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Dancing around Dancehall: Popular Music and Pentecostal Identity in Transnational Jamaica and Haiti

In part because of its long history of transnational flows, the Caribbean region presents a dilemma for anthropologists and other researchers of expressive culture. I believe this dilemma stems, in part, from the need to attend adequately to both local and global contexts of practice. When analytical approaches that limit their purview to the level of the community or village are applied to "pre/postmodern" Caribbean societies, which have been described as "inescapably historical," "inherently colonial," and "inescapably heterogeneous," these approaches become most clearly problematic. Michel-Rolph Trouillot laments the fact that "few students of Caribbean culture (especially Caribbean-born or African-American scholars) dare to cross linguistic or colonial borders." He cautions that even regional studies of the Caribbean focusing solely on Anglophone societies overlook the fact that, for example, "a comparison of women in Jamaica and Haiti would be at least as interesting as one between women in Jamaica and Trinidad." The apparent dearth of comprehensive studies of individual Caribbean communities can be read as "a healthy sign that Caribbean ethnographers often realize that the story they were after does not end with their village." These realizations motivate me to consider the global alongside the local and to embrace a multi-sited approach to conducting ethno-musicological fieldwork and writing about Pentecostalism, popular culture, and musical practice in Jamaica and Haiti. Music is an expressive means through which Jamaican and Haitian Pentecostals index both their global cosmology and also the local and transnational contexts in which they traverse. My discussion thus highlights the relationship between the spaces of global theology and those of local congregational musical practice in the African Caribbean. The African-Caribbean is home to a wide variety of musical styles and belief systems, with which Jamaican and Haitian Pentecostals often have direct involvement prior to Christian conversion. Part of the broader religious context
in which African-Caribbean varieties of Pentecostalism are observed, popular musics associated with African-inspired belief systems such as Vodou and Ob-eah are a common target of mission-affiliated pastors, who preach adamantly against them. In fact, even lay Pentecostals generally deem the stakes of spiritual warfare too high to risk meddling in religious practices outside of mainstream Pentecostal Christianity. Non-Pentecostal ritual musics are believed to evoke supernatural entities, usually characterized as “demonic spirits,” which not only oppose the Christian Holy Spirit, but also may bring about physical and emotional torment. Pentecostals thus acknowledge the mystical powers of non-Christian spirits and understand them to pose a serious threat to the lives and souls of those who worship them through song. Unlike incompatible religious musics, however, songs of the dance club are not generally believed to possess the same levels of inherent spiritual potency. Rather, it is the latter’s lyrical content and associations with nightclub life that are seen as most problematic. Understanding how commercial popular genres relate to Pentecostal church music requires a grasp of the ways in which boundaries between sacred and secular are socially and musically established.

This essay examines the ways in which Jamaican and Haitian Pentecostals construct and negotiate religious and national identities through musical style. Musical participation facilitates the articulation of overlapping collective identities that are profoundly shaped and negotiated through stylistic and conceptual distinctions between sacred and secular forms of musical practice. Following Catherine Bell, I employ the concept of “ritualization” to discuss the “various culturally specific strategies for setting some activities off from others, for creating and privileging a qualitative distinction between the ‘sacred’ and the ‘profane,’ and for ascribing such distinctions to realities thought to transcend the powers of human actors.” Ritualization theory also helps to convey the manner in which Pentecostals distinguish sacred and worldly musical styles and promote a religious brand of cultural nationalism that is predicated on Pentecostal identities. My discussion centers on the ways in which believers use music to position themselves in relation to commercial popular culture and counter national identities endorsed by government officials and reinforced by stereotypes cultivated abroad.

To what extent are Pentecostals able to uphold standards of holiness and appropriateness without sacrificing their sense of cultural and national identity? By focusing on the ways in which believers address this challenge, I aim to shed light on the relations among nationalism, Pentecostal identity, popular culture, and musical style. I begin by problematizing some of the stereotypical depictions of Jamaica and Haiti, the propagation of which has historically hindered our grasp of these nations’ complex socio-religious landscapes. My discussion then turns to the emergence of Protestantism in these locales, as I chronicle the arrival of early missionaries and examine the impact of evangelical revivals during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. My intention here is to highlight both the similarities and differences between Jamaica and Haiti that have, in different ways and at different times, given rise to modern Pentecostal practice. Drawing on ethno-musicological fieldwork I conducted in these two countries from 2000 to 2004, I offer case studies describing Pentecostals’ musical attempts to construct religious and national identities in contradiction to commercial popular genres such as dancehall reggae and konpa (Haiti’s commercial dance music). I hope also to elucidate the impact of black music from the United States in generational debates over what constitutes “appropriate” forms of Pentecostal musical practice. By “dancing around dancehall,” Jamaican and Haitian Pentecostals assert identities that are both local and global, national and transnational, distinct from, yet dependent upon, the “secular” popular cultures in which they are embedded. Finally, I comment briefly on the politics of positionality that undergirds African-Caribbean Pentecostals’ attempts to musically situate themselves in opposition to spiritual and cultural Others. I argue that this strategic positioning also relates to contemporary ethnographic research and writing.

(Re-)Constructing the Caribbean

Zora Neale Hurston’s comparative study, Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica (1990), explored two socio-religious landscapes that have since undergone tremendous change. Global mass media have spread misconceptions about Haitians and Jamaicans widely among North American and European societies. Jamaicans are too often typecast as dreadlock-wearing Rastafarians, drug dealers, marijuana addicts, or witchdoctors. It is perhaps ironic, although not surprising, that Jamaica remains a hot spot for North American tourists, many of whom seek to bask in an “exotic” island culture imagined to be pleasurably different from their “normal” routines. In Consuming the Caribbean, Mimi Sheller highlights this perception of exotic difference, which is fueled by advertising campaigns, tourist brochures, and word-of-mouth. She also critiques the “deep layering and reiteration” of such representations because they reinforce notions of the Caribbean as “a carnivalesque site for hedonistic consumption [. . .] where the normal rules of civility can be suspended.” The Caribbean region is portrayed as “a chain of ‘unreal’ fantasy islands” offering a wild alternative to the “civilized” spaces of North America and Europe. Such depictions “reflect a long history of the inscription of corruption onto the landscapes and inhabitants of these ‘Paradise isles,’…”

Written during the American occupation of Haiti (1915-1934), William Seabrook’s The Magic Island did much to perpetuate an image of Haiti as a strange, wild, and horrific land where crazed “Voodoo” devotees run rampant. Seabrook contrasts these devotees with the “literary-traditional white stranger” who witnesses all the wildest tales of Voodoo fiction justified: in the red light of torches which
made the moon turn pale, leaping, screaming, writhing black bodies, blood-madden, sex-madden, god-madden, drunken, whirled and danced their dark satanalia, heads thrown weirdly back as if their necks were broken, white teeth and eyeballs gleaming, while couples sawing, another from time to time fled from the circle, as if pursued by furies, into the forest to share and slake their ecstasy.  

Citing “one of the more thoughtful students of the religion,” Mintz and Trouillot note, ‘‘Qui dit Haiti, pense ‘Vaudoux,’ c’est un fait de la vie quotidienne to contenter ‘d’emette une vaine protestation’” [Whoever says Haiti thinks ‘voodoo,’ a state of affairs over which one can only protest in vain].

The notion that Vodou is emblematic of the Haitian people is reinforced by the writings of scholars such as Roger Bastide, who contends that Vodou is Haiti’s “national creed,” serving as a spiritual expression of “the sum of all that is specifically and originally Haitian.” Vodou is thus viewed unproblematically as the sine qua non of “authentic” Haitian culture, expressed by Michael Dash in a more recent repetition of a popular characterization of Haiti’s religious landscape: “Haiti is 90 percent Catholic and 100 percent vaudou.” Despite the perpetuation of this persistent, yet misleading adage, some figures indicate that, by turn of the twenty-first century, as much as one-third of Haiti’s population self-identified as Protestant or Pentecostal. Over the course of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, Haitian religious landscape has grown to include numerous mission-affiliated and independent Pentecostal churches.

Likewise, and contrary to popular belief, Pentecostalism is widespread in Jamaica. In fact, Pentecostalism has been developing steadily on the island since the 1920s, thriving along with belief systems such as Kumina, Revival (or Pocomania), and Rastafarianism. Despite the predominance of Catholicism and Anglicanism throughout the African Caribbean in much of the twentieth century, evangelical revivals in both Jamaica and Haiti have attracted increasing numbers of Protestant and Pentecostal missionaries, sparking the emergence of African Caribbean Pentecostal churches (founded by transnational migrants) in the United States. Multiple forms of charismatic Christianity are currently being practiced in Jamaica, Haiti, and their diasporas, even as other popular religious practices continue to flourish.

Early Protestantism in Jamaica and Haiti

While Protestant missionary activity flourished in Jamaica throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was challenged by the persistence of popular religions such as Myal and the indigenized versions of Christianity practiced by Native Baptists and Revivalists. By the 1930s, Rastafarianism had become yet another threat. In Haiti, the early work of Protestant missionaries was dwarfed by the practices of Catholicism and Vodou. Despite facing obstacles, Protestant and Pentecostal churches managed to emerge in both locales, albeit at different times and with varying degrees of success.

