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Performing Pannkotis Identity in Haiti

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on transnational networks of Pentecostal practice. It explores the use of “Pannkotis” to identify musical practice among a variety of Haitian churches, including some tied historically to Protestant and Pentecostal organizations in the United States. It also discusses the author’s roles as a Western ethnomusicologist and a Pentecostal believer, reflecting on the power shifts in transnational engagement that shared faith can engender: the author was often not only a learner about Haitian Pentecostals themselves, but also a religious learner with them; at other times, by virtue of the “portable” religious capital of the author’s status as a Pentecostal *minister*, he was placed as a musical and religious teacher. The chapter points provocatively to the discontinuities the author experienced as an ethnomusicologist because of the understandings and beliefs he shared as a coreligionist with Haitian Pentecostals.

Keywords: Christianity, Caribbean, Haiti, Pentecostal, Catholic, Protestant, African diaspora, transcendence

In the early 21st century, a variety of mainline Christian assemblies in Haiti and its diaspora are self-identifying as *Pannkotis* (Pentecostal).¹ Music is a primary vehicle through which this *Pannkotis* identity is sounded and reconstructed in ritual spaces. Even when founded by foreign missionaries, congregations in Haiti have creative autonomy within the country’s religious sphere. Church leaders exercise control over musical repertoire, and selected song lyrics encourage sincere devotion while recounting supernatural experiences involving divine healing, miracles, and prophetic utterances. Pentecostals embrace a musical aesthetic of “heating up” (*chofe*) and consider it critical to the success of Christian ritual. However, they often debate the proper function of musical expression and the appropriateness of certain musical styles for worship services. Here I highlight the ways in which Haitian churchgoers negotiate the meaning of *Pannkotis* through the contested practices and discourses of music making.

This chapter argues that musical performance is a powerful sonic index of Pentecostal theology, particularly for believers who perform their identities in relation to denominational Protestants (*Pwotestan*). While the latter often use denominational and mission labels (e.g., Baptist, Methodist, Nazarene, Episcopalian) as primary markers of affiliation, Pentecostals are more likely to define themselves through a shared logic of religious practice. And yet, as I have explained elsewhere (Butler 2008), music is also a significant marker of the *differences* among the varieties of Pentecostalism in Haiti.²

I begin by considering some historical and theological foundations of Pentecostalism, underscoring some of the basic tenets its Haitian adherents share. I then explore the ways in which religion has been constructed in relation to racial and national identities, proposing that this historical foundation informs contemporary understandings of Pentecostal difference. Finally, I discuss the performance of faith and the phenomenology of divine encounter in two distinct Pentecostal congregations, Glorious Rock Worship Center and Good Shepherd Assembly. These case studies reveal how Pentecostals seek manifestations of the Holy Spirit through ritualized moments of praise and

worship, while identifying themselves as devoted Christians in contradistinction to a host of cultural and spiritual others. Song and speech mark churchgoers as *Pannkotis* and facilitate various modes of performance during worship services.

Defining Pentecostalism in Global and Local Contexts

Anthropologist Simon Coleman posits that Christian activities around the globe involve “the promotion of transnational ‘flows’ (Appadurai 1996) of religious culture, personnel and objects across space and time.” He argues that these mobilizations of faith should be seen as “contemporary manifestations of age-old proselytizing practices” (2000, 4). Haitian Pentecostals often cite biblical evidence of a centuries-long tradition of transnationally constituted Christian communities. In narrating the watershed events of the Day of Pentecost, preachers draw on passages from the book of Acts, which highlights the formation of this transnational body of believers, empowered and commissioned by the Holy Spirit.³ Moreover, transnational migrations spurred by political and economic turmoil, the proliferation of global media, and a steady stream of monetary remittances across national boundaries have bolstered all kinds of social and spiritual communities, including those composed of Haitian Christians (Glick Schiller et al. 1994; Butler 2002). Pentecostal practitioners in the United States often posit the 1906 Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles as the key event precipitating a much more recent, but no less worldwide, resurgence of the faith. Historians and socialists of religion also note that the revival helped to spread the message of Pentecostalism across the globe. For example, David Martin writes, “What happened following the explosive starburst of the end of the trail in Los Angeles, and equally following all the other parallel starbursts worldwide, was a hurling of people in every direction” (2002, 5).

Modern-day Haitian Pentecostalism is often defined in musical terms. However, *mizik Pannkotis* (Pentecostal music) is also informed by a rich tradition of ritual practice and biblical interpretation, and *Pannkotis* share a number of fundamental beliefs. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, with the “initial evidence” of speaking in tongues (also known as glossolalia or xenoglossy) as recorded in the second chapter of Acts, lies at the heart of Pentecostal practice and distinguishes it from that of most mainline Protestant denominations. The term *karismatik* (charismatic) is sometimes used in a broader sense to refer to Christian practices that privilege gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, prophesying, supernatural healing, and holy dancing. Although some observers in Haiti and the United States use “Pentecostal” and “charismatic” more or less interchangeably, others distinguish the two adjectives, reserving the latter to describe a mid-20th-century transdenominational movement of the Holy Spirit within congregations that often maintained self-designations such as Catholic, Baptist, or Methodist. By contrast, most Pentecostals embrace an ascetic lifestyle and celebrate a lineage that predates the Protestant Reformation, continues through the Azusa Street Revival of 1906, and retains a nondenominational self-designation. I believe it is important not to lose sight of the ways in which this historical consciousness shapes 21st-century perceptions and practices of Pentecostalism in the Haitian context.

Methodists, Baptists, and other Protestant groups share with *Pannkotis* the belief that Jesus Christ is the resurrected Savior, but they tend not to view speaking in tongues as initial evidence of Spirit infilling. Many Protestants also disapprove of the Pentecostal belief that music may be used to enliven or “heat up” the worship space so that the Holy Spirit will descend. Pentecostal churches are spaces in which women are the majority holders of expressive and spiritual power. Indeed, women comprise the overwhelming majority of most congregations; and it is through their voices and bodies that the critical process of heating up most often occurs. But their spiritual power is tempered by the fact that relatively few women pastor their own congregations or play musical instruments. Music also helps congregants become emotionally involved in the service and more receptive to preaching. Although Pentecostal congregations share these beliefs, the character of musical praise in Haitian churches varies according to the type of church service in which music occurs.

