SPIRALIST INTERCONNECTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN CARIBBEAN LITERATURE

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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This dissertation addresses the politics of interrelation between living beings and the natural world within Caribbean literature, and the underlying dangers inherent in modes of existence that deny such interrelation. Spiralism is a chaotic and pluralist literary movement emerging from Haiti in the 1960s, and this project features René Philoctète's Spiralist novel *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* (1989) as its literary center, joined with two other Caribbean novels: Jacques Roumain's *Gouverneurs de la rosée* (1944), and Mayra Montero's *Tú, la oscuridad* (1995). In my comparative reading of these novels, I argue that their representations of environmental consciousness, social collaboration, and all-inclusive modes of interacting with the natural world provide models of co-existence in the context of the many socio-environmental injustices that threaten the continuation of many life forms on Earth, including humans.

These novels evoke empathy and imagination, and add vital perspectives to the understudied field of environmentally conscious literature. Each of these three novels emotionally engages and reconnects humans as members of ecosystems – a move often lacking in the objective presentation of environmental studies. Given that the Earth is our only home, the continued ecological devastation caused by the human species increasingly deserves our full attention. I argue that the all-inclusive Spiralist imaginary

and the related literatures are apt ideological tools to help address the cognitive dissonance currently preventing sufficient social change.

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INTRODUCTION: THE INTERCONNECTING SPIRAL

For earthly beings, the natural world is everything. In the external sense, it is the planet on which we live, wreathed in global atmosphere and distinct ecosystems, receiving light and energy from the sun. It includes the galactic and universal systems, comprised of forces and matter that scientists have only just begun to perceive. Equally, the natural world is everything in the internal, physical sense – containing all the material resources that earthly beings need to grow and maintain life. Our human bodies are temporary, ever-morphing chemical arrangements and exchanges, composed of the elements of the natural world: oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur, sodium, magnesium, and other trace elements, all formed long ago in the intense heat of exploding stars. Our consumption of the natural world determines the cyclical processes of our lives – of new cells growing and old cells dying, dependent on the delivery of nutrients through functions such as breathing, eating, drinking, and absorbing sunlight.

From these perspectives, the natural world is all-encompassing: from the furthest reaches of the universe, all the way down to the infinitesimal atoms of oxygen in the air we breathe, continually absorbed by our blood in exchange for the carbon dioxide of each exhalation. In the physical sense, nothing exists outside the natural world; everything on earth is *natural*, even meteorites. Like all earthly beings, humans have grown from and within their ecosystems, and therefore everything we do is natural. As anthills are reconfigurations of already existing earthly materials, so too are skyscrapers. Even

synthetic elements such as curium[1] could be considered natural, in that they are the products of the activities of living beings on Earth.

In the figurative sense, however, the term *natural* has come to mark a divide in the human world, separating civilization from its source and host, the natural world. From this notion of civilization emerge scales of hierarchy in which self-proclaimed "civilized" groups position themselves as superior to the natural world, as well as to "non-civilized" societies, a locus that rationalizes claims on other bodies and landbases. The European colonial project in Africa, Asia, and the Americas is a prime example of such domination.

Physical Interrelation and Haitian Spiralism

Haitian Spiralism offers a worldview that recognizes all phenomena within a chaotic yet interrelated process, constituting one of the many and diverse forms of resistance to colonial exploitation. In addition to revealing these divisions between natural and civilized as human constructions, Spiralism's interconnecting literary process positions the natural world as inseparable from human reality. In this way, the delimited foci of fields such as environmental studies and ecocriticism are exploded and infused into every aspect of language-based consciousness. The Spiralist literary works dealt with here suggest a critical eco-conscious methodology of interrelation[2] – one that values the bond between all living systems. This notion, so central to Spiralism, is currently missing

[1] Curium is a human-made transuranic radioactive chemical element developed in the 1940s.

[2] Throughout this dissertation, I use both *interrelation* (which describes the process) and *interconnection* (describing the physical and symbolic links between the interrelating parts).

from dominant global systems of neocapitalism. Though the sciences are able to diagnose and offer solutions to many of the biosphere's current ecological problems, the facts alone are often not enough to catalyze sufficient emotional response, particularly where individualism and materialism are dominant values, as they are in late capitalism[3]. I maintain that Spiralism offers a valuable imaginary in which human existence unfolds in an intimate union with the natural world, and where the consciousness of interrelation takes center stage.

Emerging in Haiti in 1965 in response to François Duvalier's regime, in which his *Tontons Macoutes* or "Bogeymen" police actively terrorized Haitian civilians in order to enforce absolute submission to his totalitarian vision, Spiralism embraces the ambiguous, communicating an awareness of existence that is not only decentralized, but also interconnected in its ever-widening scope. Challenging manmade hierarchical divides, the Spiralist philosophy, while also a human construction, finds inspiration in patterns and processes of the natural world. Its founders, Frankétienne, Jean-Claude Fignolé and René Philoctète[4] chose the spiral form to articulate their pluralist philosophical and literary movement due to its regular and repeated pattern of outward motion and ever-expanding growth, its interconnecting qualities of balanced proportion, and its omnipresence throughout our lives, the world, and the universe.

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[3] I use Noam Chomsky's definition of *capitalism* as "a system of corporate mercantilism, with huge and largely unaccountable private tyrannies exercising vast control over the economy, political systems, and social and cultural life, operating in close cooperation with powerful states that intervene massively in the domestic economy and international society" (*Language and Politics* 784).

[4] Prior to co-founding Spiralism, Philoctète was a founding member of the literary collective *Haïti Littéraire*. *Île en île* describes him as "l'un de ceux qui a le plus marqué la poésie haïtienne du 20ème siècle." (Web)

In an interview with *The Public Archive*[5], Spiralist scholar Kaiama Glover explains how

> the spiral provided a primal point of relation to a world beyond the claustrophobia and creative asphyxiation of François Duvalier's totalitarian state. It also operated for the three writers with some measure of cultural specificity: its form evokes that of the conch shell, symbolic artifact of the Haitian Revolution, and decorates the full vertical length of the potomitan, the wooden post positioned at the center of every Haitian Vodou temple and around which all ceremonies revolve. On a formal, literary level, the spiral's perfectly balanced maintenance of the centrifugal and centripetal offers a neat allegory of the tension between insular boundedness and global intention that marks their work. (Web)

In addition to the spiral form's specific Caribbean symbolism, unlike the numerous binary oppositions that underpin the construction of modernity, such as nature/culture, subject/object, masculine/feminine, or rational/irrational, Spiralism seeks to engage the whole, chaotic spectrum of interrelation.

In contrast with the static and organized focus on interrelation in structuralism (emerging from France in the previous decades), Spiralism asserts the infinite possibilities of unpredictable movement and continual change shared among humans, animals and everything in existence, spinning and repeating, but never the same; ever more open and expansive in perspective and reach. As Frankétienne describes this literary movement, "[l]a spirale représente un genre nouveau qui permet de traduire les palpitations du monde moderne. L'œuvre spirale est constamment en mouvement" (Kauss Web). The increasingly chaotic complexity of the modern world is maintained in Spiralism's limitless literary *movement* in which freedom, chaos, difference, and inventiveness prevail, pushing the limits of the novel into poetry. Spinning and twisting, the Spiralists' 360-degree scope dissolves centralist notions such as individualism, static

[5] A website that offers an "accessible clearinghouse of historical essays, archival sources, and informed contemporary journalism on Haiti."

positioning, and elitism. Instead, Spiralism is all inclusive: from the creative and beautiful to the terrifying and destructive, as in the spiral form of hurricanes – a well-known archetype of nature's chaotic and destructive power in the Caribbean.

While the Spiralist movement is largely understudied and often excluded from the Caribbean literary canon[6], it has undoubtedly influenced Édouard Glissant's articulation of the "Poetics of Relation," *le Chaos-monde* and *le Tout-monde,* and in the context of translation, his concept of "spiral retelling." In "Theory versus Practice: On the Postcolonial Marginalization of Haitian Literature," Rachel Douglas explains:

> Spiralists' unwillingness to codify their literary aesthetic, then, is contrasted with their Martinican counterparts – Edouard Glissant and the creolists – in order to account for Martinican hegemony in French Caribbean scholarship and its antithesis: the relative scholarly silencing that has prevented the Spiralists from assuming a more prominent place in a regional literary canon. (189)

Approaching literary anarchy, Spiralism's lack of delineation has ironically caused it to be marginalized – if not quite silenced. Kaiama Glover argues that the Spiralists' choice to remain in Haiti during both father and son Duvalier's dictatorships (1957–71 and 1971–86) was both physically and intellectually isolating. "Essential to this anchoring in the geographical space of Haiti has been a philosophical commitment to avoid explicitly defining Spiralism. That is, the Spiralists' refusal of exile has been bound from the outset to a certain refusal of theoretical codification" (ix). Quoting Frankétienne (from an interview with René Philoctète's brother Raymond), Glover explains how, "[r]ather than supply a set of specific standards for what or how literature should be, the three writers have preferred 'to be considered anarchists of the written … demolishers of myths'" (ix).

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[6] A notable exception to this marginalization is Lyonel Trouillot's recognition of René Philoctète as "the Haitian writer *par excellence,*" quoted on the jacket of *Massacre River*, the English translation of *Le Peuple des terres mêlées.*

While Glover debates the extent to which their goal is realized, the Spiralists "by no means entirely resist the temptation to describe their own aesthetic and its intellectual underpinnings. For the most part, however, stylistic considerations take precedence over the theoretical, and any ideology is revealed primarily through the formal strategies at work in their creative writings" (ix). In its commitment to openness and movement, and in its resistance to singularity, control, and definition, Spiralism is a method of perceiving and telling: an evolving, spontaneous and transformative process in which the many parts of existence that make up the local scene are co-protagonists.

Unrestricted and unconventional, Spiralism resists classification and comparison with other literary movements, as its creators are quick to assert. In an interview with Jean-Claude Fignolé, Kathleen Gyssels asks about "the branding of Haitian literature with the etiquette of 'lo real maravilloso' and its derivations, notably 'le réalisme merveilleux'" (13). Fignolé responds by refuting this "alliance of words" as "antithetical" and "nonsense." After linking the word *marvelous* to the Middle Ages and faith, as well as the supernatural, the magical, and the sacred, in contrast, he explains that:

> [w]ith Spiralism, that which people might take for magic is nothing more than the comprehension and transcription of the real as it is lived schizophrenically by Haitians. A double, triple, multiple real that, following diverse reading possibilities, is merely the metamorphosis of a reality that has become fantastic through the game of writing; or, in the domain of popular beliefs, through the bias of a tradition of clamorings that end up fashioning, molding, the collective imagination, nourishing an oral literature that doesn't know its own name. (13)

Indeed, Spiralism embodies the fluidity, spontaneity, and creativity common to many oral traditions, including tropes of repetition. In this case, as in others, when asked to discuss Spiralism, all three of the Spiralists describe it through action verbs – what it does and

how it can act, rather than discussing its qualities or characteristics, which would give it a static, dependable quality – antithetical to its impetus.

An important technique that Philoctète employs to communicate movement and interrelation between human and nonhuman subjectivity is parataxis, or the additive style, in which unexpected subjects are grouped together in the same sentence, often sharing the same verb or verbs. This chaotic list-like reading experience dissolves the notion of single-subject sentences, and forces the reader's consciousness to travel and shift, to make room for multiple new elements that often do not make immediate sense. As the following example from Philoctète's *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* illustrates, the spiralist voice is language in motion:

> Et d'un coup, les bourgeons folâtraient avec l'air, les fruits éclataient entre les branches, les fleurs se pâmaient, d'innombrables oiseaux verts criaient, chantaient, s'appelaient; l'arpenteur, le notaire, le spéculateur en denrées, le hougan, les mendiants, les cloches, les cerceaux des enfants, s'animaient, mesurant, soignant, vendant, quémandant, prêchant, vérifiant, roulant, carillonnant. (45)

Glover stresses that Spiralists show rather than tell, and that producing clear narratives or making sense is not their goal. They "make no attempt in their writings to order confusion, to compensate for missing information, or to provide authoritative answers – and they offer few critical guidelines with which to contextualize their creative output" (xv). As a result of these conditions, Spiralism requires the active participation of its readers' imaginations, critical interpretation skills, and big-picture thinking. While never an "easy read," within these conditions, the reader interconnects with the text as a co-creative subject in the process of Spiralist narrative formation, in which there are as many interpretations as there are readers.

René Philoctète's *Le Peuple des terres mêlées*

René Philoctète's *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* (1989) is the heart of this project. Set in the Dominican Republic, the story unfolds just before and during the 1937 Parsley Massacre – a genocide waged on the peoples of the Dominican-Haitian border by Rafael Trujillo, dictator of the Dominican Republic from 1930 to 1961. Over the course of one week (October 2 - 8), Trujillo's army's slaughtered an estimated 20,000[7] ethnic Haitians – in some cases, second- or third-generation Dominican citizens – as well as black Dominicans who were "mistakenly" killed, or who resisted the assault on Haitians. Philoctète's interpretation of these events portrays Trujillo as racially motivated, as he seeks to "purify" the country of black Haitians and establish a racially "superior" Dominican Republic, comprised of the "blancos de la tierra" (56). *Le Peuple des terres mêlées*'s title translates to "the (one) people belonging to mixed lands," underscoring the shared, integrated reality of Haitians and Dominicans of the borderlands, affirming the very interconnection Trujillo wished to annihilate.

The experience of reading its chaotic sequences of dizzying movements and non-linear moments, repeating and evolving through its one hundred and forty-seven pages, is indeed akin to the experience of traveling in a spiral. In each of my chapters, I analyze how this perspective celebrates the energetic link among all people, animals, plants and diverse forms of matter that inhabit the universe in a non-hierarchical manner.

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[7] "Historians continue to disagree about the number of people killed in the massacre. In the months after the killings, Haitian authorities registered around 12,000 deaths. But other estimates have placed the number between 8,000 and 30,000, with many settling around 20,000" (Fieser).

I engage Philoctète's novel in conversation with two other Caribbean novels: Jacques Roumain's Haitian classic *Gouverneurs de la rosée* (1944), in which a small, socially divided Haitian town faces a life-threatening drought, and Cuban-Puerto Rican writer Mayra Montero's *Tú, la oscuridad* (1995), about an American herpetologist and Haitian guide who embark on a trek in the dangerous mountains of Haiti searching for a species of frog that is on the edge of extinction. Each novel takes place on the island of Hispaniola, and each embodies a unique environmental consciousness. In this way, I enact a comparative, ecocritical reading of twentieth-century Spiralist (Philoctète) and non-Spiralist (Roumain and Montero) novels in the Franco-Hispano Caribbean. A region both divided and united by water and land, the Caribbean marks an important beginning of industrialized environmental exploitation, as it is the initial and continual victim of Western colonialism and multinational exploitation in the Americas.

My reading of these novels considers how the inclusion of non-human figures performs an anti-hegemonic discourse of interrelation that includes the many parts of the natural world. Such environmental consciousness is fundamental to the Caribbean literary imaginary, as Edouard Glissant explains in *Discours antillais:*

> Le rapport à la terre, rapport d'autant plus menacé que la terre de la communauté est aliénée, devient tellement fondamental du discours, que le paysage dans l'œuvre cesse d'être décor ou confident pour s'inscrire comme constituant de l'être. Décrire le paysage ne suffira pas. L'individu, la communauté, le pays sont indissociables dans l'épisode constitutif de leur histoire. Le paysage est un personnage de cette histoire. Il faut le comprendre dans ses profondeurs. (199)

While the Spiralist philosophy is particularly useful in my reading of Philoctète's novel, it embodies the attitude and aesthetics of interconnectedness reflected in each of the texts of my corpus. As I will argue in the Conclusion, the environmental imaginary of Spiralism

has much to offer to the world today, particularly given humanity's often unconscious or misunderstood role in the rapidly changing and increasingly precarious conditions of the global biosphere.

The Spiral Form and the Golden Ratio

As encapsulated in the name of this movement, the spiral form is symbolic in its physical omnipresence and its multi-formed manifestations throughout the natural world. Humanity has long been fascinated by its presence, visible all around us, and even within us. Our solar system lies in an outer-arm of the Milky Way Galaxy, a spiral composed of "hundreds of billions of stars, enough gas and dust to make billions more stars, and at least ten times as much dark matter as all the stars and gas put together […], all held together by gravity" (NASA). In *The Repeating Island: The Caribbean and the Postmodern Perspective*, Antonio Benítez-Rojo writes that,

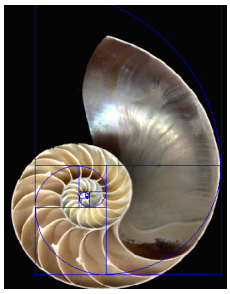
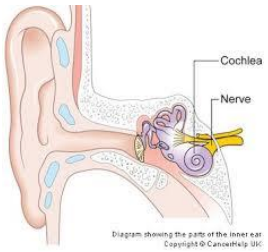
> [i]f someone needed a visual explanation, a graphic picture of what the Caribbean is, I would refer him to the spiral chaos of the Milky Way, the unpredictable flux of transformative plasma that spins calmly in our globe's firmament, that sketches in an "other" shape that keeps changing, with some objects born to light while others disappear into the womb of darkness—change, transit, return, fluxes of sidereal matter. (4)

On Earth as in outer space, the spiral is integral to many living forms: in flora, we find spirals in flowers, cacti, fern fronds, and the grasping tendrils of climbing vines; it appears in fauna as well, from gestating fetal forms, to the chambered nautilus, to the inner ear.



Figures 1-3. Spiral galaxy, spiral cloud formation, spiral whirlpool. (Google)



Figures 4-7. Spiral vine, Aloe Polyphylla, nautilus shell, inner ear. (Google)

The spiral's unique form contains a particularly elegant proportion, Phi Φ, or the Divine Proportion. In this relationship of parts, one small (A), and one large (B), their sum (C) is to the large part (B) in exactly the same proportion as the large part (B) is to the small (A). Greek mathematician Euclid (323–283 BCE) represented this proportional relationship as such:

----------A---------- _____B_____

_____C_____,

where the ratio of A to B is equal to the ratio of B to C. In *Divine Proportion: Phi in Art, Nature, and Science*, Priya Hemenway describes it as "the relation, in perfect proportion, of the whole to its parts. It is a relationship so perfect that its parts are to each other as the whole is to its larger part" (11). A numerical representation of the golden proportion within the spiral form, referred to as the Fibonacci sequence, is as follows:

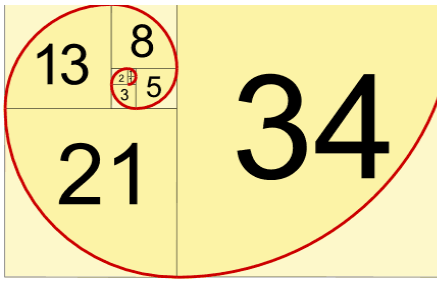


Figure 8. Fibonacci sequence. (Google)

As it expands from the center (0), the Divine Proportion can be measured numerically where the next value is found by adding up the two preceding numbers: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, etc. In this way, the spiral represents how unequal parts can function within an interconnected relationship of difference, proportion, balance, and outward growth. Priya Hemenway argues that this special numeric relationship deserves all of its many names: "Divine Proportion, Golden Mean, Golden Section, Golden Ratio, Sacred Cut" (11). She underlines how the consistent proportions of the spiral arc represent an interconnective "relationship of macrocosm and microcosm," in which "the Divine Proportion describes the larger and the smaller in their most intimate relationship: They are not separate; they are related. The proportion links them in such a way that there is a mirroring effect that makes it possible to see the large in the small and the small in the large" (Hemenway 8). In this sense, the Golden Ratio is the most basic mathematical expression of interrelation.

Informing many aspects of human expression, the Golden Ratio's harmonious proportion appears in architecture, dating back to the puquios of Ancient Peru,

Figure 9. Puquios. (Google)

Egyptian pyramids, the Parthenon in Greece, and Gothic cathedrals. It has been adopted in the designs of modern architects such as Le Courbusier and his many protégés. The Guggenheim Museum in New York City is perhaps one of the most famous public buildings utilizing a spiral form.

Figures 10-11. Guggenheim Museum. (Google)

The organization of musical scales and common melodic progressions (like the circle of fifths) are based on Fibonacci numbers; the repeating piano keyboard (from C to C with 13 keys), has 8 white keys and 5 black keys, split into groups of 3 and 2. Numerous instruments, such as the violin, are based on Phi Φ.

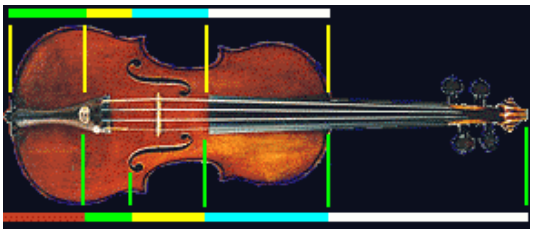


Figure 12. Golden Proportions of the violin. (Google)

Given the extent to which the spiral permeates the universe on macro and micro scales, at times obvious to us and at times inconspicuous, it is not surprising that human cultural production finds inspiration in the spiral form, including the swirling principles of Haitian Spiralism.

Kaiama Glover expounds on the significance of the spiral form within Spiralism in *Haiti Unbound: A Spiralist Challenge to the Postcolonial Canon*. She draws attention to its integration of the natural world, and how its openness and flexibility represented hope in the midst of the Duvaliers' repressive stranglehold on the Haitian people.

> Dynamic and open-ended, the spiral – as Frankétienne, Fignolé, and Philoctète envisioned it – would be operational on multiple levels, incarnating a precise artistic attitude while evoking essential phenomena at work in *every aspect of the natural world*. Integrally reflective of the processes by which organisms and living systems grow and develop, the biological, physical reality of the spiral was as significant to their insular existence as to the wider world from which they were so acutely cut off. It represented a formal testament to the possibility of the infinite. (viii my emphasis)

As Glover articulates, the Spiralists' attentiveness to the natural world (represented through the spiral symbol) as a message of liberation in the midst of tyranny, "a formal testament to the possibility of the infinite," is at the crux of my literary analysis in this project. My ecocritical reading of all three novels considers how their environmentally interconnected language counters divisive systems of domination.

Environmental interconnection and “le langage des arbres et de la terre”

In Philoctète’s novel, language of environmental interconnection is inscribed as “le langage des arbres et de la terre” (23), spoken by Toussaint Louverture’s soldiers during the Haitian Revolution, passed down from their African ancestors and then on to their Caribbean descendants. As this ecocentric language ties human existence to the natural world, it is also the language of resistance among peoples forcefully subjugated by the European slave traders and the colonists who controlled the plantation system in the Caribbean. Symbolically, this language represents an ecocentric cosmovision, and tangibly – for those who managed to escape their chains – it becomes a syntax of survival, a coding of resources and weapons, and a tool of refuge from colonial trackers. In my third chapter on the uses of juxtaposition, I analyze how Philoctète positions *le langage des arbres et de la terre* as the catalytic starting point of Trujillo’s racialized hatred of Haitians.

While the Spiralists maintained an experimental and transgressive literary objective driven by linguistic creativity they also drew inspiration from many writers and artists before them. Philoctète cites Jacques Roumain as an important influence, particularly in many of his works of poetry. Referencing his 1962 collection of poems titled *Les Tambours du soleil*, he explains in a 1992 interview that “[i]t was a kind of quest. I wanted to use in poetry Jacques Roumain's writing. I mean a two-sided kind of writing with a French syntax and a Creole morphology – a writing in which the Creole expressions and the French sentence, or French syntax, go hand in hand. Have I succeeded? I don't know” (623). Roumain and Philoctète exhibit a shared eco-poetic environmental esthetic, one that connects landscape with identity, communicating a

moving love of place. For example, in *Gouverneurs de la rosée,* as Roumain's character Manuel walks at night: "[q]uel jardin d'étoiles dans le ciel et la lune glissait parmi elles, si brillante et aiguisée que les étoiles auraient dû tomber comme des fleurs fauchées" (Roumain 155); comparably reverent of the natural world, as Philoctète's Adèle thinks of her lover Pedro, she is "[s]ous des parapluies aux mille nuances, aux formes les plus diverses, je me suis pâmée, une pluie continuelle, parfumé à la menthe, verte, escortant en mon extase. […] chants indistincts d'oiseaux de cristal, mers infinies se mêlant aux arcs-en-ciel" (45). As these examples communicate, both Roumain and Philoctète write the human experience within a lyrical reverence for non-human elements, interlinking human existence and consciousness with the natural world.

Roumain's *Gouverneurs de la rosée*

A Haitian classic, Roumain's *Gouverneurs de la rosée* was published posthumously in 1944[8]. Set between the two World Wars, it is a story of love and sociopolitical *engagement* with the land. After years of labor in sugarcane fields in Cuba, the novel's hero, Manuel, returns to his Haitian village to find it ravaged by drought, largely due to deforestation. "Cette question de l'eau, c'est la vie ou la mort pour nous, la salvation ou la perdition" (52). Paralleling the ecological devastation that poses a serious threat to all living beings in the region, Manuel also finds the social fabric of his village torn due to a land inheritance dispute and mutual blame for the water shortage. The people who had made up a unified community at the time of his departure are now

[8] It was also adapted for the stage twice: in 1975 in Paris by the Théâtre Noir company, and in 1994 by Sylvaine Telchid in Haitian Creole titled "Sé komandè siren-la," directed by Harry Kancell (Théâtre Pawòl). In addition, there is a French TV movie version, adapted by Maurice Failevic in 1976 (Youtube).

divided in animosity: "toute la journée ils affilent leurs dents avec des menaces; l'un déteste l'autre, la famille est désaccordée, les amis d'hier sont les ennemis d'aujourd'hui et ils ont pris deux cadavres pour drapeaux et il y a du sang sur ces morts et le sang n'est pas encore sec" (85). Manuel is upset by the gravity of the environmental and social problems facing Fonds Rouge, and the novel is centered on his efforts to find solutions.

Manuel's work within a Cuban combite[9] exposes him to cooperative modes of labor in Cuba that date back to 1866, when the *Asociación* [or *Gremio*] *de Tabaqueros de La Habana* was formed, marking the start of a new, post-slavery tradition of workers organizing and fighting for empowerment (Alexander 9). His immersion in this culture of worker solidarity teaches Manuel that although one worker alone is powerless and replaceable, the labor collective wields great power with its threat of strike. As Michael Dash asserts, *Gouverneurs de la rosée* "is about migration, cultural transformation, and the emergence of new diasporic revolutionary identities" (30). Understanding the combined power of working with people from other islands and other nations, Manuel is an advocate for cooperation. In this sense, his character is comparable to Philoctète's (anti-hero) Pedro, who tries to organize with his cane-cutter coworkers to resist Trujillo's genocide. In addition to Manuel's exposure to and participation in unified labor strikes,

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[9] "The cooperative work-system, which is so important in maintaining agricultural production, is directly related to comparable groupings of West Africa … The combite, as an instrument of co-operative labor and mutual self-help, with its tradition of giving no pecuniary reward for work done, but of making the feast which comes at the end of the day's labor adequate return – all these represent pure retentions of African practice. Even more striking is the carry-over in the attitudes which go with these outer forms – the manner in which the participants look forward with pleasant anticipation to taking part in combites, the enjoyment which they derive from their group work, and the verve with which the work is done are clear expressions of these attitudes. The role of the combite-song in exercising social control and enforcing conformity to local custom is entirely African, as is its function in stimulating work by setting a rhythm for it" (Herskovits 259-60).

he has accumulated agrarian knowledge. Together, these changes have awakened in him a sense of agency along with an anti-hierarchical consciousness that propels him to act for justice upon his return home.

Love plays a large role in both Roumain's and Philoctète's novels. Manuel refuses to dismiss the "others" of the village as his parents do; instead, in a situation that echoes *Romeo & Juliet*, he sparks a relationship with a childhood acquaintance, Anaïse, the daughter of former family friends, now enemies. Their electric mutual attraction (which I analyze in juxtaposition to the villagers' divisive and antagonistic dynamic in my third chapter) drives them to meet secretly in a copse of trees in the hills behind their village in order to protect their socially forbidden relationship. In *Terres mêlées*, Pedro and Adèle's love of two years also shines above the darkness of the terrific totalitarian violence of the Massacre.

Vodou, Interrelation, Marronage, and "le langage des arbres et de la terre"

While its purpose and role differ among them, Vodou occupies a significant presence in all three novels. In *Creole Religions of the Caribbean: An Introduction from Vodou and Santería to Obeah and Espiritismo*, Margarite Fernández Olmos and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert write how "Vodou, the most maligned and misunderstood of all African-inspired religions in the Americas, is also one of its most complex" (102). This complexity stems from its many roots, its spiritual figures of worship embodying "a fusion of African and creole gods, the spirits of deified ancestors, and syncretized manifestations of Catholic saints" (102). Themes of interconnection are especially prevalent in Vodou's extensive practice of rituals based on reciprocity, among a pantheon

of spirits known as *loa* or *lwa* (102). Vodou operates within a hierarchy of participants, but all parts give and take, all parts are connected energetically, and balance is maintained through the continual exchange of gifts. Claudine Michel explains that due to the interrelational mechanics of Vodou, a person must live in good moral standing; transgressions can create "dissonance in society's polyrhythms, disturbing the harmonious flow of things, bringing about division in the community" (20). She describes how poor choices and actions on the part of individuals have repercussions on communal wellbeing:

> Due to the web of interconnectedness, a person's moral violations distract, disturb, and perturb the outer world, which ought to seek restoration of its harmonious state and rhythm. […] Morality for those who *serve the spirits* is a constant effort to maintain social cohesion, harmony, and balance. What is "right" in the Vodou world is not a function of abstract reasoning but is relative to what will achieve *unity*. (20)

In addition to its emphasis on the interconnected balance between the spiritual world and the physical world, Vodou highlights the relationships between people, loa, and the natural environment. This is unsurprising, given that Vodou emerged within small groups of escaped slaves who depended on their knowledge of flora and fauna to resist colonial captivity and abuse. In an act termed *marronage* by the colonists, and described by Maryse Condé as "le refus de la domination de l'Occident" (20), escaped individuals depended upon their African legacies of biological knowledge, embodied in Philoctète's repeated references to the orally transmitted epistemology of "le langage des arbres et de la terre" (23).

The *Marrons*' relationship with the natural world drew from a common literacy of the natural environment (despite differences between African and Caribbean ecosystems), and was not only key to each small group's survival in isolated mountain locations, but

was also an essential strategy of resistance and rebellion against slavery and colonial hegemony. Margarite Fernández Olmos and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert argue that

> vodou is intricately connected to the twelve-year war of independence that we know as the Haitian Revolution (1791-1803). The Revolution's early leaders – Boukman and Makandal – were oungans whose knowledge of the powers and poisonous properties of herbs had helped mount a campaign of terror and death among French planters in Saint Domingue. (103)

The fact that slaves used their knowledge of trees, plants and animals in order to attack their colonial captors is significant, given that the colonial project depended in part upon an ideological stance that man was superior to and separate from nature.

Mayra Montero's *Tú, la oscuridad*

Published in 1995, Mayra Montero's novel *Tú, la oscuridad* takes place in the mountains of Haiti in 1992. In this novel, an American herpetologist named Victor Grigg and a local hired guide, Thierry Adrien, try to hunt down a rare species of frog called *Eleutherodactylus sanguineus, la grenouille de sang* or the blood frog, believed to be close to extinction. Montero presents different epistemologies in *Tú, la oscuridad*: Victor's rational, science-based views contrast to Thierry's Vodou-informed knowledge of flora and fauna. The novel's structure promotes environmental mindfulness, most obviously noticeable in its interspersed, non-fiction chapters detailing the mysterious extinctions of frogs around the globe.

Overview of the Chapters

In Chapter Two, I give an ecocritical reading of the three novels. I analyze how the presence of the natural world permeates language, plot, and the consciousness of

various protagonists, communicating to the reader an imaginary in which the physical interconnectedness between all beings becomes evident. In Chapter Three, I explore five juxtaposed relationships in *Terres mêlées*, arguing that Philoctète constructs binary dualisms within the chaos of his narrative in order to deconstruct and expose the dangers of such fabricated oppositions. I bring the other two novels of my corpus into conversation with Philoctète's, drawing attention to the ways in which Montero contrasts the Western scientific logic of Victor with the Vodou-based ecoliteracy of Thierry, thereby juxtaposing two perceptions of the environment that often contradict, or misunderstand each other. Though critical of their use as divisive and hierarchical tools, I also pay attention to the function of binaries in understanding systems, and in marking external limits or extremes of any given assemblage, as the interrelated assemblage must be looked at in sections that can be comprehended by the human mind. In Chapter Four, I analyze how interconnection is practiced and promoted in explicit, didactic ways within the works of my corpus, and I discuss how their styles and plots do the same work in more implicit ways. Finally, in my conclusion, I connect my analysis to the present state of environmental instability. Violence directed outward at the environment is, simultaneously, an act of violence committed on the self: as an individual, a community, and a species. The process of objectifying and treating nature as a commodity to be exploited for profit can lead to results that make living impossible. I address what Rob Nixon calls *slow violence*: environmental "threats that take time to wreak their havoc, threats that never materialize in one spectacular, explosive, cinematic scene" (14).

My aim is to show how these three literary texts construct a stage on which the dangers of these human-made extremes become evident, both ideologically and

physically; they show us how it is the connecting space of *between* where life exists and reverberates. I consider the following questions: How do these works help to raise consciousness about the relationship between human behavior, the ecosystem's wellbeing, and human wellbeing? In what ways do these Caribbean authors of different generations, genders, classes, languages and cultures voice a shared awareness of the natural balance currently at risk in the world, a balance necessary to the survival of so many living beings? In what ways can each of these texts be read as a call to action?

CHAPTER TWO

IN*TERRE*LATION: A SPIRALIST ETHICS

The presence and signification of the natural environment permeates the narratives of *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* by René Philoctète, *Gouverneurs de la rosée* by Jacques Roumain, and *Tú, la oscuridad* by Mayra Montero. In this chapter, I analyze how these novels communicate an environmental ethics, one that understands human existence as interlinked with a vast network of living beings and habitat. Of particular significance to this chapter is Philoctète's "langage des arbres et de la terre" (23). Helping to contextualize this chapter within an eco-critical framework, I begin my analysis with Martinican author Aimé Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (1939), as it provides an early articulation of anticolonial ecocritical consciousness in the Caribbean. Next, I look at two main threads within the first twenty-two pages of *Le Peuple des terres mêlées:* the threatening presence of the *machin* – an unearthly, terrifying bird-machine-drone-thing. I analyze how Pedro and Adèle, two of the novel's key figures, embody a perspective that transgresses national division and portrays the Haitian-Dominican border region as a shared space of "mixed-lands," in which the people, the flora and the fauna of both sides intermingle. Finally, in conversation with my ecocritical analysis of Philoctète's novel, I analyze how Jacques Roumain's and Mayra Montero's novels complement *Terres mêlées* with their ecocentric narratives and attention to relationships, yet differ in their presentation and styles. While Montero's and Roumain's narratives are prosaic, Philoctète's spiralism, like Aimé Césaire's *Cahier,* demand imaginative work on the part of the reader in order to form their version of the narrative.

Aimé Césaire's Eco-politics

Nature-based epistemologies and spiritualties (like Vodou) are integral to anti-colonial Caribbean discourse. Aimé Césaire's earliest and most celebrated work, *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (1939), along with his other poetry and plays published over five decades, incorporate a distinct environmental and geographical ethics, especially concerning questions of space, place, and identity within the context of slavery and its legacy. The colonial project in the Caribbean depended on the subjugation of bodies, imagination, and identity. African cultural traditions and cosmologies based on relationships to the earth and its flora and fauna were reinvented and adapted to the Caribbean islands – not only in response to the differences in climate, possible diet and dangers, but also to oppressive systems of labor, language, religion and land- and body-rights. Many slaves ran away to higher ground (maroons), often living off the land in small groups (marronage). These refugees depended on the language of the trees and of the land for their survival and eventual warfare against the colonists at the beginning of the 18th century.

Along with Léopold Sédar Senghor and Léon Damas, Césaire was father to the *Négritude* movement, a celebration of blackness and African values through the deconstruction and refusal of the racism integral to the French colonial project. This Marxist movement from the 1930s played a vital role in the psychological decolonization process and the reclaiming of identity amidst the continued legacies of slavery. Césaire had an important influence on the Spiralists, as their works clearly echo his creative methods as well as his revolutionary political ideals. In her introduction to *Haiti Unbound*, Kaiama Glover links the spiralists' sense of "territorial rootedness" and their

position of "committed iconoclasm" to Césaire and Franz Fanon, including their "notions of violent, purifying apocalypse." As she notes the importance of African spiritual tradition in their process, Glover underlines the greater goal of their writings as "literary tabulae rasae: unsettled and unsettling spaces from which they as writers and, they imply, the postcolonial collective might be reborn—vodou-style—as warriors" (14).

To the rhythm of the *tam-tam* beat, in his epic manifesto *Cahier,* Césaire incorporates the land, water and sky, evoking them especially in opposition to Modernist European values:

> ma négritude n'est pas une pierre, sa surdité ruée
> contre la clameur du jour
> ma négritude n'est pas une taie d'eau morte sur l'oeil mort de la terre
> ma négritude n'est ni une tour ni une cathédrale
>
> elle plonge dans la chair rouge du sol
> elle plonge dans la chair ardente du ciel
> elle troue l'accablement opaque de sa droite patience. (16)

Césaire utilizes the living and non-living beings of the natural world to raise the black Caribbean community above their circumscribed identity as descendants of slaves (inferior beings, savages) and to embrace their African identity as the original peoples of Earth, "véritablement les fils aînés du monde / poreux à tous les souffles du monde / aire fraternelle de tous les souffles du monde / lit sans drain de toutes les eaux du monde" (16). In refusing racially-based marginalization, these lines not only insist upon the glory of being black as descendants of Africa, but highlight blackness and Africanness as older brothers of the world in a global relationship with all breathing beings: they are receptive, "poreux" to all the world's breaths, and they are familial, "brotherly," to all the world's breaths. Africans are the "étincelle du feu sacré du monde" and the "chair de la chair du monde palpitant du mouvement même du monde!" (16). The integral presence of the

natural world of living and nonliving beings is not only apparent but *esteemed* in Césaire's poem. In his essay "The Uses of Landscape: Ecocriticism and Martinican Cultural Theory," Eric Prieto argues that Césaire's many references to the natural world – his "attention lavished on detailing the flora, fauna, and topography of Martinique," – are not, in fact, specifically about the Martinican environment. He draws out a parallel between Negritude and the natural world as counters to colonial domination and the "technological imperatives ordering European civilization," providing an imagery that "had an important role to play in putting to rest the myth of European superiority embodied in such expressions as the "white man's burden" and the "*mission civilisatrice*" (237). In this sense, Césaire can be read as an eco-political thinker.

The many representations of the natural world in Césaire's work "are integrated into the allegorical struggle between European and African values" and serve as "a rhetorical tool for advancing a sociopolitical argument about human nature" (Prieto 237). As the division, domination, and exploitation of the natural world and certain groups of people are central parts of the modernist colonial philosophy and praxis, anti-colonial political thinking must include environmental consciousness to some degree.

In*terre*lation in *Terres mêlées*

Throughout its 147 complex and chaotic pages, *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* communicates an ethics of interrelation between humanity, fauna, flora, land, water, air, and sun. In the introduction to the English translation of *Terres mêlées,* Haitian novelist and poet Lyonel Trouillot notes the importance of environment in Philoctète's life:

> We might begin by saying that René Philoctète was born in Jérémie, Haiti, in the Départment de la Grande Anse, one of the last verdant corners in a country where nature has been ravaged by the hand of man and the hazards of geography. This by way of explaining the strong sense of place which radiates throughout

> Philoctète's writing. When asked about his work, he sometimes replied simply that there was a tree that he loved along the Route de la Grande Anse. (11)

Embodying such a "sense of place," Philoctète's techniques—such as sentences that feature eclectically grouped animate and inanimate subjects sharing the same verbs—create unpredictable shifts of perspective, movement and, via inclusion, highlight the importance of all beings *in relationship*, from the outer workings of the universe as we understand it down to the energetic tensions at play within atoms. Myriad subjects inhabit a single sentence that may continue for pages, while the narrative voice is likely to switch person midsentence, from third to first to second and back again, singular and plural alike.

This changing and unpredictable mixture of subjects creates a permeable, multi-vocal narrative, resounding with Mikhail Bakhtin's assertion of the dialogical nature of language, and the heteroglossic potential of the novel form. Each word is not only inflected by the meanings of words contiguous in the text, but rather by the infinite sedimentation of all the utterances of the word[10]. Philoctète's writing performs the "dialogisation intérieure [du discours]" and locates "cette force créatrice de forme […] là où dissensions et contradictions individuelles sont fécondées par un plurilinguisme social […] dialogisant le langage lui-même et sa vision du monde (la forme intérieure du discours), là où le dialogue des voix nait spontanément du dialogue social des langues" (Bakhtin 107). The inclusive heteroglossia that characterizes the *terres mêlées* creates a chaotic motion keeping the reader on their toes and requiring their participation in order to make sense of the magnitude of incompatible parts. When I examine juxtaposition in

[10] See *Esthétique et théorie du roman.*

the following chapter, I contrast these multifocal border chapters with the single-minded, domination-driven chapters of Trujillo.

Le Peuple des terres mêlées takes place in the Dominican Republic, on the Haitian border that splits the island of Hispaniola in two. As the novel's title indicates, the two lands constitute one fundamentally undivided space, whose unity is represented at the borderlands. The horizontal presence of the borderland communities and the natural world throughout the text counters the vertical structure of Trujillo's State-machine, including his disguised army led by General Don Agustin.

Philoctète transcends the notion of linear time and the geopolitical division of Hispaniola by incorporating colonial and precolonial pasts into his narrative. Often without pause, the novel's present-tense narrative slips into the past, representing visions of subaltern histories at various points in time. Varying from page-long sentences to series of clipped sentence fragments that shift perspectives and agency through their diverse subjects, the narrative voice is unpredictable, at times even chaotic:

> Belles, belles, belles ces terres! Les deux ensemble. L'une haute, l'autre basse, avec les sortileges de leur sous-sol: l'or des Zémès, la sueur de ceux-là tirés d'Afrique. Le cacique Caonabo connut Anacaona, la samba. La tendresse du Xaragua fut fondue dans l'orgueil du Cibao. Les fleurs découvrirent l'ivresse de la bravoure. Lorsque souffle le hurricane, les sarcelles tournent en rond – Une couronne fragile dans la vigueur de la tourmente. (19)

Philoctète weaves into his narrative pre-colonial societies and ceremonies, the arrival of Columbus and the ensuing subjugation of Arawak and Caribe peoples, the importation, forced labor, and extensive abuses of African slaves, the Haitian Revolution, and continuing conflicts due to corruption and internationally imposed debt. In addition to Philoctète's temporal flexibility in the example cited above, the agency given to the flowers which "découvrirent l'ivresse de la bravoure" and to the hurricane's *souffle*,

including its spinning effect on the teals that "tournent en rond – Une couronne fragile dans la vigueur de la tourmente" not only references the prominent role of hurricanes in the Caribbean imaginary, but also communicates an awareness of how the many parts of existence continually affect each other.

In contrast to the divisive and brutally violent practices of Trujillo, this explicit message of inclusion is especially apparent in the animated philosophy of Chicha Calma, a personified Haitian passenger bus,[11] who has been carrying people here and there around the two lands for more than twenty years. The bus represents "l'esprit du peuple de la frontière. Un peuple qui sait jouer de la dissimulation, saisir les nuances, disséquer les parties d'un tout, cerner les à-peu-près, se servir des en-cas. Un peuple qui vit avec l'impondérable, reçoit au même degré, orages et éclaircies" (78). In addition to Chicha, many other characters voice or enact spiralist values of inclusion, openness, ambiguity, limitlessness, and a non-hierarchical ideology. These themes are made especially apparent through the time-, space-, and life-transcending love between Pedro Brito, a Dominican, and Adèle Benjamin, a Haitian, two of the novel's civilian protagonists who fall victim to the violence of the "Grand Tourmenteur" (124). Their sensitivity to the land and the local ecosystems not only creates a poetic, sensual experience, but also helps to construct the novel's overarching ethics of community, justice and eco-connectedness. As I will explore in my close readings, the couple's love for and attraction to one another is often communicated via environmentally conscious language, affirming their relationship within the larger web of life. By acknowledging the relational bio-interdependency of all forms of existence, Spiralism exposes legacies of hierarchical domination and division as

[11] A *guagua, carro público* or *concho* in the Dominican Republic.

false constructions – imposed upon the island of Hispaniola since the start of the colonial project in the Americas, beginning with Spain's arrival in 1492. Pedro and Adele's love and interconnected relationship with living and non-living beings contradict the armies of death and hierarchical exclusion under Trujillo's fanatic reign; I will scrutinize this dichotomy in my analysis of juxtaposition in the following chapter. In this chapter, I limit my analysis of *Terres mêlées* to Pedro and Adele's connection with the natural world, including metaphors based on flora and fauna.

Le Machin

In the opening paragraphs of *Le Peuple des terres mêlées*, Philoctète depicts a scene of ominous oppression due to the presence of a bird-like *thing* hovering up in the sky. From the very beginning of the novel, the ambiguity of the maybe-bird/ maybe-flying-gadget unsettles the limits between "the natural" and "the machine," confounding the reader's perception of reality. The novel begins:

> Depuis cinq heures du matin, un oiseau (à la vérité, on ne sait quoi) tourne dans le ciel d'Elias Pina, petite ville frontière dominicaine.
>
> Les enfants croient qu'il s'agit du cerf-volant que le chef du village lance, des fois, pour s'amuser. Les adolescents aimeraient l'enfourcher pour une fugue. Apparemment, les jeunes adultes ne s'en soucient. Mais au fond, ils espèrent que le machin s'en aille. Les vieillards, hommes et femmes, mâchoires en saillie, paupières clignotantes, se regardent en coulisse, crachent trois fois sur leur poitrine. Se signent. (9)

The steady hovering of the *machin* creates an ambiguous tension between human technology and nature, its oppressive *something-ness* imposing a foreboding atmosphere of surveillance above the town of Elias Pina.

Exemplary of the spiralist method, the mysterious presence of the bird-thing helps to defamiliarize and unsettle the reader at the very moment s/he is trying to establish a

semantic foothold in the story. Wheeling high above the people, the bird-thing is reminiscent of Jeremy Bentham's inspection house at the center of his Panopticon (meaning all-seeing) prison, in which no one can escape the sense of being watched.[12] Circling overhead also mimics a bird of prey's behavior when hunting, thus designating the villagers as potential victims.

After establishing the bird-thing's presence in the first sentence, the narrator describes the villagers' varied perceptions, which range from the naïveté of the youngsters to the superstitious worry of the experienced elders. In these few opening lines, the village is not only introduced; it is humanized as well, with varied, multiple truths expressed. The youth of the village see the bird-thing as something harmless and even enjoyable; the elders are clearly concerned that it is a threat; and the adults experience a repressed, semi-conscious anxiety. This range of human reaction demonstrates the spiralist method at play, including all emotions on a spectrum without prioritization.

Given the dramatic tension between the circling bird-thing and the people of the village, what happens next only augments this anxiety: "Soudain, l'oiseau immobilise, ailes déployées. Son ombre découpe une croix carrelant Elias Piña. Aucun son ne sort de son gosier. Pas de cri ni de gazouillement. L'oiseau est muet" (9). Now, stopped in the sky, hanging motionless and silent, it takes on an even more oppressive and machine-like air. The bird-thing hovers directly above the village in the shape of a cross. As it "découpe une croix carrelant Elias Piña," the shadow is afforded a violent agency, foreshadowing, through the verb "découpe," the machete massacre to come. It can also be

[12] See Jeremy Bentham's,*The Panopticon writings* and Michel Foucault's *Surveiller et punir.*

read as a symbolic commentary on the land-base of Hispaniola – cut into the two nations of the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The symbol of the cross appears to be as ambiguous as the bird-thing itself: while the elders call on the protection of the Catholic faith as they cross themselves beneath it, the bird-thing's cross-shaped shadow that cuts the land into quarters also signals a history of colonial violence, often upheld through institutionalized Christianity.[13]

Throughout this passage, the spiralist mode of all-inclusion expands the scope outward, as now many of the domesticated animals of the village are included in the scene beneath the spell of the *machin*: "Chiens, chats, bœufs, chèvres, ânes, chevaux, mordent, griffent, broutent, paissent son ombre sertie dans le cristal d'un midi caraïbe" (9). Six different kinds of animals share four verbs, which indicate both unrest – "mordent, griffent" – and indifference – "broutent, paissent." The presence of these domesticated beings' reactions acknowledges their place within village life: some live in the village as companions, some as protectors, some as laborers in farming, and likely, some as providers of milk and meat for consumption. They are given space in the narrative's foreground, but at the same time, their state of domesticity and the varying ways that each would be treated by their particular human owners raises politicized questions regarding animal slavery, animal rights, and justice.

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[13] Beginning with Columbus's invocation of the cross when establishing the trans-Atlantic slave trade on Hispaniola in the 15th century, and continuing through when "France undertook to venture into the field of colonization, the extension of the Catholic faith […] became an important aspect of this activity," as missionaries were called upon to save the souls of the Amerindians and African Slaves (Breathett 1). This helped to create a faith-based hierarchy between the colonists and the colonized or enslaved in which injustices could be justified as part of God's plan to sanctify lost souls.

From the point of view of the planetary "web of life" (Carson 189), living beings have evolved to the current complexity via the harsh reality of the necessary transfer of energy from one life form to another: the eating and absorption of the energy of plants and other animals is the life and death cycle of the animal world. However, from an anti-anthropocentric point of view, many of the relationships humans have developed with domesticated animals parallel the exploitive and abusive relationships of plantation owners to the slaves who worked the cane fields and sugar mills in colonial times, or to the *braceros* in the "post-slave era" that continues into the present. Philoctète's multi-layered opening brings forth these contradictory implications of the animal presence as equally important and as embedded in the local context as the human-centric narration.

In the introductory section cited above, the final lines once again geographically situate the reader, as the bird-thing's shadow is set in "le cristal d'un midi caraïbe" (19), panning out from "une petite ville frontière dominicaine" to the Caribbean context. Furthermore, we are localized in time, at the noon hour—the moment of limbo between the rising and the setting of the sun, marking a symbolic shift from the time of day when light is increasing to the time of day when light wanes. Noon is when there are the fewest but strongest shadows, which further emphasizes the intense, unnatural presence of the quartering shadow cast by the bird-thing centered above.

Not all of the villagers are passive beneath the *machin*; an elderly hunter takes defensive action against it with his shotgun, but his bullets "décrivent un arc de cercle et tombent au sol, écrasés" (10) proving that his fighting efforts to take the thing down – his efforts of resistance against the machine – are futile. The hunter's failed attempt to penetrate it, to deter it, to kill it, proves the inorganic nature of the machine-beast:

"l'oiseau n'a pas de sang" (10). For the hunter, the realization of his powerlessness is enough to leave him hopeless to the point of suicide; upon seeing his bullets fall back to the earth, he returns home and takes his own life. The hunter's ultimate act of self-violence is a testament to the emotional distress caused by the scope and extent of the *machin*'s oppressive qualities – so terrifying that the hunter turns his own gun – which is itself a kind of machine – on himself.

The narrator makes it clear that resistance toward the *machin* will *not* go unpunished: "On ne s'attaque pas impunément à la machine" (10). Various members of the community are cited – thirteen individuals by name – who have committed suicide, disappeared, or been killed under suspicious circumstances: a whole family, a sailor, a prostitute, a poet, a baker, a teacher, a tailor. The omnipotent and unforgiving power of the bird-thing is implied through the absence of these people, disappeared. The narrator reemphasizes that no one attacks the thing: "[s]inon les enfants maigrissent et du sang pisse entre les cuisses des femmes" (10). This crude description of the machine's effects implies a mission to destroy the people of the border, as it causes children to lose weight (and implicitly die), and women to miscarry their pregnancies, ending hope for next generations.

Due to the degree of its power, the bird-thing takes on a supernatural quality: "L'oiseau est sorcier" (10). This qualification carries weight in the context of the Haitian-Dominican border, where Vodou beliefs and practices are an explicit and implicit part of existence, as I discussed in the Introduction. The building tension of the bird-thing's hovering presence as it "prend ses aises dans le ciel du village" (9) breaks into mayhem when, without warning or apparent cause, it suddenly and violently descends to the earth

below: “D’un coup, il plonge, tête baissée, sur les arbres. Les feuilles giclent, les branches se cassent, les fleurs prennent feu. L’impacte contre les troncs n’arrête pas sa furie. Tout s’écroule sur son passage, lui laissant la liberté de ses manœuvres” (10). The bird-thing invades the land-base with such force that it destroys all of the life it encounters: “Tout s’écroule sur son passage” – including the solid mass of tree trunks, whose strength is no match against its fury. The fact that the bird-thing’s plummeting causes the flowers to catch fire (rather than being broken or crushed) evokes a bomb-like power, or may even suggest a mythological association with a fire-breathing dragon in flight. With this attack, the village elders’ anxiety is confirmed, as there is no longer any doubt concerning its threat to living beings.

In addition, the devastation wrought from the bird-thing’s crashing dive to earth increases its ability to maneuver, demonstrating that such a destructive act has no negative impact on its state of being. Its obliterating crash only creates more space for mobility on the ground. The language used portrays the natural world as something in the way – and weak in comparison to the bird-thing. The destruction of everything in the bird-thing’s path appears inherent to its method.

Containing but four words, the following paragraph is of critical importance, both in the wake of the bird-thing’s attack, and to the novel as a whole: “L’oiseau est aveugle” (10). This announcement communicates the arbitrary nature of its destruction: unable to visually discern its target, it seems that the bird could repeat such a strike anywhere, at any time. From this oppressive presence, we can extrapolate that, through the figure of the blind bird-machine, Philoctète seeks to evoke the pervasive terror inflicted by the *Trujillato*, “época de corrupción y violencia aberrantes, desde luego estigmatizada por lo

que parece haber sido una fuente inagotable de malicia" (Larson 92). In addition, as the themes of sight, blindness and mirrors reoccur throughout the novel in multiple, significant ways, this statement about the bird's blindness prefigures the political criticism of Trujillo's lack of vision in the extremist and (ironically) visually-based racial discrimination which he used to justify mass murder.