In Jamaica, the British established the Anglican Church after taking control of the island in 1655, but most white planters refused to share their religion with the slaves, who were generally deemed too unsophisticated for Christian conversion. Furthermore, many whites feared that religious instruction would contribute to feelings of equality and entitle among the blacks. George Simpson reports that “for nearly a hundred years after Britain acquired Jamaica [. . . ] no missionary work was carried on in the island.”

But by 1738, an evangelical revival had begun in England, and this religious fervor inspired a movement, led by John Wesley, to reform the Anglican Church. The Wesleyan Methodist movement soon spread to the New World, where missionaries in Jamaica began to make attempts at Christianizing the slave population. In 1754, the Methodist presence in Jamaica was supplemented by the United Brethren, or Moravians, who arrived from Germany. However, the Moravian Church had only limited success, baptizing fewer than one thousand slaves by 1800. During the closing years of the American War of Independence, one of the more fruitful missionary endeavors was launched in Jamaica, as some American families loyal to England chose to emigrate from the United States and settle in Canada, the Bahamas, and Jamaica. Two former slaves, George Lisle and Moses Baker, accompanied their masters to Jamaica in 1782 or 1783 and brought their Baptist religion with them. Lisle and Baker planted the first highly successful missionary enterprise on the island, and their work had an enormous impact on the development of Baptist religion from the latter eighteenth through the nineteenth century. The Wesleyan Methodists and Moravians experienced most of their early successes among the “Free Blacks and Coloureds of Kingston,” particularly the black and brown churchgoers who were discriminated against in the capital city’s Anglican cathedral. However, Lisle and Baker reached enslaved blacks both in Kingston and on rural plantations. These two preachers exemplify the African American migrants who “contributed decisively to the shaping of an Afro-cultural world that embraced the American South and a number of Caribbean islands.” Moreover, the endeavors of these blacks from the United States reveal “both the transatlantic and the inter-American dimensions of the religious transformation” of Anglophone Caribbean nations in the late eighteenth century.

Neither Lisle nor Baker was a novice at ministering to oppressed black slaves. For example, Lisle brought to Jamaica his experience preaching before black congregations in the United States, and both men knew intimately the pains of slavery. This first-hand knowledge allowed them to pass along “a tradition of passionate concern for the enslaved and for the mass of the people,” while building a church family in which “African-Jamaicans were at home and participated both in managing its religious affairs and also in maintaining the principles of freedom, equality, and brotherhood.”

In many ways, Lisle and Baker are pivotal figures in the history of Jamaican
religion. They started a tradition of appointing traveling preachers, known as "daddys" or "deacons," who assisted church leaders by exhorting others to convert to Christianity. Both men and women were appointed as "warners" whose duties included telling the unconverted about the urgent need for salvation and warning them of the dangers of sinful living. The practice of appointing unlicensed, itinerant preachers was significant in that it led to a socio-religious hierarchy established and maintained from within the black population. Sherwood and Bennett explain that the hierarchy constituted "a 'ranking' of the slaves by blacks and not by white owners, masters, overseers; an appointment of slaves by the preachers to guide, counsel and convert, not to act as drivers whose symbol of authority was the whip." In this way, Lisle and Baker contributed greatly both to the organizational structure and general mission of the Protestant churches in Jamaica. Furthermore, the Bible and the hymnal "became the treasured library of the African-Jamaican people." Lisle and Baker also helped to prepare the way for white Baptist missionaries from England, who did not launch full-fledged missionary endeavors in Jamaica until some thirty years after black Baptist churches had been established.

In the early 1790s, disputes began to arise between black Baptists, such as Lisle and Baker, and various splinter groups that were embracing more energetic musical and bodily worship practices. These groups attracted increasing numbers of blacks by "blending the Christian message with traditional African modes of worship, including spirit possession, dancing, the clapping of hands and swaying of the body." Most black Baptists eventually became known as "Native Baptists" because of their adoption of an indigenous style of worship, characterized by large-scale black involvement and leadership. Their use of bodily and musical participation as a means of achieving states of ecstasy and transcendence foreshadowed the twentieth-century Pentecostal movement.

By late summer 1791, while neighboring St. Domingue was experiencing the onset of its violent Revolution, Native Baptist churches in Jamaica continued to grow. Even Lisle's church in Kingston had already gained 450 members, most of whom were black slaves. This was a time of great nervousness for many white planters, as news of the St. Domingue rebellion spread quickly and British abolitionists stepped up their campaign to end slavery. Geggus notes that the pro-slavery stance of the white Jamaican planters was likely strengthened by the Haitian Revolution. The plantocracy argued that abolitionists' efforts were largely responsible for stirring the St. Domingue slaves to revolt. The planters contended, furthermore, that the absence of a similar rebellion in Jamaica proved that the institution of slavery was noble and beneficial to the colony.

As French refugees from St. Domingue poured into Kingston, the Jamaican economy was strengthened by the flow of capital and the non-enforcement of French trade laws. Geggus also argues that, in some ways, St. Domingue and Jamaica grew closer, as transnational bonds formed between the planter classes of the two colonies. These bonds "cut across the political divide," even as antagonisms among the white classes in Jamaica were exacerbated. One major source of class tension was the issue of slavery. Wealthy white planters and overseers saw slave labor as a critical means of gaining tremendous economic profit. They perceived the growing abolitionist movement and the Christianization of slaves—ideas embraced by some less wealthy whites—as serious threats to their financial well-being. White Wesleyan Methodists fought for the right to teach Christianity to slaves, while many planters saw such efforts as increasing the probability of slave uprisings.

The success of the St. Domingue revolt thus struck fear in the hearts of white overseers in Jamaica and "strengthened their misgivings about missionary enterprises." In 1802, the Jamaican House of Assembly published an act aimed at persons described as "ill-disposed, illiterate, and ignorant enthusiasts," who addressed "meetings of Negroes and persons of color, chiefly slaves, unlawfully assembled," inciting them to "concoct schemes of much private and public mischief." Although the British king overturned this act in 1804, the Kingston Council passed a similar act in 1807. This new legislation, approved only three years after Haitian Independence, reflected the anxiety of white power holders, many of whom were no doubt still fearful of the capacity for religiously inspired slaves to revolt. The 1807 act forbade slaves to hold religious gatherings at night, which was their only free time. Other prohibited practices included "all preaching, teaching, the offering of public prayer, and the singing of psalms by unauthorized persons of any sect or denomination [...] within the boundaries of Kingston." This crackdown on religious practice, which even applied to singing or reciting certain psalms and hymns, was not without precedent in colonial Jamaica. Moses Baker was once arrested for including the words to the following hymn in his sermon:

Shall we go on in Sin
Because Thy grace abounds,
or crucify my Lord again
And open all His Wounds?
We will be slaves no more
Since Christ has made us free,
Has nailed our tyrants to the cross
And bought our liberty.

After the Methodist complained to the British Crown that the 1807 act excluded some 400,000 slaves from any form of public worship, the legislation was finally overturned in 1809. As the white planters and clergy jockeyed for control over the degree to which black slaves could receive religious instruction, Native Baptists continued to flourish. However, their indigenous worship style was displeasing to most white missionaries. Despite fierce planter opposition, the Jamaican Assembly therefore resolved in 1816 to "consider the state of the religion among the slaves, and to carefully investigate the means of diffusing the light of genuine Christianity among them (my italics)." However, it seems the white missionaries were dependent on the plantocracy for certain economic fa-
vors. Consequently, the 1816 resolution had little effect because "the resistance of the Planters to teaching Christianity to slaves was so strong that no clergyman would dare risk his benefits to do so."48

It is very important to keep in mind that the growth of Native Baptist religion in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Jamaica coincided with the proliferation of African-inspired popular cults in both Jamaica, which had received an influx of African slaves accompanied by their masters from St. Domingue,39 and also Haiti, where the power of the Catholic Church had been significantly weakened. The indigenous churches founded by Lisle and Baker grew alongside a multiplicity of African-influenced religious practices flourishing in Jamaica around the turn of the nineteenth century.