I reserve the term “trance” for descriptions of Pentecostal experiences characterized by obliviousness to physical surroundings or endowment with supernatural physical strength. In describing various kinds of Pentecostal experiences, I find the term “possession” problematic because it attempts to universalize supernatural phenomena that are enormously diverse, at the expense of illuminating that which is specific to a given religious experience. In biblical usage, a person is said to be “possessed” by a demon but “filled” with the Holy Spirit. Ethnomusicologist Gilbert Rouget notes, “Nothing could be more hazy, less sharply focused than the concept of possession, so that despite its great convenience it is also the source of a great many confusions” (1985, 25). And speaking from a

psychological perspective, Winkelmann notes that although “strong cross-cultural similarities ... suggest a common basis ... a closer explanation of the phenomena grouped under the guise of possession illustrates variation and ultimately problems in assuming a unitary phenomenon” (1999, 412).

Applying the term “possession” to transcendent experiences in both Pentecostalism and Vodou (e.g., Conway 1978) may overstate the *experiential* similarities between them. I therefore avoid the practice of using the term “possession” to denote religious phenomena occurring in both Vodou and Pentecostal contexts. Although Pentecostals emphasize heated musical activity, they vehemently preach against involvement in Carnival, *rara* processions, and Vodou. Thus, even if Pentecostalism and Vodou can be said to converge at the level of musical intensity, sharing an emphasis on lively, energetic singing and dancing, they diverge at the level of belief and often view one another as adversarial. I would add that if Haitian Catholicism and Vodou tend to converge at the level of belief, sharing religious iconography and ritual acts (see Greene 1993; Desmangles 1992), they diverge at the level of musical intensity. Indeed, most Haitians with whom I have spoken regard Catholic Church music as relatively “cold,” despite the indigenization of many Catholic liturgies after the second Vatican council in the 1960s.

In many ways, Catholicism can be seen as Haiti’s default form of institutionalized religion. Haitians often define Pentecostal and Protestant worship in relation to Catholic ritual, the latter representing a more cultivated and “respectable” Christian religion that can be practiced publicly without fear of stigma (Michel 2006, 24).⁴ The ritual forms of *Pannkotis* have been shaped by a series of historical processes and transnational migrations involving the work of foreign missions and a complex interaction of racial and religious ideologies.⁵ In the 19th century, in particular, Christianity became embroiled in the politics of cultural identity formation, as Haiti’s political leaders sought to reconcile the goals of national self-determination with those of Catholic and Protestant missions. One of the challenges of this endeavor stemmed from the antagonistic relationship between these branches of Christianity, along with the ways in which differences were constructed between them on the basis of theological orientation and musical style. Examining the historical intertwining of racial, national, and spiritual identities may shed light on the ways in which *Pannkotis* serves as a marker of cultural and musical style in modern-day Haiti.

The Rise of Protestantism: Constructing Religion, Race, and Nation

Since Haiti’s independence in 1804, a cultural politics of race and religion has played a crucial role in the process of constructing a Haitian national identity. Throughout the 19th century, race was “a unifying factor among Haitians” (Nicholls 1979, 2). In fact, a “black” racial identity had been “the very basis of the Haitian claim to independence” as national leaders sought to demonstrate to the world that a black-led republic could live up to European standards of progress and community (Nicholls 1979, 2). Earlier stages of the revolution, allegedly inspired by a Vodou ceremony,⁶ had also foreshadowed 19th-century racial conflicts. The country’s first constitution designated all Haitians as “black” (“*neg*”), and “white” foreigners (*blan*) were not permitted to own land. Independent Haiti became a symbol of black dignity and proof that blacks were equal to other races. After Haitian independence, the climate was not favorable for the few Catholic priests who had survived the bloody struggle against the French (Hurbon 2001, 155). Protestant missionaries were also disinclined to seek converts among the newly enfranchised and emboldened black population. However, as early as 1806, there may have been indigenous “Baptist” churches planted by blacks from the United States who traveled to Haiti escaping slavery (Lain 1998, 66).

In the latter half of the 19th century there was a huge uptick in the amount of Protestant missionary work being carried out by British Baptists along Haiti’s southern coast (Conway 1978, 163). Whereas earlier Methodist missions had targeted mostly Haitian elites and non-Haitian immigrants,⁷ the British Baptists, along with the Haitian pastors who succeeded them, “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]” (Conway 1978, 163). Both Baptists and Seventh-day Adventists showed deeper concern for the masses; as a result, they saw significant growth (Lain 1998, 68). Scholars have speculated at length about the reasons for the missionary focus on rural populations and the latter’s embrace of Protestantism in the 1920s. The U.S. occupation (1915–1934) certainly “provided a context for the flourish of American Protestantism in Haiti and indirectly was responsible for reducing the prevalent influence of the Catholic Church” (Laguerre 1993, 78). By the mid-1930s the Baptist church had 1,200 baptized members and over 3,000 congregants (Conway 1978, 164; Jeanty 1989, 80). Most of the Protestant missions that flourished in the first quarter of the 20th century were of the Baptist variety, fueled by the triumphs of earlier endeavors in Jacmel

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(Jeanty 1989, 56).

The rapid growth of Protestantism was a cause of serious alarm for Haiti's Catholic leaders. In fact, the anti-Vodou "campaigns" of the late 1930s and early 1940s carried with them a strong anti-Protestant tenor (Smith 2009, 49). Much of the propaganda produced by Catholic clergy during the 1940s provides song lyrics expressing this anti-Protestant sentiment. Citing a handbook written by Monseigneur Jean-Marie Jan, a prominent Haitian Catholic bishop, Griffiths (261) presents the hymn verses below as a case in point. Defending Catholicism from Protestant critiques, these lyrics go so far as to cast Protestants as heretics trapped "in the clutch of Satan."

If you are with the rebel angels
The good Lord is not happy.
That old spirit-worship gives wings
To help you fly off to find Satan.

The unfaithful Christian
Who becomes a Protestant,
Is just like the rebel angels
In the clutch of Satan.

Other lyrics describe Protestants as misled by "superstitious" beliefs—a damning characterization, certainly intended to lump Protestants and Vodou practitioners in the same category as enemies of the true Christian faith.

The Protestant says: "Catholics
Have changed the religion of Jesus Christ."
But it's Henry VIII, Luther, and Calvin,
Who've changed what the Bible says.

The Protestant says: "Catholics
Possess the spirits which harm us."
Well, well! A word like that
Is far more superstitious. (Jan 1945, 55)

Despite Catholic leaders' vigorous attempts to discourage the proliferation of Protestant assemblies, the latter increased at a rate of 200 percent per decade between 1930 and 1950 (Greene 1993, 104).⁸ However, Protestant missions did not witness their greatest gains until after the presidential inauguration of François "Papa Doc" Duvalier in 1957 (Conway 1978, 165–166; cf. Bruno 1967). Sometimes referred to as the "Father of Protestantism," Duvalier saw the potential of Protestant missionaries to provide Haiti with health care and moral education. He also understood this branch of Christianity as a nonthreatening, apolitical resource that would allow him to consolidate his power vis-à-vis the Catholic Church (Conway 1978, 166).