In case the extent and power of the *machin*'s reach was at all in question, the following three sentences certify its omnipotence: "Maintenant il cingle vers le ciel, ailes repliées, pattes jointes, vrillant l'air. Le soleil, frappé de plein fouet, tremble s'incurve, rapetisse. Personne n'ose se prononcer à fond sur les acrobaties de l'engin, ni même essayer un mauvais sort" (10). In addition to the people and domesticated animals of the village, the sun itself is now afforded its own reaction as the blind bird-thing, "vrillant l'air" (a self-referential nod to spiral movement), strikes it "de plein fouet." After its downward attack on the land-base, now it flies fantastically up to the other extreme limit, impervious to the laws of space and time. As a consequence of this attack, the biggest, most powerful and energetic component of our solar system, the astral body that makes all life on earth possible, "tremble, s'incurve, rapetisse." The humans who witness this seemingly impossible feat dismiss any thoughts of retaliation against the all-encompassing and all-powerful abilities of this flying *thing* that can intimidate and deflate even the largest, hottest mass in the solar system.

With the expansive and warped space-time perspective of the bird-thing striking the sun, the narrator folds time in a typical spiralist style back to Hispaniola at the turn of the 16th century, to the time when "le cacique Caonabo avait pris le fort La Nativité" (11). This reach back to the moment of the colonial project's beginning continues the

conversations among those villagers who realize the rapidly increasing danger. They, too, connect with the past, in an attempt to summon "la chanson que chantaient les caraïbes avant d'ouvrir les sentiers de la guerre" (11). This draws not only on the image of original peoples as they found themselves preparing to fight against Columbus and his men at the end of the 15th century, but references songs of slavery as well. According to archivist Benjamin Hutchens, "the cultural memory of the Caribs survives mostly in crude ethnographical depictions in the works of Columbus and his colleagues, and in the often elliptical references to them in post 1791 slave insurrection songs" (43). The villagers thus try to elicit spiritual encouragement from peoples of the island who had lived before and fought the violent impositions of "modernity" through death by gun, dog attack, disease and the lethal work conditions forced upon them by European invaders. As Hutchins continues, "one might say that the founding moment of the archive in which the cultural memory of the Caribs was consigned was the second arrival of Columbus with a pack of massifs trained to kill and frighten the natives into total (and laborious) subjection"(43). Despite their resistance, the native peoples of Hispaniola were overcome, mostly by disease, to near extinction by 1531 (Livi-Bacci).

While not always peaceful, life in the autochthonic societies of the island of Hispaniola had been remarkably different from the brutal living conditions under which they suffered and died at the hands of the colonists.[14] However, it becomes clear that "la chanson a repris ses ailes […] [c]omme des fruits trop mûrs qui pourissent sur pied!" (11). The realization that the island's native spirit has "repris ses ailes" foreshadows the future via the past. These references to the colonial project's beginnings, including the

[14] See David Traboulay's *Columbus and Las Casas: the conquest and Christianization of America, 1492–1566*.

realization that the war song once used by the indigenous peoples had since flown away, signal an ominous loss, and an inability to sustain life against such an overwhelming invasion – in the past by Columbus, and in the novel's present by Trujillo. Further explanation using the over-ripe fruit as metaphor draws a comparison between wasted human life and the wasted fruit, once again seamlessly tying together the non-human and human worlds.

In response to this failed attempt to recall an ancient song grown inaccessible through the years, a vacationing sociology student "tente d'apaiser la colère de la bête en lui jouant de la mandoline. Mais ses doigts en pinçant les cordes de l'instrument raccourcissent jusqu'aux racines" (11). However, he is undeterred by the loss of his fingers, shriveled like dead plants, and continues playing. Now with his teeth, he plays "des accords, n'importe lesquels! qui s'embrouillent, grincent, sifflent, s'empêtrent" (11). With Spiralism explicitly at play, this student's determination to do something in response to the bird-thing's threat – and specifically through the swaying power of music – inspires the whole village (including the roofs and the church bells) to join in a group effort to appease the creature's anger. Playing back-up, "les tôles des maisons se mettent à crisser, à caqueter, à miauler, à piailler" (11), while the people of the village pick up whatever they can find and join in the musical procession. "Les cloches de la chapelle de bois dédiée à Notre-Dame de la Conception laissent leur tour, s'appellent, se cognent dans un bruit de mitraille et de noces" (11). The fact that music is the vehicle for the village's united response to the bird-thing's menace is significant: working together in chorus, they are confronting violent destruction with an entirely creative, communal act – one that elicits and complements emotional expression. Solo song is employed later to

communicate complicity with Trujillo's racialized project of violence, as juxtaposition and contradiction are fundamental techniques used throughout this novel.

Despite the valiant musical efforts of the villagers – and of the village itself – to mollify the *machin,* it appears unaffected: "Sur ces entrefaites, l'appareil qui a poursuivi le soleil dans ses derniers retranchements revient dans le ciel d'Elias Piña. Il enfouit la tête sous son aile gauche et dort, suspendu entre les labours et les premières étoiles. La bête est sourde" (12). This last four-word sentence echoes the "l'oiseau est aveugle" on page 10. This almost tender act of tucking its head beneath its wing to sleep demonstrates to the reader that it is not all machine, as it too needs rest. And yet, even at rest, it maintains its dominant position in the sky, rendering the earth and its inhabitants below vulnerable to the potential of its erratic and violent outbursts. Given the many examples discussed so far, the narrator and the villagers make clear that the bird-thing – blind and deaf and exceedingly violent – is operating on its own terms, with an unknown agenda, outside the constraints of physical law, and unfazed by Elías Piña's attempts to thwart it.

The Eco-embedded Couple

Philoctète interweaves the natural world and all its living beings into the actions, sensations, and thoughts of the novel's central couple, Adèle and Pedro, young laborers deeply in love with each other. It can equally be argued that Philoctète also interweaves the couple into the natural world with all its living and nonliving beings. This type of ideological and formal flip, in this case between the foreground and background, is the kind of disorienting defamiliarization that the spiralist method champions. Pedro and Adèle's passion-filled union of spiritual and physical love represents an antipodal

opposition to the bird-thing and Trujillo's nationalist agenda of racial purification, particularly given that Adèle, who is a black Haitian, and Pedro, who is a mixed-race Dominican, not only love and respect each other, but also love the land and all living beings who share it.

The spiralist technique depends upon writing with movement, changes of perspective, and a sensitized consciousness of the intricacies of the natural world: its beauty; its destructive power; its needs and its offerings; and human beings' inseparable existence within it. As Philoctète's writing interlinks Pedro and Adèle within a much larger system of nature, he establishes a reality in which the environment and all living beings are not only respected, but are shown to be intrinsically interwoven with all of existence in the face of the divisive forces of tyranny and violent injustice. Kaiama Glover supports this position in *Haiti Unbound*. Arguing that Pedro is not the novel's central figure, she writes that he is instead "the primary conduit through which the reader is granted access to a series of events that concern the greater community […]; he is but one element of a larger social tableau, and his voice quite often goes unheard over the din of the collective in its daily struggles for survival" (91). Pedro, Adèle, and the other people of the border are depicted as threads of a larger fabric.

Just before we meet Adèle and Pedro, the narrative includes terrifying examples of an escalating violence. Two songs – one by the town mayor and one by Don Agustín – summarize the situation in a public setting. First the mayor of Elías, holding a late 18th–century lantern, sings "une sorte de méringue lente. Comme une adoration" (13) in which he calls on the "Seigneur du sang horrible," and offers a group surrender to the horrors of death: "Par la puissance de l'agonie nous te saluons, Seigneur de mort folle" (13). Don

Agustín, awakened from his nap by the singing, scratches, farts, stretches, hiccups, and then replies in song to the tune of the blue Danube "Pour une tête d'homme haïtien, l'accolade de Trujillo; pour un corps d'enfant haïtien, femelle ou mâle, le sourire de Trujillo; pour une femme haïtienne coupée en deux, la reconnaissance de Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina" (13). In the midst of this singing, where eventually the village "récite la gloire de Trujillo […] jusqu'à ce que la nuit s'empêtre dans la gorge de chaque récitant et que des bouches ouvertes ne sorte aucun son" (14), the *truc* continues its nightmarish menace above. "[E]ntre les labours et les étoiles, [il] continue de couver du cauchemar et que des machettes en faisceau restent là, au repos, récupérant, pour la ruée prochaine vers les têtes haïtiennes. Les cloches se sont tues. Un silence soigneusement ficelé monte la garde à Elias Pina" (14-15). In the wake of these horrific songs, the attention to the village's reactive silence is not simply a side effect of the brewing terror; rather, the narrative voice tells us that such silence has been "soigneusement ficelé," indicating the premeditative oppression of the people through intimidation.

It is in the midst of the chaos provoked by the *machin* that we first meet Pedro and Adèle. Their intimate tenderness and voiced communication is a respite from the horror and violence. Furthermore, in contrast to the mayhem and panic of the villagers, the narrator describes Pedro as physically unresponsive to the bird-thing's threat:

> Pedro Alvarez Brito, el mulato dominicano, l'ouvrier de l'usine sucrière de San Pedro de Macoris, qui n'avait pas chanté ni pleuré ni parlé ni même regardé l'oiseau-seigneur, l'oiseau-cerf-volant-vorace, l'oiseau-insigne, touche la main droite de sa femme, Adèle Benjamin, la chiquita negrita haitiana de Belladère. Et la trouve très froide! (15)

His refusal to show a reaction to its menacing presence immediately sets him apart from the others as a man with resolve, who is not easily intimidated. In the context of the legacy of sugar production and the centuries-long practices of slave labor and land abuse in the Dominican Republic,[15] Pedro's character is emblematic of resistance and rebellion from the underside of power. His participation in attempts to organize a resistance movement with fellow sugarcane cutters – to fight back against Trujillo's brisk attack on the borderlands – evokes the will of the Haitian Revolution, and the extensive, collaborative organizing between escaped and enslaved parties that led to eventual success. As we will see when I analyze attempts at resistance in Chapter Four, due to their lack of time and resources, the villagers are starkly overwhelmed by the scope and speed of Trujillo's attack, preventing their hopes from becoming reality.

Pedro's lack of physical reaction does not translate to apathy or indifference; both Adèle and Pedro are obviously aware and concerned about the *machin*. Both are realists; however, Adèle is more critical and pessimistic: "Le jour du sang approche […] le jour de la honte et du mépris" (15). Adèle's cold hand (a sign of distress in which blood flow is redirected from the extremities to the body's core) and her foreboding words show the degree to which she senses the inevitability of danger, experiencing fear and anger in response to Trujillo's threat. When Pedro asks, "Est-ce possible?", his doubt communicating the unimaginable and absurd nature of the situation, Adèle "s'énerve," responding with another question: "Qu'est ce qui est impossible quand le pouvoir s'abêtit?" (15). In response, Pedro remains hopeful, citing the power of humanity: "[i]l y a tout de même la fête de l'homme, petite!" (15), and Adèle agrees:

[15] Mono-crop agriculture increases the chances of ecocide, erosion, and drought.

"Notre unique rempart, hombre!" (15), using French and Spanish – a linguistic mixture that emphasizes the common ground of humanity despite differences. However, her angry pessimism returns when Pedro voices his determination:

> – On doit pouvoir y arriver.
> – Par l'amour sans doute, Pedro? demande Adèle, d'un air rêveur.
> – Si, Douce Folie.
> – Mais l'amour a les pieds bots, hombre!, explose la jeune femme. (15)

While Pedro's belief that the power of humanity's "fête" is enough to resist Trujillo, Adèle's vision of humanity includes Trujillo as a deformation. From Adèle's perspective, Trujillo's power hobbles the human condition of love, preventing "la fête de l'homme" from being able to stand up together and mobilize. It is significant that we meet Adèle and Pedro in the context of this conversation; and it becomes clear that they stand for love; that they *are* love and international union, the very target of the opposition.

The couple's relationship to other living beings and to the land plays out in Pedro's thoughts: "Je trouvais qu'elle sentait plutôt la rosée comme si l'on eût écrasé un jardin sur son corps," (66), as well as in Adèle's inner fantasies, memories and desires: "Il sortait de la pluie comme une église, une fête, une récolte." (45). The vibrancy of the sensual and sexual drive existing between the lovers, as well as between the lovers and the physical world, is a testament to their vivacity – their desire to love each other, to procreate and to propagate life.

Giving off the same scent as a garden, Adèle is imbued with fertility and bounty, associating her bodily smell with the place where lifecycles are sown with the seasons – through ongoing cycles of life and death: among sun, water, soil (composed of decaying organic beings, minerals, microbes and disintegrating rocks), roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruit. In this way, the garden can be understood as collaboration between

human beings and certain species of plants and insects. These themes resonate with Adèle and Pedro's relationship with each other and their natural surroundings.

The presence of the natural world within the couple's relationship is equally strong in their individual lives. As Pedro Brito walks to work in the early morning, "[l]'odeur des herbes coupées envahit [son] corps. Comme si son corps était labouré par l'odeur des herbes coupées. Pedro tousse. Une tourterelle dérangée dans son bain d'aube tranche l'air d'une lumière rose ardoise" (16). The impact is so intense, his body is *plowed* by the airborne grass molecules' force, a force so powerful that he is made to cough, which spooks a nearby bathing bird, which flies off, causing the air to split open from its movement. This cause-and-effect chain of events demonstrates interrelation at play – the butterfly effect – in its constant process of influence, flux, and change. Furthermore, Pedro, a human being, is imbued with qualities belonging to the land. When "son corps était labouré," he is *earthified* in the same way things or non-human living beings can be personified.

One page later, Pedro continues to make his way through the stretching green of the countryside to the sugarcane fields. This time, we find an example of animation – when animal qualities are given to the plain – which is dazzled by the flights of scarlet ortolans: "Pedro presse le pas. La plaine, au loin, s'étend verte, éblouie de temps à autre d'un vol écarlate d'ortolans" (17). The plain, which *spreads itself green*, is sensitive, with a capacity for emotional reaction. It seems that the sky is delighting that these birds fly freely, yet their scarlet flight signals troubling associations with the color of spilled blood – a combination of birds and violence that echoes the bird-thing, as well as the border people's impending slaughter.

Immediately after we hear of the plain's capacity to be dazzled by the birds' flight, the dawn is also animated: "L'aube, ayant peur, s'est réfugiée sous les ailes des oiseaux. Le déclenchement de la folie n'est certes pas pour aujourd'hui, mais pour y parvenir tout est mis en place" (17). The inevitability that the day of madness will come, that everything is set and ready, causes even the first light of day to feel terrorized, wishing to seek refuge beneath the wings of birds in flight, to hide in the shadows of their feathers. While it can be argued that this kind of emotional assignment to entities such as the plain and the dawn is a case of pathetic fallacy, it can equally be argued that such inventiveness signals a reimagining of all the parts as subjective agents who affect each other in complex ways, from the terrible to the marvelous. Philoctète's creation of a world composed of innumerable feeling and thinking parts is an act of rebellion against the objectification, exploitation and violence that Trujillo's regime commits.

A narrative rhythm is established as Pedro walks the long path to work. His name and the descriptions of his walk begin a series of paragraphs that read like verses in a song recited to a drumbeat – a spiral in motion, repeating but changing, advancing: "Pedro Brito avance à longues enjambées dans la rosée qui commence à s'évaporer. Il frôle une touffe de basilic" (18). Just as smells in the air interact with his being, entering him and changing him to the point that he feels like earth being plowed, so too does Pedro interact with the world, touching the plants, wearing the dew, enthralled by the beauty of it all. Rather than Pedro coughing, this time it is the air that reacts to the smell of basil wafting from his contact and motion: "L'air éternue, culbute, se casse le nez, étourdi. Des insectes troublés tournent leurs miroirs où s'affolent des couleurs: du jaune safran au violet pur, du noir de jais au cristal blanc des chutes d'eau. Belles, belles, belles

ces terres! Les deux ensemble" (18-19). While the air sneezes, the riled insects spin their mirrors, panicked by the colors. This reference to a multitude of shades is a counter-reference to Trujillo's obsession with racial purity, including the symbol of the mirror. It is at this point that the third-person omniscient narrator and Pedro's first-person voice begin to intermix, flowing together. Like the plain, Pedro is deeply moved by the beauty he witnesses – from the saffron yellow to pure purple, from jet black to the crystal white of waterfall – he emphasizes the totality, the union, the whole of it – indicating that all parts create the beauty of these *terres mêlées*.

The theme of oneness between Haiti and the Dominican Republic continues as Pedro makes his journey toward the distant sugarcane fields in the early morning with the last remaining stars – described as gemstones – still glittering above both lands. He crosses a stream, thinking about his *compañeros* – men from both sides of the border – and the hard physical labor they will soon be doing. His thoughts about work are framed in tactile, physical terms. Furthermore, Pedro's description foreshadows the impending genocide: "Les machettes trancheront les cannes, le suc gommeux collera aux tiges. Les muscles des deux peuples se conjugueront pour tirer au clair le jus de la terre dominicaine" (19). The machetes – the same tools that will soon be used by Trujillo's secret army to slaughter innocent people along the border – will be used to cut the cane down. If we consider all living beings in a nonhierarchical fashion, the work being done in the sugarcane field to cut and collect the cane is strikingly similar to the massacre of people. In both cases, individuals who are doing their jobs, working hard to survive so that a few above them may profit, are slaughtering living beings with machetes. However, the correspondence stops there, as quite unlike the Parsley Massacre, Pedro

and his *compañeros* from both Haiti and the Dominican Republic will work together in unison to "tirer au clair le jus de la terre dominicaine," a phrase that references the immense energetic process of planting, growing, and harvesting sugarcane in order to boil out the sugar through clarification and evaporation.[16] In addition, the latter statement about the muscles of two people joining together to clarify the *jus* – coincidentally the first three letters of "justice" in French, as in English – can be read with revolutionary intent, especially given that we soon find out that Pedro takes a leadership role in organizing the people's resistance to the bird thing, Trujillo, and the disguised soldiers with their deadly machetes.

Pedro continues to walk, thinking about his *compañeros*, increasingly invigorated by the idea of their combined strength: of their muscles and their numbers; their common goal; their shared earth, space, history, weather, languages, and consciousness. Thinking about all of these connections, Pedro becomes acutely alive, his blood flowing, his breathing strong. He is appreciative and impassioned, ("Ah! L'odeur des cannaies dans les matins clairs! Comme si la terre voulait asperger le ciel" [19]), reflective, and even possessive, about the unity of life on the island. As the following examples show, many of his thoughts and feelings explicitly leap the border – from one side to the other, back-and-forth in protest – refusing both the concept and physical manifestation of the Haitian-Dominican division. "Pedro Brito ouvre goulûment les narines: la vie de l'île s'y réfugie en bouffées chaudes" (19). As the narration seamlessly reverts back into third-person to describe Pedro's breathing, there is mutual agency between air and man. The life of the island takes refuge in Pedro's warm breath. As he continues walking, he acknowledges

[16] See Oliver Cheesman's *Environmental Impacts of Sugar Production*.

how the land wears his footsteps, once again prioritizing the perspective of various living and nonliving beings, which are implicated in the interconnected nature of social systems and ecosystems: between Pedro and his *compañeros*; between Haitians and Dominicans; between all living beings on the island of Hispaniola, and, as my project aims to show, between the Earth's atmospheric, terrestrial, and aquatic balances.

In contrast to the anthropocentric narration expressed in the mono-vocal Trujillo chapters, in which the subject dominates the land, Pedro acknowledges that, "[l]a terre d'ici porte mes pas qui doivent s'entendre de l'autre côté. Dans l'autre terre, ma terre!" (19). Pedro's awareness of his interconnection with the natural world reverberates beyond the limits of the national border, In his next breath, he situates the division of land as a recent phenomenon by referencing the pre-colonial land that knew no separation: "[l]a caciquesse visita le cacique, leurs feux ont longtemps couru, d'ici à l'autre bord" (19). Pedro's historical imagining of people's fluid movement back and forth centuries ago incites big-picture temporal perspective. The seamless transition of his thoughts from the present to the past underscores impermanence and change – the constant motion of all parts of existence. While references to the *caciques* evokes nostalgia for a lost time when the land was understood to be whole, they also suggest that perceptions of the border as a fixed division are temporary, as they too may change through time.

Still in rhythmic beat, the following paragraph speaks to the holistic quality of the land, divided by a fabrication. The dawn, like a wild vessel traveling out of control through space, is shipwrecked, straddling the two lands. "Pedro accélère le pas. L'aube a fait naufrage. On remarque ses débris nobles: ourlets de nuages, étoiles rongées, vapeurs perdues aux flancs violets des contre-forts. L'aurore franche, royale, chevauche les deux

terres, celle d'ici, la basse, celle de là-bas, la haute, sereine étrangement!" (19). The use of the pronoun *on* as the subject seamlessly shifts the narration from third-person omniscient to first-person plural, as in this context *on* is more suggestive of the inclusive and humanizing subject 'we' than the nameless, general subject, 'one.' Furthermore, *we* notice its noble debris, situating the spattering of its violent coming in contrast with the foreshadowing "sereine étrangement." Instead of humans receiving the honor, dawn is crowned with the authority of royalty.

The author's choice of the word *chevauche* is evocative, as it contains the word *cheval* within it, conjuring images of the dawn riding the land as if it were a horse. An equine metaphor is used again two pages later, only this time the light of the sun is the horse, galloping across the two lands: "Le soleil libéré du piège de la Sierra de Neiba galope sur les deux terres" (21). Given that the horse accompanied the European conquest as a tool of Colonial domination, in the Caribbean context horses symbolize Colonial power. Later in the novel, Trujillo and his army ride in rigid formation and from atop his steed Trujillo looks at the land wanting to "posséder sa terre entière […c]omme un conquistador" (128). With sunlight acting as both rider and horse, Philoctète reverses the colonial power dynamics of man's domination over animals and the land.

In the last paragraph describing Pedro's journey to work, "Pedro s'arrête de marcher. Les voix des paysans, sautant par-dessus les cannaies, affluent à ses sens, à sa gorge. Il aspire délicieusement à la fois cette présence directe de la terre et cette chaleur ouvrière qui lui vient d'au delà des cannaies" (19). The quality of the narration reaches a climax in terms of his perceptions, sensations and appreciation of the dawning world before him.

> Le ciel allume les arbres de la Sierra de Nieba. Les hautes branches absorbent les premières joailleries. Arrive la brise qui les secoue, c'est un ruissellement silencieux d'escarboucles vers les troncs et vers les branches basses. La Sierra devient tel un brasier d'où chaque aile se saoule, chaque toit se gave, chaque point d'eau s'alimente. Droit, les yeux dans la lumière, Pedro regarde au loin rosir la terre haïtienne. Il s'étonne qu'elle soit si belle, s'émerveille d'être né d'une telle merveille, l'une et l'autre terre étant elles-mêmes merveilles. (19-20)

The voices of the farmers, the light in Pedro's eyes, the expanse of marvelous land before him, the trees moving from the breeze, and Pedro's place within it all is communicated in an exalted prose. While he takes in the morning scene in its entirety, he is also aware of its many details, where "chaque aile se saoule, chaque toit se gave, chaque point d'eau s'alimente." By assigning equal beauty to the land of the Dominican Republic in which Pedro was born – and to Haiti in the distance, "l'une et l'autre terre" are united by their shared esthetic quality, their division imperceptible.

At the end of this chapter, the language, setting, and atmosphere of the novel's first few pages rematerialize. The bird-thing once again circles above the village, cutting the land with its shadow-cross. The domesticated animals again share many different verbs in response to the image of the *machin*. The one chilling difference we find here is that this time, the animals look at each other and share a moment of recognition, their eyes bathed in an *immense tendresse*:

> Sur le ciel, l'oiseau tourne en rond. La chanson des cannaies s'étrangle. Le soleil cafouille. Une grande croix tranche les champs. Les bœufs, les ânes, les chiens, les chats, paissent, mordent, broutent, griffent, l'image du machin. Les bœufs, les ânes, les chiens, les chats, mâchent de l'ombre, puis veules, se regardent, les yeux baignés d'une immense tendresse...(22)

They are overcome with sympathy for each other in reaction to the *machin,* and the author's use of the adjective "baignés," suggests the presence of tears in their eyes, implying a shared consciousness – and sadness – as they witness the threat above them.

While many more textual examples of nonhuman beings – both living and non-living – are woven through the novel's chapters (those that do not focus on Trujillo), their space, presence and agency lessen as the violence along the border escalates. As an atmosphere of chaos grows, the focus on the natural world recedes, replaced by fascist propaganda and corporate advertising. Chicha, the *tap-tap,* becomes increasingly outspoken in the face of the violence, driving wildly while preaching for human rights, and for the united spirit and people of Hispaniola in opposition to Trujillo and the deadly division he brings about in his quest for racial purity.

Le langage des arbres et de la terre

One last, overt example of environmental awareness in *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* references the African legacy of "le langage des arbres et de la terre" (23). Paradoxically, this reference is situated within one of Trujillo's chapters. When he is a boy, Trujillo hears an old woman on the streets telling a story about Toussaint Louverture's soldiers overtaking Santo-Domingo in 1801. At this time, when Toussaint took control of the island from the French, declaring slavery abolished, the invasion and ransacking of former Spanish territory planted seeds of animosity between the two sides that endured. "Un soir de chaleur caraïbe, les soldats de Toussaint Louverture, venus de l'Ouest par les lacs, les forêts, les montagnes, les parfums, les oiseaux, se déversaient sur Santo-Domingo. Ils massacraient le bétail, gaulaient les fruits, détournaient les cours d'eau, arrêtaient les horloges" (23). The old woman's language, as is common to the fables and legends of the Haitian Revolution, mythologizes the soldiers, giving them both natural and supernatural powers, *se déversant* over Santo-Domingo like liquid impossible

to retain, affecting the world order to such a profound degree that they succeeded not only in diverting the flow of rivers, but they stopped the clocks – interrupting the very measure of time. The storyteller continues: "Les soldats de Louverture demeurèrent longtemps chez nous, dans l'Est. Ils cultivèrent des jardins, tracèrent des routes, construisirent des maisons, se marièrent avec nos filles, eurent beaucoup d'enfants auxquels ils apprirent *le langage des arbres et de la terre*" (23 emphasis added). In this pivotal story, this language – the knowledge, understanding and ability to communicate with the trees and the earth – is credited to escaped and liberated slaves whose African traditions maintained an open channel of communication with the natural world and understood interrelation not only as instinctual and necessary for survival, but also as an epistemology, constructed and shared among a community of living and non-living beings, promoted and passed down from generation to generation.

Young Trujillo, hearing this tale of the beginnings of the intra-island legacy of hatred, finds himself transfixed, frozen in place well after the old woman gets up, dusts her skirt off, and walks painfully away. Her articulation of an environmental language – one that aided the slaves of St. Domingue, both in their ability to survive once escaped from the plantations, and in their revolution against colonial oppression – is a trigger for Trujillo, marking the beginning of his demonization of Haitians in what he refers to as the "engagement du sang" (24). I analyze this turning point in Trujillo's youth in the next chapter.

Although the presence of the natural world in *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* is abundant, it does not compete with humans for attention or importance. Rather, people are presented as part of the natural world, and the natural world as part of human

existence, neither separate nor independent from each other. However, in the ten chapters of the novel that narrate Trujillo's perspective, chapters situated between those that focus on Pedro, Adèle and *le peuple*, if the natural world is referenced at all, its value exists only as profit via exploitation of its resources, or as a thing to be owned, a symbol of domination. The contrast between the chapters narrating *le peuple* and the chapters detailing the totalitarian horrors of Trujillo are striking: the first marked by an abundance of nature and the latter by an absence of nature. An ethics of environmental consciousness is fundamental to Philoctète's message of resistance against Trujillo's totalitarianism.

Ecocentrism in *Gouverneurs de la rosée*

While not nearly as chaotic as *Terres mêlées, Gouverneurs* shares many of its themes, particularly the poetic incorporation of both living and nonliving members of the natural world. Their shared ecocentric imaginary depends on descriptors and metaphors that repeatedly extend the narrative focus out to the natural environment, including the descriptions of individual people. Due to the geographical limits of the Caribbean islands, especially the smaller islands (some of which are just a handful of kilometers wide), the reality of a finite land-base and the need for environmentally sustainable practices becomes more apparent. When biospheres are cleared for mono-crop agriculture, and local flora is replaced with incompatible foreign imports, loss of fertility, erosion, and drought can threaten living systems, causing basic natural resources such as water to become scarce. Such is the central conflict in *Gouverneurs de la rosée*.

When Manuel, the novel's protagonist and agent of positive change, is out hunting for water, he comes across a man making charcoal whose "mains énormes' pendaient au bout de ses bras ainsi que des paquets de racines. Ses cheveux lui descendaient sur le front buté par petits buissons enroulés et clairsemés" (49). Such description based on the earth, plants, water, and animals positions the environment as a primary source of comparison. Roumain's inclusion of earthy narration resonates with many ecocentric descriptions in Philoctète's novel, such as when Adèle's scent struck Pedro as if "l'on eût écrasé un jardin sur son corps," (66), setting off a flood of associations.

In addition to the metaphorical presence of the natural world in both novels, both narratives include descriptive spaces dedicated to the natural world. On multiple occasions, these descriptions accompany Manuel as he leaves the social space of the village and enters the natural world, communicating his relief and appreciation of being there. "Manuel s'en alla, le cœur mal à l'aise. Il laissa derrière lui les dernières cases. Les chardons dorés couvraient de leurs soleils minuscules les talus du chemin" (76). In this description of the thistles, not only does Roumain play with perception à la Voltaire (*Micromegas*) with his "soleils minuscules," but also the verb *couvraient* acts on both the plants and the hillsides at once, creating a mutually inclusive relationship. Next, the narrative describes the setting of the sun. Like a rogue team-member, "[u]n reflet de la lumière oblique traînait sur la plaine, mais l'ombre se nichait déjà dans les arbres et des taches mauves s'étendaient sur les flancs des collines" (76). In this description, we experience the inter-affecting movement of the world: from a last reflection of light as it lay on the plain, to the shadows already nestling in the trees who create them and the

"taches mauves" stretching across the hillsides and growing longer with each minute. This description of Manuel watching the sun set can equally be read as a foreshadowing of his eventual fate.

While Roumain's narrative does not invest non-human beings with the same level of subjective agency that Philoctète's does, Manuel's understanding of ecosystems, as well as the ways in which he interacts with the remaining patches of trees and plants, communicates a sacred respect for natural systems. Manuel voices to his cousin and neighbor Laurélien: "Ce sont les racines qui font amitié avec la terre et la retiennent: ce sont les manguiers, les bois de chênes, les acajous qui lui donnent les eaux des pluies pour sa grande soif et leur ombrage contre la chaleur de midi" (37). Manuel communicates this understanding not as opinion, but as truth: "C'est comme ça et pas autrement, sinon la pluie écorche la terre et le soleil l'échaude: il ne reste plus que les roches" (37). Such environmental consciousness both describes the causes behind Fonds Rouge's deterioration, as well as points to the solution of reforestation, *if* a new source of water can be found.

Rather than the florae possessing agency as they do in *Terres mêlées*, in *Gouverneurs*, Manuel speaks to and for the plants through song, authoring the interaction. It is directly following a conversation with his mother, in which his proactive and practical outlook clashes with her spiritual faith in the gods' will to act, that this scene takes place, in the hills where he continues his ongoing search for a new water source. Manuel experiences an emotional and spiritual connection with the natural world. He is transformed by his surroundings, feeling "plein d'allégresse, malgré la pensée obstinée qui le hantait" (49). In contrast to the tone of domination he voiced earlier, when

trying to inspire his mother to action, he is so moved by the connection he feels with the plants that he sings to them with exultant praise:

> Plantes, ô mes plantes, je vous dis: honneur; vous me répondrez: respect, pour que je puisse entrer. Vous êtes ma maison, vous êtes mon pays. Plantes, je dis: lianes de mes bois, je suis planté dans cette terre, je suis lié à cette terre. Plantes, ô mes plantes, je vous dis: honneur; répondez-moi: respect, pour que je puisse passer. (49)

While Manuel worships these plants, asking with respect and honor for permission to enter their world, he also describes himself as living among them; already they are his house, his nation. Then, intensifying his expression of connection with flora, he *plantifies* himself, declaring how he is "planté dans cette terre, […] lié à cette terre."

While Pedro in *Terres mêlées* is a believer in the supernatural – "À dire vrai. Pedro se reconnaît un homme respectueux des mystères, des voix, des ombres, des signes, des loas" (135), Manuel tends toward the practical, the physical, and the power of social unity. His sense of spirituality or faith focuses on his love Annaïse, his belief in his ability to find water, and to reunite the village, where many believe that the drought is a curse. Flipping the culpability, Manuel cites human responsibility: "Je dis vrai: c'est pas Dieu qui abandonne le nègre, c'est le nègre qui abandonne la terre et il reçoit sa punition: la sécheresse, la misère et la désolation" (37). The earth is God, and misusing it will result in direct punishment; abuse of Earth/God is abuse of the self.

Manuel perceives his identity and his physical existence as part of the earth – made from the land. While talking to Laurélien about his life in Cuba, Manuel pauses for a moment, touches the Haitian soil, then continues: "Mais, tu sais, moi je suis fait avec ça, moi-même. […] Je suis ça: cette terre-là, et je l'ai dans le sang. Regarde ma couleur: on dirait que la terre a déteint sur moi et sur toi aussi" (69). Both Roumain's and

Philoctète's novels articulate an environmental ethics that is made evident through their narratives, as well as through their characters' relationships with the physical environment, both real and imagined. Kaiama Glover outlines their close relationship, articulating that the two novels contain "twin tropes of rootedness and utopian subaltern solidarity" (148). Furthermore, she argues, *Terres mêlées* can be understood as a "transnationalizing riff" on *Gouverneurs:*

> That is, where [Roumain]'s novel recounts a self-destructive enmity between related clans based in violent disagreement far-removed from the present needs and realities of the community, Philoctète's narrative explores the self-destructive enmity between related peoples based in equally distant historical antagonism. Both texts are concerned with tragic foolishness of individuals and communities acting against their own interests in the name of unexamined, inherited conflict. *And in both works, the land calls for reconciliations refused by the pettiness of men.* (148-149 emphasis added)

Because the main conflicts are directly or indirectly related to the state of the environment, its control and treatment, both novels are conscious of their local ecosystems and both feature protagonists who employ *le langage des arbres et de la terre* for survival, as their ancestors did when they overturned the colonial power structure and founded the first independent nation of the Caribbean in 1804.

Environmental Consciousness in *Tú, la oscuridad*

A third example of Caribbean eco-conscious literature is *Tú, la oscuridad*, written by Mayra Montero and published in 1995. Set in the mountains of Haiti, this environmentally-focused novel recounts the journey of two men from different cultures, and the relationship that develops as they try to hunt down a "blood frog" – a near extinct species exclusive to Hispaniola. Victor Grigg, an American herpetologist, hires a local Haitian guide named Thierry Adrien to help him navigate Haiti – its people, flora and

fauna, as well as the very real dangers of local drug traffickers and the *ton-ton macoute,* Baby Doc Duvalier's ruthless and deadly secret police. The year is 1992, the year Jean-Bertrand Aristide was forced into exile, and one of the last years of the Duvaliers' decades-long reign of terror. The theme of *la oscuridad* – real and psychic, plays an important role in the story's plot, defining the relationship between the two men, and symbolizing the mysterious extinctions of frogs all over the globe.

Victor's logical, scientific Western training, and Thierry's instinctual and Vodou-based ancestral knowledge of the natural world demonstrate two very different environmental epistemologies. As these men endeavor to grasp each other's points of view, their interactions highlight how human beings relate to the natural world in diverse ways, depending on socio-economic, religious, and cultural contexts. Victor's faith in science, that assists his ability to *know* (saber) the world, is confronted with Thierry's faith in Vodou, that assists his ability to *know* (conocer) the world. Still, while perspectives may be subjective and socially constructed, the worldwide evidence that frogs around the world are dying off supersedes questions of perception.

To highlight the evidence of frog decline throughout her novel, Montero includes ten half-page, non-fiction chapters centered on their own pages that detail the mysterious declines and extinctions of frogs around the world. The first entry on extinction directly follows the first fictional chapter of the novel narrated by Victor. It outlines the demise of the Western toad:

> Entre 1974 y 1982, el sapo *Bufo boreas boreas*, mejor conocido como sapo del Oeste, desapareció de las montañas de Colorado y de la casi totalidad de sus hábitats americanos.
>
> Según estudios realizados por la doctora Cynthia Kennedy, profesora de biología de la Universidad de Colorado, la causa de la desaparición fue una infección masiva, producida por la bacteria *Aeromonas hidrophilia.* Esta

> infección provoca graves hemorragias, especialmente en las patas que tomen una coloración rojiza. De ahí el nombre de la enfermedad: el Mal de la Pata Roja.
>
> Un sapo saludable no debería sucumbir a una infección por *Aeromonas.* Pero en el caso del *Bufo boreas boreas*, su sistema inmunológico falló.
>
> Todavía se ignoran las causas. (21)

Thus, Montero brings the real world context into her fiction – for indeed, numerous species of amphibians are disappearing all over the world, a cause of consternation for biologists. In a 2015 study, biologist John Alroy writes how "[t]here is broad concern that a mass extinction of amphibians and reptiles is now underway." He notes that Latin American species are particularly vulnerable, as the area "has been greatly affected by the pathogenic chytrid fungus *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*" (13003). Alroy reports that rates of extinction "are now four orders-of-magnitude higher than background, and "that about 200 frog extinctions have occurred and hundreds more will be lost over the next century, so we are on pace to create a mass extinction" (13003).

Understanding frogs as a bellwether species in the science of ecological change, Montero communicates their actual and symbolic importance – already apparent in 1995 when *Tú, la oscuridad* was published. In an interview, Montero references the 1992 New York Times article titled "Silence of the Frogs" by Emily Yoffe as the inspiration for her novel. In fact, many of the frog species and locales included in the non-fiction pages of Montero's novel are pulled directly from Yoffe's article, as well as the growing understanding within the scientific community of the unfolding global crisis. Being particularly sensitive to pollution and habitat destruction, "Frogs are in essence a messenger," [David B.] Wake says. "This is about biodiversity and disintegration, the destruction of our total environment" (Yoffe Web).

In an interview from 2000, Mayra Montero comments on her lifelong interest in understanding the processes of living beings, saying, "I have always said that I am a frustrated biologist" (Prieto 90). Centering on this publicly underappreciated crisis through its globalized nonfiction examples and its localized plot, *Tú, la oscuridad* sounds a delicately delivered alarm bell.

In a recent study published under the title, "Accelerated Modern Human–induced Species Losses: Entering the Sixth Mass Extinction," Gerardo Ceballos et al. confirm that "[e]ven under our assumptions, which would tend to minimize evidence of an incipient mass extinction, the average rate of vertebrate species loss over the last century is up to 100 times higher than the background rate" (1). While a vast array of diverse species are in decline or already extinct, amphibians are "the most threatened group of species known to date" according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's *Red List*. Out of the known 6,285 amphibians, "1,895 are in danger of extinction. Of these, 39 are already Extinct or Extinct in the Wild, 484 are Critically Endangered, 754 are Endangered and 657 are Vulnerable" (CNRL Web). Jane Smart, Director of the Biodiversity Conservation Group (within the International Union for Conservation of Nature), warns how "[t]he scientific evidence of a serious extinction crisis is mounting," (IUCN Web).

Tú, la oscuridad's inter-chapter examples documenting frogs that have gone extinct complement the explicit commentary on the global decline of frogs in Victor's narrative:

> Al principio […] utilizábamos palabras menos violentas: "declinación" era mi favorita, "declinaban" las poblaciones anfibias; se ocultaban para siempre colonias enteras de sapos saludables; enmudecían y escaseaban las mismas ranas que apenas una temporada antes no habíamos cansado de escuchar; enfermaban y morían, o simplemente huían, nadie podía explicar adónde ni por qué. (18-19)

Even though it is Victor's first time in Haiti, based on his own research and accounts of his colleagues, he is acutely aware that "muchas cosas habían cambiado en el país, y entre esas cosas estaba el bosque: de acuerdo con Thierry, tampoco los árboles querían crecer y de ahí que las laderas, desde abajo, se divisaron tan peladas" (38). While he voices both local and global worry for the environment, it is filtered through his obsession with frogs in general, and in finding the blood frog specifically. His deep concern for the loss of frog habitat ignores the myriad other life-forms also at risk, showing how environmental passion can be both myopic and self-serving.

As much as Victor clings to his scientific certainty and his Western habits, his experiences with Thierry in the humid, forested mountains of Haiti change him. At one point early in the novel, Victor reflects on how his perception of his own body odor has transformed from an estranged disgust to an enjoyable, enriching connection with his animal body:

> En Haití el sudor se me había vuelto rancio, de una consistencia algo pastosa, que al secarse endurecía la camisa. Varias veces al día me sorprendía oliéndome debajo de los brazos, me intrigaba ese olor, mi propio olor desconocido como el olor de un sueño. Aspirar aquella miasma intensa, personal, seguramente inesperada, gratificaba algo impreciso en mi interior, me espabilaba los sentidos, presiento que me enriquecía. (38-39)

For Victor, culturally trained from an early age to prevent and conceal his own smell, the act of breathing in his intense body-scent, born from the hot damp air of Haiti, "gratificaba algo impreciso" inside him, connecting him to a repressed aspect of his own estranged nature. His surprised satisfaction is but one example in which Victor's "certain" knowledge is not only shaken, but also experienced as untrue. The sharp smell his body exudes may be shameful in the Western social context, but after some time in Haiti, his stink stirs his senses, and he feels better off for it; he feels to be *more*.

When, after much fruitless searching, Thierry and Victor encounter an adult male blood frog, Victor details his reaction: "Tuve la sensación de que me hallaba frente a un ejemplar longevo, una criatura que se olvidó de morir, o que se refugió en alguna parte adonde no llegó el aviso, si había sido aviso, o la orden de aniquilamiento, si fue eso. […] Ese bicho tiene muchos años. No hay otra rana, ésa es la última" (228). Rather than expressing joy, relief or hope upon finding a living blood frog, when Victor finds it, "una criatura que se olvidó de morir," it confirms "la orden de aniquilamiento" – the magnitude and momentum of the global epidemic in process. The frog is not a sign that other members of the species may still be surviving nearby; Victor is certain that this frog is the last of its kind.

As Thierry and Victor's relationship is informed by their often incongruous worldviews, revealing a dynamics of difference that I will explore in the next chapter on juxtaposition as a literary device. While each of the works under examination in this chapter incorporates the natural world through a distinct approach and under a particular circumstance, they all function within an environmental ethics of interrelation, in which the systemic whole is promoted through the conscious inclusion of the many parts of any given system.

CHAPTER THREE

JUXTAPOSITION: AN ANTI-DIVISIVE LITERARY DEVICE

Juxtaposition, the fact of two or more things being placed or observed close together with contrasting effect (Oxford), is a literary and artistic method that has long been incorporated into cultural productions to provoke new meanings, perspectives and interpretations. By placing opposing or incongruous components side-by-side, authors and artists can contrast differences, highlight similarities, establish paradoxes, and expose connections between seemingly unrelated entities. Hogins and Bryant describe the dynamic of such a use: "By examining several objects in juxtaposition, the creative mind often arrives at new insights, a higher order of thought and abstraction, a synthesis that is more than the originals. Juxtaposition is designed to set in motion just such a process" (Hogins & Bryant xvii). Depending on the context and what is being juxtaposed, the impact of its effects can range from subtle suggestion to defamiliarization.

In this chapter, I investigate the literary technique of juxtaposition within the works of my corpus, and I explore its fundamental role in the greater context of my case for interrelation. In *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* by René Philoctète, *Gouverneurs de la rosée* by Jacques Roumain, and *Tú, la oscuridad* by Mayra Montero, I read juxtaposition as an anti-binary and anti-colonial literary device. I maintain that through their distinctive styles and handling of language, these authors use juxtaposition to expose the interconnectivity among parts that have been made to appear separate or contrary within colonial ideologies. I argue that this literary process revalues what has been devalued by the dominant Western paradigms of empire, sovereignty, and neoliberal capitalism.

Highlighting both difference *and* interrelation within the narratives, Philoctète, Roumain and Montero use juxtaposition in their representations of power to communicate an ethics of dignity for human and non-human subjects alike. I pay particular attention to the authors' use of juxtaposition in their representations of both separation and connection – within the human realm, and between humans and the natural world, and the consequent challenge to the colonial legacy and the status quo of Western hegemony that continue to dominate lands, resources, and bodies.

Juxtaposition: An Overview

Like the theme of interrelation (as we saw in the first chapter), the presence of juxtaposition in creative works is widespread. The East Asian Taoist imagery and philosophy of yin-yang is an early example that illustrates an interdependent balance between opposites. Cases of radical juxtaposition appear in other religious texts such as the *Torah, Bible* and *Qur'an* to delineate moral parameters and to create dramatic tension – opposite or contrasting characters are placed side by side to help define each other: evil is what good is not, good is what evil is not.

Indeed, it can be argued from an evolutionary perspective that much of animal survival and reproduction has depended on sensory development via the need to distinguish danger from non-danger. The fundamental survival drive within much of the animal kingdom involves continual evaluation of the immediate environment: senses assess the continually changing parts of reality and categorize them into a binary of threat and non-threat. Likewise, organisms use variations of sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch to detect energy sources: is it food or not food?

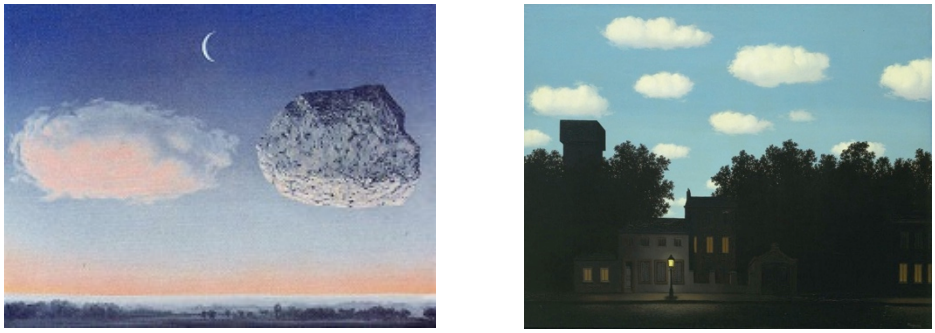
Within the symbolic realm of human language, the meaning of both sides of a binary structure are present at the root of each sign's meanings; hate is hate as the opposite of love, and vice versa. In this sense, the term *radical juxtaposition* signifies the difference between the elements being juxtaposed; at the same time it acknowledges the semiotic radical, as in the *root* of meaning, via *différance*. Theorized by Jacques Derrida, first in "Cogito et histoire de la folie" (1963) and further developed in *Positions* (1972), word-concepts exist as non-essentialist constructions in relation to each other via *différance,* a term derived from the French word *différer,* which translates as 'to differ' as well as 'to defer.' The meaning of any given sign is determined by both its difference from other signs and its relationship to those signs.

In addition to highlighting the space between extreme differences and referencing semantic roots, radical juxtaposition evokes further symbolic richness from a physiochemical perspective, given that a free radical is "an atom, molecule, or ion that has unpaired valance electrons or an open electron shell" making them "highly chemically reactive among other substances, or even towards themselves," capable of "initiating a series of chemical reactions" (Koltuniewicz 219). Metaphorically, the chemical properties and processes of free radicals lend themselves well to the literary realm and to my argument that radical juxtaposition functions in the texts of my corpus as a semantic catalyst of perception, openness and inclusion.

In the European poetic tradition, juxtaposition has been an important literary device. William Shakespeare, John Milton, and Dylan Thomas regularly used radical juxtaposition within their works to create original language, achieve humor, and to establish dramatic effect through opposites such as darkness and light, heaven and hell,

weakness and strength, “Merry and tragical? Tedious and brief? / That is hot ice, and wondrous strange snow! / How shall we find the concord of this discord?” (Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Act V, Scene I). Beyond poetry, in prose ironic juxtaposition has often been incorporated to exaggerate a point, as Jonathan Swift’s Lilliputians demonstrate in *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726).

In the visual world of cultural production, artists of the French *avant-garde*, particularly Dadaists and Surrealists, integrate disparate and surprising subjects and imagery. Here, two examples by René Magritte exemplify the use of juxtaposition:



Figures 13 -14. *“The Battle of the Argonne”* (1959), and *L'Empire des lumières* (1950) by René Magritte. (renemagritte.org)

The first, *“The Battle of the Argonne”* (1959) plays with spatial perspective, density, and gravity, while *L'Empire des lumières* (1950) juxtaposes daylight with the darkness of night in the same scene.

> With no fantastic element other than the single paradoxical combination of day and night, René Magritte upsets a fundamental organizing premise of life. Sunlight, ordinarily the source of clarity, here causes the confusion and unease traditionally associated with darkness. The luminosity of the sky becomes unsettling, making the empty darkness below even more impenetrable than it would seem in a normal context. (renemagritte.org)

In a letter from 1967 – the last year of his life, Magritte wrote, “Si le rêve est une traduction de la vie éveillée, la vie éveillée est également une traduction du rêve” (Roberts-Jones 34). The conscious experience of the day and the unconscious experience of the night were equally important to him, and profoundly informed his experience of each as the oneiric tone and subject matter of his oeuvre display.

While the European surrealists’ expressive search for liberation in all aspects of life included the juxtaposition of unexpected objects in subversive and playful ways, Cuban writer Alejandro Carpentier, who lived in Europe from 1928-1939 and participated in Andre Breton's Surrealist movement, later regarded the surrealists’ work as formulaic and constrained, particularly after a visit to Haiti in 1943. In the prologue to his 1949 novel *El reino de este mundo,* he included a biting criticism of Surrealism’s predictably random assemblages:

> Lo maravilloso, obtenido con trucos de prestidigitación, reuniéndose objetos que para nada suelen encontrarse […] : la vieja y embustera historia del encuentro fortuito del paraguas y de la máquina de coser sobre una mesa de disección, generador de las cucharas de armiño, los caracoles en el taxi pluvioso, la cabeza de león en la pelvis de una viuda, de las exposiciones surrealistas […i]nvocando por medio de fórmulas consabidas que hacen de ciertas pinturas un monótono baratillo de relojes amelcochados, de maniquíes de costurera, de vagos monumentos fálicos, lo maravilloso se queda en paraguas o langosta o máquina de coser, o lo que sea, sobre una mesa de disección, en el interior de un cuarto triste, en un desierto de rocas. Pobreza imaginativa, decía Unamuno, es aprenderse códigos de memoria. (1-2)

Clearly influenced by his experiences with the European surrealists, he helped to develop a literary style that encompassed the complexities of Latin American, *lo Real Maravilloso.*

In 2008, controversial pop-artist Jeff Koons juxtaposed his looming cartoon-like pieces with the site in which he installed them: the classical art environment of

Versailles, which, at the time of the opening, incited art purists to rally outside the palace gates (NY Times).


Figures 15-16. Jeff Koons's exhibition at Versailles. (Eberle)

Though his work provoked outrage, Koons's motivation goes beyond an impulse to shock. "I'm interested in the kind of polarities and equilibriums that take place within sexuality and philosophy and sociology. So in Versailles, in this type of setting, you have a place that is about absolute control, where everything has been thought about" (Colman Interview). By displaying his sculptures in the iconic palace of Louis XIV, Koons created cultural, temporal, and visual contrasts that were able to provoke more complex discussions than Versailles or his sculptures could rouse separately. Koons describes how

> some of the guards would be walking around huffing and puffing, you know, "How can this be here?" They were upset by it. But actually people say that in France it's really having quite an impact. They're getting very large crowds coming and that it's somehow hit a nerve within French culture where they can have a dialogue about contemporary art and historical works and the decorative arts of the past. (Web)

Confronted with the contradictions that juxtaposition can offer, an observer is likely to react, to feel something in response – whether confusion, curiosity, disgust, appreciation, sadness, exhilaration, or any number of sensations and combinations

thereof. The viewer might then make associations, recall memories, and ultimately construct a story in order to make sense out of the juxtaposed subjects. This process of creating dialogue, between Magritte's floating cloud and rock, for example, demands imaginative thinking and stimulates the brain to work outside the parameters of what it knows and expects. These evocative effects point to why juxtaposition is an important technique within Haitian Spiralism's mission to undo the binary constructions foundational to repressive, divisive, and violent colonial power structures still at work in the Caribbean today.

Juxtaposition in the Caribbean

In the works of my corpus, the technique of juxtaposition performs the revolutionary work Antonio Benítez Rojo calls "a dismantling, or rather unmasking, of the mechanism that we know as 'binary opposition'– the thing that sustains, to a greater or a lesser degree, the philosophical and ideological edifice of modernity" (154). In *The Repeating Island*, Benítez-Rojo depicts binary opposition as "not really a law but just a discursive strategy, for the unity of the respective poles that set themselves up in opposition is there to be seen and is also subverted by the presence of 'multiple factors,' that is, by differences" (154). Philoctète, Montero and Roumain not only confront illusions such as human separateness from nature, but in each of their works, juxtaposition serves to undo divisions by constructing a large-scale and even global perspective from which the "unity of the respective poles" prevails.

In the Caribbean literature of my corpus, juxtaposition mirrors and contains the complex entanglement of cultures brought together there from around the world - in

many cases by force. Aimé Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* exemplifies how radical juxtaposition serves as a central trope for dismantling the duplicity of the Enlightenment and the Manichean model of colonial subjugation in order to refuse it:

> Ecoutez le monde blanc
> horriblement las de son effort immense
> ses articulations rebelles craquer sous les étoiles dures
> ses raideurs d'acier bleu transperçant la chair mystique
> écoute ses victoires proditoires trompeter ses défaites
> écoute aux alibis grandioses son piètre trébuchement
>
> Pitié pour nos vainqueurs omniscients et naïfs ! (68)

Through his use of extreme opposites in jointed function such as "las" and "effort immense" or "omniscients" and "naïfs," Césaire's sarcastic and accusatory tone signals the contradictions integral to the Enlightenment-inspired but slave-fueled colonial project.

