (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), p. 8
Business (1985) written by Rod Prince, recount Haiti’s history to argue that reoccurring themes in Haitian history should be looked to as indicators of current despair of the Haitian population and potential future occurrences in the country. Furthermore, these themes or indicators serve to explain that although there is a strong US presence “influencing the course of events in Haiti, the US does not control Haiti.” Therefore, due to its deeply historical habits, certain events will occur because these themes are already shaping the future of events to come.

These re-occurring themes, he insists, came about not only since Haiti’s independence in 1804, but were created and existed vibrantly during its colonial times under French rule. Such themes like, “the tradition of armed intervention in government, the absence of any developed political system, and the long standing practice of presidents regarding state finance as their personal property” still permeate heavily in Haiti today. Consequently, from the forces within, the country will once again fall victim to a toppled government once the Duvalier regime “prove(s) inadequate.”

Prince’s approach to Haiti’s ‘born into ruin’ account is a good indication that history is critical to understanding current events. Although he succinctly explains the colonial take-over of the western one-third of the Island of Hispaniola, he subsequently delves into the description of “lucrative colony” that Saint-Domingue came to be. It is at this juncture that Prince takes the time to examine the class structure of the colony and deep sentiments of each class that “contained the seeds of multiple conflicts,” and which were and still are today the harrowing prescription of Haitian instability.

Prince chronicles the usual suspects of the Haitian class structure: the grand blancs, the petits blans, the mulattoes or gens de coluleur and the slaves, who trumped
the other classes in numbers. One critical observation, which Prince uses to support his argument of Haiti’s ‘militarized and authoritarian’ inclination, is the inclusion of the Navy Ministry in the Saint-Domingue society. He mentions that, ‘the military officers in charge of towns and districts were the undisputed rulers of the areas of town and districts.’ These “colonial administrator(s) eagerly took advantage of the opportunity to turn their power to profit…many were recruited from among disgraced officer, bankrupt nobles or merchants, dispatched to Saint-Domingue…to regain their wealth and return to France.”

In the end, “authoritarian military power and extensive corruption became so deeply entrenched in the colony that they survived throughout the following 200 years as permanent and essential features of Haitian life.”

Prince’s look into the past is important to understanding modern-day Haiti and its struggles. Furthermore, the power politics among the different classes is relevant to the way in which specific class faction within Haitian society is still prominent in modern-day Haiti and in the way it functions. However, the way in which his emphasis on power politics within the slave society comes across is that Haitian culture has an inherent nature of corruption. Less blame is placed on the foreign powers of the present day, which is essentially saying that Haitians will do this no matter how good or bad intentioned the influence of the foreign powers is. It begs the question: Would the powerful elites, at any given time, acted differently if those outside influences would not have been there?

Since independence, outside colonial powers hovered over Haiti as it attempted to regain a semblance of order within its borders and its fragmented class structure.

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“European nations contributed to the plundering by regularly demanding compensation for allegedly maltreated subjects.”

A more distant approach but equally as damaging, western power took years before recognizing Haiti and deeming trade with them illegal. In addition to and beyond the US occupation (1915 – 1934), the US left a permanent reminder that foreign intervention will always be a factor in Haitian politics, when it “re-wrote the Haitian Constitution to permit foreign ownership of property.”

Furthermore, years of US financial backing through ‘development aid’ has proven to be a detriment to responsible governance and political cohesion amongst the class structures.

Haitian Diaspora Association and Their Investments in Basic Social Services in Haiti is a report commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and led by Patricia Wiess Fagen. This report sets out to attain information on ‘how Haitian migrants and those still in the country are contributing to development processes’ in Haiti. Looking at ‘migrant diaspora and their remittance practices’ the study focuses on host country organization initiatives in Health and Education by Haitian Diaspora in the United States and in Canada.

The research was gathered through “survey questionnaires, open-ended interviews with key individuals and assembled books, articles and relevant documents that provided analysis and a broader context to the interviews.’ It critically conducted a two part approach: 1) Focusing on how diaspora groups seek to impact their home communities and 2) Focusing on whether there is an impact and how community members participated-or did not participate-in programmed activities.

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The findings of this report fall along the lines of developmental studies. In the case of Haiti, this report shows that international organizations have taken an interest in finding evidence not only on the significance of a diaspora group but also its functionality in development. The report introduces “collective remittances” not only as an individual migrant support mechanism for country of origin, but also as “diaspora associations dedicated to addressing unmet needs” in their country of origin. In the case of Haiti, Fagen et al., identifies three types of groups that fall under the umbrella of associations: 1) home town associations (HTAs), 2) faith-based association, and 3) professional associations.

The study analyzes all three groups in the context of how these associations group themselves and decide on developmental projects in Haiti. It focuses less on the impact of these associations in Haiti. Mostly this is due to the lack of most of these associations not having obtained a 501c3 non-profit status (therefore, not having to report, in which case not having information readily available), “reticent to complete the questionnaire, or interviewee’s suspicion as to the true purpose of the research.”

Although the impact of development was difficult for the researchers to attain, the study’s focus on the diaspora associations is a critical start in understanding the character of these associations. The relevance of the report is in the descriptive analysis on how these associations are grouped. It also sheds light into the fragmentation that exists among the Haitian class within the United States.

Moreover, Fagen et al. compares these associations in relation to the countries Diasporas have adopted, in this case the United States and Canada. This comparison has
the future potential to assist Donor Countries in engaging Diasporas in a more cohesive manner so as to affect development in their country of origin more positively.

To conclude, the study inclines that from a ‘developmental perspective, individualistic approaches do not constitute effective development practice. With this said, Diaspora projects would undoubtedly be more effective if groups with similar objectives combined forces. However, Diaspora group associations cannot take the bulk of the work and deliver services to Haiti where there is no infrastructure. What is recommended is that groups not only engage each other in their adopted country, but also in unison make attempts to approach their country of origin and host country alike.

**Research Design**

The objective of this paper is to explore Haiti’s Diaspora and Haitian development since the transitional period that followed the fall of the Duvalier regime. The paper will focus on Haiti’s social class structure and follow it to the diaspora community in the United States. The hypothesis is that the Haitian Diaspora in the United States has a negative impact on Haitian socio-political and economic development.

Haitians in the United States left Haiti for a multitude of reasons, i.e. better living conditions or for political persecution. Within the United States the Haitian Diaspora politically organized with intentions of returning to Haiti. Prior to 1971, the single purpose of most Haitian political groups in the Diaspora was the overthrow of the
Duvalier regime. As poverty deepened and repression from the Duvalier regime worsened, Haitians started to emigrate in droves. A new phase of migration from Haiti to the US began in 1972 when several sailboats carrying Haitians arrived in South Florida.

The waves or phases of Haitian Diaspora settled into US life and culture with different intentions. These different intentions prompted the Diaspora to organize socially and politically however with diverse objectives in relations to Haiti Proper. It is this political and social chasm in the Haitian Diaspora that has negated any efforts of aiding any of the socio-economic and political arenas of Haitian development.

Since the Duvalier-Aristide regime transition, Haiti’s civil society has been highly praised for its efforts of bringing democracy to Haiti. However, the 14 years since the momentous event divisions in the Haitian Diaspora are evidence that through huge successes in Haiti this group’s contribution is an ‘invaluable socio-political and financial asset for Haiti’.38

To guide the argument of this paper, the following questions will be discussed. Why did the Haitian Diaspora start emigrating from Haiti? Why did they settle in the United States? Were they defined through economic, social, or political attaches? How did the phases of Haitian immigrants define the Haitian Diaspora in the United States? Were there connections with Haitian civil society? How were they aiding Haiti politically and socially? With what focus were political organizations first created? How were they aiding Haiti economically? What major role did the Diaspora have in the elections of 1994? Was there a concerted effort to maintain democracy in Haiti and what role did the

Diaspora play? Why did the focus of Haitian Diasporas change? Have there been concerted efforts since Haitians voted for democracy? What role does the Haitian Diaspora play today? Is it effective in Haiti as it is in the United State? What has been the role of the U. S. Government in relation to the Haitian Diaspora?

Variables
I will be considering the historical developments of Haitian socio-political events as well as the emigration movement of Haitians from 1960 to 2000. The timeframe of the historical developments of Haiti will be one of my independent variables. The socio-political elements will be attained from studies produced, i.e. United States Citizen and Immigration Services, articles, journals, and statistical information gathered.

The historical events of Haiti will help to outline the social and racial divide created in that environment. The social cleavages in Haiti will be dependent variables. After explaining the phases of Haitian emigration this will help to outline and identify the how the Haitian Diaspora in the United States organizes through socio-political associations.

Methodology

For the purpose of this thesis, qualitative data will be employed. Both primary and secondary sources will be used to demonstrate that Haiti indeed has a fragmented class system created during its colonization period. Furthermore, this class system has existed in much of the socio-political and economic history of Haiti and still does today. Moreover, this approach will look to establish that the Haitian Diaspora has transplanted the same social structures in the United States. As an active participator in Haitian
development, the social structures that affect the Haitian Diaspora have in turn affected Haitian development negatively.

**Chapter Outline**

This paper will comprise of 5 Chapters. The first chapter of this paper has introduced the argument that the Haitian Diaspora has had a negative impact on Haitian socio-political and economic development. Within the context of international relations the origins of the dependency framework will be reviewed, highlighting the rationale behind the underdevelopment in Third World countries and more specifically in Haiti.

Chapter 2 will depict Haiti’s historical background leading to the first major exodus of the Haitian Diaspora to the United States between the years of late 1950s to 2000. A look into these phases will explain how Haitians settled in the US and therefore the mode of organization and purpose in Haitian development.

Chapter 3 will concentrate on the Haitian Diaspora in the United States. Lending on ethnography approaches of immigration as a transnational process the study will explain the way in which each wave of the Haitian Diaspora settled in the United States and retained social and class fragmentation.

Chapter 4 will specifically take a look at the Duvalier-Aristide Regime change of the early 1990s. The significance of this period will help to further analyze the Diaspora’s role and its affects by focusing on its role with a different regime under a “new” political, economic and social structure. By looking at a more specific event in Haiti this will further support my hypothesis that the Haitian Diaspora has negatively affected Haitian social, political, and economic development.