By the mid-20th century, several groups of "Pentecostals" (*Pannkotis*) had settled in Haiti, including representatives of global organizations such as the Assemblies of God, the Church of God, and the Church of God in Christ, the United Pentecostal Church, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World. Mission-affiliated Pentecostal churches range greatly in size and influence, and they have thrived alongside independent "heavenly army" congregations more strongly influenced by local culture. It is no surprise that the few scholars who have conducted studies specifically on Haitian Pentecostalism have struggled to derive reliable data on the number of these congregations. In his landmark dissertation in 1978, Frederick Conway noted that Pentecostal churches were growing at an alarming rate, and he regretted that "more recent statistics are not available" (168). Lain (1998) and Louis (1998) have since offered estimates of the percentages of Protestants and Pentecostals among Haiti's churchgoers. Both writers suggest that as much as one-third of Haiti's population self-identifies as Protestant or Pentecostal (Lain 1998, 72; Louis 1998, 197). Cleary (2011, 1) claims that there are 25 to 35 million "Protestant Pentecostals" worldwide, numbering two-thirds of all Latin American (including Haitian) evangelicals. He adds, "Protestants, especially Pentecostals, grew from a small beginning in the country more than forty years ago to gain adherents among probably 30 percent of Haitians by 2008" (235–236).

My sense is that the intensity of Pentecostal worship—what I refer to below as its high "magnitude"—attracts increasing numbers of Haitians to services in which they can expect to experience the exuberance of heated

music and dance. Such services are “too hot” (*twò cho*) for many Catholics and denominational Protestants, for whom physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit in worship may be an uncomfortable reminder of Vodou ritual. Even among self-described *Pannkotis*, there appear to be limits to the amount of “heat” deemed appropriate in a Christian setting. As shown in the case study below, music making is a critically important means through which Pentecostals define and position themselves in relation to those whose experiences and practices differ.

Magnitudes of Worship and Performance in Pentecostal Ritual

I made my first research trip to Haiti in 2000, eager to sift through discourses of cultural and spiritual identity as they related to musical practice in Pentecostal and Protestant churches. Having just arrived in Port-au-Prince, I was grateful to be presented with such a golden opportunity so soon. Jozwe, a local music teacher, had enthusiastically invited me to his “Pentecostal church” (*legliz Pannkotis*), located only about a ten-minute drive away. I would soon have a chance to experience in Haiti the musical energy and lively expressions of faith to which I had grown accustomed in African American churches in the United States. As promised, Jozwe picked me up at 7:15 on Sunday morning. Many of the largest Protestant and Pentecostal assemblies in the capital hold an early morning service, followed by one or two others to accommodate the schedules of their vast membership. Glorious Rock Worship Center is no exception; the early service that began at 7:30 was followed by two additional services, at 9:30 and 11:30.⁹ Jozwe played saxophone in the church band, so he needed to stay for all three services. This was all the better for me, since it meant I’d be able to observe and participate in plenty of musical praise and worship.

The service began with some slow worship songs followed by prayer and then some remarks by a few of the associate ministers seated on the dais. When the singing recommenced, the slow songs were less prevalent than the faster paced choruses. This transition from slow to fast tempos is something I easily recognized as a primary characteristic of Pentecostal ritual, in which believers often articulate a mystical connection between musical and spiritual intensity. The goal of “heating up” a service is crucial to the success of a variety of expressive cultures throughout the African diaspora. In particular, many Haitian churchgoers understand that a service that is *chofe* will feature lively singing and even dancing. There are mixed feelings toward hot services in Haiti: some see them as overly exuberant and a distraction from the meditative state required for a true connection with God, while others regard heated services as the sine qua non of authentic Spirit-filled worship. Glorious Rock Worship Center was obviously of the latter variety. In fact, its musical and spiritual “hotness” was precisely the quality that led Jozwe and many others with whom I spoke to characterize Church on Rock as *Pannkotis* (Pentecostal).

From a theological standpoint, the church would be more accurately described as nondenominational charismatic—some Haitians believe the church to be affiliated with a Baptist mission. I was initially disappointed to learn that the church was perhaps not a “real” Pentecostal assembly. Its pastor, a white American, founded the church as a mission installation under the auspices of a non-Pentecostal, U.S.-based mission. But over the course of my fieldwork, I came to appreciate the multivalence of the term *Pannkotis*. A singular definition became less important to me than the ways in which Pentecostal faith is performed. Faith performances take place in an array of experiential modes: through spoken word, musical sound, and dance.

As the praise and worship continued in the early morning service, things definitely got hotter. The piece “David Was a Great King” focused on the biblical figure’s penchant for dancing “in the Spirit” and getting carried away without feeling embarrassed or ashamed. Likewise, the faithful are urged to let go of any paralyzing inhibitions: —to let God take control of their minds and, in turn, their bodies, so that they will be totally free to praise him. This freedom brings with it the ability, even for those who are normally timid, to shout out, dance in the aisles, and engage in what outsiders might consider uncharacteristically demonstrative behavior in worship services. “David Was a Great King” transitioned directly to another short piece, setting off a medley of praise choruses that seemed to increase in intensity as they were repeated. Seated and then standing smack dab in the middle of the congregation, my heart raced with excitement. I was able to absorb the sounds and images all around me while reading the Creole lyrics sometimes provided on a large screen behind the pulpit. As the songs progressed, I gathered that their sequence became much less predictable—a real challenge for the young woman who sat next to the overhead projector rapidly thumbing through a folder of transparencies. The sermon came next, followed by an altar call and what seemed like an abrupt benediction. A line had formed outside for the second service, and the ministers in charge needed to be mindful of the day’s schedule.