Indeed, a dualistic cosmology of "us versus them" is a major construct of the colonial project's dependence on negative difference. Franz Fanon focuses on this dialectic in *Peau noire, masques blancs,* in which he radically juxtaposes the colonizer and the colonized, the master and the slave. Abdul Jan Mohamed comments that Fanon's characterization of the "conqueror/native relation" as a Manichean struggle is a "definition that is not a fanciful metaphoric caricature but an accurate representation of a profound conflict" (60). Citing Dorothy Hammond and Alta Jablow, JanMohamed explains that before the slave trade developed, Europeans perceived Africans in a more or less benign fashion. But, "once the triangular trade became established, [they] were newly characterized as the epitome of evil and barbarity" (61). From the European mindset, adopting a racist narrative that demonized Africans justified the militarized violence and appropriation of human beings as a purifying, godly act.

Social scientists aided in developing a chromatic scale of radical opposition which dehumanized dark-skinned people as "bad" and celebrated light-skinned people as "good." To back up such a corporeal scale of value, and to further bolster a sense of European superior civility, nationality, and rationality, essentialist claims of qualitative differences between human beings were quantified, as Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues in *Silencing the Past*: "[c]olonization provided the most potent impetus for the transformation of European ethnocentrism into scientific racism" (77). The creation of this binary system of white superiority was the foundation of slavery: the unpaid labor on which the revenue from the American colonies depended. For colonists, the logic of such a value system based on racial inferiority was circular and self-fulfilling in practice: once enslaved, non-compliance, escape, or retaliation then proved the slaves' "badness," therein validating further abusive treatment.

Looked at from the 21st-century perspective, contradictions between the ideals and the practices of the Enlightenment inevitably rise to the surface. Through the act of *othering*, Europeans rationalized the conflict between their Christian values of inclusiveness and a growing belief in their own cultural and ethnic superiority. Fueled by European exclusive universalism, French nationalist slave owners in Saint-Domingue were able to celebrate the mantra of "liberté, égalité, fraternité" by excluding African people from their definition of humanity while at the same time ruthlessly exploiting their work force. In *Empire,* Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri explain how "[c]olonialism constructs figures of alterity and manages their flows in what unfolds as a complex dialectical structure. The negative construction of non-European others is finally what founds and sustains European identity itself" (124). As Europeans deemed their own light

skin pigment as superior, the othering of non-European individuals and entire cultures helped them to situate themselves at the pinnacle of culture, as the universal bar of civilization and progress.

Using the Western concept of linear time to constitute a hierarchical scale, colonial Europeans relegated non-European peoples and cultures to the past: as backward thinking, immature, and less evolved. This contributed to yet another binary construction: between "savage fools" and "refined sages." Hardt and Negri describe how:

> [i]n both its scholarly and its popular forms, nineteenth-century anthropology presented non-European subjects and cultures as the undeveloped versions of Europeans and their civilization: they were signs of primitiveness that represented stages on the road to European civilization. The diachronic stages of humanity's evolution toward civilization were thus conceived as present synchronically in the various primitive peoples and cultures spread across the globe. The anthropological presentation of non-European others within this evolutionary theory of civilizations served to confirm and validate the eminent position of Europeans and thereby legitimate the colonialist project as a whole. (126)

Backed once again with scientific "evidence," the temporal-based ethnocentric perspective was yet another value system that empowered slave traders and colonists to claim other human beings as their own property and to force them to work the cash crops in the Americas.

Parallel to the European objectification and exploitation of African and indigenous peoples as sources of free labor to drive production and increase capital, the colonial project likewise objectified the natural world, considering it separate from civil society, and circumscribing it as a valuable source of material production and profit. In the drive to increase monetary gains and expand empires, New World entrepreneurs continued to exploit and commoditize biota, land and water. William Adams summarizes this relationship in "Nature and the Colonial Mind":

> The colonial period saw a distinctive pattern of engagement with nature: a destructive, utilitarian and cornucopian view of the feasibility of yoking nature to economic gain. [...] The bedrock of colonial ideas about nature was the European enlightenment, and the fundamental Cartesian dualism between humans and nature. The idea that 'man' and nature were separate formed the worldview of the pioneers of imperial trade, and of the annexation of the tropics and the New Worlds. (Adams & Mulligan 22)

For Europeans born on a continent already heavily deforested over the course of the Middle Ages (largely to fuel the explosive technology and production of metal-forged weaponry), the virgin forests and fertile soils of the Americas were perceived as precious resources to be extracted and farmed. The constructions of binary scales of values were a necessary step in justifying the invasion and subjugation of peoples, ecosystems, and long-inhabited territory.

The contradictions between the values of the Enlightenment and the racialized colonial project abroad began to manifest on European soil in Germany during the early 1930s. In *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, Robert Young addresses these contradictions within colonialism and European identity-construction. He asks, "How has the dialectic deviated into fascism? Why has History gone wrong?" (38). Referencing Horkheimer and Adorno's 1944 *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and their claim at the height of Nazi barbarism that enlightenment is totalitarian, Young writes that "reason had always contained a measure of irrationality, which, despite its best intentions, had led to its involvement with tyranny and domination. […] The very powers of rationality which enabled modern man to free himself from nature and control it had also become an instrumental device to dominate him" (38). The Hitler-inspired ethnocentric binary ideology of us versus them is also at the core of Trujillo's 1937

Parsley Massacre in the Dominican Republic, the terrifying historical moment in which Philoctète sets *Le Peuple des terres mêlées.*

Various forms of juxtaposition are integral to the anticolonial work of Spiralism. The use of juxtaposition is particularly important to its mission of undoing the dominant, Manichean order of imperialism in order to communicate what Glissant would later call *le chaos-monde*. Kaimia Glover describes how, "[r]ather than codify the island space and assign relative value to its various components, […] Frankétienne, Fignolé, and Philoctète celebrate juxtapositions of the incongruous and consistently avoid hierarchical categorization" (103). By incorporating complexity, ambiguity, and movement into their literary and artistic productions, the Spiralists articulate a general refusal to represent binary constructions "that often provide spatial orientation in New World postcolonial literature" (Glover 103). Glover continues:

> [F]orested hills vs. flatlands, urban centers vs. rural communities, restrictive/ed island space vs. outward-opened expanse of the sea, etc.—are largely absent from their works. The three authors present instead diversified textual universes in which any space can be invested either positively or negatively depending on the state of the community, the individual, or the environment at any given moment. (103)

Two distinct modes of juxtaposition surface in Philoctète's Spiralist work: 1) *inclusive juxtaposition,* in which disparate or seemingly unrelated aspects of the narrative are connected via parataxis, and 2) *radical juxtaposition*, in which opposite ends of a binary spectrum are structurally and thematically contrasted, creating metaphoric tension, semantic openness, and new significance – beyond the sum of their parts.

Before my analysis of juxtaposition in Philoctète's Spiralist novel, I begin by looking at the distinct ways in which the non-spiralist novels of my corpus employ juxtaposition in their narratives.

Juxtaposition in *Gouverneurs de la rosée*

Unlike Philoctète's chaotic, Spiralist narrative and Montero's non-fiction interjections between its narrative chapters, Roumain's lyrical prose maintains spatial and temporal continuity. While juxtaposition helps to problematize divisive ideologies and to highlight the spectrum between oppositional poles in all three Caribbean novels, Jacques Roumain's use in *Gouverneurs de la rosée* is subtler than in Philoctète's and Montero's works. I will look at two cases of juxtaposition in *Gouverneurs*'s local setting: Manuel's proletariat pragmatism in contrast to the Voudon faith of his village, and the hate-filled social divide of Fonds Rouge in contrast to the loving union of Manuel and Annaïse.

Upon returning from Cuba, Manuel is troubled to find a very different Fonds Rouge than the one he left nearly a decade ago – both environmentally and socially. Manuel's shock at the barren landscape and broken community provokes in him an urgent need to find solutions, first and foremost to the life-threatening issue of drought in which all life is suffering: "Le soleil raclait le dos écorché du morne avec des ongles étincelants; la terre haletait par sa barranque altérée, et le pays enfourné dans la sécheresse se mettait à chauffer" (52). In the midst of such devastation, Manuel is frustrated to find that his parents place all action and responsibility concerning the crises in the hands of their Gods. From Manuel's logic-dominated perspective, his parents and the other villagers are denying their personal agency by living with their heads down in

prayer, resigned to the cycles of daily survival and unwilling to imagine themselves as agents of change. “La vie s’était détraquée, figée dans son cours: le même vent balayait les champs par rafales de poussière” (53). Manuel, on the other hand, proactively continues to look for water, exploring and familiarizing himself with the changed landscape, trying to find solutions: “C’est pourtant de la bonne terre, pensait Manuel. Le morne est perdu, c’est vrai, mais la plaine peut encore donner sa bonne mesure de maïs, de petit-mil, et tous genres de vivres. Ce qu’il faudrait, c’est l’arrosage” (46). His hope-filled imagination envisions “un réseau de veines charriant la vie jusqu’au profond de la terre” (46), seeing water as the earth’s lifeblood, that will restore the scorched and eroded lands to a vibrant green.

Upon returning home after one of his hunts for a spring, Manuel confronts Délira’s indifference, asking, “Maman, comment allez-vous vivre?” Délira murmurs in reply, “A la grâce de Dieu,” adding sadly, “Mais il n’y a pas de miséricorde pour les malheureux” (47). Riled by his mother’s helpless self-perception as a poor woman undeserving of mercy and accepting without question whatever the Gods impose, “Manuel secoua la tête avec impatience” and tries to convince her of the follies of such faith-based thinking. “Ça ne sert à rien, la résignation.” For Manuel, in the face of the oppressive drought, putting faith in the Gods is akin to accepting the Colonial legacy of slavery – that the black community is expected to assume their given lot, no matter the burden.

> C’est traître, la résignation ; c’est du pareil au même que le découragement. Ça vous casse les bras: on attend les miracles et la Providence, chapelet en main, sans rien faire. On prie pour la pluie, on prie pour la récolte, on dit les oraisons des saints et des loa. Mais la Providence, laisse-moi te dire, c’est le propre vouloir du nègre de ne pas accepter le malheur, de dompter chaque jour la mauvaise volonté de la terre, de soumettre le caprice de l’eau à ses besoins; alors la terre

> l'appelle: cher maître, et l'eau l'appelle: cher maître, et n'y a d'autre Providence que son travail d'habitant sérieux, d'autre miracle que le fruit de ses mains. (47)

Condemning the notion of resignation and discouragement, Manuel calls on the values and spirit of the Haitian Revolution, "le propre vouloir du nègre de ne pas accepter le malheur," therein championing the legacy of slaves overcoming their oppression. Just as years of organized slave revolts flipped the hierarchy between master and slave, Manuel imagines a similar inversion of the power dynamic between the villagers and their environment, creating a society that puts all their energies into taming "la mauvaise volonté de la terre." This perspective, in which it is the people's right "de soumettre le caprice de l'eau à ses besoins" is a drastic change from the village's trust in the magic of saints and loa, as well as their faith in the spirits' will – or lack thereof – to decide and provide for the people.

Rather than living from the outside in, Manuel is proposing a radical shift in which the people would begin to live from the inside out, putting their own thoughts and needs first. Such a reversal of control is an empowering, positive move from the perspective of the victims, yet such a turnaround remains problematic in that the same system of oppression, subjugation, and abuse in which the crisis originated continues with different actors at the helm ("alors la terre l'appelle: cher maître, et l'eau l'appelle: cher maître" (47)). Manuel is not looking to harmonize or work in tandem with the earth. In this sense, his vision of dominating the natural world echoes the philosophies of Western Imperialism. In the inspirational context of the Haitian Revolution, reproductions of the very violence that provoked it were evident in the aftermath, when leaders like Henri Christophe and his *corvée* policies of forced labor essentially reenacted new forms of slavery. Rather than being driven by personal greed or a hunger for power

as Trujillo's character is, Manuel is driven by his will for the survival and prosperity of the entire community of Fonds Rouge.

The result of many years spent participating in communist-inspired discussions and group actions, Manuel's words make no sense to Délira's faith-based reality, causing her to worry for her son's faithlessness rather than provoking her to question her own perspective. "Délira le regarda avec une tendresse inquiète: 'Tu as la langue habile et tu as voyagé dans les pays étrangers. Tu as appris des choses qui dépassent mon entendement: je ne suis qu'une pauvre négresse sotte'" (47). Her very name, the third-person *passé simple* form of the verb *délirer*, carries explicit pejorative connotations, as it can mean to be unreasonable (*déraisonner; de croire en l'impossible*), to babble incoherently or deliriously, to be crazy or out of one's mind, to hallucinate, or to be overjoyed. Manuel's name is equally self-descriptive, as the noun *manuel* in French means a textbook, guide, or handbook (referencing his knowledge and experience he brings back from Cuba); it also means a practical person, which he is to his core. As an adjective, *manuel* is akin to manual, i.e. labor done by hand, referencing his years of manual labor in Cuba and his readiness and strength, both needed to dig extensive canal systems to bring water to Fonds Rouge. While Délira's character represents pure faith, Manuel's character represents the opposite, instead a champion of the power of practical knowledge and physical labor.

From Manuel's point of view, his mother is lacking sense. However, from her position, he is the lost soul: "Mais tu ne rends pas justice au bon Dieu. C'est lui le Seigneur de toutes choses; il tient dans ses mains le changement des saisons, le fil de la pluie et la vie de ses créatures. […] il dirige les esprits des sources, de la mer et des

arbres" (47-48). After evoking Voudon gods such as Papa Loki, Maître Agoué, and Agoueta-Woyo, Délira asks her son if he has forgotten about them, to which he answers, "[i]l y a longtemps que je ne les avais plus entendues, maman," as "Manuel souriait et Délira décontenancée soupira: 'Ay, mon fi, c'est que c'est la vérité, oui'" (48). While Délira thinks and acts "selon la sagesse des anciens" (54), Manuel's worldview, on the other hand, "c'est la rébellion, et la connaissance que l'homme est le boulanger de la vie" (84). Mother and son are caught in an ideological standoff, where each is 'right' from within their own frame of reference.

Refuting his mother's passive stance of letting the gods control their fate, he talks about dominating the land to the people's advantage. Like a hunter who thanks and honors each slain animal – killing for sustenance rather than killing for ideology, Manuel wishes to dominate the ravaged land as an act of survival, and as a revolutionary reversal of victimhood, shifting from starving drought-ridden townsfolk to *gouverneurs de la rosée*. Outside of Roumain's novel, this notion becomes problematic in the wider context of environmental devastation, as the current harsh state of the local environment is the result of excessive human practices – a struggle in which man is fighting the ramifications of his own actions.

Manuel confronts Laurélien about the role of humans in the mass deforestation of Fonds Rouge: "Mais pourquoi, foutre, avez-vous coupé le bois: les chênes, les acajous et tout ce qui poussait là-haut? En voilà des nègres inconséquents, des nègres sans mesure" (51-52). After struggling, Laurélien finally responds: "Que veux-tu, frère... On a éclairci pour le bois-neuf, on a coupé pour la charpente et le faîtage des cases, on a refait les entourages des jardins" (52). Laurélien explains, citing practical reasons as to why the

villagers cut so many trees: for building shelter and ameliorating living spaces. Attributing a lack of awareness, he continues, "on ne savait pas nous-mêmes: l'ignorance et le besoin marchent ensemble, pas vrai?" (52). In this instance, the townspeople's focus on their need for wood, without understanding the devastating effects of deforestation – on the water cycle, the temperature, the root systems (that prevent erosion and hold moisture), and the loss of habitat for entire ecosystems – is juxtaposed with Manuel's awareness and practical, international knowledge. Similar to how Roumain (via Manuel's character) is highly critical and dismissive of religion, in this instance he is writing from a cosmopolitan and progressive communist perspective, reinforcing the stereotype of small village / small mentality.

The Couple

Manuel finds that Annaïse, like his mother, is also uneasy with his unconventional thinking, believing that the village's misfortunes are a matter of "fatalité" (84). After he unleashes a scornful description of faith-based living: "crier votre misère aux loa, offrir des cérémonies pour qu'ils fassent tomber la pluie […] c'est inutile et c'est un gaspillage" (83), she, too, questions whether he has lost his faith, lost his connection to his Voudon roots: "Alors qu'est-ce qui compte, Manuel? Et tu n'as pas peur de dérespecter les vieux de Guinée?" (83). He responds that he enjoys the music and the communal dancing of the ceremonies, and that he cannot help but feel the beat. "Quand les tambours battent, ça me répond au creux de l'estomac, je sens une démangeaison dans mes reins et un courant dans mes jambes, il faut que j'entre dans la ronde. Mais c'est tout" (84). The Voudon ceremonies, which promise answers, good fortune, spells,

healing, and greater spiritual meaning to the faithful, are simply physical rites to him, and therefore a waste of money, serving only to eat up families' entire savings.

Nevertheless, Annaïse is more open to his progressive dreams than his mother is. She believes in him, and trusts that he will succeed in bringing irrigation to the village. With a voice "assourdie par l'émotion," she tells him that "[o]ui, tu le feras. Tu es le nègre qui trouvera l'eau, tu seras le maître des sources, tu marcheras dans ta rosée et au milieu de tes plantes. Je sens ta force et ta vérité" (85). However, she is doubtful that Manuel will be able to convince the town to come together when he insists that he cannot single-handedly achieve such a feat, and that "[t]ous les habitants auront leur part, tous jouiront de la bienfaisance de l'eau" (85). Annaïse reminds him that the fight that took place years back is just as fresh as always in the people's minds and hearts: "les amis d'hier sont les ennemis d'aujourd'hui" and that symbolically, the blood has still not dried on the bodies of the dead (85). This deep divide between the townspeople, in contrast to the lovers' transgressive, yet uniting bond is the second illustration of juxtaposition I examine in this chapter.

The animosity Manuel witnesses between the villagers is a difficult mystery to solve, as the hard feelings run so deeply that people are unwilling to speak about the reasons *why* the community – that lived in relative harmony at the time of his departure to Cuba – devolved into a state of ongoing civil unrest. Walking out in the surrounding hills on one of his early scouting missions, he comes upon a man working to make charcoal. Manuel approaches him with a greeting, but the man only stares at him in untrusting silence. Finally, he asks if Manuel is "le nègre qui est retourné hier de Cuba" and the son of Bienaimé. Upon confirmation, "[l]e regard aminci, jusqu'à n'être plus qu'une

escarbille brûlante, l'habitant dévisagea Manuel, puis avec une lenteur calculée, il tourna la tête, cracha, et se remit à sa meule" (49). Now implicated in the conflict by lineage, he can no longer remain neutral and must rein in his violent urges: "Manuel se débattait entre la surprise et la rage. Encore une seconde de ce voile rouge sur les yeux et il aurait rentré à l'inconnu son insolence à coups de plat de machette sur le crâne, mais il se domina" (50). Continuing on his way, Manuel collects himself "remâchant sa colère et son malaise" and exclaims "*El hijo de puta*..." The fact that Manuel insults him under his breath in Spanish reveals that his Cuban identity is at the forefront of his psyche, and perhaps symbolizes a nostalgia for the camaraderie and unity he knew in Cuba, absent from his homeland.

As he walks on, he muses about his encounter with Annaïse, which also became awkward and cold when she learned who he was, "[m]ais que se passe-t-il ? Il se rappelait le brusque changement d'attitude d'Annaïse. 'Il y a quelque chose de pas clair dans tout ça'" (50). Now that Manuel has personally felt the animosity, his need to understand its cause intensifies, particularly as he knows that if he does find a spring, the whole town's labor force will need to come together to build the needed system of canals, working in unison in "un grand *coumbite*" (14).

On his return home, Manuel presses the issue with his parents, asking about the man in the hills who spat at his presence, and about the young woman called Annaïse who had turned her back on him upon hearing his name. Insisting that he learn the backstory of the feud, Manuel asks them, "Pourquoi sommes-nous ennemis?" (55). The complicated and heavy nature of the answer to Manuel's question leaves his father, Bienaimé, disturbed and searching for words: "'C'est une histoire ancienne,' commença

le vieux, 'mais elle n'est pas oubliée'" (55). He leaves to fetch a chair, then settles in and chews on his pipe a while before beginning: "Le sang a coulé." Rapt with attention, Manuel politely encourages him: "Racontez, papa, je vous écoute." The problem began with Général Lonjeannis, an ancestor common to nearly everyone in the entire town. "Il avait fait des enfants sans compter." Following his death, his land was to be divided among his descendants, which seemed a plausible task. After all, "[l]a terre n'est pas un drap, il y a de la place pour tous" (56).

However, there were disagreements involving the details of the division, alcohol was involved, claims were made, returned with threats, insults, and soon the fight escalated into murder, with Bienaimé's younger brother beginning the killing, and eventually dying in prison. "Il y a eu des blessés en quantité." Lifting his shirt to show his own scar and wiping a tear with his clenched fist, Bienaimé finishes the story, insisting on the division between the two factions, now stronger than ever. "On a fini par séparer la terre, avec l'aide du juge de paix. Mais on a partagé aussi la haine. Avant on ne faisait qu'une seule famille. C'est fini maintenant. Chacun garde sa rancune et fourbit sa colère. Il y a nous et il y a les autres. Et entre les deux: le sang. On ne peut enjamber le sang" (56-57). As Manuel takes in this news, looking through the trees to the other homes in the distance, "[t]ête basse," he can now identify the culprit: "[c]'était la haine et son ruminement amer du passé sanglant" (57). Overwhelmed by the reality of the disaccord, Manuel heads towards the fields, crushing the withered plants, walking slowly, bent by the weight of the burden "comme si il portait un fardeau" (57). His community – his extended family – had fallen apart, dissolving into "son intransigeance fratricide" over territorial greed, hurt feelings, and alcohol-strengthened anger. Manuel's devastation is

twofold; already committed to finding a solution to the water crisis, he understands the challenge of mustering community action for a *coumbite*. The destructive division he faces among the members of Fonds Rouge is radically juxtaposed to the relationship that he and Annaïse are in the process of forming.

Manuel ignores the social taboo of interacting with the "other side." He acknowledges everyone in the village, particularly Annaïse, who was only a girl before he left for Cuba, but is now a young woman. From the very start, it is clear that Manuel is attracted to Annaïse, evident in both the way the narrative describes his thoughts of her and how he interacts with her. While she is equally attracted to him, it takes her some time to overcome the social taboo of even being in his proximity. After learning of his relationship to the *others* and turning her back on him, Annaïse remains wary of Manuel, and yet expresses curiosity, enough to start hesitantly engaging with him again. They cautiously defy the social animosity that their families expect them to support, and the sincerity of their mutual admiration is palpable as their connection grows.

The spring-like feeling of love, life, and cooperation between the lovers contrasts with the malignant atmosphere of the feud and the drought. This is comparable to how Philoctète juxtaposes the vivacious love of Pedro and Adèle with the horrors of Trujillo and his Parsley Massacre. Manuel is physically forward from the beginning of their courtship, at times to Annaïse's dismay. "Il lui prit la main. Elle voulut la lui retirer, mais elle était sans force" (78). While there are numerous instances in the novel that communicate pejorative notions of women as inferior and even bothersome, in Manuel's perception of Annaïse, this is not the case. Manuel comments on the roughness of her hand as he holds it: "[t]u es une bonne travailleuse, on dirait." This signals his

appreciation of her physical strength and the hard-working attitude behind it. Proudly, she answers "[o]ui, […] mes mains sont usées" (78). Her weakness, then, signals the emotional conflict she is experiencing between the socially imposed taboo of interacting with him and her desire for him.

Manuel wants to have a long talk with her, but Annaïse puts him off, as night is falling. During their conversation, the narrative voice describes the dusk intensifying around them, indicating not only a blurring of the visible lines and differences of colors in the landscape, but also the blurring of the division between the two families as Manuel and Annaïse connect in their rebellious love. "Le chemin s'effaçait, les arbres noircissaient et se fondaient dans l'ombre. Le ciel n'avait plus qu'une lueur hésitante, assombrie et lointaine. Seul, au plus bas de l'horizon, un nuage rouge et noir se dissolvait dans le vertige du crépuscule" (78). Going back and forth, Manuel remains steadfast as Annaïse continues to debate his invitation: "Ah, tu me tourmentes, et c'est comme si j'avais perdu mon bon ange, pourquoi me tourmentes-tu, Manuel? Il vit ses yeux pleins de larmes, et entre ses lèvres qui suppliaient, l'éclat humide de ses dents" (78). Her voice "basse et effrayée," and her hand trembling in his, Annaïse leaves him without an answer.

The next day, however, though still troubled and afraid, she comes to the meeting spot, undeniably curious and attracted. "Elle s'avança vers lui de son pas égal et agile, sa gorge était haute et pleine et sous le déploiement de sa robe, la noble avancée des jambes déplaçait le dessin épanoui de son jeune corps. Elle fit une révérence devant lui" (81). "Alors, tu es venue," Manuel says, to which Annaïse replies, "Je suis venue, tu vois, mais je n'aurais pas dû. Elle baissa la tête et détourna le visage" (81). While she is still hesitant, the conscious decision to secretly meet with him in a copse of trees outside of

town marks the beginning of the end of her hesitation. Their association is no longer a coincidence or accident; she has chosen, and acted on her choice, and shares her struggle with him. “Toute la nuit j’ai lutté, toute la nuit j’ai dit: non, mais au matin je me suis habillée au chant du coq et j’ai été au bourg pour avoir une raison de sortir” (82). After Manuel asks her if the market went well, she responds with a familial – “Ah, Dieu, non, frère. Quelques mesures de maïs, c’est tout” (82), a response that offers a reminder of the drought’s economic impact, and incurs a moment of silence between them. Annaïse finally breaks it: “Manuel, ho?” and he assures her: “Je t’écoute, oui, Anna,” creating further intimacy by addressing her with the shortened version of her name. Annaïse communicates how out of the ordinary her behavior has been, and shares her confusion over a surprising sense of trust between them. “‘Je suis une négresse sérieuse, tu sais. Aucun garçon ne m’a jamais touchée. Je suis venue parce que je suis sûre que tu ne seras pas abusant.’ Et s’interrogeant elle-même, rêveusement: ‘Pourquoi que j’ai confiance en toi, pourquoi que j’écoute tes paroles?’” (82). The kinds of fresh, new emotional reactions that Annaïse experiences with Manuel indicate the intensity of their connection. In response, he explains to her his own perception of trust, including its role in his effortless, immediate connection with her:

> La confiance, c’est presque un mystère. Ça ne s’achète pas et ça n’a pas de prix; tu ne peux pas dire: vends m’en pour tant. C’est comme qui dirait une complicité de cœur à cœur; ça vient tout naturel et tout vrai, avec un regard peut-être et le son de la voix, ça suffit pour savoir la vérité ou la menterie. Depuis le premier jour, tu m’entends, Anna, depuis le premier jour j’ai vu que tu n’avais pas de fausseté, que tout était clair en toi et propre comme une source, comme la lumière de tes yeux. (82)

Comparing her to a spring, Manuel not only interconnects her with the natural world, but also elevates her to a necessary and vital presence in his life, as quenching to his heart as

a spring would be to his thirst. “Propre comme une source” can be read as both ‘clean as a spring’ and ‘self-producing like a spring,’ indicating his appreciation of her clarity and sincerity. To Manuel, the pure energy of Annaïse flows out from within, like fresh water from a spring, or the light of her eyes.

Upon hearing his reverent words, Annaïse tells him: “Ne commence pas avec les galanteries, ça ne sert à rien et ce n’est pas nécessaire” (82. However, she reciprocates, repeating her own thoughts upon seeing him for the first time: “il n’est pas comme les autres et il a l’air bien sincère, mais quels mots il parle, Jésus Marie Joseph, c’est trop savant pour l’entendement d’une malheureuse comme moi” (82). Like Délira, Annaïse is overwhelmed by the language and ideas that have become second nature to him. In response to her praise, Manuel lightens the mutually awed tenor they have established, as he parrots her own reaction to his praises: “Ne commence pas avec les compliments, ça ne sert à rien et ce n’est pas nécessaire. Ils rirent tous deux” (82). Through the profound words they share, followed by their playful burst of laughter, Annaïse and Manuel’s unique sense of intimacy strengthens, producing an electrifying, joyful sexual tension. “Le rire d’Annaïse roulait dans sa gorge renversée et ses dents se mouillaient d’une blancheur éclatante” (82). The graceful relationship that they continue to develop serves to inspire Manuel in his search for water, and eventually the unification of the town.

Featuring a classical hero-martyr and a tragic, yet hopeful ending, Roumain’s love story is worlds away from the Spiralist, de-centric, anti-empire of Philoctète. However, Manuel and Annaïse’s relationship is as important to the construction of *Gouverneurs* as Pedro and Adèle’s relationship is to *Terres mêlées*’s structure. Embodying hope, egalitarianism, community, and love, both couples offer the antitheses to divisiveness and

hatred. However, contrary to how Pedro and Adèle's relationship begins in bliss but falls victim to divisive genocide, Annaïse and Manuel's union is born out of social conflict yet catalyzes the process of reconciliation, as their emotional and sexual connection is the beginning of reunification between their families and the town. The local police (and son of one of the casualties of the "other side") murders Manuel, and yet it is his death and new child growing in Annaïse that provoke the reconciliation. This sign of hope in the wake of tragedy reflects the community's rebirth out of darkness and discord, as they unite in their efforts to bring water to Fonds Rouge. Ultimately, Manuel's efforts result in the villagers working together in a *coumbite* to bring water – and therefore life – back to the village. Manuel is the agent of change between "la haine, la vengeance entre les habitants" and "la réconciliation pour que la vie recommence" (164).

Furthermore, in both *Terre Mêlées* and *Gouverneurs,* the heterosexual love between the two young couples is entwined with reproduction and the creation of new life in response to senseless death. The fact that after two years Pedro and Adèle have not been able to conceive a child floats in and out of their consciousness as they face the threat of Trujillo's army. Running against the threat of death, these thoughts of potential life intensify the tragedy of the couple's fate, as their dream of a family is murdered along with Adèle. While Annaïse and Manuel conceive a child straightaway, Annaïse is left a widowed mother, representing the hope of new life, yet burdened by loss, the cost of attempting to impose change on the people, even though the change is in everyone's best interest.

Manuel's determination to heal the afflictions of conflict and drought drives the novel's plot toward a bittersweet conclusion, in which the community is on its way

toward social and environmental reconnection, but at the cost of Manuel's life as sacrifice. In both novels, the negative cause and effect relationship between division and death is juxtaposed – and in the case of Roumain, resolved – with a positive cause and effect relationship between collaboration and life.

Juxtaposition in *Tú, la oscuridad*

While numerous cases of juxtaposition traverse the storyline of *Tú, la oscuridad*, by Mayra Montero, I focus on two prominent examples: the juxtaposition of fact and fiction between the narrative chapters and the interposed scientific accounts of frog extinctions, and the ideological juxtaposition within the partnership of the two main characters: Thierry Adrien's Haitian, eco-centric traditional knowledge and Voudon spirituality, in contrast to Victor Griggs's Western-scientific rationality. Thierry is old, weak, and untrained in science. But, as Victor discovers, Thierry's knowledge of frogs, insects and even the spirit world represents an epistemology that the scientific method cannot understand but from which it could benefit. These two uses of juxtaposition are integral to the novel's structure as well as its message, and help to support my overarching case for environmental consciousness and interconnection relevant in the works I analyze.

Structurally, Montero's novel is composed of twenty titled chapters, which are divided equally between Victor and Thierry's first-person perspectives. Both men delve into their inner thoughts and memories of past events and relationships, and each references his different perceptions of their interactions. Evenly juxtaposed among these alternating narrative chapters are the accounts of frog extinctions: ten untitled, one- to

two-page briefings. Victor's voice begins the novel, followed by the first case of extinction (that I examined in Chapter Two) about frogs disappearing from the Colorado Rockies. Starting here, Montero establishes her pattern of three: Frogs, Thierry, Victor; repeating until the last chapter, which is told by Thierry, balancing Victor's beginning chapter. The novel concludes with a tenth and final account of frog extinction, but this time it recounts Victor and Thierry's fictional hunt for the blood frog, as well as their death by drowning: "El ultimo ejemplar de la *grenouille du sang*, debidamente preservado, se perdió con ellos en el mar" (241). These final pages interconnect fiction and reality, as Montero combines the novel's protagonists (with whom the reader is now emotionally invested) within the established structure of factual evidence. In this way, she links the personal with the global, inciting an emotional reaction to the final account of extinction that is interwoven with the men's death.

Systematically suspending Thierry and Victor's narratives with her intra-chapter breaks, Montero details the increasing rates of frog population decline and extinction in an objective, unemotional prose that mimics the dispassionate objectivity strived for in the scientific world. Furthermore, the factual and impersonal accounts reproduce the unemotional, unresponsive tone of international leaders on environmental issues in general – despite the prolific data that points to an ongoing Holocene extinction, or what many bio-conservationists call the Beginning Stages of a Sixth Extinction.

Even without these factual interjections, the novel would still communicate an environmentally conscious message sensitive to the disappearance of frogs and a troublesome global imbalance. However, Montero's choice to include these scientific findings performs an important intersection often lacking in recent efforts to raise

environmental awareness: a combination of storytelling and fact-telling, a mixture of mythology and methodology and a blend of the rational and the creative. While to the mind of a scientist, research data and results can tell a story, access to such scientific narratives requires substantial background knowledge and the particular vocabulary to interpret it. Narratives involving the relationships between people are accessible to all. As I discuss in my conclusion, interconnective thinking and collaboration is key for global consciousness raising and global action. Dialogue between the scientific community and the creative community is necessary in order to provoke informed investment – of the mind *and* the heart – in the current state and future of local and global ecosystems.

The second and more complex juxtaposition Montero establishes is within her depiction of Thierry and Victor's relationship, both interpersonally, and as cultural representatives – perhaps even as stereotypical products of their respective cultures. As the narrative chapters alternate back and forth from Thierry's to Victor's perspectives, memories, and experiences hunting the blood frog together, "the novel becomes an exploration of the relationship between these two men and the adventures they experience in the crazy Haitian geography, which is full of dangers and frustrations," Montero explains (Prieto Interview 90).

Thierry and Victor's worldviews clash, each a product of their different cultures. However, throughout their time spent together – searching for the blood frog, surviving the dangers of the Haitian mountains, and learning about each other's lives – we witness an evolution in Victor's scientific identity. Laura Gillman argues that due to Victor Grigg's "narrative unreliability, the reader is obliged to consider the horizon or background for Grigg's outlook and self-concept, derived from his social location, and

how that background causes him to formulate the epistemic relevance of his experiences" (649). As Victor's logical and methodological mind is confronted by the mysterious world of spirits, spells, and chaos, he begins to understand that his reality is not as predictable and mechanistic as his scientific training has taught him. The positivism with which Victor begins – that knowledge is derived from what we can observe, measure and classify – slowly erodes as metaphysical questions and experiences arise.

The power dynamic that Victor assumes about the nature of their relationship in Haiti (as white scientist and black hired help) clearly evokes the master/slave relationship. However, Victor's sense of privilege is eroded over the course of the novel as Thierry's extensive ecological and cultural knowledge prove to be superior, echoing tropes of the primitivist "savior" who emerges from the natural, non-modern world. The men's unlikely relationship symbolizes the benefits of non-hierarchical, non-exclusivist interactions, as Victor learns to consider the world of unquantifiable experiences. As Victor's typically dominant Western position becomes marginal in the Haitian context, the ways in which he is challenged enrich him – from his relationship with his own body to his outlook on knowledge and mystery.

In her essay, "Narrative as a Resource for Feminist Practices of Socially Engaged Inquiry: Mayra Montero's *In the Palm of Darkness*," Laura Gillman explains that by using "a variety of literary and rhetorical devices" such as irony, metaphor, and metalepsis, Montero's "oppositional narrative [calls] attention to how scientific method constructs 'objective' reality in order to serve the interests of particular knowers" (648). Concerned with balance and imbalance, the tensions and disconnects between the two men are communicated through binaries such as light and darkness, fire and water, life

and death – important concepts in the Voudon faith in which maintaining such balances is central to wellbeing.

Little by little, Victor's clearly-outlined, rigid scientific agenda – that values only that which can be seen and proven *in the light* – is eroded by his experiences with people who live within the lore of light *and* darkness: in mystery, magic, and faith, as part of an enduring stewardship of local, ancestral, oral knowledge. "'Lo que he aprendido lo aprendí en los libros,' recalcó Boukaka desde la puerta. 'Pero lo que sé, todo lo que sé, lo saqué del fuego y del agua, del agua y la candela: una apaga a la otra'" (133). Victor learns to appreciate the importance of the darkness, the unknown, and the unknowable as necessary counterparts to light, the known, and the predictable. A man who is alone in his logic – as well as in his troubled marriage – begins the process of opening himself to a metaphysical connection with the world.

Just as Victor undergoes a process of awakening and connection to the physicality of life in Haiti (including the new smells and sensations of his own body) his awareness of and respect for Haitian epistemologies grow. We witness an important shift in Victor's conception of Western exceptionalism – and his place in it – during a conversation with Emile Boukaka, a Haitian herpetologist and Vodou priest or *houngan*. "Ya empezó la gran huida," Emile stresses to Victor. "Ustedes se inventan excusas: la lluvia ácida, los herbicidas, la deforestación. Pero las ranas desaparecen de lugares donde no ha habido nada de eso" (132). This accusation can be read in different ways: either Emile is stating that specific human causes are not necessarily the trigger of "la gran huida," or that there are so many interrelated factors leading to a generalized imbalance of a global scale that

all living beings of the planet are implicated in the imbalances provoked by humans – and/or the gods.

Emile directly questions the scientific community's authorities (including Victor), who are not only intent on establishing quantifying and qualifying scientific "truths," but are also looking for personal recognition within their elite society.

> Me pregunté a quien se refería cuando decía 'ustedes'. Ustedes, los herpetólogos profesionales. O ustedes, los biólogos que celebraban sus congresos en Canterbury, en Nashville, en Brasilia; los celebraban a puertas cerradas y salían de allí más perplejos de lo que habían entrado. Ustedes, en fin, gente atemorizada, quisquillosa, incapaz de mirar el lado oscuro, insumiso, seguramente atemporal de las declinaciones. (132)

From the Vodou perspective, imbalances in the physical world can be interpreted as the result of imbalances between the *loa*, which can be due to a lack of participation and generosity on the part of human subjects. In essence, Emile mocks the arrogance of the scientific community's closed-door conferences that celebrate their branches of knowledge as all-encompassing truths, while simultaneously they are "incapaz de mirar el lado oscuro, insumiso, seguramente atemporal de las declinaciones" (132).

Victor responds that he has no excuses, that "[n]adie sabe lo que pasa," admitting the great degree of mystery biologists like Victor obsessively attempt to solve through their research – the mystery that drove him to Haiti in the first place. As Victor and Emile continue their conversation about other various species of frogs, Victor is shocked by the extent of Emile's knowledge, demonstrating Victor's preconceived and prejudiced views of what an intellectual and teacher can and should resemble: "hice un esfuerzo por manejar con naturalidad la enorme cantidad de datos de que me proveía Boukaka. Me asombró su capacidad para el detalle, su precisión, puedo decir que su sabiduría" (132).

Juxtaposing the men's accounts of their lives with the segments about frog death ultimately coincides with the men's fate, when death takes them all. Like the cases of extinction that serve as a warning call to the planet, the novel's first line, "Un astrólogo tibetano le predijo a Martha que yo moriría en un incendio" (13), establishes a forewarning tension that is ultimately confirmed when Victor and Thierry die at sea, and reflects the counterpart balance of fire and water expressed throughout the novel. In her article "Apocalipsis en 'Tú, la oscuridad' de Mayra Montero," Becky Boling examines the parallel between the protagonists' and the frogs' demise.

> La oscuridad es más que la muerte; es la nada, es la sin-creación, es el apocalipsis. Se entiende en la novela que debe haber un equilibrio entre la vida y la muerte, la luz y la oscuridad. En las ultimas décadas del siglo XX, la novela sugiere que ese equilibrio ya no existe y abundan los indicios de pánico, de muerte, de exterminación. Pero igual que el protagonista, nuestro error es no hacer caso a las señales de desastre. La profecía de la muerte de Víctor puede entenderse como un pronostico simbólico de la extinción global. (320)

The task of perceiving local and global imbalances is arduous; our senses can only perceive so much. Because of the limited scope of observation in each of us, including how cultural ideologies shape perception, efforts to communicate, both locally and internationally, can help to widen our awareness of the need for balance – in our interactions with ecosystems and with each other. Promoting philosophies of interrelation are key to this process, and to avoiding habitat loss, species loss, and ultimately, if the imbalances continue to increase, apocalypse.

Juxtaposition in *Le Peuple de terres mêlées*

Generally speaking, Philoctète uses inclusive juxtaposition as he amasses incongruent parts into long, rhythmically flowing paragraphs, therein helping to create an

oneiric – and at times nightmarish – narrative in *Le Peuple des terres mêlées*. These instances of connective, inclusive juxtaposition create a synecdoche, a semantic relation between the disparate parts connected through proximity. In the following excerpt, twenty-three diverse subjects share three verbs, followed by twenty-five more subjects (both new and repeated from the previous list), which share three verbs:

> L'eau du ruisseau colle aux jambes de Pedro Brito. Il y passe la main. Celle-ci est rouge de cafards. Pedro se met à courir. Les cafards aussi. Le ciel, les oiseaux, les enfants, les femmes, les vieillards, la Sierra de Neiba, le Yaqui, les herbes, les senteurs, la Reine Anacaona, sa tête de Zémès, la Virgen de Higuey, Puerto Plata, l'alcade Preguntas Feliz, el padre Ramirez, les gardes, don Agustin de Cortoba, les cloches, le lac Enriquillo, les deux Terres, les fleurs, l'aube, le soleil, glissent dans les cheveux de Pedro Brito, le patinent, le soupèsent, colin-maillard épouvantable! Puis, les herbes, la Virgen de Higuey, l'alcade Preguntas Feliz, les femmes, la Sierra de Neiba, son sortilège, les vieillards, le Yaqui, don Agustin de Cortoba, sa maison au lait de chaux, les fleurs, Puerto Plata, les deux Terres, l'aube, el padre Ramirez, les gardes, la Reine Anacaona, sa tête de Zémès, les senteurs, les cloches, le lac Enriquillo, le ciel, les enfants, les oiseaux, le soleil, s'arrêtent, se fondent, disparaissent en un silence inaltérable, mais mou. (25)

Such inclusive juxtaposition imparts to the reader a narrative of interrelation, in which all the many and disparate parts are joined not only in textual contiguity, but also in shared subjectivity and action. I will further scrutinize the role of inclusive juxtaposition when I focus on interrelation in Chapter Four. In this chapter, I limit my study to examples of radical juxtaposition in Philoctète's representation of the trauma caused by *El Corte.* In short, I articulate how he establishes a binary opposition between the binary-obsessed Trujillo and the interrelated whole. In doing so, I argue that he exposes the dangers of imposing binary opposition onto the complexity of co-existence, and therein champions the inherent value and dignity within community and the natural world.

The varied instances of radical juxtaposition in Philoctète's novel can be understood as the same basic struggle between antipodal power structures: totalitarianism

versus community, and, from a greater historical and global perspective, the colonial legacy of the living world as capital versus the webbed interconnectivity of all living and non-living beings. As we will see, Philoctète's use of radical juxtaposition within his paratactic prose exposes oppositions such as competition/ teamwork, jealousy/ compassion, and vanity/ humility.

In my close readings of *Le Peuple des terres mêlées*, I consider four radically juxtaposed relationships: first, I analyze the structural design of the novel's juxtaposed chapters; next, I outline how Philoctète juxtaposes the natural environment with the colonial state-machine; thirdly, I examine the juxtaposition of the novel's two couples: the humanized love of Pedro and Adèle versus the dehumanized violence of Don Agustin and Emmanuela; finally, I scrutinize how corporate-sponsored state propaganda is juxtaposed with acts of genocide, therein highlighting the moral disparity of capitalist totalitarianism.

Assemblage

While an omniscient and impartial narrator runs throughout most of *Le Peuple des terres mêlées*'s twenty-six chapters, the first ten chapters present a distinct separation between two narrative worlds. As I detailed in Chapter Two, the first chapter immerses the reader into the ominous world of a border village under the unpredictable and inescapable violence of the *machin*, a hovering power that establishes the tone and foreshadows the violence to come. Following this terror-inspiring mise-en-scène, the chapters then begin to alternate: between the linguistically open-ended and lyrical world of the people, animals, flora, and mixed lands of the border communities, and the solitary

narration of the *machin* and Trujillo, including the construction of his sociopathic and narcissistic perspective that eventually leads him to order his military (focused through the eyes of Don Agustin) to commit the atrocities of the Parsley Massacre. The novel's language and structure position the two narrative worlds as binaries, in which the world of *everything in relation* is radically juxtaposed with the exclusionary world of a dictator whose main purpose is to possess and control the whole island. When one observes Philoctète's explicit reproduction of binary division and examines its parts, it becomes clear that Trujillo's totalitarian mission exclusively creates the dualism; without him, the presence of the binary would vanish. This fact reinforces how binary opposition is a human invention, a necessary relationship in the process of subjugation in the pursuit of empire.

The rhythmic back and forth between the two sides, through the second to the ninth chapter, emphasizes their differences, creating mounting tension between the oppositional energies – between the antagonist and his victims. While divided in philosophy and style, as the alternating chapters share the space of the book, their interweaving establishes an indefinable connection, an additional intrigue grown from the relationship of their organization. The ways in which both sides define and affect one another – how they are interrelated – become increasingly apparent as the chaotic, non-linear plot advances, and the chapters begin to house both sides in increasing proximity, creating a total structural balance of eight borderlands chapters, eight Trujillo regime chapters, and ten intermixed chapters.

All twenty-six chapters share the same title: "XXX," which frees them of the numeric quantification and linearity I outline here in my motivation to understand the

novel's mechanics and organization – qualities emphasized by my Western education, up to and including the parameters and expectations of this project. Ideally, the following diagram of the chapters would be a three-dimensional spiral in motion, with the first chapter marking the beginning of its repeating, evolving, expanding arc, and each subsequent chapter situated along its spinning, outwardly opening path.

However, to help illustrate how the chapters radically juxtapose the characters' perspectives and presence, I have diagramed a rough, two-dimensional breakdown of the novel's twenty-six chapters into three categories: the borderlands community, Trujillo's totalitarianism, and the mixture of the two worlds, which begins the novel, and returns again in the 10th chapter to mark the start of military invasion in the border villages. Furthermore, if the first and last chapters are excluded (and considered as the introduction and the conclusion), then the three categories are equally divided into eight, eight and eight, which are perfect cubes, making three sets of three binaries.

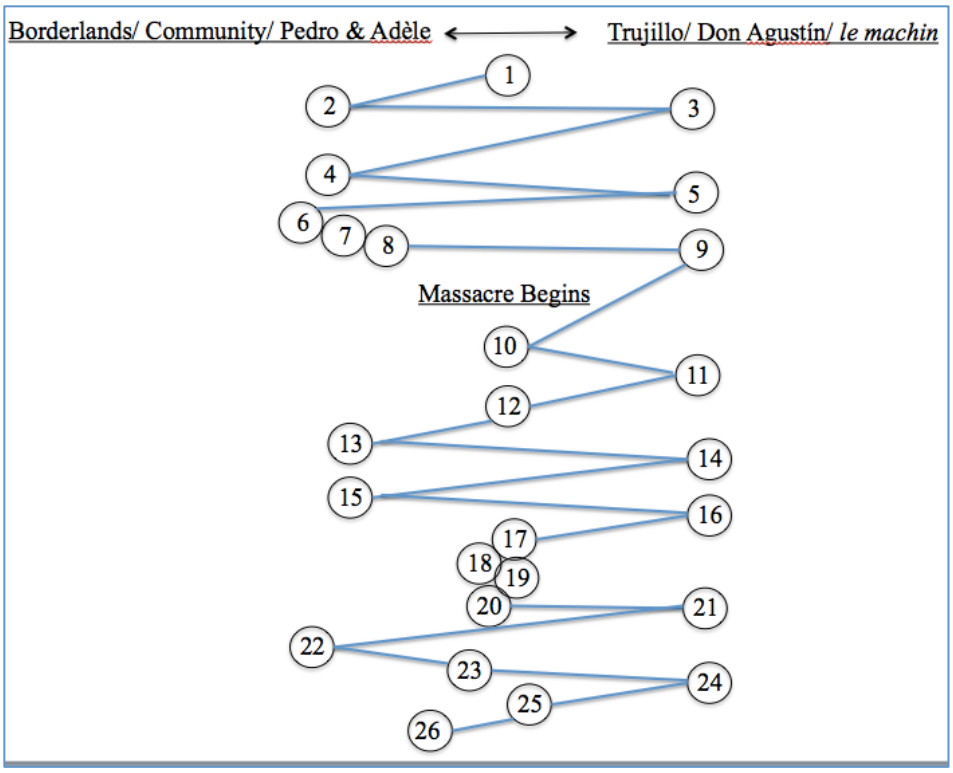


Figure 13. Chapter diagram of *Le Peuple des terres mêlées.*

After the first nine divided chapters, the threat of the hovering bird-thing (that has been making appearances and building tension and fear since the novel's first lines) lands with the full force of machetes as the dictator's plans turn to action in the 10th chapter, when Don Agustin and his army begin dismembering heads and body parts of the villagers, slaughtering whole families. Symbolic of the influx of this violent invasion, the previously chapter-separated sides now begin to intermix within the structure of the chapters. Collisions between Trujillo's regime and the borderlands world of Haiti and the Dominican Republic now take place between paragraphs, within paragraphs, and even within the same sentence, textually reflecting how the two sides' separation is now over, replaced by a violently imposing proximity.

Philoctète juxtaposes the oppositional narrative voices seamlessly, without warning. In one example, the narrative transitions from Adèle's intense, first-person inner dream-world ("La mémoire double les choses quand on aime" (46)), to the omniscient narrator who first describes Adèle's physical reactions, and then Agustin's chaotic violence taking place nearby. As she fantasizes about the first time she and Pedro met in Thomassique, her memories of him are enough to bring her to climax: "Après une brusque secousse, son corps entier s'écroule, extatique. Elle se sent ventilée de la tête à la matrice. Elle blêmit!" (46). Immediately following this passion-filled moment, Adèle goes dreamily inside the house, while "[o]n entend dehors les coups de pioche de don Agustin creusant la fosse du rayon de soleil qu'il avait pendu haut et court jusqu'à ce que mort s'ensuive. Branches, fruits, becquetées d'oiseaux. Dehors, Elias Pina déserte" (46-47). The fact that Don Agustin has moved beyond massacring individual people and is now digging the grave to bury the ray of sunshine in the darkness – after hanging it to death – demonstrates the tremendous scope of the violence. Everything is vulnerable in the massacre, even the light from the sun, echoing the first chapter when the sun "tremble, s'incurve, rapetisse" after the *machin* strikes it "de plein fouet" (10).

Within this case of radical juxtaposition between love-filled memory and hate-filled mission, some parallels can be observed. Adèle collapses after her climax; similarly, the death of the sunbeam Agustin hanged "haut et court jusqu'à ce que mort s'ensuive" (47) suggests the image of a sunray collapsing like a body. Secondly, both juxtaposed individuals are acting and reacting in response to a significant other: for Adèle, it is Pedro; for Agustin, it is his *patrón*, Trujillo. However, the results of these relationships are antipodal. Agustin's unending acts of annihilation form a binary with

Adèle's love-inspired desire for Pedro, establishing a radical juxtaposition between the desire to create life and the desire to destroy it. Side by side, they increase each other's semantic purchase, while exposing the absurdity of Trujillo's gratuitous violence. His insatiable greed, his lust for the Citadel, and his quest to whiten the Dominican Republic are all communicated as implicit motivations, but explicitly, he does not defend or explain his mass murdering – a dictator need not justify anything. With the help of juxtaposition, Philoctète exposes the indefensible senselessness of the Parsley Massacre.

Since the planet's animal kingdom has evolved to require the consumption of other living animals and/or plants, violence and appropriation of others' bodies is a continuing and necessary aspect of many creatures' lifelong search for nourishment. Anti-predator adaptations within the interconnected food web of any ecosystem have produced violent forms of protection: stingers, toxic chemicals, poisonous projectile liquids and gases, and the structure of the body itself – via spines, hooves, horns, claws and teeth. As the opposite of such survival-driven violence – a violence *for life*, and the norm since the dawn of complex organisms – Trujillo's symbolic and utterly unnecessary violence *for death* creates yet another binary opposition.

Trujillo's State-machine versus Pedro and The Environment

In Chapter Two, I explored how Philoctète opens the novel with the looming presence of *le machin,* an antagonistic threat to the village and the natural world that surrounds it. I detailed how omnipotent and undefeatable it proves to be, causing brave men to take their own lives or to be murdered for even challenging it. As the *machin* haphazardly inflicts destruction on trees and land before flying to the sun and back, it

works outside the natural laws of time and space, infecting *everything*. “La chose a pondu dans les fleurs. Elle a couché avec le grand chemin. Elle a marché dans nos rêves. Elle a appris au ciel à hurler. Elle dort dans les berceaux de nos enfants. Elle se glisse sous nos draps. Elle occupe la place d'honneur à notre table” (17). In juxtaposition to the fantastical bird-machine’s omnipotence and omnipresence, Pedro and Adèle, representative of the Haitian-Dominican village people, live a physically and spiritually sensual relationship that is intertwined with the land, the water, the air, and all the biota of which they are a small part.

The interwoven presence of nature throughout the text is in itself a radical, ideological defense to the abuses of the state-machine – the fascist government of Trujillo, Don Agustin, and his machete-wielding army that masquerades as townsfolk in order to slaughter them. On the one hand, the bird-thing is symbolic of Trujillo’s dominance. Inversely, as a conduit and reproducer of a larger legacy of structured power, Trujillo’s character can be understood as a manifestation of the *machin* in human form,

> devenu chef d’Etat après un pronunciamiento style Amérique Latine: coup de force exécuté avec la rapidité de l'éclair par des féodalités militaires, renversement d'un gouvernement autoritaire au profit d'une camarilla, établissement d'un autre gouvernement autoritaire au profit d'un nouveau petit groupe de clientèle. (49)

El Jefe’s exploitive possessiveness of the land and its resources – and his lust for the Citadel – sit in radical juxtaposition to Adèle and Pedro’s love and integration with the natural world, especially apparent in their perceptions of each other and their fervent sexual connection.