Burton posits that by the 1820s, "a religious version of the Creole language continuum" was in place.40 Drawing on the work of Brathwaite,41 he claims that this continuum stretched "from the Euro-Christianity—principally Methodism—of the free colored class through the 'Creole-Christianity' of the white-led Baptist churches to the black-led Afro-Christianity of the slave masses."42 Slave religious practices "remained at least as much 'Afro' as 'Christian,' and in the marriage of Myalism and Christianity, much of the substance of the former had received only the thinnest veneer of the latter."43 The ongoing interpenetration of Protestant Christianity and popular religion among the slaves widened the gulf between the Native Baptists and the more European-influenced Wesleyan Methodists. Once the first British Baptists arrived in Jamaica in 1813, they tried unsuccessfully to absorb the Native Baptist Church. The latter avoided being taken over by white Baptists by splitting off "to follow their own style of worship, which, giving a Christian form to long-established Myalist practices, emphasized music and dancing, 'spirit possession,' prophecy, and speaking in tongues."44

Protestant Christianity had a profound impact on both Obeah and Myal practices. Austin-Broos notes that the belief systems of Myal evolved gradually as a means of undoing the negative effects of Obeah. "The logic of Jamaican obeah," she maintains, "with its various techniques to 'put on spirits' and the myal rites to take them off, therefore is seen more properly as a Jamaican phenomenon shaped by a Christian presence."45 Although Christian practice certainly impacted Myalism, the latter was viewed by those who practiced it as a distinct and even oppositional form of religious expression. The experiences of trance and speaking in tongues were central to Myal religion, and these phenomena were supported by singing, dancing, and drumming. Women were crucial to the efficacy of the rituals, "but probably not leaders." Authority rested in the hands of "Myal men," also known as "faith men" or "angel men" who presided over the female majority.46

There are some striking similarities between Jamaican popular religion of the early nineteenth century and the Pentecostal practices that would emerge a century later. These similarities include the predominant role of women despite mostly male leadership and the use of music to invite manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Burton also points out that Myal "involved inspiration by 'the Spirit' rather than possession by 'the spirits' as in Afro-Catholic cults such as Vodou, Shango, Santeria, and Candomblé."47 This is one of the important ways in which modern-day Pentecostals in Haiti distinguish their religion from other belief systems in the African Caribbean. J.H. Buchner, a Moravian missionary who witnessed Myal practices in the late 1700s, paints a vivid portrait of a ritual that could have taken place in numerous African Caribbean locales during this era.

As soon as darkness of evening set in, they assembled in crowds in open pastures, most frequently under large cotton trees, which they worship, and counted holy; after sacrificing some fowls, the leader began an extempore song, in a wild strain, which was answered in chorus, the dance followed, grew wilder and wilder, until they were in a state of excitement bordering on madness. Some would perform incredible revolutions while in this state, until nearly exhausted, they fell senseless to the ground, when every word they uttered was received as divine revelation. At other times obeah was discovered or a shadow was caught; a little coffin being prepared in which it was enclosed and buried.48

In rituals such as this one, drumming and dancing are always vehicles for spirit possession, through which ancestors provide revelations to the community. These revelations are sometimes given through glossolalia utterances (i.e., words spoken in an unknown language) understood only by the possessed, and they may provide a cure for an illness or serve as a warning of impending danger.49 Although Barrett refers to this late eighteenth-century event as a "kumina" ceremony, Ken Bilby admonishes that kumina did not actually emerge in Jamaica until slave Emancipation in 1838, after which African indentured laborers from the Congo region migrated to the island and began cultivating the practice.50 Barrett's use of the term probably reflects a certain terminological looseness, which has long characterized written accounts of Jamaican popular religion. Moreover, there appears to be considerable overlap among various Jamaican belief systems and popular religious practices, many of which involve the use of drums, dancing, and singing to evoke spiritual manifestations and invite possession. Bilby discusses a number of religious practices with African origins, of which one of the most notable is the maroon tradition known as "kromanti play." Like the kumina rituals brought to Jamaica in the nineteenth century, kromanti play ceremonies "revolve around the possession of participants by ancestral spirits who use their powers to help the living solve various problems."51

Through the first third of the nineteenth century, both white Wesleyan Methodists and black Native Baptists thrived, and the leaders of these two groups trained blacks to preach and proselytize. Although the Christian education of black slaves incurred the wrath of white planters toward both religious groups, this did not prevent serious political differences, in addition to variations in worship style, from surfacing between Methodists and black Baptists. Citing Ba-
Bakan. Burton stresses that while the Methodists wanted slaves to be patient and wait for slavery to be legally abolished, black Baptists leaders exhorted their congregations to pursue freedom immediately. One such leader was Samuel Sharpe, a black Baptist deacon, who led an anti-slavery resistance movement known as “the Baptist War” in 1831. As a deacon, Sharpe enjoyed greater traveling privileges than non-ranked slaves. This relative freedom allowed him to visit various plantations, where, in gatherings disguised as prayer meetings, he enlisted the cooperation of other slaves. The Baptist War did not succeed in overthrowing the institution of slavery overnight, but it was one of many tactics employed by Sharpe and other black leaders in Jamaica to destabilize the existing system of black oppression in Jamaica. Black Baptists continued to oppose white hegemony even after Emancipation in 1838. In fact, “even more than before it was religion, understood in a sense very different from that of white missionaries, that would be the focus of the Jamaican dream of real, rather than merely formal, freedom and equality.” By 1838, a great majority of blacks were nominal Christians. In some cases, slaves had done more than simply receive baptism; a considerable number of slaves “had been married according to the church they belonged to.” Social and economic tensions between ex-slaves and ex-masters increased over the ensuing three decades, as did the conflicts between white missionaries and black preachers “over the kind of Christianity that was to hold sway in Jamaica.”

As we have seen, the situation in early to mid-nineteenth-century Haiti was much different from that in Jamaica. Under French colonial rule, evangelical Protestantism had made few inroads because of the dominant influence of the Roman Catholic Church on slaves and free members of society. After overthrowing the whites in 1804, Haiti remained an unlikely destination for most missionary groups. Nevertheless, there were some Protestant endeavors that managed to take root in the newly founded black republic. As early as 1806, Protestant churches may have been started in southern Haiti by black slaves who escaped from the American colonies. Indigenous “Baptist” churches were also started by African Americans in northern Haiti in 1824. Wesleyan Methodists from England started work in Haiti in 1817, as they had done in Jamaica several decades prior.” Logan notes that Mark Baker Bird, a Methodist missionary, arrived in Haiti in 1839 and established a number of churches and schools. By 1854, Bird, who spoke both English and French, opened an English-language church catering to the significant numbers of blacks who had migrated to Haiti “after the decline of the British West Indian sugar islands.” In 1879, Bird left Haiti because of lack of financial and institutional support.

Despite the successes of these early Protestants in Haiti, their work pales in comparison to the growth of Methodist and Baptist churches in Jamaica. The different degrees of Protestant success in Jamaica and Haiti have much to do with the colonial histories of these two nation-states during the nineteenth century. Haiti’s War of Independence resulted in its international non-recognition and a split with the Vatican in Rome. As Vodou practices flourished in Haiti, Protestantism found a more welcome home in Jamaica, where indigenous versions of Christianity emerged and set the stage for the Pentecostal movement of the twentieth century. Although both Jamaica and St. Domingue thrived on plantation economies maintained by large-scale African slave labor, the religious landscapes of the two colonies took increasingly different shapes in the nineteenth century.

In many ways, the years 1860-1865 marked a watershed moment in the historical development of religion in Haiti and Jamaica. In Haiti, of course, relations were restored with Rome, and this led to the return of Catholic priests, the attempted institutional suppression of Vodou, and only a relatively small role for Protestant missions. Nevertheless, shortly after the signing of the Concordat in 1861, the Episcopal Church was established in Haiti by James Theodore Holly, an African American clergyman from Detroit, Michigan. Reverend Holly arrived in Haiti accompanied by 110 blacks who were fleeing racial oppression in the United States. Although two-thirds of the new arrivals died or returned home, Holly managed to continue his work. In 1874, he was appointed bishop, and he served in that capacity for over thirty-five years. Later in the nineteenth century other Protestant groups such as the Seventh Day Adventists and Baptists arrived. Both of these groups were more concerned with the social uplift of the masses, and, consequently, they experienced growth at a faster rate.

**Evangelical revivals and the Pentecostal movement**

The latter half of the nineteenth century saw even more dramatic developments in the religious landscapes of the African Caribbean. Evangelical revivals that swept through the United States and Britain in 1858 and 1859 had perhaps the strongest repercussions in Jamaica. Representatives from the Church of Christ arrived in Jamaica as early as 1858. These missionaries planted the seeds of a revival that, although initially sown on the east coast of the United States, would yield fruit in Jamaica throughout the remaining decades of the nineteenth century. Charles Finney, a Presbyterian theologian, Phoebe Palmer, a New York-based Methodist evangelist, and Henry Clay Fish, a Baptist preacher from New Jersey, were leading figures in the U.S. revival. Baptists were also at the forefront of revitalism in England, and in 1859, the Baptist Missionary Society sent two delegates, Edward Bean Underhill and J.T. Brown, to Jamaica, where they began revival meetings soon after arriving. By 1861, a new wave of evangelical preachers had reached the island, finding converts among the Native Baptists, Methodists, and other Protestant groups. Commenting on the impact of the Great Revival in Jamaica, Austin-Brooks notes, “The logic of malaise and healing,” central to many African-derived popular religions, “was imbued with Christian ideas of sin.” In addition, Protestant Christianity became an intractable element within Jamaican ritual practice. The Great Revival “secured in Jamaica the salience of local Christian forms. Thereafter, for many Jamaicans, the Bible
would be a textbook of life, and Christian practice, whatever its form, would be the bracketing experience of being. Most scholars agree that the revival atmosphere of the early 1860s led to the formation of religious cults such as Revival Zion and Pocomania, which have continued to thrive in Jamaica through the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The period following the American Civil War (1861–1865) was characterized by an even greater increase in evangelical activity in the United States. As a holiness movement swept the country, numerous camp meetings were held in the southern United States during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Although these meetings were at first run by Methodists, many Methodist church leaders began to express discomfort with the intensity of the religious services, which often featured ecstatic behavior, glossolalia, dancing, and weeping as participants responded emotionally to fiery sermons and the felt presence of the Holy Spirit. By 1894, the Methodist Episcopal Church denounced the holiness movement, labeling it unorthodox and un biblical. Consequently, many of the movement’s supporters left the Methodist church and began to form their own holiness organizations, such as the Church of the Nazarene and the Church of God in Christ.55

