

Gatherings in Diaspora

Religious Communities
and the New Immigration

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Reclaimed by the Virgin

Every year on the fifteenth of July, the tall, wrought-iron gates of the big, brick Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in East Harlem swing open to welcome thousands of religious pilgrims. Women and men, children and the elderly, throng to the church for evening Mass, after which they follow a larger-than-life statue of the Virgin Mary through the New York City streets in a long, night-time procession. After a midnight Mass they spend the night in the church, or go home and come back early the next day, dressed in the Madonna's colors of blue and white and carrying flowers, letters, rosaries, and money. In this way, the faithful celebrate the feast day of Our Lady and perform devotions for one of the many appellations of the Blessed Mother.

In 1995, ten-year-old Marie-Carmel wore a puffy, sky-blue satin dress whose many layers and petticoats made her look as though she were the topmost decoration on a multitiered cake. She sat patiently through the Mass, listening to the priest while she wrestled with her squirming baby brother on her lap. Her long, dark hair was carefully oiled and braided, each braid ending in a shiny blue and gold ribbon tied in a bow. As she rose with her family to join the line to receive Holy Communion, she faltered and tripped, and her mother had to catch her by the arm and

In this essay, I capitalize the term Black American to refer to the specific national group that is regularly designated as a category separate from other Americans.

help her up. Marie-Carmel looked down in embarrassment and studied her patent-leather Mary Janes as she approached the priest.

When Marie-Carmel lifted her head to receive the Host, her knees buckled and she staggered backward, wheeling into an aunt standing behind her. After she took communion, the family helped Marie-Carmel out of the church for some fresh air in the courtyard. They smiled and waved away the concern of the deacon who approached them about the little girl. "She'll be fine, thank you," said her mother, "it's just that she hasn't eaten today."

She turned to her sister and to me, as I was a friend of the family and had come to join them. Beginning in French, she finished in her mother tongue, Haitian Creole: "*C'est la Vierge. Li vin manifeste nan tèt ti-moun nan*" (It's the Virgin. She manifested herself in the child's head.) To indicate her continuing protection over the little girl, Notre Dame du Mont Carmel (Our Lady of Mount Carmel) had, briefly, possessed her namesake, Marie-Carmel.

The little girl's fall inside the church yielded two different interpretations, delivered in three languages. The family explained to the deacon, in English, that the girl was simply hungry.¹ But the deeper reality for the family had to do with their long relationship with the Virgin. That meaning was expressed in Haitian Creole, with, as a nod to me, a *blan* (foreigner), a translation in French.² This ten-minute drama at the church in East Harlem was only a small part of a much larger story about the involvement of Notre Dame du Mont Carmel in the life of a new immigrant family from the island nation of Haiti. It is a story about migration and religious expression, production, and performance, and like language itself, it contains multiple levels of meaning for various audiences.

Thousands of Haitian people have been making the yearly pilgrimage to the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in East Harlem for the last two decades. It is surely the largest annual religious gathering of Haitians in North America. It takes place at the same moment when thousands in Haiti flock to a mountainside waterfall at a village called Sodo (pronounced "So-DOE"), for the Fèt Vièj Mirak (Feast of the Miracle Virgin). Temporarily relaxing class, color, and political boundaries during the pilgrimage, the feast day of the "Miracle Virgin" also brings Haitian people in New York together for two days to pray, sing, and socialize in a particularly Haitian style. In this sense, Marie-Carmel's small drama in church was also part of an even wider story about Haitian religiosity in the United States.

For several years I have been following that story through the words

and actions of the Haitian people who come to visit Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The stories here will not only feature individual women and men expressing their devotion, but will also consider the role of social forces in their religious lives. These social forces extend back to the legacies of French colonization and the lasting effects of slavery, and the ways that Afro-Haitian religion appropriated Roman Catholicism to form what Haitians call "le mélange" (the mixing) and what anthropologists call "religious syncretism." Another shaping factor is the postcolonial or, more properly put, the neocolonial relationship between Haiti and the United States. This relationship has contributed to the creation of the Haitian *diaspora*, or "diaspora," which, since the fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier in 1986, has been increasingly shaped by the phenomenon of transnational migration—the frequent movement back and forth of migrants from home countries to host countries.

What, then, can this pilgrimage tell us about immigrant religiosity? What do Roman Catholic devotions mean in the ritual vocabulary of Afro-Haitian religious culture? What meanings do these same devotions acquire in the United States? This chapter tries to answer these questions by focusing on the Haitian experience of the feast.

I offer four central points. First, religious culture in Haiti is a creolized system, wherein actors have learned to "code-switch" between performances of Catholicism and Vodou. Second, it is in Vodou that the feminine divine spiritually enfranchises Haitian women. Third, in the United States, Catholic codes themselves become part of a strategy of Haitian disaffiliation from African Americans, in an attempt to contest and renegotiate United States systems of racialization.

Fourth and finally, West Indians and Latin Americans actively use religion to articulate American identities, and in so doing they continue a long-standing strategy used by previous immigrant groups. Unlike older immigrants from Europe, however, Haitian religious articulations are bound up with the realities of transnational movement. Religious sites in the United States become added to the American landscape; they multiply, rather than replace, spiritual centers of the home country.

Revisiting 115th Street: Religious Borderlands

The story of the Haitian devotion at the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in East Harlem is only the latest chapter in the ongoing history of that feast. Although the annual July feast at 115th Street now attracts thousands of Haitians, the church was built in 1884 by the Roman Catholic Pallottine order as a mission church to minister

to the Italian immigrant population of that era. Italian Harlem nourished itself with the love and protection of La Madonna del Carmine, continuing a tradition they had known back in Italy. Robert Anthony Orsi's book *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880–1950*, paints a lyrical and sensitive portrait of the ways the *fiesta* for the Madonna shaped people's lives—especially the mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters in the community for whom the Blessed Virgin was mother, goddess, protector, and role model. Her feast day, July 16, grew to be a major ritual marker in Italian New York, helping Italians forge an American identity based largely on their Catholicism (Orsi 1985). Although the mission of the church officially remains the same—to minister to Italian immigrants—now only 750 Italian Americans are left in its neighborhood (Laurino 1995).³

The ethnic flavor of the area began to change when Puerto Ricans started migrating into East Harlem just before World War II. By 1963, eleven public housing projects were built in the vicinity of the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel for twelve thousand low-income black and Latino families (Orsi 1992, 326; Bourgois 1995, 51). The neighborhood transformed into Spanish Harlem, the strong “Nuyorican” community affectionately known as “El Barrio” that now shares its territory with Mexicans, Dominicans, and West Africans.

The Italian immigrant families that moved to East Harlem between the 1880s and the 1920s had prospered by the 1950s, and as the Puerto Rican families moved in, the Italians emigrated to middle-class suburban communities with lawns and fences. Many of them still come back to the church to organize the feast, to attend the novena still prayed in Italian beforehand, to celebrate a special Mass for the dead, or to bless a bride or groom the day before their wedding. But these days, the majority of the pilgrims form a sea of coffee-, mahogany-, and cinnamon-colored bodies, clad in sky blue and white, praying and singing in French and Haitian Creole. The Haitians' presence at the feast is actually part of a larger social drama that is playing itself out among the Virgin, the Pallottine order, the Italian Americans who organize the event, their Puerto Rican (and other Latino) neighbors, and the Haitian pilgrims. Haitians have become actors on a multiethnic social stage that is vastly more diverse than their relatively homogeneous home ground.⁴

This Catholic church and its surrounding neighborhood have become a religious borderland of sorts. During the feast for Our Lady, Masses are said every hour in Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, French, or Haitian Creole. There are a very few Latino pilgrims in attendance, and only a handful of Irish Americans who search out the Tridentine

Mass still said there. But this feast, which is sponsored and produced by Italian Americans, has come to be peopled by new immigrants, who turn the space of the large church into a site of Haitian religious activity.

Haitians at East 115th Street

Most Haitians in New York know where the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is and have visited it—or know someone who has. By attending what they call the “Fête du Notre Dame du Mont Carmel” by the thousands, the New York Haitian population has collectively placed the church on an invisible community map. Stepping onto the public stage of this Catholic feast, they orient themselves within the shifting “ethnoscape” of New York City (Appadurai 1990). They make sense of the confusing complexity of this ethnic landscape by locating the church as a center of spiritual power where they will be welcome.

Haitians come in pilgrimage to East Harlem from diverse places in Haitian New York—Queens, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Long Island—and New Jersey, and from as far away as Atlanta, Chicago, and Montreal. Although they could attend feasts at other churches for Our Lady of Mount Carmel, like the one in Brooklyn's Williamsburg, thousands choose instead to cross the East River to Harlem.

Some say the Haitians come en masse to 115th Street because the church is a shrine, an official sanctuary for the Blessed Mother. It received this special status in 1903 from Pope Leo XIII, who thereupon donated two emeralds from the Vatican to adorn the golden crown of the parish's statue of the Madonna.⁵ Others say that the statue's hair—real human hair—makes her the most powerful Virgin in the area. Some Haitians are attracted to 115th Street because of the French Mass said there on the first Saturday of every month in support of the canonization of Pierre Toussaint, a Haitian slave who emigrated to colonial New York with his master. There may be another factor as well: as *teledjol* (word of mouth) began to bring Haitians to the shrine, others came to be able to worship La Vierge (the Virgin) in the presence of their countrymen and -women. While they cannot possibly re-create the busy, celebratory atmosphere of the Sodo pilgrimage in the Haitian mountains, they can nevertheless find friends, reunite with long-lost neighbors, speak and sing in Creole and French, and perform spiritual work for the Vièj Mirak.