Like the colonial project, which was based upon a cold, constructed dualism of superiority/inferiority, white/black, and civilization/nature, Trujillo’s opinion of the people he rules was not hastily constructed. “Il avait consacré de longues heures à l'étude

des mœurs de son peuple. Avait découvert qu'il dirigeait des gens désintéressés, hospitaliers, expansifs, belliqueux, aimant les jeux de hasard, les courses de chevaux, les combats de coqs. Des gens qui font l'amour avec des crocs et du cœur" (128). The reductive conclusions that Trujillo draws about Dominicans expose how his logical, scientific, yet dehumanizing process of assessing human beings in fact characterizes a diverse population of adults into one naïve and child-like mass, in need of his direction and heavy-handed rule – eventually including control over their reproductive partners.

How did Trujillo get to this point? His early chapters take us back to his youth, revealing foundational moments in the construction of his hatred for Haiti, Haitians and dark-skinned peoples in general. After the young Trujillo hears an old woman telling tales of the Revolution in the streets in which "le langage des arbres et de la terre," takes on a sacred tone, he is so transfixed that for a while, he cannot move – even after she has ambled away into the night. Suddenly inspired, he runs back to his family's home, into his room, and searches through an armoire until he finds what he is looking for. Delighted, he reads aloud an article about how the once Dominican-turned-Haitian cities of Lascahobas, Saint Raphaël, Hinche and Saint Michel de l'Attalaye were to be returned to the Dominicain Republic. "Il éclatait de rire, paraissait satisfait. Il pensait tout haut que, en lieu et place du 'langage de la terre' dont parlait la mémé, il eût dit: 'L'engagement du sang.' Il s'examina. Et ce jour-là, il se prit au sérieux" (23-24). This childhood epiphany is a key moment in the narrative construction of Trujillo's sadistic character. Rejecting outright the environmentally interconnected, black Haitian and African-based philosophies of the language of the trees and the earth, Trujillo revels instead in a promise of blood, and subsequently undergoes a dramatic shift in identity

perception. This moment marks the self-realization of his uncompromising hardness, and his commitment to power via cruelty.

The chapters based on Trujillo's development from boy to man paint him as insatiable, obdurate, and obsessive from the start. No game or toys could please him: he lusted only after the Citadel:

> Tout au bout de sa petite enfance, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina était amoureux de cette chose-formidable-près-du-ciel qu'on appelle la Citadelle Henry. Cerfs-volants aux queues de sirène, cerceaux d'acier raclant l'asphalte de leurs langues de feu, ballons multicolores pardessus les toits de Santo-Domingo, billes, petits bateaux papillonnant dans les bassins, peluches, figurines, toupies, rien n'enchantait Rafaelito Leonidas Trujillo y Molina. Il ne voulait que la Citadelle. II se lamentait jour et nuit de ne pouvoir la posséder. Mais caressait l'espoir qu'il l'aura un jour. (22)

While his obsession with the Citadel becomes ever more pointed as he ages, so too does the anti-Haitian propaganda around him, inspired by the long-brewing rivalry dating back to the Haitian Revolution at the turn of the 19th century (1791 to 1804). [17]

> A mesure qu'il avançait en âge l'enfant Trujillo devenait de plus en plus excentrique. Il n'en était pas autrement dans les lieux du pouvoir, en République Dominicaine. On était extravagant. On inscrivait sur les murs blancs des maisons municipales, à travers le pays, en grandes lettres noires, moulées: "El diablo haitiano!" (27)

The disgust toward Haitians continues to deepen, not just in Trujillo but also throughout the Dominican Republic's population via an organized governmental campaign, inspired by the past legacy of the Haitian Revolution and by the present legacy of Nazi Germany, of which Trujillo is a shameless fan. "On organisait des réunions publiques au cours desquelles on distribuait des tracts contre les voisins de l'Ouest. Avec le drapeau national dominicain et des machettes" (27). The inundation of anti-Haitian discourse in the D.R.

[17] I give a summary of the Haitian Revolution and subsequent rivalry in the introduction.

reveals a certain colonial duplicity, as the novel's omniscient narrator details, "[o]n prenait le repas de l'Eucharistie en maudissant les hommes de l'Ouest" (27), thereby exposing the extent of racial loathing. Even the sacred moment of Communion has been infected; the usual prayers and thanks spoken while receiving the body of Christ are replaced with insults towards Haitians.

From the religious perspective, uttering such hate-speech while engaging in a sacred Catholic ritual is blasphemous. From the nationalist point of view, however, the hateful curses muttered by Dominicans while supposedly honoring Jesus can be read as the ritualization of racism; jingoistic, xenophobic hatred takes the place of prayer. From a critical, non-religious perspective – one that understands the Catholic Church as a hegemonic structure complicit in the construction of empire – such hypocrisy is not surprising.

By the time Trujillo comes into power, his desire to possess the Citadel has become so obsessive that one day, while riding with the men from his personal guard in San Francisco de Monte Plata, he hallucinates its heavenly silhouette drifting in the clouds before him and silently pledges himself to it. "Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina, dans l'obscurité et le froid, souriait étrangement, en caressant un lampyre coincé dans le chaton émeraude de sa bague en platine. C'était comme s'il venait de conclure un contrat de mariage entre la chose-près-du-ciel et lui, el máximo jefe" (50). His commitment to obtaining the Citadel is thereupon amplified through this mental vow.

With the patriotic and racially charged fervor building among the masses, so too does the military gear up for action:

> On sonnait la diane, par intervalles, de jour, de nuit, dans les casernes, pour maintenir les troupes en éveil. On improvisait des champs de tir sur les places

> publiques. On mimait des corps à corps, des coups et mouvements de l'escrime, des combats d'athlètes, de coqs, de boxe. Chacun exposait sa stratégie. Chacun concevait sa tactique. (27)

In contrast to the intimate and eco-conscious narratives I examined in Chapter Two, the extensive descriptions – and violent interruptions – of the fascist machine outline Trujillo's strategies for total psychological and physical domination of the Dominican people. Even those who try to carry on with life as usual experience a growing anxiety. "On menait son train de vie ordinaire, mais on se sentait à la veille du chaos. Aucune violence n'avait encore occasionné la violence, mais on parlait librement de violence. Les imaginations levaient dans les ténèbres" (27). Throughout the novel, Philoctète adroitly presents the construction of cultural complicity via brainwashing that establishes the hatred of the Haitian as Other – inseparable from the national identity. I explore this psychological control further at the end of this chapter, when I look at the role of media and the juxtaposition Philoctète creates between corporate advertisements and death reports of the massacre.

Perceptions of Nature: Trujillo versus Pedro

Just as Trujillo's totalitarian relationship to Dominicans and Haitians is antipodal to Pedro's grass-roots socialism and participation in community, so too is Trujillo's relationship with the natural world antipodal to Pedro and Adèle's integrated, respectful place within it. In the colonial tradition, Trujillo's goal is to conquer, possess, and exploit the land for all that it is worth: "Pour posséder sa terre entière, il l'avait parcourue à coups de cravache. Comme un conquistador. Des vastes plaines aux hautes montagnes" (128). While Philoctète portrays Trujillo as someone not immune to the aesthetics of geography,

he can only appreciate the view and the history of the land insofar as it is *his* beautiful (and monetarily valuable) possession: “Les vents alizés lui avaient raconté les histoires de Caonabo[18], de Nunez de Caceres[19], lui avaient parlé des quatre fleuves et des trois mille rivières aux paillettes d'or. A Monte Tina (3190m), il avait contemplé son pays par les horizons de ciel, de terre et de mer: Il pouvait à loisir embrasser les merveilles” (128). The narrator presents Trujillo as reflective and calm, and in the last example, the wind even speaks to him, recalling historical figures relevant to his project, and taunting him with accounts of gold flakes flowing throughout the country’s many rivers. However, just as in childhood, all the glitter and glory that nature could ever offer is not enough; in fact, no one, and no amount of things, can fulfill his insatiable ache to expand his empire.

Just as Pedro’s narratives that illustrate his connection to the natural world are lush and full, so too is the language narrating Trujillo’s pomp and excessive extravagances. In one instance, after Trujillo privately touches his ring and “marries” the Citadel, he turns to head home with his more than 2,000 personal guards, composed of

> quarante-huit généraux de division à pompons en or, sur de fringants coursiers, cinquante-trois généraux de brigade à pompons en argent, sur des destriers blancs, trois cent quatre colonels à casquettes brodées, sur des genêts d’Espagne, huit cents grenadiers et chasseurs à dos de mulet avec des fusils à répétition et culasses en cuivre bruni, deux cent treize tirailleurs à gibernes avec baudriers en galons d’or, sur des juments baies, cinq cents grenadiers à pied, sanglés dans des paletots de grosse toile brune, cinq cent douze chasseurs à pied, azur et pourpre, avec des

[18] An indigenous chief who around 1493 led the destruction of the colony *La Navidad* including all the men Columbus had left behind during his return to Spain. (Verges Vidal)

[19] The leader for independence against Spain in 1821 and the only President of the extremely short-lived Republic of Spanish Haiti, which existed only a little more than two months (December 1, 1821 to February 9, 1822.)
Just before the take-over, while Spain maintained a perfunctory rule over the east side of Hispaniola, he was one of the first to use literature as a weapon for anti-colonial protest. (See: Sara Johnson)

> shakos en castor, velours maroquin, sans cordons, sept cent deux artilleurs vêtus de laine bleue et traînant après eux de minuscules canons de fer. Fanfare: cors, hélicons, trompettes, trombones à coulisses, à pistons, sur trente ânesses à chabraques en popeline. (50)

The qualified and quantified description of his immense, bedizened brigade demonstrates Trujillo's pretentiousness, simultaneously rendering Pedro's down-to-earth humility even more sincere and sane in contrast.

Trujillo's extravagances and possessions (which in his mind include all the living and nonliving beings of the Dominican Republic) are never enough. Ideas, faith and human expression can never be sufficient for him. All titles and honors fall short; the accumulated wealth and power he possesses are trivial in comparison to his ever-increasing need to possess the Citadel. The degree of this obsession is made emphatically obvious in the following example, in which his possessions, detailed in an excessive list, are rendered insufficient compared with his desire for the Citadel.

> Malgré son accaparement des métaux, des minéraux, des marais salants, des oiseaux, des reptiles, des poissons, des insectes, des végétaux, sa main-mise sur l'agriculture, l'industrie, le commerce, les finances, l'armée, son emprise sur les mœurs, les arts, les lettres, la religion, l'instruction publique, la justice, son ascendant sur la population, sa possession réelle de la République Dominicaine, sa prépotence, ses titres, ses décorations, ses maîtresses, ses gardes du corps, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina souffrait du mal de la Citadelle Henry. Il n'arrivait pas à admettre qu'elle ne fût pas sa propriété... Il en vint à en vouloir terriblement au peuple haïtien. (128-129)

Like any serious addict, his desire is so singular and all-consuming that meaning is drained from all aspects of his life that do not involve obtaining the Citadel or punishing the Haitian people for having inherited it.

Recalling Pedro Brito's lengthy walk to work, during which he caressed the plants, water, sky and earth with his thoughts, his movement, and his very presence, we see the radically opposite ways in which the two men interact with the natural world. Side

by side, they offer oppositional sets of values, priorities, sensibilities and intentions. Trujillo is obsessed with one historically important, yet lifeless and unobtainable symbol of power. Pedro is committed to the living land, to his love Adèle, to fighting fascism, and to exposing the reality that the island is one whole, inhabited by one people. Trujillo objectifies nature and appreciates it from afar as a commodity; Pedro is part of nature, sensitive to it, in communication with it, interconnected and reverent to it. While Trujillo possesses uncountable possessions and prizes – but is never satisfied because he *never has enough*, Pedro possesses the bare minimum and works in the cane fields to brutal exhaustion, yet experiences joy and immense gratitude for his place in the living world. The two characters exist in radical juxtaposition, highlighting greed versus generosity, singularity versus multiplicity, and materialist exploitation of the natural world versus ecological and social interconnection. Once again, these extreme binaries expose the contrived nature of their difference.

The Two Couples

The novel's two couples reinforce the binary from an interpersonal, sexual point of view: the fullness of mutual love versus the void of rape. Each pair inhabits the antipode of the other on the spectrum of lust: don Agustin de Cortoba's detached, sexually-charged murder versus the connected and adoring passion between Adèle and Pedro. "Le chef représentant du gouvernement," don Agustin carries out the tyrannical objectives of Trujillo's state and its project of historical revenge via ethnic whitening. Adèle and Pedro's inclusive alliance extends beyond the couple's intimate bond and epitomizes the relationship between the villagers and the natural world. As we have seen,

however, after the massacre begins, both representations are intermixed and tangled, inscribing an inescapable presence of chaotic violence into every breath.

A black Haitian, Emmanuela escaped to Haiti weeks before. In her absence, Don Agustin evokes her image as a recurring, fantastical vessel to pleasure him as he cuts and hacks the border people to death. Reduced to a sexual possession of a vagina with legs, Emmanuela's upper body, her mind, heart and voice – her being – are not only silenced, but also erased. Early on in the massacre, wearing his brutalized fantasy of Emmanuela like a part of his uniform – or a soldier riding his horse into battle – don Agustin cuts off Adèle's head. Her head, however, "péremptoirement reprend ses droits; elle va, vient, court-ci, court-là, souffle, rit, se contemple" (124). In fact, it is unclear whether Adèle has actually been killed, or if she has "lost her head" symbolically, her decapitation representing a trauma-provoked psychotic disassociation. As Kaimia Glover notes, once Adèle's head is separated, she

> behaves even more erratically than ever. Vacillating unpredictably between pious calm and shameless eroticism, between lighthearted playfulness and violent anger, Adèle's head scampers crazily throughout the town as Pedro looks on, mysteriously paralyzed and unable to help. (93)

However, as with the entirety of this spiralist novel, trying to discern the real from the symbolic and what exactly occurred is a fruitless and unproductive enterprise.

The violence has enflamed her already precarious mental state, suggested earlier in the book, including references to sedatives. It can be argued that her psychological problems are no more than an empathetic internalization of the demented chaos that has been building long before the start of Trujillo's massacre. Her sensitive soul absorbs and eventually mirrors the insanity imposed upon her and all that she loves. Near the novel's end, Pedro calls her "mon amour, petite bête schizophrène!" (115), communicating his

unchecked devotion to her, especially in the midst of her psychological collapse in response to the surrounding chaos.

Certainly, her thoughts are incongruous, even detached, from her own state of physical dismemberment – as we can observe when, as a flying, spinning head she says hopefully, "[j]e ferai mieux que ça quand j'aurai mon gosse, bien que mon ventre n'ait jamais voulu féconder la semence de mon homme. Elle tourne sur elle-même, dévoilant un demi-cercle de dents éblouissantes" (124). Offering up yet another opposition in this case between the two Haitian women, Adèle loses her body, left with only her head, spirit and intellect, while Emmanuela is reduced to nothing *but* the physical, a mere sex receptacle.

Don Agustin's repeated, fantasy-driven performance is not only sexualized, but also highly theatrical. The enjoyment and satisfaction of the destruction he capriciously wreaks seems as natural to him as breathing is: an unconscious reflex like his hiccups and burps, displaying his mechanical callousness and total absence of empathy. Like skilled dance partners, he and his machete are precise, avid, and even graceful. While Emmanuela is utterly dehumanized and objectified, the machete is *subjectified*, possessing agency of movement as well as thought:

> Chaque fois qu'il frappe, les jambes d'Emmanuela, longues, fines, ceinturant, étreignent, serrent, purgent son corps immense, beige. Et la machette gambade, culbute. La machette pirouette. Et là et là !, ronge, fauche, mutile, découpe. Une vessie éclate. L'air, d'un coup, se déploie, multiplie des entrechats, et, par surprise, tape. (39)

Wrapped around Don Agustin, Emmanuela's lower half is an ever-present accompaniment to his murderous performance, repeatedly purging his body. The fact that this happens with *each* blow communicates the insatiable lust that accompanies his

violence. Furthermore, the language mirrors the actions it describes: excessive commas throughout the narration create sharp, brisk, and rhythmic language, reinforcing the sexual impulse that accompanies his slaughter. Such imagery depicts an absurd and grotesque spectacle of contradiction: he is animalistic yet deliberate, brutish yet graceful, a ballet dancer and a monster in one. His nonchalant attitude while hacking people of all ages to bits and destroying whole communities underlines the evil of his actions, and displays the depths of his own dehumanized self.

In addition to the machete's physical agency, it is self-aware and gendered. In the moments leading up to when don Agustin decapitates Adèle, his weapon expresses its free will, and considers the choice laid out before it: to kill or not. The machete "observe, raisonne, hésite: 'Suis-je faite pour couper des cous? Que diront les herbes? les troncs des chênes? les vieux manguiers aïeuls de la Sierra?'" (56). Its brief moral interrogation (which shows that don Agustin's weapon has more empathy than he does) is based in loyalty to its original identity, and not out of concern for Adèle. Conscious of its traditional use, it worries about what its usual victims – the plants and trees – will think if it cuts down human beings. However, the debate is short-lived, and "puis d'un coup de tête: 'Je suis maîtresse de moi-même, comme de la mort'" (56).

Following the blatant double entendre "d'un coup de tête" to describe the impulsive nature of the blade's shift from self-doubt to self-determination,

> la machette opte pour *la raison d'Etat*, la pureté de la nation dominicaine, son authenticité, sa spécificité, son originalité, se souvient qu'elle est chevalière des blancos de la tierra, se persuade qu'il faut que l'ocre étouffe le noir, le dissolve afin que du Bahoruco à Monte Christi tout soit jaune, blanc... (blanc surtout) comme l'aube rameutant son peuple de clarté, blanc comme lorsque, brisants, les flots écument, colombes d'eau. Et hop! la machette décide (Adèle se l'imagine train, serpent de nuit, dragon), conclut, tombe sur la nuque d'Adèle! (Vapeur,

poupée, criquet). (56 emphasis added)

With his "maîtresse […] de la mort" serving him not just as a tool but also as a decided accomplice, the machete and Don Agustin (with the remains of Emmanuela spurring him on) are a dedicated raping and killing machine, dispassionately but dutifully bringing pain and death to the borderlands in a dizzying dance of destruction.

As don Agustin leads the assault of Trujillo's genocide, the focus on sexualized violence echoes colonial rape of indigenous women as a weapon of conquest, appropriation via genealogical occupation, and psychological oppression. Rauna Kuokkane affirms in her article titled "Globalization as Racialized, Sexualized Violence" that "[c]olonial relationships are gendered and sexualized and sexual violence functions as a tool of racism and colonialism, not merely as a means of patriarchal control" (220). Such violation reproduces itself through generations, executing an intrinsic ethnic subjugation.

In *The Devil Behind the Mirror: Globalization and Politics in the Dominican Republic,* Steven Gregory asserts that, in addition to the massive devaluation of Haitians based on a construction of racial superiority among the white elite, there has been a systematic feminization of Haitians, particularly at the border. This semantic devaluing further helped the patriarchal and racist state apparatus used to demonize the people who inhabited it.

> That the borderlands economy was oriented towards Haiti and dominated by Haitian merchants, many of whom were women, gave rise to a gendered valuation of the Haitian threat according to which the Haitians were seen 'as the very embodiment of money magic' and as 'social filth'—a threat to both the integrity of the economy and the body politic. This unstable, polysemic construction of Haitians as possessing a mystical, hence illegitimate, economic agency—one coded as aggressively female—informed elite interpretations of the Haitian presence in Andrés-Boca

Chica as well. (181)

The gendered image of Haitians and Haiti is reinforced by Trujillo's lustful obsession with (and mental marriage to) the Citadel, Haiti's greatest symbol of historical power and hard-won sovereignty. As Trujillo aims to conquer and possess the Citadel on a state level, don Agustin conquers and destroys Haitians on the local level, bringing the Dominican Republic closer to whiteness while reinforcing its domination over Haiti.

Contrasting the *non*-relationship of exploitation, violation and death that Don Agustin perpetuates as he leads the State's horrific project, Adele and Pedro's connection offers the antithesis. Engaged in a passionate love affair of two years, they are intimately united on multiple levels. They embody the harmonious mixture of the Haitian and Dominican borderland culture, including a profound sexual connection that transcends the physical world, even after Adèle's decapitation.

The ever-present flow of sexual energy in its many forms between Pedro and Adèle is a recurring theme. Yet, after two years, they have not been able to conceive a child. Their yearning for a family surfaces in multiple places, including in the novel's beginning when Pedro's thoughts (which are driving the narrative at this point in the novel) turn to Adèle and her safety. He considers if he should try to help her escape to Haiti, as other ethnic Haitians are doing. At the thought of separation, he is shaken: "[e]lle est cette chaleur qui s'entortille dans mon corps, ce rire qui pompe dans mon sang; si l'un s'en va, l'autre meurt de dépérissement" (20). Unable to imagine life apart from Adèle, he focuses on their union, and thinks about how "[u]n foyer est un grain mis en terre. Il doit être entier pour germer, donner des fruits. Tranché, le grain pourrit" (21). His reflection can also be read as societal foreshadowing of the wellbeing of the borderlands

communities at large, soon to be "tranchées" by machete, the seeds of life ruined, the lifecycle broken.

When apart, the intimate longing Adèle and Pedro feel for each other dominates their consciousness as the narrative voice shifts back and forth from first to third person. At one point, in a fever of desire inspired by Pedro's shirt, redolent of his body-scent, Adèle experiences a Proustian nostalgia that arouses her being and causes her to relive their sexual bond in a humanizing act of connection, awe and respect for the other. The personified shirt makes love to her as he would, carving out a symbolic space of psychic interconnectedness that stands in extreme opposition to Emmanuela and don Agustin's abusive disconnect.

> Ah! mon homme! Adèle est habitée d'une chaleur subite. La chemise de grosse toile orange joue dans ses cheveux, flotte sur les lèvres, lui soupèse les seins, flatte son ventre l'enveloppe, lui serre les reins, palpe ses cuisses, presse son sexe, presse, entre en elle, entre, la pénètre, l'habite, la fouille, la possède. Ah! mon homme! Il sortait de la pluie comme né de la pluie. (45)

This passionate and intimate moment gives testament to Adèle's humanity and to her will to live and to love. In her fantasy, Pedro comes out of the rain "comme né de la pluie," suggesting a rebirth, marking the start of a new life together, as rain begins each new cycle of spring. In addition to reaffirming her love for Pedro, the fantasized sexual act becomes an affirmation of life itself: a vibrant defiance of the physical and emotional destruction that is happening all around.

In this rapturous celebration of life – the reverse of Don Agustin's brutal and dehumanizing death-mission, Adèle makes love with Pedro through his essence, his smell. She is inspired and seduced by Pedro's connection to the natural world. Indeed, their person-to-person relationship (rather than person-to-object) is complemented by the

couples' profound connection with the world and animals around them. Their bond with the ecosystem often plays out in her thoughts, memories and desire, recalling again and again that transformative moment when she first saw him:

> Il portait, ce jour-là, sa salopette, et communiquait son rire, son enthousiasme, sa vie… Il sortait de la pluie comme une église, une fête, une récolte. Comme on dirait une coopérative. Autour de lui des myriades de petites pattes cristallines voltigeaient, gambadaient, cabriolaient, tintinnabulant. Puis cavalaient. (45)

The erotic impact that Pedro has on Adèle is so powerful and rich that the man evokes the sacredness of a church, the united generosity of a celebration, and the abundance and nourishment of a harvest – therein connecting him to the earth, sun and rain in a collaborative balance between community, spirituality, and sustenance: the foundations of humanity. Adèle's incandescent perception of Pedro is further conveyed by the crystalline "pattes" that she can see, dancing about him like sparkling faery dust.

Coherent with the other dualities I examine, Trujillo's perverse attention to life's inception and growth exists in opposition to the young couple's intimate love, eager passion, and unfulfilled desire to create a family from their union. Trujillo is motivated by a calculated racial loathing of Haitians, present even before he heard the old woman telling her stories in the streets. To realize his goal of whitening the skin of Dominicans, he schemes a breeding plan, treating his people as a rancher treats his cattle:

> Certes, la prescription sera exécutée: les femmes dominicaines seront croisées avec les 20.111 mâles importés d'Espagne, du Liban, de la Palestine, de la Jordanie, de l'Allemagne et de la Grèce. Des milliers de sujets naîtront de ces accouplements. En général, ils auront le teint passablement clair. Mais dame nature voudra que quelques-uns soient albinos, certains assez foncés. Trujillo ordonnera que ces derniers soeint [sic] appelés indios. Ils n'en demeureront pas moins noirs puisqu'ils le seront en fait. (140)

In Trujillo's eyes the Dominican people are but simple and impulsive animals, and, like a livestock breeder, or colonial slave-owner, he has a long-term plan to change the

appearance of those who survive the genocide, mirroring a longstanding tradition in Latin America of *blanqueamiento*, or racial whitening.

Linguistic Juxtapositions in Trujillo's Media

Each of the numerous instances of juxtaposition in *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* contribute to the novel's overarching binary of totalitarianism versus community. The last example of radical juxtaposition I scrutinize lies within the propaganda techniques of the State-controlled radio broadcasts. Carrying out Trujillo's media campaign of purging the country of dark-skinned peoples in his goal of populating the country with only "*los blancos de la tierra!*" (83), the combination of increasingly violent news intermixed with upbeat jingles, branding slogans, and taglines causes a semantic clash, reminiscent of the irrational disconnection in don Agustin's dance of slaughter.

The repetition of predominantly US corporate advertising interrupting or concluding the bloody news reports (interjected between entertainment programs) not only normalizes the broadcasts' treacherous content, but also implicates the United States' influence and sponsorship in Trujillo's rise to power. In his late twenties, Trujillo trained with both the US National Guard and the Marines in the then-US-occupied Dominican Republic. It was only after the Parsley Massacre that the Roosevelt Administration condemned Trujillo's ideology and actions; before that, the United States mostly viewed the D.R. as a stable, anti-communist Caribbean ally.

> Ici, à Elias Pina, les machettes s'entraînent – Moniteur principal: Don Agustin de Cortoba, grand maître du sang coagulé – On attend d'autres données pour vous renseigner. Patienter – figurant: Le gouvernement haïtien – Bonne chance avec Coca-Cola! Et l'unique radio de la rue principale d'Elias Pina poursuit son programme avec Tino Rossi dans "Sous le Ciel de Paris." (40)

The news flashes interjected into the narrative from the State-run media are often portrayed as if voiced by the street itself – a public space where people gather to listen and where the radio waves are strongest. These reports regularly detail the newest statistics about the number of heads so far claimed in the massacre in each region, thereby routinizing – even extolling – the violence. As Trujillo's armies disguise themselves to better infiltrate the border villages, the national reports of the massacre are celebrated as good progress.

> La rue, forte de ses ondes, renseigne: "Neuf cent huit têtes à la minute dans la province d'Azua – Huit cent dix-neuf à Santiago – Dans les Pédernales: subite prise de conscience Nationale : mille cent deux cent dix-sept! – Dajabon l'emporte: quinze mille deux cent huit têtes à la minute – (Pause). (40)

The narrative tone of competition in announcing which region has claimed the most heads, as if they were goal points in a soccer game, reinforces the banality of demonizing ethnic Haitians in the Dominican Republic and encourages their slaughter in the name of ethnic cleansing, which Philoctète depicts as a new national sport. At the same time, the anomalous report from Pédernales where there was a "subite prise de conscience," counters the pattern of brainwashed participation and offers an isolated and brief show of conscience and resistance in a sea of compliance.

The death tally reports communicate the brutally cold, unemotional, and self-absorbed practicality of the army's methodology. To help train the soldiers, they begin by massacring the smaller, easier targets: children. The news reports classify their deaths by age, save the group of girls who are set aside, "nubiles et pubères, destinées, elles, aux colonels," and for whom "[n]ous n'avons pas de relevés statistiques rigoureux […] Nous le regrettons bien – De toutes façons, nous vous tiendrons au courant – L'opération se poursuit méthodiquement – Cheminement cohérent – Saludo! – Gillette la lame qui rase

frais et qui dure" (48). The ironic voicing of regret within the news broadcast is not inspired by any moral questioning, but by the lack of rigorous information available to the public about the kidnapping of young girls to be distributed to colonels as sex slaves. Furthermore, directly following the routine detailing of children being systematically reallocated for rape, the double entendre within the Gillette ad both emphasizes the US corporate backing of Trujillo's violence, and reinforces his plan to "rase frais" the Dominican population in a manner "qui dure."

Directly following this news broadcast, the sole radio of Elias Piña offers "à la méditation des auditeurs" an excerpt from Spanish dictator Francisco Franco's latest speech titled "Le Respect des peuples à l'endroit de leurs dirigeants" (48). In response to the relentless flow of national and international propaganda, the narrative turns to the natural world and to Adèle before recommencing the radio reports of slain children. "L'arc du ciel craque," which can reference both a crack in the form of the sky, as well as in the firmament – in Heaven – created by God to separate the waters above and below it. Following these radio broadcasts and well before don Agustin decapitates her, Adèle

> devient une moitié de corps qui s'abîme, se *délite* dans son propre corps. Je glisse. Ah! mon homme! C'était une pluie bleue, à n'en plus finir. Avec des oiseaux verts qui tombaient du ciel; si vert qu'on eût dit des monceaux d'eau. Avec des chansons qui sortaient de partout. Et des cloches, des poissons frits, des guitares, des pastèques, des chapeaux, des palabres! (48).

As Adèle loses her sense of being in her already damaged body, she focuses on her memories of Pedro, returning to the first time she saw him coming out of the rain. The attention she pays to her missing partner is twofold, both grounding her and causing her to ache, as she "mesure les douleurs de l'absence." The sensitive nature of the connection

established through her intimate thoughts and feelings is immediately interrupted as the narrator returns to more radio reports:

> La rue reprend, stridente: 'La chair des enfants est si douce que les machettes ne mordent pas – Elles patinent au lieu de couper, causant plus de meurtrissures douloureuses que de blessures franches, de coupures directes – Aussi, par humanité, le comité Cabezas Haitianas a-t-il préférablement prescrit l'étranglement à la gorge par coups de dent secs – Jusqu'ici huit mille deux cent quatre-vingt-six enfants, mâles et femelles ont trépassé sous les griffes et les dents de la Guardia – L'expérience s'enrichit de moment en moment, de mieux en mieux. – Ce soir, à l'Eldorado, le film qui fait courir la capitale: La joie de vivre! – La météo: nuit fraîche sur l'île entière.' Et l'unique radio cafouille. (48-9)

In addition to brainwashing via the media where banal tallies of murder are shared in the same breath as ads for movies such as "La joie de vivre!" serve to desensitize the citizenry, Trujillo's cult of personality relies on suppressing any facts that contradict his vision. His attention to western science and anthropological studies plays into the chaotic narrative mix, but the omniscient narrator makes it clear that only information that supports his project will survive:

> Il manda d'urgence ses généraux, ses féodaux, ses confidents. Tint conseil. Un seul point à l'ordre du jour: révéler à la nation dominicaine son vrai visage anthropologique.
>
> On fit venir des ethnographes, des ethnologues, des sociologues, des historiens, des linguistes, même des statisticiens. On délibéra. D'aucuns, imbus de la question, avancèrent tout de go: "La nation dominicaine est un produit de race africaine et de race rouge ou américaine." Hors du sujet. — "Propositions simplistes," considéra l'autorité. (51)

Mamadou Wattara writes that beyond regimes such as those of Trujillo, or the Duvaliers in Haiti decades later, Philoctète's novel "dénonce aussi toutes les collisions entre l'anthropologie et les pouvoirs d'exception (dictatures et colonisation incluses) qui culminent en génocide" (99). Indeed, Philoctète presents Trujillo as a dictator comparable to Adolf Hitler, who is referenced in various places throughout the text. Citing Césaire, who "lance à ce propos un véritable 'cri agonique' avec *Discours sur le colonialisme*

dans lequel il met la colonisation sur le même plan que le totalitarisme nazi," Wattara contends that in *Le peuple des terres mêlées,* "la figure du Général-Président dictateur est ainsi évoquée" (99). While Trujillo's totalitarian and murderous project was not nearly as extensive as Adolf Hitler's, like Hitler, he maintained total military control, total media control, and was therefore able to scare people into silence, brainwash them, or kill them in the name of obsession, power and racial purity.

In my reading of juxtaposition in these novels by Philoctète, Montero, and Roumain, I maintain that these authors bring extremes together in order to *resensitize* consciousness, to humanize the dehumanized, to privilege empathy, and to dissolve divisions that are at the root of many of today's social and environmental injustices – in the Caribbean, and worldwide. Like many tools, binary oppositions can be used for various purposes, ranging from good to bad, and everything in between. My last sentence is a perfect example of how binaries can be productive by establishing semantic poles that share a spectrum. In the case of Trujillo, however, binaries were used as a divisive, exclusionary tactic of nationalist brainwashing and power mongering, with no middle ground. In my greater argument for existential interrelation, the championing of one epistemology over another is a repressive act; the philosophy of interrelation champions all knowledges, empowering the process of collaboration among common themes as well as local and individual particularities. The only philosophy or practice that is disallowed is exclusion itself, which is not an epistemology, but a method of control. Similar to the ironic but common reactions of hating hate, fearing fear, being angry at anger, or having intolerance for intolerance, the only necessary exclusion is exclusivist behavior. Philoctète's critique of Trujillo's dictatorship, Montero's on the ground depiction of run-

ins with the Duvalier's Macoutes and their continued violence, and Roumain's civil war and environmental crisis all problematize exclusion-based power dynamics. Each of these three novels juxtaposes the denial of interconnectedness with interconnectedness.

While Philoctète's spiraling narrative is multivocal and explicitly inclusive of living and nonliving beings, championing the multifarious and flexible nature of the borderlands (most directly through Chicha the passerger bus, as I soon detail), *Tú, la oscuridad,* and *Gouverneurs de la rosée* have somewhat opposing philosophical agendas in terms of their representations of Western and Afro-indigenous epistemologies. While Montero's narrative is critical of the myopathy and soullessness of the rational, scientific mindset, Roumain's harsh portrayal of the Voudon faith combined with his honorable presentation of Manuel's communism-inspired pragmatism and collectivist mentality is overtly pro-Western. Together, they demonstrate that all knowledge bases, like each human being that participates in maintaining and expanding them, has weaknesses, blind spots, and faults, as well as unique and positive qualities to offer. The more open we are to the strengths and weaknesses of different ideologies, the more efficient, meaningful, and interconnected our own consciousness becomes.

CHAPTER FOUR

IN-*TERRE*-LATE! THE ETHICS OF INTERCONNECTION

A dropper-full of blue dye is let loose into still water. At first it holds together, a billowing, expanding cloud of color. But with enough time, the dye dissipates throughout the water, diluted and evenly distributed. This process, called *pedesis,* from the ancient Greek meaning to leap, beat, and throb (Oxford), is an apt metaphor for the process of interrelation. First noted by the Scottish botanist Robert Brown (1773–1858), pedesis is also referred to as *Brownian motion.* Describing the inter-affecting dynamics of objects in motion on a minuscular level, pedesis is defined as "the erratic random movement of microscopic particles in a fluid, as a result of continuous bombardment from molecules of the surrounding medium" (ibid). While not every particle directly impacts the others equally, the chaotic flow of energies interacting with one another creates a complex and ever-unfolding web of cause and effect, bouncing off each other in opposite directions, grazing each other and thus slightly changing each other's trajectory towards the next encounter. This ongoing, interconnected movement extends to all imaginable parts of existence, including the expansion of the universe.

In *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, David Bohm describes interconnectivity in terms of "*Undivided Wholeness and Flowing Movement*" (14). This view "implies that flow is, in some sense, prior to that of the 'things' that can be seen to form and dissolve in this flow" (14). When applied to the evidence of universal expansion (cosmological red shift theory[20]), the *flow* of movement is primordial to matter; nothing has ever existed outside of the flow. Rather, physical existence takes place within it, situating the flow as

[20] A redshift is the measurement of a light source as it moves away from the observer.

creator and context for physical existence. To help clarify the concept of *Undivided Wholeness and Flowing Movement*, Bohm uses the more manageable metaphor of "stream of consciousness":

> This flux of awareness is not precisely definable, and yet it is evidently prior to the definable forms of thoughts and ideas which can be seen to form and dissolve in the flux, like ripples, waves and vortices in a flowing stream. As happens with such patterns of movement and stream, some thoughts recur and persist in a more or less stable way, while others are evanescent. (14)

Just as thoughts rise out of the stream of consciousness, matter emerges from the flow of energy – and not the other way around. This concept is vital to understanding how interconnectedness begins at the source, before division was possible. It is the status quo of existence, rather than a goal, end result, or imposed framework. From stars to planets to living beings on Earth, all perceived matter is part of the flow, built from the same recycled and reorganized stellar leftovers. Carl Sagan mused in his series *Cosmos* how "we are star stuff harvesting sunlight," our human bodies temporary, ever-morphing arrangements of oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur, sodium, magnesium, and other trace elements.

Our ability to see matter on this elemental level and to understand the very ingredients of our chemical composition – quite literally the dust of exploded stars – offers a new perspective on existence, one that begins with the tenet that we are fundamentally interconnected, of the same physical family. Access to such knowledge, to this entirely new reality, hinges on our construction of advanced tools, such as electron microscopes.

Similarly mind-blowing and difficult to grasp, if we go even further into the center of atoms (quantum physics), we discover a new set of behaviors and parameters

that defy prior knowledge and confound the observer, such as the behavior of quarks. As Baum argues, "What is needed in the relativistic theory is to give up altogether the notion that the world is constituted of basic objects or 'building blocks.' Rather, one has to view the world in terms of universal flux of events and processes" (Baum 12). The caveat, then, is that access to perception (which determines perspective) is relative to the observer. For this reason, qualitative value can only begin to take shape when evidence-based social consensus is reached about any given topic.

Throughout this project I have looked critically – if not harshly – at division, particularly its function within the colonial construction of binaries. Division itself, however, is not inherently negative, and is in fact integral to the development of living beings. Each of us begins as a single cell; it is only through cellular division that we are able to grow. As I have already discussed in earlier chapters, in the symbolic realm of human perception and thought, the ability to perceive and remember distinctions in the physical world around us is a necessary survival mechanism. However, some forms of man-made division are harmful.

As Henri Atlan puts forth in *Gaia, a Way of Knowing: Political Implications of the New Biology*, "[a] very important question is: to what extent are the different levels of organization real and to what extent are they due to our operation of cutting reality into different levels due to the different techniques of observation?" (121). As division has served us well in classifying and understanding many aspects of our continually expanding knowledge of existence on Planet Earth and in the Universe, it has also been used to exploit and destroy. For this reason, assuming healthy survival is the goal, constructions of division – and the values we assign to them – call for an overarching

ethics of interrelation. In such an ethics, division exists in the world as a physical process in the form of growth and reproduction, and in the mental process of distinguishing one form from the next, but in these, it is division within the flow of interconnectivity – rather than division being used as a tool of power to interrupt this very flow.

Interrelation in *Le Peuple des terres mêlées*

In addition to *Le Peuple des terres mêlées*'s spiraling prose, its interwoven presence of the natural world, and the series of binary oppositions that accentuate the danger of such constructions, Philoctète also incorporates explicit messages of connection, community, and love, communicating an *ethics of interrelation*. Numerous examples of this practice have been shown within my analysis of Pedro and Adèle's relationship (in Chapters Two and Three). In this chapter, my analysis of *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* begins with two explicit illustrations of interrelation: the first with a pair of children playing on the border, and the second with a communal, bi-national family whose shared lives and garden span the border. Then, I turn my focus to language – and particularly the border language – as a connecting force, in opposition to Trujillo's use of the word "perejil." While the Parsley Massacre was racially charged and both black Haitians and black Dominicans were slaughtered, Trujillo's soldiers, when doubtful of an individual's ethnic heritage, would sentence the victim according to his or her ability to roll the r in the Spanish word for parsley, *perejil.*[21] Finally, I study the role of Chicha Calma, the personified bus or *guagua*, who embodies and preaches explicit messages of

[21] Philoctète presents the *perejil* test in his novel as a common practice, however there lacks consensus about the extent to which the word was used. UCLA historian Lauren Derby argues that its use is a myth.

interconnection as she careens through the mixed lands, transporting the mixed people of Hispaniola.

The Young Friends

In the midst of the Massacre, "[d]eux enfants noirs, une fillette de cinq ans, un garçonnet de quatre, se sont rencontrés à tout hasard, un midi, au pied d'un citronnier poussé sur la ligne même de la frontière, non loin de Hinche" (94). The growth of the lemon tree overcomes the divide of the border; its liminal roots and branches providing not only a neutral, shaded meeting space for the children, but also echoing the symbolism of their newly formed friendship that knows little of the separation imposed upon the land and people. Though the boy, Nathan Bahoruco, is from a Haitian family, and the girl, Juanita Cortez, is from a Dominican one, they see each other with the untarnished eyes of youth, free of preconception, nationality, or judgment: "[s]ans effort, ils se sont liés d'amitié, (comme cela se voit d'ordinaire chez les enfants)" (94). While the easy energy of the children's first encounter echoes that of Adèle and Pedro at the market (minus the sexual sparks), the fact that Philoctète depicts the Dominican as female and the Haitian as male helps to undo any gendered stereotypes or power dynamics that could be read into the adult lovers' relationship. As we will soon see, Juanita is forced to adopt the role of protector, just as Pedro is.

Speaking different languages does not impede the children's ability to engage in play: "[e]t les voilà qui, sans façon, s'amusent à sauter à cloche-pied du côté-ci de la frontière, du côté-là de la frontière, tantôt chez les Haïtiens, tantôt chez les Dominicains" (94-95). Born into a world divided, the two children transcend the animosity and

totalitarian violence with their carefree and creative play, therein temporarily transforming the mortal danger of the borderlands into a site of joy. “Leurs rires font des trous de fraîcheur dans le décor” (95), bringing air to the suffocating oppression of Trujillo’s assault on the border communities. In contrast to the machetes’ work of making holes of destruction and death in bodies, relationships, and entire communities, the children’s laughter makes freshening, life-affirming holes in the pall of oppression. Antithetical to the Parsley Massacre, this scene establishes yet another case of radical juxtaposition in which the simple, routine friendship between two children becomes momentous and dangerous in the context of the genocide.

Subverting the power of the boundary to split their respective countries, the children spend over an hour playing their border-hopping games. Their joyful innocence succumbs to a shift in consciousness of the divisive realities at hand, however, as Juanita asks Nathan “de bien vouloir articuler ‘perejil’” (95). From one sentence to the next, the local, carefree, physical world of playing *with* the border abruptly shifts to the life and death seriousness of one word’s role in the attack. With this seamless turn from joy to fear, Philoctète adroitly communicates the human connection that has been established through the children’s playing. Conscious of their external difference and the danger that Nathan faces as a black Haitian on the border, Juanita fears for his life. Trying to protect him, she helps him learn the Spanish pronunciation of the word. Nathan tries, “tout sourire,” but tells her that it is impossible for him to pronounce it. Demonstrating the gravity of the problem, “Juanita cérémonieusement prend la main de Nathan. Les deux enfants s'en vont s'asseoir sous le citronnier. La petite fille dominicaine fait reprendre le mot au petit garçon haïtien” (95). Under the unifying, transnational cover of the fruit tree,

Juanita and Nathan work at sharpening his only weapon of defense – the trill of his tongue.

> Le jour décline que les deux enfants chantent “perejil! perejil!” Une brise légère emporte au loin leur voix, leur babillage, leurs bravos, leur étonnement. Un criquet pointillé le crépuscule. Au ciel montent les premières mottes d’étoiles. Puis Nathan et Juanita se sont endormis côte à côte.
> On les trouvera demain, au petit jour, les doigts enlacés, serrant un bouquet de persil. Les gardes n'auront pas le courage de couper l'une ou l'autre tête.
> Le citronnier aura d'un coup poussé toutes ses fleurs. (95)

Amidst the overwhelmingly violent and merciless scenes of chaos in which all border peoples, from infants to elderly, are targeted, Nathan and Juanita’s sweetness saves them. The image of them together, vulnerably asleep under the lemon tree, clutching a bouquet of parsley, is symbolically powerful enough to draw out the soldiers’ repressed humanity, marking a rare turn towards *rehumanization* in the hearts of the enemy soldiers. This moment of mercy – a moment of hope in a world of violent despair – is punctuated and affirmed by the lemon tree, which suddenly bursts into bloom over the sleeping children.

The Old Friends

Pages later, the narrative turns its focus to another border friendship: this time between two men, Urbain, a Haitian, and Prospero, a Dominican. As with Nathan and Juanita, their idyllic friendship causes dividing lines to blur, including the terrestrial boundary at their feet and the identity politics in their heads and hearts. From practical needs to the emotionally charged interpersonal aspects of existence, the two men’s communal lives intertwine on all levels: national, local, social, marital, and familial. The friends’ joy stems from the process of cooperative cultivation, of joining together in

fostering the growth of healthy gardens, then sharing the feeling of plenitude from the harvest filling their hands.

> Urbain et Prospero cultivent à deux leurs jardins sans se préoccuper de savoir si le maïs mûrit en territoire haïtien, si les patates grossissent en République Dominicaine. Ils se réjouissent seulement à voir pousser les bourgeons verts, à sentir aux creux de leurs mains le fruit de leur travail. (98)

Borders dissolve in their partnership, and commonplace notions of competition, rivalry, and possessiveness are entirely absent. They revel in the *process* of growing the food together, nourishment that sustains them and their interrelated family.

Just as in their gardens, the partners' domestic relationships with their wives and children show no sign of customary propriety:

> Leurs quatre femmes, Joséphine, Esperancia, Julie, Amanda, leur sont aveuglément fidèles. Leurs vingt-huit enfants, treize filles, quinze garçons, jouent dans la même cour, mangent, dorment sous la même longue tonnelle de bambou recouverte de vétiver. Aucun d'entre eux ne peut dire au juste qui est son père? Urbain ou Prospero? D'ailleurs, les deux compères s'enfichent royalement, pourvu que les petits aient de quoi se mettre sous les dents... et sur la peau. (98)

In opposition to Trujillo's ego-charged extremism and obsession with ownership, Prospero and Urbain exemplify humility and good humor, with values and actions built around the ongoing, cooperative process of providing enough food and clothing for everyone in the family. While their relationship is not always harmonious, upsets tend to be minor and short-lived due to their mutual respect, their easy communication, and their desire to reconcile. As the omniscient narrator explains,

> [s]'il arrive qu'Urbain et Prospero se querellent, c'est pour tuer le temps, changer, diversifier, se taquiner, oublier quelque tracasserie. Avec eux, les disputes finissent toujours dans de petits verres de vin d'orange à la boutique de doña Rosita Manuel et par de fortes claques dans le dos. Ce qui fait pencher dangereusement Prospero et dandiner le gros Urbain. (98)

Sharing time and space, their local lives are intimately intertwined, even down to the genetics and parentage of their offspring. Yet, unlike the naïve innocence of Juanita and Nathan, the two men understand the threat of Trujillo's onslaught of the border. In their fear, Prospero and Urbain distance themselves from each other.

> Mais, depuis un certain temps, ils ne se parlent pas. Ils prennent leur distance. Ils n'ignorent pas que par décision de Ciudad Trujillo, avec l'assentiment de Port-au-Prince, la mort viendra bientôt s'asseoir entre eux. Ils deviennent désespérément tristes. (98-99)

The once *symbolically* divisive powers of the border have become real at the hands of Trujillo's soldiers. The threat of their impending arrival slices Prospero and Urbain's shared life into two, separating their familial union with an inflicted national difference. The fear that provokes their parting does not diminish their bond, however, as both become "désespérément tristes." The narrative that focuses on the relationship between these dear friends concludes with a chilling declaration by Prospero: "Les vers de ton cadavre me mangeront mêmement, amigo!" (99), therein reemphasizing the depths of their empathy and interconnected existence.

Directly following this tragic pronouncement, the narrative perspective pans out from the friends' locale to a Spiralist perspective and tone that emphasizes the sociolinguistic, geographical and ecological diversity of the Dominican-Haitian border:

> De mémoire de peuple de frontière on n'a jamais enregistré un tel rassemblement d'êtres humains, depuis Mancenille face à Monte-Christi jusqu'aux Anses-à-Pitre non loin de Las Damas. Un immense espace de montagnes, de fleurs, d'insectes, de cours d'eaux, de rongeurs, de plaines, d'oiseaux, contenant plus de cent mille âmes, Dominicains et Haïtiens, se parlant dans un langage que seuls eux-mêmes puissent comprendre: le langage de la frontière, où entrent à la fois us et coutumes, histoire et feux du cœur. (99)

The unintelligibility of the border language "que seuls eux-mêmes puissent comprendre" separates the peoples of mixed lands from the communicative norms of

either Haitian or Dominican nationalism, in a long, semantic island of both. Contrary to the notion of the border as a divisive, two-dimensional line drawn tidily on a map, Philoctète represents the living reality of the borderlands as a subversively messy and chaotic process of exchange. A space of *connection* rather than division, the border is a snaking seam between two pieces of fabric, in which distinctive threads interlace to form a continually unfolding space, an ideological and linguistic amalgam of the divided whole of Hispaniola. Rather than the intended power of borders to divide and separate empire, land, culture, and identity, the people who physically create the social reality of these borderlands partake in a cultural and communicative union, within which a Brownian, multi-directional motion of give-and-take prevails. Rather than Spanish and Haitian Creole/French remaining a divisive source of difference, the border language is a custom-tailored, living form of communication, free from standardization, and "où entrent à la fois us et coutumes, histoire et feux du cœur." (99). The border language represents the diverse and mixed peoples who speak it, as well as the range of ecosystems in which they live.

"Perejil!"

At the opposite end of the spectrum from language as an inclusive tool of creative cooperation and cultural amalgamation, Trujillo's project of genocide reduces all communications down to one, arbitrary word, "perejil." This totalitarian and murderous tactic of determining individuals' Dominican-ness via their pronunciation of *a single word* offers up yet another radically juxtaposed relationship: between the border people's

democratic, living-language hybrid and Trujillo's reductive process of arbitrary exclusion and destruction.

The numerous sections that detail the powerful role of the word *perejil* – as well as the many brief interjected references to it in the second half of the narrative – communicate the deliberate denial of interrelation. One of the first instances in which we encounter the impact of this verbal threat takes place between Pedro and a young woman, as they ride together in the *guagua,* Chicha. Echoing the children's teamwork, when he hears her practicing under her breath, Pedro is driven to help the young Haitian woman learn how to pronounce "perejil" with a Spanish accent. "Une main se pose sur le bras de Pedro Brito. Une main froide, tremblante. Comme celle d'Adèle lorsqu'elle avait vu la chose labourer le ciel d'Elias Pina. Il s'agit de la main de la jeune femme dont la voix cassée répète encore: 'Perejil!'" (73). The terror of the young woman facing the pronunciation test is as intense as the terror provoked in Adèle upon witnessing the *machin.* This parallel suggests a shared source and effect: both threats are equally petrifying manifestations of Trujillo's reach.

Not only has all communication been violently reduced to one word, even the letters *within* that word have turned on each other in violence. "L'l a bu l'i. L'e a botté l'r. Le mot a passé de travers. La jeune femme tousse. Un léger parfum de rose tombe et s'écrase. Pedro reprend avec patience: "Perejil." La passagère tousse encore" (73). With the exception of a few one-letter words, the vast majority of linguistic meaning in Western languages comes from individual letters working together in groups to form signs. In the case of *perejil*'s new usage, however, the narrator recounts the breakdown of the letters' relationship to one another, mirroring the word's divisive role in the massacre.

> Le mot est sur le point de commettre un assassinat franc, sans complice. Pedro dépose sa grosse main d'ouvrier sur celle, froide, de l'inconnue agglutinée à son bras droit, et dit posément: “Perejil.” La négrita murmure: “Perejil.” Le p se heurte quelque part dans l’i. Le mot a culbuté. Décidément, encore une bouche qui n’aura servi à quoi que ce soit et qui aura mérité la décapitation: “Perejil!” criera le garde. L'i aura télescopé le j. Voilà! “Mata lo!” “Mata lo bien!,” se mettra à vociférer le commandant. La tête aura vite connu l'étonnement de la mort. Un gâchis de bouche! (73)

As he seeks to eradicate Haitian-ness from the Dominican Republic, Trujillo’s army exploits the intrinsically linked relationship between language and identity. By reducing language to a dividing tool, the once intimate, personal, and creative process of making social sounds has been maimed and reformed into an imminently treacherous act. Set by Trujillo as the bar of humanity, his requirement of the Spanish pronunciation of *perejil* carries on the traditions of the colonial project, which appropriates and transforms people into something else (mentally and physically), or eliminates them altogether. For ethnic Haitians in the borderlands, the psychological imposition of the one word is so penetrating that it becomes inescapable, even in sleep:

> Pedro Alvarez Brito y Molina détache de son bras la main gauche, crispée, de la jeune femme dont les lèvres murmurent péniblement: “Perejil”. Le p a crevé l’r. Le mot fuite. La jeune femme dort pourtant. Or, le mot ne l’a pas quittée. Le mot l’a investie. Domestiquée. Colonisée. Luttant de ses forces quasi inconscientes, elle tente de s'y arracher. Elle gémit; elle balbutie. Sa voix exprime la terreur que lui inspirent ce moment absurde de la vie de la frontière et cette étrange inhumanité qui se dessine. (75-76)

Like the bird-thing, the word *perejil* is a totalitarian tool of domination in the war on the Haitians, and yet, like an independent contractor, it maintains its own agency, domesticating and colonizing its victims with its death threat. Likewise, the word’s individual letters have subjectivity, taking on a life of their own as they turn to attack one other, internally acting out the violence that results from their external “mispronunciation.” Similar to the agencies of the natural world expressed throughout the

novel, the portrayal of this single word as an active player in the web of existence highlights the destructive power of its newly assigned role as determiner of nationality, which to Trujillo's eyes should be determined by race.

As profoundly terrifying as the word has become to the border people, the narrative repeatedly juxtaposes the severity of its new role with the banality of its former meaning, revealing not only its arbitrary and entirely reconstructed meaning, but also its role within "ce moment absurde de la vie de la frontière et cette étrange inhumanité qui se dessine" as a condiment is instilled with the power to spare or end lives.

> Depuis quarante-huit heures le peuple haïtien de la frontière apprend à dire "perejil". Un mot banal. Un condiment. Qui vaut une vie. Suivant qu'on le prononce bien on est Dominicain, blanco de la tierra, les honneurs vous sont rendus: "Guardia, saludade!" Mais, suivant que l'r a transité dans l'i, que le j a bu l'l, que le p boîte dans l'r, que l'e s'est pris dans le j ou que le p, l'l, l'r se déboitent, s'encastrent, s'agrippent, se desserrent, se bagarrent, se fuient, on est Haitien, bon pour le poteau: "Guardia, fusile lo!" (76)

Like the quick flip of a coin, the value of a human life – its right to live or its condemnation to die – is reduced to a split-second movement of the tongue and mouth as it pronounces the Spanish word for a common cooking herb.