Meanwhile, in Jamaica, the doctrinal and experiential boundaries between Orthodox and Native Baptists were beginning to solidify, and many of the latter became known as Zion Revivalists after the Great Revival of 1861. These Revivalists continued to engage in spiritual practices such as “trumping,” “sounding,” and “laboring in the Spirit,” which were condemned by most missionaries. Rather than privileging the missionary ideals of ethical rationalism and strict discipline, Revivalists placed a great emphasis on divine healing, not only from physical ailments, but also from the “sickness” of sin. Another controversial aspect of Zion Revival included the belief that participants could become the expressive vehicles for Old Testament figures such as Moses, Joshua, and Elijah, or angels such as Michael or Gabriel. By becoming “possessed” with one of these spiritualized entities, Revivalists believed they gained the power to bring about healing.66 Revival pastors often used herbal remedies, which worked along with repentance on the part of the afflicted individual and supernatural intervention from the Holy Spirit. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, Revivalists held on to many of the basic tenets of nineteenth-century missionary Christianity. However, they modified these tenets in practice to deploy a broader range of spiritual resources for healing and cleansing from sin. Jesus and the Holy Ghost (or Holy Spirit) were given special emphasis for practical matters pertaining to community spiritual, moral, and physical health, while God was viewed as omnipresent yet largely uninvolved in most mundane matters.

Revivalists’ emphasis on the accessibility of Jesus and the healing power of the Holy Spirit would become prominent characteristics of twentieth-century Pentecostal practice. By 1900, Jamaican religious society featured an undeniable split between “respectable” Orthodox Baptists associated with middle-class men and “uncivilized” possession cults deemed “African” and thus inferior. Many of the Orthodox Baptists “looked askance at the American revivals that were spreading to Jamaica.” Middle-class churchgoers began to place an even stronger emphasis on British-influenced values, including a “tempered and law-like” style of worship. They also eschewed healing and possession practices, which they considered both superstitious and immoral. The stigmatization of Revivalism came partly in response to Methodists and Anglicans, who exerted considerable influence on Jamaican Orthodox Baptists, especially those in Kingston.

The latter half of the nineteenth century also saw a tremendous increase in the amount of Protestant missionary work being carried out in Haiti. Not surprisingly, much of this evangelizing was done by British Baptists, who, by 1845, had established a mission in Jacmel. Unlike Mark Bird’s earlier Methodist mission, which received criticism because its leaders often spoken no French or Creole and focused mostly on non-Haitian immigrants, the British Baptists reached out to rural Haitians. The Jacmel mission was, as Conway notes, “supported by funds from London and Jamaica.” Jacmel’s location on Haiti’s southern coast made it a relatively easy stop for ships traveling from London to Kingston. The Great Revival in Jamaica during the 1860s, the holiness movement in the United States, and the convenience of accessible shipping lanes no doubt contributed to the growth of the Baptist presence in southern Haiti. Conway states that “by the 1890s the church […] had 49 baptized members and considerable more ‘believers,’ both in the town and in ‘stations’ around the town.”67 By the turn of the twentieth century, the Jacmel church was no longer being run by British missionaries, and Nossirehi Lherisson, a Haitian pastor (whose name is a palindrome), took over the mission. Citing Haitian evangelist Myrthil Bruno, Conway notes that Lherisson “saw that the future of Protestantism [in Haiti] lay more in its potential appeal to the rural population than to the middle and upper class[es],” who embraced the French language and Roman Catholicism.68 Haitian theologian, Edner Jeanty, remarks, “Jacmel est l’endroit où le Protestantisme est synonyme de Baptisme plus qu’ailleurs sur l’ile” (“More than any other region of the country, Jacmel is the place where Protestantism is synonymous with the Baptist faith”—my translation).69 Drawing on the formal and informal education he had gained through his travels to France, England, and Jamaica, Lherisson evangelized along Haiti’s southern coast to win converts and establish stations. By the time of his death in 1934, the Baptist church had twelve hundred baptized members and over three thousand congregants. Missionaries from the Baptist Missionary Society in Jamaica had a major impact on the Baptist church not only in Jacmel, but also in St. Marc, a town farther north. In reference to the St. Marc church, Jeanty writes, “Il y avait presque toujours un Jamanca à donner un coup de main” (“There was almost always a Jamaican to lend a helping hand”—my translation);70 until a Haitian pastor was eventually appointed.

The 1906 Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles was a key event precipitat-
ing the global resurgence of Pentecostalism and the birth of numerous Pentecos-
tal organizations. As David Martin writes, "What happened following the ex-
plosive star-burst of the end of the trail in Los Angeles, and equally following all the
other parallel star-bursts worldwide, was a hurling of people in every
direction." After the Azusa Street Revival, two basic types of Pentecostal or-
ganizations emerged: trinitarian groups, such as the Assemblies of God, the
Church of God, and the Church of God in Christ (COGIC); and apostolic or
"Oneness" organizations, such as the United Pentecostal Church (UPC) and the
Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW). All of these organizations estab-
ilished missions in Haiti and Jamaica by the middle of the twentieth century and
have remained global in reach.

The 1920s marked the start of large-scale missionary work in Haiti. How-
ever, most of these Protestant groups were Baptist missions, fueled by the tri-
umphs of earlier endeavors in Jacmel. The Church of God was the first Pente-
costal group to achieve success in Haiti, planting a church there in the mid-
1930s. Conway estimates that Protestants did not penetrate very much of
Haiti's interior until the 1940s. He argues that although the American occupa-
tion (1915-1934) and the consequent media sensationalization of Vodou prob-
ably gave foreign missionaries a greater impetus to rescue Haitians from "Voo-
doo," Protestant and Pentecostal missionary work did not grow significantly
during this period. Nevertheless, the occupation "provided a context for the
flourish of American Protestantism in Haiti and indirectly was responsible for
reducing the prevalent influence of the Catholic Church." The 1950s and
1960s saw a more dramatic increase in Protestant and Pentecostal missionary
activity, particularly after the 1957 inauguration of Haiti's notorious president,
François "Papa Doc" Duvalier. Although Duvalier is often associated with
Vodou, he also earned the title, "Father of Protestantism," because of the re-
nmarkable growth Protestant churches experienced during his reign. Duvalier
believed Protestants were a valuable resource because they provided the country
with moral instruction and public health care without becoming politically active
or posing a collective threat to his power. In fact, he saw Protestantism as a way
of strengthening his own political power vis-à-vis the Catholic Church. Protes-
tant churches were growing at an even faster rate during the 1970s, but Conway
regrets that "more recent statistics are not available." Lain and Louis offer
more recent estimates of the percentages of Protestants and Pentecostals among
Haiti's churchgoers.