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Chapter 5 will conclude my analysis and will help to better understand the role of the Haitian Diaspora in Haiti’s socio-political and economic development. In conclusion, this explanatory thesis will show that the fragmented group associations assisting in Haiti have affected Haitian development (socio-politics and economics) negatively. Lastly, several recommendations and afterthoughts will be included with the hope that this paper will further expand developmental studies on Haiti’s problematique.
Chapter 2: Relevant Historical Overview

Haiti

The Republic of Haiti, as it is formally known, is located in the western third of the Island of Hispaniola. Haiti shares the island with the Dominican Republic and is approximately, 650 miles (1,048 kilometers) from the coast of Florida in the United States (Appendix 1)

The Colony

Christopher Columbus first encountered the island of Hispaniola in 1492. He documented coming across natives, Arawaks, in the island, whom he colonized under the auspices of the Spanish crown. Under the harsh new conditions, it did not take long until the native population of Hispaniola found itself nearing extinction. The Spanish looked to the trans-Atlantic slave trade to re-populate the island with “expendable manpower with which to build forts, mine for gold, and clear and till the soil.”

This act “began in earnest in 1517; by 1540 some 30,000 Africans had been imported to Hispaniola.”

While the Spanish occupied the eastern portion of Hispaniola, the French slowly took control of the western most part of the island. After 200 years and having established a profitable slave trade in the east, the Spanish officially ceded their western domain to the France in 1697, who in turn, named it Saint Saint-Domingue.

41 *Ibid. pp. 54*
It is at this juncture, that the histories of both the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Haiti diverge. For after Saint–Domingue was established, the French took no time to initiate an agricultural venture intended to make it their jewel in the Caribbean. Now recognized as Saint-Domingue, thus begins the story of the country that would eventually become known as the Republic of Haiti.

With sugar cane farming as the focal point, the French created and maintained an agricultural empire in Saint-Domingue. Sugar plantations required a sizable amount of work, hands and labor. “Thus began in earnest the era of sugar slavery [and] in the 1700s [became] a malevolent machine.”42 By the mid-1700s, Saint-Domingue was France’s most affluent colony, “of all French possessions in the New World, the most significant in terms of wealth procured for its metropolis and in terms of its influence on agriculture and commerce.”43 “Saint-Domingue was the last of the great sugar isles to come into production, and being last, was the most fertile and profitable.”44

Equally important to maintaining the status quo of the jewel colony, was the French ambition of facilitating a well-organized society. The populous fitted well into categories for the purpose of establishing order. According to the Eric Williams, Saint-Domingue had 5 classes:

“The first was the planters, the big whites…the second was the royal officials, the representative of the Exclusive, the symbols of the denial of the self-governing institutions. Then came the poor whites, the overseers, artisans, professional men, hating the planters above, determined to maintain the bridge that separated them for the men of color below. Below them came the fourth class, the mulattos and

43 *Ibid*, p 56
free Negroes, numbering 28,000, possessing one-third of the real estate and one-fourth of the personal property in the colony, but denied social and political equality with the whites. Finally, there were...the slaves; many of them only recently arrived from Africa, the foundation on which the prosperity and superiority of Saint-Domingue rested.”

The Revolution

As one might have guessed, conditions of the slave population within the sugar industry were absolutely brutal. As Landes describes, “it took a lot of work to grow sugar cane, cut, crush it, and refine the juice: gang labor under a hot sky; dangerous, hurried round-the-clock pressing, boiling, and skimming before the crops spoiled...In the fields, men and women did the work of animals... No plows, few tools, everything by hand.”

Harsher were the inhumanities that the slave population had to endure. “Master and overseers thought the blacks no better than brutes, and used stick and lash freely, sometimes so freely as to maim and kill...and so on and on in a ceaseless round of torment and humiliation.”

The significance of the Haitian Revolution is that it dislodged Haiti from a system of tyranny, if only for a while. The rest of the world was left aghast when France, with its entire advanced military prowess, was made to yield its position. Although it took 13 years to realize this independence from France, the intricate details of the revolution proves that there were many forces at work.

As news of the French Revolution reached Saint-Domingue, an inspired community of varying class distinctions began to organize. The French Revolution of

46 *Ibid*, p. 116
47 *Ibid*, p. 118-119
1789 became “the spark that ignited them.”

“At first, the dislodged link from French rule saw an opportunity for the Saint-Domingue upper white class to gain[ed] control of the new Colonial Assembly [thereby] excluding their economic competitors, the mulattos, and the poor whites.”

At the same time, these same groups resisted. With the support “they found in a French abolitionist society, les Amis des Noirs,” the mulatto group, consisting of “wealthy mulattos, initiated an open revolt against the status quo in 1791.”

Although there was a common desire to break free from French rule, there was also an understanding that maintaining a certain status quo was deemed necessary for a continuation of supplying “three-fourths of the world’s sugar.”

Until 1791, the slave populous “had served chiefly as pawns, with both white and mulatto factions recruiting slave armies-in-waiting.”

In August 1791, the slaves revolted. “Armed with picks, machetes, clubs, and torches, they razed approximately 180 sugar plantations, and perhaps 900 plantations of coffee, cotton, and indigo.”

Toussaint Louverture led the slave revolts and led with such skill that worried the other societal classes in Saint-Domingue, but also challenged the power of the French Army. He “introduced guerilla tactics to the slave army,” which allowed him to continue to gain support and continue to build an army from the slave inhabitants of Saint-Domingue. After several years of tactical fighting against the French army, “Toussaint

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49 Ibid, p. 59
50 Ibid, p. 59
51 Ibid, p. 56
52 Ibid, p. 60
53 Ibid, p. 60
54 Ibid, p. 60
named himself “Lieutenant Governor of the colonial state, Saint Domingue, within the French Empire.” With such a desire to break free from French control, why include himself into the French empire? Well, as stated by Farmer:

Toussaint’s goal was nothing less than the restoration of the colony’s economic prosperity-without slavery. Somewhat surprisingly, his plans did not involve changing the plantation basis of production. Instead, he planned to replace slavery with a system of contract labor enforced by a gendarmerie.56

Toussaint’s effort to restore Saint-Domingue to its jewel status without slavery was never realized. Although there is much speculation on how this occurred, Toussaint was captured and killed by the French army. Jean-Jacques Dessalines, a disciple and fellow combatant “led and carried on an armed struggle against the French.”57

Intertwined within the events of the Haitian Revolution is the way in which the power politics played out in the 13 years of the revolution. The battle to gain control over Saint-Domingue was not only against France but also amongst its Creole and slave population. Michel-Rolph Trouillot examines a certain portion of the last 2 years of the Revolution to include yet another faction, in what he called a “war within the war.” He lends to the intricate details of the revolution that highlight oscillating decisions of generals and revolutionaries.

After the eventual capturing and death of Touissant Lourveture, Trouillot mentions that there was essentially two campaigns occurring: 1) the one led by black officers reintegrated under Leclerc’s command against the former slaves who had refused

56 *Ibid*, p. 61
57 *Ibid*, p. 62
to surrender to the French, and 2) the generals and the free colored officers associated with Petion against the former slaves who refused to acknowledge the revolutionary hierarchy and the supreme authority of Dessalines.\textsuperscript{58}

The significance of this faction in the Haitian Revolution and to Trouillot’s argument is that the different powers at play between the revolutionaries “introduced dissidence.”

Dessalines, who before Trouillot died was still under his leadership, and therefore still ‘under the French banner’ was in fact fighting former slave forces who refused to surrender to France and also against the smaller former slave dissident groups. The leader of these dissident groups and another significant factor in the outcome of the Haitian revolution, as Trouillot acknowledges, is Colonel Jean-Baptiste San Souci.

Formerly a Bossale slave under the colonial system, San Souci became the leader of the sustained resistance of the various dissident groups (composed mainly of Africans).\textsuperscript{59} Dessalines along with free colored, mulatto General Alexandre Petion were fighting to quell San Souci-led dissident groups. Although they did not capture San Souci, by November 1802, Dessaline, Petion and Christophe forged an alliance against the French.\textsuperscript{60}

As military leader Dessaline lead “a scorched-earth approach to battle,” it proved successful as he carried on the battle until winning control of Saint-Domingue from the

\textsuperscript{58} Trouillot, Michel-Rolph, \textit{Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History} (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), pp.40
\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid}, p. 43
\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Ibid}, p. 43
French. On the first of January 1804, the island’s new leaders reclaimed its Indian name, Haiti.\textsuperscript{61}

After three centuries of slavery, fatal deforestation to the land, and a decade of brutal fighting, the new Republic of Haiti had more than the lion share to rebuild itself as a country. Furthermore, it had to revive an economy that had been neglected for a decade and all the while establishing itself as the first black governed country and only second self- liberated country in the Americas, from its colonizers. Recovery from these factors has proven to be complex. But first, they had to deal with their class struggle.

At the end of the revolution and at the beginning of independence, Dessalines ruled an authoritarian Haiti. He drafted a constitution, which was intended to mark Haiti’s departure from the regional status quo… and at the same time an asylum for escaped slaves.\textsuperscript{62} However the years that followed for Haiti, were years of obstacles that proved to be too complex.

Two years after Dessalines declared himself ‘first emperor of Haiti,’ he was assassinated. This marked a successive in-fighting amongst generals and elites. Generals of the Haitian Revolution, Christophe and Petion, claimed the throne. Out of this rivalry there was a faction that remained strong in the north led by Christophe and a Petion-led faction in the south.\textsuperscript{63} Haiti remained divided until Jean Pierre Boyer reunited the country in 1818.