Striking at the core of the novel's message, the absurdity of such a contrived assignment of differential quality highlights the extremity of the injustice at hand, unabashedly exposing the madness of Trujillo's malicious plan to populate the Dominican Republic with only *los blancos de la tierra* (83). However, while the rationale behind the violence is based on the contemptible delusions of a man mad with power, the brutality perpetrated by his vision is deadly serious and entirely real. In a few short days, the voices of the border are transformed from a lively chorus of harmonious local community to a mass of entirely self-conscious Haitian and Dominican individuals, some

crippled by their inability to articulate the singular sound of the dark-magic word that has aggressively infiltrated every aspect of existence.

> Une voix, la voix de tête presque surnaturelle d'un homme squelettique à la peau chocolat, psalmodie: “Perejil!” Le mot est repris aussitôt par des milliers de gosiers haïtiens et dominicains, (comme une incantation lente, lourde, épaisse) puis s'affaisse, aspiré par un immense trou d'air, pour après s’envoler dessus les têtes des récitants sur les roches blanches, s'écrouler encore et se confondre. Un mot qui a flambé dans des yeux, bouilli dans des entrailles, galopé sur des plaines, traversé des rivières, mais que n'arrivent pas à bien prononcer les lèvres haïtiennes. Un mot qui porte la mort: “Perejil!” Un condiment, roturier de potager. (93)

The tangible dangers of such an oppressive and frivolous test cause the peoples of the border not only to abandon their holistic communities and ways of life, but also to lose their faith in words altogether, resorting instead to other forms of less dangerous communication:

> Au milieu du tumulte des voix, dans les émanations des sueurs, par-dessus le roulis des têtes, ils se font de larges gestes profonds avec des mains, des chapeaux, des branches, des mouchoirs, comme si les mots, n'ayant pas assez de force, d’allant ou de mémoire, n'arrivaient pas. Ou tout simplement comme si les mots avaient trahi. (99)

Furthermore, echoing how Europeans would deflect their own responsibility by citing examples of slaves’ rebellion to further justify enslaving them, don Agustin ironically blames the Haitians for being uncooperative – for betraying the word and the Dominican nation in mispronunciation – and therefore deserving of their murderous punishment. “Selon don Agustin de Cortoba […] les lèvres haïtiennes ont massacré le mot. Les lèvres haïtiennes n’ont rien de constructif. Ni de coopératif. Elles ont abandonné le mot. Trompé le mot. L’ont couillonné. La vengeance est à l’ordre du jour” (100). Using psychological warfare common to abusers, don Agustin flips the responsibility from the perpetrator onto the victim, framing the sufferer for the crime, as if to say, ‘*You* made me kill you

when *you* didn't meet the requirements that I established.' The creative variation, personalization, and endless possibility of language are thereby reduced to a binary between the correct pronunciation and the wrong one; this interconnecting tool of the people has been reduced to a divisive weapon to be used against them.

The Holistic Chaos of Chicha Calma

As we have so far seen, *Le Peuple des terres mêlées* offers numerous messages of interrelation – both implicit and explicit – through its ecosyntax, its use of juxtaposition, and its many didactic stories told by the omniscient narrator. In this last section of textual analysis, I turn my attention to the role of the passenger bus, Chicha Calma, whose chaotic narrative in motion offers distinctive philosophical insights and commentary throughout the border people chapters. Much like the interwoven syntax of people, animals, and the natural world throughout the narrative of the borderlands villagers, the numerous passages featuring Chicha Calma interweave her thoughts and actions with those of her passengers, and the Dominican land through which they travel. "Chicha Calma, avalée par la nuit, poursuit sa route, tête droite. Le bruit roqueteux de son moteur est soutenu de temps en temps par les ronflements des passagers affalés sur les banquettes branlantes" (73). The snoring of her passengers backing the sounds of Chicha's engine suggests the sonic unison of a musical group playing together, evoking the start of the novel when "les tôles des maisons se mettent à crisser, à caqueter, à miauler, à piailler" (11) along with the sounds of villagers as they face the threat of the *machin*.

While Chicha is not the driver (she has different chauffeurs such as don Pipo), marvelously, the bus is conscious and self-possessed. At times just another character

popping onto the scene, at other times speaking directly with her conductor, and at still others dominating the narrative voice, Chicha's rolling presence alternates between first, second, and third person – singular and plural both. While she is called Chicha Calma, she is anything but calm. Representing this mixture of many elements, Chicha embodies the Spiralist philosophy and mode of communication that imbues interconnecting parts with agency.

Throughout her chaotic movement, a connective thread of moral conscience unifies her unpredictability. Indeed, Chicha's jerking, brisk, and rhythmical movements echo don Agustin's punctuated scenes of massacre, but unlike the violence concentrated on the border, Chicha Calma renders the people an important service: she provides them with freedom of movement. Transporting the diverse border peoples and other travelers from the whole of the Dominican Republic – as well as the goods that are their livelihood – Chicha provides a communal, inclusive space for all, while being carefully aware of each of her passengers and their distinctive stories.

In the passage below, the arduous yet rhythmical energy of Chicha's interconnectedness with her world is conveyed by a spinning, narrative movement. From one passenger to the next, to a turkey, a rooster, to the bus driver lost in the night, to the cyclical patterns of roads and destinations, to the Haitian woman chanting the word 'parsley,' to Chicha's relationship to the roads between Dominican cities, Philoctète's narrative structure offers an expanding, spinning, Spiralist expression of Chicha's movement and holistic consciousness, a *guagua* who has spent her whole life traveling the spaces in between.

> L'un d'eux se perd à moitié dans son urine: il doit être diabétique à plein temps. Un autre, dans son rêve, parle d'une jeune fille qui lui aurait soutiré de l'argent et

> qui aurait été se marier à Curaçao avec un pédé hollandais à la tignasse mauve. Chicha Calma souffle. D'une dinde qui aurait croqué une montre en eau massive. Chicha bringuebale. D'un sergent nègre américain dont on aurait coupé le pénis, à Trinidad, un soir de carnaval. Chicha glousse. D'une guitare qui aurait joué de la mandoline comme un cimetière. Chicha pouffe. Un vieillard centenaire rumine en balançant la tête. Il dégobille chaque vingt secondes en marmonnant des excuses. Un coq attaché quelque part sur la plate-forme lance un cocorico. Se ravisant, il ne recommence pas et avale sa fierté. La tête du chauffeur est à peine visible. Elle doit encore penser à ses kilomètres de kilomètres. De Santiago à la Romana. D'asphalte. De Sanchez à Higuey. De boue. De Monte-Christi à San Pedro. De caillasse. Par tout le pays. De chairs, de chansons. Sa tête de chauffeur dominicain, perdue dans la nuit de la guagua parmi les borborygmes des ventres des passagers et la voix à peine perceptible de la jeune femme ânonnant: 'Perejil!' (73-74)

Just as Chicha is sensitive to the details of the people and animals who populate her internal existence in transit from town to town, she is also attentive to the world outside: from the asphalt and mud beneath her wheels to the landscapes she blusters through, her tail of wind whipping things around in her wake. Again echoing the violence occurring on the border, her motion is ferocious, as she "dépèce l'air noir de la nuit" (75). At the same time, Chicha is sensitive not only to the natural world as she speeds through it, but also to the interrelated nature of the two sides – Dominican and Haitian – as evidenced in her reverent perceptions of the border peoples.

In this way, Chicha represents the in-between, the middle ground – the complete scene between the antipodes of the binary constructions, echoing the efforts and philosophies of Pedro, Adèle, and other members of the border community, while at the same time acting out a violence unmistakably reflective of the ongoing genocide. Chicha is as chaotically ambiguous and difficult to define as the complex totality of existence, and yet her moral makeup consistently supports the good of the whole. As we will soon see, when she is confronted with the realities of the genocide, her reaction of panic,

followed by disbelief and outrage, highlight her developed sense of compassion and humanity.

Echoing Pedro and Adèle's interrelated eco-consciousness, Chicha and the surroundings through which she travels mutually affect each other. In numerous examples, she lifts and spreads the scent of wild daises on the winds born of her breakneck movement.

> Chicha dépèce l'air noir de la nuit. Dans son carnage elle emporte le parfum des marguerites sauvages qui bordent la route et qui s'égaillent en même temps dans les terres à perte de vue. La nuit dominicaine dans son accoutrement sombre a une allure royale. Une étoile haut perchée, superbe, la couronne. Dire qu'elle est aussi une étoile haïtienne. Vue sans doute par ceux de là-bas, de Locaré, Boc-Banic, Ferrier, Maribaroux, Guayaba, Capotille, Ouanaminthe, par les populations de la frontière. (75)

Yet again, the narrative voice communicates the importance of the natural world by infusing it with the esteem and power of royalty, reminiscent of Pedro's early morning walk to work in which the "aurore franche, royale, chevauche les deux terres, celle d'ici, la basse, celle de là-bas, la haute, sereine étrangement!" (19). In this instance, however, the Dominican night, that "dans son accoutrement sombre a une allure royale," is crowned by a high star "perchée, superbe." The multiple, widening perspectives – from the earth-bound daisies' perfume dispersing into the night air to the high, perching star – expands the scope of consciousness from the local to the national to the terrestrial to the cosmic, demonstrating Spiralism in process. From this grand standpoint – or rather hover-point – from the spinning heights of space and back down again to the island of Hispaniola, the star becomes "aussi une étoile haïtienne," as it is "[v]ue sans doute par ceux de là-bas, […] par les populations de la frontière." Such an exercise in widening perspectives dissolves the limits of man-made borders and nationality, and shows the

reality of one island rising from the ocean, dotted with plants and animals, some of whom are human.

After this comprehensive moment of inclusion, Chicha's attention is drawn to two of her passengers: Pedro, and his neighbor, a young Haitian woman, as they work together to find the right sounds that might save her life. Soon after the woman's struggle, where the letters in her mouth "se déboitent, s'encastrent, s'agrippent, se desserrent, se bagarrent, se fuient […], Chicha Calma laisse la route, entre d'emblée dans le spectacle des marguerites, traverse le court-circuit des lucioles. Chicha a peur" (76). While the goings-on and conversations among her passengers have already put her on edge, it is the radio news on the winds from Elias Piña whispering in her ear that provokes her to drive off the road – to break away from the linear confines of her routine:

> 'Nul ne peut se permettre de commenter l'erreur de la Guardia, un incident de parcours, un massacre marginal. D'ailleurs, sur les mêmes bords du Guayamuco, quatre mille sept cent quatre-vingt-quatre ouvriers agricoles haïtiens sont descendus, en revanche – Voyagez par le Panama Line – Le Panama Line rend le monde plus rapide.' (76)

"Bouleversée" by the news of an incomprehensibly large number of Haitian farmworkers slaughtered, Chicha "laisse résolument la route," lurching into the natural world with her passengers, off and away from the reality and symbolism of the manmade, Dominican road.[22] This rebellious move made in panic demonstrates how Chicha's compliance has reached its limit. For her, things cannot carry on *business as usual.*

Philoctète's exultant language depicts the natural word as a glorious, unfolding performance into which Chicha escapes, as she attempts to flee the horrific words pouring from the "vent-radio-de-bord." Chicha crosses through a sparkling mass of

[22] In fact, Trujillo was responsible for extensive infrastructure development throughout the country, including the construction and upkeep of roads and bridges.

fireflies blinking on and off, taking refuge in the "spectacle" of wild daisies – flowers that represent innocence, purity, and healing, the exact opposite of the realities occurring at the border. It is unclear whether the radio "furète alentour, cabriole, vire, grésille" due to Chicha's chaotic movements, or if it, too, has gone wild from its incapacity to accept the words it is transmitting. As usual, the news report ends with an advertisement, this time for Panama Line, a transnational cargo, freight and passenger company promising to "rend[re] le monde plus rapide" (76), further highlighting the significance of Chicha's emotional decision to discontinue her regular route and role as hired transporter.

The *guagua*'s profound physical response contrasts with the impartial and nonchalant radio announcement, exposing her empathy, panic, and even denial: "Chicha feint de ne pas entendre. En somme, elle n'arrive pas à croire ce qu'elle vient d'entendre" (77). After abandoning the road, her passengers temporarily forgotten, she continues her crazy movement through the wilderness, as she "s'empêtre" in the scent of the wild daisies, and "saute un carré de yuca" (77). As she maneuvers violently about through the night, trying to process her shock and her impulsive need to bolt, the Spiralist narrative of inclusion reveals the relationship between Chicha and the world she has entered.

A cuckoo bird, symbolic of time, expresses its own fear – whether in sympathy with her or in reaction to her barreling movement (or both) – as it "roule ses gros yeux bêtes, fixes de terreur." Still trying to "admettre ce qu'elle a entendu," Chicha nearly crashes into a cow sleeping beneath a fig tree. The cow's startled mooing trails behind her frenzied driving: "A accepter le fait. Le meuglement a traîné." She plows into a field, scraping by animal pens, "[e]n plein horizon perdu" (77).

Just as Chicha is beginning to think critically about her impulsivity, and to question just what, exactly, she is fleeing ("Pour fuir. Et fuir quoi?"), "[l]e vent-radio reprend," delivering a new round of horrific news. The update presents the murder of individuals involved in any form of State resistance in a purely positive light, "de plus en plus rassurantes" (77), communicating the depths of ideological dehumanization.

> 'Aucune approche des forces adverses, sinon quelques têtes chaudes dominicaines, des ouvriers! Et quelques voix haïtiennes, des paysans! ont tenté de résister... Elles ont été vite matées, mises en demeure de ne pas contrarier l'ordre des choses – En tout état de cause, il n'a jamais été question pour des classes inférieures de faire la leçon aux lumières de la nation...' (77)

The State-run radio reminds its listeners of Trujillo's absolute power of top-down social hierarchy in which the people fighting for their lives are represented as inferior, bothersome peasants. By stepping outside of their place in the system, they have thereby become deserving of whatever punishment befalls them at the hands of the enlightened elite. After hearing how any Haitian and Dominican resistance – and therefore hope – have been "vite matées," (reinforcing what happens to those who go against "l'ordre des choses"), the bus, a champion of the border peoples, comes apart – not only emotionally, but also physically. "Chicha craque sous ses bois, sous ses fers. Chicha trépigne. Elle ébranle un poulailler. La nuit craquette, piaule, piaille. Chicha rouspète" (77). After Chicha shakes up the henhouse, it is the night that makes the bird noises and not the chickens themselves, showing the Spiralist transmission of movement between subjects. "Elle saccage les planches d'un potager. La terre, s'éveille, flotte, voyage. Chicha s'énerve. Décidément, elle n'arrive pas à accepter!" (77). Chicha cannot contain the knowledge of the intolerable violence carried by the winds of the radio. It provokes chaos within her, which she externalizes through her actions, like a train off its tracks.

Lacking ill intention, Chicha's violence is pure reaction – in contrast to Trujillo's premeditated project, defined by self-righteousness and deliberate malice. In addition, as "[l]a terre s'éveille, flotte, voyage" from the frenzy of her spinning wheels, we find a double entendre. Read on a local level, the word "terre" describes the flying dirt that she throws up with her tires, causing the soil to behave in ways contrary to the laws of physics. If we understand the word on a global level, however, the perspective pans out to an awakening planet, floating, traveling – which can be read as a Spiralist, big-perspective call to collective change on a global scale.

The news Chicha hears on the radio from across the border is also cause for despair, as Sténio Vincent, (President from 1930-1941) and the rest of the Haitian government remain complicit in their silence as the brutality continues.

> Le vent rapplique:
> 'Sur l'affaire des cabezas, Port-au-Prince garde le silence le plus recommandé –
> Les citoyens vaquent à leurs occupations. Les bureaux du Gouvernement
> fonctionnent normalement. Le Président Vincent mange à sa faim.'
> A comprendre.
> 'Ses maîtresses aussi.'
> A saisir.
> 'Leurs gigolos aussi.'
> A tolérer. (77)

The fact that President Vincent "mange à sa faim" – as do his mistresses, and their gigolos – is an explicit reference to the corruption between the Haitian and Dominican governments, in which money flowed west. In *Why the Cocks Fight: Dominicans, Haitians, and the Struggle for Hispaniola*, Michelle Wucker addresses the reasons why "[t]he Haitian government's reaction to the massacre was oddly muted." Citing the power of money, corruption, and the importance of image, she describes how "Trujillo had supported Haitian president Sanyo Vincent. If he had not gone along with Trujillo's

efforts to mask what really happened at the border, Vincent risked having his relationship with the Dominican dictator come out in the open, which would have destroyed him politically" (54). Vincent's silence, and, as Philoctète depicts him, his bingeing opulence at the same moment his people were being specifically targeted for annihilation communicates the violence of indifference, the polar opposite of Chicha's reaction.

Chicha's mounting emotional and physical panic, evoked by her consciousness of the atrocities unfolding around her, finally culminates as she finds herself "au paroxysme de l'énervement" (78). Chicha "saute sur des plates-bandes de pois chiche, charge une cahute" (78). Philoctète's playful alliteration and assonance contrast with Chicha's unraveling actions as she turns on herself, backfiring, smoking, spinning in circles, while a "tir de mitraillette quelque part cloue une vie" (78), resounding with her engine's sudden burst. Echoing the cuckoo bird's terror-stricken eyes toward the beginning of her off-road spree, "[l]'heure, dérangée, ouvre un œil. Apeurée, se replie. Chicha gigote, fulmine, explose" (78). At this emotionally and physically volatile moment, when it seems as though Chicha is approaching her own explosive demise, driven mad by the irrational violence being perpetrated upon the border peoples and the complicities of all sides enabling it, her driver, don Pipo, awakens her out of the terror-induced madness by reminding her of who she is: interconnected with the peoples of the border.

> Calma! Señorita Chicha! Du calme! tu portes dans tes pneus l'esprit du peuple de la frontière. Un peuple qui sait jouer de la dissimulation, saisir les nuances, disséquer les parties d'un tout, cerner les à-peu-près, se servir des en-cas. Un peuple qui vit avec l'impondérable, reçoit au même degré, orages et éclaircies. (78)

Don Pipo's description of the border people, *le peuple des terres mêlées,* is the heart through which the novel's lifeblood cycles, the center around which the parts of

Philoctète's spiraling story are built. Filling Chicha's tires, their *esprit* keeps her buoyant and moving.

As with all translation, analyzing Philoctète in English highlights the ideological power of language. Before continuing on with my textual analysis, let us momentarily reflect on the interconnective (but general) and divisive (but particular) potential of individual words, often lost in translation. As with the word *terre,* that creates an interconnecting quality between the local and the global (as it can refer to dirt, to clay, to the ground, to a specific land, zone, or area, or to the whole planet), the French word *esprit* carries multiple meanings – from ghost or spirit (like its English cognate), to a broader spectrum of meanings such as mind, intellect, sense, psyche, and even diplomacy. The rich – and far more rigorous – range of meanings in the word *esprit* is reduced in both the Spanish '*espiritu*' and the English 'spirit,' both of which reference a person's willpower or spunk, or carry strong spiritual connotations. Thus, the English translation 'spirit' (as used by Linda Coverdale) unwittingly reinforces the colonial binary that assigned rational intellect to Europeans (as keepers of valuable knowledge) and reduced Indigenous peoples of Africa and the Americas to brutish animals (driven by superstition). It is important to underline the robust intellectual connotations within the word *esprit,* particularly in the context of Trujillo's disparaging and dehumanizing radio declaration that "il n'a jamais été question pour des classes inférieures de faire la leçon aux lumières de la nation" (77).

Contrary to such a false binary – and at the extreme opposite of Trujillo's black and white world – is the border people's uniquely sensitive, astute, and intricate cultural consciousness. Don Pipo wakes Chicha from her despair by describing them as a people

who 'know how to play dissimulation,' as they would a play a guitar, or perhaps play *at* dissimulation. Coverdale translates this as "[a] people who know how to ring changes on dissimulation" (121), an interpretation that creates a multidimensional aspect, rather than the more negative connotations of the word dissimulation (such as pretense, dishonesty, or fakery). My interpretation of "[u]n peuple qui sait jouer de la dissimulation" is that the border peoples are wily; they know how to wear multiple hats, use various registers, and speak in several languages.

Don Pipo points out how the border culture knows how to "saisir les nuances," highlighting the sensitivity of their particular intelligence, one that reflects their multicultural and multilingual world. He reminds Chicha of how the border population is able to dissect the parts of a whole, implying not only the ability to understand how the complex parts of any systems function, but its common practice. Next, don Pipo addresses the border peoples' flexibility and ease with ambiguity, and how they can "cerner les à-peu-près," as well as how they can "se servir des en-cas," communicating their readiness to take the myriad possibilities that arise given different conditions and factors as easily as they would help themselves to a snack. His further qualification of them as "[u]n peuple qui vit avec l'impondérable," speaks to their experience with that which cannot be weighed, like the energy of light or heat. *Impondérable* also expresses the unpredictable, the immeasurable, the ineffable, all of which pose no threat to a people comfortable with ambiguity and mystery.

Finally, the fact that the border people "reçoit au même degré, orages et éclaircies" (78) reinforces their flexibility and openness to the ever-changing world around them, prepared for whatever the weather might bring. The fact that they receive

both storm and sunshine with the same attitude not only speaks of their adaptability and roll-with-it attitude, but conjures Pedro's declaration to Adèle that Caribbean people are "le creuset des joies et des douleurs" (83), a people who live in between difference in all ways, from the physical to the figurative. With difference serving as a uniting force, the border people's cooperative qualities represent everything that Trujillo lacks, despises, and wants to destroy. While he couches his motivation for slaughter in terms of racial supremacy – striving to make the Dominican Republic a nation in which *los blancos de la tierra* rule, his attack is in fact grounded in much more profound positions of difference, such as the border philosophies of interconnectedness, as don Pipo outlines.

The singular Trujillo, perched above his vast army, creates the chasm of difference that catalyzes the novel's genocidal border. As the designer of negative difference, Trujillo capitalizes on a long legacy of Haitian-Dominican tensions. While the Dominican people were victims of propaganda – a campaign of demonization spread across the country through radio, publicized imagery, and even the church, as we saw in Chapter Three – were they not also responsible? How could they stand by and do nothing but go complacently about their lives, while Haitian and Dominican children, parents and grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles, friends and strangers were being hacked to pieces on their own land, by their own government?

After many more complex and chaotic pages – a spinning narrative hurricane involving Chicha, don Pipo, don Agustin, Emmanuela, Adèle and Pedro, the radio, Trujillo and his role models Mussolini and Hitler, as well as the border people falling under the army's blades –, Chicha takes pause to reflect on the Dominican people. Herself Dominican – with noble blood ("vieille garce de Chicha loca, ce foutu caractère,

tu l'as dans le sang... ce sang exubérant des hidalgos" (78)), she takes stock in herself, carefully defining both her physical and her mental identity based on nineteen years of service as a working *guagua.*

> Depuis que je me connais, c'est-à-dire depuis 1918, moi, Chicha Calma, guagua Ford no. 2742, 113 contraventions, service-graissage-serrage 16 fois, panne de batterie 15 fois, de radio de bord 6 fois, de moteur 8 fois, de pneus 432, panne sèche nullement, je n'ai jamais pu tolérer l'immobilisme. Je suis une guagua progressiste. Je me révolte contre tout sortilège qui consisterait à me retenir sur place. Ai-je des caoutchoucs pour la camisole? Zombi? Moi? Allons donc, jamais de la vie! Mais par quoi ou par qui nos gens sont-ils piégés? Curieux, non? Peut-être une maladie collective? Ce que les vieux appellent un saisissement? (111)

Listing off statistics like badges of honor from a lifetime of service on the road, Chicha first lays down the physical proof of a life in motion before pronouncing her intolerance for immobility, and even more, before declaring herself "progressiste," communicating that forward motion – and forward thinking – are intrinsic to her being. The fact that she revolts "contre tout sortilège qui consisterait à me retenir sur place" openly speaks her commitment to free movement, and implies a readiness to fight against Trujillo's oppression.

Playing with an imaginary of opposites, Chicha asks rhetorically, "Ai-je des caoutchoucs pour la camisole?" emphasizing how her tires are specifically made for motion and freedom – the opposite of a straightjacket that symbolizes the increasingly rigid and oppressive rule of Trujillo and his army. She then asks, "Zombi? Moi?" to which she replies, "Allons donc, jamais de la vie!" These sarcastic questions that reiterate her values of consciousness, freedom, and motion set up a narrative tension that increases the message of the all too serious question that follows: "Mais par quoi ou par qui nos gens sont-ils piégés? Curieux, non?" Chicha wants to know how the people she has served her whole life could succumb to the trap of either demonizing Haitians, or

remaining indifferent to the border massacres. Pondering the answer, she asks "Peut-être une maladie collective? Ce que les vieux appellent un saisissement?" (111). Because Chicha, like the border people, understands the infinite nuance of a spectrum, she cannot condemn the Dominican people as "bad." Because she knows them as human beings, the only explanations she can imagine to explain how a nation could stand by and do nothing, are ones in which Dominicans could have caught a communicable disease, or are victims of a group paroxysm, during which normal consciousness and control are inaccessible to them. Chicha can only fathom that they are out of their bodies and minds, and are instead under the influence of an extensive spell, cast through Trujillo's state propaganda and nationalist brainwashing.

Certainly, as we can witness through Philoctète's various representations of Dominicans, all are not hateful or indifferent to the massacre, especially in the border region. In particular, Pedro, as well as Guillermo Sánchez, or "*el trabajador*," attempt to organize a resistance movement, gathering together after work or during breaks "pour envisager les moyens de sauver du massacre autant de têtes haïtiennes possibles" (62). Already experienced in labor union organization, Guillermo addresses the longstanding Dominican reliance on poorly paid Haitian laborers, communicating to the group how "[l]'économie dominicaine dépend de la sueur haïtienne. On ne sabote pas la machine quand on vit de la machine" (62). The omniscient narrator hopes along with them: "[s]i les ouvriers se mettaient à faire valoir leur sueur, ils finiraient peut-être par contrer la folie de Trujillo" (62). While the cane workers did have the combined strengths of their bodies, minds, and hearts on their side, the fact of the matter is that they were out-matched and out of time: "Mais nos moyens sont limités. Nos organisations sont jeunes.

Elles manquent de cohérence et de pouvoir d'action. Il nous faut beaucoup de temps avant de pouvoir lutter efficacement contre les forces établies" (62). Despite the seeds of resistance and revolution being present, the scale and speed of Trujillo's army prevented their growth.

Chicha's hectic, non-stop, *aller-retour* motion throughout the novel's narrative reflects her generous ethics ("panne sèche nullement" (111)), extending far beyond the paths I have highlighted in this chapter. She is a voice of reason, as Chicha Calma, and as Chicha loca. Non-human, she represents a more neutral position. At the same time, her voice carries the most articulate and ethically based declarations concerning humanity, as well as some of the most human reactions to violence and trauma.

From the examples of transborder friendship (between Juanita and Nathan, and between Prospero and Urbain) to the starkly contrasting absolute reduction of value *into a single, arbitrary word,* to the explosive physical and vocal presence of Chicha as champion of interrelation, the narrative takes us back and forth, around and around, constantly building in momentum and chaos – demonstrating, in the context of genocide and totalitarian rule, that the consciousness of Spiralist interrelation is a relevant and vital tool in the ongoing fight against socio-political and environmental injustices.

Gouverneurs de la rosée's Interrelation

In *Gouverneurs de la rosée*'s socially divided setting, Manuel's character is the voice and instigator of interrelation, regarding all of the people in his village as equally valuable members of the community. His position is made clearest during a town hall meeting – one that Annaïse helped facilitate by reaching out to women in the community,

who then convinced their men to attend. At the meeting, when Manuel addresses Gervilen[23] (son of Dorisca, who was killed by Manuel's uncle, Sauveur), as "compere," he bitterly replies, "Ne m'appelle pas compère. Je ne suis rien pour toi" (152). Gervilen is not only profoundly and personally enmeshed in the familial conflict, but is also seething with jealousy, as he is in love with Annaïse. Not only refusing to be addressed with such a familiar and friendly name, Gervilen even denies his existence as a human being in relation to Manuel, communicating the depth of the animosity – even to the point of dehumanization.

Although Manuel has discovered a new water source, he knows that the only way to bring it to Fonds Rouge is through the organization of a coumbite, requiring those on both sides to move beyond the familial conflict and to join together for the benefit of all: "le concoure de tous serait nécessaire [et] l'eau les unirait à nouveau, son haleine fraîche disperserait l'odeur maligne de la rancune et de la haine; la communauté fraternelle renaîtrait avec les plantes nouvelles, les champs chargés de fruits et d'épis, la terre gorgée de vie simple et féconde" (75). Gervilen's stance of non-existence – "Je ne suis rien pour toi" – causes Manuel to launch into a spirited speech about human value and community, fueled by the life and death situation of the town's water shortage:

> Tous les habitants sont pareils, dit Manuel, tous forment une seule famille. C'est pour ça qu'ils s'appellent entre eux: frère, compère, cousin, beau-frère. L'un a besoin de l'autre. L'un périt sans le secours de l'autre. C'est la vérité du coumbite. Cette source que j'ai trouvée demande le concours de tous les habitants de Fonds Rouge. Ne dites pas non. C'est la vie qui commande et quand la vie commande, faut répondre: présent. (152)

Manuel's insistence upon the interconnectedness between people and their need for solidarity is both heartfelt and practical.

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[23] Phonetically, Gervilen sounds like "gère vilain," akin to "manages wickedness."

His words have little affect on Gervilen's rage, however. Despite the fact that Saveur died in prison, for Gervilen, the revenge must be taken with his own hands. After the meeting, in which most community members show signs of wanting to make peace, Manuel, feeling the energy of externalized and communal hope, walks alone through the night, appreciating the stars: "Quel jardin d'étoiles dans le ciel et la lune glissait parmi elles, si brillante et aiguisée que les étoiles auraient dû tomber comme des fleurs fauchées" (155). When he reaches Annaïse's home, he stops for a moment to dream of their future, full of hard work and love. "Ce sera comme ça, ma négresse, et tu verras que ton homme n'est pas un fainéant, mais un nègre vaillant levé chaque jour au premier chant du coq, un travailleur de la terre sans reproche, un gouverneur de la rosée véritable" (155). At this moment, when everything appears to be falling into place, with social resolution and the beginnings of a new solidarity taking root, his blossoming love sleeping in the house before him, and the possibility of forming a combite becoming a reality, Manuel is overjoyed. "il respira l'odeur des fleurs de campêchers et une grande joie calme et grave entra en lui. 'Repose Anna, repose, chère, jusqu'au lever du soleil" (155). At the precise moment when his life is approaching its fullest, Gervilen, who believes he is avenging his father's death, sneaks up on Manuel, stabs him twice and leaves him for dead. Manuel manages to drag himself home.

As he is dying, he begs his mother to keep his murder a secret, as he knows that the news would undo the tenuous steps toward reconciliation that he worked so hard to produce, and destroy the chances of bringing water to the village: "Dit-lui la volonté de mon sang qui a coulé: la réconciliation, la réconciliation pour que la vie recommence, pour que le jour se lève sur la rosée" (160). Délira respects his wishes, and tells Hilarion

that Manuel is sick with a fever that he brought back with him from Cuba. In his Christ-like roll of sacrificial savior, and with the real cause of his death hidden, the town is moved to respect Manuel's last wishes, which Délira relates to the others: "Je ne suis pas venue pour vous raconter ma peine, je suis venue pour vous rapporter la dernière volonté de mon garçon. C'est à moi qu'il parlait, mais c'est à vous tous qu'il s'adressait: 'Chanter mon deuil, qu'il a dit, chanter mon deuil avec un champ de coumbite' (185). With these words, the families remain on the path toward cooperation, and with Annaïse as their guide, they find the water source and begin work on the system of canals. In this sense, Manuel is an agent of interconnection, a facilitator of healing, and the town's inspiration for claiming agency over their fate.

Voicing a newfound sense of personal power – rather than leaving all things up to the gods, Délira communicates a consciousness of interrelation:

> On chante le deuil, c'est la coutume, avec les cantiques de mort, mais lui, Manuel, a choisi un quantique pour les vivants: le chant du coumbite, le chant de la terre, de l'eau, des plantes, de l'amitié entre habitants, parce qu'il a voulu, je comprends maintenant, que sa mort soit pour vous le recommencement de la vie. (185)

Although Manuel's life was tragically stolen, from his martyred death flows hope for the living. In the novel's last chapter, titled, "La Fin et le commencement," even the greedy Hilarion recognizes that his own power has diminished with the success of the combite. He wonders about imposing a tax on the water, but thinks better of it: "On verra. (Oui, on verra si les habitants se laisseront faire.) Ces derniers jours, ils travaillent à la source même, à la tête de l'eau, comme ils disent. Ils ont suivi point pour point les indications de Manuel. Il est mort, Manuel, mais c'est toujours lui qui guide" (189). The infectious spirit of workers' solidarity that Manuel brought back from Cuba is now alive in the town's

combite, bonding the people in their shared power, and causing the masters of exploitation to doubt their own authority.

In the wake of Manuel's death, Délira and Annaïse bond, and consider each other family, calling each other "ma fille" and "maman," finding joy in each other in spite of their sadness. After Annaïse makes a joke about a "stupid" inedible fruit that looks like a brain, Délira replies, "Mais tu es maligne, oui, s'écria Délira. Tu vas faire rire cette vieille Délira malgré elle" (191). Listening to the songs of the combite workers floating on the breeze – sung in honor of their departed leader – "*Manuel Jean-Joseph, ho nègre vaillant, enhého!*" Délira silently envisions the green life of the times to come, as the omniscient narrator details: "bientôt cette plaine aride se couvrirait d'une haute verdure; dans les jardins pousseraient les bananiers, le maïs, les patates, les ignames, les lauriers roses et les lauriers blancs, et ce serait grâce à son fils" (192). Délira, who once insisted that the drought was a fate handed down from the gods, now understands how Manuel engendered the change through his knowledge, determination, and genuine good will towards all members of the community, thereby changing the course of the village's destiny. While in Chapter Three I analyzed the literal meaning of Manuel's name in French, its Hebrew origin means "God is with us," symbolizing his role as benevolent savior.

Echoing her son's last feelings and thoughts, Délira's profound appreciation for the web of interconnected steps that began with Manuel's return from Cuba and led to a green, fruitful village that can sustain the community – comes to its fulfillment: "Maman, dis Annaïse d'une voix étrangement faible. Voici l'eau" (192). The description of the shining water finally flowing into the new canal mirrors the description of the deadly

silver blade that ended his life, yet caused the inspiration for the town's unification and salvation: "[u]ne mince lame d'argent s'avançait dans la plaine et les habitants l'accompagnaient en criant et en chantant" (192). As she witnesses the water's arrival, Délira is overwhelmed with grief that her son is gone and cannot see the results of his project. "Oh Manuel, Manuel, Manuel, pourquoi es-tu mort? gémit Délira" (192). Ending the novel with an emotional blast of hope and renewal, Anna tells her no, as she "sourit à travers ses larmes, non, il n'est pas mort. Elle prit la main de la vieille et la pressa doucement contre son ventre où remuait la vie nouvelle" (192). The hope of new life growing inside Annaïse, combined with the hope of new life made possible through the combite's efforts, end Roumain's heroic tale - in which division is mended through Manuel's environmental and interconnective consciousness, now a part of the whole village. Roumain's local setting and tangible, commonplace conflict provides an accessible, personable, and romantic construct that evokes in the reader the most basic and powerful of human emotions. It can be read as a moral lesson, teaching that without the health of the whole, the health of the parts will fail. Kaima Glover describes *Gouverneurs* as

> a future-looking narrative – a tale of redemption and rebirth. Roumain's little rural Haitian village eventually overcomes the spatio-temporal obstacles that prevent it from flourishing. Consummate tale of the primacy of the human spirit over the indifference and cruelty of the natural and political New World, the characters of Gouverneurs ultimately make peace with nature and subvert the pernicious corruption of the state. They slay their beasts. (126)

Filled with strife, love, loss, reconciliation, and hope, *Gouverneurs de la rosée* offers an accessible yet profound message of the importance of balance and interrelation – between groups of people and the natural world – in the overcoming of various forms of capitalist exploitation. As Annaïse recalls Manuel telling her – as clearly as if it was yesterday –

"la vie, c'est un fil qui ne se casse pas, qui ne se perd jamais et tu sais pourquoi? Parce que chaque nègre pendant son existence y fait un nœud: c'est le travail qu'il a accompli et c'est ça qui rend la vie vivante dans les siècles des siècles: l'utilité de l'homme sur cette terre" (190). In this vision of each life as a knot along a united and unbreakable thread, each life is interconnected to the next, making the continuation of the great thread of life possible through what is accomplished, knot by knot.

Tú, la oscuridad's Interrelation

Unlike the explicit themes of interrelation in Roumain and Philoctète's novels, in Montero's *Tú, la oscuridad,* interrelation is implicitly communicated through its environmental consciousness, presented most noticeably in the breaks detailing frog extinctions interspersed throughout the narrative, as I have analyzed earlier in the dissertation. While each account of extinction focuses on specific species, locations and timeframes, when they are considered as parts of a collection, they paint a globally affected picture of habitat precarity, the causes of which remain mysterious to all parties in the novel – faith-based and science-based perspectives alike.

Overt messages of interrelation do not appear in Thierry and Victor's narratives. Instead, Montero suggests interrelation by depicting its absence. While the structural division of Victor and Thierry's alternating chapters emphasizes their separation as subjects, in contrast to Philoctète's spiralist prose, the resonances between their narrative voices emphasize surprisingly similar psychological profiles. Both men struggle while seeking the validation and approval of their masculinity from male authority figures, evident in their relationships to the two Australian herpetologists: Thierry to Jasper

Wilbur (called Papa Crapaud[24] by Thierry) and Victor to Doctor Vaughn Patterson. As Wilbur was professor and friend to Patterson, Victor finds meaning in the links among the four men and their search for frogs: "Me pareció de buen augurio que el círculo se cerrara precisamente aquí, después de tanto tiempo, conmigo y con el mismo guía envejecido, acaso con las mismas ranas" (37). Although Victor feels the comfort of the interconnection between his own fate and those of the other frog trackers, he withholds himself from the spiral's movement, assuming that his presence on the island meant a stoppage of the circle, rather than simply another turn.

Victor's experiences in Haiti depict personal and intellectual challenges that transform him, opening his logical mind to rationalities alien to him, and in some instances, such as his reconnection with his body's odors, introducing him to his own humanity, as I detailed in Chapter Two. The relationship between the two is redolent of Enlightenment tropes of Occidental rejuvenation through contact with so-called "primitive" cultures and "noble savages." It can even be argued that Victor represents disconnection. In the novel, he is not only isolated in the myopic specialization of his academic research, obsessively focusing on one small part of the biosphere as he tracks one frog species; he is also isolated in his personal life, estranged from his wife Martha who, as we learn in the first pages of the novel, is in an ambiguous relationship with her best friend, Barbara. In contrast, Thierry's perspective illustrates an awareness of interrelation between life and death, magic and ecological knowledge, love and hate – all communicated through the frames of faith, mysticism, and the indeterminable mystery of darkness.

[24] In French, *crapaud* means toad – as well as a slur for a Frenchman

The richest explorations of interconnection in Montero's novel are carried out in the negative spaces created by its absence within the self-consciousness of the protagonizing characters, their (limited) understandings of their own relationships and the resulting fragmentation of community and environment. As mentioned previously, the notion of darkness symbolically suggests the potential turns and movements of a spiral of interrelation while emphasizing the suffering, indignity and deterioration that impact human, amphibian and ecological communities in its absence. The novel's title, *Tú, la oscuridad,* brings to the fore the impenetrability of the role of interlocutor to each of the narrators, while suggesting that in this nexus of human connection – one that fails both Victor and Thierry – lies their ultimate redemption, and perhaps, that of the planet as well.

The title is as mysterious as the extinction phenomena that drive the plot. It is originally uttered by Ganesha, Papá Crapaud's mistress who ultimately leads to his demise, a prayer "a la virgin de los muchos brazos, una que ella llamaba Mariamman. Repitió varias veces ese rezo: 'O, toi, lumière…Toi, l'Inmaculée, toi, l'obscurité qui enveloppe l'esprit de ceux qui ignorent ta gloire'" (119). Although Thierry never explicitly states this, his descriptions of Ganesha's appearance (a 'red mole' in the middle of her forehead, orange robes, facial piercings) and her Indian origins are all indicators that she is worshipping here the Southern Tamil incarnation of the Hindu goddess Kali, known as Mariamman. However, the fact that she is praying in French may indicate rather a syncretic form developed in her adoptive Guadeloupe. In addition to providing the title to the novel, this mantra also provides it a certain closure by ending Thierry's last

chapter, presumably appearing in his last thoughts before the fatal shipwreck of the *Neptune*:

> Ganesha estaba muerta y su fantasma vino a soplarme en el oído:
> Tú, la oscuridad que envuelve el espíritu de aquellos que ignoran tu gloria".
> Levanté la cabeza y supe que en la hora de mi muerte, yo también debía decir esas palabras…Veré venir a todos los que espero…y les hablaré despacio para que me entiendan bien: "Tú, la oscuridad…". Entonces ellos me darán la luz. (239)

The triple mention of this refrain – in the title, then nine chapters later in the eponymous tenth chapter "Tú, la oscuridad" and another nine chapters later in "Neptuno" – makes visible the tension between a reality of disconnection, strife and violence, and the urgent need for an alternative.

In a spiralist approach, a close reading of this mantra begins with its full iteration in the virtual middle of the novel, in which Thierry finally answers, in a way, Victor's question about the cause of Papá Crapaud's death. It is the only reaction that Ganesha seems to have to the news of his death, or Thierry's admonition against her interference with the herpetologist's documents and samples. It contains a kind of internal contradiction worthy of radical juxtaposition, since the invoked virgin is both light and darkness, clearly implored as a positive force whose destructive potential is evident. The contradiction, however, is not an absolute or facile one. Mariamman is light and darkness, but the latter only to those who ignore her glory. This darkness, then, is not immanent but rather is constituted through ignorance, through an inability to perceive the impact – or its magnitude – of the deity upon the world of the mortal. Ignoring the source of the light, not acknowledging one's position within the ecosystem – be it environmental, familial, spiritual, scientific – condemns one to a further intensifying darkness.

This resonates with the mystified and mystifying treatment of the extinction episodes mentioned both within the fictional narrative chapters as well as the non-fictional interjectional chapters. Emile Boukaka, the amateur herpetologist, surgeon and houngan summarizes this best: "Ya empezó la gran huida—recalcó--. Ustedes se inventan excusas: la lluvia ácida, los herbicidas, la deforestación. Pero las ranas desaparecen de lugares donde no ha habido nada de eso" (132). This apparent indictment of Occidental scientific knowledge as unable to grasp the causes of the disappearances is much deeper than it appears. Acid rain, herbicides and deforestation are not just excuses invented by Occidental scientists. They are concrete phenomena that are responsible for extinctions, habitat destruction, climate change and other devastations, and a man of Boukaka's intellect, as admired by Victor, would know as much. It does not follow that he would simply discount such facts. His parting words to Victor shed further light on his thought process: "Lo que he aprendido lo aprendí en libros—recalcó Boukaka desde la puerta—. Pero lo que sé, todo lo que sé, lo saqué del fuego y del agua, del agua y la candela: una apaga a la otra" (133). While opposing book learning, and the Western knowledge it symbolizes, to the cosmovision and spiritual practices inherited from his ancestors, Boukaka's comparison is not a simple one of untruth versus truth. What he has learned, he has learned from books in a passive transfer of knowledge that does not engage the position of the learner as such, while what he knows he has actively crafted in fire and water, water and flame, one extinguishing the other. Boukaka values a process of creating knowledge that is embedded in the forces that determine life, a dangerous process that requires one to be fully conscious of one's place in a moving, living system and from that place to seek to understand those forces.

This consciousness, or its absence, represents the tragic flaw of both narrators, indicating that Montero is not falling into stereotypical oppositions of characters that read as stereotypes. Both the rationality of Victor, as well as the sensual, spiritually imbued familial knowledge of Thierry remain blinded to their need for interconnection, and to the causal role its absence plays in the destruction and losses that mark them. Although Thierry's tumultuous stories of nearly incestuous and fragmented familial relations make his pain more apparent than Victor's, the scientist performs repeated disavowals of the state of his relationships that belie his fraught psychic life. He begins his first chapter by recounting the announcement of his death by fire brought back by his wife, Martha, during the Indian adventure she had with her best friend, Bárbara. Implications abound that the relationship between the two women is not strictly platonic, and it is clear that Victor is threatened by it, but he only acknowledges it once:

> Como mujer y hombre, me estremecí. ¿Quién era el hombre entre las dos? ¿O es que acaso se querían como mujer y mujer? ¿Quién fue la que sedujo a quién […] qué se dijo de mí […] qué alegó Martha, qué recuerdos, qué reproches, qué frustraciones desahogó? […] Me sentí de pronto como desesperado, traté de concentrarme en mi recuperación y en la fecha aproximada en que podríamos emprender la expedición a Casetaches. Eso era lo único que debía importarme. (109)

Victor's understanding of the emotional life of his partner, and even of his own emotions, is as perceptive as his scientific knowledge is about the frog extinctions. The questions he asks himself not only do not serve to illuminate the causes for Martha's choice, but they also reveal a self-absorption that makes him unable to accurately assess his own positioning in relation to the two women and their relationship. His disavowal and denial, the avoidant and obsessive turn to his hunt for the *grenouille de sang* so as to avoid his uncomfortable emotions demonstrate a fundamental unwillingness, or inability, to accept

or interrogate his circumstances. It could even be said that this disavowal is responsible for driving him to his watery death off the Haitian coast, especially when combined with the pull of the other formative and unexamined relationship in his life.

Victor undertakes this expedition as much to avoid his reactions to Martha's choice to fulfill their life-long dream of an Indian adventure with her best friend, as to gain the recognition of the Australian herpetologist who becomes a surrogate father figure. Before departing for the last expedition, he takes care of his correspondence:

> Esta noche, antes de salir al campo, escribí dos cartas: una a mi padre y otra para Vaughan Patterson. La de Patterson, que pretendía ser una carta breve y desapasionada, resultó un poco más larga y como cargada de ansiedad. […] Con la carta de mi padre ocurrió todo lo contrario, quise ser afectuoso, empecé por hablarle de Thierry y de su gran curiosidad por los avestruces. Era una forma de decirle que me acordaba del rancho y de los pájaros y que pensaba en él a menudo. Pero la carta me salió tan fría, que me puse a escribir otra, y luego una tercera, y al final rompí las tres […] tomé una tarjeta en blanco de las que utilizaba para rellenar mis fichas, escribí el juego de palabras que me enseñó mi padre y lo metí en un sobre con su dirección. (199-200)

The juxtaposed inversion of the process of relating to these two men is more revealing than any acknowledgment Victor makes of the difficult and obviously impacting relationship with his father. He attempts to align his emotional investment into each letter with the normative role each man plays in his life, consigning Patterson to his scientific prose while attempting connection and tenderness towards his father. However, without questioning why, or the meaning of this outcome, he is unable to textually perform the emotions he thinks he is supposed to feel towards his addressees. His unacknowledged and unconscious psychic life betrays him, however, allowing his existential fears to seep into his academic prose towards his surrogate father, while rendering him unable to connect with his actual father in a meaningful, mature way. Instead, Victor returns to his childhood through a series of free associations arising from his immediate environment

and he decides to objectify his relationship with his father in a word play on an index card, rather than fruitfully engaging with himself, his feelings towards his father, or even his father as a real person.

Victor's psychic landscape as evidenced through the disavowals that are foundational to his character maps onto the *toi, lumière/ tú, la oscuridad* dynamic analyzed earlier in this chapter. He is blinded twice, firstly by his inability to acknowledge his connections, or relationships, as they exist and impact him, and secondly, by the psychic darkness that ensues from such a choice, immobilizing him and actively preventing him from participating in the life-affirming processes of interrelation. The character, then, is tragically determined by a double paralysis that determines his textual fate, a disconnection from life that condemns him to participating actively in the frog extinctions he laments. His ultimate victory in the capture of the last remaining *grenouille du sang* in the last moments before Casetaches fell to the *macoutes* also represents the ultimate destruction of the species, as the final non-fictional entry concludes: "El último ejemplar de la *grenouille du sang*, debidamente preservado, se perdió con ellos en el mar" (241). The dispassionate scientific report of the demise of the three protagonists—Victor, *la grenouille* and Thierry—finally exposes the internal contradiction within Victor's project. How could the systematic capture of remaining specimens of endangered species and their removal from their threatened habitats lead to their preservation? The founding Occidental fallacy of valuing life as merely the object of scientific study rather than as its driving goal is revealed as the first darkness that envelops the scientist, intensifying the second layer, woven by Victor's inability to

connect to the causal forces around him. Ironically, he becomes the vehicle through which Boukaka's explanation of the extinction is materialized:

> Dicen que Agwé Tarayo, el dios de las aguas, ha llamado a las ranas para que se vayan por un tiempo al fondo. Dicen que las han visto partir: animales de agua dulce metiéndose de cabeza en el mar, y las que no tienen tiempo ni fuerzas para llegar al lugar de la reunión, cavan huecos en la tierra para esconderse, o se dejan morir por el camino…Parece absurdo, ¿no? Pues, unos pescadores de Corail[…] informaron que habían sacado del agua cientos de ranas muertas, y que luego se acercaron a la playa[…] y encontraron a los pájaros devorando miles de ranas más. (131)

The location and state in which Victor and Thierry discover their frog aligns with Boukaka's assertion, since *la grenouille* is seemingly disoriented in a dry mountain slope, devoid of the plants and bodies of water that normally constitute the amphibian's habitat. The ultimate trajectory the three are forced to take in their attempt to avoid the looming *macoute* violence aligns with the call of the deep sea that the frog seemed to be in the process of answering when captured.

The unity of this narrative apparent only to the reader, completely impenetrable to the characters themselves as they act as unwitting pawns in an evidently larger process, constitutes the negative space of interrelation that Montero carefully constructs, layering the darknesses, ignorances and blindnesses that bring the story to its closure. While not making it possible to empathize or identify with any of the characters, *Tú, la oscuridad* does call upon the reader to witness, and acknowledge the interconnections the characters themselves cannot, and to imagine the alternatives possible if only they had been able to enter interrelation as their mode of engagement with their situation. As readers, we cannot but wonder whether the global frog extinctions would still occur on a planet on which all life is understood as intrinsically valuable, rather than objectified and "preserved" in sterile laboratories; whether Victor's fate would be different if he had had

the capacity to face his failed relationships rather than obsessively pursue a frog in the midst of civil unrest; whether Thierry's familial relationships would have been less violent and traumatizing if he had acknowledged the stunting impact of his father's masculinity instead of seeking to conquer it in the bodies of the women possessed by his father figures. We cannot help but wonder what the world would look like, what Haiti would look like if light, connection, and relation were the organizing principles of human societies and ecological engagements, rather than the paralyzing darkness of separateness, self-absorption and domination.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION: FROM LITERATURE TO LIFE

There are no unsacred places;
there are only sacred places
and desecrated places
—Wendell Berry

Literature performs a number of cultural functions; prominent among these are its abilities to stimulate the imagination and to enlarge consciousness. Through an imaginative process, each reader absorbs words according to a number of factors, coloring the texts with personalized tone, connotation and meaning. Through the combination of written language and creativity, we can be transported from our specific place, time and experiences, into those of other beings. In this way, literature itself is an interconnecting force. Terry Eagleton describes how the "literary work itself comes to be seen as the mysterious organic unity, in contrast to the fragmented individualism of the capitalist marketplace: it is 'spontaneous' rather than rationally calculated, creative rather than mechanical" (19-20). For those who are open to it, literature can rewire the brain and the heart, as well as increase empathy, knowledge, and understanding of the self, others, and the many conditions of existence on Earth.

The human species lives within the totality of a finite planet, shared by a multiplicity of cohabitating species. While literature approximates and imagines life outside the self, it is not possible for one person to know the perspectives, relationships, and experiences of another being's life – let alone those of whole ecosystems, communities, and cultures, composed of multitudes of sub-cultures and particularities. However, it *is* possible to recognize the physical needs and limits that apply to all 7.4

billion (and counting) humans, as well as the varying parameters of existence for the innumerable other living forms on Earth. Sharing the need to breathe, to eat and drink, and to maintain optimum body temperatures, our varying yet related physical limits are an equalizer. In this sense, we are all affected when it comes to questions of environmental stability. Yet, in the human population, due to factors such as privilege, location, access to resources, and lifestyle, we do not all share the same responsibility for environmental degradation, and we are not all equally vulnerable to its consequences.

Though the wealthiest societies are the largest contributors to global pollution, deforestation, and climate change, these same groups control a disproportionate share of the means to protect themselves from the resulting consequences. For these reasons (among many less anthropocentric ones), ecocentric philosophies that are sensitive to inter-affecting processes are in particular need of attention at this moment in space and time, as the greatest human – and non-human – rights issue unfolds before us: the right to a balanced, habitable living space. In the face of this crisis, Spiralism and other eco-sensitive modes of consciousness are apt frames for comprehending and communicating the cause and effect relationships between human activities and the global ecosystem, and their associated literatures are relevant ways to express this understanding.

While each offers a unique environmentally aware perspective, the three novels of my corpus communicate the interrelated condition of humans and the natural world. The syntactic innovation of Philoctète's Spiralism epitomizes this ethics of environmental interrelation, as it extends beyond the limits of the literary conventions that characterize Montero's and Roumain's novels. Mamadou Wattara writes in his 2012 article titled, "Le

Peuple des terres mêlées de René Philoctète: Au-delà de la spirale: Oraliture, rupture(s) et convergence(s)":

> Dans la dynamique de la mondialisation et du "Chaos-Monde," le peuple de la frontière, par la puissance de sa charge symbolique représente dans le roman les peuples de la Terre où qu'ils soient. A cet égard, le roman de Philoctète est digne d'occuper une place de choix dans la "littérature-monde." [quotd. in Amedro: 2007]. (169)

As *Terres mêlées*'s clever and flexible border culture offers a valuable "charge symbolique" in today's world where cultural boundaries – as well as exploitive transactions – are becoming increasingly ambiguous under globalization, it also disrupts the linguistic status quo through its spiralist delivery.