Pentecostals made inroads in Jamaica considerably earlier than in Haiti. The
Holiness Church of God, an important predecessor to the Jamaican Pentecostal
movement, arrived on the island in 1908 and is mentioned in several articles in
the Jamaica Daily Gleaner from the 1920s. In 1918, A.J. Tomlinson, founder of
the Pentecostal Church of God in Cleveland, Tennessee, sent an evangelist,
J.S. Llewellyn, to Jamaica. This trinitarian church changed its name to the New
Testament Church of God and is now the largest Pentecostal organization in
Jamaica. In the 1920s, there were also notices in the Gleaner concerning Pente-
costal groups such as the Apostolic Church of God, the Church of God in Christ,
and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World. It was this latter organization that
experienced the most rapid growth in Jamaica during this time, largely through
the efforts of George and Melvina White. George White began pastoring in St.
Elizabeth and Kingston in the mid-1920s. By 1926, he had claimed affiliation
with the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, and a year later, the Whites trave-
led to the United States to visit the organization's headquarters. During this
visit, George White gained accreditation and formal recognition as a minister of
the gospel and marriage celebrant. White's success in achieving accreditation
and his active role in negotiating the social hierarchy is seen by Austin-Broos as
a chief characteristic of Anansi, the cunning trickster-spider character prominent
in Jamaican folktales: "White displayed the achievement proudly and with a
degree of Jamaican veneer that cast him and his contemporaries as serious religi-
onists who also played trickster to the state. They circumvented the govern-
ment's restrictions by association with American churches." Anansi's ability to
gain material advantage by outwitting or "tricking" other characters despite their
apparent superiority is thus viewed as analogous to early Jamaican Pentecostals
pastors' use of transnational linkages to acquire status and circumvent local state
authority. Drawing on the work of Petton and Turner, Austin-Broos likens
Jamaican Anansi tales to the "liminal phase" of ritual transformation, in which
"persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate
states and positions in cultural space." This liminality is understood as a "per-
manent possibility" rather than as a transitional stage of ritual action. For Aus-
tin-Broos, Jamaican Pentecostal and Revival pastors exemplify key traits of An-
ansi the trickster by employing (perhaps unwittingly) a Christian hermeneutic
that incorporates the "Afro-Caribbean aesthetic of play." This is primarily done,
she claims, "through interpretations of the moral in terms of malaise and embodi-
ied rite" and "the interpretation of joy as a this-worldly human and sensuous
concern." Austin-Broos further maintains that "as healing rejected a disembody-
ed ethic, Anansi and the world of play opposed the mission's endorsement of
work as an essential dimension of moral redemption."
To embrace a holy lifestyle is to abide by biblical teachings and to reject the ways of "the world," which include drug and alcohol consumption, proflanity, extramarital sex, and immodest apparel. This all-encompassing standard of holiness also mandates that believers eschew commercial popular musics such as dancehall reggae in Jamaica and konpa in Haiti, which are often seen as emblematic of their respective nation-states. Nevertheless, Pentecostals often express national and cultural pride and enjoy emphasizing their distinctiveness from North Americans. Amidst an onslaught of gospel music from the United States, Jamaican and Haitian Pentecostals celebrate their cultural identities by infusing their religious music with indigenous stylistic characteristics. However, confronted with local secular genres that are equally pervasive, they strive extra carefully to maintain a healthy distance from commercial popular musics, which are more likely than foreign genres to be considered worldly and, therefore, inappropriate.

The distinction between worldliness and holiness is a central component of the biblical doctrine embraced by most Pentecostals. When individuals are "saved" or "born again," they become delivered from the penalty and power of sin and initiated into a global community of believers who have been baptized in water and filled with the Holy Spirit. This body of believers, collectively referred to as "the Church," comprises those who have been "called out" and divinely distinguished from a sinful realm of existence known as "the world." The world thus represents a way of living that is characteristic of pre-conversion status and generally understood to lie outside the boundaries of acceptability that God has established for his chosen people.

In sermons and songs, the transition from the world into the Church is often compared with the Bible's account of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. This exodus, through which Moses led God's people out of slavery by miraculously crossing the Red Sea, is viewed as symbolic of an individual's rescue from spiritual bondage. The world is thus a type of spiritual Egypt, and the Church represents Canaan, a type of spiritual Promised Land to be enjoyed not only in this life, but also eternally in heaven. The call to "come out from among them" (2 Corinthians 6:17-18) rests upon the notion that a spiritual Promised Land awaits those who willingly leave behind a worldly lifestyle and claim their inheritance as one of God's chosen children.

Once born again, an individual is considered a "babe in Christ"—one who has just set out on the path to holiness or sanctification, as described in the lyrics of the following verse to the classic hymn "Holiness unto the Lord." Like numerous hymns from this era, this piece equates worldliness with spiritual bondage.

 Called unto holiness, Church of our God,
 Purchase of Jesus, redeemed by His blood;
 Called from the world and its idols to flee;
 Called from the bondage of sin to be free.

Holiness is understood as an inward state attained through an ongoing process of maturation during which believers constantly strive toward a state of spiritual "perfection." Perfection, in this sense, does not necessarily mean without fault, but, rather, suggests a consecrated Christian walk in which one demonstrates spiritual maturity by maintaining a healthy, growing relationship with God. For Pentecostals, a state of holiness, sanctification, or perfection is attained only through an ascetic lifestyle of submission to God, obedience to divinely selected leadership, and diligence in prayer and fasting. Holiness also requires abandoning worldly pleasures, which include secular musics associated with dancehall cultures. Jamaican Pentecostals sing numerous hymns and choruses that reinforce this belief in the mandates of holiness. For example, the popular hymn, "I Surrender All," which is found in Redemption Songs (number 581), expresses complete submission to Jesus by forsaking worldly pleasures. The second verse and chorus of this hymn are as follows:

 All to Jesus I surrender,
 Humbly at His feet I bow;
 Worldly pleasures all forsaken,
 Take me, Jesus, take me now.
 I surrender all,
 I surrender all
 All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
 I surrender all.

Living a holy lifestyle requires a firm commitment to resist worldly temptations in order to walk the Christian path. The traditional chorus, "Goodbye World," which has been re-popularized in Jamaica through a 2000 recording by African American gospel singer, Donnie McClurkin, expresses this idea of being convinced to leave the world behind.

 Goodbye, world. I'll stay no longer with you.
 Goodbye, pleasures of sin. I'll stay no longer with you.
 I made up my mind to go God's way the rest of my life.
 I made up my mind to go God's way the rest of my life.

For many Jamaican Pentecostals, the "reggae-ish" rhythmic accompaniments featured in McClurkin's rendition, with its guitar and keyboard offbeats, is in tension with the song's lyrics, which are understood to celebrate the eschewal of "the dancehall" indexed by the song's rhythmic feel. Therefore, Pentecostals usually sing "Goodbye World" with an underlying groove that is less easily identified with the classic reggae sound of the 1970s or with the contemporary dancehall. In the context of this chorus, saying goodbye to the world does not involve a physical removal from earthly existence or the Jamaican nation-state. On the contrary, congregants are generally encouraged to make the most of life
by excelling in education, working hard at one's job, voting in political elections, and taking advantages of opportunities to prosper financially for the benefit of family and church. Pentecostals often describe themselves as being "in the world, but not of the world," meaning that while they are physically located within the larger society, they remain "separate" from it by personally upholding a distinct spiritual and moral framework.

Cheryl Sanders uses the concept of "exile" to describe African American Pentecostals' paradoxical condition of being embedded within a national society whose moral paradigm and norms of respectability often conflict with Pentecostal beliefs and practices. As Sanders explains, the condition of spiritual exile resonates strongly with churchgoers in the United States, who constitute both a racial and religious minority. For African Caribbean Pentecostals in the United States, this spiritual exile is made even more acute, reinforced by marginalization according to both race and ethnicity. In Jamaica, Pentecostals experience a spiritual exile that produces somewhat contradictory attitudes toward popular musics such as mento, ska, reggae, and dancehall, which may constitute expressions of Jamaican cultural nationalism.

Music and morality in a Pentecostal church

During evening services at Mount Olive, one can usually discern the pounding of a bass drum emanating from some distant sound system—a ubiquitous reminder of the expressive power and influence of secular dancehall culture. For Mount Olive's pastor, the proximity of these dancehall sounds presents a dangerous temptation, particularly for the church's youths and young adults, who are challenged to adhere to acceptable forms of musical expression in the midst of what is described to them as a hostile sonic environment. Eric, age forty, is Mount Olive's keyboardist and minister of music. He regularly works with the youth, giving them music lessons and encouraging them to stay faithful to God. After one church service, when an instrumentalist began mimicking the bass line to a popular dancehall piece, Eric scolded him, "Never play that in the church!" Policeman the boundary between worldliness and holiness is one of the hardest challenges Pentecostal leaders face in trying to keep young people from falling away from the church, a process known as "backsliding." Eric feels that he and other leaders have a crucial responsibility to help prevent youth from yielding to worldly temptations and becoming enmeshed in dancehall culture. During our interview, he spoke about the significance of generational differences within Pentecostal churches as they relate to the need for young people to find an appropriate means of musical self-expression.

Melvin: Do you think music helps to keep young people in the church?
Eric: That's one of the thing the church needs to do. Young people—even in the young people's choir, cause we have two choirs here—they want to sing music they can't sing, because you know, they [are] not ready for it.
M: You mean the young people's choir isn't ready, or the congregation?
E: The congregation—it's the leadership. You know, the young people [want] to sing the Donnie McClurkin, the—
M: Kirk Franklin?
E: Yes! And the church people they not ready for that kind of thing. So what we need to do is try to meet the young people halfway. Not to give up too much, but you know, come halfway. A lot of kids come to church and the music help them express themselves. You know, the beat is fast and they can dance and move. But sometimes they say, well, "in the church me cyan express myself, so me nah stayin' in de church. Me goin' to the dancehall where I can express myself."[100]
M: So right now do you think the church is succeeding? Is music helping to stop young people from backsliding?
E: Sometimes. But we still have to do some more work to meet them halfway. It's goin' take time, because they like to sing—like the choir, they wanna sing this song, "Shake your Booty for Jesus."
M: [laughs] What?