\textsuperscript{61} Farmer, Paul, \textit{The Uses of Haiti} (Monroe, Common Courage Press, 2006), p 62
\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Ibid}, p 65
\textsuperscript{63} Kuser, J. Dryden, \textit{Haiti: Its Dawn of Progress after Years in a Night of Revolution} (Boston: R.G. Badger, 1921), p. 47
Despite the factions and changing of powers, there remained the question of ‘economic priority of its citizens.’ Soon after the Haitian Revolution, as anthropologist Paul Farmer framed it:

The division reintroduced the inequalities of the colonial system, replacing the gulf between master and slave with a gap between those whose interests led toward participation in the global economy and those who saw more advantage in keeping a safe distance from it. The new elite insisted that the emerging peasantry produce commodities for an international market, but the peasants-former slaves-wished to be left alone to grow foodstuffs for themselves and for local markets.64

In the end, the elite managed to coerce the situation so that Haiti started producing sugar and rum. “Thus the plantation status quo reorganized itself anew in Haiti,” notes Benitez-Rojo, “although under other work and power relations.”65

Haiti as the first black independent country did not fare well in the world system. It was essentially ostracized from the economic world market; an effort led by France and other European powers alike, including the United States. The first years after independence, no foreign credit institution lent money to Haiti.66 Unrecognized as a country, Haiti sought trading partners to gain sustainability in the world market. Haiti became the source of advantageous trade deals, particularly for the British, but also became a chief trading partner with the United States, although the US did not recognize Haiti until 1862.67

65 Ibid. p. 65
67 Note: Some theorists speculate that United Stats only recognized Haiti because within the US they had the question of slavery. If the slaves were to be free, Americans essentially saw former slaves possibly going to Haiti.
On the home front Haiti was not faring any better. Intermediaries who bulked and or processed the produce of small landholders linked the way in which Haiti sold its commodities on the world market. Farmer best describes the result of this operation:

“Such restrictions were a spatial isolation of the peasantry, not just from the outside world,” but from the other classes inside Haiti as well… “The economic structures, the very mechanisms of extracting this surplus, made it possible to bleed this peasantry without ever touching or seeing it.” These feudal structures have endured to the present day. The chief bleeders of the peasantry were the State and the small commercial class it came to represent.69

The economic environment that was created was highly unstable. This proved to be true, during the Geffrard government (1859-1867) when the country was starting to show signs of unrest among its population. Eventually, unrest did emerge amongst the ‘urban poor, the small-scale merchants, the market women, the unemployed and the progressive sector of the middle class…and later by the business community.70 To stave off the rioting that already had seized Port-au Prince, “the Geffrard government became the first Haitian administration openly to obtain foreign aid to remain in power.”71

American Occupation

In the years that followed into the Twentieth century, Haiti fared no better. The Geffrard government set the precedent. The United States Marine Corps invaded Haiti in 1915.72 Why did the US invade? The pretext for the U.S. intervention was “instability”

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69 *Ibid*, p. 71
70 *Ibid*, p. 71
71 *Ibid*, p. 73
72 *Ibid*, p. 78
in Haiti. Nonetheless, others would claim, in order to preserve the integrity of the Monroe Doctrine.

The US-Haitian treaty that followed in 1915, granted the United States complete political and administrative control over Haiti. In the 19 years that the United States occupied Haiti, the practices and consequences of those practices left Haiti in a complete fragmented state not only amongst their government, but their economy as well as their social class structure. Amongst these practices was: 1) A US-written constitution that overturned laws preventing foreigners from owning land, thus enabling US corporations to take what they want, 2) Consistently suppressed local democratic institutions and denied elementary political liberties, 3) Established a foreign-dominated plantation agriculture, which destroyed the existing mini-fundia land-tenure system with its myriad peasant freeholders, 4) Concept of racial discrimination thus reinforcing the internal class/race oppression from the days of French colonialism.

Equally important, the US occupation: 1) Augmented the peasantry’s forced contribution to the maintenance of the State, 2) Centralized the Haitian army and disarmed the provinces, putting in place the structures of military, fiscal, and commercial centralization, and 3) The national finances were still controlled by the US officials, and the Banque Nationale remained a subsidiary of the US Export-Import Bank.

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77 Ibid, pp. 11
Once the United States left in 1934, ‘Haiti remained firmly in the US orbit.’

The Duvalier Regime

After the US occupation, an indigeniste movement, which attempted to elevate Haitian culture as a nationalist response, spread through the nation. From this movement of ‘extreme color consciousness, Francois Duvalier declared himself a noiriste (a partisan of the blacker citizens, rather than the lighter urban elites). Rod Prince characterized Duvalier’s rule in two stages, ‘the early years’ and the ‘second stage.’ In his early years, Duvalier neutralized the major possible sources of opposition: the army, the Roman Catholic Church, the United States embassy, the business elite, political parties and trade unions.

Phase One

To counter the army’s assuming control of the state, Duvalier created a volunteer army, Volunteers for National security (VSN). This militia, responsible only to Duvalier

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Note: In the 1920s and 1930s, a small group of Haitian and other French Caribbean intellectuals began the Noiriste (Black-oriented) movement designed to recognize and positively value African heritage in the Caribbean (Price Mars 1983; Roumain 1947). The movement formed the basis for the subsequent efforts throughout the world to reevaluate African’s cultural contributions, including the contemporary multicultural sensitivity and Afro-centric efforts. For Haitians, the Noiriste movement led to the reevaluation of Haitian creole and ultimately to its becoming a written language and eventually, after the fall of the Duvalier dictatorship in the mid-1980s, the official language of the Haitian government (Stepick 1998:81).
[82] Ibid, p. 25
was soon dubbed the \textit{tontons macoutes} as they effectively managed to neutralize the army.\footnote{Farmer, Paul, \textit{The Uses of Haiti} (Monroe, Common Courage Press, 2006), p. 93} The VSN also effectively nullified all political parties. To counter the Roman Catholic Church, Duvalier had all members of the church removed.\footnote{\textit{Ibid}, p. 95} Although the Catholic Church and Duvalier reconciled officially through an accord in 1966, Duvalier continued his witch-hunt on the other \textit{orders} in the following years.

To quell the concerns of the United States, Duvalier guaranteed to look out for US interests, which was good enough to deserve Washington’s support.\footnote{\textit{Ibid}, p. 94} All other institutions were either severely hindered (controlled) or silenced.

**Phase Two**

The second stage of Duvalier’s institution started in 1963 when an attempted coup led by a former VSN member almost succeeded. In continuing phase two, Duvalier “was able to negotiate from strength, reaching an accommodation with certain of these groups which would allow them to pursue their sectional interests on the understanding that the supreme power remained with Duvalier.”\footnote{Prince, Rod, \textit{Haiti: Family Business} (London: Latin America Bureau, 1985), p. 26} Scrutinizing the way in which he planned, played, or eliminated opponents, many have coined this as the ‘Duvalierist Revolution.’ Subsequently, Duvalier’s first order of business was to institutionalize the Tontons Macoute.

Just the way he managed to throw bishops and priests out of Haiti at one time only to strike a deal with the Holy Sea a couple of years later with the condition that he has the ‘right to fill vacant bishoprics with clerics of his own choice is incredible.
With a hand-picked clergy, Duvalier was able to influence the ‘church-controlled educational system’ to ‘aid the renewal and preservation of the class from which Duvalier drew his support.’ In politics, Duvalier ‘curtailed political pretensions of the mulatto elite but touched few of their economic interests.’

Most important part of phase two was making his support base a ‘lasting force.’ As mentioned before, Duvalier was a noiriste and as such he wanted to uplift the black population of Haiti. This cohort consisted of the ‘black urban middle class, the medium-sized peasant landowners and those peasants dependent on them.’ These groups were rewarded in different ways to assist in maintaining Duvalier’s grasp of the country.

- Urban middle class: rewarded with an increased role in the bureaucracy
- Peasant landowners and their followers: brought into the power structure (VSN) and given new opportunities for authority and enrichment. They had authority over the peasantry in their districts.
- Peasantry: called up to the army (for the first time) and given local power and rights.

Phase Three

Although Prince mentioned two phases in Duvalier’s permanency in power, a third is in order. This phase would be completed however upon his death the permanency of the Duvalier regime would begin to fall apart.

Before dying (21 April 1971), Francois Duvalier initiated the third phase of his regime. Duvalier installed his 19-year-old son Jean-Claude to succeed him as president.

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88 *Ibid*, p. 28
89 *Ibid*, p. 29
90 *Ibid*, p. 29
After Duvalier’s death and Jean-Claude at the head of the state, power struggle amongst three groups within the ruling family emerged in Haiti. These three groups were the ‘old guard Duvalierists, modernizers, and the newer commercial mulatto elite.’

Jean-Claude ‘shifted his power base from the black middle class to the mulatto business community.’\(^9\) This shift included Jean-Claude becoming ‘wholly dependent on US economic aid and political goodwill.’\(^2\)

The Jean-Claude government marked a lot of changes, one of which the relationship with the United States. Where in Francois’ affiliation with the United States was an agreement (mainly not falling to the communists and protecting private American citizens and American property interests in Haiti); with Jean-Claude it became a relationship of dependence on the United States and the business elite to maintain his power.

**Haitian Diaspora (1960s – Present)**

The diaspora of Haiti is considered an ‘active diaspora,’ meaning a diaspora that maintains its relationships with the homeland in real and not simply in symbolic terms.\(^3\)

In relation to geographic proximity, economic and political history the Haitian people who would come to be known as the Haitian Diaspora migrated and settled chiefly in North America. It was only after Francois Duvalier assumed the presidency and started to quell all opposition (middle class and upper class), such as political parties, trade unions,

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\(^2\) Ibid, p. 33
student organizations, the press, and the church, that Haitians began to arrive in the United States. At the end of the 29 years of the Duvalier Regime 225,000\textsuperscript{94} foreign-born Haitians resided in the United States. What is understood or generally accepted is that with the migration of Haitian nationals the largest concentration is in the United States and that this resettlement occurred in waves.

The first and second wave of Haitians started arriving in the United States in the 1960s. Although not in large numbers, this wave consisted of doctors, teachers, intellectuals, and other skilled workers as well as those escaping persecution that were the first to go. As president, John Fitzgerald Kennedy actively encouraged Haitian refugees to come to the United States.\textsuperscript{95} The U.S. consular officers readily approved nonimmigrant Haitian visas and virtually all of these immigrants arrived in the U.S. legally via airplane and settled in the northeastern United States.\textsuperscript{96} Aside from being part of the elite class in Haiti another shared commonality was the want to see the Duvalier regime overthrown for them to return to their country.\textsuperscript{97}

Although its been identified that there were essentially two waves of Haitians into the United States, Michel Laguerre identifies three types. All based on different economic standing in Haiti as well as in the United States, the first wave (1957-1964) of Haitians in the US were of the Haitian elite and staunchly opposed Duvalier and emigrated with the intent to return after Duvalier’s fall. The second wave (1965 – 1971)

http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab03.html

\textsuperscript{95} Stepick, Alex, Pride Against Prejudice: Haitians in the United States. (Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon,1998), p. 100

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid, p 100

were the middle-class of Haiti. And, the third wave (1972-) which continued [well into until 2004] “consisting mostly of boatloads of undocumented refugees headed toward Miami” (Laguerre1998: 86).

In December 1972, a group of Haitian refugees landed on the shores of Miami in a flimsy craft after braving the high seas. This single act marked the beginning of yet another wave of the Haitian Diaspora. The 1970s saw a significant in-flow of Haitians arriving on the Florida shores of the US. However, it was not until 1981 that it reached its peak, “up to 1,000 people a month continued to arrive in Florida.” Statistics showed that between 1971 and 1977, fifty to seventy thousand Haitians arrived by boat in South Florida.