Jozwe came to check on me just before the second service began. Noticing my efforts to understand and scribble down some of the lyrics, he reassured me that he would write them all down for me later, and he did just that. Although I had my minidisc recorder on hand, I was grateful for the chance to enjoy the next round of praise and worship without having to worry about missing some important lyric that I might later be unable to decipher. I remained in my seat as the next group of congregants streamed in. There was, it seemed, a healthy contingent of *jenn moun* (young people), the term used to denote teenagers and those who appeared to be under the age of 30. The abundance of young people is, I would learn, one of the major selling points used by members of Glorious Rock. Not only did it encourage other youths to join, but the church also served as a social networking site for unmarried men and women to scope out prospective mates. Socioeconomic class was hard to discern on an individual level. The clothes people wore were an unreliable indicator, particularly since many Haitians take such pride in their appearance that they will make extraordinary sacrifices to look their best. Even if congregants at Glorious Rock were poor in terms of income, the church's reputation was as a primarily "middle-class" assembly, attracting a better-off-than-usual congregation. Certainly, by comparison with other Haitians who self-identify as *Pannkotis*, Glorious Rock's members seemed to occupy a higher "status" on locally understood social hierarchies. In other words, while exuberant worship styles were (stereo)typically espoused by the poorest and "less refined" Haitian Christians, Glorious Rock featured a lively style of musical practice that still stayed within the bounds of respectability. Things were hot, but not *too* hot. And the hotter Creole-language choruses were balanced by a requisite number of French-language ones, which were sung before and after the most heated musical moments. Usually no one got too carried away, as was thought to happen in more explicitly Pentecostal congregations, such as the scores of *legliz de Dye* (Churches of God) scattered throughout Port-au-Prince. In these assemblies, the spontaneity of the Spirit produces faith performances that are too "hot" to handle for many of Haiti's Episcopalian, Baptist, Methodist, and nondenominational Christians.

As the 9:30 a.m. service got underway, I paid particular attention to how it differed from the first service. The song selections did not vary much, but as I suspected would happen, they tended to be longer in duration, with more repetitions of the shorter choruses. The level of intensity also felt higher to me, as I noticed more congregants standing, clapping, lifting and waving their hands in the air, and crying out, "*Mesi Jezu!*" Such praise phrases, as I call them, were also frequent in the second service. While the musical portions seemed extended by comparison with the earlier service, the sermon itself was truncated: The pastor hit most of the same points, but having rehearsed his discourse, he now seemed able to deliver it with more punch, calling for and receiving a number of responsorial "Amens" throughout the 20-minute speech. An altar call was given, and as had happened before, the congregation was dismissed to make way for those awaiting the 11:30 a.m. service.

Naturally, I imagined that the third and final service of the day would be a kind of *pièce de résistance*—a rewarding musicospiritual culmination of what I had witnessed thus far. The first two services had featured some heated singing, but not much in the way of holy dancing. Dance remained a practice the congregants sang *about* in songs such as "David Was a Great King," but seemed less willing to emulate. On my imaginary scale of Pentecostal intensity, the first service had registered about a level five. And since service number two had reached a magnitude of about six or seven, I was now eager for what would follow. Level eight? Nine? Just what were the limits, I wondered, of Pentecostal exuberance at Glorious Rock?

It is interesting to juxtapose this notion of the magnitude of worship with Richard Schechner's work in performance theory. In his discussion of the "magnitudes of performance," Schechner (1985) explores the relationship between meaning and emotion. Disagreeing with those who posit a unilinear causal relationship between the two, Schechner proposes that emotion is both a source and an effect of performative behavior. Thus, the "mechanical acting" of those who rehearse facial expressions to depict scenes is just as effective as Western methods of acting, which often require the performer to apply past emotional states to current dramatic contexts. As Schechner notes:

Reliving emotions from past experiences is an exercise familiar to anyone who has studied acting in America. ... The performer is drawn away from the actual present circumstances unfolding onstage and is concentrated on a "there and then" inserted or bootlegged into the present. (1985, 346)

Schechner sees performances as occurring along a spectrum. At one end, actions are presented in accordance with what has been rehearsed beforehand. At the other end, it is impossible to distinguish rehearsed behaviors from those that stem from spontaneous emotional states. Schechner's spectrum has interesting implications for Pentecostal worship in the Haitian context. If Haitian churchgoers understand that "the human animal is complex

enough so that emotions generate actions and actions generate emotions” (Schechner 1985, 349), the exuberant music making of Pentecostal worship may be seen more easily as performative. Believers are encouraged to reflect on what God has done for them, and this reflection, no matter how fleeting, may spur words or songs of praise. By contrast, musical worship is also understood to precipitate the emotional state that inspires it. This mutually dependent character of Pentecostal worship and emotion corresponds to what Glenn Hinson (2000, 11) refers to as the “circle of faith.” This circle is made complete through the interplay of experience, knowledge, and belief, as Hinson explains:

Experience grants knowledge; knowledge informs belief; belief invites further experience. At the same time, experience confirms belief; belief provides a frame for knowledge; and knowledge explains experience. Such are the poetics of faith among sanctified believers. (Hinson 2000:11–12)

Both Schechner’s and Hinson’s work suggests that the emotions connected to Pentecostal ritual are phenomenologically real whether praise precedes the experience of transcendence or vice versa. Furthermore, the dynamic, circular connection among experience, knowledge, and belief, which is often strengthened through “high magnitude” musical participation, lends *Pannkotis*-style worship its distinct ritual flavor.

As the 11:30 service got underway, I could tell that no perceived cutoff time constrained the musical praise and worship. Without a lengthening cue of congregants waiting to get inside, the ministers and song leaders could take their time, and they did—elaborating on points rushed through before, extending or restarting songs that yielded a positive response, and spending more time enjoining those seated to become active participants in the praise and worship. With each repetition of a familiar chorus, the level of intensity grew, equaling, but in my view not surpassing, the magnitude of the previous service. Once the musical praise and worship ended, however, I noticed that a greater percentage of congregants seemed to feel the touch of the Spirit. Eyes were closed with arms uplifted; some wept, others hopped up and down, as the Holy Spirit’s anointing (*onksyon*) lingered in the midst of the assembly. I too acknowledged the Spirit’s presence. It would have felt disingenuous not to do so, perhaps because adherence to a traditional ethic of dispassionate fieldwork worked against a deeper grasp of charismatic worship experiences. Observation-as-watching now took a back seat to observation-as-worshipping, and I allowed myself to be moved through the experience of musical praise. The tension between fieldworker and faith performer is one that I had come to embrace over time as a valuable source of embodied knowing. Nevertheless, my willingness to enjoy a transcendent experience was tempered by my awareness that I was, in fact, still an ethnomusicologist with field notes to take and a book to write. Even at my church in New York, I had grown accustomed to maintaining a certain level of detached observation. I felt this was necessary because as a minister of music, organist, and choir director, I needed to be able to remain “in myself” to monitor the flow of the service and make musical adjustments to facilitate it (see Butler 2000). I felt the need to “observe” in both senses of the term, and I wanted both my spiritual and natural senses to be engaged in this setting.