Eric was actually referring to "Gospel Time," the first song on Beenie Man's 1999 recording, The Doctor. Among Beenie Man's recordings, "Gospel Time" is unique in that it juxtaposes traditional church choruses against a hip-hop groove and a dancehall vocal style, deliberately creating a striking dissonance between the sacred and the profane, the church and the dance club. The introduction to "Gospel Time" is a slow gospel rendition of "Praise Him" in triadic harmony, after which the rhythmicized chorus is sung, featuring a hip-hop drum loop that accompanies the jarring lyrics, "Shake that booty in the name of the Lord." This provocative chorus is interpolated between well-known gospel songs, such as "Everybody Has to Know," "He's So Real to Me," and "Down by the Riverside." Referring to the chorus, Eric noted, "If you look at the lyrics, they don't really say anything of substance. A lot of the new songs [are] like that. They like to sing them, but they don't really speak of a true experience, like in "How Great Thou Art"—where you just look outside at the trees and the grass and say how great God is. The older songs tell of a true experience."

African-American influences and Jamaican youth

Many young Jamaican Pentecostals with whom I spoke are strongly drawn towards African American gospel music styles, which they sometimes experience as "black" though not necessarily "Jamaican." In both New York and Jamaica (especially in Spanish Town and Kingston), African American styles provide a means for some Pentecostals to express a "modern" Pentecostal aesthetic while counter-identifying against the "white" hymnody and "white-sounding" im-
ported gospel music preferred by some churches. "Black" styles are associated mostly with contemporary R&B- and hip-hop-influenced gospel artists from the United States, but also with the traditional choruses and the ska and dancehall rhythms characteristic of contemporary Jamaican gospel music. Whether they emanate from Jamaican or foreign soil, however, the use of "black" gospel styles significantly impacts the experiential framework of Pentecostal social activity. Moreover, the espousal of African American gospel music by Jamaican and Haitian Pentecostals may even provide a sense of empowerment and facilitate their participation, on some level, in a spiritual warfare whose battlegrounds have become increasingly transnational in scope. In Haiti, by comparison, I found a greater tendency to conflate "blackness" and "Haitianess." In light of Haitian history, this is not at all surprising.

The opposition that some Jamaican preachers express towards African American cultural influences takes the form of a scathing critique of contemporary church practices, which, they contend, have stray too far from the more "authentic" practices of yesteryear. One of the perceived dangers in moving away from traditional practices is that Jamaican Pentecostal identities are compromised as worldly influences begin to infiltrate congregations. The "modern" musical activities of many Jamaican churches are deemed inauthentic or "artificial" to the extent that they rely on emotionalism and entertainment rather than on the Holy Spirit for their affective impact. One Spanish Town preacher urged his congregation not to "sit down" on God by refusing to offer him praise. The modern-day church, he argued, has also become too lazy to "make a joyful noise" as the Bible commands. A spirit of apathy has become prevalent, he claimed, and many churchgoers lack the spiritual "unction"—that "Holy Ghost anointing"—that would compel them to sing and shout praises to God. He exhorted, "Give me that old time Holy Ghost—that Holy Ghost that make[s] me want to sing and dance and preach! I don't want the quiet one! Oh glory! I want the one that make[s] me jump up and shout 'hallelujah!' I just can't keep quiet!

A similar message was delivered by Bishop Christie, a Jamaican minister visiting from New York, who also expressed a desire for a return to old times characterized less by "emotional" musical practices that "tickle the ear" but more by the transforming power of God's anointing. He began his sermon by lamenting how many changes that have moved the church away from a genuine experience of the Holy Spirit. "What we need today is not more music and emotional singing, but we need the old time anointing. We need not more charismatic preachers, but Holy Ghost preachers, anointed preachers! The present-day church has changed! The pastors have changed! The bishops have changed! The music has changed! The preaching has changed!" Although the present generation relies heavily on musical participation to experience a feeling of ecstasy, the "old time anointing," Bishop Christie preached, does not depend on music. He feels that many of the younger believers today are sacrificing a true relationship with God for the temporary pleasures of musical sound. He continued, "This generation has to make so much music because they have to create an artificial joy! In the old times, the people shouted. They didn't dance, 'cause it was the Holy Ghost! They didn't even have a lot of instruments. But when they sang 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus,' oh my! I don't need no organ to help me preach!"

The significant point here is that worldliness and "African-Americaneness" are conflated, at least implicitly, in the discourses of some Jamaican Pentecostals. Indeed, most of the "changes" mentioned by Bishop Christie are experienced by older Jamaican churchgoers not only as more "modern" and "artificial" but also as evidence of African American influence on traditional Jamaican Pentecostal practices. For example, Bishop Christie suggests a fascinating distinction between the terms "dancing" and "shouting," both of which denote bodily movements that Pentecostals generally assume to be spiritually induced. Although many Pentecostals view these terms as synonymous, "shouting" is sometimes used to describe a type of holy dancing that appears relatively more spontaneous, less stylized, and less controlled. "Shouting is a form of bodily praise occurring during intense moments of singing and handclapping that spur an individual to transcendence. The terms "dancing in the Spirit" and "holy dancing" hold different connotations for Bishop Christie, who apparently uses them to refer to a more modernized dance pattern that some Pentecostals argue is more controlled by the dancer than by the Spirit. Moreover, the use of stylized foot patterns and jig-like dance steps is more prevalent among African American Pentecostals than among Jamaican Pentecostals.

Bishop Christie's reference to the hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" provides evidence of a Jamaican preference for the meaningful lyrics of traditional hymns and "sober songs" over the "one-liners" and simpler choruses whose appeal derives more obviously from rhythmic or melodic elements. Although hymn singing is practiced by many African American Pentecostals, it is noticeably more prevalent among Jamaican churchgoers. Bishop Christie's emphatic statement, "I don't need no organ to help me preach," refers to the organist's practice of interjecting percussive choral attacks in between a preacher's words during a sermon. This occurs most often when a preacher switches to a singing or "intoned" style of sermonizing, which is more characteristic of African American preachers than Jamaican ones. The use of the organ to complement or "help" the preacher is not commonly found in Jamaica's Pentecostal churches, although I did occasionally notice it in urban areas such as Kingston and Montego Bay, where churches often attract preachers visiting from, or influenced by, the United States. Television and radio play a major role in transmitting African American styles of preaching and singing to the island.

Judith, age twenty, belongs to Lighthouse Assembly, a five-hundred-member Pentecostal church in Kingston. She spoke to me about the frustrations of teens and young adults who are attracted to African American gospel music styles but feel that they are denied opportunities to express themselves musically because of the traditional tastes of some church leaders. Judith noted that the church's musicians, most of whom are under age thirty, often attempt to sneak
jazz elements into their pieces during services. She also spoke about the differences between the jazz-tinged accompaniment played by the instrumentalists and the traditional style preferred by older church leaders. I began by asking her to describe what she meant by "jazz."

Judith: Okay, it's not straight jazz, but there's a flavor of jazz in there. Like, for example, when the offering is being taken, they'll maybe put hymns, like "Just a Closer Walk with You," in jazz form. It's generally traditional songs, but with a jazz taste.

Melvin: And what did the older generation think of that?

J: At first they were quite resistant, 'cause, you know, anything that is not traditional is worldly.

M: Well, what does "traditional" mean?

J: Traditional means four-four beat, four beats to the bar, no variation, no ad-libbing, as is.

M: So would they just sing a hymn or something?

J: They would sing a hymn or a regular chorus, but with no twist, no flavor—just as is, verbatim. No style. [laughs] Just straight.

Since Judith's parents were members of Lighthouse before she was born, she has been attending the church for as long as she can remember. Since the age of five, she has also been quite active in the church. Currently, Judith sings in the choir. The choir, she explains, is an outlet for many youth who find congregational hymns unsatisfactory. Most of the Lighthouse choristers are teens and young adults, many of whom sang in the now defunct Youth Choir, which had to disband because so many congregants have been migrating to the United States and England in recent years. In 2001 alone, the church lost eight families to out-migration. Despite the preponderance of youth in the choir, Judith still feels that the choir is limited by the overly conservative tastes of the choir director. Although the director is only in her late thirties, she happens to be the daughter of the pastor, Bishop Wheaton, and is committed to staying within the boundaries of appropriateness determined by her father's musical preferences. Judith continued, "We have an assistant choir director who is a younger person, but there still is sort of like a puzzle on things because the director is not very open to contemporary stuff. No, if it's not traditional, if it's gonna cause a riptide, they're not gonna listen to it. And she has the final word."

Judith indicated that even traditional songs can be deemed inappropriate and "cause a riptide" if the rhythmic accompaniment does not correspond to accepted norms. She manages to find humor in the reactions of conservatively minded believers to musical selections that stray from traditional guidelines.

J: Right now, we have a song that we are in the process of practicing. It's an old song, "Saved by His Power Divine" but I'm not too sure it is going to go over very well because it has a calypso-funky beat. And I'm really nervous about it. [laughs]

M: So what would it mean for it not to go over well? Have you had experiences like that before?