When Jean-Claude Duvalier was ousted in 1986, a semblance of political and human rights peeked through the years of repression. The political landscaped momentarily changed and so the flow of Haitians migrating to the United States diminished. A resurgence of socio-political activity ascended Jean-Bertrand Aristide to lead Haiti in what everyone thought would be Haitian development. However, this was temporary as political in-fighting within the country sparked political repression and violence. Eventually, the flow of Haitians migrating to Haiti, legally or illegally, continued.

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When the government officially transitioned from the Duvalier regime to the Aristide presidency in 1994, Aristide called upon the “tenth department” – the émigrés – to help rehabilitate Haitian infrastructure.

In the 10 years that followed, Haiti has seen two presidents (Aristide 2nd term; Preval 2 terms), political parties (oppositions), and a semblance of democratic governance, foreign aid, and development aid. And certainly, Haiti has not been without a coup, a stand-off, more inflow of Haitians via boats to the shores of Florida, and chaos breaking out again in 2004. However, in the midst of these 10 years, where Haiti has experienced a more open government that is willing to work for developing Haiti, how has the diaspora contributed? How has the Diasporas organized politically to help Haiti? Has the Diasporas’ assistance aided development in Haiti? Was aid focused on bringing change to the political front or economic front? Was it substantial enough to help development move forward in Haiti? And, lastly has the Diaspora’s assistance in Haiti impacted Haiti positively or negatively?
Chapter 3: Haitian Diaspora in the United States

In the earlier days of the Haitian migration to the United States the diaspora maintained a transnational activity in the form of remittances. “Defined as the transfer of money or goods, sent by the migrants and received by individuals who, generally, are family members of these migrants, remittances were an important means of support throughout the Duvalier era and continues to be today.”\(^{101}\) This chapter will briefly discuss remittances and how the changing political environment in Haiti then changed to other forms of diasporic support. Focus will be given to the varying waves of foreign-born Haitian Diaspora and the different methods of support since the Duvalier-Aristide transition and beyond.

The popular movement that emerged in Haiti during the late-1980s, sparked renewed vigor in the American sector of the Haitian diaspora. Aristide’s popular movement “Lavalas Operations” and eventually the Lavalas Organization, unified Haiti and had a far reaching effect across national lines and well into the United States. It re-invigorated the Haitian Diaspora to such an extent that both the socio-political and economic efforts of the Diaspora began taking on a different and significant form both in the United States as well as in Haiti. These new forms of diasporic support also required innovative notions of reorganization in order to fit into the new democratically elected

<http://isim.georgetown.edu/publications/20090101_Haitian_Diaspora_Associations.pdf >
popular government. The Haitian Diaspora refocused its remittances through organizations (political and non-political) and associations.

Several events in the early 1990s brought attention to the significant number of Haitian immigrants in the United States and their potential to organize. Some of these events include the April 20, 1990, march from Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn across the Brooklyn Bridge to Wall Street. “This march brought thousands of orderly but insistent Black people together in order to protest a decision by the Center for Disease Control that proposed Haitians (and West Africans) be forbidden from donating their blood to blood banks.”

Similarly in their potential to organize and more to the diaspora’s potential to assist Haiti, the diaspora responded by forming hundreds of small meetings, parties, and all sorts of appeals in order to help Aristide counter the Washington-supported opponent, Marc Bazin.

“Aristide’s victory on December 16, 1990 produced an outburst of joy both in Haiti and in the diaspora. The coup against Aristide on September 30, 1991, was followed by immediate protests in Washington, Miami, Boston, Montreal and New York, with a major protest in New York announced for Friday, Oct. 11. In the words of the New York Times, "... the police had not expected such a large turnout -- even though the 300,000 members of the Haitian community in New York have shown a readiness to voice their political concerns." (NY Times, October 12, 1991)"


The Haitian Diaspora’s display of mass demonstrations in these two events opened a dialogue within the international community on the Haitian Diaspora potential to playing a role in Haitian development. Jean-Bertrand Aristide also questioned the Diaspora’s potential, but acted on this by creating a diaspora ministry:

“One of the earliest examples of a diaspora ministry in the developing world is Haiti’s Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad (MHLA). Created in 1995, the ministry aims to encourage the participation of diaspora communities in technical and professional activities to advance Haiti's development efforts. The ministry informs the diaspora of local realities and changes in Haiti and encourages the diaspora to return to and invest in the country.”

Before these massive demonstrations and since the first wave of the Haitian Diaspora, foreign-born Haitians were assisting their home country beyond remittances. As the years continued, remittances increased but also the dynamics of contributions to Haiti changed.

In the 1960s, the number of foreign-born Haitians in the United States was relatively small with 4,816 foreign-born Haitians (Appendix 2). However, since the 1970s and onwards, that has increasingly grown by leaps and bounds in the United States doubling with each new decade since. By 1990, there was a population of 225,000 foreign-born Haitians residing in the United States. That number again doubled in the year 2000 to 419,000. This is significant in that as the diaspora grew in the United States

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the consistency and amount of remittances being sent to Haiti increased as well (Appendix 3).

A disaggregate look into the 1990 US Census (Appendix 2) on the 225,000 foreign-born Haitians shows that this cohort had a labor force of 156,000 (1990 US Census), a cohort that potentially contributes remittance. In 1990 the number of remittances reached levels of over $300 million USD, surpassing the levels reached in the 1980s, which steadily remained at approximately $100 million USD. In the following decades, the foreign-born Haitian population again doubled and so did the estimates of remittance contributions, reaching well over $500 million USD in the year 2000.105

Haitians have settled in many parts of the United States; however the largest concentrations of the Haitian Diaspora reside in Florida, New York and Massachusetts, respectively. As of 2008, there were 535,000 foreign-born Haitians living in the United States, with the highest concentrations in Florida (183,108, or 34.2 percent of the total Haitian-born population), New York (159,444, or 29.8 percent), and Massachusetts (34,757, or 6.5 percent).106 With the steady increase in remittance being sent to Haiti as the population of foreign-born Haitians continued to grow. In the United States it has

become clear that the transnational activity of remittance flows has created an ‘active diaspora.’

Remittances: The Economic Impact on Haiti

“Remittance is defined as the transfer of money or goods, sent by the migrants and received by individuals who, generally, are family members of these migrants.” Migrants sending remittances do it to help “meet basic family needs including health care and education;” after those responsibilities are fulfilled, they may contribute to housing improvements and eventually land purchase. The country where immigrants are sending money from is called sending country and the country receiving remittances is called a receiving country or labor-sending country.

In the context of Haiti, prior to 1970 there was no record to show the flow of remittances entering Haiti from the United States and less showing their impact. Since 1970, however, it was recorded that an estimated $18 million USD (Appendix 3) were flowing into Haiti from the United States, steadily increasing until reaching levels upwards of $106 million USD in the 1980s. Research on the impact of these


remittances in Haiti during this time is insufficient, but initial findings told that the supplemental resource of income did go to fulfill the basic needs of a household.

Surveys in New York and Miami in the late nineties revealed that 90 percent of Haitians remit money back to Haiti, averaging just over $100 per month. With these statistics it was starting to become clear that remittances were an important ‘external input into the Haitian economy.’ In 2001, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) estimated that 24.2 percent of Haiti’s GDP came from remittances.

In the mid-nineties, research on the receiving country, in this case Haiti started to look at the affects of remittances, mainly looking at the undertakings of the individuals/households when receiving remittances. In Itzigsohn’s study on Migrant Remittances, Labor Markets, and Household Strategies, findings in Haiti (Port-au-Prince), suggested that remittances supplement a household’s well being, however, “those that receive remittances are the better off among the poor.” The study seemed to negate most of Itzigsohn’s claims on remittance impact on households. For instance, although emigrating was pervasive in Haiti, households with higher human capital were more likely to receive remittances. Itzigsohn’s hypothesis that head-of-households receiving remittances do not participate in the local labor market complied, however, did

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<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/display.cfm?ID=138#1>
not corroborate with the amount of income that was being generated aside from remittances. This only proves that the Haitian labor economy is informal.\footnote{Itzigsohn, Jose. “Migrant Remittances, Labor Markets, and Household Strategies: A Comparative Analysis of Low-Income Household Strategies in the Caribbean Basin \textit{University of North Carolina Press}. Vol. 74, No. 2 (Dec., 1995), p. 649}

In 2003, the Migrant Policy Institute (MPI) stated that although their (remittances) “are an important source of income for many developing countries, they are extremely difficult to measure.” This is often due to the different ways in which Diasporas sent remittances back to the receiving country. In fact, there is much to say about the informal way that remittances are sent. Remittances are estimates at best and so it is safe to assume that the way they are impacting households can only be a presumption. One thing is known for sure and that is that ‘remittances from the United States are particularly important to countries of the Caribbean. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) estimates that over three-quarters of remittances originate in the United States.\footnote{O’Neil, Kevin. “Remittances from the United States in Context.” Migrant Policy Institute. June 2003. Web March 2011 \url{http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/display.cfm?ID=138#1} }

The difficulty in assessing impact through individual remittance contributions has prompted research on other methods of contribution. Migrant organizations are another way remittance contributions reach Haiti. These organizations consist of Haitian volunteers/members who are “dedicated to addressing unmet needs and contribute to communities.”\footnote{Weiss Fagan, Patricia, et al. \textit{Haitian Diaspora Associations and Their Investments in Basic Social Services in Haiti.} (Washington, DC: Georgetown University, 2009), Web. 01 Mar. 2011. \url{http://isim.georgetown.edu/publications/20090101_Haitian_Diaspora_Associations.pdf} , p. 6} These “collective remittances support initiatives in their country of
origin; they are collective because migrants do so with the intention of having a collective impact, and are themselves organized for collective action.”

Haiti’s diaspora contributes collective remittances through three types of organizations or associations. These are hometown associations (HTAs), profession-based associations and church-based organizations. These types of organizations all assist within different capacities and focus in different sectors where Haiti’s government lacks the capacity to deliver services.

**Migrant Organizations and Associations**

The collective action of migrant organizations to contribute remittances to Haiti is more generally known as Home Town Associations (HTAs). Satisfying the HTA criteria are a great many student organizations along with large and small non-profit organizations, local US community organizations and centers existing around the US. “These associations have been important vehicles both for maintaining Haitian identity in the new country and affirming loyalties to their country of origin.” These social groups support many projects abroad in Haiti as well as within the US diaspora community. An initial look into the number of organizations operating in the US with the focus of assisting Haiti and registered under the charity & non-profit code (501c3) is

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115 *Ibid*, p. 6
numbered at 846 organizations as of January 2011. The exact figure on the number of organizations spearheaded by foreign-born Haitians alone does not exist. However, identifying their impact through collective remittances has shown that association or organization supported projects focus on ‘addressing unmet needs in specific geographic locations.’ They also tend to assist in places where a member of the association has a specific link to a Haitian community.