The Haitian community, as did (and do) the Italians, begins to celebrate the feast nine days before July 16 with a novena—a series of daily prayers to the Virgin at the 115th Street church. Their numbers increase until the two days the feast is celebrated, the fifteenth and

sixteenth of July. The activity at the church begins to build throughout the day of the fifteenth. The Italian American ladies who form the religious articles committee unpack the goods they sell on behalf of the church: statues, medallions, scapulars, prayer cards, crosses, and crucifixes. Soon pilgrims pull up in cars, step down from buses, and climb the stairs leading from the subway. For the two days of the feast the sidewalks leading from the Lexington Avenue IRT trains become rivers of people wearing "Sunday best" outfits of the light blue associated with the Blessed Mother (and with ritual begging in Vodou), or white, a color of ritual purity for Catholic and Vodouist alike. They stroll on the arms of husbands, children, old people, and friends. Boys dressed in little suits and ties gallop ahead, racing little girls wearing dresses of satin tiers of sugary-looking cloth.

Notre Dame du Mont Carmel is especially known for the miracles she bestows on her followers, particularly those related to marriage and childbirth. I stop to talk to one young family and learn that their little girl—another Marie-Carmel—has ritually dressed in blue all of her life. She is *an ve* (in French, *en voeu*, or "in the condition of wishing"). At birth her mother dedicated her to Mont Carmel because she was born with an illness. To repay the Vièj Mirak for her recovery and continued protection, she will wear only blue or white clothing until the day of her First Holy Communion.

Pilgrims arrive throughout the day, and by nine o'clock that evening the huge church is filled to capacity for the Latin Mass; more than two thousand are in attendance. Hundreds more gather together in the courtyard and spill out into the sidewalk for the candlelight procession behind the larger-than-life statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Soon a great popping can be heard; this is the fireworks that announce and salute the Virgin at various places on the procession route. The smell of gunpowder fills the air, and the Haitian ladies, candles in their hands, lift their hands upward in a posture learned from Charismatic Catholicism.⁶ The noise and smell of the firecrackers "heat up" the prayers, as each pilgrim hopes that the fireworks will carry his or her message to the Virgin. But the sound of bursting gunpowder is also an aural semiotic sign for Ezili Dantò, the goddess who "walks behind" the Vièj Mirak. In Vodou services for Dantò and the rest of the spirits in the Petwo rite to which she belongs, whips are cracked and gunpowder is lit to create the slaps and pops that Petwo spirits like. When the fireworks go off in front of the Madonna on 115th Street, not a few women falter and clutch at those around them, fighting off spirit possession.

Each July fifteenth, the statue of Our Lady is brought out thus, and she is paraded along a route designated by the church priests. Past Second Avenue after a left to Saint Ann's Church on 110th Street, more fireworks are lit, and more prayers launched heavenward. Some pilgrims take the opportunity to go inside and visit Saint Ann. Just as she is the mother of Mary in Roman Catholicism, in Vodou cosmology she is Grann Ezili, an older form of Ezili. A few Haitian pilgrims have come to East Harlem specifically to see her. "The power starts with the mother," confided one woman. "Me, I come to the *fèt* to *pran woulib* [take a ride] on the procession." She uses the mystical power of the feast day to strengthen her request to the older feminine powers, Grann Ezili/Saint Ann.

The procession winds down Second Avenue from Saint Ann's back up First Avenue, past 116th to 118th Street, pausing at various points along the way to light firecrackers. Many of these stopping places are homes of the Italian American families still in the neighborhood, who contribute time and money to the feast. They have decorated their brownstones, some in the old style of hanging linens from the windows, others by placing blue candles and statues along their steps. The fireworks are a sort of salute to patronage that the Haitian community understands from their own Carnival and Rara celebrations, where music is played for the contributions of local *gwo nèg*, or "big men" (McAlister 1995a).

During the procession some families walk together and sing hymns like "Ave Maria," "Louange a Toi," and "Chez Nous Soyez Reine," or the Lord's Prayer in French. Others crowd toward the float bearing the Madonna, touching the blue and white plastic fringe as they walk. Candles in hand, the pilgrims wear the brown scapulars of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Bearing a brown scapular when she originally appeared, the Blessed Virgin promised that whosoever wore her scapular at the moment of death would escape the fires of eternal damnation.

When the procession reaches the church, every seat is filled for the midnight Mass. The courtyard is a scene of another sort, one closer in mood to the mountain celebrations at Sodo. Each year several women bring food, which they ritually distribute among the pilgrims. Standing in the vicinity you may be handed delicious *soup joumou*, (pumpkin soup), rice and beans, *griyo* (fried pork, the ritual food of Ezili Dantò), soda, and black, sugary Haitian coffee. The women who bring the food explain that they are continuing a tradition they kept at Sodo, inherited from their mothers, a form of ritual feeding of the poor. In late-night New York there are no homeless or needy people

around this church, so other Haitian pilgrims stand in for the poor and consume the food with gusto. The menfolk stand around drinking rum or whiskey, talking politics among themselves. Manbo Miracia, a priestess of Vodou who is a pilgrim here, nudges me and nods to a knot of middle-aged gentlemen. "The majority of them are married to Ezili Dantò," she said. "I know because I performed the services."

On the day of the sixteenth, the feast day proper, a 9:00 A.M. Mass is followed by another procession. Throughout the day, a quick Mass is said every half-hour in a different language, as hundreds of people arrive at the church, hand flowers to the workers in the sacristy, light candles, pray to the saints, attend Mass, and receive communion. Pilgrims pass in front of the various statues, praying out loud in the Haitian style, asking for the intercession of the Blessed Mother.

Some pilgrims bring a practical orientation born out of their Afro-Creole religious culture. "Never come into the church through the back door from the courtyard," one woman instructs me. "You should not approach the saint from her back—she has to see you walking in." Other pilgrims come to perform spiritual work that is meaningful in the ritual logic of Vodou. They leave money near the statues, either dollar bills or ritual amounts of coins. A few leave candles or sprinkle Florida Water, the cologne commonly used in Vodou for its sweet, spiced scent. Occasionally the priests have found plates of food as offerings to the *lwa*, the spirits of Vodou. Many leave notes and letters stuffed in Jesus' hands, on Saint Lucy's plate of eyes, and in the folds of the gowns of Saint Damien and Cosmos. The priests walk the length of the church from time to time, collecting the money and sweeping up the letters into piles (which they later throw away). Some of the letters are written to the Virgin for help in a specific problem, related to good health, jobs, or love. Other letters are formulas for spiritual work with *lwa*. One, with name written seven times with three Xs and the word *Jistis*, is asking Ezili Dantò for justice. Another name, written repeatedly on one side of a scrap of paper, is echoed by a name listed on its reverse. Here Ezili is asked to reconcile two enemies, or two lovers.

Every once in a while at the shrine in East Harlem, I have seen newly born *ounsi*, or "initiate," arrive with their godmother or godfather in Vodou. A *ounsi* must dress in white for a period of time designated by the *lwa*, usually forty-two days. In the first week after the week-long *kouche kanzo*, or "formal initiation," each *ounsi* must go to a new church each day and speak to the saints and the *zanj*, or "angels," of Vodou that "walk with them." For anyone initiated around July sixteenth, a trip to the Fèt Vièj Mirak is a special opportunity. These

pilgrims arrive dressed entirely in the whitest white from head to toe, with white head ties and straw hats. By performing the spiritual work of Vodou in a Catholic sacred space, they illustrate how Afro-Haitian religion uses and incorporates Catholicism.

The new *ounsi* is a rare sight in East Harlem, but not because people are not initiated in the summer. On the contrary, the summer season is the best time for those who are *reklame* (reclaimed) by the spirits to undergo the long religious ordeal of ritual worldly death and the joy of spiritual rebirth, instruction, and fortification. But just as churches are sites of spiritual power, physical space is very important in Vodou. Whenever possible Haitians will return to Haiti for initiation at the place of their *demembre*, or "ancestral spiritual homes." If these places in the countryside have been sold or stolen by the *tonton makout*, (destroyed), then people will be initiated into the formal temple system in Port-au-Prince. After the fall of Duvalier in 1986 allowed the Haitian population abroad to return home, the geography of spiritual work changed. As a result, the United States has become chiefly a place to perform healings and interventions in crisis. Sickness, work-related problems, and love are the most pressing issues brought to *oungan* (priest) and *manbo* (priestess) here. The more serious works—initiations, funerary rituals, or becoming a priest or priestess—are all carefully planned for trips back to Haiti (Brown 1991, McAlister 1992-93).

Religious Culture, Diaspora, and Transnational Migration

In many ways, Haitians' experience of the Mount Carmel feast is similar to that of their Italian predecessors at the church. In fact, their general positions as immigrant populations run parallel. Like Italians fleeing from *la miseria* (poverty) at the end of the last century, Haitians have come to the United States to escape the structural violence of *la mizè*, the poverty of the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Both agricultural peoples, arriving Italians and Haitians were (and are) similarly independent, family-centered, and devoted to local religious forms. The Italian emphasis on *rispetto* (respect) and dependence on *padroni* (patrons) (Orsi 1985) is similar to the Haitians' social hierarchies, articulated through patronage and loyalty to a *patron*, or *gwo nèg*.