Reformulating language itself – and thereby re-conceptualizing how relationships, identity, and consciousness are communicated – Philoctète challenges the reader to work, to grasp for meaning, and to feel lost – even disconnected – in its chaos. In an interview, Frankétienne explains that "[t]he Spiral is an open work in the sense described by Umberto Eco" (Chemla and Pujol 115). In *The Open Work*, Eco describes this kind of literary text as art, "effectively open to a virtually unlimited range of possible readings, each of which causes the work to acquire new vitality in terms of one particular taste, or perspective, or personal performance" (13). In addition to the spiralist work comprising, as Glover insists, "incredibly demanding," uneconomical language creating narratives that "are, without exception, alinear and arrythmic, dialogic and polyphonic" and "rooted in the oral," she highlights how their content asks the reader difficult and profound questions (Interview Web).

Roumain and Montero's novels, on the other hand, although less inventive and exhibiting fewer processes of interrelation, both take the reader by the hand, offering a

consistent narrative guide, and are therefore more accessible, making them more likely to be read and absorbed by academics and non-academics alike. Because literature with activist potential can only find traction when opened in the hands of a human, Roumain and Montero's definitive framing equates an important quality of readability, one that improves the two novels' eco-political potential. While *Gouverneurs*' shines light on the values of cooperation and environmental sensitivity and whose central characters are likely to evoke sympathetic identification with its readers, *Tú, la oscuridad* approaches interrelation from the darkness (as its title suggests), eliciting a contrary response as its protagonists' myopic disconnection highlights the perils of failing to acknowledge one's place in the web of life.

Philoctète's rewired linguistic structure and his *langage des arbre et de la terre,* along with the interconnecting ecocentric themes in all three novels of my corpus, join a longstanding tradition of valuing interconnection. Throughout human existence – from the multitudes of oral and image-based epistemologies, to written literatures, to the methodological mapping of physical qualities and relationships between living beings and the natural world – the ability to comprehend complex interdependencies has been an important framework for interpreting life. The awareness of interrelation has come in many forms and has been framed through many lenses, including African Ubuntu,[i] Taoism and Buddhism,[ii] Māori belief systems,[iii] the Roman Stoics (such as Lucius Seneca and Marcus Aurelius),[iv] as well as various branches of current scientific study.[v]

On the other hand, though practices of defining, classifying and specializing can facilitate both organization and profundity of knowledge, these kinds of divisions can also be symptomatic of myopic ideology, in which the interconnections among all parts

of existence become concealed. Considering rationalism as an invented technology, like many human inventions, it is not in and of itself dangerous, but certain uses of it can be. Furthermore, increasingly egregious examples of Western society's rationalist split from nature in order to control it – and profit from it – are found throughout the colonial legacy.

Hierarchical, divisive, and in many cases devastating examples of exclusion, separation, and violence have been and continue to be backed by systems of rationalized reasoning. Imperialist concepts such as a racial hierarchy (to the point of exclusion from the human species); Francis Bacon's dictum that "nature should serve man" (Shepard 3); René Descartes's assertion that animals feel no pain because they are soulless (ibid 23); or the belief in Manifest Destiny are a few examples. Certainly, these ideologies and praxes have been and continue to be challenged by other Western thinkers, revolutionaries and activists. Influential thinkers such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, members of the Frankfurt School (Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse), Walter Benjamin, Hannah Arendt, and phenomenologists such as Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger have critiqued the divisive and harmful aspects of progress, capitalism, imperialism, racism, and consumerism, fighting for notions of social interconnectivity and solidarity.

Still, humanity's current forms of mass production and consumption – in which colossal accumulation of symbolic profit (and material control) lies in fewer and fewer hands[25] – depend on abusive systems of underpaid human labor in order to exploit

[25] It is estimated that 62 individuals possess the same amount of wealth as the poorest 3.7 billion people. "[T]he wealth of the poorest 50% dropped by 41% between 2010 and

resources from the natural world and to make profitable products, often with little or no concern for mental and physical human wellbeing, pollution, habitat loss, and other negative externalities. In his 1973 book *Small Is Beautiful: Economics as If People Mattered*, E.F. Schumacher highlights "the fragmentary nature of the judgments of economics" (43). He outlines how "[i]t is inherent in the methodology of economics *to ignore man's dependence on the natural world*" (44), so "[a]n activity can be economic although it plays hell with the environment, and that a competing activity, if at some cost it protects and conserves the environment, will be uneconomic" (43). The wanton exploitation of peoples, animals, and entire ecosystems is only possible through a logic that values short-term monetary profit above all else – including a sustainable planet for young and future generations.

Many such premises of capitalist societies contribute to an estranged yet noxious relationship between people and the natural world. Most egregious among these are the notions that the wellbeing of humans is independent from the ecosystem, and that the Earth possesses infinite resources and potential for growth. Kenneth Boulding, economist and environmental advisor to President Kennedy, quipped, "Anyone who believes in indefinite growth on a physically finite planet is either mad, or an economist."[26] While the disregard for ecosystems and future generations inherent to many economic trends arouse this kind of harsh judgment, environmentally conscious and balanced economic

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2015, despite an increase in the global population of 400m. In the same period, the wealth of the richest 62 people increased by $500bn […] to $1.76tn" (Guardian).

[26] Attributed to Boulding in: United States Congress (1973) *Energy reorganization act of 1973: Hearings, Ninety-third Congress, first session, on H.R. 11510*. p. 248

philosophies continue to emerge as business models, trying to circumvent the ramifications of short-term profit models that ignore the future. Nearly forty years ago, ecological economist Herman Daly spelled out a fundamental shift needed in the philosophy of business: "The economy is a wholly owned subsidiary of the environment, not the reverse."[27] And, to paraphrase Gandhi's well-known saying, the Earth provides for every person's need, but not for every person's greed.

While living beings have been significantly altering the surface of the planet since the first single-cell life forms began to spread,[28] over the last century, technologies have led to a population explosion unlike anything previously possible.[29]

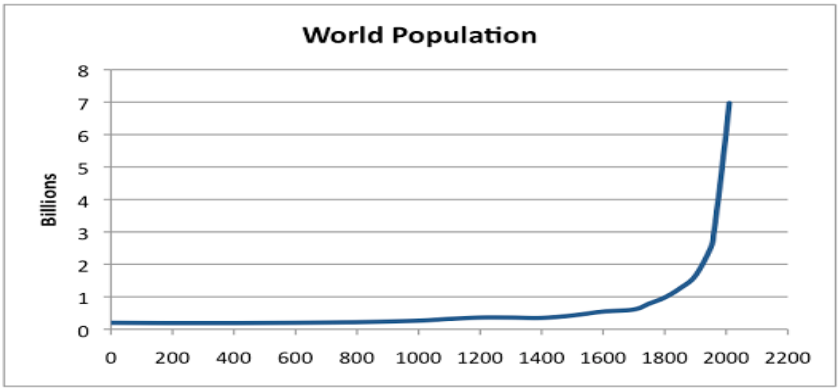

Figure 14. World population graph. (Google)

[27] The International Society for Ecological Economics: http://www.isecoeco.org/dr-herman-daly-nobel-prize-nomination/ (Web)

[28] "As life expands, it alters the composition, temperature, and chemical nature of the atmosphere and the composition, texture, and diversity of Earth's surface. The surface environment and organisms on it have been evolving together for billions of years" (Margulis 109). "[E]ven 3 billion years ago, neatly functioning atmospheric cycles were modulated by organisms, […] and by two billion years ago the cyanobacteria had made drastic changes in the atmosphere" (Margulis 108).

[29] According to the United Nations, in 1804, 1 billion people inhabited the planet; in 1927 we reached 2 billion; by 1974 we were at 4 billion; today, just over 40 years later, we have nearly doubled our numbers again with 7.42 billion.

This massive increase of human population, combined with trends of excessive consumption, waste-producing lifestyles, and increased carbon emission, are causing deterioration – not only of many land and sea ecosystems across the planet, but also of atmospheric balances, livable temperature ranges, and predictable weather systems.[30] Statistically, the strength of droughts, forest fires, storms, and floods is on the rise.

To put into clearer perspective the urgency of human impact on the global ecosystem, the well-known environmental activist group Greenpeace scales the immense geological timeframe into one more tangible to the human experience. They explain that the Earth is "4.6 billion years old. Scaling to 46 years, humans have been here four hours; the industrial revolution began one minute ago, and in that time we've destroyed over half the world's forests" (Web). Since forests produce a significant amount of oxygen as well as consuming and sequestering carbon, they are essential to living systems, essentially functioning as the earth's lungs. Their canopies not only shade streams and cool surface temperatures, but also help to capture rainfall, which their root systems guide into the earth and groundwater tables below. They provide habitat for myriad life forms.

Less immediate ramifications are appearing due to temperature changes, such as polar ice melt and sea rise, a phenomenon that threatens coastal and low-lying island

[30] In a 2014 report by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (the world's largest general scientific society), the authors explain how "pushing global temperatures past certain thresholds could trigger abrupt, unpredictable and potentially irreversible changes that have massively disruptive and large-scale impacts. At that point, even if we do not add any additional CO2 to the atmosphere, potentially unstoppable processes are set in motion. We can think of this as sudden climate brake and steering failure where the problem and its consequences are no longer something we can control" (quotd. in Klein 1).

habitats and communities, making the islands of the Caribbean some of the most vulnerable regions in the world. Citing a radio report with Dr. Lenard Nurse, coordinator of the University of the West Indies' (Barbados) Graduate Program in Climate Change from WINN FM 98.9, the website *Repeating Islands* reports that "it is proving to be very difficult to contain rising sea levels, because the process depends on a number of factors [and that] effectively tackling the problem begins with Caribbean nations and other Small Island Developing States identifying the source of the problem – unabated global greenhouse gas emissions" (Web). In a recent UN report titled "Climate Change in the Caribbean and the Challenge of Adaptation," the authors write that the Caribbean "faces impacts of climate change, a problem to whose making it has had little to contribute" (6), adding to centuries' long ecological and social exploitation. For these reasons, anti-capitalist environmental consciousness is particularly relevant in the Caribbean today, as many will likely face the need to evacuate their homes, becoming climate refugees without the means to move and rebuild their lives.

While the evidence in the field has been showing increasingly serious consequences of industrial human practices, why has the public not become outraged? While one person can easily observe that her house is on fire and will immediately take action to put it out, individuals, limited by senses and location, are incapable of personally perceiving the wellbeing – or lack there of – of regional, continental, and global systems. Through collaboration, however, as Philoctète and Roumain highlight in their novels, individual sensorial limits are expanded, thereby extending our perceptive capabilities. From our individual locations, most of us cannot see the melting ice caps; it is difficult to perceive mass deforestation and the subsequent habitat loss, or the

increasing rates of extinction across the globe. If we look to the global scientific community, however, and listen to the people who have dedicated their lives to studying patterns in local and global ecosystems and meteorological conditions, their dominant, decades-long message proves to be alarming.

Indeed, learning about and considering the extent of the many environmental problems can lead to anxiety and depression, particularly for the people documenting degradation firsthand. In the National Wildlife Federation's 2012 report, "The Psychological Effects of Global Warming on the United States," biologist Camille Parmesan of the University of Texas reported: "I don't know of a single scientist that's not having an emotional reaction to what is being lost" (19), and, in reference to an ocean reef she had been studying since 2002, "It's gotten to be so depressing that I'm not sure I'm going to go back […] I just know I'm going to see more and more of the coral dead, and bleached, and covered with brown algae" (19). In a 2015 New York Magazine piece called "Climate Scientists Are Dealing With Psychological Problems," Jack Holmes writes:

> One psychologist who works with climate scientists [reported that] they suffer from "pre-traumatic stress," the overwhelming sense of anger, panic, and "obsessive-intrusive thoughts" that results when your work every day is to chart a planetary future that looks increasingly apocalyptic. Some climatologists merely report depression and feelings of hopelessness. Others, resigned to our shared fate, have written what amount to survival guides for a sort of *Mad Max* dystopian future where civilization has broken down under the pressures of resource scarcity and habitat erosion. (Web)

Because biological health depends upon a complex collaboration of living and nonliving systems, from the microscopic scale of bacteria to the macroscopic span of weather systems, atmosphere and temperature, big-picture, interconnective approaches are becoming essential. The results of slow violence, such as declining animal populations

and the extinctions of certain species across the globe, can only be understood and slowed though a combination of collaborative perspectives and approaches.

Another issue that prevents humans from experiencing appropriate reaction to the threats of ecological degradation is a (paradoxically) self-protective (from depression and anxiety) drive to remain unaware, causing an aversion to acknowledging the gravity of the situation. According to deep ecologist Bill Devall, "[w]e utilize the psychological defense mechanisms of denial. Psychologist Ernest Becker in his book *Denial of Death*, demonstrated some of the consequences of the near universal denial of our own mortality. The 'it can't happen to me' syndrome leads us to *bury* thoughts, which then work on our psyches in unconscious ways" (194). Literature can help to bridge this kind of gap, rendering the consciousness of critical problems more accessible, presenting them in the tenable yet once removed safe-space of the literary experience.

The engaging presentation of literature and the emotional links it awakens can help to connect the individual with the hard data of science in meaningful ways, for even if a human is connected with the natural world on a local, personal level, the complexity and scope of physical interrelation exceeds individual capacity for awareness: "Outside of human minds exist billions of interacting events and processes – atoms, humans, animals, plants, microbes, and so on – whose ultimate trajectory is uncertain, if not in many cases impossible to predict" (Veldman 17). While the physical sciences are relevant, eye-opening tools for understanding the earth's intricate systems and how they are changing, the scientific frame privileges rational objectivity over emotional engagement. Inversely, eco-conscious literature, and Spiralism in particular, engages the human *esprit* as an interrelated subject of the natural world, yet does not do the

technological and pragmatic labor fundamental to scientific work. Together, art and science, like the collaborative power of the combite, can become more than the sum of their parts, and increase each other's impact. Wilson Harris cleverly describes this very relationship: "But though science and art approach reality in different ways – in different partial ways – the varieties of language they employ, ascent and descent into the poetry of mathematical vision (which corresponds to literary density) are ingrained in the mystery of wholeness" (Harris 18).

Promoting the merits and consciousness-raising powers of literature is a valuable undertaking. Yet, it is also necessary to acknowledge how the literary space is struggling to maintain its force in the face of new technologies and their effect on human behavior, including a diminishing attention span. Rob Nixon addresses these concerns in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*:

> In an age that increasingly genuflects to the digital divinity of speed, how will environmental activists negotiate the representational challenges of slow violence – a violence that is by definition image weak and demanding on attention spans? How will writers, photographers, video artists, podcasters, and bloggers navigate the possibilities – and possible perils – opened up by a new media culture characterized both by extensive, instant connectivity and by impatient, distractive staccato rhythms? How will we distribute and maintain our attention over the *longue duree* as we seek to extend and sustain the pathways to environmental justice on a transnational scale? (275-276)

The medium may morph; nonetheless, humans will always love to tell stories and to connect with one another. Through reading literature, not only can one plug into new worlds and experiences – making connections to formerly unknown possibilities of existence as an imaginary traveler to other realms, and into other minds – but through reading about others, the self reveals itself as well. While newer, more fragmented options for intercommunication continue to surface, there is no substitute for the literary

experience, which teaches not only imagination, but also empathy. For this reason, advocating for the integration of literature in society – ideally by fostering a joyful connection at the pre-verbal age that will continue through formal education and beyond – is a form of slow activism.

In their introduction to *Caribbean Literature and the Environment: Between Nature and Culture,* Elizabeth DeLoughrey, Renée Gosson, and George Handley underscore that "[l]iterature is by no means the only way to establish a sense of place, but it's rhetorical recovery of a *sense* of history, especially when historical memory is fragmented, can play a crucial role and establishing sustainable belonging In the land" (DeLoughrey, Gosson, and Handley 14). In addition to literature's power to form meaningful connection, compassion, and long-term focus, enabling readers to grasp extensive and complex information, in the face of oppression it can also inspire, motivate, and diffuse hope by bringing to life past examples of groups that have overcome oppression. The stories of major social movements against injustice have been led by many different individuals in many places and through varied historical moments: Latin American revolutionaries Toussaint L'Ouverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, José Martí, Simón Bolívar, Frantz Fanon, and Ché Guevara; Indian revolutionary Mahatma Gandhi; the 14th Dalai Lama in exile from Chinese-occupied Tibet, Nelson Mandela in apartheid South Africa; and, Martin Luther King Jr. in the US. Today, as imperialism has become corporate, embracing interrelation and fighting for environmental justice is a moral and pragmatic endeavor in the face of mounting evidence that reveals direct links between human activities and negative environmental changes.

With profits at stake, fighting for human and environmental rights against systems of power can be dangerous work. Like the actions of tyrants, in addition to deftly used propaganda,[31] numerous corporate managers and their minions have employed violence and fear in order to continue their singular goal of increasing profits at any cost. After years of protesting the *Aqua Zarca* hydroelectric megadam project in Honduras, Berta Cáceres[32] was recently assassinated (March 3 2016), as was one of her colleagues, Nelson García,[33] just two weeks later. Still, a growing counter-culture fights on for positive change.

Individuals and social movements are forming a new tradition, one that seeks to restore balance and health to ecosystems across the globe, or at least, to lessen the future impacts of excessive industrialization. In the early 1960s, biologist and conservationist Rachel Carson fought to raise awareness concerning the harmful, large-scale effects of pesticide use, therein playing an important role in establishing a global environmental movement.[34] More recent grassroots activism *is* taking place around the world: from Indian activist Vandana Shiva and her drive to save the world's seeds, to Bolivian

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[31] In their study, "Social Dominance Orientation and Climate Change Denial: The Role of Dominance and System Justification," Kirsti Jylhä and Nazar Akrami write that among climate change deniers, their "denial is driven partly by dominant personality and low empathy, and partly by motivation to justify and promote existing social and human-nature hierarchies" (109).

[32] Cáceres was an Indigenous leader of the Lenca people and co-founder and coordinator of the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras.

[33] García was a Rio Chiquito community leader.

[34] In *Silent Spring* (1962), Rachel Carson explains that "[f]or each of us, as for the robin in Michigan or the Salmon in the Miramichi, this is a problem of ecology, of interrelationships, of interdependence. […] We spray our elms and the following springs are silent of robin song, not because we sprayed the robins directly but because the

president Evo Morales Ayma and Bolivia's Plurinational Legislative Assembly's 2010 "Defensoría de la Madre Tierra," which grants legal rights to the earth,"[35] to Scotland's pledge to convert to 100% sustainable power sources, to the Canadian-based and now world-wide Indigenous protest movement *Idle No More*, to the activism of individual artists such as Alixa Garcia and Naima Penniman of *Climbing poeTree*, with their spoken-word performances including "Hurricane Season: the Hidden Messages in Water," and their education program, "Hurricane Season Curriculum."[36] It is also important to highlight the quiet but powerful activism taking place outside of the public view: in back-yard gardens, among collaborating neighbors, in co-ops, and through gift/ trade economies.

Because many of the most serious problems, like atmospheric imbalances and ocean acidification, are invisible to the individual (there are no flames to be seen) – many of the harmful effects of current modes of living do not appear until later, putting the burden on future generations. Wangari Maathai, Kenyan environmental activist and

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poison traveled, step by step, through the now familiar elm leaf-earthworm-robin cycle. These are matters of record, observable, part of the visible world around us. They reflect the web of life – or death – that scientists know as ecology" (189).

[35] The law states: "Mother Earth is a living dynamic system made up of the undivided community of all living systems and living beings, interrelated, interdependent and complementary, sharing a common destiny" (Web).

[36] "Climbing PoeTree's multimedia social justice curriculum "employs the power of art to develop critical consciousness and build new leadership essential for fundamental social change. […] Interactive lessons examine intersecting themes, including: indigenous land struggles; housing and gentrification; climate change and environmental injustice; economic inequality and globalization; over-policing and mass-imprisonment; war and disaster capitalism" (Web).

instigator of "The Green Belt Movement"[37] observed: "The generation that destroys the environment is not the generation that pays the price. That is the problem" (Web).

In the face of increasing data on climate change, particularly its many effects that are slow to become obvious, sixteen-year-old Xiuhtezcatl Martinez, activist, hip hop artist, and director of Earth Guardians, along with twenty other young people from across the United States, are representing an entire generation in court by suing the United States Government for "the constitutional right to a healthy atmosphere and stable climate for all present and future generations"[38] (Web).

Figure 15. Hundreds of children showed their support for the twenty-one young plaintiffs suing the United States Government outside the Federal Courthouse in Eugene, Oregon, March 9, 2016. (my photo)

[37] "Founded in 1977, […] The GBM "has planted over 51 million trees in Kenya. GBM works at the grassroots, national, and international levels to promote environmental conservation; to build climate resilience and empower communities, especially women and girls; to foster democratic space and sustainable livelihoods" (Web).

[38] "Our Children's Trust (OCT) are asking the courts, executive agencies and legislative bodies to adopt science-based climate recovery efforts before it is too late to address climate change" (Web).

The drive to accumulate monetary profit is built into the foundations of corporate businesses models; capitalism cannot solve the problems of capitalism, just as solutions to the many environmental issues resulting from abusive human activities are not likely to be found within those same systems. Within capitalist societies, "going green," recycling, and other "environmentally conscious," movements are often the equivalent of placing a bandage on a cancerous body. As Wilson Harris writes, "a civilization which is geared towards progressive realism cannot solve the hazards and dangers and the pollution which it has inflicted upon the globe" (Fabric 73). In short, the systems that deal with material and energy production, consumerism, and waste must be *radically* redesigned, and restructured in new, world-conscious ways.

For the many people all over the world who are fighting for systemic change – including rewriting the laws that dictate which practices are allowed and which are not – face substantial challenges, as corporate power is often embedded in government systems. However, as colossal as the fight may be, it is a fight for survival. Interconnective ecocritical thinking – my analytical focus in this dissertation – is a valuable tool in the fight to realize meaningful systemic change. While innovative modes of global networking can help to fostering large-scale awareness that human health is interlinked with the health of ecosystems, the emotional connections necessary to motivate changes in lifestyle, (including what may feel like sacrifices or burdens), can be complimentarily facilitated through literature. The combination of awareness on both rational and emotional planes can provoke the instinctive drive to protect one's survival.

Kaiama Glover reminds us that "Spiralism adamantly privileges form over politics, refusing any kind of explicit ideological agenda" (Interview Web). While I am

aware that I am risking a denial of this refusal by aligning Spiralism with the politically charged cause of fighting transnational corporate environmental desecration, I maintain that the urgency of the problems supersede the notion of one political agenda over another, for if there are sides to this question, they are the continuation of living systems versus their end.

The issues concerning global habitat balance necessarily take precedence over all others. If we imagine floating away into space and seeing the earth – our only planet – as a house, it is a house filled with both chaos and quiet. Before the rise of humans, this house belonged to no one. Species pushed and pulled within local spaces, some fighting for mates or territory, many eating other species, many becoming extinct along the way. Others would thrive and spread through the seas and lands in search of new space and sources of sustenance. In this house, non-human animals, plants, trees, and microbes evolved and spread, changing the air, sea, and land quality throughout the passing of time. These beings roamed the house's floors of soil and flew through its air and swam in its waters. As Homo Sapiens joined the house and began to spread, the house continued its incrementally slow rate of change (save for the anomalous asteroid crashing through its gaseous roof).

Fast-forward to the present. Humans have taken over the house and its occupants, claiming them as their own, to do with and use at will. While many humans were unwittingly swept along in the violent takeover and are exploited by the overlords in their desire for more and more control, all members of the species are part of it. These diverse and multifarious peoples are loving, fighting… killing each other, making and raising children, experiencing joy, pain, and fear; some are planning alterations and expansions,

some are creating music and art, some are just distracting themselves, others are sick and dying, and still others – academics and intellectuals – are busy studying, reading and writing, debating and exploring new ideas and technologies. The vast majority are busy working for little in return, growing food, making products, cleaning and relocating waste, doing the work that keeps society going - just trying to survive and provide for their families. All this while an infinitesimal few increase their possessive control over the rooms of the house, and the resources and bodies within. To reiterate: it is estimated that 62 individuals possess the same amount of wealth as the poorest 3.7 billion people (Guardian).

The numerous injustices among people matter. While some activists dedicate their focus to the lack of wealth distribution, others investigate and fight for justice on issues of race, still others on gender; some worry about religion and God, others worry about sexual discrimination and other societal inequalities. And yet, while all these issues are valid injustices deserving of attention, scholarship, and activism, and while many of them intersect, none of these debates and discussions can take place if there is no longer a house in which to hold them.

The works of my corpus – and Spiralism at large – do not just communicate information, but, through language in which the reader's perception is stimulated to perceive the multiplicity of its parts, produce new ways of constructing the world, and entices her to feel her interrelationship with the natural world that is her home. I have brought these novels into conversation in order to exemplify an ideological shift necessary to the health of all living systems on the planet. Through problematizing broken connections, and in offering solutions via their articulation of a geographically

and biologically sensitive poetics of interconnecting ecologies, they offer examples of integrated living and collaboration in the face of the many alienating challenges of globalization and ecological unrest. In *Introduction à une Poétique du Divers* (1996), Glissant writes: "Dans la rencontre des cultures du monde, il nous faut avoir la force imaginaire de concevoir toutes les cultures comme exerçant à la fois une action d'unité et de diversité libératrice" (72). Through Philoctète, Roumain, and Montero's environmental consciousness, their use of juxtaposition that problematizes divisive ideologies, and their messages of interrelation, these authors articulate a literary and liberatory activism that remains salient in today's increasingly disrupted and disrupting global biosphere. While these three works do not contain solutions to the enormity of the global ecological crisis, they do offer interrelated philosophies that counter the divisive, destructive, addictive, and individualist behaviors common to late capitalism. Social philosopher and poet William Irwin Thompson astutely summarizes the challenge at hand:

> [As] we move into the period of crisis for the modern world system of industrial nation-states, a period not simply of wars of resources, but also of ecological planetary damage from unbalanced industrialization, we will need to come together to envision a new world. What physics was to engineering in industrial society, biology has become to ecology in our new society. As we move from economics to ecology as the governing science of our era of stewardship, our politics will have to help us realize, beyond all budgets and bottom lines, that what truly counts can't be counted. (33)

In line with making the necessary shift from "economics to ecology," we will equally benefit "[o]nce we have replaced the basic premise of "more is better" with the much sounder axiom that "enough is best" (Daly 2). The problems are indeed great, yet the human will for continued hope is the foundation for all positive change. In this regard, while Montero's novel ends ambiguously, intentionally leaving the reader in the

darkness, the hope of Roumain and Philoctète's stories resonate harmoniously, as Mamadou Wattara underscores in his reading of the ending of *Terres mêlées* ending as "digne de l'optimisme de Roumain telle que incarnée par *Gouverneur de la Rosée*" (108):

> Et savent qu'ils ont un monde à construire. Pedro et Adèle regardent longtemps le ciel nu, libre, par-dessus les clameurs de la frontière. Sur la terre noirâtre, ils dessinent avec leurs doigts (à la vérité on ne sait quoi). Une aile, peut-être ? Cela fait, ils sourient comme s'ils chantaient (147).

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APPENDIX A:

i. One of the many subgroups of African belief systems, Ubuntu is an ideology and practice within Bantu languages of the Southern African Continent that promotes an understanding that identity, meaning, and wellbeing all stem from existing as a *part* of a greater whole. Ubuntu emphasizes compassion, empathy, and mutual prosperity, offering an approach to community living based on the importance of generosity, anti-individualism, and the intricate relationship between people, nature, and the earth. *Ubuntu* is an ideology and praxis, a *logic of interdependence* (Praeg in Mbiti 369), an African humanism (Michael Onyebuchi Eze). Through its reciprocal approach, Ubuntu maintains that as individuals create community, the community creates the individuals. Lovemore Mbigi writes that, "[a]lthough African cultures display awesome diversity, they also show remarkable similarities. Community is the cornerstone in African thought and life" (75). Emphasizing the importance of compassion, empathy, and mutual prosperity, life within Ubuntu is understood as an ever-unfolding process, a '-ness' and not an '-ism.'

> *Ubu-ntu* is the fundamental ontological and episemological category in the African thought of the Bantu-speaking people. It is the indivisible one-ness and whole-ness of ontology and epistemology, […] which must be understood from the perspective that African philosophy is consistent with the philosophic position that motion is the principle of be-ing [...] with regard to every entity [...;] to be is to be in the condition of -ness. Whatever is perceived as a whole is always a whole-ness in the sense that it ex-ists and per-sists towards that which is yet to be. (Coetzee, Roux 324)

From this perspective, every influential part within the whole is valued. Consciousness of an eternal system of motion and change helps the participants to understand the world and all its elements – animate and inanimate – through the process of relational be-ing. As South African social rights activist and antiapartheid leader Desmond Tutu explains, "Ubuntu is the essence of being a person. It means that we are people through other people. We cannot be fully human alone. We are made for interdependence, we are made for family" (Lipman Web).

Within many belief systems, a person who commits a harmful deed is seen as a bad person, sinful, or criminal; in Ubuntu, this person is simply viewed as not being a person, but rather as an animal external to the human way, for to be a person is to be part of a community, and to respect and care for that community. "If one harms others, e.g. by being exploitive, deceptive or unfaithful, or even if one is merely indifferent to others and fails to share oneself with them, then one is said to be lacking '*Botho*' (Sotho-Tswana) or '*Ubuntu*' (Nguni), literally lacking in personhood or humanness" (Metz and Gaie 275). While the Ubuntu philosophy focuses heavily on social unity and the importance of the group, the individual is neither denied nor repressed. David W. Lutz writes that

> The communal character of African cultures does not mean that the good of the individual person is subordinated to that of the group, as is the case with Marxist collectivism. In a true community, the individual does not pursue the common good instead of his or her own good, but rather pursues his or her own good through pursuing the common good. (314)

In addition to this intra-human-based schema of ethics, Ubuntu promotes interconnection in relation to the physical environment, especially in people's relationship to the land. Theologian Laurenti Magesa notes that in contrast to the common practice of land ownership by governments, corporations or individuals, and in opposition to the increasing pattern of wealthy individuals owning massive swaths of private land, Ubuntu "prescribes distributing property in a way that expresses esteem for communal relationships" (In Metz and Gaieb 277). This means that all members of the group or society are considered to be equally deserving of spaces and resources, and aim to avoid hierarchy of privilege. Magesa emphasizes how such a stance on land rights creates "much less of a tolerance for economic inequality than what is typical in the West, for a sense of togetherness is difficult to foster when some have much greater wealth than others" (278). At the opposite end of the Ubuntu way of cooperative living and equal distribution is capitalism, in which individualistic and competitive values dominate, ego vs ego. Psychologically speaking, there is no real social connection under such terms. Ubuntu, on the other hand, depends on the psychic practice of social interconnection; individual subject and identity formation through community is a constantly changing, dynamic, and "reflective" process. In his book *Intellectual History in Contemporary South Africa,* Michael Onyebuchi Eze explains:

> Humanity is a quality we owe to each other. We create each other and need to sustain this otherness creation. And if we belong to each other, we participate in our creations: we are because you are, and since you are, definitely I am. The 'I am' is not a rigid subject, but a dynamic self-constitution dependent on this otherness creation of relation and distance. (190-191)

Just as the notion of equal distribution of land conflicts with the practice of land ownership, so too does this concept of identity construction *through* an "other" conflict with the western construction of modern identity, in *opposition to/competition with* the Other, as articulated by Georg Hegel, Edmund Husserl, Emmanuel Levinas and Edward Said. By many standards, the Ubuntu worldview can be considered utopian, especially when juxtaposed with the current world inequities achieved through competitive individualism and hierarchical social divisions. Desmond Tutu articulates that

> [w]hen you have Ubuntu, you embrace others. You are generous, compassionate. If the world had more Ubuntu, we would not have war. We would not have this huge gap between the rich and the poor. You are rich so that you can make up what is lacking for others. You are powerful so that you can help the weak, just as a mother or father helps their children" (Lipman interview).

In her work titled *Tapping the Wisdom of the Ancestors,* Claudine Michel contrasts the common morality of modern Western societies with themes found in African systems of morality. She maintains that Western morality "is almost always based on the concepts of individual rationality and personal responsibility which stem from Cartesian philosophy ('I think, therefore I am')," whereas the African philosophy of "We are, therefore I am," represents a paradigm which "better expresses the dominant essence of ethics in an African context by showing the ties that link humans to one another" (18). The interconnective philosophies of Ubuntu that I have presented are certainly prevalent in other African belief systems of the past and present, including the African-based religions of the Caribbean and its diaspora. In particular, many forms of Vodou are influential throughout Caribbean expression and thought, including Haitian spiralism.

ii. Chinese Taoism (or Daoism) also aims to undo the ego-construction of the individual, and stresses the relationships between humanity and nature. The term *tao* can be understood as the oneness within the great scope of the yin-yang balance, in which all things and energies exist. Its concept of the life-force or energy flow *qi* (literally translated as breath, air or gas) interlinks matter and spirit. Taoism focuses on compassion, movement, processes, the presence of be-ing, as well as holistic understanding.

Taoism is linked to the School of Naturalists, or the School of Yin-yang. Given the many branches of Taoism and its longevity, exact origins are difficult to pinpoint. Scholars have traced its roots to prehistoric folk religions in China, but its organized beginnings are most often linked to the teachings of Lao-Tzu (or Laozi), a philosopher and record keeper of the Zhou Dynasty in 6th century BCE, who wrote the *Tao Te Ching*[39].

Taoism has been transformed throughout the centuries in relation to the times; the *Tao-tsang* (1442) is the existing Taoist canon, and contains over one thousand works (Robinet 1). According to the Center of Traditional Taoist Studies, the *Tao-tsang* is the second most translated book after Christianity's *Holy Bible*, which depends largely on binary constructions. Although Taoism is contingent on the pairing of oppositional forces, its focus on the harmonies and balances between the extremities makes it inherently anti-binary. The *Tao-tsang* "unifies all aspects of existence. It combines both earthly and spiritual dimensions with principles that simultaneously function in physical, mental and metaphysical realms" (web). Because of this, there is a special emphasis placed on incorporating all aspects of existence into its practices in order "to reinforce how core principles transcend dimensions" (web). From the physical (diet, exercise and stretching) to the cerebral (philosophy, history and learning) to the spiritual (meditation and religious practices), each and every part of life is interconnected through the life force *qi* that flows through all beings.

> As with the other belief systems examined in this chapter, Taoism upholds a consistent principle of holistic unity, as Chung-ying Cheng outlines:
> [A]ll things in the world are unified as a whole through their being continuously generated from the same source or origin. [...] The oneness they share (Tao) both sustains and gives rise to the multitude of things. Second, there is the principle of internal life-movements. By this I mean that all things in the world have an intrinsic life-force which moves them in a way in which motion is not imposed from other things or a God but is derived from the inexhaustible source of energy of life, which is the Way. [...] Finally, there is the principle of organic balance. [...] The Yin-Yang polarities with their contrary and complementary qualities

[39] Lao-Tzu's authorship of the *Tao Te Ching* – and even his existence – continue to be disputed. As Chad Hanson posits, "philosophical Daoism owes more to philosopher Zhuang (Zhuangzi) of the 4th Century BCE than the celebrated story of Laozi" (Stanford). Still, despite its debated origins about which one of its roots is oldest and deepest, its trunk, branches and leaves continue to develop across the globe.

> clearly illustrate the example of processes toward the balance and harmony of things. (12)

Taoism looks symbolically to the antipodal energies as a frame for its real focus on the spaces played out *in between*, a key concept in this project. Chapter II of the *Tao Tê Ching* reveals just how oppositional pairings act as defining agents for one another: "It is because every one under Heaven recognizes beauty as beauty, that the idea of ugliness exists. And equally if every one recognized virtue as virtue, this would merely create fresh conceptions of wickedness" (unpaginated). The relationship between oppositions, the spaces in between, and the meanings we interpret and assign therein are examples of how all is viewed as interconnected within Taoism, even – and especially – opposites. The chapter continues: "For truly Being and Non-being grow out of one another; Difficult and easy complete one another. Long and short test one another; High and low determine one another" (Waley 143). Cheng further explains that "as a methodological principle, [Taoism] legislates that any individual thing must be understood in the whole context which forms its background, source, and network of interrelations. One may, therefore, call this the principle of wholeness" (13). This notion of wholeness, which includes the peoples, animals and things, is understood in the term *wanwu*, meaning myriad, or ten thousand things, a term used throughout Taoist teachings.

Because of its focus on holistic unity, internal *qi*, and balance, Taoism can be seen as anarchist in relation to the hierarchical laws and class structures out of which it was born. In its political ideals, it maintains rather critical views concerning social order, ritual, and progress, including the belief that government does not act in the people's best interests. According to Kari Väyrynen, Taoism can be understood as "an anarchistic ideal of non-action and non-mastery, a spontaneous, non-violent and virtuous self-realization of people" (7). From this standpoint, the notion of externally imposed leadership and law is not just anti-productive, but harmful. Rather, Taoism maintains that the forces governing a population should not descend from some higher authority, but should ascend from within each individual's *qi* in their search for balance and harmony. If life is motion, evolution and learning, wherein balances between ebb and flow, yin and yang are the goal, then the notion of top-down authority is false and dangerous to life as it threatens the flow of qi. Such an anarchist viewpoint reverberates within Philoctète's novel, which grapples with the totalitarian violence inflicted by Trujillo. Exploring the relationship between early Taoism and the environment in the journal *Philosophy East and West*, Sean Nelson further explains the inherent anarchism in Taoism. He observes that Taoism is centered on the understanding of a holistic, interdependent power structure connecting all parts of existence, in contrast to the accumulation of isolated power, such as within hierarchies.

> Although classical Daoist texts seem to reject "ethics," provided that ethics consists of rules, norms, and conventions organizing hierarchical and authority-driven social relations, early Daoism is not so much an anti-ethical and aesthetic nihilism as it is an alternative way of living with things. This naturalistic and anti-conventional approach to the ethical can be described preliminarily as an embodied receptivity to the myriad or ten thousand things (*wanwu*) themselves in their specificity, parity, and interconnectedness. (294)

The consciousness of *wanwu* – the myriad or ten thousand things, together with the *qi* that circulates and pulsates throughout it, presents an unobjectifiable, inseparable and integrated reality. As the *Hua Hu Ching* states,

> *The Tao gives birth to One.*
> *One gives birth to yin and yang.*
> *Yin and yang give birth to all things [...]*
> *The complete whole is the complete whole.*
> *So also is any part the complete whole [...]*
> *But forget about understanding and harmonizing and*
> *making all things one. The universe is already a*
> *harmonious oneness; just realize it.* (46)

In Taoist philosophy and practice, the interconnection among energies, including all living and nonliving matter (as far as we know) is neither a goal nor a construct, but the very foundation of existence – a fact that can be recognized and embraced by humans.

In Japanese Buddhism, which is both spiritual and philosophical, its tenants explicitly emphasize harmony, balance and gratitude, encouraging a consciousness of the inherent interrelations among all beings. As Japanese Buddhist and scholar Yasuaki Nara explains, "there is nothing that is purely independent and exists by itself. All things exist interdependently" (3). Out of the many schools of thought under examination here, Buddhism is a paragon of interconnection within human consciousness.

In 13th-century Japan, a Buddhist teacher named Dōgen Zenji wrote extensively on Buddhism, his most well-known collection entitled *Shōbōgenzō*, or *Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma.* He also founded the Sōtō school of Zen before continuing his work in China. He stands out among other scholars of his time for his particular focus on the interrelation of all things. "For Dōgen there is no differentiation between living and non-living beings or between beings with and without mind. These categories had been invoked by other philosophers in order to define the sphere of potential enlightenment, and it usually resulted in a hierarchy of beings [...]" (Shaw 118). The inseparable nature of all existence within Dōgen's teachings and philosophies underlines an egoless human existence within the holistic network of nature and the universe. "[I]n Dōgen, through the negation of the egocentric self, whole being, including man, animal, mountains, rivers, grasses, trees etc., is one with him, making both nature and himself encompassed within the world of the Buddha" (Nara 199).

Beyond these explicit connections among all living beings and the planet, Buddhism also expands its scope to a universal scale. "I do not and cannot exist independently of my total environment;" I am not "an island unto myself," or, in Buddhadasa's terminology, "I do not and cannot exist unto myself […] because to do so contravenes the very laws of nature. […] Buddhadasa's sense of a cooperative society, […] therefore, extends to the broadest reaches of the cosmos" (Swearer 246). The Buddhist perspective works to dissolve the illusion of the independent ego, and to embrace the reality of an energetically interconnected existence.

> The entire cosmos is a cooperative. The sun, the moon, and the stars live together as a cooperative. The same is true for humans and animals, trees and the earth. Our bodily parts function as a cooperative. When we realize that the world is a mutual, interdependent, cooperative enterprise, that human beings are all mutual friends in the process of birth, old age, suffering, and death, then we can build a

> noble, even a heavenly environment. If our lives are not based on this truth then we'll all perish. (Buddhadasa in Swearer 29)

In these different examples I have cited from the Taoist and Buddhist traditions, we can observe the extent to which an awareness of the interconnections – the mutuality – between environmental health and all living beings is manifest, central within these Asian philosophies.

iii. Traveling in great canoes or *wakas* over 700 years ago, explorers from Eastern Polynesia encountered and inhabited the islands we now call New Zealand. With numerous voyages back and forth (proving their navigating abilities), they established a tribal society on the newly found lands, becoming the Māori people. They maintained a vibrant and successful pre-colonial culture in which they both maintained and evolved an oral cosmology rooted in warfare readiness, ancestry, and deities of the natural world. Their creation myth – that the first woman was born from the children of the earth and the sky – permeated existence. "For the Māori of New Zealand, the intimate connection between nature and culture (from patterns of basket making to conceptions of cosmological forces) implies that every living thing has an inherent right to its place in the world, and all food is sacred" (Barnhill & Gottlieb 9). Indeed, respect for the land, its inhabitants and its essential nutrients is most pronounced in societies that live in direct relation to the land and to bodies of water, as such lifestyles depend on a well-developed understanding of humanity's place within the balance of the larger web of life and ecosystem, including inter-generational knowledge about the natural world, with all its abundances and its dangers. Such ecocentric, inter-generations oral-based knowledge is what René Philoctète calls "le langage des arbres et de la terre" (23), an African-based epistemology of living with the land and within the natural ecosystem.

iv. In ancient Rome, several examples of interconnection arise around the beginning of the Common Era. In *Book III* his work *Of a Happy Life*, the Stoic Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 BCE – 65 CE) noted that "[t]rue wisdom consists in not departing from Nature" but "in molding our conduct according to Her laws and model." A century later, known as the "Philosopher King," and the last of the "Five Good Emperors" (McNeil xiii), Marcus Aurelius, emperor of Rome from 161 to his death in 180, was notable for his big-picture perspectives on life, philosophy and spirituality, particularly evident in his extensive, journal-like work titled *Meditations.* One of the most significant of Stoic philosophers, Aurelius condemned hedonism and the ego-driven life and promoted honorable living, which for him involved simplicity, contemplation, and respect for one's place in the greater whole of inter-relational existence, that one "must consider the things of the world, not as a loose independent number, consisting merely of necessary events; but as a discreet connection of things orderly and harmoniously disposed" (Web). His cosmos-conscious outlook also included a clear grasp of the relationship between cause and effect, and the interdependent nature of all things. "There is then to be seen in the things of the world, not a bare succession, but an admirable correspondence and affinity" (48). In *Book IV, Meditation XXXIII*, he reflects that we must

> [e]ver consider and think upon the world as being but one living substance, and

> having but one soul, and how all things in the world, are terminated into one sensitive power; and are done by one general motion as it were, and deliberation of that one soul; and how all things that are, concur in the cause of one another's being, and by what manner of connection and concatenation all things happen. (47)

The themes of networks and the mutuality of existence resurface again and again throughout *Meditations*. Aurelius' philosophy has influenced and inspired many, and he is often grouped with other great thinkers such as Plato, Euripides, Socrates, Plutarch, Isocrates and Cicero.

In surveying these many global examples of interconnection that extend across different spaces, times and cultures throughout recent human history, it becomes clear that again and again, people of all kinds, coming from diverse environments and cultures, have understood the interwoven mechanics of human relations, as well as the connection between life and the physical environment from which it springs, and the many elements at play in achieving a balance between each and every valued part.

v. Interconnection in the Sciences

From the quantum to the astrological, the aim of physics is to understand how every bit of matter, force, and energy interconnects to create the universe, at least as far as we are able to understand the physical energetic existence, arranged and in constant motion due to gravity, and through the subatomic and atomic forces that construct atoms, each one perhaps composed of 99.999999999999% empty space.

> Quantum theory has thus demolished the classical concepts of solid objects and of strictly deterministic laws of nature. At the subatomic level, the solid material objects of classical physics dissolve into wave-like patterns of probabilities, and these patterns, ultimately, do not represent probabilities of things, but rather probabilities of interconnections. A careful analysis of the process of observation in atomic physics has shown that the subatomic particles have no meaning as isolated entities, but can be only understood as interconnections between the preparation of an experiment and the subsequent measurement. Quantum theory thus reveals a basic oneness of the universe. It shows that we cannot decompose the world into independently existing smallest units. As we penetrate into matter, nature does not show us any isolated "basic building blocks," but rather appears as a complicated web of relations between the various parts of the whole. (Capra 56-57)

Beginning in 2007 and held in various places across the globe, the International Conference on Interconnection between Particle Physics and Cosmology brings together some of the brightest minds in physics. This ongoing event marks an ever-increasing awareness of interconnectivity throughout the universe, as the goal of these physicists and cosmologists is to explore and expand our understanding of how every part of the physical world affects other parts – from the very smallest of scales to the very largest, from the mechanics of quarks within the nucleus of an atom to the mechanics of intergalactic and extra-universal space. Some of the topics discussed at the most recent conference include the theory, phenomenology and experimental detection of dark matter, neutrino physics, recent results from the Large Hadron Collider, and Higgs boson physics. "Panel discussions led by key people in the energy, intensity and cosmic

frontiers will be arranged to highlight important issues that straddle the boundaries of these intersecting topics" (inspirehep). This annual conference among members of the international scientific community highlights the most recent hypotheses and findings within the growing understanding of the mechanics of interconnectivity.

Thanks to the technology of the telescope and the microscope, one of the most obvious links between particle physics and cosmology can be observed in the centrifugal force of revolution: as planets revolve around a star, so too do electrons revolve around an atom's nucleus, including each and every atom that makes up each and every solar system. Astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, director of the Hayden Planetarium in New York and host of the acclaimed series *Cosmos* posits that, "the most remarkable fact about the universe is that these elements that comprise the human body and life on Earth are traceable to the actions of stars." While astronomers have a large body of evidence concerning the visible universe and our connection to it as recycled star parts, they are unable to perceive the majority of the universe. According to the agenda of the 2013 Interconnection between Particle Physics and Cosmology conference,

> [w]ith the content of the universe well known from astrophysical observations, a key aspect is that 23% of the universe appears to consist of dark matter. If current theories are correct, the particle physics candidate for this matter may well be observed in ongoing direct and/or indirect dark matter detection experiments or at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC). In addition, about 70% of the universe, the dark energy, still remains a significant mystery that major theoretical attempts are trying to understand.

To understand interconnectivity on any level, the actors involved must be identifiable, each part that is influenced by – and influences – the greater system. Given that so much of the universe is imperceptible to us as of yet, we cannot understand how dark matter and dark energy influence the universal system, despite accounting for 93% of the Universe. How do they influence the remaining 7% of which we are part? Many top astrologers are consumed by these mysteries, working to find ways new ways to detect and perceive them.

On the smaller and more familiar scale of human society, another example of science-based interconnection emerges in the development of computer science, the World Wide Web and its underlying Internet. In 1989, British computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee put forth the HyperText Project, which marked the beginning of a system that has radically transformed how human beings communicate socially, do commerce, research, learn, and express themselves to each other. Often referred to as the *digital revolution*, the increasing integration of computers into human lives marks a major shift in world society, including the capacity for people to connect to one another simultaneously – consensually or not (in the case of hackers, spies and repressive state regimes). "The Internet is at once a world-wide broadcasting capability, a mechanism for information dissemination, and a medium for collaboration and interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographic location" (internetsociety). Communication is increasingly driven by this world-wide system of linked machines, motivated by education, social networking, business transactions, cultural production and entertainment, and how we do our shopping. "The web has generated trillions of dollars of economic value, transformed education and healthcare and activated many new movements for democracy around the world" (googleblog). Perhaps one of its most

revolutionary features is how the Internet enables people to work together for positive change across the globe. Grassroots social and environmental justice movements use the Internet to organize, to build coalitions, to educate and to communicate in real time.

vi. Psychological Division: Rationalism, Science, and Modernity

We can trace the origins of classification, of dividing to conquer and tame the unknown through language, back to Greek rationalism, as expressed by thinkers such as Pythagoras (570–495 BCE), Plato (427–347 BCE), and Aristotle (384–322 BCE). A new technology, these early thinkers employed rationalism as they began to divide, organize and classify the world around them. Aristotle was particularly concerned with organization via division. He separated life into two distinct categories of plants and animals; he then divided animals into blood and bloodless, and so on. Such thinking was not isolated to the Greeks; during this same period in China, Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* (300 BCE) also stressed division and classification as important organizational strategies for military success.

These early examples of rationalist thinking inspired a legacy: St. Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Spinoza, Kant and many others have since contributed to the construction of divisive, categorical method of thinking based on difference. In 1735, the Swedish scientist Carl Linnaeus developed the system of taxonomy, publishing his famous work *Systema Naturæ*. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert published their *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* between 1751 and 1772. Entries on agriculture, geography, the colonies, slavery, botany, natural history, and medicine further mobilized a philosophy of organized separation and defined difference. Disciplines of observation, exploration, classification and collection are the methodological building blocks of what we now recognize as the political economic doctrine of "eternal growth." Ideals of progress, development, and modernity emerge in the *encyclopédiste*'s concerns surrounding knowledge, labor, and land (Israel).

Nothing is all good or all bad; the rational, logical and critical thought processes that humanity has developed over the last 2,500 have been used for productive and helpful purposes as well as destructive and exploitive ones.

vii. *Physical Division: Agriculture and Land Ownership*

Around 10,000 – 15,000 years ago, changing factors likely caused the availability of food to diminish, primarily big-game extinction, possibly due to climate change and over-hunting caused by population growth (May). For the human populations, this lack of food was a catalyst to developing ways of surviving through new technologies. It marked the start of artificial (human-based) selection of plants and animals, and therefore remarkable shifts in how humans interacted within the ecosystem, as well as within their social structures. As archeologist Brian Fagan notes, in the Americas starting some 15,000 years ago, "Paleo-Indians responded to changed circumstances by developing ever more intensive and specialized ways of exploiting local environments," which in turn created

new systems of social ranking (287). This was a drastic transition among various independent populations across the globe, from small and mobile clans living as hunter-gathers, to a completely different lifestyle of settlement, farming the land, raising livestock, and establishing permanent towns and cities with hierarchical social structures based on land control and storage of surplus production from that land. Obviously, this transformation brought about numerous radical changes – on ideological, physical, and social levels.

The possession of surplus food – including the ability to preserve and store it – created not only increased populations, but also stratifications of power among communities. "Large, hierarchically organized societies appeared, centered around villages and then cities. With the rise of civilization and the state came socioeconomic classes, job specialization, governments and armies" (Wadley and Martin). As agriculture spread, "an event whose significance can hardly be overstated," human beings began to experience a drastically different relationship not only with each other, but also with the Earth (Mann 20). Historian Ronald Wright stresses the importance of this transformation: "[t]he human career divides in two: everything before the Neolithic Revolution and everything after it" (Wright 45). In place of seeking nourishment where it happened to be found, humans were changing the land in order to manipulate the reproduction and growth of preferred plants and animals. Whereas before this change we likely tended to perceive our environment as a powerful and sacred parent on which we were dependent, with the newfound ability to control how and where our food grew, we became our own parents, masters of our destiny. As Paul Shepard proposes in his book *Nature and Madness,*

> [t]he economic and material demands of growing villages and towns are, I believe, not causes but results of this change. In concert with advancing knowledge and human organization it wrenched the ancient social machinery that had limited human births. It fostered a new sense of human mastery and the extirpation of nonhuman life. In hindsight this change has been explained in terms of necessity or as the decline of ancient gods. But more likely it was irrational (though not unlogical) and unconscious, a kind of failure in some fundamental dimension of human existence, an irrationality beyond mistakenness, a kind of madness. (24)

Accompanying this new form of madness, I maintain that humans, in order to create ever more surplus, began to develop a taste for organized and expansion-driven domination and exploitation: of the land, of plants, of animals, and of each other, based on who controlled resources, and who did not.

> Besides malnutrition, starvation, and epidemic diseases, farming helped bring another curse upon humanity: deep class divisions. Hunter-gatherers have little or no stored food, and no concentrated food sources, like an orchard or a herd of cows: they live off the wild plants and animals they obtain each day. Therefore, there can be no kings, no class of social parasites who grow fat on food seized from others. Only in a farming population could a healthy, non-producing elite set itself above the disease-ridden masses. (Diamond 65)

With agriculture and settlement began the notion of land ownership. Different from territorialism, which many animals practice to some degree, ownership of land and its yields began a hierarchy of human value with land-owning humans at its pinnacle.

Despite this agriculturally-based ideological shift in which people began to objectify the land, it is important to acknowledge that certain societies did not adopt this anthropocentric view and instead maintained traditions in which the earth – its land, water and living creatures – were understood and treated as part of an interconnected and sacred whole. As Robert Gilman explains in a piece entitled "The Idea of Owning Land," among the aborigines of Australia, traditionally, individuals inherited a special relationship to sacred places, but rather than "ownership," this relationship was understood as being owned by the land. In their worldview, this sense of environmental responsibility and belonging was not just for the living, but also extended to ancestors and to future generations as well.