In 2005, music artist and producer Wyclef Jean started Yele Haiti. The mission of this organization is to assist with the “process of dialogue, an engagement of all factions present in Haiti” and to fully engage the diaspora in supporting this process and to provide aid and assistance to the Haitian communities in greatest need.

Since its inception, Yele Haiti has focused on education, entrepreneurship, community development, health and environment and most recently emergency relief. Its high profile status has allowed it to engage the diaspora for support with resources and secure local and international financial and political support. Local Haitian communities (mainly in Port-au-Prince and Gonaives) embrace this organization and the work that has been done and future projects to come.

117 Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Web March 2011 <http://www.irs.gov/app/pub-78/search.do?resultsPerPage=500&nameSearchTypeStarts=false&names=Haiti&nameSearchTypeAll=false&city=&state=All...&country=USA&deductibility=all&sortColumn=name&indexOfFirstRow=0&isDescending=false&dispatchMethod=search> These organizations are indexed in the IRS website and were searched using the word ‘Haiti.’ Any further information as to what their specific focus on Haiti is, does not exist in this website.


Many other less well-known HTAs operate in much of the same way although they don’t have the star power or the backing of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). The small-scale projects that are initiated in Haiti generally deal with education, health and infrastructure. In order to begin most of these projects, sources of funding come from the members themselves to start-up projects in a small rural community (that diaspora may or may not have a link to). Usually these communities are difficult to get to and the small HTA operating in that community may be the only assistance that is in the area.

**Professional Associations and Church Organizations**

In order to assist Haiti, the Haitian Diaspora also comes together through professional groups and church organizations. These two types of group associations are far more reputable and with larger membership. Overall the “professional organizations [who] are comprised of better educated and wealthier members than either of the two categories.” Most recognized amongst these professional organizations is the:

Association des Medecins Haitiens a l’Etranger, AMHE. Founded in 1972 and founded 8 more chapters by 1980 in other US states. AMHE works in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. Its activities include raising medical standards in the major hospitals, training Haitian physicians, and mounting campaigns to reduce HIV/AIDS and Malaria. The government of Haiti has also given AMHE a customs franchise that allows it to ship medical supplies to the country duty free. (Customs duties are a continuing problem for other organizations, and it is not clear whether they are

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unable to negotiate similar arrangement or prefer not to do so.)  

Professional associations operate in much the same way as HTAs. However, because of a larger pool of funding sources they operate with a “more elaborate organizational and communication structures.” Their capacity to fund projects of their liking (usually in the health sector) is due to their expansive network that professional associations are able to create. They usually have different chapters of the associations not only in one city but several cities in the United States, and it may not necessarily be a city that has a large Haitian Diaspora population.

Churches are among the oldest institutions to which Haitian migrants belong to, with the most visible and important religious institution being the Haitian Catholic Church. Nearly 75 percent of recent Haitian immigrants in South Florida reported in 1985 that they attended church at least weekly. The contributions and work in Haiti from church organizations is primarily geared towards education, school building and disaster relief. Most if not all of the funding for these projects come from a large faith-based community. More importantly it is an exponentially growing community of faith-based diaspora membership with the increase of Haitian émigrés into the US and settling into Haitian Diaspora communities.

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122 Ibid, p. 23
123 Ibid, p. 39
124 Ibid, p. 38
An increase in HTAs, professional and faith-based organizations in 1995, with the focus of assisting Haiti, surged collective remittances (by 2000 $578 million USD). INGOs began to take notice of the untapped development-assistance potential in the Haitian Diaspora. In 2008, a study commissioned by the IDB was conducted on Haitian Diaspora organizations and associations in the US (specifically New York City, Miami, and Boston) and Canada to gauge the impact of their assistance in Haiti. In the report’s findings, the amount of commitment, money, and influence that these associations and organizations are giving is unquestionable. However, the research found many inconsistencies to fully support the claim that through associations and organizations the Haitian Diaspora was conducting assistance that would be favorable to Haitian development. In fact, the results from the surveys conducted showed that most of the inconsistencies in developmental aid were due to the fragmented nature of US-based Haitian Diaspora associations and organizations.

Among HTAs alone very little collaboration exists between the smaller and larger and resource-heavy organizations within the US. One possible reason given by the author of this report suggested “probably the major reason is that HTA projects are created by closely related individuals who wish to make their own mark and do not seek partnerships with other inclined individuals.”

Not all professional associations have the capacity to assist in the way that AMHE or Yele Haiti can. For instance, the Haitian American Nurses Association (HANA)

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provides Nurse training services in Haiti. The members “carry out their own missions in Haiti by using their own salaries to do the work they have agreed to do.” On the same note, with the added presence of the mushrooming number of HTAs many organizations are struggling to simply obtain basic resources that are necessary to operate, even on a very small scale in Haiti.

It was found that although there is a large Church-based diaspora community, the projects with schools (building, supplying, etc) are constantly ‘struggling against odds’ to complete or maintain. Moreover, if the church-funded schools are operating ‘they may or may not follow a government curriculum.’ “And more often than not lack appropriate teachers and equipment to cover more than basic learning.”

Overall, the finding on the impact of these associations and organizations on Haiti, ‘have been at least modestly effective in contributing to systemic improvements that only a few are likely to be sustainable over the long term.’

**Political Organization within the US**

Aristide’s advent to the political scene in Haiti and his welcoming request for Haitian Diaspora support sealed the transcontinental political relation. The start of the changing government landscape in Haiti (1986) and its openness welcomed an equally

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127 *Ibid*, p. 24
128 *Ibid*, p. 38
diversified political environment in the US. The multitude of political parties that sprang up or came out of hiding in Haiti, more specifically in the US, have created a unique dynamic on Haitian-US relations and Haitian politics.

The political organizations of the early 1960s, headed (usually) by elite exiles of the Haitian Diaspora, were focused on either emigrating with the hopes of returning once the Duvalier government toppled or on actions to over-throw the Duvalier government. It has been documented that Haitians (exile) such as Bernard Sansaricq organized annual invasions of Haiti over the course of almost two decades.\textsuperscript{130} No attempt was ever successful because the opposition’s movement lacked a strong and well-organized base in Haiti.\textsuperscript{131} While waiting for either event to occur, political relations were more a state-to-state function, and at the local level the Haitian Diaspora was a somewhat united front waiting for the fall of the Duvalier regime.

Since the 1970s the Diaspora’s political efforts, in the United States and aside from its efforts to overthrow the Duvalier regime, started to focus on realizing the more humane treatment of and allowing entry to Haitian refugees entering via US waters. Approximately three decades of legal battles with the United States government on the status and rights of Haitian refugees helped to build a significantly cohesive diaspora body politic. Groups such as churches and liberal organizations lobbied and used the courts to obtain better treatment for the new refugees.\textsuperscript{132} Several American institutions

\textsuperscript{131} Ibid, pp. 56
\textsuperscript{132} Stepick, Alex. “Flight into Despair: A Profile of Recent Haitian Refugees in South Florida,” International Migration Review, Vol. 20, No. 2, Special Issue: Refugees: issues and Directions (Summer, 1986), pp 334
such as the Ford Foundation and the Congressional Black Caucus\textsuperscript{133} have a history of continuously assisting Haitian organizations such as the Haitian Refugee Center (HCR).

Immediately after the fall of the Duvalier dictatorship of 1986, a long awaited opportunity presented itself to the Haitian Diaspora. Exiled Haitians returned to Haiti and some returned with political hopes. Exiles, like Bernard Sansaricq, returned with the hopes of having their party represented in the new political forum of Haiti and presidential candidacy.\textsuperscript{134}

It was the grassroots initiative that supported Jean-Bertrand Aristide and that support culminated with the Haitian Diaspora of the United States. By the time Aristide emerged as the new president in Haiti, the diaspora was an important political entity in the United States. The significance of the diaspora’s support for Aristide and the battle fought by the diaspora to return him to Haiti proved that the diaspora belonged in Haiti’s new political forum.

Since that time, the added factor of the Diaspora in Haitian homeland politics of Haiti has been marred with problems. Not specifically because of the Haitian Diaspora but certainly the added “presence of the returnees in town and periodic visits of members of the diaspora made things more complicated.”\textsuperscript{135} Such complications Laguerre claims

\textsuperscript{133} Note: In 1979, the Congressional Black Caucus was the only organized group in the U.S. Congres that stood up for the rights of Haitian refugees in the United States (Stepick 1998:07).


\textsuperscript{135} Laguerre, Michel S. Diasporic Citizenship: Haitian Americans in Transnational America (New York: St. Martin’s Press,1998), p. 26

(Laguerre further supports this claim by stating that the end of the dictatorial regime did not bring about peace and prosperity for all. It was characterized by the emergence of
are the various forms in which individuals from the Haitian Diaspora interact with Haitian homeland politics. “Among the most productive are those that involve direct interaction with the Haitian electorate and the political establishment…also productive are actions carried out in the United States by the diaspora on behalf of the Haitian government or the Haitian people at large.”

The added complication of the diaspora in Haitian politics culminates in a list by Laguerre (1998):

- The financial resources of the diaspora are an important asset (Haitian elite no longer have the financial leverage they once held in Haiti);
- Diaspora also participates in island politics by contacting US Congressmen and form, voluntary and grassroots organizations for favors on behalf of Haiti… Members of the diaspora have been able to introduce their presidential candidates to US politicians and to members of Congress.
- Since Diaspora sends remittances back home, they can influence the votes of their relatives and friends.

**Haitian Diaspora Political Outlet through Media**

The Haitian print weeklies and the radio programs have maintained the transnational connection of the Haitian Diaspora to Haiti. The founding of these *weeklies* delineates the successive support systems in the diasporic community. Much of the way the weeklies came about follows the Haitian Diaspora and the Duvalier-Aristide trajectory in Haiti. Where the first weekly to come out, *Haiti Obervateur* (1971), staunchly opposed the Duvalier government, the weeklies that followed *Haiti Progres* and *Haiti en Marche*, respectively, were weeklies that portrayed Haiti’s new and versatile new political actors, an army that found itself in a new environment and without a script to follow as before.)