There are, however, major differences between the experiences of these two communities that visit this shrine for the Madonna. For example, compared to the Haitians, Italian immigrants fit better the classic pattern of nineteenth-century migration. "Uprooting" them-

selves from the home country, they were “transplanted” to the United States and gradually created a new, Italian American national identity (Handlin 1951, Orsi 1992, 316). In contrast, many Haitians in the contemporary United States perceive themselves to be living *nan djaspora*, “in the diaspora,” defined against Haiti as an essential location of its own, regardless of whether they live in Miami, Montreal, Paris, or Senegal. Haiti itself is real, tangible, and, in fact, often a place of partial residence. From local points “in the diaspora,” Haitians live transnational lives. That is, they live embedded in international networks, sustaining social relations that link their societies of origin with their new settlement (Basch et al. 1994). Haitian transmigrants typically work jobs in New York to support homes in Haiti, keeping their children in Haitian schools until they are young teens. They return to Haiti during periods of illness or unemployment; for vacations; for important family events like baptisms, marriages, or funerals; and sometimes for national celebrations like the inauguration of a president, the yearly Carnival or Rara, or the pilgrimage to Sodo for Fèt Vièj Mirak. After decades in the United States, the elderly may return to spend their last years at home. Family roles shift between the two countries, so that children come of age and migrate north, and old folks retire and return southward to home. Both opportunity and tragedy can be the occasion to *janbe dlo*, or “cross over the water.”⁸

It is the U.S. Immigration Act of 1965 and its liberalizing entrance policies that allowed for the legal immigration of large numbers of non-European peoples. We can look to this moment as a pivotal occasion that heralds the vast increase in migrants from developing countries, many of whom have brought new religious traditions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and numerous local, “traditional” spiritualities—to the United States. But this legislation cannot be the sole explanation for the increase of Caribbean (and other) immigrants. It does not explain, for one thing, why so many thousands of people would want to leave their homelands and cultures and come live in the *djaspora* in cold and hostile environments.

Such drastic movement of people is linked to economic conditions. The past several decades can be characterized in terms of new levels of capital penetrations into “Third World” economies, the development of export processing, and the increased migration of people from the peripheries to the centers (Wallerstein 1974, 229–231; Nash 1983, 3–69; Sassen-Koob 1982). Individual actors who maintain lives in two nation-states at once are engaging in a creative strategy that maximizes their position in the present configuration of global capital. It is more

practical, for example, for many women to work as nurses in New York and send remittances back to Haiti to raise small children so that they will become *kretyen vivan* (good people, or literally “living Christians”) and not *gate* (ruined) by the harshness of New York life. In this way we can see that economic conditions are affecting both the flows of transmigrant activities and “the manner in which they come to understand who they are and what they are doing” (Basch et al 1994, 12).

It is increasingly true that in order to understand religious life for some new immigrants, we must also understand their continued relationship with the religious world of their home countries (Levitt in press). Unlike the earlier Italian immigrants of East Harlem, who shifted their religious focus from the churches of the old country to East 115th Street, Haitians join congregations and undertake pilgrimages *nan djaspora*, and also continue religious activities when they go to Haiti. They often plan business or vacation trips to coincide with opportunities to perform religious work at one of the many important spiritual sites at home. When they arrive, they are labeled *djaspora* by the townspeople who could not afford to leave.

As spaces where other Haitians congregate, religious sites in diasporic locations become inflected with meanings that span both home and host nations. Working with Cubans at a shrine church in Miami, Thomas Tweed (1997) suggests that we can usefully understand diasporic religious communities as translocative (moving symbolically between the homeland and the new land) and transtemporal (relating to a constructed past and an imagined future). In Latin America the saints, with their feast days on the calendar and their churches in different villages, already have both temporal and territorialized identities, and become an organizational principle in the countryside. Each saint governs a day of the week, and the market days correspond to the saints’ days. In Capotille, Haiti, for example, the church is dedicated to Notre Dame du Mont Carmel, and Tuesday is her day. Tuesday is also market day in Capotille.

The pilgrimage to Our Lady of Mount Carmel in East Harlem expands the saint’s influence in the Haitian world. Rather than substituting the New York feast for the ones they left behind in Haiti, they add the Harlem location as another site of spiritual work. In this way East Harlem is opened up as one more place in the expanding “religioscape” of transnational Haitian religious culture.⁹ During the pilgrimage to the Vièj Mirak in New York, the Haitian population reterritorializes spiritual practice, reinscribing sacred, translocative space onto their new landscape of settlement.¹⁰ Haitians in diaspora

reach out to Mont Carmel and Ezili Dantò, powerful nationalist symbols, extending prayers for family and friends throughout the *djaspora* and in Haiti. Temporally they include concern for the dead and departed in Haiti as well as the hoped-for children of the future. Insofar as the Haitian population is able to return to Haiti—unlike the Cuban community at the time of this writing—the activities at the shrine are those of an actively transnational religious culture.

In 1993, commercial air travel was suspended during the U.S. embargo against Haiti after the 1991 coup d'état that had ousted Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Many Haitians who had come to New York for brief visits were delayed in the United States for months, and some who came to the feast that year told me they regretted not being back in Haiti. Their prayers on behalf of their beleaguered home nation were especially poignant. They were praying not for a remote ancestral homeland but for an embattled place of (partial) residence. Thus the feast in New York is not an isolated enclave of Haitian festivity focused solely on life in the United States. The movements, religious practices and ideologies of pilgrim actors mirror the realities of Haitian transnational migrants.

Vièj Mirak: Mont Carmel in Haiti

Many of the pilgrims at the New York Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, if they are in Haiti in July, would go to one of the pilgrimage sites for the Vièj Mirak back home. The biggest one, at Sodo in Ville Bonheur, attracts thousands of pilgrims who come for summer vacation and stay for weeks around the time of the July sixteenth feast. This small village is located high in the mountain range between Mirebalais and Saint Marc, with a population that is probably under three thousand (Laguerre 1989, 84). During the month of the feast, the town swells with pilgrims and vacationers, who rent rooms and houses from the villagers.

It is for the Fèt Vièj Mirak that many *djaspora* are willing to plan their international travel, don the light blue clothing of the ritual beggar pilgrim or the burlap sacks of penitence, and ride for seven hours on a *bourik* (donkey) into the mountainous Haitian countryside. Although Notre Dame du Perpetuel Secours (Our Lady of Perpetual Help) is the official patron saint of Haiti, the chapel for Notre Dame du Mont Carmel at Sodo is the most popular pilgrimage of the country.

“Sodo” is the Creole spelling of “Saut d’Eau,” which in French means “waterfall.” The great waterfall of Sodo was created during an

earthquake on May 7, 1842 (Rouzier 1891, 262; cited in Laguerre 1989, 86). Farmers in the region understood “sodo” to be a natural dwelling place of various water spirits in Afro-Haitian cosmology: the serpent Danbala Wèdo and his rainbow wife Ayida Wèdo, Simbi Dlo (Simbi of the water), and others. It is indeed a beautiful place. White, frothy mineral water falls hundreds of feet, bounces off boulders, and runs through twisting tree roots into pools below. As the cool spray splashes off the rocks, tiny rainbows glisten in the air. Pilgrims, hot from the seven-hour ride through the mountains, step under the falls and are sometimes possessed by the spirits. Their faltering steps and wide-eyed expressions become the visual currency of the ubiquitous foreign photographers who ring the falls, fighting for the best spots for their tripods in the undergrowth.¹¹

In July 1849, some time after the creation of the waterfall, rumors began to circulate that a peasant farmer had sighted the Virgin Mary in a nearby palm tree. President Faustin Soulouque, Haiti’s ruler from 1847 to 1859, appointed members of his legislative cabinet to study the apparition. After satisfying himself with their report, he ordered the (now) lemon-yellow chapel built in honor of Notre Dame du Mont Carmel (Laguerre 1989, 87).¹²

Since the apparition, the pilgrimage at Sodo has been not only a center of spiritual power but also a place of celebration. Haitians of all classes travel to Sodo in July with their families. Struggling entrepreneurs arrive early to set up food stalls, market stands, and gambling houses. Rich vacationers build or rent houses and arrive in private cars with the family to spend a few weeks enjoying the festivities. Among these, the *djaspora* from the United States are easily recognizable. They arrive wearing the latest fashions from Brooklyn or Miami, the women in shorts and halter tops with blonde streaks in their permed hair and long acrylic nails painted with designs. Young men likewise adopt the styles of Black American popular culture, often crossed with a Jamaican sensibility they learn through their contact with the Jamaican youth in their own West Indian neighborhoods. They wear athletic shoes, baseball hats, and the red, green, and gold belts of the Rastafari looped through their baggy jeans.¹³ This small mountain village turns into a crossroads of the global Haitian diaspora each July, as returning pilgrims also come from Zaire, Martinique, Guadeloupe, the Bahamas, Boston, and Montreal.

Nights in Ville Bonheur before and after the feast are a series of ongoing parties by all the classes that come together in the village. The town is without electricity, like the rest of the Haitian countryside. The

wealthy sit on their porches, enjoying whiskey, telling jokes, listening to Haitian *konpa* dance music on portable radios they power with batteries. Young sons may go out into the night in search of the many *bouzen* (prostitutes) who come into the town especially for the feast.