It was my sense of hearing that brought me and most of the other worshippers back down to earth. As the litany of emphatic praise phrases prompted by the song leader first morphed into a noisy drone of simultaneously rendered personal prayers, and then waned into a low murmur, a woman at the front right side of the sanctuary began to flail her arms and let out a series of shrieks. Falling to the ground and out of the view of all but those next to her, the woman was experiencing either the joyous touch of the Holy Spirit or an attack of an evil spirit—at least those are the two options into which most churchgoers would relegate her experience. But other Haitian Christians see the woman’s apparently involuntary behavior in more nuanced terms. Perhaps it evidenced a spiritual experience more properly situated in the cracks of a rigid holy-evil dichotomy. Or perhaps this was, heaven forbid, a learned behavior—a *performance* of Pentecostal faith motivated by a desire to express a natural emotion. As a matter of fact, my past experiences in a wide variety of heated worship services had prepared me *not* to know, to accept the uncertainty of it; I had gained a level of intellectual comfort that, despite (or perhaps because of) my allegiance to the faith, the “legitimacy” of these kinds of practices—the question of whether they really “are” spiritual manifestations—must lie outside my analytical frame. At any rate, most congregants seemed to view the woman’s behavior as, at best, an unwanted distraction. At worst, it was what Jozwe would later term “an evil spirit” (*yon movèz espri*) that had come to torment the woman. He felt it likely that she brought on this attack by engaging in secret activities unbecoming of a Christian. God had apparently allowed this attack as a warning to those who failed to take seriously the Gospel’s call to lead a holy life.

The woman’s screams continued as some of the female ushers surrounded her in an attempt to cool her down. By

now the other congregants' worship had ceased and most were standing, straining to see. And then a male minister tried to refocus the congregation—"You may be seated. You may be seated"—as the woman's high-pitched cries became muffled but still audible. The minister's efforts reminded me of a police officer trying to keep onlookers from gathering at the scene of an accident: "Keep moving, folks. Keep moving. Nothing to see here ..." I smiled, reminded of the ways in which the woman's actions would have been interpreted as normal within more demonstrative Pentecostal congregations. Indeed, it is the performative frame, in Erving Goffman's sense (1974), that often determines how ritual meanings are established. And it is this level of analysis that most fascinated me during the service.

Before the minister's admonition was heeded, Jozwe suddenly appeared. His words, "Let's go!" caught me off guard. "We're leaving *now*?" my face protested. Things had gotten interesting to say the least; I had been enjoying not only the flow of the 11:30 service, but also the sequence of the day's three services. Viewed as three-part ritual, the services were chock-full of analytical substance. But Jozwe's job was over: his role as a saxophonist had been fulfilled and his services were no longer required. Since he was my ride back "home," I gathered my things and followed him out of the sanctuary, even as the sound of the woman's cries seemed to follow me.

I couldn't help but wonder: Had Jozwe planned to leave at precisely this moment, or was it the woman's disruptive behavior that motivated him? Did Jozwe experience this event as a kind of "ritual failure?" Reflecting on this event some years later and viewing it through a performative lens, I am reminded of Edward Schieffelin's comment that performance genres are "both fundamentally *interactive* and inherently *risky*. There is always something aesthetically and/or practically at stake in them, and something can always go wrong" (1996, 60; italics in original, cited in Askew 2002, 5). But on the other hand, one might also view the distractive outburst as an element contributing to the worship service's success. It may have served to outline the limits of exuberance and/or as constructive evidence of the tangibility of spiritual forces. In this sense, then, nothing actually "went wrong"—at least not from my analytical point of view. The phenomenological disruption of my own worship experience need not hinder the validity of the woman's experience or the integrity of the performative event. On the contrary, "unwanted" manifestations may strengthen faith and whet spiritual and intellectual appetites for different kinds of spiritual(ized) expressions perceived to be "real" on numerous levels.

"You've Got to Have a Reason!" Praise and Purpose at Good Shepherd Assembly

During my time in Haiti, I also attended services at Good Shepherd Assembly, a mission-affiliated mainline church in Jacmel. Situated on the country's scenic southern coast, Jacmel is home to several Protestant and Pentecostal churches whose pastors express opposition to the practices of heavenly armies. One of my fieldwork challenges involved dividing my time among congregations whose members were suspicious of each other and of foreign researchers wanting to document their worship services. My first encounter with Good Shepherd's leader was not entirely successful. An acquaintance of Pastor Rene had walked with me to the church after I had asked whether he knew of any Pentecostal groups in the immediate vicinity. Upon our arrival one Sunday morning, Pastor Rene welcomed me to his small assembly, volunteering to converse in English, which he spoke fluently as a result of his frequent trips to conferences and services in the United States and Canada. We stood outside the small schoolroom where the congregation met as I explained my purpose: that I was doing field research and wished to record the morning worship service. "No." The curtness of his response caught me off guard, and I wasn't able to feign apathy. "I can't?" I responded almost incredulously. His initial warmth had led me to believe he'd have no problem with it. "Not until I know more about you," he then explained, recalling how another "researcher" he'd met had misrepresented other congregations by labeling them incorrectly on a video recording. It was only after I self-identified as a Pentecostal believer—one who also had a serious stake in representational integrity—that Pastor Rene softened. "You can record, but with cassette only. You know, no video." I hadn't planned to film the service anyway, only to make an audio recording, so the pastor's limited permission was sufficient, and I proceeded, still somewhat apprehensively, to record the worship service.

By summer 2004, Good Shepherd's membership had surpassed the 60 or so congregants I had observed four years earlier (Butler 2002), to more than 250. New instruments—a keyboard, drum set, and cowbell—now accompanied the singing.¹⁰ As the congregation multiplied, new songs were added to its repertoire, and the musical praise became even livelier and more intense. However, singing with intensity and heat did not necessarily mean that fast tempos were used. In fact, with the addition of musical instruments, the congregation now tended to

linger in slower songs, which were easier to prolong when the sound of keyboards and drums filled rests between the lyrics. Sometimes the instrumentalists would establish the atmosphere by softly playing a familiar chorus, which the congregation would eventually begin to sing or hum. I often witnessed this during moments of calm reflection or prayer, after which Pastor Rene would urge the worshippers to lift their hands and praise God. On other occasions, a slow worship song would be used as a meditative device at the conclusion of a brief exhortation or testimony.

One Sunday morning Pastor Rene spoke eloquently about the need for sincere praise and worship that comes from a grateful heart. "You must have a *reason* to praise the Lord," he preached. "You must have a *reason* to lift up your hands! You must have a *reason* to worship!" His voice rose and fell, growing more impassioned as he continued. "What we sing is useless if we don't know what we're singing about! What we sing is useless if it lacks gratitude!" Pastor Rene used the dramatic intonation and rhythmic repetition characteristic of Pentecostal preachers not only in Haiti, but in the United States as well. His remarks spurred congregants to assess the sincerity of their praise and worship while reflecting on God's blessings. He reiterated his theme, and many congregants began to lift their hands in worship. Others stood with their eyes closed, mouthing half-audible prayers of thanksgiving.