137 Ibid, p. 160
political forum. Today the three competing weeklies, *Haiti Observateur*, *Haiti Progres*, and *Haiti en Marche*, continue to keep the diaspora abreast of all of the happenings within the diaspora community and abroad. However, with the changed environment and tools of media in general, there are far many different ways to receive information from abroad and vice versa.

Radio has always been the ‘optimum medium of communication’ for Haitians in Haiti, and in the diaspora community it’s much the same.\(^{138}\) Radio transmissions to the diaspora community in the US started in 1972 with *L’Heure Haitienne*, a weekly political program. Since then the number of radio programs have increased and so have the type of programs that are transmitted. Aside from the news, music, and event information radio transmission has served ‘foremost [as a] vehicle for political activism.’\(^{139}\) Much like the assemblage of thousands of Haitian Diaspora in the events of protestations against the CDC and Aristide support, these gathering were ‘assembled through radio announcements, with only a day’s notice.’\(^{140}\)

**Conclusion**

This chapter identified the various ways in which the Haitian Diaspora has maintained a transnational connection to Haiti. The physical distance has been no essential factor into how much influence the diaspora has in their homeland. So connected are the diaspora to Haiti and vice versa, that even members of this community

\(^{138}\) Stepick, Alex. *Pride Against Prejudice: Haitians in the United States* (Massachusetts: New Immigrants Series, Allyn & Bacon, 1998), p. 77 (While no Haitians own a single radio station in South Florida, Haitian radio programs still can be heard 24 hours a day, seven days a week as Haitians rent time on seven different stations and air about 124 programs a week.)


\(^{140}\) *Ibid*, p. 58
that lived outside of Haiti for the better part of their lives have been able to re-insert themselves through Haitian development, socio-political and economic platforms. Individuals from the diaspora community like, Dumarsais Simeus, a naturalized US citizen and self-made millionaire, have been involved in HTAs for many years in the US, help channel financial and other resources in organizations like Yele Haiti. His efforts culminated in an attempt to run in the Haitian elections of 2005. Many other exiles in the US returned to Haiti to serve as civil servants in the Haitian government (Haiti Observateur founder and supporter of Yele Haiti and uncle to Wyclef Jean, Raymond Joseph, the Haitian Ambassador to the United States).

It’s safe to say that the Haitian Diaspora in the US is an influential powerhouse in political and economic platforms with in Haiti, and that moreover, have been sealed with the backing of the United States government. The transnational importance of this phenomenon is creating a dependency that would seem to be co-dependent. But, is it really? Why has Haiti still managed to rank amongst the low human development countries?

In 2006, already 12 years since Aristide’s installation back into the presidential seat (1994), Haiti ranked at 146 on the United Nations Development Program’s (UNDP) human development index (HDI) with one of the highest rates of child mortality (Haiti is currently 72 per 1,000 live births)\textsuperscript{141} in the western hemisphere, the highest incidence of

\textsuperscript{141} United Nations Development Program. Under-five mortality (per 1,000 live births): Probability per 1,000 that a newborn baby will die before reaching age five, if subject to current age-specific mortality rates. Web March 2011 <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/57506.html>
HIV/AIDS, as well as the highest poverty index\(^{142}\) in the Caribbean. Granted development has never been without its complications. And with Haiti’s checkered past including over 200 years of slavery, being generally ostracized by the world community at large, and repeatedly suffering invasion after invasion, which are controlled by a powerful and developed country that lies a mere 800 miles away, development will certainly be a challenge.

The addition of the Haitian Diaspora as a major force in Haiti’s development process (as seen in the last 12 years) is uncertain. Doubtful because there has been a common denominator in Haitian history that the diaspora has transplanted and perpetuated as its been involved in the Haitian developmental process. The common denominator is the fragmented social structures that plague Haiti proper. The Haitian Diaspora has managed to allow this fragmentation to seep into the Haitian community in the United States. Furthermore, it appears as though the diaspora has also become the vehicle of re-inserting and establishing a more viable core-periphery relation between the United States and Haiti.

The following chapter will further discuss the diaspora impact on Haitian development. It will explain why the impact is not working and is in fact affecting Haitian development in its political, economic, and social sectors negatively.

\(^{142}\) United Nations Development Program. Intensity of deprivation: Percentage of weighted indicators in which an average poor household is deprived. A household is poor if it is deprived in at least 3 indicators. Web March 2011 <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/38506.html>
Chapter 4: Haitian Diaspora Impact on Haiti: Why the impact is not working?

On Monday, 16 February 2004 the New York Times front page read, “Chaos Becomes a Way of Life in a Rebel-Held Haitian City.” The article chronicled the political dispute which turned violent and froze Haiti since the ‘disputed parliamentary election of 2000. In order to convey the severity of this turmoil, the article opened with a heart-wrenching story of a woman identifying the ‘bullet-ridden’ body of her dead husband and confirming that he had been killed by “pro-Aristide militants as he tried to make his way home [here] during the uprising.” The article also highlighted militant leaders who opposed Aristide and their intentions to oust him out of the presidential palace. In so much as Jean-Bertrand Aristide’s power over the country had deteriorated, so had his followers from the diaspora community turned their backs on him. Mentioned in the article was a former exile (during the Duvalier regime) and member of Aristide’s cabinet, Jean-Claude Bajeux, who was recorded having said: “Power that has fallen into delinquency wants to have its own law, it is for that reason that Aristide lies and kills.”

In 1990 a large portion of the diaspora in the United States marched down the streets of Brooklyn, New York in support of Aristide. In 1994 the whole Haitian community was elated to see Aristide return to Haiti as its rightful leader. So quickly had

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Aristide’s power deteriorated that only-10 years later- he was once again on the brink of a coup and members of the diaspora were vehemently opposed to his governing tactics.

When Aristide returned to Haiti in 1994, he was returning to a fragile government structure, a massive budget deficit, a population begging for basic services, and a wave of violence that seemed to be predominantly coming from the pro-Duvalier government faction in the country. One of the things he did to begin a period of recovery was call upon the Haitian Diaspora to assist in the development of Haiti. Aristide then created the Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad (MHAVE) coined the ‘10th Department’ to represent the Haitian diaspora and to begin a structured system of collaborative measures.

This diaspora was supposed to be a key element in the development of Haiti. The substantial human, social and financial capital along with the benevolent-nature of the diaspora shown throughout years of scattered remittance and development efforts, especially those from the US, should have benefitted Haiti positively. During Aristide’s transitional and presidential period, has the Diaspora’s assistance aided development in Haiti? Why or why not? How did it affect Haiti? Was aid focused on bringing change to the political front or economic front, and was it substantial enough to move towards development in all its aspects?

The addition of the Haitian Diaspora as a major force in Haiti’s development process (as seen in the last 10 years) is uncertain. Doubtful because there has been a common denominator in Haitian history, which the diaspora has transplanted and perpetuated as its been involved in the Haitian democratic and developmental process. That common denominator is the fragmented social structures in Haiti, which the Haitian Diaspora has transplanted into the diaspora community in the United States. With the
disjointed nature of the diaspora this has impeded the development of Haiti’s political and civic atmosphere. The lack of collaboration has also affected development work supported by the diaspora, hindering any successes or temporary solutions with no long-term sustainability. Lastly, the diaspora has become the vehicle of re-inserting and establishing a more viable core-periphery, or more specifically, a metropolis-satellite relation between the United States and Haiti.

The following chapter will further discuss the diaspora impact on Haitian development. It will explain why the impact is not working and is in fact affecting Haitian development in its political, economic, and social sectors negatively. It will also discuss the US-Haitian relations (core-periphery) perpetuated by the Haitian Diaspora.

**Haitian Diaspora impact on Post-Duvalier transition**

Michel S. Laguerre’s three waves of Haitian egress highlights that the ‘economic disparities among Haitian American households can be traced to the history of Haitian immigration into the United States.’ When the first wave (1957-1964) of professionals, educated and elite left Haiti, ‘many of them were able to attend professional schools and or to find jobs in the US because they had entered the country legally.’ The second wave (1964-1971), the middle class Haitians exited Haiti on tourist visas and stayed beyond their tourist visa’s expiration. And the third wave which started in 1971, ‘consisted of lower-class Haitians, both urban dwellers and peasants, in boatloads headed to the shores of Florida,’ as undocumented refugees.

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Since the Haitian Diaspora started trickling in to the United States, they brought with them the economic and political positions of their Haitian history. Many from the first and second waves had the intention of returning to Haiti once it was freed of Duvalierism. And many educators, businessmen, and political officials did so as well as diaspora from the third wave. However, the way in which Aristide’s transition was unfolding, it became evident that members of the diaspora community had ‘conflicting political and social interests.’ Once democracy was restored in Haiti, cultural issues more than politics emerged as a defining element of the Haitian community. Divisions between the old and new generations of Haitian immigrants made unity within the diaspora almost impossible to achieve. Jean-Pierre further explains:

“A multitude of political organizations, 80 at last count, that sprung up in the last couple of years…Ninety percent of these groups are composed of 20 people or fewer …this fragmentation is hard to politically influence their representatives, whether local or national…in a permanent ad hoc approach, these groups come and go depending on the nature and duration of the crisis at hand.”

Further evidence that political fragmentation exists within the diaspora are the ‘fractious relations among the three major competing Haitian weeklies…they are a ‘mirror of the rips and tears in Haitian society, the rivalry among these weeklies often borders on ideological war.’ Radio programs hosts and the listeners no longer had a common enemy—the repressive, undemocratic Haitian government. Once democracy was

145 Stepick, Alex, Pride Against Prejudice: Haitians in the United States. (Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon, 1998), p. 79
147 Ibid, pp 57
148 Ibid, pp 57
restored, the differences of opinion that were relatively unimportant previously emerged as critical divisions within the community.149

The political fragmentation of the diaspora in the US translated seamlessly into Haiti. When it comes to the politics of Haiti there are just as many transitional problems and with the added political struggles within the diaspora the political instability of the Haitian government is exacerbated. Anthony P. Maingot (1986) highlighted the diaspora factor in Haiti’s first year of transition. Maingot first explained that certain facets of Haiti’s social structure might impede the process of transition to democracy. These features are essentially problems that originate from Haiti’s historically fragmented structure and “soft state” modus operandi. To begin, Maingot calls attention to understanding Haiti’s historical political traditions, which he defines as political individualism. This concept has persisted in Haiti due to its “multitude of social divisions,” viz., historical race-class division between blacks and mulattoes, regional, religious, language divisions difference (French vs. Creole), as well as differential levels of education, healthcare, and of opportunities in general.150 The Haitian story is reflected in the internal class diversity that characterizes the Haitian Diaspora.151

Maingot continues by highlighting one of the six problems that the diaspora factor has added to the environment of homeland politics:

“Haiti’s fourth problem: the presence of a large number of risk – free participants, the many key actors who are

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149 Stepick, Alex, Pride Against Prejudice: Haitians in the United States. (Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon,1998), p. 77
151 Stepick, Alex, Pride Against Prejudice: Haitians in the United States. (Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon,1998), p. 116
exogenous to the system and have relatively little to lose in the struggle. [Haitian exiles permanently residing abroad. They invest money, publish newspapers, send delegations to the island, and generally tend to get more attention than do most local actors. This last point raises the crucial question of the proper role for “outsiders” in a post-authoritarian transitional period, such as that of contemporary Haiti.]