J: Oh yes! [laughs] Where the pastor's wife, she won't say anything but she'll start fidgeting—imitates pastor's wife acting nervously—and getting really uncomfortable and sitting at the edge of her seat. And that's generally how you know it's a problem. And then, she has this way of just—You see the tension. She may not say it right away. But pastor [Bishop Wheaton] will be like "Ahah," and you know he wants to say something, but he doesn't quite know how to come out and not offend the choir and not offend this wife. And like the next time we choose to do the song the director will be like [shakes her head] no, uh-uh. Do the next one, because we keep getting that response.

Both Bishops Christie and Wheaton express views toward music not unlike other Jamaican Pentecostals of their generation. They strive to maintain a delicate balance between allowing the use of music as a tool of transcendence and avoiding an overreliance on musical sound to experience the anointing of the Holy Spirit. These church leaders recognize the positive potential of inspired musical participation, but they are careful not to mistake the pleasures of sound for the touch of the Spirit. "Emotion is not Spirit!" Bishop Christie proclaimed at one point during his sermon. He expounded, "When the music is played to its highest potential, it has something in it to stir the soul and touch the heart. But you've got to have the Holy Ghost that you can feel [even] when you kneel to pray, so you know it is not [just] the music." He thus recognizes the power of musical sound but deems it worthless apart from the Holy Spirit who channels that power and uses it not merely to rouse emotions but, rather, to transform lives. Keeping a healthy distance from African American influences is often a key mandate in this transformation process.

Negotiating Haitian popular music

"Se Tabou! Sa se Tabou!" ("It's Tabou! This is Tabou!") The lead singer belted the lyrics while motioning the crowd of jubilant spectators to wave their hands and sing along. I marveled at the synchrony of the more than six thousand bodies swaying to and fro in rhythm with the konpa beat. It was August 1996, and I was nearing the end of a two-month Caribbean tour with Tabou Combo, one of the premiere dance bands to emerge from Duvalier-era Haiti. Based in New York City, Tabou Combo always used young North American horn players to supplement their core membership, which had remained mostly intact since the group's inception in the late 1960s. I had just begun playing saxophone and writing horn arrangements for this renowned group, after having spent the previous two years working with Phantoms, one of many nouvel genre (new generation) konpa bands also based in the Haitian diaspora. By the time I visited Haiti with Tabou Combo, I was accustomed to the music's infectious rhythm and the enthusiastic fans who recognized Tabou Combo as international superstars. As I began thinking seriously about pursuing a deeper study of
Haitian music and culture, I took note of the strong emotional impact that konpa seemed to have on those who attended our concerts and festivals. I would eventually discover that this genre, which "has become a symbol for Haitians in Haiti and the diaspora," is negotiated in a variety of ways by Haitian Pentecostals.

What struck me most during my travels with Tabou Combo were the experiential similarities I noticed between Pentecostal worship services and the outdoor konpa concerts in which I played. In both contexts, participants place a premium on lively music and bodily expression, collectively producing energy or "heat" that marks the success of the event. At the music's most intense moments, the heat flowing from the performers to the crowd and among all those who danced and sang along was even capable of producing spiritual manifestations. Members of Tabou Combo report that a lwa even appeared during a concert in the late 1990s. The lwa allegedly entered into a listener who marched onto the stage and began to chew glass during the band's performance of a piece containing roots rhythms. Tabou Combo stopped performing the piece shortly thereafter because, according to one member of the group, "Some people didn't like it." During other konpa concerts, I have witnessed participants lose control of themselves to the point that they had to be restrained or carried away by other audience members.

As I observed audience behavior while playing in Tabou Combo's horn section, I often reflected on the claim made by some Pentecostals that music and worship are inseparable. Disagreeing with characterizations of secular music as "devil worship," I had chosen rather to view the konpa concerts in which I played simply as entertainment. While blowing saxophone lines, however, I sometimes secretly wondered whether I was supporting the musical and bodily worship of an Evil Force. Given the non-Christian character of most commercial konpa lyrics and the ways in which couples sometimes danced, it hardly seemed as though those gyrating their bodies and waving their arms in the air were trying to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." But then, who or what was being glorified in the konpa concerts in which I played? Did these musical events really have to be placed on one side or the other of the boundary between holiness and worldliness, as I had often heard preached? Or could secular konpa be spiritually neutral? Already struggling with these types of issues throughout my performing career, I found that they took on a heightened relevance once I began conducting ethno-musicological research among Pentecostals in the Caribbean.

All of the Haitian Pentecostals to whom I talked frowned upon konpa featuring the kinds of bawdy lyrics sung by performers such as Michel Martelly (a.k.a. Sweet Mickey). Some, however, object strongly to konpa even when played as an instrumental genre or used to support Christian lyrics during church services. These objections, usually voiced by pastors, are based on the fact that konpa is played in nightclubs where "unholy" behaviors, such as drinking, smoking, social dancing, and fornicking, are believed to find support. During a service I attended at a Church of God in Christ in Port-au-Prince, the pastor condemned the hypocrisy of those who profess to be Christians but surreptitiously listen to dance bands. The sermon was based on Romans 12:1-2 and emphasized believers' mandate to avoid conforming to the fads and fashions of the world. The pastor used humor to make his point, bemoaning the fact that he would sometimes walk by a saint's home and hear the popular songs of konpa artists such as Tropicana or Sweet Mickey instead of mizik evanjelik. For many leaders, the konpa rhythm thus indexes worldliness and unrighteous living. Some church leaders go so far as to preach that konpa "is not a rhythm of the Body of Christ" ("se pa yon rit ko a") and chastise church musicians who play in a style that too closely resembles the konpa beat. Most of the Pentecostals I met disagree with such extreme viewpoints and feel that konpa is appropriate provided the rhythm does not overpower the singing or become a distraction. Knowing that the status of konpa is controversial among Pentecostals, I usually avoided discussing my prior involvement with Tabou Combo whenever I found myself among churchgoers. However, I felt much less awkward talking about my experience playing African American musical styles such as blues, jazz, and gospel, which, unlike konpa, did not index worldliness or make Haitian Pentecostals uncomfortable. In fact, in churches where konpa is forbidden, congregational singing was usually accompanied by music obviously influenced by commercial popular musics from the United States. Timothy Rommen discusses a similar phenomenon in his ethno-musicological study of Protestant Christianity in Trinidad. The "negotiation of proximity," as he terms it, involves the processes through which churchgoers develop a preference for musical styles that are farthest from them. Discussing the controversies surrounding "gospelypo," Rommen explains that this genre "is situated much too close to home to remain unfettered and uncomplicated." By contrast, North American gospel songs remain "fundamentally Other" despite their integration into Trinidadian religious culture. Unlike gospelypo, which is "implicated in the messiness of everyday life," gospel choruses from abroad maintain a distanced position that ultimately makes them easier to incorporate into worship services.

A very similar phenomenon occurs among Pentecostals in Haiti, where local styles, such as konpa, are more likely to be viewed as a negative influence. Part and parcel of the "messiness of everyday life," konpa's proximity renders it a greater threat, while musical genres that hail from abroad are less ethically complicated and more easily embraced. It is as though their distance renders them innocuous even if they are deemed problematic in their country of origin.

**Conclusion**

There are some tremendous difficulties in maintaining one's commitment to a religious tradition that says, "We know by faith and not by sight," while maintaining habits of critical inquiry that rest on relentless interrogation of the warrants, grounds, bases, and assertions of truth put forth in all sorts of intellectual
popularity among African Caribbean believers.

I have also found transcendence a convenient trope through which to examine the multiple boundaries that are negotiated through Pentecostal musical practice. Through musical practice, Pentecostals are able to draw lines between a number of contested positions: sacred and profane, holy and worldly, church and dancehall, local and foreign, African Caribbean and North American, black and white, Self and Other, human and divine. By sharing my experiences with popular music and transcendence among Jamaican and Haitian Pentecostals, I hope to have shed light on how these dichotomies continue to be constructed through the expression of national, cultural, and religious identities within localized forms of charismatic Christian practice.

Notes


3. Pentecostalism has recently been described as "a repertoire of recognizable spiritual affinities which constantly breaks out in new forms" across the globe—David Martin, Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 176. Since the 1990s, scholars have begun to devote greater attention to the worldwide Pentecostal movement. For example, Martin L. Hallowes, Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide (Peabody, Mass.: Hendricks, 1997) provides a thorough synopsis of Pentecostalism as it has spread, during the twentieth century, from very few to approximately five hundred million adherents. Poewe and Coleman also provide comprehensive overviews of Pentecostal and charismatic churches from a global perspective—see Karla Poewe, "Introduction: The Nature, Globality, and History of Charismatic Christianity," in Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture, ed. Karla Poewe (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994) and Simon Coleman, The Globalization of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Coleman's study of charismatic Christianity differs from my own in that he is primarily concerned with "Word of Faith" churches that emphasize obtaining financial prosperity through faith and sacrificial giving.

4. In Haiti, the same is believed to be true of musics associated with Vodou, rara, and "heavenly armies"—see Melvin L. Butler, "Songs of Pentecost: Experiencing Music, Transcendence, and Identity in Jamaica and Haiti" (PhD diss., New York University, 2005).