Another example Gilman cites is that of the Ashanti of Ghana, who indeed embrace a notion of ownership, but it is *communal ownership* understood with long-term, intergenerational perspectives, thereby implying the need for environmental respect and protection. As Gilman notes, the Ashanti believe that the land "belongs to a vast family of whom many are dead, a few are living and a countless host are still unborn." This all-inclusive perception of ownership is radically different from the exclusive and elite notions of land ownership that subdivide the Earth today – countries, states, counties, cities and individual lots, owned by private, public, and corporate entities. Furthermore, in the capitalist context, due to inheritance laws, one family can maintain individual ownership of land and its resources for centuries through the process of intergenerational bequeathing

viii. Osage scholar George E. Tinker articulates how

> in the Indigenous world, there is a firmly established notion of the interrelatedness of the entire created/natural world. This sense of interrelatedness means that there is a much larger community whole than the clan or village or band, and furthermore has enormous import for understanding the religious traditions of these peoples. Yet this larger community is not the modern state, but rather consists of animals (four-leggeds), birds, and all the living, moving things (including rocks, hills, trees, and rivers), along with all the other sorts of two-leggeds (humans) in the world. Indian cultures are acutely aware of being a part of creation, rather than being somehow apart from creation with some freedom to consume it at will. (45)

APPENDIX B: ENGLSIH TRANSLATIONS OF PRIMARY TEXTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THE INTERCONNECTING SPIRAL

P. 4

"[l]a spirale représente un genre nouveau qui permet de traduire les palpitations du monde moderne. L'œuvre spirale est constamment en mouvement" (*Popomitan*)

"The spiral represents a new genre that allows one to translate the palpitations of the modern world. Spiral work is in constant motion" (my translation).

P. 7

Et d'un coup, les bourgeons folâtraient avec l'air, les fruits éclataient entre les branches, les fleurs se pâmaient, d'innombrables oiseaux verts criaient, chantaient, s'appelaient; l'arpenteur, le notaire, le spéculateur en denrées, le hougan, les mendiants, les cloches, les cerceaux des enfants, s'animaient, mesurant, soignant, vendant, quémandant, prêchant, vérifiant, roulant, carillonnant. (45)

And all at once buds were romping with the breeze, fruits gleamed on branches, flowers were in raptures, countless green birds squawked and sang to one another, while the surveyor, notary, produce vendor, *houngan*, priest, beggars, bells, and children's hoops leaped into action, measuring, verifying, selling, curing, preaching, panhandling, ringing, rolling. (75)

P. 10

"Le rapport à la terre, rapport d'autant plus menacé que la terre de la communauté est aliénée, devient tellement fondamental du discours, que le paysage dans l'œuvre cesse d'être décor ou confident pour s'inscrire comme constituant de l'être. Décrire le paysage ne suffira pas. L'individu, la communauté, le pays sont indissociables dans l'épisode constitutif de leur histoire. Le paysage est un personnage de cette histoire. Il faut le comprendre dans ses profondeurs." (Glissant Discours antillais 199)

"**The relationship with the land, one that is even more threatened because the community is alienated from the land, becomes so fundamental in this discourse that landscape in the work stops being merely decorative or supportive and emerges as a full character. Describing the landscape is not enough. The individual, the community, the land are inextricable in the**

process of creating history" (Dash 146). C*aribbean Discourse: Selected Essays By Édouard Glissant*. (J. Michael Dash).

P.17

"[q]uel jardin d'étoiles dans le ciel et la lune glissait parmi elles, si brillante et aiguisée que les étoiles auraient dû tomber comme des fleurs fauchées" (155).

"What a garden stars in the sky! And the moon crept among them so brilliant and sharp that the stars should have fallen like cut flowers" (153).

"[s]ous des parapluies aux mille nuances, aux formes les plus diverses, je me suis pâmée, une pluie continuelle, parfumé à la menthe, verte, escortant en mon extase. […] chants indistincts d'oiseaux de cristal, mers infinies se mêlant aux arcs-en-ciel" (33).

"Beneath umbrellas of a thousand nuances and the most varied forms, I have been enraptured, my ecstasy endlessly misted by a green and mint-perfumed rain. What worlds have turned before me, been born in me: clusters of lamps gliding past me, the tremulous song of crystal birds, seas without end melting into rainbows" (59-60)

"Cette question de l'eau, c'est la vie ou la mort pour nous, la salvation ou la perdition" (52).

"This water problem is life or death for us." (59)

Pp.17-18

"toute la journée ils affilent leurs dents avec des menaces; l'un déteste l'autre, la famille est désaccordée, les amis d'hier sont les ennemis d'aujourd'hui et ils ont pris deux cadavres pour drapeaux et il y a du sang sur ces morts et le sang n'est pas encore sec" (85).

All day long they sharpen their teeth with threats. One detests the other. Families are feuding. Yesterday's friends are today's enemies. They have taken two corpses for their battle flags. There's blood on those corpses and the blood is not yet dry!" (89)

CHAPTER TWO

IN*TERRE*LATION: A SPIRALIST ETHICS

P. 26

ma négritude n'est pas une pierre, sa surdité ruée
contre la clameur du jour
ma négritude n'est pas une taie d'eau morte sur l'oeil mort de la terre
ma négritude n'est ni une tour ni une cathédrale

elle plonge dans la chair rouge du sol
elle plonge dans la chair ardente du ciel
elle troue l'accablement opaque de sa droite patience. (16)

My negritude is not a stone, its deafness hurled against
the clamor of the day
my negritude is not a leukoma of dead liquid over the earth's dead eye
my negritude is neither tower nor cathedral

it takes root in the red flesh of the soil
it takes root in the ardent flesh of the sky
it breaks through opaque prostration with its upright patience. (41)

"véritablement les fils aînés du monde
poreux à tous les souffles du monde
aire fraternelle de tous les souffles du monde
lit sans drain de toutes les eaux du monde" (16).

truly the eldest sons of the world
porous to all the breathing of the world
fraternal locus for all the breathing of the world
drainless channel for all the water of the world (41)
étincelle du feu sacré du monde
chair de la chair du monde palpitant du mouvement même du monde!" (16).

spark of the sacred fire of the world
flesh of the world's flesh pulsating with the very motion of the world! (41)

P. 30

Belles, belles, belles ces terres! Les deux ensemble. L'une haute, l'autre basse, avec les sortileges de leur sous-sol: l'or des Zémès, la sueur de ceux-là tirés

d'Afrique. Le cacique Caonabo connut Anacaona, la samba. La tendresse du Xaragua fut fondue dans l'orgueil du Cibao. Les fleurs découvrirent l'ivresse de la bravoure. Lorsque souffle le hurricane, les sarcelles tournent en rond – Une couronne fragile dans la vigueur de la tourmente. (19)

Beautiful, Beautiful, Beautiful, these lands! Both of them together. One high, one low, with their underground sortileges: the Zemis' gold, the sweat of those wrenched from Africa. The cacique Caonabo knew Anacaona, the *samba.* The tenderness of Jaragua was dissolved into the pride of the Cibao Valley. Flowers discovered the intoxication of bravery. When the hurricane blows, the teals whirl in circles – a fragile crown and the vigor of the gale. (33)

P. 32

"Depuis cinq heures du matin, un oiseau (à la vérité, on ne sait quoi) tourne dans le ciel d'Elias Pina, petite ville frontière dominicaine.

"Les enfants croient qu'il s'agit du cerf-volant que le chef du village lance, des fois, pour s'amuser. Les adolescents aimeraient l'enfourcher pour une fugue. Apparemment, les jeunes adultes ne s'en soucient. Mais au fond, ils espèrent que le machin s'en aille. Les vieillards, hommes et femmes, mâchoires en saillie, paupières clignotantes, se regardent en coulisse, crachent trois fois sur leur poitrine. Se signent" (9).

"Since five o'clock in the morning, a bird – to be honest, no one knows what it is – has been wheeling in the sky over Elías Piña, a small Dominican town near the Haitian border.

"The children think it's the kite the local boss sometimes flies to kill time. The adolescents would love to straddle it for a joyride. The adults don't seem worried about it, but deep down, they're hoping the thingamajig will go away. Jaws jutting, eyelids blinking, the old folks slide sidelong glances at one another, spit three times on their chests, and cross themselves" (19).

P. 33

"Soudain, l'oiseau immobilise, ailes déployées. Son ombre découpe une croix carrelant Elias Piña. Aucun son ne sort de son gosier. Pas de cri ni de gazouillement. L'oiseau est muet" (9).

"Suddenly, the bird hangs motionless, wings spread. Its shadow carves a cross that cuts Elías Piña into quarters. No sound leaves its throat. Not one twitter or chirp. The bird is mute" (19).

P. 34

"Chiens, chats, bœufs, chèvres, ânes, chevaux, mordent, griffent, broutent, paissent son ombre sertie dans le cristal d'un midi caraïbe" (9).

“Dogs, cats, oxen, goats, donkeys, horses bite, claw, graze, browse its shadow set in the Crystal of a Caribbean noon” (19).

P. 35

“décrivent un arc de cercle et tombent au sol, écrasés” (10).

“rebound in an arc to the ground, squashed flat” (20).

“l’oiseau n’a pas de sang” (10).

“There is no blood in the bird” (20).

P. 36

“On ne s’attaque pas impunément à la machine” (10).

“No one attacks the machine with impunity” (20).

“Sinon les enfants maigrissent et du sang pisse entre les cuisses des femmes” (10).

“**Or else children waste away and women piss blood between their thighs” (21).**

“L’oiseau est sorcier” (10).

“**The bird is a sorcerer” (21).**

“prend ses aises dans le ciel du village” (9)

“village takes life easy in the village sky” (20)

Pp. 36-37

“D’un coup, il plonge, tête baissée, sur les arbres. Les feuilles giclent, les branches se cassent, les fleurs prennent feu. L’impacte contre les troncs n’arrête pas sa furie. Tout s’écroule sur son passage, lui laissant la liberté de ses manœuvres” (10).

"**With one fell swoop it plummets, head down, onto the trees. Leaves go flying, branches break, flowers catch fire. The impact against the trunks does not stem its fury. Everything collapses in its wake, leaving it free to maneuver" (21).**

P. 37

"L'oiseau est aveugle" (10).

"The bird is blind" (21).

Trujillato: "época de corrupción y violencia aberrantes, desde luego estigmatizada por lo que parece haber sido una fuente inagotable de malicia" (Larson 92).

Trujillato: "aberrant era of corruption and violence, since stigmatized by what appears to have been an inexhaustible source of malice" (my translation).

P. 38

"Maintenant il cingle vers le ciel, ailes repliées, pattes jointes, vrillant l'air. Le soleil, frappé de plein fouet, tremble s'incurve, rapetisse. Personne n'ose se prononcer à fond sur les acrobaties de l'engin, ni même essayer un mauvais sort" (10).

"Now it shoots skyward, wings folded, feet together, drilling the air. Struck head-on, the sun quivers, shrinks, caves in. No one dares to comment on the missile's acrobatics or even *try* to cast a counter-spell" (21).

P. 39

"le cacique Caonabo avait pris le fort La Nativité" (11).

"le cacique Caonabo took fort La Nativité" (21).

"la chanson que chantaient les caraïbes avant d'ouvrir les sentiers de la guerre" (11).

"the song the Caribs sang before going down the paths of war" (21).

P. 40

"la chanson a repris ses ailes […c]omme des fruits trop mûrs qui pourissent sur pied!" (11).

"[t]hat song has flown away. […] Like overripe fruit that rotted on the vine" (22).

"tente d'apaiser la colère de la bête en lui jouant de la mandoline. Mais ses doigts en pinçant les cordes de l'instrument raccourcissent jusqu'aux racines" (11).

"tries to appease the creature's anger, by playing the mandolin. But his fingers on the instrument's strings shrivel up to their roots" (22).

"des accords, n'importe lesquels! qui s'embrouillent, grincent, sifflent, s'empêtrent" (11).

"plucks chords from the instrument – any chords at all! – that tangle, squeak, whistle, flounder" (22).

Pp. 40-41

"les tôles des maisons se mettent à crisser, à caqueter, à miauler, à piailler" (11),

"the corrugated-metal roofs of the houses begin to screech, cackle, cheep and mew" (22).

P. 41

"Les cloches de la chapelle de bois dédiée à Notre-Dame de la Conception laissent leur tour, s'appellent, se cognent dans un bruit de mitraille et de noces" (11).

"The bells of the church quit their tower, calling and jostling one another with the rapid-fire sound of weddings" (22).

"Sur ces entrefaites, l'appareil qui a poursuivi le soleil dans ses derniers retranchements revient dans le ciel d'Elias Piña. Il enfouit la tête sous son aile gauche et dort, suspendu entre les labours et les premières étoiles. La bête est sourde" (12).

"Meanwhile, after hounding the sun into a corner, the device reappears in the sky over Elías Piña. It buries its head under its left wing and sleeps, suspended between the fields and the first stars. The beast is deaf" (23).

P. 43

"une sorte de méringue lente. Comme une adoration" (13).
"Seigneur du sang horrible" (13).
"Par la puissance de l'agonie nous te saluons, Seigneur de mort folle" (13).

"a kind of slow merengue. Like an Adoration" (24).

“Lord of demented death” (25).
“By the power of the agony we hail thee, Lord of demented death!” (25).

“Pour une tête d'homme haïtien, l'accolade de Trujillo; pour un corps d'enfant haïtien, femelle ou mâle, le sourire de Trujillo; pour une femme haïtienne coupée en deux, la reconnaissance de Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina” (13).

“For the head of a Haitian man, the accolade of Trujillo; for the body of a Haitian child, male or female, the smile of Trujillo; for a Haitian woman hacked in two, the gratitude of Raphael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina!” (25).

“récite la gloire de Trujillo […] jusqu'à ce que la nuit s'empêtre dans la gorge de chaque récitant et que des bouches ouvertes ne sorte aucun son” (14),

“Recited the glory of Trujillo … until night stops up every throat and each mouth gapes mutely.” (26)

“[E]ntre les labours et les étoiles, [il] continue de couver du cauchemar et que des machettes en faisceau restent là, au repos, récupérant, pour la ruée prochaine vers les têtes haïtiennes. Les cloches se sont tues. Un silence soigneusement ficelé monte la garde à Elias Pina” (14-15).

“The contraption, hovering between the fields and the stars, continues to brood a nightmare, and piled up machetes lie resting, recouperating for the next onslaught on Haitian heads. The bells are quiet now. Carefully bound and gagged, silence stands guard over Elías Piña” (26).

P. 44

Pedro Alvarez Brito, el mulato dominicano, l'ouvrier de l'usine sucrière de San Pedro de Macoris, qui n'avait pas chanté ni pleuré ni parlé ni même regardé l'oiseau-seigneur, l'oiseau-cerf-volant-vorace, l'oiseau-insigne, touche la main droite de sa femme, Adèle Benjamin, la chiquita negrita haitiana de Belladère. Et la trouve très froide! (15)

“**Pedro Alvarez Brito, el mulato dominicano, a worker at the sugar factory in de San Pedro de Macorís, who had neither sung nor wept nor spoken nor even looked at the bird-lord, the raptor-kite, the sign-bird, touches the right hand of his wife, Adèle Benjamin, la chiquita negrita haitiana from Belladère. And finds it freezing!” (26).**

45.

“Le jour du sang approche […] le jour de la honte et du mépris” (15).

“The day of blood is coming closer […] the day of shame and scorn” (27).

“Qu’est ce qui est impossible quand le pouvoir s’abêtit?” (15).

“What isn’t possible when power turns stupid?” (27).

“[i]l y a tout de même la fête de l’homme, petite!” (15),

Don’t forget our common humanity, sweetheart!” (27).

“Notre unique rempart, hombre!” (15)

“Our only protection, hombre!” (27).

“On doit pouvoir y arriver” (15).

“We should be able to mange.”

“Par l'amour sans doute, Pedro? demande Adèle, d'un air rêveur” (15).

“No doubt through love, Pedro?, asks Adèle dreamily” (27).

“Si, Douce Folie” (15).

“That’s right, my sweet madness” (27).

“Mais l'amour a les pieds bots, hombre!, explose la jeune femme” (15).

“But love is crippled, hombre! Cries the young woman” (27).

P. 46

Je trouvais qu’elle sentait plutôt la rosée comme si l’on eût écrasé un jardin sur son corps” (66).

“**I thought her scent was more like morning dew, as if her body had been rubbed with a garden” (104).**

"Il sortait de la pluie comme une église, une fête, une récolte." (45).

"he came out of the rain like a church, a celebration, a harvest" (75).

Pp. 46-47

"[l]'odeur des herbes coupées envahit le corps de Pedro Brito. Comme si son corps était labouré par l'odeur des herbes coupées. Pedro tousse. Une tourterelle dérangée dans son bain d'aube tranche l'air d'une lumière rose ardoise" (16)

"as if plowing his body, the smell of cut grass invades Pedro Brito. He coughs. Disturbed at its dawn bath, a tutledove cleaves the air with a slate-pink light" (29).

"Pedro presse le pas. La plaine, au loin, s'étend verte, éblouie de temps à autre d'un vol écarlate d'ortolans" (17).

"**Pedro quickens his pace. The plain streatches away into a green distance dazzled from time to time by a scarlet flight of ortalans" (31).**

P. 48

"L'aube, ayant peur, s'est réfugiée sous les ailes des oiseaux. Le déclenchement de la folie n'est certes pas pour aujourd'hui, mais pour y parvenir tout est mis en place" (17)

"Frightened, dawn has saught refuge beneath the pinions of birds. The madness will not be unleashed today, of course, but everything is ready" (31).

"Pedro Brito avance à longues enjambées dans la rosée qui commence à s'évaporer. Il frôle une touffe de basilic" (18).

"Striding through the dew just beginning to burn off, Pedro Brito brushes by a tuft of basil" (33).

P. 49

"L'air éternue, culbute, se casse le nez, étourdi. Des insectes troublés tournent leurs miroirs où s'affolent des couleurs: du jaune safran au violet pur, du noir de jais au cristal blanc des chutes d'eau. Belles, belles, belles ces terres! Les deux ensemble" (18-19).

"The air sneezes, somersaults, breaks its nose, all in a daze. Bewildered insects jiggle their mirrors of spinning colors; from saffron yellow to pure

violet, from jet black to the pellucid white of waterfalls. Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, these lands! Both of them together" (33).

"Les machettes trancheront les cannes, le suc gommeux collera aux tiges. Les muscles des deux peuples se conjugueront pour tirer au clair le jus de la terre dominicaine" (19).

"**Machetes will cut the cane; the sticky juice will cling to the stalks. The muscles of two peoples will work together to bring forth the goodness of the Dominican earth" (33).**

P. 50

"Ah! L'odeur des cannaies dans les matins clairs! Comme si la terre voulait asperger le ciel" [19],

"Ah! The smell of the canebrakes on a clear morning! As if the earth wished to bless the sky" (33).

P. 51

"Pedro Brito ouvre goulûment les narines: la vie de l'île s'y réfugie en bouffées chaudes" (19).

"**Pedro Brito flares his nostrils greedily, inhaling the life of the island in whiffs of warm air" (33).**

"[l]a terre d'ici porte mes pas qui doivent s'entendre de l'autre côté. Dans l'autre terre, ma terre!" (19).

"The land here bears my footsteps, which can surely be heard on the other side" (33-34).

"[l]a caciquesse visita le cacique, leurs feux ont longtemps couru, d'ici à l'autre bord" (19).

"The caciquesse visited the cacique, and their fires burned brightly for a long time, from coast to coast" (34).

P. 52

"Pedro accélère le pas. L'aube a fait naufrage. On remarque ses débris nobles: ourlets de nuages, étoiles rongées, vapeurs perdues aux flancs violets des contre-forts. L'aurore franche, royale, chevauche les deux terres, celle d'ici, la basse, celle de là-bas, la haute, sereine étrangement!" (19).

“Pedro hurries a little faster. Dawn has been shipwrecked, strewing noble debris; rims of clouds, corroded stars, mists lost on the violent flanks of foothills. A frank and royal early morning sky spans the two lands, the low one here, the high one over there, strangely serene!” (34).

“Le soleil libéré du piège de la Sierra de Neiba galope sur les deux terres” (21).

“Freed from the snare of the Sierra de Nieba, the sun that gallops across the two lands” (36).

P. 53

“posséder sa terre entire […c]omme un conquistador” (128).

“To posess his entire land […l]ike a conquistador” (188).

“Pedro s'arrête de marcher. Les voix des paysans, sautant par-dessus les cannaies, affluent à ses sens, à sa gorge. Il aspire délicieusement à la fois cette présence directe de la terre et cette chaleur ouvrière qui lui vient d'au delà des cannaies” (19).

“Pedro stops walking. Tumbling over the canefields, the peasents voices rush to his senses, catch in his throat. He breathes with delight both this direct presence of the earth and this fraternal warmth of honest toil coming to him from beyond the plantations” (34).

“Le ciel allume les arbres de la Sierra de Nieba. Les hautes branches absorbent les premières joailleries. Arrive la brise qui les secoue, c’est un ruissellement silencieux d’escarboucles vers les troncs et vers les branches basses. La Sierra devient tel un brasier d'où chaque aile se saoule, chaque toit se gave, chaque point d'eau s'alimente. Droit, les yeux dans la lumière, Pedro regarde au loin rosir la terre haïtienne. Il s'étonne qu'elle soit si belle, s'émerveille d'être né d’une telle merveille, l’une et l’autre terre étant elles-mêmes merveilles” (19-20).

“The sky sets the trees of the Sierra de Nieba aflame, and the breeze arrives to rustle them in a silent shimmering of deep-red gems sifting down through the branches. The Sierra becomes like a clear blowing fire where every wing drinks deeply, every roof gathers radiance, every water hole takes nourishment. Standing tall, gazing toward the light, Pedro watches the Haitian earth turn rosey in the distance, astonished that the land should be so lovely, wondering at his birth in such a marvel, for both lands are marvelous” (34).

P. 54

"Sur le ciel, l'oiseau tourne en rond. La chanson des cannaies s'étrangle. Le soleil cafouille. Une grande croix tranche les champs. Les bœufs, les ânes, les chiens, les chats, paissent, mordent, broutent, griffent, l'image du machin. Les bœufs, les ânes, les chiens, les chats, mâchent de l'ombre, puis veules, se regardent, les yeux baignés d'une immense tendresse" (22).

"In the sky, the bird goes round in circles. The song of the canebreaks chokes off. The sun becomes muddled. A vast cross carves up the fields. The oxen, donkeys, dogs, cats graze, bite, browse, claw the image of the contraption. The oxen, donkeys, dogs, and cats chew on shadow, then gaze at one another, stricken, their eyes flooded with immense tenderness" (37).

P. 55

"Un soir de chaleur caraïbe, les soldats de Toussaint Louverture, venus de l'Ouest par les lacs, les forêts, les montagnes, les parfums, les oiseaux, se déversaient sur Santo-Domingo. Ils massacraient le bétail, gaulaient les fruits, détournaient les cours d'eau, arrêtaient les horloges" (23).

"They came from the West, passing through forests, over lakes and mountains, past perfumes and birds, and on a night of Caribbean heat, the soldiers of Toussaint Louverture poured into Santo Domingo. They slaughtered the livestock, thrashed fruit from the trees, diverted rivers and streams, stop the clocks." (39-40)

"Les soldats de Louverture demeurèrent longtemps chez nous, dans l'Est. Ils cultivèrent des jardins, tracèrent des routes, construisirent des maisons, se marièrent avec nos filles, eurent beaucoup d'enfants auxquels ils apprirent *le langage des arbres et de la terre*." (23 emphasis added).

"Louvertures's soldiers stayed with us here in the East for a long time. They grew gardens, laid out roads, built houses, married our daughters, had many children to whom they taught the language of the land and the trees" (40).

Gouverneurs de la rosée

P. 57

"mains énormes' pendaient au bout de ses bras ainsi que des paquets de racines. Ses cheveux lui descendaient sur le front buté par petits buissons enroulés et clairsemés" (49).

"enormous hands dangled at the ends of his arms like bundles of roots. His hair grew low on his stubborn brow, thin and kinky" (56).

P. 58

"l'on eût écrasé un jardin sur son corps," (66), (45)?

“her body had been rubbed with a garden” (104).

“Manuel s’en alla, le cœur mal à l’aise. Il laissa derrière lui les dernières cases. Les chardons dorés couvraient de leurs soleils minuscules les talus du chemin” (76).

“Manuel went on, his heart ill at ease. He left the last huts behind him. Golden thistles covered the ruts in the path with their tiny suns” (81).

“[u]n reflet de la lumière oblique traînait sur la plaine, mais l’ombre se nichait déjà dans les arbres et des taches mauves s’étendaient sur les flancs des collines. (76).

“A reflection of oblique light spread slowly across the plain, but shadows were already nestling in the trees, and mauve spots were spreading over the hillsides” (81).

P. 59

“Ce sont les racines qui font amitié avec la terre et la retiennent: ce sont les manguiers, les bois de chênes, les acajous qui lui donnent les eaux des pluies pour sa grande soif et leur ombrage contre la chaleur de midi” (37).

“It’s the roots that make friends with the soil, and hold it. It’s the mango tree, the oak, the mahogany that give it rainwater when it’s thirsty and shade it from the noonday heat” (45).

“C’est comme ça et pas autrement, sinon la pluie écorche la terre et le soleil l’échaude: il ne reste plus que les roches” (37).

“That’s how it is – otherwise the rain carries away the soil and the sun bakes it, only the rocks remain” (45).

“plein d'allégresse, malgré la pensée obstinée qui le hantait” (49).

“full of happiness, despite the stubborn thoughts that haunted him” (55).

P. 60

“Plantes, ô mes plantes, je vous dis: honneur; vous me répondrez: respect, pour que je puisse entrer. Vous êtes ma maison, vous êtes mon pays Plantes, je dis: lianes de mes bois, je suis planté dans cette terre, je suis lié à cette terre. Plantes, ô mes plantes, je vous dis: honneur; répondez-moi: respect, pour que je puisse

passer"(49).

"Growing things, my growing things! To you I say, 'honor!' You must answer 'respect,' so that I may enter. You're my house, you're my country. Growing things, I say, vines of my woods, I am planted in this soil. I am rooted in this earth. To all that grows, I say, 'Honor.' Answer 'Respect,' so that I may enter" (55-56).

"À dire vrai. Pedro se reconnaît un homme respectueux des mystères, des voix, des ombres, des signes, des loas" (135)

"Actually, Pedro admits to being a man who respects the *loas, mystères,* signs, voices, shadows" (197).

"Je dis vrai: c'est pas Dieu qui abandonne le nègre, c'est le nègre qui abandonne la terre et il reçoit sa punition: la sécheresse, la misère et la désolation" (37).

"That's the truth. It's not God who betrays us. We betray the soil and receive his punishment: drought and poverty and desolation" (45).

"Mais, tu sais, moi je suis fait avec ça, moi-même. […] Je suis ça: cette terre-là, et je l'ai dans le sang. Regarde ma couleur: on dirait que la terre a déteint sur moi et sur toi aussi" (69).

"But, you know, I'm made out of this, I am. 'That's what I am, this very earth! I've got it in my blood. Look at my color. Folks could say the soil has [dyed] me, and you, too" (74).

Tú, la oscuridad

Pp. 62-63

"Entre 1974 y 1982, el sapo *Bufo boreas boreas*, mejor conocido como sapo del Oeste, desapareció de las montañas de Colorado y de la casi totalidad de sus hábitats americanos.

"Según estudios realizados por la doctora Cynthia Carey, profesora de biología de la Universidad de Colorado, la causa de la desaparición fue una infección masiva, producida por la bacteria *Aeromonas hidrophilia.* Esta infección provoca graves hemorragias, especialmente en las patas que tomen una coloración rojiza. De ahí el nombre de la enfermedad: el Mal de la Pata Roja.

"Un sapo saludable no debería sucumbir a una infección por *Aeromonas.* Pero en el caso del *Bufo boreas boreas*, su sistema inmunológico falló.

"Todavía se ignoran las causas" (21).

"Between 1974 and 1982, the *Bufo boreas boreas,* better known as the Western toad, disappeared from the Colorado mountains, and from almost all its other American habitats.

"According to studies carried out by Dr. Cynthia Carey, professor of biology at the Univerity of Colorado, the cause of its disappeaeance was a massive infection attributed to the bacteria *Aeromonas hidrophilia.* The infection produces acute hemoraging, especially in the legs, which take on a reddish coloring, giving rise to the name of the illness: Red Leg Disease.

"A healthy toad should not succumb to an *Aeromonas* infection. But in the case of *Bufo boreas boreas,* there was a failure of the immune system.

"The cause of the failure is unknown" (9).

P. 65

"Al principio […] utilizábamos palabras menos violentas: "declinación" era mi favorita, "declinaban" las poblaciones anfibias; se ocultaban para siempre colonias enteras de sapos saludables; enmudecían y escaseaban las mismas ranas que apenas una temporada antes no habíamos cansado de escuchar; enfermaban y morían, o simplemente huían, nadie podía explicar adónde ni por qué" (18-19).

"At first we [...] used less violent words: 'Decline' was my favorite, amphibian populations were 'declining'; entire colonies of healthy toads went into permanent hiding; the same frogs we had grown tired of hearing only a season earlier fell silent and became rare; they sickened and died, or simply fled, and no one could explain where or why" (7).

"En Haití el sudor se me había vuelto rancio, de una consistencia algo pastosa, que al secarse endurecía la camisa. Varias veces al día me sorprendía oliéndome debajo de los brazos, me intrigaba ese olor, mi propio olor desconocido como el olor de un sueño. Aspirar aquella miasma intensa, personal, seguramente inesperada, gratificaba algo impreciso en mi interior, me espabilaba los sentidos, presiento que me enriquecía" (38-39).

"In Haiti my perspiration had turned rank, almost thick, and when it dried, it stiffened my shirt. Several times a day I found myself sniffing under my arms; I was intrigued by the oder, my own unfamiliar oder like the oder in a dream. Inhaling that intense, personal, unexpected smell, gratified a part of me I can't define, it stimulated my senses, I thought it made me more attractive" (22).

P. 66

"Tuve la sensación de que me hallaba frente a un ejemplar longevo, una criatura que se olvidó de morir, o que se refugió en alguna parte adonde no llegó el aviso, si había sido aviso, o la orden de aniquilamiento, si fue eso. […] Ese bicho tiene muchos años. No hay otra rana, ésa es la última" (228).

"**I felt as if I were holding an ancient survivor, a creature that had forgotten to die, or had taken refuge in a place so remote he hadn't heard the warning, if there was a warning, of the annihilation order, if that's what it was. […] That's an old animal. There's no other frog, that's the last one" (172-173).**

"una criatura que se olvidó de morir, […] la orden de aniquilamiento"

"a creature that had forgotten to die […] the annihilation order (172).

CHAPTER THREE

JUXTAPOSITION: AN ANTI-DIVISIVE LITERARY DEVICE

P. 70

"Si le rêve est une traduction de la vie éveillée, la vie éveillée est également une traduction du rêve" (Roberts-Jones 34).

"If dreaming is a translation of waking life, waking life is also a translation of dreaming" (my translation).

P. 73

"Ecoutez le monde blanc
horriblement las de son effort immense
ses articulations rebelles craquer sous les étoiles dures
ses raideurs d'acier bleu transperçant la chair mystique
écoute ses victoires proditoires trompeter ses défaites
écoute aux alibis grandioses son piètre trébuchement

Pitié pour nos vainqueurs omniscients et naïfs!" (68).

**"Hear the white world
horribly weary from its immense efforts
its stiff joints crack under the hard stars
its blue steel rigidities pierce the mystic flesh
bear its deceptive victories tout its defeats
hear the grandiose alibis of its pitiful stumbling**

Pity for our omniscient and naive conquerors!" (42).

P. 78

"Le soleil raclait le dos écorché du morne avec des ongles étincelants; la terre haletait par sa barranque altérée, et le pays enfourné dans la sécheresse se mettait à chauffer" (52).

"The sun scratched the scortched back of the mountain with its shining fingernails. Along the dry ravine the earth panted. The countryside, baked in drought, began to sizzle" (58).

"La vie s'était détraquée, figée dans son cours: le même vent balayait les champs par rafales de poussière" (53).

"Life had beenb thrown off stride, congealed in its course. Squalls of dust swept the fields" (60).

P. 79

"C'est pourtant de la bonne terre, pensait Manuel. Le morne est perdu, c'est vrai, mais la plaine peut encore donner sa bonne mesure de maïs, de petit-mil, et tous genres de vivres. Ce qu'il faudrait, c'est l'arrosage" (46).

"Anyhow, its good soil, Manuel was thinking. The mountains are ruined, that's true, but but the plain can still produce its full measure of corn, millet, and all kinds of crops. What it needs is irrigation" (53).

"un réseau de veines charriant la vie jusqu'au profond de la terre" (46)

"a network of veins transporting life to the depths of the soil" (53).

"Maman, comment allez-vous vivre?"
"A la grâce de Dieu,"
"Mais il n'y a pas de miséricorde pour les malheureux" (47).

"Mama, how are are you going to keep alive?
"By the grace of God"
"But there isn't any mercy for the poor" (54).

"Manuel secoua la tête avec impatience" and tries to convince her of the follies of such faith-based thinking. "Ça ne sert à rien, la résignation" (47).

“Manuel shook his head impatiently”
“Resignation won't get us anywhere” (54).

Pp. 79-80

“C’est traître, la résignation ; c’est du pareil au même que le découragement. Ça vous casse les bras: on attend les miracles et la Providence, chapelet en main, sans rien faire. On prie pour la pluie, on prie pour la récolte, on dit les oraisons des saints et des loa. Mais la Providence, laisse-moi te dire, c’est le propre vouloir du nègre de ne pas accepter le malheur, de dompter chaque jour la mauvaise volonté de la terre, de soumettre le caprice de l’eau à ses besoins; alors la terre l’appelle: cher maître, et l’eau l’appelle: cher maître, et n’y a d’autre Providence que son travail d’habitant sérieux, d’autre miracle que le fruit de ses mains” (47).

“**Resignation is treaterous. Its just the same as discouragement. It breaks your arms. You keep on expecting miracles and providence, with your rosary in your hand, without doing a thing. You pray for rain, you pray for harvest, you recite the prayers of the saints and the loas. But providence – take my word for it – is a man’s determination not to accept misfourtune, to overcome the earth’s bad will every day, to bend the whims of the water to your needs. Then the earth will call you, “Dear Master.” The water will call you, “Dear Master.” And there’s no providence but hard work, no miracles but the fruit of your hands” (54).**

P. 80

“le propre vouloir du nègre de ne pas accepter le malheur,” (47)

“man’s determination [is] not to accept misfourtune” (54).

P. 81

“Délira le regarda avec une tendresse inquiète: ‘Tu as la langue habile et tu as voyagé dans les pays étrangers. Tu as appris des choses qui dépassent mon entendement: je ne suis qu’une pauvre négresse sotte’” (47).

“Delira looked at him with an anxious tenderness. ‘You have a clever tongue, and you’ve traveled to foreign lands. You’ve learned things that pass my understanding. I’m just a poor old stupid black woman” (54).

Pp. 81-82

“Mais tu ne rends pas justice au bon Dieu. C’est lui le Seigneur de toutes choses; il tient dans ses mains le changement des saisons, le fil de la pluie et la vie de ses créatures. […] il dirige les esprits des sources, de la mer et des arbres” (47-48).

“Still, you don’t give the Good Lord his due. He *is* the Lord of all things! In his hands, he holds the changing of the seasons. The thread of the rain, and the life of his creatures. […] he controls the spirits of the springs, the sea, and of the trees” (54).

P. 82

"[i]l y a longtemps que je ne les avais plus entendues, maman," as "Manuel souriait et Délira décontenancée soupira: 'Ay, mon fi, c'est que c'est la vérité, oui'" (48).

"I haven't heard them for a long time, mama" as "Manuel was smiling. Delira, somewhat abashed, sighed, "Ah! My son, it's the truth, *oui*" (55).

"selon la sagesse des anciens" (54),

"in keeping with the wisdom of her ascestral gods" (60).

"c'est la rébellion, et la connaissance que l'homme est le boulanger de la vie" (84).

"[it] is rebellion, and the knowledge that man is the baker of life" (88).

"Mais pourquoi, foutre, avez-vous coupé le bois: les chênes, les acajous et tout ce qui poussait là-haut? En voilà des nègres inconséquents, des nègres sans mesure" (51-52).

"But why, damn it! did you cut the woods down, the oaks, the mahogany trees, and everything else that grew up there? Stupid people with no sense!" (58).

"Que veux-tu, frère... On a éclairci pour le bois-neuf, on a coupé pour la charpente et le faîtage des cases, on a refait les entourages des jardins" (52).

"What else could we do? We cleared it to get new wood. We cut it down for f ramework and beams for our huts. We repared the fenses around our fields" (58).

P. 83

"on ne savait pas nous-mêmes: l'ignorance et le besoin marchent ensemble, pas vrai?" (52)

"we didn't know, ourselves. Ignorange and need go together, don't they?" (58).

"crier votre misère aux loa, offrir des cérémonies pour qu'ils fassent tomber la pluie […] c'est inutile et c'est un gaspillage" (83)

“cried about your misfortune to the loas, offered ceremonies so that they’d make the rain fall. [...] it’s useless and it’s wasting time” (87).

“Alors qu’est-ce qui compte, Manuel? Et tu n’as pas peur de dérespecter les vieux de Guinée?” (83).

“Then what *does* count, Manuel? And aren’t you afraid of offending our old gods of Guinea?” (87).

“Quand les tambours battent, ça me répond au creux de l’estomac, je sens une démangeaison dans mes reins et un courant dans mes jambes, il faut que j’entre dans la ronde. Mais c’est tout” (84).

“When the drums beat, I feel it in the pit of my stomache. I feel an itch in my loins and an electric current in my legs, and I’ve got to join the dance. But that's all there is to it for me” (88).

P. 84

“assourdie par l’émotion,” she tells him that “[o]ui, tu le feras. Tu es le nègre qui trouvera l'eau, tu seras le maître des sources, tu marcheras dans ta rosée et au milieu de tes plantes. Je sens ta force et ta vérité” (85).

“muffled by emotion, ‘yes, you’’ll do it. You're the man who will find water. You’ll be master of the springs, you’ll walk through the dew in the midst of your growing things. I know you are right – and I know you are strong’” (89).

“[t]ous les habitants auront leur part, tous jouiront de la bienfaisance de l’eau” (85).

“All the peasants with have a part in it, and all of us will reap the benefits of the water” (89).

“les amis d’hier sont les ennemis d’aujourd’hui” (85).

"Yesterday’s friends are today's enemies" (89).

Pp. 84-85

“le nègre qui est retourné hier de Cuba” (49)

“the negro who returned from Cuba yesterday” (56)

“[l]e regard aminci, jusqu’à n’être plus qu'une escarbille brûlante, l’habitant dévisagea Manuel, puis avec une lenteur calculée, il tourna la tête, cracha, et se remit à sa meule” (49).

“his glance narrowed to become no more than a burning cinder. The peasant looked Manuel up and down, then with calculated slowness, he turned his head, spat, and returned to his charcoal pit” (56).

P. 85

“Manuel se débattait entre la surprise et la rage. Encore une seconde de ce voile rouge sur les yeux et il aurait rentré à l’inconnu son insolence à coups de plat de machette sur le crâne, mais il se domina” (50).

“Manuel struggled between surprise and anger. One second more of this red veil over his eyes, and he would have repaid the stanger’s insolence with the flat of his machete across his cranium, but he controlled himself” (56).

“remâchant sa colère et son malaise” […] “*El hijo de puta…*” (50).

"ruminating over his indignation and his uneasiness. […] “That son of bitch...”(56).

“[m]ais que se passe-t-il ? Il se rappelait le brusque changement d’attitude d’Annaïse. ‘Il y a quelque chose de pas clair dans tout ça’” (50).

“‘but what's behind it?’ He remembered the sudden change in Annaïse’s attitude. ‘There is something strange in all that’” (56).

“Pourquoi sommes-nous ennemis?” (55).

“Why are we enemies?” (85-86).

“‘C’est une histoire ancienne,’ commença le vieux, ‘mais elle n’est pas oubliée’” (55).

“It is an old story,’ the old man began. ‘But it hasn’t been forgotten” (62).

“Le sang a coulé.” (55)

“Blood was shed” (62).

“Racontez, papa, je vous écoute.”

“Tell me about it, papa, I’m listening” (62).

“Il avait fait des enfants sans compter.” (56)

“He had so many children you can’t count them” (62).

“[l]a terre n’est pas un drap, il y a de la place pour tous” (56).

“[The soil isn’t a piece of cloth. There’s room for everybody” (62).

“Il y a eu des blessés en quantité.”

“There were plenty of wounded” (63).

“On a fini par séparer la terre, avec l’aide du juge de paix. Mais on a partagé aussi la haine. Avant on ne faisait qu’une seule famille. C’est fini maintenant. Chacun garde sa rancune et fourbit sa colère. Il y a nous et il y a les autres. Et entre les deux: le sang. On ne peut enjamber le sang” (56-57).

“We finally got the land devided up, with the help of the justice of the peace. But we also divided up all that hate between us. Before, we were just one big family. That’s finished now. Each one nurses his own grudge and whets his own anger. There’s our side – and the others. Between the two, blood! You can wade in blood!” (63).

“[c]’était la haine et son ruminement amer du passé sanglant” (57).

"[It was hate with its bitter brooding over the bloody past” (63).

“comme si il portait un fardeau” (57).

“As though he were carrying a heavy load” (63).

“son intransigeance fratricide” (57).

“its fratricidal quarels” (63).

P. 87

"Il lui prit la main. Elle voulut la lui retirer, mais elle était sans force" (78).

"He took her hand. She tried to withdraw it, but she had no strength" (83).

"[t]u es une bonne travailleuse, on dirait,"

"You're a hard worker, one would say" (83).

P. 88

"[o]ui, […] mes mains sont usées" (78).

"Yes, my hands are rough" (83).

"Le chemin s'effaçait, les arbres noircissaient et se fondaient dans l'ombre. Le ciel n'avait plus qu'une lueur hésitante, assombrie et lointaine. Seul, au plus bas de l'horizon, un nuage rouge et noir se dissolvait dans le vertige du crépuscule" (78).

"**The road began to fade away, and the trees were turning black, blending with the shadows. The sky held only a hesitant glimmer, fading and distant. Alone on the far-off edge of the horizon, a red and black cloud dissolved in the vertigo of twilight" (83).**

"Ah, tu me tourmentes, et c'est comme si j'avais perdu mon bon ange, pourquoi me tourmentes-tu, Manuel? Il vit ses yeux pleins de larmes, et entre ses lèvres qui suppliaient, l'éclat humide de ses dents" (78).

"'Ah, you torment me. I feel like I've lost my good angel. Why do you torment me, Manuel?' He saw her eyes fill with tears, and between her supplicating lips, the moist splendor of her teeth" (83).

"basse et effrayée,"

"low and fearful"

"Elle s'avança vers lui de son pas égal et agile, sa gorge était haute et pleine et sous le déploiement de sa robe, la noble avancée des jambes déplaçait le dessin épanoui de son jeune corps. Elle fit une révérence devant lui" (81).

"**She moved toward him with her even, agile, gait. Her breasts were high and firm, and under the folds of her dress, the regal motion of her legs revealed the luscious shape of her young body. She bowed to him" (85).**

"Alors, tu es venue," Manuel says, to which Annaïse replies, "Je suis venue, tu vois, mais je n'aurais pas dû. Elle baissa la tête et détourna le visage" (81).

"So you came." "I came, you see, but I shouldn't have. She lowered her head and turned her face away" (85).

P. 89

"Toute la nuit j'ai lutté, toute la nuit j'ai dit: non, mais au matin je me suis habillée au chant du coq et j'ai été au bourg pour avoir une raison de sortir" (82).

"All night long I struggled. All night long I said, 'no.' But in the morning I got dressed when the cock crowed and I went to town to have an excuse for going out" (85-86).

"Ah, Dieu, non, frère. Quelques mesures de maïs, c'est tout" (82),

Ah, Lord, no, brother! A few measures of corn, that's it" (86).

"Je t'écoute, oui, Anna," (82)

"**I'm listening, *oui*, Anna" (86).**

"Je suis une négresse sérieuse, tu sais. Aucun garçon ne m'a jamais touchée. Je suis venue parce que je suis sûre que tu ne seras pas abusant.' Et s'interrogeant elle-même, rêveusement: 'Pourquoi que j'ai confiance en toi, pourquoi que j'écoute tes paroles?" (82).

"I just want to tell you, I'm one woman that goes straight. No man has ever touched me. I came because I am sure you will not take advantage of me. And then, dreamily, she asked, 'Why I trust you? Why do I listen to your words?" (86).

"La confiance, c'est presque un mystère. Ça ne s'achète pas et ça n'a pas de prix; tu ne peux pas dire: vends m'en pour tant. C'est comme qui dirait une complicité de cœur à cœur; ça vient tout naturel et tout vrai, avec un regard peut-être et le son de la voix, ça suffit pour savoir la vérité ou la menterie. Depuis le premier jour, tu m'entends, Anna, depuis le premier jour j'ai vu que tu n'avais pas de

fausseté, que tout était clair en toi et propre comme une source, comme la lumière de tes yeux" (82).

"**Trust is almost a mystery. It can't be bought and it has no price. You can't say 'sell me so much and so much.' It's more like a plot between one heart and another heart. It comes naturally and sincerely, a glance maybe or the sound of a voice is enough to tell the difference between the truth and a lie. Since the first day, listen, Anna, from the first day I saw that there's nothing false about you, that everything in you is as clear and clean as a spring, like the light in your eyes" (86).**

P. 90

"Ne commence pas avec les galanteries, ça ne sert à rien et ce n'est pas nécessaire" (82).

"Don't begin with compliments. That doesn't do any good, and it isn't necessary" (86).

"il n'est pas comme les autres et il a l'air bien sincère, mais quels mots il parle, Jésus Marie Joseph, c'est trop savant pour l'entendement d'une malheureuse comme moi" (82).

"he is not like the others and he has a very sincere way about him. But what words he speaks! Jesus – Mary – Joseph! He knows too much for a poor girl like me to understand" (86).

"Ne commence pas avec les compliments, ça ne sert à rien et ce n'est pas nécessaire. Ils rirent tous deux" (82).

"Don't begin with compliments. That doesn't do any good, and it isn't necessary" (86).

"Le rire d'Annaïse roulait dans sa gorge renversée et ses dents se mouillaient d'une blancheur éclatante" (82).

"The laughter of Anaïse rose full-throated, and her teeth were moist with a gleaming whiteness" (86).

P. 91

"la haine, la vengeance entre les habitants" and "la réconciliation pour que la vie recommence."

“hatred, revenge among the people” and “reconciliation so that life begins.”

P. 92

“El ultimo ejemplar de la *grenouille du sang*, debidamente preservado, se perdió con ellos en el mar” (241).

“The last, carefully preserved specimen of the *grenouille du sang*, was lost with them at sea” (183).

P. 96

“‘Lo que he aprendido lo aprendí en los libros,’ recalcó Boukaka desde la puerta. ‘Pero lo que sé, todo lo que sé, lo saqué del fuego y del agua, del agua y la candela: una apaga a la otra’” (133).

“‘What I’ve learned, I learned in books,’ Boukaka said emphatically from the door. ‘But what I know, everything I know, I took from fire and water, from water and flame: one puts out the other’” (97).

“‘Ya empezó la gran huida,” (132).

“The great flight has begun” (96).

“Ustedes se inventan excusas: la lluvia ácida, los herbicidas, la deforestación. Pero las ranas desaparecen de lugares donde no ha habido nada de eso” (132).

“You people invent excuses: acid rain, herbicides, deforestation. But the frogs are disappearing from places where none of that has happened” (96).

P. 97

“Me pregunté a quien se refería cuando decía ‘ustedes’. Ustedes, los herpetólogos profesionales. O ustedes, los biólogos que celebraban sus congresos en Canterbury, en Nashville, en Brasilia; los celebraban a puertas cerradas y salían de allí más perplejos de lo que habían entrado. Ustedes, en fin, gente atemorizada, quisquillosa, incapaz de mirar el lado oscuro, insumiso, seguramente atemporal de las declinaciones” (132).

“I wondered who he meant by ‘you people.’ You people, the professional herpetologists. Or you people, the biologists who hold their conferences in Canterbury, in Nashville, in Brasilia, hold them behind closed doors and walk out more perplexed than when they came in. You, people, fearful, finicky people, incapable of looking at the dark, recalcitrant, atemporal side of the decline” (96).

"hice un esfuerzo por manejar con naturalidad la enorme cantidad de datos de que me proveía Boukaka. Me asombró su capacidad para el detalle, su precisión, puedo decir que su sabiduría" (132).

"I made an effort to handle with some grace, the enormous quantity of data provided by Boukaka. I was amazed by his capacity for detail, his precision, I can even say his erudition" (97).

P. 98

"Un astrólogo tibetano le predijo a Martha que yo moriría en un incendio" (13)

"A Tibetan astrologer told Martha I would die by fire" (1).

"La oscuridad es más que la muerte; es la nada, es la sin-creación, es el apocalipsis. Se entiende en la novela que debe haber un equilibrio entre la vida y la muerte, la luz y la oscuridad. En las ultimas décadas del siglo XX, la novela sugiere que ese equilibrio ya no existe y abundan los indicios de pánico, de muerte, de exterminación. Pero igual que el protagonista, nuestro error es no hacer caso a las señales de desastre. La profecía de la muerte de Víctor puede entenderse como un pronostico simbólico de la extinción global. (320)

"**The darkness is more than death; it is nothingness, it is the non-creation, it is the apocalypse. It is understood in the novel that there should be balance between life and death, light and darkness. Emerging from the last decades of the twentieth century, the novel suggests that this balance no longer exists, and already we find abundant indications of panic, death, and extermination. But like the protagonist, our mistake is to ignore these signs of disaster. The prophecy of Victor's death can be understood as a symbolic forecast of global extinction" (my translation).**

P. 99

"L'eau du ruisseau colle aux jambes de Pedro Brito. Il y passe la main. Celle-ci est rouge de cafards. Pedro se met à courir. Les cafards aussi. Le ciel, les oiseaux, les enfants, les femmes, les vieillards, la Sierra de Neiba, le Yaqui, les herbes, les senteurs, la Reine Anacaona, sa tête de Zémès, la Virgen de Higuey, Puerto Plata, l'alcade Preguntas Feliz, el padre Ramirez, les gardes, don Agustin de Cortoba, les cloches, le lac Enriquillo, les deux Terres, les fleurs, l'aube, le soleil, glissent dans les cheveux de Pedro Brito, le patinent, le soupèsent, colin-maillard épouvantable! Puis, les herbes, la Virgen de Higuey, l'alcade Preguntas Feliz, les femmes, la Sierra de Neiba, son sortilège, les vieillards, le Yaqui, don Agustin de Cortoba, sa maison au lait de chaux, les fleurs, Puerto Plata, les deux Terres, l'aube, el padre Ramirez, les gardes, la Reine Anacaona, sa tête de Zémès, les senteurs, les cloches, le lac Enriquillo, le ciel, les enfants, les oiseaux, le soleil, s'arrêtent, se

fondent, disparaissent en un silence inaltérable, mais mou" (25).

"The water in the stream clings to Pedro Brito's legs. He runs his hands over it... and finds it red with cockroaches. Pedro starts to run. So do the cockroaches. The sky, birds, children, women, old folks, the Sierra de Neiba, the Yaqui, grasses, smells, Queen Anacaona, her Zemi face, the Virgen of Higuey, Puerto Plata, Alcalde Preguntas Feliz, Padre Ramirez, the Guardia, Don Agustin de Cortoba, the bells, Lake Enriquillo, the two Lands, flowers, the dawn, the sun – all slip into Pedro Brito's hair, pawing him, sizing him up, in a horrible game of blindman's buff [sic]! Then the grasses, the Virgen of Higuey, Alcalde Preguntas Feliz, the women, the Sierra de Neiba, its sourcery, the old folks, the Yaqui, Don Agustin de Cortoba, his whitewashed house, the flowers, Puerto Plata, the two Lands, the dawn, Padre Ramirez, the Guardia, Queen Anacaona, her Zemi face, the smells, Lake Enriquillo, the sky, the bells, the children, the birds, the sun… stop, dissolve, disappear in a pervasive but flabby silence" (43-44).

P. 103

"La mémoire double les choses quand on aime" (46).

"Memory sees double when you're in love" (76).

"Après une brusque secousse, son corps entier s'écroule, extatique. Elle se sent ventilée de la tête à la matrice. Elle blêmit!" (46).

"After a sudden shudder, her whole body relaxes, ecstatic. She feels refreshed, from her head to her womb. She turns pale!" (76).

while "[o]n entend dehors les coups de pioche de don Agustin creusant la fosse du rayon de soleil qu'il avait pendu haut et court jusqu'à ce que mort s'ensuive. Branches, fruits, becquetées d'oiseaux. Dehors, Elias Pina déserte" (46-47).

"she can hear the pickax blows of Don Augustine digging a grave for the sunbeam he'd hanged by the neck until dead. Branches, fruits, pecked by birds. Outside: Elías Piña, deserted" (76).

P. 104

"tremble, s'incurve, rapetisse" after the *machin* strikes it "de plein fouet" (10).

"quivers, shrinks, drilling" after the *machin* strikes it **"Head on" (21)**

P. 105

"La chose a pondu dans les fleurs. Elle a couché avec le grand chemin. Elle a marché dans nos rêves. Elle a appris au ciel à hurler. Elle dort dans les berceaux de nos enfants. Elle se glisse sous nos draps. Elle occupe la place d'honneur à notre table" (17).

"The thing has laid eggs among the flowers. It has lain with the high road. It has stalked through our dreams. It has taught the sky to scream. It sleeps in the cradles of our children. It slips between our sheets. It sits at the head of our tables" (31).

Pp. 105-106

"devenu chef d'Etat après un pronunciamiento style Amérique Latine: coup de force exécuté avec la rapidité de l'éclair par des féodalités militaires, renversement d'un gouvernement autoritaire au profit d'une camarilla, établissement d'un autre gouvernement autoritaire au profit d'un nouveau petit groupe de clientele" (49).

"made chief of state buy a Latin-American style pronunciamiento: a lightning-fast military coup that replaces an authoritarian Government in the service of a *cam arilla* with another authoritarian government in the service of a new coterie of the influential elite" (81).

P. 106

"Il avait consacré de longues heures à l'étude des mœurs de son peuple. Avait découvert qu'il dirigeait des gens désintéressés, hospitaliers, expansifs, belliqueux, aimant les jeux de hasard, les courses de chevaux, les combats de coqs. Des gens qui font l'amour avec des crocs et du cœur" (128).

"He had devoted long hours to studying the customs of his country. Had discovered that he was the leader of a people who were hospitable, unselfish, effusive, quarrelsome, fond of games of chance, horse races, cockfights. People who made love with real heart – and bared fangs" (188).