In relation to the previously mentioned dilemma is the added problem within Haiti – What happens when the diaspora returns to Haiti? Maingot coins this as the “problem of the asymmetry of motivation.” This is the problem in Haiti where groups on the extremes of both Left and Right share disdain [“bourgeois democracy”]. It lies [more correctly] between exiled politicians and those who stayed behind. The very length of the time spent in exile has much to do with it. A lengthy exile tends to break contacts, which are difficult to rebuild in a situation where the “law of large number” and an “outguessing regress” make for shifting targets. The temptation to run their campaigns from abroad, and /or through subordinates, can be fatal in a system, which is at once so personal and so communal.  

Maingot’s argument in this stage is further supported by Laguerre’s (1998) observations that “some local people are suspicious of the newcomers from the diaspora not only because they take jobs from the locals, but also because of their double allegiance.” So far, most diasporic cabinet members have been on “loan”, returning abroad at the end of their term in office. For example, shortly after the Manigat and

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153 *Ibid*, p. 92
Aristide coups d’etat, diasporic cabinet members were granted protection by the embassies of their adopted countries.\textsuperscript{154}

Maingot’s \textit{sixth and final problem} that Haiti must tend to is the problem of the “manipulated agenda.” “In Haiti this means large numbers of individuals and groups with high expectations but no general framework, information, or group mechanisms for interaction and bargaining-is ripe for a manipulated outcome.”\textsuperscript{155} With much of what has happened in the Haitian political stage, many would support that this is exactly what has happened. Haiti is still lacking socio-political cohesion and the added diasporic factor has not aided in easing civic tensions in Haiti.

Indicators from the Freedom House organizations on civil liberties and political rights also show that with the fragility of Haiti’s political forum it has struggled to develop in the political stage. During the times of the Duvalier regime Haiti consistently ranked as ‘Not Free’ under Freedom House indicators.\textsuperscript{156} However, in 1986-87 enjoying the vibrant new atmosphere of a political forum indicated that Haiti was transitioning towards democracy as it exercised it political will; Freedomhouse ranked Haiti as Partially Free (PF) during that time. In the years that followed, Haiti has wavered back and forth between these two rankings however, with minimal success in sustaining at least a PF status.

Haitian Diaspora impact on Civil Society

Traditional and more formal institutions are supposed to be the drivers of developmental strategy and implementation. In Haiti it has not been the case, mostly due to the weakened state of the Haitian government. And when it has been strong (Duvalier regime), it has been shown that civil society (rural/urban) has received services in such a way that has marginalized and fragmented social structures. In the case of the Haitian Diaspora, it is evident that it has contributed to Haiti’s civil society in helping to bring basic social services and needs to Haiti. Many of these labors have been in place of the incapacitated-state of the Haitian government. Almost as an extension of the political fragmentation however, recent studies have shown that diaspora efforts with civil society in Haiti have also been less than successful due to the fragmented diaspora social structure that exists.

The IDB’s research on the diaspora activity in bringing basic social services to Haiti found that first and foremost the diaspora organizations and associations in the US were disjointed in nature.157

“Hometown associations are by far the most numerous, [however], the HTAs in each city (in the US) typically operate independently and in a different manner. The professional organizations are by definition more elitist and more national in character…smaller groups, struggling for resources and access were not inclined to explore possible

Note: Study interviewed organization that were wholly diaspora funded and operated, as well as some that had outside support and non-Haitian participants.
collaboration or support [for concern] they would be treated disdainfully.”¹⁵⁸

Furthermore, the study focused on how diaspora organizations function. Although there were many that are well-operating non-governmental organizations (NGOs), many of the those organizations “established between 1995 and 2000 have operated on a small scale and depended on funding from family and friends,” moreover “only two had obtained a 501c3 non-profit status.” This is due to the lack of knowledge or training in needs assessment, fundraising strategies, designing project proposal, planning accessing information and identifying potential sources of support of those who establish HTAs.¹⁵⁹

The non-collaborative nature of associations and organizations in the United States has shown to be equally ineffective to bringing a broader comprehensive approach to development in Haiti’s civil society. Diaspora organizations operate in Haiti mostly as small projects and limited to particular places (working separately and without coordination). The IDB research determined that “many of the specific projects now underway will not prove to be sustainable and this is generally due to declining membership of older HTAs, funding, sustainable maintenance and lack of local resources.”¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, pp. 20
¹⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 43
More specifically, very few projects work on, promote, or achieve community empowerment (human and social capital) and infrastructural development. Not enough organizations engage local participation in decision-making and planning. Diaspora groups that create and establish local community organizations are, ‘on the whole, weak.’ Furthermore, Diaspora and Haitian community relations are subject to tensions.\textsuperscript{161}

“Haitian groups in all cities expressed mixed feelings about their Haiti-based counterparts, i.e., compassion for their needs but caution regarding their capacities to manage money and projects; [moreover] diaspora contributions that are seen as patronizing are unlikely to elicit the active cooperation of community members”.\textsuperscript{162}

The diaspora has volunteered their time, expertise, money, and have delivered direct services.\textsuperscript{163} However, projects put forth by the Haitian Diaspora are seemingly perpetuating the same structural fragmentation and to some extent creating a cyclical form of dependency or rather further weakening the Haitian government responsibility to manage developmental strategy and implementation.

“As the New York based social analyst Francois Pierre-Louis has written: In a country like Haiti where the state is weak, the hometown associations, if they are organized and financed, can implement certain projects more effectively than the government bureaucracy. However, while they may come with good intentions to implement sound projects for the population, they can also undermine the authority of the state by competing with one another and creating duplicate projects.”\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{161} Ibid, p. 42  
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid, p. 42  
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid, p. 41
Haitian Diaspora and the United States

Since Haiti’s independence, economics, geography, labor, and politics have tied the US and Haiti. In the 1970s, as Haitian refugees were immigrating en mass to United States, US-Haitian relations remained a state-to-state function. However, the 1990s saw a changing dynamic where the Haitian Diaspora had a role in US-Haitian relations. This role of state to actor relations has further strengthened the involvement of Diaspora in Haiti.

Carolle Charles most notably highlights “how immigrant communities also are involved in the transnational processes of nation-building… and also interacting with the process of hegemonic power relationships between a strong state (the United States) and a weak state (country of origin).”165

One way to explain it is in the events previously mentioned: 1) In April 20, 1990, the Haitian Diaspora marched from Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn, across the Brooklyn Bridge to Wall Street protesting a decision by the Centers for Disease Control; 2) The coup against Aristide Sept. 30, 1991, was followed by immediate protests in Washington, Miami, Boston, Montreal and New York, with a major protest in New York announced for Friday, Oct. 11, 1991. Over 60,000 people blocked downtown Manhattan for hours to protest against apparent tacit U.S. support of the military coup.166

165 Charles, Carolle, “Political Refugees or Economic Immigrants?: A New “Old Debate” within the Haitian Immigrant Communities but with Contestations and Division,” Journal of American Ethnic History (Winter/Spring 2006) p. 191

The Haitian Diaspora has successively engaged the US government in the area of refugee policies. And with the eventual return of Aristide to Port-au-Prince by the United States, the Haitian Diaspora has taken a more active role in Haitian/US relations. No longer are these relations left to state-to-state function. Members of the diaspora community have managed to become major actors changing the way in which the US approaches Haiti. There have been instances of “Diasporas participating in island politics [who] contact US Congressmen and formal, voluntary and grassroots organizations for favors on behalf of Haiti…also members of the diaspora have been able to introduce their presidential candidates to US politicians and to members of Congress.”

On the involvement of ‘immigrant communities and nation-building,’ Laguerre (1998) says it best: “to understand the importance of the United States in Haitian affairs is to spell out the relations that Port-au-Prince maintains with the diaspora in Miami, New York and Boston. These cities are at the core of Haitian Diaspora transnational activity and extend to the Haitian economic, political and social societies. Politically, diaspora groups and non-governmental organizations in New York City subsidiaries serve as subsidiaries of the headquarters of their operations in Port-au-Prince. As such, they raise funds to be channeled to Haiti, and are consulted in the headquarters’ decision –making processes. Economically, transnational businesses are created to satisfy both diasporic and Haitian markets. Whether its Haitian products being provided in the US to the Haitian diaspora or introducing US products to the Haitian market, ‘sustained

169 Ibid, p.161

76
economic relations between the US and Haiti add a new impetus to the existing formal trade relations between the countries.\textsuperscript{170}

Nevertheless, the “economic-spheres,”\textsuperscript{171} along with political and social activities are extensions of a dependency that is not favorable to Haitian development. And although these relations have long been established as a state-to-state function the diasporic community in its new role has changed this. Transnational diasporic activity has generally operated on an informal basis. And with this the informal and sometimes ad hoc nature of the diaspora activity undermines Haiti’s already weak government.

Laguerre defines the informal transnational activities of the diaspora as experimental, transitional, multiplex, multi-vocal, underground, and transnational in practice.\textsuperscript{172} It is through these modes of conduct that the diaspora has become a ‘major factor in the opening up of the political system in Haiti.’\textsuperscript{173} Although this may be true, given the disjointed social structures within the diaspora how effective can this be in creating a cohesive effort to develop Haiti? It is understandable that with the many years of living abroad, the diaspora has amassed a human capital unequal to that of Haiti in all its aspects. However, the diasporic reach and pace are always leaving the “formal state

\textsuperscript{171} Note: Laguerre believes that the places where there are large concentrations of Haitian Diaspora have yet to fulfill the criteria of ethnic enclave. Rather he sees diaspora activity in business as an \textit{economic sphere}. Pp 127 Stepick also does not recognize the Haitian community in Miami called Little Haiti as an enclave: “a Haitian enclave had not emerged by the middle of the 1990s, nor is it likely to materialize. While many Haitian remain loyal to their heritage and community, too many disassociate themselves to permit an enclave to emerge” (Stepick 1998:54).
\textsuperscript{173} \textit{ibid}, pp 170
of Haiti in a process of clarifying its relations with the overseas tentacle of the nation” and therefore always in a state of stagnation and constant in the reassessment.\(^{174}\)

**Conclusion**

This chapter looked at diasporic activities in developmental work (collective remittances; projects in Haiti) through group associations and organizations. It discussed its political activism and influence in Haitian politics and furthermore, through its transnational participation, discussed the way in which the diaspora maintains the US involvement. Finally, this chapter analyzed the Diasporas modus operandi based on the fragmented social structures, which is the underlying factor that impedes Haiti’s most basic development.