It is important to keep in mind here that Hinson's notion of a "circle of faith" (see above) is again applicable, as past experiences, along with present reflections on those experiences, serve to reconstruct a ritual frame of knowledge and action during the church service. Moreover, Pastor Rene's insistence on the necessity of a "reason to praise" resonates well with Schechner's "magnitudes of performance." In this case, a "there and then" (1985, 346) is deemed critically important for the success and authenticity of worship in the here and now. Pastor Rene is perhaps calling for a "magnitude of worship" in which emotion must precede meaning. However, I believe the reverse can also be true. Indeed, many Haitian Pentecostal pastors encourage congregants to praise God as a way of combating feelings of discouragement and obtaining the blessing of healing or deliverance. This magnitude of worship is also evident in African American Pentecostal churches I have frequented, in which worship leaders often exclaim, "When praises go up, blessings come down!" It seems clear to me that the "reason" Pentecostals praise God may be formulated either before or after the generation of meaningful religious experience. In fact, song lyrics serve multiple functions related to the ritual inculcation of attitudes of praise and worship. Songs may affirm God's greatness, testify about difficulties that have been overcome, or address God directly to ask for deliverance from trying circumstances. The service at Good Shepherd demonstrates how these lyrical functions combine with musical song to produce an uplifting worship service that is heartfelt and sincere, yet performative in the Schechnerian sense I outlined above.

Continuing on with the musical worship at Good Shepherd, Pastor Rene slowed his pace, as he often did when manifestations of the Holy Spirit seemed imminent. He then began singing a slow chorus, "*Ou se Senyè'm*" (You are my Lord), the simple lyrics of which stress one's personal relationship with God.

<i>Ou se Senyè'm.</i>	You are my Lord.
<i>Ou se trezòr mwen.</i>	You are my treasure.
<i>Ou se wa mwen.</i>	You are my king.
<i>Tout glwa se pou ou, Bondye, wa mwen.</i>	All glory belongs to you, God, my king.

Next came familiar praise phrases, which were uttered first by Pastor Rene and then by the congregation: "Hallelujah! Glory to God! Thank-you, Jesus!" As the keyboardist sustained a few chords, Pastor Rene started up the chorus of a popular hymn in the same key. After a few repetitions, he announced, "You don't need to be afraid to say 'Hallelujah!' Just think a little bit (*f'on ti reflechi*), and when you are ready, say 'Hallelujah!'" At this point, the collective intensity grew noticeably as most of the congregants began praising God on their own. The keyboardist began playing the slow chorus to a locally composed song, "*Nanm mwen beni non ou*" (My soul blesses your name). Taking their cue from Pastor Rene, the congregation was now engaged in more uninhibited forms of expression, waving their arms in adoration and crying out to God. No single prayer of praise was distinguishable to me, but blended together, the murmuring voices seemed to rumble gradually and almost unbearably toward a point

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of eruption. I barely noticed that the drummer had joined with the keyboardist, keeping a light, steady pulse on the hi-hat.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is in treble clef with a tempo marking of ♩=60. It features a melody with several triplets. The lyrics are: "Mwen pap janm kab fin eks - pli - ke gran - de Bon - dye nan". The bottom staff is also in treble clef and contains the lyrics: "la - vi mwen Mwen pat la pou'm te viv an - kò. Se sa m'kon-nen-".

[Click to view larger](#)

Example 1 : "Nanm mwen beni non ou"

After about three minutes of corporate praise with instrumental accompaniment, Pastor Rene began singing, prompting the congregation to follow his lead. The lyrics of "*Nanm mwen beni non ou*" (My soul blesses your name), which praise God for "meeting the challenge" ("*leve defi a*") and rescuing the singer from the devil (*djab la*), are general enough for congregational participation, yet can be applied to individual circumstances. The singing and playing had the kind of gentle, flowing quality that many Pentecostals enjoy during moments of personal intimacy with God, during which they bask in the presence of his Spirit. The harmonic progression, with its emphasis on the relative minor and the frequent occurrence of I, IV, and V chords, was typical of the slow *mizik evangelik* recordings of popular Haitian gospel artists such as Alabanza. As the transcribed excerpt below shows, there are many repeated notes in the melody of the verses, where the first few syllables sometimes use the same pitch (see Example 1). This repetition is a common feature of both slower and faster Haitian choruses.

Mwen pap janm kab fin eksplike grandè Bondye nan lavi mwen.

I'll never be able to explain the greatness of God in my life.

Mwen pat la pou m te viv ankò, se sa m konnen.

I just knew I wouldn't be alive anymore.

As the song built in intensity, the voices became louder, and several congregants appeared emotionally overcome. Some young women wept; others swayed from side to side with their eyes closed. Although most congregants stood, a few had reclaimed their seats and were rocking slowly while twitching their shoulders and waving their open hands as though fanning themselves. Most of the men remained standing; some jumped in place with their arms outstretched, symbolically opening themselves to the presence of God. Other men looked upward and sang intently while lifting a hand in praise. There were, however, some congregants who seemed oblivious to the power of the music and the influence of the Holy Spirit. Pastor Rene's services always included at least a few visitors, and some of these people were new to the Pentecostal experience. Moreover, the church had several children and recent converts, and it would take these individuals time to grow into their faith and the practice of charismatic praise and worship. This phase of musical praise lasted about seven minutes, after which the instrumentalists began picking up the tempo. Some congregants clapped and danced in the aisles, and the mood quickly became less meditative and more celebratory. Three minutes later the song ended, followed by familiar phrase praises and the introduction of a guest preacher.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a melody with several repeated notes. The bottom staff is also in treble clef and contains a melody with a long, sustained note.

[Click to view larger](#)

Example 2 : "Woule wòch la"

One of the most interesting features of this praise and worship segment is that only a small percentage of time was spent on fast-tempo music. In fact, the most intense moments came during "My Soul Blesses Your Name." In this instance, the thought-provoking lyrics of a slow song proved more conducive to heartfelt praise than did the up-tempo beats of a simple, more repetitive chorus. Some pastors and laypeople to whom I spoke expressed concern that faster *konpa*-flavored songs sometimes distract from the experience of transcendent worship. *Konpa*, which I discuss below in greater detail, is the most popular form of Haitian dance music. Its use is often controversial in Christian churches because of its association with nightclubs, secular dancing, alcohol consumption, and a party atmosphere deemed antithetical to established standards of biblically mandated comportment. Among Pastor Rene's growing congregation, about two-thirds of whom are teens and young adults, worshippers express a liking

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for both slow, lyrically oriented songs and also faster-paced choruses with a *konpa* beat. Many of the fast songs are narrative in character, relating a biblical story to convey the power of God to deliver. Others resemble slower choruses in that they use first-person pronouns to make personal appeals for divine intervention. The song “*Woule wòch la*” (Roll away the rock) accomplishes both objectives (See Example 2).