The less well-to-do stroll through the streets, tend their businesses, or stop in at one of the many Vodou ceremonies that enliven the village during the month of July. Traveling Vodou societies may bring their entire personnel, who set up their drums and call out the songs of the *lwa*, who are sometimes called *zanj* (angels) of Vodou. Street life is full and lively. By the light of the *tèt gridap* (kerosene lamps) or the burning torches set around the town, people recognize old friends, acquire new ones, make economic transactions, and perform the spiritual work they need to do in order to effect change in their lives.

The Haitian Religious Continuum

The chapel and the waterfall at Sodo are both important and impressive. However, *manbo* and *oungan* who serve the spirits of Vodou insist that the most powerful spot is the actual place where the Madonna appeared. Called Nan Palm (In the Palm Grove), this site stands near the entrance to the village. It is here that the Virgin dwells with her counterpart Ezili Dantò, the powerful Afro-Haitian goddess. Dantò's co-existence with the Vièj Mirak is an example of the great mystery of le mélange, or the syncretism of African and Catholic symbolisms. Like Mexico's Virgin of Guadalupe, who appeared to an Indian man at the shrine of an Aztec goddess, Notre Dame du Mont Carmel at Sodo is a powerful national figure resonant with multiple layers of meaning. When pilgrims make the trip through the mountains to Sodo, they visit the church, the waterfall, and the palm grove—a three-fold spiritual site.¹⁴

The *manbo* I have worked with tell me that Notre Dame du Mont Carmel "walks a path" with Ezili Dantò, a *lwa* or *mistè* "mystery" who has become one of the most important divinities in the culture.¹⁵ While she can be represented by Mont Carmel, Ezili Dantò is most often represented in popular Haitian iconography as Notre Dame du Czestochowa, the Black Virgin of Poland, whose face bears two scars running down her cheek. Like both Czestochowa and Mont Carmel, Ezili Dantò carries a baby in her arms. Dantò's baby is not the infant Jesus but, interestingly, a daughter. Some call her "Anayiz," others "Ti-Gungun." Dantò is known as single mother, a hard-working black woman, and a powerful warrior and fighter. A symbol of nationalist pride, she is said to have been a leader in the slaves' victorious war of

independence against Napoleon's army, when she earned the scars she carries (Brown 1991, 229).

Sometimes Dantò is described as a lesbian, and she is thought to choose which men will live as effeminate homosexuals. When she possesses people (for she can "ride" both women and men), she drinks *kleren* cane liquor and demands to eat pork, often the ears and feet of the roasted pig. In her incarnation as Ezili Ge Wouj (Red Eyed Ezili), she speaks without the use of the front of her tongue, saying only "ke ke ke," and pantomiming her meanings. Some say her tongue was cut out during the Haitian revolution so she would not betray her side's secrets (Brown 1991, 229).

When pilgrims go to the East Harlem shrine or to *Nan Palm* at Sodo and light a candle, sing to the Virgin, and *fè demann* (make requests), they are addressing Notre Dame du Mont Carmel and Ezili Dantò *at the same time*. This overlapping, simultaneous practice of Catholicism and Vodou has puzzled outsiders—both Haitian intellectuals and foreigners—for generations. Within anthropology, "syncretism" was the theoretical concept developed by Melville Herskovits (1941) and then Roger Bastide (1960) to understand the processes of change that arose with culture contact. Syncretism came to describe an "impure" religious tradition, saturated with local, unorthodox strains. Recent terms used to describe cultural mixings have included "creolization," "symbiosis," and "inter-culture" (Stewart and Shaw 1994, Desmangles 1992).

The received way of thinking about Vodou and Catholicism is to imagine them as a pair of binary opposites. It is true that Haitian Catholics have affirmed their own status by stressing their apartness from Vodou. A Catholic who is not at all involved in serving the *lwa* identifies as a *fran katolik* (straight Catholic), and there are some in the Haitian upper classes who know nothing of Afro-Haitian religion. The upper classes were (and are) generally literate, French-speaking, politically enfranchised, light-skinned, and emphatically Catholic. On the stage of cultural politics, Vodou was (and is) held up as the pagan, Satanic superstition of the poor, dark, nonliterate, and disenfranchised majority. Politically, then, Catholicism has always positioned itself in opposition to Vodou.¹⁶

In practice, it may be more helpful to imagine these two traditions occupying either end of a continuum, with Roman Catholicism on one end and Vodou on the other.¹⁷ Any given actor in Haiti falls somewhere along the continuum, some as Catholics, some as Vodouists, and the vast majority living their lives in the middle, going through the rites

of passage of the Catholic church while simultaneously maintaining contact with Vodou healers and the *lwa*, especially in times of crisis.

Even this continuum model must be complicated with further qualifications. Elsewhere, I have written that both the Afro-Haitian religion and the Catholicism that evolved in Haiti were constructed in dialectical relation to the other in a process of creolization. In this sense there is simply no "pure Catholicism" or "pure Vodou" in Haiti. To a degree that some advocates in each tradition might not like to admit, each has incorporated the other into its philosophies and practices. Each tradition is therefore constitutive and revealing of the other (McAlister 1995a, 179).¹⁸

While one tradition may be bound up in the other, the Haitian cultural politics that divides the enfranchised from the disenfranchised insists on seeing each as a separate religion. This same politics governs the behavior of actors in public space. It can be useful to understand the Haitian majority as being "bicultural" or "bireligious," a population able to speak both of the religious languages operating within the culture (Murphy 1988, 124). People strategically employ "religious code-switching" to translate the logics of Catholicism and Vodou back and forth to suit the social situation at hand. For this reason it may make sense to view the religious worldview of the vast majority as "Haitian religious culture," a term that "reflects a religion in two-way communication with the structures of authority around it" (Davis 1982). It is a religious culture that contains within it shifting sets of possible elements, complicated yet bounded by the theologies and practices of both Roman Catholicism and Vodou.

Catholics throughout Latin America make *promesas* (promises) to the saints, in which they ask for a favor and in return make a sacrificial promise. Some promise to return to a church on its feast day each year, others make pilgrimages barefoot, and still others donate family treasures to the saint's shrine. In Haiti, people will also make a request (*fè demann*) and tell the saint what they will give in return. Often the requests to the saints are governed by the logic of Vodou.

Madame Luc, an older woman who grew up in a small village in northern Haiti and who now goes to the East Harlem pilgrimage each year, explained to me that her family was Catholic and did not serve the spirits. But although she considers herself Catholic, she "thinks in Vodou" (Murphy 1988, 124). In keeping with a worldview focused on the family, she maintains that the Virgins of Mont Carmel, Altagrace, and La Merci are sisters.

For Catholics, the Virgin Mary and the saints are intercessors; they

carry our prayers to God. If they grace us with our wish, we are blessed, but if they do not, we must accept things as they are as God's will. For Vodouist Catholics, things are slightly different. If one saint does not give us what we want, we may berate it, argue with it, and ultimately turn to a different saint with the same wish. Just as we can punish them by turning away, they can punish us if we do not live up to our promise. Madame Luc told me that making promises to the saints is tricky: "Watch out, because if you promise something to them and then you forget, you're in trouble." She told me that if you promise to give the saint a cow, for example, you had better make good on your word. "How do you bring a cow to the church?" I asked her. "No, you don't give it to the church; the church isn't involved in that sort of thing," she said. "You make your request at the church. But you are dealing with the spirit behind the saint." She explained that if you promise a cow to the saint and your request is granted, you must give the cow to "the people who serve the *zanj* [angels]," a Vodou society. Madame Luc therefore places herself in an intermediary space where her actions are performed in the Catholic church, but her dealings are with the *zanj* of Vodou. Thus it is possible to situate her toward the Catholic end of a continuum between Catholicism and Vodou, themselves intertwined in Haitian culture.

The fact that people do the spiritual work of Afro-Haitian religion in church settings does not mean that they are not also fully participating Catholics. For the Haitians, the pilgrimage at 115th Street is very much respected as a Catholic event, and any spiritual work that is done explicitly for the *lwa* is done discreetly. Vodou remains an unspoken presence at the feast in New York, and each sign that carries meaning within Vodou can also be read as a form of Catholic devotion. Wearing light blue clothing, saying prayers during fireworks, distributing pork in the churchyard, writing letters to the Virgin—all these things have a place in the ritual vocabulary of Catholicism, even if they are seen by the priests at the church as the quaint expressions of the "folk."

The spiritual works of Vodouist Catholics are achieved in a process of religious code-switching through the subtle use of language, the nuanced use of color, and discreet offerings of spiritual significance. It is possible, then, to communicate with Ezili Dantò through Mont Carmel on the public stage without detection, even by fellow community-members standing at one's side. Devotions to Our Lady that are also spiritual work for Ezili Dantò are masked with a discretion that has come from generations of experience with colonial and postcolonial repression from France and Rome. Because of the historical circumstances involving the

church's repression of Vodou, then, it is quite possible to serve Ezili Dantò through the coded performance of Catholicism.

Anthropologist Initiate-Outsider Insider: A Word on Position and Method

The first time I went to Haiti, I traveled with a group of friends "back" to that country with a master drummer of Vodou music. We went as musical apprentices, and not as anthropologists. Rather than choosing a site for field research and then going to it, my trip mirrored patterns of transmigration, as I went "home" with an immigrant who had settled in my area.