\(^{174}\) *Ibid*, pp 164
Chapter 5: Conclusion

On April 13, 2011 the United Nations hosted a forum that placed emphasis on *Realizing The Development Potential of Diasporas*. It was an opportunity for various members of the development community to speak on propositions focusing on the diasporic contributions extending well beyond remittance flows. Moreover, the forum promoted a recently published book that covered various subjects including migration, contributions, network links of the diaspora, and presented a framework on how Diasporas bring opportunities for development to their countries of origin. It is clear that there is enthusiasm to look to the diaspora for new and innovative ways to further promote advancement in their country of origin.

This paper looked at the Haitian Diaspora as an active catalyst in Haitian development. An exploratory analysis on Haitian émigrés in the United States helped to confirm that the Haitian Diaspora has a significant transnational link to Haiti. These connections are strengthened with the presence of both political and socio-economic associations. Moreover, after looking at how political organizations and associations operate, it becomes apparent that the fractured social class structure is divided by socio-economic status. Although a unified Haitian Diaspora has proven to be a strong lobby (i.e., swaying American policy and collective remittance contributions) the factions that exist beyond that have implications on sustaining the efforts taken on by the diaspora.

Politically, the Haitian migrant community has been an important factor in opening the channels of political fora in the United States and in Haiti. This was
particularly demonstrated with Aristide’s return to power in 1994 via US intervention. The Diaspora’s 300,000-member protest in New York and the subsequent support of Aristide’s return to Haiti proves that the diaspora is influential and can support the democratic process. However, in the case of Diaspora involvement in Haitian politics, either through financial means or access to certain US government officials, it has proven to be detrimental in influencing a political cohesion as mentioned in chapter four.

The divisions existing within the Diaspora community exacerbate the inability of political cohesion in the Haitian government. This is generally seen in instances where the Diaspora uses whatever means necessary to create a particular desired outcome. The government in turn may look to other diasporic members to find even other means of support thereby creating a more complex political web. This in turn, creates an environment that fosters mistrust and ultimately violence. For example, the disputes of a contested 2000 election had long destabilized an already weak political environment that affected the entire country. The effects of perpetuated chasms in Haiti’s government culminated in 2004. Public services ceased, ‘fear and chaos (and violence) became a way of life’ once again. And media outlets worldwide once again documented daring interceptions of Haitian refugees brazenly heading for Florida shores.

The social development efforts of the diaspora through remittances, HTAs, and church organizations have been plenty. The efforts via remittances or collective remittances (community organizations, projects) help to fulfill the most urgent of needs to civil society. Furthermore, their contributions can be found operating in areas of Haiti
where government is barely functional and donors are minimally involved or absent.\textsuperscript{175}

Although their efforts are not affecting development negatively in this way, the disjointed efforts of these organizations and associations have created pockets of work that in reality do not bear long-term successes and are marginally effective.

Remittances, whether individual or collective, should help to build a more viable infrastructure that would eventually lead to development. “Even if the influx of money and goods were to increase, that alone will not be sufficient to drive development.”\textsuperscript{176} In Haiti’s case, it has been known that “the projects meant to upgrade the standard of living of the residents, by providing them with running water, electricity, school canteens, clinics for local populations with visiting physicians from the US, libraries and multipurpose building have provided individual successes, they end up serving as catalysts for emigration to the United States,”\textsuperscript{177}

Taking in to consideration the overall argument of development, “projects and loans –such as for clean water, clinics and schools in remote villages-may have a social and humanitarian impact, but they do not stimulate” development; “in other words, this kind of development does no harm,” but it does not create an environment of ownership, responsibility and good governance.\textsuperscript{178}


\textsuperscript{176} Ibid, p. 15

\textsuperscript{177} Laguerre, Michel S, \textit{Diasporic Citizenship: Haitian Americans in Transnational America} (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), p. 28

\textsuperscript{178} Luther, Hansu. \textit{Foreign aid alone doesn’t help: Without political and regulatory change, aid-dependent economies will remain just that}. Bankok Post. November 10, 2002. Interview with Dr. Hans U. Luther, a senior economic advisor of the Lao-German
Recommendations

Dr. Hans U. Luther once said: “To resolve home-grown problems; no external advice, however sound, and no amount of external financing can substitute for self responsibility and political cohesion in a society.” The transnational link between the Diaspora and Haiti is strong and therefore has proven to be an influential tool. However, if that influence does not extend itself to political unification then certain failure is assured. The Diaspora’s use of US government to support multiple Haitian factions only further intensifies animosity within Haiti’s political forum. Moreover, pertaining to civil society, no amount of remittances can ever make a positive enough impact if the way in which a diaspora approaches assistance is disjointed.

What is needed is a network of diaspora for the benefit of their country of origin. Unfortunately there still exists the practice of separating oneself from certain aspects of their immigrant group. In Haiti’s case, many middle-class Haitians distance themselves from the recently arrived, primarily working-class Little Haiti community, “the want to make certain that no one mistakes him or her for boat people.”

The question does not lie in whether the diaspora is assisting in their homeland but rather in the means by which they assist. For Haiti, political participation has added more animosity to the Haitian political environment. In development, diaspora

Project for Training and Advisory Services in Market-oriented Economic Policies at NOSPA in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

organizations alleviate the immediate needs of civil society however; they do not support more long-term sustainability. Also, most of the time government is not included in the projects or developmental efforts that they spearhead.

Lastly, how or what should the adopted countries of the diaspora communities do to assist diasporas to help their countries of origin? Aside from looking at the Haitian Diaspora in the United States, the International Development Bank study also focused on the diaspora in Canada and its approach to its Haitian Diaspora. The study found that there was much more unified diaspora activity happening in Canada than that of the United States. This was due to Canada’s approach to the diasporic community to assist Haiti.

“The Diaspora organizations in Canada are more likely than those anywhere else to see and receive government support. Furthermore, Canada has more consistently asked diaspora organizations to consolidate their multiple small projects, on grounds that development efforts would be more effectively served by larger scale efforts. This type of approach has occurred in the United States minimally.”

US/Haitian diasporic relations currently exist in solely a political realm but what is truly necessary are more grassroots initiatives.

Though the adopted country can manage to assist a diaspora in development efforts, this does not let the country of origin off quite so easily. Aristide did create the


‘Tenth Department,’ however the lack of mistrust that came from both sides was enough to deem the department irrelevant. Already by 1994, there were complaints on the lack of transparency in the ‘Tenth Department.’ If the homeland wants to reach out to its diaspora, the local government should be willing to facilitate that objective.

Afterthoughts

Today, Haiti’s Human Development Index ranking is 145 out of 169 countries and areas, positioning it in the low human development category. A ranking that was generated from a value that has not changed significantly, especially towards the increase of development. In the United States, however, many Haitians are successful professionals, which is different than the images we see arriving in the shores of Florida. The divisions between them and the majority of their fellow countrymen and women are immense.

These social and economic distinctions remain a prominent part of interaction within the various Haitian communities in the United States. However, social and economic distinction should not always have to classify one’s intentions to help their country of origin or their adopted country. What will it take for Diaspora to unite? Will Haiti ever get on the road to a true and viable development with the support of the diaspora? More often than not these questions have no easy answer. However, stories, like that of Roger Biamby, have always happened, pointing out the potential of the Haitian Diaspora:

183 Stepick, Alex, Pride Against Prejudice: Haitians in the United States. (Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon,1998), p. 3
Roger Biamby was sixteen when his family of ten fled to New York from Haiti in 1964 after his father, Ernst, an army colonel, launched an unsuccessful coup against President Duvalier. The Biambys, once part of the Haitian elite, arrived in New York with only $100. A career military officer with no experience in the civilian world, the former colonel took a job collecting litter at the 1964 World’s Fair in Queens. His wife sewed in a garment factory. His son, Roger, washed dishes at a Times Square restaurant, eventually putting himself into a doctoral program in political science. In the 1970s Roger moved to South Florida, where he has run nonprofit centers in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and Pompano Beach that provide job placement, legal help, and other services to Haitian immigrants (Grogan 1994). (Stepick 1998:37)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Appendices

Appendix 1: Map: Republic of Haiti

CIA: The World Fact Book: Republic of Haiti [MAP]
Appendix 2: Total and Haitian Foreign Born Populations, 1960 to 2008 [Table]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Foreign born</th>
<th>Haitian born</th>
<th>Share of all foreign born</th>
<th>Rank (a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>9,738,091</td>
<td>4,816</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9,619,302</td>
<td>28,026</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>14,079,906</td>
<td>92,395</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>19,797,316</td>
<td>225,393</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>31,107,889</td>
<td>419,317</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>37,960,773</td>
<td>534,969</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: a Rank refers to the position of the Haitian born relative to other immigrant groups in terms of size of the population residing in the United States in a given census year.

Appendix 3: Remittances Profile: Haiti

### Remittances Profile: Haiti

#### Formal Inward Remittance Flows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Millions of US Dollars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>$18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>$106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>$61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>$411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>$411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>$983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>$578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: All available historical data is included above. No data is available for years prior to 1971. For data on other countries, see [World Bank Development Prospects Group](http://www.worldbank.org). For definitions, see [Glossary](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/glossary).


#### Remittance inflows as a Share of Selected Financial Flows and GDP (Percent)

Remittance flows constitute an important source of foreign exchange for developing economies. Comparing remittances to other financial inflows displays the extent to which remittances contribute to a country’s inflow of foreign exchange.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Flow</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross domestic product (GDP)( t )</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign direct investment( t )</td>
<td>10.347%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial service exports( t )</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing exports( t )</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural exports( t )</td>
<td>2.985%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official development assistance( t )</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( t \) Data for 2005. \( t \) Data for 2006. For definitions, see [Glossary](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/glossary).