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13. Rastafarianism gets its name from Ras Tafari, who was crowned King of Ethiopia in 1930. After his coronation, he adopted the name Haile Selassie and became the inspiration for many Jamaicans who formed a new religious sect. Rastafarians view Selassie as a black Messiah whose rise to power represented a fulfillment of biblical prophecy—see Philip Sherlock and Hazel Bennett, The Story of the Jamaican People (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 1998), 395-398, and Chevannes, Rastafari. Austin-Broos draws insightful comparisons between Rastafarianism and Pentecostalism in Jamaica—see Austin-Broos, Rastafari Genesia, 239-242.
17. Sherlock and Bennett, The Story, 177.
23. Simpson, Black Religions, 42.
26. Simpson, Black Religions, 42; Burton, Afro-Creole, 37.
27. Frey and Wood, Come Shouting, 132.
30. Geggus, Slavery, War, and Revolution, 93.
31. See Geggus, Slavery, 95, for a more extensive treatment of the social, economic, and political impact of the Haitian Revolution on Jamaican society.
32. Frey and Wood, Come Shouting, 136-138; Simpson, Black Religions, 39-40; Barrett, Rastafarians, 20; Burton, Afro-Creole, 37.
33. Simpson, Black Religions, 9.
34. Simpson, Black Religions, 40.
35. Simpson, Black Religions, 40.
36. Sherlock and Bennett, The Story, 181.
40. Burton, Afro-Creole, 40.
42. Burton, Afro-Creole, 37-8.
43. Burton, Afro-Creole, 43.
44. Burton, Afro-Creole, 37.
45. Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesia, 43.
49. Barrett, Rastafarians, 19.
50. Kenneth M. Bilby, “The Caribbean as a Musical Region,” in Caribbean Con-
tours, ed. Sidney W. Mintz and Sally Price (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 188 and 262.
54. Like many prior uprisings, the Baptist War took place around December 25. Therefore, it is also referred to as the "Christmas Rebellion." See Burton, Afro-Creole, 86-88, for a full account of this event.
55. Burton, Afro-Creole, 86, 89.
56. Burton, Afro-Creole, 42, 97.
58. Logan, Haiti, 182.
59. The brown class of "coloreds" or mulattoes in both Haiti and Jamaica also played a significant role in the socio-religious development of each locale. Sherrock and Bennett provide a helpful summation, in which they highlight the impact of color and class on the development of religion and social change in these two African Caribbean contexts.

These differences between Jamaican and Haitian contexts become clear: the Evangelical Movement [started by Wesley in England], largely rooted in the Protestant world, contributed significantly to social change in Jamaica but not in Haiti. The people of colour in Haiti suffered the same civil disabilities as those in Jamaica, but their political and social aspirations were opposed by a much larger body of resident whites, both rich and middle class, than in Jamaica, where the mulattoes were essentially conservative. They [the Jamaican mulattoes] shared the "terrified consciousness" of the whites for the blacks. The Enlightenment reinforced the anti-slavery movement in England, but it did not provide Jamaican blacks with a battle cry. The Evangelical movement was concerned with religious principles and man's conversion. The Enlightenment dealt with the principles of government and the rights of man. Each movement exercised a powerful influence in the Caribbean, one through the work of Lisle and Baker in Jamaica, the other through the Friends of the blacks and the Black Jacobins in Haiti.—Sherrock and Bennett, The Story, 189.
60. Logan, Haiti, 163.
62. Logan, Haiti, 182.
63. According to Lain, the Adventist Church arrived in Haiti in 1871—see Lain Church Growth, 68. However, Austin-Broos states that the Adventist Church was founded in Kingston in 1894—see Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 55. The Baptist Convention in Haiti may have begun in the early 1860s, but Lain argues that they did not receive official recognition from the American Baptist mission until 1928—see Lain, Church Growth, 67, cf. Johnson 1970, 21.
64. Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 55.
65. Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 55-59; Simpson, Black Religions, 112; Barrett, Rastafarians, 22.
66. Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 71 and 59.
68. Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 61-63.
69. Joseph M. Murphy, Working the Spirit: Ceremonies of the African Diaspora (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 126 gives a vivid account of the trumping of Revival Zion groups of spiritual dancers known as the "band" or "bands."
70. Ward, Filled, 63.
71. Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 62.
73. Gmelch and Gmelch, The Parish, 75-76.
75. Conway, Pentecostalism, 163.
77. Edner A. Jeanty, Le Christianisme En Haiti (Port-au-Prince, Haiti: La Presse Evangélique, 1989), 76.
78. Jeanty, Le Christianisme, 79-80; Conway, Pentecostalism, 164.
79. Jeanty, Le Christianisme, 80 and 164.
80. Jeanty, Le Christianisme, 82.
81. Austin-Broos correctly notes that the Azusa Street Revival was "especially significant" for Pentecostals of African descent because it involved William Seymour and his fiancée, Jennie Moore, both of whom were African American. However, he exaggerates the impact on black racial identity by claiming that "this event has become a charter myth for black Pentecostals, who deploy it as a statement of the spiritual ascendancy over whites that they propose for New World Africans"—see Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 99. In any event, the Azusa Street Revival did help to spread the message of Pentecostalism across the globe, emphasizing speaking in tongues as evidence of being filled or baptized with the Holy Spirit.
83. Jeanty writes that the Church of God arrived in 1937—see Jeanty, Le Christianisme, 36. However, Lain maintains that this church arrived three years prior "through Haitians returning from Cuba"—see Lain, Church Growth, 69. The majority of Haitian Pentecostals I encountered from 2000 to 2004 claimed membership in the Church of God.
84. Conway, Pentecostalism, 164. Like most scholars, Conway fails to distinguish Protestant from Pentecostal practice, using the term "Protestant" to designate both.
87. Conway, Pentecostalism, 166 and 168.
88. See above Lain, Church Growth; and Louis, Catholicism.
89. “Pentecostal” and “Holiness” churches were difficult to distinguish early on because the Jamaican census conflated these two categories (cf. Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 91 and 98-101).
90. See Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 46-48 and 111-112 for a fuller discussion of the Anansi character and its roots in West African Ashanti cosmology.
94. Austin-Broos, Jamaica Genesis, 46.
96. McClurkin’s version of this chorus, recorded live in London in 2000, is intriguing for a number of reasons. In my dissertation, I explain the tension between “Jamaican” and “African-American” musical styles and discuss the ways in which the piece’s reggae-like accompaniment differs from that used among most Pentecostal congregations in Jamaica—see Butler, Songs of Pentecost.
98. Pseudonyms are used throughout this section in place of the actual names of congregations and individuals I encountered during fieldwork.
100. “In the church, I can express myself. I am not staying in the church. I’m going to the dancehall where I can express myself.”
101. The cultural politics of Jamaican nationalism has contributed to ongoing tensions between social classes and their dynamic concepts of blackness, Jamaicanness, and Africanness—see Deborah A. Thomas, “Tradition’s Not an Intelligence Thing”: Jamaican Cultural Politics and Ascendance of Modern Blackness” (PhD diss., New York University, 2000). The earliest ideology of Jamaica’s national motto (“Out of Many, One People”) was sometimes articulated to me by Pentecostals in response to the suggestion that blackness defines Jamaican culture.
102. The term “anointing” is generally used to refer to the effectual presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the life and ministry of a believer.
103. Among African American and Jamaican Pentecostals the word “shouting” often refers to a type of “holy dancing” that is most often done to musical accompaniment.
104. For discussions of religious dancing among African American worshipers as it relates to West and Central African expressions of spirituality—see Albert J. Rabieux, Slave Religion: The “Invisible Institution” in the Antebellum South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 68-74, and Murphy, Working, 147-151 and 198-199. In addition to citing Melville Herskovits’ landmark work, Murphy draws on the research of Stuckey and Creel who pose significant parallels between African-American holy dancing and African ceremonies involving initiation and ancestor invocation—see Melville Hersko-

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DANCING AROUND DANCEHALL

107. I am aware that the concept of a duality between absolute good and evil—God and Satan—stems from a particular Christian perspective in which these figures are seen as mutually exclusive opposing forces impacting the world. As an African-American Pentecostal scholar, my challenge is always to operate discursively on a scholarly level of analysis that both recognizes and contextualizes Christian doctrines in relation to a much broader array of theological, ontological, and epistemological stances. My conception of evil is not of the “Satanic” or the woman’s buttocks”—see Gave Averill, A Day for the Hunter. A Day for the Prey: Popular Music and Power in Haiti (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 243. 109. Psalm 100.
110. Likewise, I very rarely mentioned my gigs with jazz, blues, and R&B artists among Pentecostals in the United States. It was much easier to discuss my work with Haitian konpa bands, which were largely unknown to African American Pentecostals.
115. Glick Schiller and Fouron show that for Haitians living abroad, “the [Haitian] nation is an extension of the family, and that both family and nation can extend long distances and across the borders of states”—see Nina Glick Schiller and Georges Eugene Fouron, George Woke Up Laughing: Long-Distance Nationalism and the Search for Home (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2001), 90.
Bibliography


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