Because we were traveling in July, our host insisted that we go to Sodo for the Fèt Vièj Mirak to receive good luck from the spirits. The trip was 1984, two years before the fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier. Since then much has happened between us as a result of that trip, which was launched under the auspices of Notre Dame du Mont Carmel. The stories are too long and too complex to tell here. Some of us married Haitians. Five children have been born, and two doctoral dissertations on Haitian culture were written (Wilcken 1991; McAlister 1995a, 1995b). Three of us were initiated together as *marasa* (twins) in the Afro-Haitian spiritual system.

Anthropologists are supposed to go off to the field by themselves (or with a spouse, who is briefly mentioned in the final academic work), and to conduct fieldwork and interviews alone. This has rarely been the case for me working in Haiti or in Haitian New York. Starting with that first visit to Haiti with a group of friends, I have always seemed to work with others, be they friends, family, photographers, assistants, or colleagues.

By the same token, I have never been to the pilgrimage to Mont Carmel in Haiti or in New York by myself. To arrive somewhere by oneself in the Haitian context is to signal unimportance, or worse, unconnectedness; it implies that *ou pa gen moun*, "you have no people." I have visited the site with other scholars, with Haitian friends, and with a group of women in a Brooklyn Vodou society. This is not to say that because I am with companions I am not doing field research, not taking notes, not making audio recordings, and not acutely observing the ritual around me. In a sense I am in my own mental universe, while others are in theirs.

The methodologies I have used in this study have ranged from the casual visit to Haiti with friends in 1984 to the formal interviewing of

pilgrims in New York in the early 1990s. Much of my knowledge of Afro-Haitian spirituality comes from being a partial "insider" as a Vodou initiate, although I recognize myself fundamentally as an "outsider" to Haitian culture. My own research and writing have been ongoing, and the period of my doctoral fieldwork let me taste the experience of transnational migration as I went back and forth to Haiti seven times in five years. (McAlister 1992-93, McAlister 1995a.)

To research and articulate the inherent realities of new migrants means following the movements of immigrants and retracing circuits of transnational migration. It entails working in immigrant enclaves in American cities and returning to home countries with recent immigrants. As one becomes embedded in these networks, field research involves working in proximity with others in new ways. This may well become the predominant field model in sociology and anthropology as scholars increasingly understand their own neighborhoods as places of globalizing cultural contact and cultural change.

A Household Reception for the Vièj Mirak

One evening in New York, as the candlelight procession for the Blessed Mother returned to the church courtyard, I noticed a ring of ladies in Creole dresses of the dark blue colors associated with Ezili Dantò. They were sitting in a semicircle atop bags of dresses and spices they had come to sell at the feast. I recognized them as *manbo* of Vodou. They were, in fact, the core initiates of a small Vodou society in Brooklyn. They would sleep in the church and after Mass in the morning set up their wares in a makeshift market on the church sidewalk.

Karen McCarthy Brown's 1991 book *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn* recounts the spiritual biography of a Brooklyn *manbo* with great insight and sensitivity, showing the many relationships Mama Lola maintains with the spirits of Vodou. Like Mama Lola, Manbo Miracia, the spiritual mother of the society I encountered, has had a long-standing relationship with Notre Dame du Mont Carmel. Her own mother was born on July sixteenth, the Virgin's feast day. Miracia was born a twin, and her mother named her "Miracia" to tie her to the "miracle Virgin." To her sister she gave the name "Lamèsi," for "Notre Dame de la Merci," another Virgin represented by a statue in the Ville Bonheur chapel. "Ever since we were in the womb, my mother brought us to Sodo each year," said Miracia proudly with an emphatic nod. "And my daughter Carmel went with me in *my* belly."

Manbo Miracia grew up to fall in love with a man also born on

July sixteenth, dedicated to Mont Carmel by virtue of his birth. When she was pregnant with their daughter, she had a vision of a dark-skinned woman with two scars running down her cheek. It was the same face as the Polish Virgin of Czestochowa, the image Haitians know also to be Ezili Dantò. "The lady was carrying my daughter in her arms," she confided. When her daughter was born on the feast day for Czestochowa, September 2, she dedicated her to Ezili Dantò and the Virgins of Czestochowa and Mont Carmel, naming her "Marie-Carmel." Thus Miracia is linked to Notre Dame du Mont Carmel in various ways through the significant dates in her family.

Manbo Miracia invited me to a reception in her home for the Virgin. Every year she holds this event to honor their special relationship. The reception would not be a Vodou ceremony where drums, antiphonal singing, and dancers would call the spirits. Rather, it would be a series of Catholic prayers said in honor of the Vièj Mirak in the presence of family and friends. By sponsoring the service in her own home, Miracia positioned herself as a producer of her own religious work, sustaining a direct relationship with the saints and the spirits, outside of the direction of male, possibly non-Haitian, Catholic priests.

Manbo Miracia lives in a small apartment in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn with her daughter Carmel and Carmel's two children. She had rearranged her house for the prayer service by pushing her furniture to the walls and setting up chairs in the living room. A simple altar table was set up under a large poster depicting Notre Dame du Mont Carmel. Flowers fashioned from blue crepe paper framed the image to create a baroque effect. On the lace-covered table sat a homemade oil lamp used on altars in Haiti, made of a metal star supporting a cotton wick suspended in oil by four corks. Two deep-blue, seven-day candles flanked the lamp, near a bouquet of flowers.

A number of people were assembled, dressed nicely and sitting on chairs against the three walls not taken up with the altar. I recognized in their number one of Brooklyn's busiest and most popular *oungan* (priest of Vodou), dressed in a white dashiki and surrounded by his entourage. But it was not he who would lead the service. That honor was reserved for the *prèt savann* (bush priest).

A *prèt savann* holds a distinct rank in Vodou. Specialists in the Catholic rites of baptism, marriage, and last rites, these officials are always men proficient in Latin. A number of *prèt savann* make the main cemetery in Port-au-Prince their daily place of business, singing in Latin and French the memorial masses that Vodouists perform a year and a week after death.

As I fell into a conversation with the priest, I learned that he had joined an order of brothers in his youth, intending to be a monk. On the eve of the fourth and final vow, he was rejected for candidacy. The *zanj* in his family appeared to him in a dream and told him that they had adopted him; he was *reklame*, or "reclaimed," by the spirits (see also McAlister 1992-93). Three years later he underwent the *kouche kanzo*, or initiation into a Vodou society. On his finger he wore both gold and silver wedding rings; he confided to me that he was married to both Ezili Dantò and Ezili Freda, her light-skinned counterpart. Many Haitian men accept marriage to these two powerful goddesses; they must both be "served" to achieve the correct balance.

Formally schooled in the Latin and French texts of the church, he now lends his services to say novenas in the home, to officiate over marriages between people and the *zanj* during a Vodou ceremony, or to preside at the sort of reception that Manbo Miracia had decided to hold. He had brought a black leather bag with him, out of which he extracted several prayer books, a chalice, a brass censer, and a small bucket of holy water. When the proper time came, he selected a white lace chasuble and donned it, adding to it a necklace bearing a large wooden cross.

Like many Catholic events requested by the *lwa*, the event was full of coded signs meaningful in the logic of Vodou. The priest began, for example, by purifying the room, scattering the four cardinal directions with Florida Water. Then he lit a bundle of charcoal topped with frankincense in the incense burner and moved through the congregation for all to be touched by rich, pungent fingers of smoke. He disappeared into the kitchen and returned for a dramatic entrance, singing loudly and formally in Latin. Taking up his small bucket and sprinkler, he scattered holy water on all of us. He motioned to Miracia to light the two big, blue candles on the altar.

The priest moved to a *ti chèz ba* (little low chair), the kind of small wooden chair used by Vodou priests for the long series of Catholic prayers sung in French before a Vodou ceremony. He proceeded to lead the small congregation in a Mass drawn from photocopied pages and prayer books he had brought. The assembled guests knew most of the songs and prayers. After a while he stopped the prayers and introduced himself by name, saying that we were saying our Hail Marys for Miracia's family, for the homeless, for the children who live in the streets, and for Haiti.

The service featured none of the songs or invocations for the *lwa*, and none appeared in possession. But as in the end of a Vodou cere-

mony for Ezili Dantò, Manbo Miracia distributed plates filled with rice and beans and fried pork. We bit gratefully into the meat, deliciously greasy and spiced with garlic and *piman*, the hot scotchbonnet pepper of Caribbean cuisine. She set aside the remainder of the enormous pot of meat. This dish would "sleep" on the floor under the altar table, a practice called "feeding the spirits" that would nourish Ezili Dantò with Miracia's symbolic sacrifice. On the altar itself would "sleep" a big cake with blue frosting, a sweet dessert for Ezili to consume. We returned the next day to enjoy a slice of the cake after it had slept. By then Manbo Miracia had put her apartment back in its usual state, with the altar table replaced by television and stereo. She was tired but pleased to have received the saints into her home with her family and friends.

Domestic prayer services like this one are not uncommon in the Haitian context. The home is transformed into sacred space by rearranging furniture, constructing an altar, and assembling a familial community in prayer. Susana Gallardo (1994) illustrates the ways in which the institutional ritual of the church is not central to Catholicism as it is practiced in many Chicano/a communities. Like the Chicano/a case, the Haitian home altar can be seen as an alternative sacred space controlled primarily by women. Prayer is offered according to the codes of Haitian religious culture, and dedicated to the spiritual work necessary to maintain relationships with the spiritual energy of both the saints and the *lwa*.