Woule wòch la. Woule wòch la.
Roll away the rock. Roll away the rock.
Senye, m pa wè kote pou mwen pase.
Lord, I don't see a place for me to pass through.

$\text{♩} = 120$ handclaps

Click to view larger

Example 3 : Melody and handclapping pattern to “*Woule wòch la*”

The “rock” is a common symbol in Haitian choruses, representing any hindrance or problem that threatens the natural or spiritual survival of God’s children.¹¹ “*Woule wòch la*” is also interesting because, like many Haitian choruses, it features monorhythmic melody lines, such as “*Bondye pa janm koumanse pou li pa fini*” (“God never starts something he doesn’t finish”), which are often sung against a syncopated handclapping pattern (See Example 3).

$\text{♩} = 100$

Click to view larger

Example 4 : *konpa* bass drum and cymbal pattern

At Good Shepherd Assembly, the congregation would often repeat this final line several times, building intensity through the blending of voices and handclaps. Furthermore, the combination of an on-the-beat vocal melody with a syncopated drum rhythm results in a pattern of accents that is heard in a variety of Caribbean musics. For example, this pattern is reflected in the juxtaposition of bass drum and cymbal in Haitian *konpa* (Averill 1993, 78) (Example 4).

It is worth pointing out that this rhythmic pattern also occurs between the bass drum and rim shot in French Antillean zouk (Guilbault et al. 1993, 133), clave and conga in Cuban rumba (Manuel 1995, 25), bass guitar and shaka (rattle) in Jamaican roots reggae (Manuel 1995, 167), güira and tambora in Dominican merengue (Austerlitz 1997, 57), and bass drum and snare in Trinidadian soca (Manuel 1995, 194), to name just a few. Manuel (1995) suggests that the widespread occurrence of these cross-rhythms in the Caribbean stems from the polyrhythmic organization of many West African musical genres. Although Caribbean musics “generally use simpler rhythms,” he contends,

they are often animated, however indirectly, by older polyrhythmic forms. The degree to which neo-African traits like polyrhythms are retained in contemporary musics is dependent on various factors and raises broad questions having to do with the relative ability of Afro-Caribbean communities in different regions to maintain cultural autonomy over the generations. (1995, 10)

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The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 120. The first staff contains the melody with lyrics: Je - zu va wou - le wòch la ki vin ba - re'm nan. The second staff contains a bass line with lyrics: mòn - nan e m'kon-nen yon jou sa va chan - je.

[Click to view larger](#)

Example 5 : “Jezu va woule wòch la”

The song “*Jezu va woule wòch la*” (Jesus will roll away the rock) also contains a mix of syncopated and on-the-beat passages, which works well with the *konpa* beat. The lyrics of this chorus, particularly the final repeated clause, suggest a hope that present-day obstacles will someday be overcome (See Example 5).

Jezu va woule wòch la ki vin bare m nan monn nan

Jesus will roll away the rock that traps me in the mountain.

É m konnen yon jou sa va chanje.

And so I know one day this [negative circumstance] is going to change.

This piece is performed in an enthusiastic and lively fashion, articulating a belief that no matter how desperate circumstances may appear, there is always a possibility that things will take a turn for the better. The lyrics are typically delivered with an attitude of joy, and congregants may even dance or hop through the aisles of the sanctuary while singing. They celebrate victory in advance and perform faith in the midst of great obstacles. Since the earthquake of January 12, 2010, “rock” (*wòch*) has become more than a mere metaphor for life’s difficulties. Songs such as “*Jezu va woule wòch la*” and “*Woule wòch la*” (partially transcribed above) are performative affirmations that God will remove and restore, quite literally, the rocks of houses, schools, and churches heavily destroyed by an almost unfathomable natural disaster.

At both Glorious Rock Worship Center and Good Shepherd Assembly, musical performance plays a powerful role in inviting felt manifestations of the Holy Spirit. When vocal and instrumental music is lively or “heated” (*chofe*), a distinctly charismatic atmosphere is cultivated that is intended to set apart *Pannkotis* within Haiti’s multifaceted Christian landscape. As we have seen, however, music need not be up-tempo in order to have this effect. Slower pieces, such as “*Nanm mwen beni non ou*” (My soul blesses your name), sung at Good Shepherd Assembly, may also bring about a Pentecostal experience, characterized by weeping, lifting hands, speaking in tongues, and other demonstrative worship activities that signal a believer’s ritual transformation. This transformation comes about largely through the style of performance and is fueled by a pastor’s or worship leader’s encouragement to mediate on prior knowledge and life experiences, which have themselves been shaped through ritual performance. In this way, a “circle of faith” (Hinson 2000, 11) is completed, and one’s identity as a true Pentecostal Christian is further solidified in the community of believers.

Conclusion: Resisting and Remembering through Song and Speech

The precise definition of “Pentecostal” is often contested by scholars and churchgoers around the world, so it is perhaps not surprising that there is a remarkable diversity of Christian affiliations among Haitians who self-identify as *Pannkotis*. Although it is problematic to insist on the existence of a single Pentecostal belief system, there does exist a body of key beliefs, doctrines, and experiences that are held in common among *Pannkotis* in Haiti. Global Pentecostal organizations have historically exerted a strong missionizing force throughout the Caribbean. Although many mission-affiliated churches in Haiti are now under local leadership, these churches’ use of a mission title suggests at least a nominal recognition of foreign power. Moreover, the Christian doctrines handed down since the 19th century have remained fundamentally in place. Although interpreted in different ways by different groups, the Bible is viewed as the inerrant Word of God and is a strong unifying factor among Pentecostals. Nevertheless, I suggest that *mizik Pannkotis* and the experience of heated worship play an equally, if not more, influential role in constructing a global religious identity that cuts across conventional boundaries of nation, denomination, and missionary affiliation.