The Roman Catholic Church and the Haitian Community in New York

The current population of an estimated four hundred thousand Haitians in the New York area has brought an increase in Catholics to the region. The Catholic church's response to this Haitian migration has followed the pattern it established with other ethnic groups of encouraging the creation of separate ethnic congregations within the local parish. In this way the church has joined other institutions in promoting ethnic group formation and the maintenance of ethnic identity (Glick-Schiller 1975, Buchanan 1980).¹⁹

The head of the Haitian Apostolate for Brooklyn and Queens, Father Guy Sansariq, is effectively the leader of the Haitian Catholic church in the New York metropolitan area. He leads a thriving Haitian congregation at the church of Saint Jerome in Brooklyn, which he estimates one thousand four hundred parishioners attend each Sunday.

As the coordinator of the National Office of Haitian American Catholics, he is also a national and transnational figure. He travels to Haiti frequently for conferences, always looking for Creole-speaking priests who might be able to serve the New York community. He also organizes pilgrimages to Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and to Our Lady of Fatima in New Jersey. He terms the pilgrimage in East Harlem "without guidance," since it was not initiated by the church but rather by the pilgrims themselves.

Besides Saint Jerome's, there are various other Catholic churches serving the Haitian community. A French Mass for Haitians in New York was said by a Haitian priest as early as 1966, and by 1970 eight hundred people regularly attended. In the early 1970s ten other parishes instituted French Masses, and the Brooklyn diocese created the Haitian Apostolate of Brooklyn (Glick-Schiller 1975, Buchanan 1980).

Today, there are fourteen churches with French or Creole Masses to serve the Haitian community in Brooklyn and Queens, and another four or five in Manhattan and Rockland County.²⁰ The Haitian Apostolate struggles to maintain service centers for Haitian refugees and immigrants, many of whom are traumatized in various ways from their experiences of military repression and flight from Haiti.²¹ Father Sansariq identifies other issues to be more critical for the Haitian population in the New York area than the question of syncretism. The legal issues that revolve around immigration status are his most pressing concerns.

The Haitian presence at the shrine for Our Lady of Mount Carmel began as a spontaneous devotion; no church institution initiated or invited the Haitian participation. Not even the sponsoring Pallottine order ministers to the Haitians as a group, except for holding a monthly Mass in French. Part of this has to do with diocesan politics and the territorial jurisdictions of the church. The Haitian leadership is located in Brooklyn and Queens, in the Brooklyn diocese. The feast in East Harlem falls into the New York archdiocese, covering Manhattan, Rockland, and Westchester. With only thirty-five priests of Haitian descent living and serving in the United States, there is a shortage of priests with Haitian cultural fluency. Yet the pilgrims at Mount Carmel do not seem to be concerned.

A small, informal group of committed Haitians prints the text of the Mass in French and distributes it during the feast. The priests at Mount Carmel explain that they offer two Masses in French out of the eight that are said that day "as a courtesy." They have also appointed a Haitian man quasideacon, endowing him with some, but not

all, of the responsibilities of that position. Yet the pilgrims who come to the feast have not played a great role in organizing it. The pilgrimage is, for the Haitians, a matter apart from their regular church activities. It is an affair between themselves and the Virgin.

The community of Haitians at the Church for Our Lady of Mount Carmel is what makes this site a translocative one—symbolically engaged with both home and host countries. The image of the festivities back in Haiti at Sodo is a quietly spoken reference. Ezili Dantò, the powerful feminine divinity who fought for Haitian independence, forms the backdrop for prayers and conversation about the various transmutations of Haitian national politics—the fall of Duvalier, the election of Aristide, the coup d'état, and the U.S. military “intervention”—as well as U.S. elections and immigration legislation. People can see old friends, be seen by new friends, and ritually distribute their Haitian foods to enthusiastic recipients. By sharing this important date with one another, actors build a religious community of sorts, maintaining the nostalgia for Haiti and reaffirming the dream of eventual return. As they would at Sodo, they can stay up late to *bay blag* (tell jokes) and sleep in groups in the church on the night before the feast. They can pray the rosary together in French and relax into the common codes of their culture. In one of the few times of liminal community solidarity, they can enjoy the deeply satisfying company of their sisters and brothers from Haiti around them as they pray, sing, and speak to their common mother, the Vièj Mirak.

Catholicism and the Haitian Strategy of Alterity

bell hooks (1989) has noted that scholars may be more comfortable focusing on international or postcolonial issues than addressing race and class differences at home. She points out that language that diasporizes and internationalizes U.S. minorities can obscure understandings of structured inequalities of class and race in the national arena. While they are dubbed “*diaspora*” when they return to Haiti, in the United States the Haitian population is engaged in a struggle over questions of identity and definition that are inseparable from American processes of racialization.

Immigrants who establish themselves in the United States enter an increasingly plural society, where ethnic identity is structured through various processes that include race, class, religion, language, and gender as well as the politics of nationalism. Recent scholarship by David Mittelberg and Mary C. Waters (1992) suggests that immigrants' identi-

ties in the United States will be formed out of a dialectic of sorts. Identity will be made up of the category into which the receiving society assigns them on one hand and the “cognitive map” of the immigrants themselves on the other. Mittelberg and Waters offer the hypothetical case of a Polish immigrant. Americans, familiar with other Polish Americans, assign him or her to the category “Polish.” The Polish American population becomes what is referred to as the “proximal host,” the group to which the receiving society would assign the immigrant. The newly arrived Pole is different, of course from Polish Americans, but most likely perceives a series of historical similarities and begins to develop a Polish American self-understanding and identity (*ibid.*, 416).

But what if the receiving society assigns the new immigrant to a proximal host that the immigrant does not recognize? Afro-Caribbean immigrants are caught in this problematic position. As black immigrants they are offered the label “African American.” But here the proximal host to which the dominant society assigns them is not the identity that they understand themselves to have. They understand themselves to be historically and culturally distinct from Black Americans. Yet social scientists have shown that groups defined through race will have the least amount of choice in self-identification. Groups of black African descent will inevitably be labeled “black.” In contrast, “white ethnics” like Irish Americans or Italian Americans have a considerable amount of choice in the ways they may cast their identity (*ibid.*).

Scholars of race have demonstrated that there is no such thing, really, as “race,” but rather that racializations and racisms are processes in historical evolution, changing through time and across space (Hall 1978). We can see the ways in which the former slaveholding societies of Latin America, the West Indies, and the United States have all developed differently racialized configurations. When Haitians arrive in the United States, they carry cognitive maps charting a complex sense of Caribbean racialization in which people are located along a color continuum, mitigated by class and family lineage. Race in the United States has been constructed along a color line, making people either black or white. Haitian Americans' identity and subjective positions of racialization must be seen as being superimposed onto their new experience of United States constructions of race. Part of the challenge people of color face when they emigrate is in assessing and renegotiating a newly found racial status in North America.

Unpacking the complexities of Haitian American identity, Carole Charles (1990) argues that the categories of race, class, and ethnicity by which Haitians identify themselves are expressions of their social con-

sciousness, and are part of a process of rejection and redefinition of categories of race and ethnicity ascribed in the United States. Charles's work reveals Haitians' tendency to disaffiliate with African Americans. Haitians are acutely aware that Black Americans have been assigned again and again to the lowest status position in the United States. Haitian immigrants see that meanings of blackness in the United States are subordinated, that blacks represent the bottom of United States society. Haitians reject this placement and tend to dismiss U.S. meanings of blackness, while affirming their own race and culture.

Although Haitians self-identify as black, they link their blackness through Haitian history to Africa and not via the United States. Haitian racial identity is closely connected to pride in the Haitian revolution of 1791–1804, which created the first black-ruled nation in the Americas. The revolution was fought by slaves said to be inspired by Vodou and fortified by magical weapons. Blackness and militarism became key tropes of Haitian nationalism, along with allusions to Afro-Creole spiritual power. Citizens of the black nation that defeated Napoleon's army, Haitians carry a deep sense of national pride that is linked to blackness and independence (Charles 1990; see also McAlister 1995a).

The paths that they chart reveal Haitians in the United States to be actors constructing their own identity as a population. Two important performative elements they have available to use in carving out their own identities are language and religion. A common Haitian American tactic is to display, use, and value their Francophone (and Creolophone) abilities. By referring to themselves as "Frenchies" and speaking French in public, Haitians display a foreign-born status that is at once an upper-class marker in Haitian society (Charles 1990, Mittelberg and Waters 1992). By continuing to participate in Catholic congregations and public feasts, Haitian Americans distinguish themselves further from African Americans, whom they generally view as members of the black Protestant church establishment.²²

It is thus possible to view the Haitian devotion at the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and at other pilgrimages to the Blessed Mother in the United States as a partial strategy in the Haitian American struggle to create an American identity, "a self-constitution through the strategy of alterity within the broader context of American racial semiotics" (Orsi 1992, 321). By maintaining Frenchness, Creoleness, and Catholicism, and by dressing in conservative, French-influenced fashions and hair styles, Haitians broadcast their difference from African Americans. By displaying and practicing their Catholic culture with its Latin and French linguistic attributes, Haitians can

underscore to themselves, their children, and the larger society that they are fully Haitian, Afro-Caribbean, Catholic, immigrant—and not African American. In a sense, Haitian Americans can be said to be struggling to create a new black ethnicity in the United States.

While this conservative Francophile strategy is a long-standing one for Haitians throughout the diaspora, it is worth noting that this is not the only stance possible for Haitian American identity. Since the fall of Duvalier in 1986, the *racine* (roots) movement has created an alternative Haitianized identity. This politically progressive movement cultivates a peasant, "folksy" style and an explicitly pro-Vodou ethos. There are also many important political and social alliances between African American and Haitian American groups, each working out of a pro-black consciousness (McAlister 1995a).

Nevertheless, while the pilgrimage is a place to perform spiritual work, it is also an occasion to perform Catholicism on the public stage, regardless of where each person stands on the Catholic-Vodou continuum in Haitian religious culture. Catholicism becomes one ritual performance among others in the larger cultural repertoire. This performance is a continuation of a stance developed in slavery and throughout the postcolonial history of Haiti in the face of church repression of African-based spirituality. In the U.S. context, the performance becomes one element in the Haitian strategy to redefine American categories of race and ethnicity.

Italians and Haitians: Race and Religious Symbiosis

The arrival of both Italians and Puerto Ricans into the United States has been racially charged, each in a specific way. Robert Orsi (1985, 160) writes of the "racial inbetweenness" of late-nineteenth-century Italian immigrants, arguing that Italians were initially viewed as unassimilable "African racial stock." Tallulah, Louisiana, became the bloody scene of race hatred when five Sicilian men (targets of a terrorism historically reserved for African Americans) were lynched "because they had violated the protocols of racial interaction." Italian Americans created an identity in reaction to early racism against them and, in turn, larger issues about their position with respect to other dark-skinned peoples. Immigrants from Italy learned that "achievement in their new environment meant successfully differentiating themselves from the dark-skinned other" (Orsi 1992, 314–317).

In New York Puerto Rican people have also been met with a racialized hatred (Orsi 1992, Diaz-Stevens 1993, Bourgeois 1995). When

Puerto Rican migrants moved into Italian Harlem in the pre-World War II period, the Italians reacted with hostility to this "other dark-skinned other," and three-way violence broke out between African Americans, Italian Americans, and Puerto Ricans. Insofar as organized crime syndicates held sway in the Italian community, they forced local landlords to maintain white-only segregated buildings (Bourgois 1995, 60).²³ They could not, however, stop the public housing projects being built in the neighborhood, which were replacing Italian families with black and Latino ones. "We had to leave when the 'goombas' moved in," an Italian American pilgrim returning to Our Lady of Mount Carmel told me. Italians spoke with disdain of the "so-called Puerto Ricans" who as Latins were culturally and linguistically similar, yet whose arrival threatened Italian control of East Harlem and soon turned *cara Harlem* into *el barrio* (Orsi 1992, 326).

Despite the important place reserved for Our Lady of Mount Carmel in their devotions, Puerto Ricans quickly sensed that they would find no welcome at the feast on 115th Street. "Puerto Ricans knew to stay away, because on these days and nights Italian Americans were in the grip of a profound experience of their own power and identity (conflicted and polysemous as this was) and would not tolerate the appearance of 'outsiders' among them, especially those 'outsiders' who lived in the neighborhood" (ibid., 330). The Italians were determined to maintain the Italian ethnic flavor of the feast, ensuring that the *fiesta* not become a *fiesta*. Even at the present writing, few Puerto Rican pilgrims attend the July sixteenth festivities.

By the time Haitian immigrants began to attend the feast in large numbers in the 1970s, the Italian battle for territory was over. Most Italian American families had moved out of East Harlem, and for them the July feast had become another sort of pilgrimage—a nostalgic visit to the old neighborhood where their parents' American journey began (ibid.). Today Italian American families return to the feast with video cameras; after Mass they line the sidewalks to film the old neighborhood for posterity. The feast is still produced and controlled by the Pallottine order, and the Italian American old guard organizes the feast committees. But the fact is that without hundreds of Haitian bodies at the processions and thousands of Haitians who come to Mass, the feast of Our Lady would not be possible.

The Italians producing the feast receive the Haitians very differently from the way they did the Puerto Ricans a generation ago. The Haitians' arrival from outside the neighborhood and their departure afterward makes their yearly "invasion" less threatening than that of

the Puerto Ricans who overtook East Harlem as residents (see also McGreevy 1996). The Italians make gestures welcoming the Haitians, adding a French Mass "as a courtesy," and flying the Haitian flag next to the Italian one in the parade. They comment on how prayerful and devoted the Haitians are. "Look how they pray, the beautiful way they dress, they come from all over, they are so devoted to the Blessed Mother," said one lay worker approvingly. They sense *rispetto* (respect) for the Blessed Mother in the little suits and "wedding-cake dresses" that make up the Haitian "Sunday best."

The Italians express hostility toward Puerto Rican *santeros* (priests in the Yoruba-based religion called *La Regla de Ocha*) when they come to do spiritual work at the church. They describe *Ocha* as "satanism" while at the same time denying that the Haitians are involved in Vodou. Florida Water, candles, and fried pork set near the altars are left only by "a few crazy ones" (Orsi 1992, 334). The elderly Italian American women are nevertheless anxious about the new influx and express fears to one another about the statue's safety in the midst of the newest pilgrims. Some advocate restricting Haitian access to the nave of the church (Bourgois 1995, 347).

Despite Italian anxieties, the Haitians are accommodated and even respected at the church. Language has been an important marker shaping the respect the Italians have for the Haitians. Well versed in the Tridentine Mass, the Haitians chant the prayers in Latin along with the priests, which impresses the Italians. In the respect and prayerfulness of the Haitians, the Italian Americans recognize a conservative, pre-Vatican II religiosity, and identify them as "traditional Catholics" (Orsi 1992, 333). The Haitians' Creole impresses the Italians, on whom the difference between French and Creole is lost. The Italian Americans recognize the Haitian strategies of racial alterity and emphatically assert that "Haitians are not considered as black people" (Orsi 1992, 334). In a sense, the two communities find sympathetic reflection in one another.

For the days of the feast, Haitians and Italians form a sort of symbiosis, each allowing the other to extend once again a cherished event from their past into the future. Italians and Haitians engage in a kind of pact, and each community fills the needs of the other. While the Italian Americans produce the feast, they maintain control over their old neighborhood and the shrine church, one of the three most important Marian sites in all the Americas. Meanwhile, the Haitians are consumers at the shrine. They arrive with flowers, make donations, and buy religious articles—scapulars, statues, and prayer cards. They sing the Mass in Latin and French, and their presence fills the streets

in the procession. Without having to organize and produce it, they use the feast as a public stage upon which to serve the Virgin and perform their ethnicity. When it is all over the Haitians retreat, leaving the Italian community to itself. In the often racially tense landscape of New York, this week represents a smooth collaboration that suits everybody involved. For one week each year, the Italian American community of East Harlem becomes a sort of "religious host," welcoming Haitians from near and far. Each community allows the other to preserve their myths, their hopes, and their own deep sense of identity.

Conclusions

Let us return for a moment to little Marie-Carmel, who was touched by the Virgin at the opening of the chapter. This ten-year-old Haitian American girl had never seen Haiti, yet her life story was intimately tied to both the symbols of Haitian religious culture and to social networks of migrants moving back and forth to the island. Her mother, years earlier, was diagnosed with cancer just after she migrated to New York. Like many immigrants of little means in her position, she gathered her things to return to Haiti to die. When she arrived, as she tells it, she dreamed her own mother came to her with a message. "Nothing is wrong. You're just pregnant. When you deliver your baby, call her Marie-Carmel." Convinced that the Vièj Mirak removed her cancer and gave her a child, she attends her *fèt*—whether in Haiti or in the *djaspòra*—each year in gratitude.

When little Marie-Carmel fainted at the communion rail, she experienced a profound religious crisis, common in narratives about the spirits in Afro-Haitian culture. Marie-Carmel's mother saw clearly that the Vièj Mirak, with Ezili Dantò next to her, had reclaimed (*reklame*) the little girl. Usually beginning in adolescence as a series of fits, faintings spells, or full-fledged spirit possessions, the process of learning to serve the spirits is initiated when the spirits themselves choose and adopt the children who will become mediums and healer-priests. Having once made Marie-Carmel's life possible, the Vièj Mirak was continuing to bestow her grace on the family through this "reclaiming" spirit possession (McAlister 1992–93).

The fact that this important moment of spiritual contact came to pass at a Catholic church is not out of the ordinary in Haitian religious culture, nor is it uncommon for people to discreetly conceal such events. Catholics who also serve the spirits of Vodou have learned to practice a form of religious code-switching by performing one ritual

practice through the codes of another when socially appropriate. One story is switched for another, and both become true. Language here reveals levels of intimacy: to respond to the concern of the priest, the family used English to report that Marie-Carmel fainted for lack of food. For insiders—family and others in Vodou societies—an interpretation emerged in French and then Creole that Marie-Carmel had been "touched," briefly, by the Virgin, and thus "reclaimed" by Ezili.

The deft and quick response of Marie-Carmel's mother to the priest comes out of an historical tradition of religious code-switching developed in Haiti in the face of dominant Catholic pressures. I have argued in this chapter that Vodou and Haitian Catholicism are at once opposed politically and intertwined historically, two religions on either end of a continuum of Haitian religious culture that contains within it multiple and shifting symbols and practices. Individual actors live their lives at various points on the continuum, here going through Catholic sacraments, and there making contact with the spirit world of the angels. It is possible to be a fully practicing Catholic who, through Catholicism, also receives the spiritual calls and blessings of the Vodou spirits. In church spaces, work for the spirits is switched into subtly coded Catholic ritual language.