The purpose of worshipping at a high “magnitude” is that it not only facilitates a transcendent state of worship, but also amplifies the expression of resistance to “the world” of nonbelievers. Pentecostals in Haiti and the United States often use the term “the world” (*lemonn*) to connote humanity’s natural and sinful realm of existence.¹² The

mode of being “not yet converted” (*poko konvèti*) is antithetical to “the Church,” which represents the sanctified body of believers in Jesus Christ. By extension, the world may also consist of any oppressive economic and political forces that contribute to social misery. Meaningful ways of opposing the world and asserting Pentecostal identities are also embedded within “language about music” and choices regarding musical and liturgical style. I hope to have shed light on what Feld and Fox refer to as the “phenomenological intertwining of music and linguistic phenomena” (1994, 29). Attending to “language about music” is helpful insofar as informants’ technical, evaluative, and aesthetic discourses about music provide valuable insight for ethnomusicologists and other scholars. I have benefited greatly from listening to what believers have to say about *mizik Pannkotis*. Their spoken and sung accounts of deliverance and triumph in the face of daunting obstacles provide a wealth of knowledge about how they remember the past and work to renew their hope for a better future.

Social theorists, such as Maurice Halbwachs (1992), have dealt extensively with the social construction of memory, claiming that religious affiliations provide social groups with the means to acquire and recall memories.¹³ Furthermore, Connerton expands and improves on Halbwach’s research by emphasizing the fact that “to study the social formation of memory is to study those acts of transfer that make remembering in common possible” (1989, 39). Connerton focuses on commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices in order to argue that “images of the past and recollected knowledge of the past are conveyed and sustained by (more or less ritual) performances” (40). Although spoken testimonies are personal narratives unique to the individual testifying, it is the congregation that provides the social framework within which each recollection becomes meaningful. A congregation serves as “a community of interests and thoughts” (37), encouraging one another to reconstruct and rearticulate memories for individual and collective benefit. These memories are, as Connerton remarks, “located within the mental and material spaces of the group” (1985, 37). Halbwach’s and Connerton’s theories about the relation between individual and collective memory are relevant to Haitian Pentecostal practice insofar as they point to the deeply social aspect of speech and song.

One of the things I find most remarkable about music making at Glorious Rock and Good Shepherd is that song lyrics effectively and affectively convey the significance of one of the most crucial activities in Pentecostal worship: remembering. It is through the acts of remembering and meditating on the goodness of God that believers acquire the compulsion to sing and preach, thereby encouraging one another through their personal narratives of victory over, through, and in spite of life’s obstacles. Through one person’s “testimony” (*temwenaj*) others are uplifted, not simply because they are “cheered up” by the testifier’s successes, but also because remembering is contagious. I often hear a church member testify about a financial blessing, only to be followed by a dozen or so individuals who, in turn, relate similar accounts of God providing money in times of need. The role of music and memory in helping believers find “reasons to praise” is supremely important in Pentecostal worship, because corporate praise opens the door to a powerful manifestation of the Holy Spirit, resulting in what *Pannkotis* experience as true worship and communion with God.

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Notes:

⁽¹⁾ U.S.-based Pentecostal missions such as the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) established a presence in Haiti during the 1930s. The Assemblies of God (Springfield, MO) and United Pentecostal Church (Hazelwood, MO) arrived in the 1950s and 1960s, respectively. Pentecostals likely comprise over one-fourth of the country's population (Bundy 2002, 81–83, cited in Anderson 2004, 79–80). In this chapter I use the term "mainline" to denote congregations that have an acknowledged historical tie to one of these religious organizations. Haiti is also home to multiple independent "heavenly army" churches, which are notoriously difficult to document. I have discussed these assemblies elsewhere (e.g., Butler 2005). Conway's dissertation (1978) is a seminal work on Pentecostalism in Haiti. See Brodwin (2003) for an insightful discussion of Pentecostal practice in the Haitian diaspora.

⁽²⁾ See Butler (2008) for an exploration of the differences between Haiti's Pentecostal churches and the varieties of spiritual warfare practiced by mission-affiliated and independent "heavenly armies."

⁽³⁾ See Acts 2:1–12.

(4) Adding still more variety to the range of “Pentecostals” in Haiti, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, which Cleary describes as a “variant form” of Pentecostalism, began in the early 1970s and has since narrowed the experiential gap between mainstream Catholic and Pentecostal practitioners (Cleary 2011, 236). Indeed, charismatic forms of Catholicism now offer an alternative to Protestant and Pentecostal ritual for those seeking to “maintain the familiarity of Catholic practice and still distance themselves from Vodou” (Rey 2004, 255).

(5) Many Pentecostal and Protestant practitioners see these categories as mutually exclusive. However, historical writings on Haitian Christianity tend to view “Pentecostal” as a subset of “Protestant.”

(6) In his critical overview, Thylefors (2009) analyzes various debates among historians regarding the role of vodou in the Haitian Revolution.

(7) Building on the work started by Wesleyan Methodists in 1817, a white Englishman, Mark Baker Bird, arrived in 1839 to open several churches and schools. Fluent in English and French, Bird established an English-language church that catered mostly to blacks who had migrated to Haiti “after the decline of the British West Indian sugar islands” (Logan 1968, 181).

(8) See Romain (1986) and Pressoir (1945) for additional discussion of Protestantism’s growth in Haiti in the first half of the 20th century.

(9) Glorious Rock Worship Center is a pseudonym for a church in the Delmas section of Port-au-Prince. The church building was destroyed in the earthquake of January 12, 2010, and as of this writing, its members are holding services in a large tent while planning construction of a new edifice.

(10) These “standard” musical instruments are seen as more respectable than are those found in independent heavenly army churches, which feature locally constructed instruments such as the *graj* (metal scraper) and *senbal* (bass drum).

(11) An alternate interpretation of “*woule wòch la*” might draw on the New Testament narrative of Jesus’s resurrection (Matt. 28), in which an angel rolls away the stone from the tomb of Jesus. However, the Haitian Christians to whom I spoke expressed a preference for the interpretation I have provided above. This meaning of “*wòch*” as a burden or hardship is perhaps clearer in the lyrical context of the song, “*Jezu va woule wòch la*” (notated below).

(12) This distinction between the world and the church resonates with Mircea Eliade’s discussion of the sacred and the profane as universal “modalities of experience” or “two modes of being in the world, two existential situations assumed by man in the course of his history” (1957, 14).

(13) In *How Societies Remember* (1989), Paul Connerton rehearses Halbwach’s argument in his discussion of social and personal memory formation:

Most frequently, if I recall something that is because others incite me to recall it, because their memory comes to the aid of mine and mine finds support in theirs. Every recollection, however personal it may be, even that of events of which we alone were the witnesses, even that of thoughts and sentiments that remain unexpressed, exists in relationship with a whole ensemble of notions which many others possess: with persons, places, dates, words, forms of language, that is to say with the whole material and moral life of the societies of which we are part or of which we have been part. (1989, 36)

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