The New York pilgrimage, I have argued, becomes the site for a second kind of code-switching, where Haitian actors respond to a new cultural politics of race. Haitians are assigned by the dominant society to the African American proximal host niche, yet they do not understand themselves to be African American. Haitian Americans' identities are in tension as the immigrant population struggles to define itself on its own terms. One tactic (among others) of the Haitian American community is to develop French-inflected identities, stressing their French and Creole language, French style of dress, and Roman Catholicism. By attending Roman Catholic churches, schools, and pilgrimages, Haitians broadcast their distinctive language, culture, and religion. Through this "strategy of alterity," Haitians broadcast cultural difference from African Americans and contest U.S. systems of racialization.

Roman Catholicism is, for Haitians, one ritual performance among others in a larger cultural repertoire. It is a religious "code" that in the United States can stand in public for all of Haitian religious culture, Vodou and Catholicism alike. Catholic churches are familiar spaces that host the saints intimately known to many Haitian Catholics. And whether one is praying to Ezili or to the Virgin Mary, stepping into a Catholic church is also stepping into a legitimate modern American

identity. In a process quite similar to that undergone by the Italian American community before them, Haitians find an aspect of their public face in the church. Perhaps the Italian Americans who host the feast for the Blessed Mother at 115th Street recognize themselves in the new immigrants praying before them.

In this chapter I set out to illustrate that in order to understand religious life for some new immigrants, we must understand their continuing relationships with the religious cultures of their home countries. The Haitian diaspora represents an actively transnational population, embedded in social, political, and financial networks that span home and host countries. The *Fèt Vièj Mirak* on East 115th Street is a religious event whose meaning also spans New York and Haiti. But rather than substituting the New York feast for the one they left behind at Sodo, Haitians add the Harlem location as another possible site of spiritual work. In this way East 115th Street is opened up as one more site in the expanding "religioscape" of transnational Haitian religious culture. During the pilgrimage for Notre Dame du Mont Carmel in New York, the Haitian population reterritorializes spiritual practice, reinscribing sacred space onto their new landscape of settlement.

The pilgrimage to Mont Carmel in East Harlem expands the saint's influence in the Haitian world. Haitians in diaspora reach out to Mont Carmel and Ezili Dantò, both nationalist divinities, extending prayers for family and friends throughout the *diaspora* and in Haiti. By attending the feast by the thousands, the New York Haitian population has collectively placed the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on an invisible community map. In stepping onto the public stage of the Catholic feast, they orient themselves within the shifting "ethnoscape" of New York City. They make sense of the confusing complexity of this ethnic landscape by locating the church as a center of spiritual power where they will be welcome.

Most Latin American countries have national shrines that use religion to connect tropes about the nation to other symbolisms about gender and sexuality.²⁴ Mexicans make pilgrimages to the shrine of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Puerto Ricans to Nuestra Señora de la Monserrate, Cubans to Nuestra Señora de Caridad del Cobre, Colombians to La Virgen de Las Lajas, Brazilians to Bom Jesus da Lapa, and Dominicans to Nuestra Señora de Altigracia del Higüey (Laguerre 1989, 83; Diaz-Stevens 1993, 47). When national populations spread through migration to new localities, they bring their divinities with them, re-territorializing their religious practices. The supernatural world assents, and comes to bear up communities in transition.

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NOTES

1. Before the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s, it was customary to fast until taking communion. While this particular family no longer observed that tradition, it did serve as an implicit, legitimating explanation for Marie-Carmel's fainting.

2. Although I speak Creole fluently, older Haitians often address me in French, as they might any non-Haitian, for French is more widely spoken worldwide and is also a marker of prestige. In Haitian Creole, foreigners are always called *blan*, implying "whiteness." An Anglo-American woman like me is a *fann blan*, while an African American woman would be a *nègès blan*, a "black white/foreigner." In Creole, blackness is normative, hence the word for "man" is *nèg*, connoting "black man." A Haitian man is always a *nèg*, even if he is of European descent, in which case he is a *nèg blan*, a "white black man," or a *nèg milat*, a "mulatto black man." Much has been written on Haitian codes of racialization, which are different from those in both the United States and other parts of Latin America and the Caribbean (see Nicholls 1979, Dupuy 1989).

3. Robert Orsi (personal communication, New York, July 1992) notes that the last Italian religious supply shop closed in 1990.

4. The vast majority of Haitians are black people of African descent. There is also a small minority of *Ayisyen blanc*, or "European Haitians," *milat*, or "mulatto Haitians," and a tiny but economically significant sector of *Siryen*, a gloss for the Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian, and Israeli diaspora merchant community in Port-au-Prince.

5. Only a few hundred other statues of the Virgin share this special shrine status worldwide, and of these, the church at 115th Street was only the third in all the Americas. The two others were designated by the same pope. Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the Ursuline Convent in New Orleans was erected in 1727. Our Lady of Guadalupe, now in the Basilica in Mexico City, was erected on an Aztec site in 1532 (Orsi 1985, 60; Pistella 1954, 76-88).

6. Interview, Father Guy Sansariqç, head of the Haitian Apostolate, Brooklyn, June 1996.

7. Spiritual marriage to the spirits, or *lwa*, of Vodou is common in Haitian religious culture (see Brown 1991).

8. Tragedy can include forced deportation, for example. Increasingly the United States and weaker nations are collaborating in an institutionalized transnational policy whereby persons convicted of crimes are deported to their home country after serving their sentences in U.S. jails. This policy was made possible by Title 3 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, and represents a new era in international relations.

9. Arjun Appadurai (1990, 6) writes of the disjoined flows that are set in motion with increased globalization: "ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes." It is possible here to think of "religioscapes" as the subjective religious maps (and attendant theologies) of diasporic communities who are also in global flow and flux.

10. Important religious sites dot the New York landscape, and include intersections where offerings can be made to Papa Legba, *lwa* of the crossroads; public parks where trees and rocks are used for their spiritual power; cemeteries where the recently dead can be honored; and churches housing the saints, where Creole Mass is spoken. Other pilgrimages are also mapped onto the metropolitan area as well: for example, thousands of Haitians take chartered buses to the Church of Czestochowa in Pennsylvania for the Feast of the Assumption. For a treatment of sacred urban landscape in Afro-Cuban tradition, see David Hilary Brown (1989, 353-357).

11. See, for example, Carole Divillers, (1985) and the Winter 1992 issue of *Aperture* (vol. 126) that focused on Haiti.

12. He was subsequently crowned emperor of the Haitian Republic and the de facto head of its Roman Catholic church (see n. 18 below). Sodo is still a site of political manipulations. During the period after the fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier, the ruling junta members built cinder-block vacation houses among the wooden and straw houses right next to the falls in order to maintain a visible public presence at the site.

13. For the only ethnographic work to date on Rastafari in New York City, see the essay by Randal L. Hepner in this volume (Chapter 6).

14. Another spot, called Fey Sen Jan, was the site of a ritual the night before the Mont Carmel feast in Ville Bonheur, but it has virtually disappeared (Laguerre 1989, 84; interview with Manbo Gislene, New York City, July 1994).

15. In French her name was written "Erzulie Dantor," and it appears that way often in Vodou flags, songs, and other works of art, as well as in priests' notebooks and other sacred writings. The etymological history of her name merits future research.

16. Throughout Haitian history, the Catholic church has launched waves of repression against Vodou practitioners in "anti-superstition campaigns" (see Desmangles 1992).

17. This understanding applies to religion the theories on Creole linguistics worked out by Lee Drummmond (1980).

18. Although the history is too lengthy to elaborate here, it is important to note that with Haitian Independence in 1804, ties were officially cut to the Vatican, and a Catholicism in Haiti evolved with its own national flavor. In 1860 a concordat was signed reopening the relationship with Rome. By that time, Afro-Haitian spirituality had established itself as the worldview of the vast majority of Haitians.

19. Although Haiti has historically been a Catholic country, evangelical Protestantism is now enjoying enormous success. On the Haitian American membership in the Southern Baptist Convention, see Carole Charles (1990, 262-280).

20. Interview, Father Guy Sansariq, Brooklyn, June 1996.

21. In the three devastating years after the coup d'état against Aristide, the Haitian military run by General Raoul Cedras embarked on a terrorist campaign of rape unprecedented in Haitian history. Many people who fled the country by sea ended up in the U.S. naval base in Cuba, Guantánamo, to be further traumatized by human rights abuses there (see Americas Watch et al. 1991).

22. Haitians also tend to send their children to Catholic schools in relatively high numbers (see Lawrence 1997).

23. In his ethnography *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*, Philippe Bourgois (1995, 48-76) chronicles the largely Puerto Rican-controlled drug trade that ravaged the neighborhood around the Church of Our Lady in the 1980s. He argues that this area of Manhattan has long been a site of "crime, violence and substance abuse," from the early Dutch tobacco farms to the heroin and cocaine trades of Italian crime families to the Latino crack dealers. While it is dangerous to attempt to describe drug-dealing networks because of the potential for stereotyping, it is important to be conscious of the realities of both legal and extralegal economic spheres and subcultures and their influence on wider communities.

24. See Andrew Parker et al. (1992).

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