P. 107

"Il éclatait de rire, paraissait satisfait. Il pensait tout haut que, en lieu et place du 'langage de la terre' dont parlait la mémé, il eût dit: 'L'engagement du sang.' Il s'examina. Et ce jour-là, il se prit au sérieux" (23-24).

"**He burst out laughing, apparently with satisfaction. He mused aloud that instead of the 'language of the land' the granny had mentioned, he would have said: 'The covenant of blood.' He examined his conscience. And that day, he took himself seriously" (40).**

Tout au bout de sa petite enfance, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina était amoureux de cette chose-formidable-près-du-ciel qu'on appelle la Citadelle Henry. Cerfs-volants aux queues de sirène, cerceaux d'acier raclant l'asphalte de leurs langues de feu, ballons multicolores pardessus les toits de Santo-Domingo, billes, petits bateaux papillonnant dans les bassins, peluches, figurines, toupies, rien n'enchantait Rafaelito Leonidas Trujillo y Molina. Il ne voulait que la Citadelle. II se lamentait jour et nuit de ne pouvoir la posséder. Mais caressait l'espoir qu'il l'aura un jour. (22)

At the very end of his infancy, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina was in love with that tremendous-thing-near-the-sky called the Citadel. Kites with mermaid tails, steel hoops scraping the asphalt with their tongues of fire, colorful balloons over the roofs of Santo Domingo, marbles, little boats flitting around ornamental ponds, plush animals, toy figures, spinning tops – nothing enchanted Rafaelito Leonidas Trujillo y Molina. He wanted only the Citadel. Unable to get his hands on it, he lamented his fate morning, noon, and night. But cherished the hope that one day it would be his" (39).

Pp. 107-108

"A mesure qu'il avançait en âge l'enfant Trujillo devenait de plus en plus excentrique. Il n'en était pas autrement dans les lieux du pouvoir, en République Dominicaine. On était extravagant. On inscrivait sur les murs blancs des maisons municipales, à travers le pays, en grandes lettres noires, moulées: "El diablo haitiano!" (27)

"**As he grew older, the child Trujillo became increasingly eccentric. Things were no different in the seats of power in the Dominican Republic. People were absurd. They wrote on the white walls of municipal building all across the country, in big, black, block letters: *'¡El diablo Haitian!'* (47)**

P. 108

"On organisait des réunions publiques au cours desquelles on distribuait des tracts contre les voisins de l'Ouest. Avec le drapeau national dominicain et des machettes" (27).

"They organized public meetings at which they distributed tracts against their Western neighbors. Along with machetes and the Dominican flag" (47).

"[o]n prenait le repas de l'Eucharistie en maudissant les hommes de l'Ouest" (27),

"**They partook of the Eucharist while cursing the men of the West" (47).**

P. 109

“Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina, dans l’obscurité et le froid, souriait étrangement, en caressant un lampyre coincé dans le chaton émeraude de sa bague en platine. C’était comme s’il venait de conclure un contrat de mariage entre la chose-près-du-ciel et lui, el máximo jefe” (50).

“Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina smiled strangely in the chilly darkness, caressing a firefly trapped in the Emerald of his platinum ring. It was as if he had just signed a marriage contract between the thing-near-the-sky and himself, *el máximo jefe*” (81).

On sonnait la diane, par intervalles, de jour, de nuit, dans les casernes, pour maintenir les troupes en éveil. On improvisait des champs de tir sur les places publiques. On mimait des corps à corps, des coups et mouvements de l’escrime, des combats d’athlètes, de coqs, de boxe. Chacun exposait sa stratégie. Chacun concevait sa tactique. (27)

“In military barracks, reveille was sounded at intervals, day and night, to keep the troops on their toes. Fireing ranges were set up on marketplaces. Men went through the motions of hand-to-hand fighting, the parry-and-thrust of fencing, combats between athletes, fighting cocks, boxers. Everyone devised tactics. Explained strategies” (47-48)

“On menait son train de vie ordinaire, mais on se sentait à la veille du chaos. Aucune violence n’avait encore occasionné la violence, mais on parlait librement de violence. Les imaginations levaient dans les ténèbres” (27).

“People went on with their ordinary lives, but felt on the verge of chaos. No violence had yet led to violence, but everybody spoke freely of violence. In the shadows, imaginations were rising like bread dough” (48).

P. 110

“Pour posséder sa terre entière, il l'avait parcourue à coups de cravache. Comme un conquistador. Des vastes plaines aux hautes montagnes” (128).

“To possess his entire land, he had galloped the length and the breath of it. Like a conquistador. Vast plains with lofty mountains” (188).

“Les vents alizés lui avaient raconté les histoires de Caonabo, de Nunez de Caceres, lui avaient parlé des quatre fleuves et des trois mille rivières aux paillettes d'or. A Monte Tina (3190m), il avait contemplé son pays par les horizons de ciel, de terre et de mer: Il pouvait à loisir embrasser les merveilles” (128).

The trade winds had told him the stories of Caonabo, of Nunez de Cáceres, and spoken of the four great rivers and the three thousand lesser

ones flecked with gold dust. On Monte Tina (3,190 meters), he had contemplated his nation with its horizons of land, sky, and sea. He could embrace all of these marvels at his leisure…" (188).

P. 111

"quarante-huit généraux de division à pompons en or, sur de fringants coursiers, cinquante-trois généraux de brigade à pompons en argent, sur des destriers blancs, trois cent quatre colonels à casquettes brodées, sur des genêts d'Espagne, huit cents grenadiers et chasseurs à dos de mulet avec des fusils à répétition et culasses en cuivre bruni, deux cent treize tirailleurs à gibernes avec baudriers en galons d'or, sur des juments baies, cinq cents grenadiers à pied, sanglés dans des paletots de grosse toile brune, cinq cent douze chasseurs à pied, azur et pourpre, avec des shakos en castor, velours maroquin, sans cordons, sept cent deux artilleurs vêtus de laine bleue et traînant après eux de minuscules canons de fer. Fanfare: cors, hélicons, trompettes, trombones à coulisses, à pistons, sur trente ânesses à chabraques en popeline" (50)

"**forty-eight major generals with gold pompoms, on spirited steeds; fifty-three brigadiers with silver pompoms, on white chargers; three hundred and four colonels in dress caps, on Spanish jennets;eight hundred grenadiers and light cavalry with repeating rifles and burnished brass-plated breach-loaders, on mules; two hundred and thirteen sharpshooters with cartridge-pouches and shoulder-belts gallooned with gold, on bay mares; five hundred more grenadiers buttoned up tight in their brown linen paletots, on foot; five hundred and twelve light infantry in purple and as azure, with beaver shakos trimmed with Moroccan and velvet but no silk cords; seven hundred and two artillery men in blue wool uniforms, dragging tiny iron cannons behind them. Fanfare: horns, base tubas, trumpets, slide trombones, valve trombones, on thirty she-asses fitted with poplin saddle-cloths" (82).**

Pp. 111-112.

"Malgré son accaparement des métaux, des minéraux, des marais salants, des oiseaux, des reptiles, des poissons, des insectes, des végétaux, sa main-mise sur l'agriculture, l'industrie, le commerce, les finances, l'armée, son emprise sur les mœurs, les arts, les lettres, la religion, l'instruction publique, la justice, son ascendant sur la population, sa possession réelle de la République Dominicaine, sa prépotence, ses titres, ses décorations, ses maîtresses, ses gardes du corps, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina souffrait du mal de la Citadelle Henry. Il n'arrivait pas à admettre qu'elle ne fût pas sa propriété... Il en vint à en vouloir terriblement au peuple haïtien" (128-129)

"**Despite his monopoly on metals, minerals, Salt marshes, birds, reptiles, Fish, insects, vegetables; his stranglehold on agriculture, industry, commerce, finance, the armed forces; his grip on Dominican mores, arts, letters, religion, public education, justice; his influence on the population and dominance of the country; his titles, medals, mistresses, and bodyguards…**

despite all this, Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina suffered from Citadel sickness. He could not bring himself to accept that the fortress did not belong to him. Eventually, he began to bear a terrific grudge against the Haitian people" (188).

P. 114

"Le chef représentant du gouvernement," (21).

"The government's chief representative" (36).

"péremptoirement reprend ses droits; elle va, vient, court-ci, court-là, souffle, rit, se contemple" (124).

"peremptorily reclaims its rights: it's off, zipping here-there-and-everywhere, panting, laughing, taking stock" (182).

"mon amour, petite bête schizophrène!" (115).

"my love, schizophrenic little beast!" (172).

"[j]e ferai mieux que ça quand j'aurai mon gosse, bien que mon ventre n'ait jamais voulu féconder la semence de mon homme. Elle tourne sur elle-même, dévoilant un demi-cercle de dents éblouissantes" (124).

"I'll do better than this when I've have my kid, even though my womb has never wanted to grow my man's seed. The head twirls around, flashing a set of sparkling teeth" (182).

P. 115

"Chaque fois qu'il frappe, les jambes d'Emmanuela, longues, fines, ceinturant, étreignent, serrent, purgent son corps immense, beige. Et la machette gambade, culbute. La machette pirouette. Et là et là !, ronge, fauche, mutile, découpe. Une vessie éclate. L'air, d'un coup, se déploie, multiplie des entrechats, et, par surprise, tape" (39).

"Each time he strikes, Emmanuella's long, slender legs grip, girdle, press, squeezing his huge beige body dry. And the machete cuts capers, turns somersault. The machete pirouettes. Snicker-snack! And slashes, sunders, severs, shears. A bladder bursts. The air, abruptly, unleashes a multiplication of the entrechats and – big surprise – strikes home" (68).

Pp. 115-116

“observe, raisonne, hésite: ‘Suis-je faite pour couper des cous? Que diront les herbes? les troncs des chênes? les vieux manguiers aïeuls de la Sierra?’” (56).

“Am I cut out to cut off heads? What will the Grass say? The boles of oaks? The old mango trees, sages of the Sierra?” (91).

P. 116

“puis d'un coup de tête: ‘Je suis maîtresse de moi-même, comme de la mort’” (56).

“Then, impulsively – ‘I am my own master, as I am of death’” (91).

“la machette opte pour la raison d’Etat, la pureté de la nation dominicaine, son authenticité, sa spécificité, son originalité, se souvient qu'elle est chevalière des blancos de la tierra, se persuade qu'il faut que l'ocre étouffe le noir, le dissolve afin que du Bahoruco à Monte Christi tout soit jaune, blanc... (blanc surtout) comme l'aube rameutant son peuple de clarté, blanc comme lorsque, brisants, les flots écument, colombes d'eau. Et hop! la machette décide (Adèle se l'imagine train, serpent de nuit, dragon), conclut, tombe sur la nuque d'Adèle! (Vapeur, poupée, criquet)” (56).

“the machete opts for the Reason of State, the purity of the Dominican nation, its authenticity, specificity, originality, remembers it’s the champion of the *blancos de la tierra*, persuades itself that ocher must snuff out black, leach it out, so that from Bahoruco to Monte Christi all will be yellow or white (mostly white) like the dawn rallying its people of light, quite like the foaming crests of waves breaking into doves of water. And hop! The machete makes up its mind, (*Adèle imagines it as a train, a snake in the night, a dragon,*) comes to a conclusion, and falls on the back of Adel’s neck! (*a vapor, a doll, a locust.*)” (91-92).

P. 118

“[e]lle est cette chaleur qui s’entortille dans mon corps, ce rire qui pompe dans mon sang; si l’un s’en va, l'autre meurt de dépérissement” (20).

“She is this heat coursing through my body, this laughter throbbing in my blood. If one of us went away, the other would languish and die” (35).

“[u]n foyer est un grain mis en terre. Il doit être entier pour germer, donner des fruits. Tranché, le grain pourrit” (21).

“A home is a seed planted in the earth. It must be whole to grow, to bear fruit. Cut into pieces, the seed rots” (35).

P. 119

"Ah! mon homme! Adèle est habitée d'une chaleur subite. La chemise de grosse toile orange joue dans ses cheveux, flotte sur les lèvres, lui soupèse les seins, flatte son ventre l'enveloppe, lui serre les reins, palpe ses cuisses, presse son sexe, presse, entre en elle, entre, la pénètre, l'habite, la fouille, la possède. Ah! mon homme! Il sortait de la pluie comme né de la pluie" (45).

"Ah! My man! Adèle feels a flash of heat. The orange linen shirt plays in her hair, grazes her lips, gently cradles her breasts, strokes her stomach, envelops her, possesses her. Ah! My man! He came out of the rain as if born of the rain" (75).

"Il portait, ce jour-là, sa salopette, et communiquait son rire, son enthousiasme, sa vie… Il sortait de la pluie comme une église, une fête, une récolte. Comme on dirait une coopérative. Autour de lui des myriades de petites pattes cristallines voltigeaient, gambadaient, cabriolaient, tintinnabulant. Puis cavalaient" (45).

"he was wearing his overalls, that day, and you could sense his laughter, his enthusiasm, his vitality…He came out of the rain like a church, a celebration, a harvest. Like – one might say – a peasant cooperative. Myriad little crystal paws frisked about him, swooping, gamboling, jingling. Then galloped off" (75).

P. 120

"Certes, la prescription sera exécutée: les femmes dominicaines seront croisées avec les 20.111 mâles importés d'Espagne, du Liban, de la Palestine, de la Jordanie, de l'Allemagne et de la Grèce. Des milliers de sujets naîtront de ces accouplements. En général, ils auront le teint passablement clair. Mais dame nature voudra que quelques-uns soient albinos, certains assez foncés. Trujillo ordonnera que ces derniers soeint [sic] appelés indios. Ils n'en demeureront pas moins noirs puisqu'ils le seront en fait" (140).

"The master plan will be carried out, of course: Dominican women will be bred with the 20,111 males imported from Spain, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Germany, and Greece. Thousands of subjects will be born of those couplings. In general, they will be passably light-skinned. But mother nature will have it that some be albino, others rather dark. Trujillo will order that these last be called *indios*. They will nevertheless remain black, since that is what they will really be" (203-204).

121.

"Ici, à Elias Pina, les machettes s'entraînent – Moniteur principal: Don Agustin de Cortoba, grand maître du sang coagulé – On attend d'autres données pour vous renseigner. Patienter – figurant: Le gouvernement haïtien – Bonne chance avec Coca-Cola! Et l'unique radio de la rue principale d'Elias Pina poursuit son programme avec Tino Rossi dans "Sous le Ciel de Paris." (40)

"'Here in Elías Piña, the machetes are in training with our head coach for operation *Cabezas Haitianas*, Don Agustin de Cortoba, Grand Master of the Clotted Blood. Be patient. We'll keep you informed of any new developments. Playing a bit part: the Haitian government. Enjoy refreshing Coca-Cola!' And this unique radio – Elías Piña's main street – continues its broadcast with Tino Rossi singing 'Under Paris Skies'" (69).

"La rue, forte de ses ondes, renseigne: "Neuf cent huit têtes à la minute dans la province d'Azua – Huit cent dix-neuf à Santiago – Dans les Pédernales: subite prise de conscience Nationale: mille cent deux cent dix-sept! – Dajabon l'emporte: quinze mille deux cent huit têtes à la minute – (Pause)" (40).

"Channeling its radio, the street updates the news: 'in Azua Province, 908 heads; 819 in Santiago; in Pedernales, a sudden access of national fervor: 1,217! Dajabón is the winner, with the current headcount of 15,208! (Pause.)" (78).

P. 122

"nubiles et pubères, destinées, elles, aux colonels," and for whom "[n]ous n'avons pas de relevés statistiques rigoureux […] Nous le regrettons bien – De toutes façons, nous vous tiendrons au courant – L'opération se poursuit méthodiquement – Cheminement cohérent – Saludo! – Gillette la lame qui rase frais et qui dure" (48).

"nubile and pubescent, intended for the colonels. Unfortunately, we do not have a reliable statistical summary for that category of children. In any case, we will keep you informed. The operation is proceeding smoothly. Definite progress. *¡Saludo!* Gillette, the long-lasting blade that gives a close shave" (78).

P. 123

"Le Respect des peuples à l'endroit de leurs dirigeants" (48).

"The Respect of Peoples for Their Leaders" (78).

"devient une moitié de corps qui s'abîme, se *délite* dans son propre corps. Je glisse. Ah! mon homme! C'était une pluie bleue, à n'en plus finir. Avec des oiseaux verts qui tombaient du ciel; si vert qu'on eût dit des monceaux d'eau. Avec des chansons qui sortaient de partout. Et des cloches, des poissons frits, des guitares, des pastèques, des chapeaux, des palabres!" (48).

"becomes half a body. I'm slipping. Ah! My man! The rain was blue, and went on forever. From the sky tumbled birds so green they seemed like

torrents of water. Songs came from everywhere. And there were bells, fried fish, guitars, watermelons, hats, plus endless palaver" (78-79).

"La rue reprend, stridente: 'La chair des enfants est si douce que les machettes ne mordent pas – Elles patinent au lieu de couper, causant plus de meurtrissures douloureuses que de blessures franches, de coupures directes – Aussi, par humanité, le comité Cabezas Haitianas a-t-il préférablement prescrit l'étranglement à la gorge par coups de dent secs – Jusqu'ici huit mille deux cent quatre-vingt-six enfants, mâles et femelles ont trépassé sous les griffes et les dents de la Guardia – L'expérience s'enrichit de moment en moment, de mieux en mieux. – Ce soir, à l'Eldorado, le film qui fait courir la capitale: La joie de vivre! – La météo: nuit fraîche sur l'île entière.' Et l'unique radio cafouille" (48-9)

"The street strikes up again in strident tones: 'The children's flesh is so tender that the machetes can't sink in – they slide instead of slicing, causing more painful bruises than outright wounds from direct hits. Therefore, as a humanitarian gesture, the *Cabezas Haitianas* Committee has stipulated that the throats of children be chomped with bare teeth. The tally for the moment: 8,286 children of both sexes have perished at the claws and fangs of the Guardia. The venture is going better and better from moment to moment. This evening, at The Eldorado, the film that's all the rage in the capital: *La joie de vivre!* Tonight's weather: cool all across the island'" (79).

P. 124

"Il manda d'urgence ses généraux, ses féodaux, ses confidents. Tint conseil. Un seul point à l'ordre du jour: révéler à la nation dominicaine son vrai visage anthropologique.

"On fit venir des ethnographes, des ethnologues, des sociologues, des historiens, des linguistes, même des statisticiens. On délibéra. D'aucuns, imbus de la question, avancèrent tout de go: 'La nation dominicaine est un produit de race africaine et de race rouge ou américaine.' Hors du sujet. — 'Propositions simplistes,' considéra l'autorité" (51).

"He sent immediately for his generals, liegemen, cronies. Held council. The single item on the agenda: to reveal to the Dominican nation its true anthropological face.

"They called in ethnographers, enthnologists, sociologists, historians, linguists, even statisticians. They deliberated. Some, experts on the question, spoke right up: 'the Dominican nation is a product of the black African and red American races.' Quite beside the point. 'Simplistic propositions' declared the voice of authority" (82-83).

"dénonce aussi toutes les collisions entre l'anthropologie et les pouvoirs d'exception (dictatures et colonisation incluses) qui culminent en génocide" (99).

"lance à ce propos un véritable 'cri agonique' avec *Discours sur le colonialisme* dans lequel il met la colonisation sur le même plan que le totalitarisme nazi" (99).

"la figure du Général-Président dictateur est ainsi évoquée" (99).

"also denounces all collisions between anthropology and Martial law (including dictatorships and colonization) that culminate in genocide"

"cries out with a true 'agonal scream' with *Discourse on Colonialism* in which he situates colonization on the same plain as Nazi totalitarianism"

"the figure of dictator President-General is thus evoked" (my translation)

CHAPTER FOUR

IN-*TERRE*-LATE! THE ETHICS OF INTERCONNECTION

Pp. 131-132

"[d]eux enfants noirs, une fillette de cinq ans, un garçonnet de quatre, se sont rencontrés à tout hasard, un midi, au pied d'un citronnier poussé sur la ligne même de la frontière, non loin de Hinche" (94).

"Two black children, a girl of five and a boy of our, met entirely by chance one midday at the foot of the lemon tree growing on the border itself, not far from Hinche" (145).

"[s]ans effort, ils se sont liés d'amitié, (comme cela se voit d'ordinaire chez les enfants)" (94).

"They fell easily into friendship, as children usually do" (145).

"[e]t les voilà qui, sans façon, s'amusent à sauter à cloche-pied du côté-ci de la frontière, du côté-là de la frontière, tantôt chez les Haïtiens, tantôt chez les Dominicains" (94-95).

"**And here they are, I'm using themselves by casually hopping on 1 foot from this side of the border to the other, and back: now on Haitian territory, now on Dominican soil" (145).**

"Leurs rires font des trous de fraîcheur dans le décor" (95)

"Their laughter pokes holes of youthful freshness in the landscape" (145).

P. 133

"de bien vouloir articuler 'perejil'" (95).

"to please say *'perejil'* (145).

"tout sourire,"

"all smiles" (145)

"Juanita cérémonieusement prend la main de Nathan. Les deux enfants s'en vont s'asseoir sous le citronnier. La petite fille dominicaine fait reprendre le mot au petit garçon haïtien" (95).

"Juanita ceremoniously takes Nathan's hand. The two children go off to sit under the lemon tree. The little Dominican girl has the little Hatian boy rehearse the word" (146).

Pp. 133-134

"Le jour décline que les deux enfants chantent "perejil! perejil!" Une brise légère emporte au loin leur voix, leur babillage, leurs bravos, leur étonnement. Un criquet pointillé le crépuscule. Au ciel montent les premières mottes d'étoiles. Puis Nathan et Juanita se sont endormis côte à côte.
On les trouvera demain, au petit jour, les doigts enlacés, serrant un bouquet de persil. Les gardes n'auront pas le courage de couper l'une ou l'autre tête.
Le citronnier aura d'un coup poussé toutes ses fleurs" (95).

"The day is waining, and the children are still sing-songing, *'¡perejil! ¡perejil!'* A light breeze wafts their voices, their prattle, their bravos, their wonderment away into the distance. A locust stipples the twilight. The first clumps of stars come out. Then Nathan and Juanita fall asleep side by side. They'll be found the next morning, at first light, holding hands around a bouquet of parsley. The guards won't have the courage to cut off either head. The lemon tree will have burst completely into bloom" (146).

P. 134

"Urbain et Prospero cultivent à deux leurs jardins sans se préoccuper de savoir si le maïs mûrit en territoire haïtien, si les patates grossissent en République Dominicaine. Ils se réjouissent seulement à voir pousser les bourgeons verts, à sentir aux creux de leurs mains le fruit de leur travail" (98).

"**Urbain and Prospero cultivate their gardens together without worrying whether the corn ripens in Haitian territory or the potatoes flourish in the Dominican Republic. They care only about welcoming the burgeoning green shoots and cradling the fruits of their labors in their hands" (149).**

P. 135

"Leurs quatre femmes, Joséphine, Esperancia, Julie, Amanda, leur sont aveuglément fidèles. Leurs vingt-huit enfants, treize filles, quinze garçons, jouent dans la même cour, mangent, dorment sous la même longue tonnelle de bambou recouverte de vétiver. Aucun d'entre eux ne peut dire au juste qui est son père? Urbain ou Prospero? D'ailleurs, les deux compères s'enfichent royalement, pourvu que les petits aient de quoi se mettre sous les dents... et sur la peau" (98).

"**Their four wives – Joséphine, Esperancia, Julie, Amanda – are devoted to them. Their twenty-eight children (thirteen girls, fifteen boys) play in the same courtyard, eat and sleep beneath the same long bamboo bower covered with fragrant vetiver. Not one of them knows for sure whether Urbain or Prospero is his father or her father, and besides, the two bosom friends couldn't care less, as long as the kids have food on the table and clothes on their backs" (149-150).**

"[s]'il arrive qu'Urbain et Prospero se querellent, c'est pour tuer le temps, changer, diversifier, se taquiner, oublier quelque tracasserie. Avec eux, les disputes finissent toujours dans de petits verres de vin d'orange à la boutique de doña Rosita Manuel et par de fortes claques dans le dos. Ce qui fait pencher dangereusement Prospero et dandiner le gros Urbain" (98).

"If Urbain and Prospero ever happen to quarrel, it's just for a change, to pass the time, tease one another, or forget some petty annoyance. Their spats always dissolve in hearty back-slapping and little glasses of orange-peel wine in doña Rosita Manuel's neighborhood shop, a ritual that leaves fat Urbain waddling and Prospero tilting dangerously off-center" (150).

P. 136

"Mais, depuis un certain temps, ils ne se parlent pas. Ils prennent leur distance. Ils n'ignorent pas que par décision de Ciudad Trujillo, avec l'assentiment de Port-au-Prince, la mort viendra bientôt s'asseoir entre eux. Ils deviennent désespérément tristes" (98-99).

"Lately, though, they haven't been speaking. They're keeping their distance. It has come to their attention that by order of Ciudad Trujillo, with the agreement of Port-au-Prince, death will soon come to sit down between them, and they are growing desperately sad" (150).

"Les vers de ton cadavre me mangeront mêmement, amigo!" (99)

"The worms in your corpse will eat me up too, amigo!" (150)

“De mémoire de peuple de frontière on n’a jamais enregistré un tel rassemblement d’êtres humains, depuis Mancenille face à Monte-Christi jusqu’aux Anses-à-Pitre non loin de Las Damas. Un immense espace de montagnes, de fleurs, d'insectes, de cours d’eaux, de rongeurs, de plaines, d'oiseaux, contenant plus de cent mille âmes, Dominicains et Haïtiens, se parlant dans un langage que seuls eux-mêmes puissent comprendre: le langage de la frontière, où entrent à la fois us et coutumes, histoire et feux du cœur” (99)

“Never in living memory have the border communities seen such a gathering of people, from Mancenille opposite Monte-Christi to Anses-à-Pitre near Las Damas: a vast area of mountains, flowers, insects, rivers and streams, rodents, plains, birds, containing more than a hundred thousand souls, Dominicans and Haitians, speaking to one another been a language that only they can understand – the language of the border, nourished by local customs, history, and the human heart” (150).

P. 137

“où entrent à la fois us et coutumes, histoire et feux du cœur” (99).

“nourished by local customs, history, and the human heart” (150).

P. 138

“Une main se pose sur le bras de Pedro Brito. Une main froide, tremblante. Comme celle d'Adèle lorsqu'elle avait vu la chose labourer le ciel d'Elias Pina. Il s'agit de la main de la jeune femme dont la voix cassée répète encore: ‘Perejil!’” (73).

“A hand alights on Pedro Brito’s arm. A cold, trembling hand. Like Adèle’s, when she saw the thing churning up the sky over Elías Piña. It’s the hand of the young woman whose cracked voice is still repeating: ‘*Perejil*…’ (115).

“L'l a bu l'i. L’e a botté l’r. Le mot a passé de travers. La jeune femme tousse. Un léger parfum de rose tombe et s'écrase. Pedro reprend avec patience: “Perejil.” La passagère tousse encore” (73).

“**The *l* has sucked up the *i*. The *e* has kicked out the *r*. The word has stuck in her throat. The young woman coughs; a faint scent of roses falls and shatters. Pedro repeats patiently: ‘*perejil.*’ She coughs again” (115).**

Pp. 138-139

“Le mot est sur le point de commettre un assassinat franc, sans complice. Pedro dépose sa grosse main d'ouvrier sur celle, froide, de l'inconnue agglutinée à son

bras droit, et dit posément: “Perejil.” La négrita murmure: “Perejil.” Le p se heurte quelque part dans l’i. Le mot a culbuté. Décidément, encore une bouche qui n’aura servi à quoi que ce soit et qui aura mérité la décapitation: “Perejil!” criera le garde. L'i aura télescopé le j. Voilà! “Mata lo!” “Mata lo bien!,” se mettra à vociférer le commandant. La tête aura vite connu l'étonnement de la mort. Un gâchis de bouche!” (73).

“**The word is about to commit outright murder, all by itself. Pedro places his big calloused hand over the cold hand of the unknown woman gripping his right arm and says, calmly: ‘*perejil.’* The *negrita* murmurs: ‘*perejil.’* The *p* bumps into the *l* someplace and the word goes head over heels. No doubt about it: another mouth will prove completely useless and deserving of decapitation. ‘¡*Perejil*¡” the guaridia will shout. Her eye will telescope into the *j*. That’s it! ‘Mata lo!’ ‘Mata lo bien!,’ The commandant will start yealling. ‘Kill her!’ The head will quickly know the astonishment of death. A mess of a mouth!” (115).**

P. 139

“Pedro Alvarez Brito y Molina détache de son bras la main gauche, crispée, de la jeune femme dont les lèvres murmurent péniblement: “Perejil”. Le p a crevé l’r. Le mot fuite. La jeune femme dort pourtant. Or, le mot ne l’a pas quittée. Le mot l’a investie. Domestiquée. Colonisée. Luttant de ses forces quasi inconscientes, elle tente de s'y arracher. Elle gémit; elle balbutie. Sa voix exprime la terreur que lui inspirent ce moment absurde de la vie de la frontière et cette étrange inhumanité qui se dessine” (75-76)

“Pedro Alvarez Brito y Molina unclamps from his arm the clenched left hand of the young woman whose lips still struggle to whisper ‘*perejil,’* even in her sleep. The *p* has done in the *r*. The word gets aways from her. But it has not left her. It has besieged her. Subdued her. Colonized her. Resisting with her almost unconscious strength, she tries to tear herself free. She moans, babbles. Her voice betrays her terror at this unimaginable moment of life on the border and the deranged inhumanity now taking shape” (118).

P. 140

“ce moment absurde de la vie de la frontière et cette étrange inhumanité qui se dessine” (76).

“This unimaginable moment of life on the border and the deranged inhumanity now taking shape” (118).

“Depuis quarante-huit heures le peuple haïtien de la frontière apprend à dire “perejil”. Un mot banal. Un condiment. Qui vaut une vie. Suivant qu’on le prononce bien on est Dominicain, blanco de la tierra, les honneurs vous sont

rendus: ‘Guardia, saludade!’ Mais, suivant que l'r a transité dans l’i, que le j a bu l’l, que le p boîte dans l’r, que l’e s’est pris dans le j ou que le p, l’l, l’r se déboitent, s’encastrent, s’agrippent, se desserrent, se bagarrent, se fuient, on est Haitien, bon pour le poteau: ‘Guardia, fusilelo!’” (76)

“**For the last fourty-eight hours, the Haitian people of the border have been learning to say ‘*perejil.’* A banal word. A kitchen herb. That can cost a life. If you can pronounce it well, you are a Dominican, *blanco de la tierra*, and the soldiers present arms; ‘*¡Guardia, salud!’* But if the r wonders into the i, if the *j* absorbs the *l*, the *p* limps into the *r*, the e gets caught in the *j*, or if the *p*, the *l*, the *r* become dislocated, jam up, grab at one another, come undone, start scrapping, go off in a huff, then you are Haitian and ready for the firing squad:*’¡Guardia, fúsilelo!’”* (118-119)**

P. 141

“Une voix, la voix de tête presque surnaturelle d'un homme squelettique à la peau chocolat, psalmodie: ‘Perejil!’ Le mot est repris aussitôt par des milliers de gosiers haïtiens et dominicains, (comme une incantation lente, lourde, épaisse) puis s'affaisse, aspiré par un immense trou d'air, pour après s’envoler dessus les têtes des récitants sur les roches blanches, s'écrouler encore et se confondre. Un mot qui a flambé dans des yeux, bouilli dans des entrailles, galopé sur des plaines, traversé des rivières, mais que n'arrivent pas à bien prononcer les lèvres haïtiennes. Un mot qui porte la mort: *‘Perejil!’* Un condiment, roturier de potager” (93)

“**A voice, in the almost uncanny head tones of a skeletal man with chocolate skin, chants,*“Perejil!”*The word rises almost immediately from thousands of Haitian and Dominican throats, like a slow, thick, heavy incantation, then subsides, sicked into an immense air pocket, only to sail out over the heads of the chanters on the white rocks before collapsing once more into an indistinct slurry. A word that has flashed fire from eyes and made blood boil, crossed rivers and galloped over plains, but cannot emerge unscathed from Haitian lips. A death-dealing word: *“Perejil!”* A humble pot herb from a kitchen garden” (143-144).**

“Au milieu du tumulte des voix, dans les émanations des sueurs, par-dessus le roulis des têtes, ils se font de larges gestes profonds avec des mains, des chapeaux, des branches, des mouchoirs, comme si les mots, n'ayant pas assez de force, d’allant ou de mémoire, n'arrivaient pas. Ou tout simplement comme si les mots avaient trahi” (99).

“**Amid the tumult of voices, in the smell of sweat, across the solid sea of heads, they signal broadly to one another with hands, hats, branches, hankies, as if words, lacking enough strength, thrust, or memory, were just not coming to mind. Or had simply betrayed them” (150).**

"Selon don Agustin de Cortoba […] les lèvres haïtiennes ont massacré le mot. Les lèvres haïtiennes n'ont rien de constructif. Ni de coopératif. Elles ont abandonné le mot. Trompé le mot. L'ont couillonné. La vengeance est à l'ordre du jour" (100).

"According to don Agustin de Cortoba […] Haitian lips have massacred the word. There is nothing either constructive or cooperative about Hatian lips. They have abandoned the word. Decieved the word. Swindled it. Revenge is on the menu" (152).

P. 142

"Chicha Calma, avalée par la nuit, poursuit sa route, tête droite. Le bruit roqueteux de son moteur est soutenu de temps en temps par les ronflements des passagers affalés sur les banquettes branlantes" (73).

"Swallowed up by the night, Chicha Calma goes on her way, eyes front, her engine racket reinforced from time to time by the snoring of the passengers slumped on her rickety seats" (115).

"les tôles des maisons se mettent à crisser, à caqueter, à miauler, à piailler" (11)

"the corrugated-metal roofs of the houses begin to screech, cackle, cheep and mew" (22).

P. 144

"L'un d'eux se perd à moitié dans son urine: il doit être diabétique à plein temps. Un autre, dans son rêve, parle d'une jeune fille qui lui aurait soutiré de l'argent et qui aurait été se marier à Curaçao avec un pédé hollandais à la tignasse mauve. Chicha Calma souffle. D'une dinde qui aurait croqué une montre en eau massive. Chicha bringuebale. D'un sergent nègre américain dont on aurait coupé le pénis, à Trinidad, un soir de carnaval. Chicha glousse. D'une guitare qui aurait joué de la mandoline comme un cimetière. Chicha pouffe. Un vieillard centenaire rumine en balançant la tête. Il dégobille chaque vingt secondes en marmonnant des excuses. Un coq attaché quelque part sur la plate-forme lance un cocorico. Se ravisant, il ne recommence pas et avale sa fierté. La tête du chauffeur est à peine visible. Elle doit encore penser à ses kilomètres de kilomètres. De Santiago à la Romana. D'asphalte. De Sanchez à Higuey. De boue. De Monte-Christi à San Pedro. De caillasse. Par tout le pays. De chairs, de chansons. Sa tête de chauffeur dominicain, perdue dans la nuit de la guagua parmi les borborygmes des ventres des passagers et la voix à peine perceptible de la jeune femme ânonnant: 'Perejil!'" (73-74).

"**One man, probably a full-blown diabetic, is half-drenched in his own urine. Someone else mutters in his sleep about a girl he claims wheedled money out of him and skipped off to Curaçao to marry a Dutch fag with a mop of lavender hair…Chicha Calma puffs along. And a turkey hen that supposedly gobbled up a watch made of solid water…Chicha sways from side to side. And an American Negro seargent rumored to have lost his penis to a knife one night in Trinidad during Carnaval… Chicha gurgles. And a guitar people say played the mandolin like a cemetery… Chicha bursts out laughing period. Swaying his head from side to side, a centenarian gentleman sits ruminating and spits up every twenty seconds, murmuring, 'Sorry.' A rooster tied somewhere on the luggage-rack tries out 'cock-a-doodle-doo,' thinks better of it, and quietly swallows his pride. You can barely see the driver's head. It must still be thinking of its kilometers of kilometers. From Santiago to la Romana. Of asphalt. From Sanchez to Higuey. Of mud. From Monte-Christi to San Pedro. Of road metal. All through the country. Of bodies and songs. His Dominican bus-driver's head, lost in the darkness of the *guagua* among the passengers' tummy-rumblings and the barely perceptible voice of the young woman droning '*perejil*'" (116).**

"dépèce l'air noir de la nuit" (75).

"slices through the black night air" (117)

P. 145

"Chicha dépèce l'air noir de la nuit. Dans son carnage elle emporte le parfum des marguerites sauvages qui bordent la route et qui s'égaillent en même temps dans les terres à perte de vue. La nuit dominicaine dans son accoutrement sombre a une allure royale. Une étoile haut perchée, superbe, la couronne. Dire qu'elle est aussi une étoile haïtienne. Vue sans doute par ceux de là-bas, de Locaré, Boc-Banic, Ferrier, Maribaroux, Guayaba, Capotille, Ouanaminthe, par les populations de la frontier" (75).

"**Chicha slices through the black night air. In her carnage she drags along the scent of wild dasies nodding by the roadside and scattered across the land as far as the eye can see. In its somber apparel, the Dominican night has a regal presence, crowned high overhead by a superb star. And to think that it's a Haitian star as well…" (117-118). Doubtless seen by everyone over there in Locaré, Boc-Banic, Ferrier, Maribaroux, Guayaba, Capotille, Ouanaminthe, by all the border people" (117-118).**

the "aurore franche, royale, chevauche les deux terres, celle d'ici, la basse, celle de là-bas, la haute, sereine étrangement!" (19).

the "frank and royal early morning sky spans the two lands, the low one here, the high one over there, strangely serene!" (34).

"dans son accoutrement sombre a une allure royale," is crowned by a high star "perchée, superbe."

"**In its somber apparel, the Dominican night has "a regal presence, crowned high overhead by a superb star" (117).**

P. 146

"se déboitent, s'encastrent, s'agrippent, se desserrent, se bagarrent, se fuient […], Chicha Calma laisse la route, entre d'emblée dans le spectacle des marguerites, traverse le court-circuit des lucioles. Chicha a peur" (76).

"becomes dislocated, jam up, grab at one another, come undone, start scrapping, go off in a huff […] Chicha Calma abandons the road, plunging right into the daisy display and plowing through the short circuits of the lightning bugs. Chicha is scared" (119).

"Nul ne peut se permettre de commenter l'erreur de la Guardia, un incident de parcours, un massacre marginal. D'ailleurs, sur les mêmes bords du Guayamuco, quatre mille sept cent quatre-vingt-quatre ouvriers agricoles haïtiens sont descendus, en revanche – Voyagez par le Panama Line – Le Panama Line rend le monde plus rapide" (76).

"No one should dare to criticize the Gardia's mistake – a minor incident, a marginal massacre. And anyway, to make up for it, on the banks of that same Guayamuco they have butchered four thousand seven hundred and eighty-four Haitian agricultural workers. Going on a trip? Travel on Panama Lines: You'll get there faster!" (119)

P. 147

"vent-radio-de-bord."

"on-board wind-radio" (119).

"furète alentour, cabriole, vire, grésille" (76)

"**ferrets around, kicks up its heels, swerves, crackles" (119)**

"rend[re] le monde plus rapide" (76),

"you'll get there faster" (119)

“Chicha feint de ne pas entendre. En somme, elle n’arrive pas à croire ce qu’elle vient d’entendre” (77).

“Chicha pretends she hasn’t heard. Basically, she cannot believe what she did just hear” (119).

“saute un carré de yuca” (77).

“leaps over a plot of yucca” (119)

P. 148

“roule ses gros yeux bêtes, fixes de terreur.”

“rolls it’s big dumb eyes, wide with fright” (119)

“admettre ce qu'elle a entendu,”

“She cannot believe what she did just hear” (119)

“A accepter le fait. Le meuglement a traîné.”

“[To] accept the fact. Mooing trails after her” (119-120)

“[e]n plein horizon perdu” (77).

“toward the far horizon” (120).

“Pour fuir. Et fuir quoi?”, “[l]e vent-radio reprend,” “de plus en plus rassurantes” (77)

“To escape. Escape what?” “The wind radio continues: […] increasingly reassuring” (120).

“Aucune approche des forces adverses, sinon quelques têtes chaudes dominicaines, des ouvriers! Et quelques voix haïtiennes, des paysans! ont tenté de résister... Elles ont été vite matées, mises en demeure de ne pas contrarier l'ordre des choses – En tout état de cause, il n'a jamais été question pour des classes inférieures de faire la leçon aux lumières de la nation...” (77).

"There have been no moves by hostile forces, except for a few Dominican hotheads, some workers… and a few Haitian peasants have try to resist! They have quickly been brought to heel, and enjoined not obstruct the ongoing operation. In any case, there has never been any question of the lower classes dictating to the leading lights of the nation…" (120)

Pp. 148-149

"Chicha craque sous ses bois, sous ses fers. Chicha trépigne. Elle ébranle un poulailler. La nuit craquette, piaule, piaille. Chicha rouspète" (77).

"Chicha groans with all her wood and metal. Chicha stamps and tramples. Sideswipes a chicken coop. The night crackles, cheeps, squawks. Chicha grumbles" (120).

P. 149

"Elle saccage les planches d'un potager. La terre, s'éveille, flotte, voyage. Chicha s'énerve. Décidément, elle n'arrive pas à accepter!" (77).

"**She trashes the planks fencing a vegetable garden. The earth wakes up, drifts, wonders about. Chicha is fuming. No, definitely, she simply can't bring herself to accept the situation!" (120)**

"Le vent rapplique:
'Sur l'affaire des cabezas, Port-au-Prince garde le silence le plus recommandé – Les citoyens vaquent à leurs occupations. Les bureaux du Gouvernement fonctionnent normalement. Le Président Vincent mange à sa faim.'
A comprendre.
'Ses maîtresses aussi.'
A saisir.
'Leurs gigolos aussi.'" (77)

"The wind comes back:
'Regarding the *cabezas* affair, Port-au-Prince is remaining studiously silent. Citizens are going about their business. Government offices are functioning normally. President Vincent has enough to eat.'
It's understandable.
'So do his mistresses.'
Perfectly comprehensible.
'So do their gigolos.'" (120)

P. 150

"A tolérer" (77).

“Only natural” (120).

“au paroxysme de l'énervement” Chicha “saute sur des plates-bandes de pois chiche, charge une cahute” (78).

“**Beside herself, chicha charges a hut, tramples some chickpea beds, goes around in circles” (121).**

“tir de mitraillette quelque part cloue une vie” (78).

“A burst of machine-gun bullets somewhere nails a life” (121).

“[l]'heure, dérangée, ouvre un œil. Apeurée, se replie. Chicha gigote, fulmine, explose” (78).

“Time, this disturbed, opens one eye. Slinks off, aghast. Chicha wriggles, fulminates, explodes” (121).

P. 151

“Calma! Señorita Chicha! Du calme! tu portes dans tes pneus l’esprit du peuple de la frontière. Un peuple qui sait jouer de la dissimulation, saisir les nuances, disséquer les parties d'un tout, cerner les à-peu-près, se servir des en-cas. Un peuple qui vit avec l’impondérable, reçoit au même degré, orages et éclaircies” (78).

“¡Calma! Señorita Chicha! Calm down! You carry on your tires the spirit of the border people. A people who know how to ring changes on dissimulation, grasp nuances, dissect the parts of a whole, pin down rough esimates, fall back on stand-bys. A people living with the imponderable, facing sunshine and storms with equanimity” (121).

P. 152

“il n'a jamais été question pour des classes inférieures de faire la leçon aux lumières de la nation” (77). (repeat?) check.

“**there has never been any question of the lower classes dictating to the leading lights of the nation…” (120).**

P. 153

See quote above (from p. 151).

"le creuset des joies et des douleurs" (83)

"the crucible of joys and sorrows" (127).

P. 154

"vieille garce de Chicha loca, ce foutu caractère, tu l'as dans le sang... ce sang exubérant des hidalgos" (78).

"you crazy old Chicha *loca*, that damned temper of yours, it's in your blood, the exuberant blood of the *Hildagos*" (121).

"Depuis que je me connais, c'est-à-dire depuis 1918, moi, Chicha Calma, guagua Ford no. 2742, 113 contraventions, service-graissage-serrage 16 fois, panne de batterie 15 fois, de radio de bord 6 fois, de moteur 8 fois, de pneus 432, panne sèche nullement, je n'ai jamais pu tolérer l'immobilisme. Je suis une guagua progressiste. Je me révolte contre tout sortilège qui consisterait à me retenir sur place. Ai-je des caoutchoucs pour la camisole? Zombi? Moi? Allons donc, jamais de la vie! Mais par quoi ou par qui nos gens sont-ils piégés? Curieux, non? Peut-être une maladie collective? Ce que les vieux appellent un saisissement?" (111).

"**Ever since I can remember, which means since 1918, I Chicha Calma, who have never run out of gas, Ford *guagua* no. 2742 (113 tickets, 16 top-to-bottom-tuneups, 15 dead batteries, 6 on-board radios kaput, 8 motor conk-outs, 430 flat tires), I never could stand standing still. I am a progressive *guagua*. I rebel against all sorcery that would keep me in one place. Do I look like I am ready for a straight jacket? A zombie? Me? Come off it! Not on your life! But who or what is holding our people in thrall? Weird, isn't it? Maybe a mass fit? What old folks call a seizure?" (166).**

P. 156

"pour envisager les moyens de sauver du massacre autant de têtes haïtiennes possibles" (62).

"To try working out ways of saving as many Haitian heads as possible from the massacres" (99).

"[l]'économie dominicaine dépend de la sueur haïtienne. On ne sabote pas la machine quand on vit de la machine" (74).

"The Dominican economy runs on Haitian sweat. You don't sabatoge the machine that earns your living" (117).

"[s]i les ouvriers se mettaient à faire valoir leur sueur, ils finiraient peut-être par contrer la folie de Trujillo" (74).

“If the workers demand respect for their sweat, they might manage to beat back Trujillo’s madness” (116).

“Mais nos moyens sont limités. Nos organisations sont jeunes. Elles manquent de cohérence et de pouvoir d'action. Il nous faut beaucoup de temps avant de pouvoir lutter efficacement contre les forces établies” (62).

“But out means are limited, and our young organizations are weak and inexperienced. It will be a long time before we can effectively resit the powers that be” (99)

Gouverneurs de la rosée

P. 157

“Ne m’appelle pas compère. Je ne suis rien pour toi” (152).

“Don’t call me brother. I’m nothing to you” (149).

P. 158

“le concoure de tous serait nécessaire [et] l’eau les unirait à nouveau, son haleine fraîche disperserait l’odeur maligne de la rancune et de la haine; la communauté fraternelle renaîtrait avec les plantes nouvelles, les champs chargés de fruits et d’épis, la terre gorgée de vie simple et féconde” (75).

“**Everyone’s help would be needed [and] the water would bring them together again. Its cool breath would dispel the evil oder of spite and hatred. With the new plants, with the fruit- and corn-laden fields, the earth overflowing with simple fecund life” (80)**

Tous les habitants sont pareils, dit Manuel, tous forment une seule famille. C’est pour ça qu’ils s’appellent entre eux: frère, compère, cousin, beau-frère. L’un a besoin de l’autre. L’un périt sans le secours de l’autre. C’est la vérité du coumbite. Cette source que j’ai trouvée demande le concours de tous les habitants de Fonds Rouge. Ne dites pas non. C’est la vie qui commande et quand la vie commande, faut répondre: présent. (152)

“‘All peasents are equals,’ Manuel said. ‘They’re all one single family. That’s why they call each other ‘brother,’ ‘cousin,’ ‘brother-in-law.’ One needs the other. One perishes without the other’s help. That’s the lesson of the *coumbite*. This spring that I’ve found needs the help of all the peasents of Fonds Rouge. Don’t say no. It’s life that gives orders. When life commands, we’ve got to answer, ‘present!’” (149-150)

Pp. 158-159

“Quel jardin d’étoiles dans le ciel et la lune glissait parmi elles, si brillante et aiguisée que les étoiles auraient dû tomber comme des fleurs fauchées” (155).

"**What a garden of stars in the sky! And the moon crept among them so brilliant and sharp that the stars should have fallen like cut flowers" (153).**

P. 159

"Ce sera comme ça, ma négresse, et tu verras que ton homme n'est pas un fainéant, mais un nègre vaillant levé chaque jour au premier chant du coq, un travailleur de la terre sans reproche, un gouverneur de la rosée véritable" (155).

"**That's how it will be, my sweet *Négresse*. You'll see your man's no idler, but a strong fellow up each day at the first crow of the rooster, a hard-working tiller of the land, a real Master of the Dew!" (153).**

"il respira l'odeur des fleurs de campêchers et une grande joie calme et grave entra en lui. 'Repose Anna, repose, chère, jusqu'au lever du soleil" (155).

"**He inhaled the oder of logwood blossoms, and a great, deep, calm joy penetrated his being. Rest, Anna darling, rest until the rising of the sun" (153).**

"Dit-lui la volonté de mon sang qui a coulé: la réconciliation, la réconciliation pour que la vie recommence, pour que le jour se lève sur la rosée" (160).

"**Tell him the will of my blood that's been shed – reconciliation – reconciliation – so that life can start all over again, so that day can break on the dew" (158).**

Pp. 159-160

"Je ne suis pas venue pour vous raconter ma peine, je suis venue pour vous rapporter la dernière volonté de mon garçon. C'est à moi qu'il parlait, mais c'est à vous tous qu'il s'adressait: 'Chanter mon deuil, qu'il a dit, chanter mon deuil avec un champ de coumbite' (185).

"**But I didn't come here to tell you about my grief. I came to bring you the last wish of my son. He was talking to me, but he was really talking to all of you, 'Sing my mourning,' he said, 'sing my mourning with a song of the *coumbite*!'" (182).**

P. 160

"On chante le deuil, c'est la coutume, avec les cantiques de mort, mais lui, Manuel, a choisi un quantique pour les vivants: le chant du coumbite, le chant de la terre, de l'eau, des plantes, de l'amitié entre habitants, parce qu'il a voulu, je comprends maintenant, que sa mort soit pour vous le recommencement de la vie" (185).

“It’s customary to sing mourning with hymns for the dead, but he, Manuel had chosen a hymn for the living – the chant of the *coumbite*, the chant of the soil, of the water, the plants, of friendship between peasants, because he wanted his death to be the beginning of life for you” (182).

“On verra. (Oui, on verra si les habitants se laisseront faire.) Ces derniers jours, ils travaillent à la source même, à la tête de l’eau, comme ils disent. Ils ont suivi point pour point les indications de Manuel. Il est mort, Manuel, mais c’est toujours lui qui guide” (189).

“We’ll see about that. But would the peasants stand for it? They had been working lately right by the spring itself, at the very head of the water. They had followed Manuel’s instructions point by point. He was dead, Manuel, but he was still guiding them” (185).

P. 161

“Mais tu es maligne, oui, s’écria Délira. Tu vas faire rire cette vieille Délira malgré elle” (191).

“My, you’re bright, *oui!* Délira cried. You’re going to make old Délira laugh in spite of herself” (187).

“*Manuel Jean-Joseph, ho nègre vaillant, enhého!*”

“*Manuel Jean-Joseph, ho! Mighty negro! enhého!*” (188).

“bientôt cette plaine aride se couvrirait d’une haute verdure; dans les jardins pousseraient les bananiers, le maïs, les patates, les ignames, les lauriers roses et les lauriers blancs, et ce serait grâce à son fils” (192).

“Soon this arid plain would be covered with high grass. In the fields, banana trees, corn, sweet potatoes, yams, red and white laurel would be growing. And it would be thanks to her son” (188).

“Maman, dis Annaïse d’une voix étrangement faible. Voici l’eau” (192).

‘Mama,’ said Annaïse, in a strangly weak voice. ‘There’s the water.’” (188)

“[u]ne mince lame d’argent s’avançait dans la plaine et les habitants l’accompagnaient en criant et en chantant” (192).

“a thin thread of water advanced, flowing through the plain, and the peasants went along with it, shouting and singing” (188).

P. 162

“Oh Manuel, Manuel, Manuel, pourquoi es-tu mort? gémit Délira” (192).

“Oh, Manuel! Manuel! Manuel! Why are you dead?’ Délira groaned (188).

“sourit à travers ses larmes, non, il n’est pas mort. Elle prit la main de la vieille et la pressa doucement contre son ventre où remuait la vie nouvelle” (192).

“smiled through her tears. ‘No, he isn’t dead.’ She took the old woman’s hand and pressed it gently against her belly where the new life was stirring.” (188).

Pp. 162-163

“la vie, c’est un fil qui ne se casse pas, qui ne se perd jamais et tu sais pourquoi? Parce que chaque nègre pendant son existence y fait un nœud: c’est le travail qu’il a accompli et c’est ça qui rend la vie vivante dans les siècles des siècles: l’utilité de l’homme sur cette terre” (190).

“life is a thread that doesn’t break, that is never lost, and do you know why? Because every man ties a knot in it during his lifetime with the work he has done. That’s what keeps life going through the centuries – man’s work on this earth” (186).

Tú, la oscuridad

P. 164

“Me pareció de buen augurio que el círculo se cerrara precisamente aquí, después de tanto tiempo, conmigo y con el mismo guía envejecido, acaso con las mismas ranas” (37).

“**I took it as a good omen that after so much time the circle was closing at precisely this spot – with me, and the same guide grown old, and perhaps the same frogs”(20).**

P. 165

“a la virgin de los muchos brazos, una que ella llamaba Mariamman. Repitió varias veces ese rezo: ‘*O, toi, lumière…Toi, l’Inmaculée, toi, l’obscurité qui enveloppe l’esprit de ceux qui ignorent ta gloire”*’ (119).

"to the virgin with all those arms, the one she called Mariamman. She repeated the prayer several times: '*O, toi, lumière…Toi, l'Inmaculée, toi, l'obscurité qui enveloppe l'esprit de ceux qui ignorent ta gloire*'" (84).

P. 166

"Ganesha estaba muerta y su fantasma vino a soplarme en el oído:
'Tú, la oscuridad que envuelve el espíritu de aquellos que ignoran tu gloria.'
Levanté la cabeza y supe que en la hora de mi muerte, yo también debía decir esas palabras…Veré venir a todos los que espero…y les hablaré despacio para que me entiendan bien: 'Tú, la oscuridad…' Entonces ellos me darán la luz" (239).

"Ganesha was dead and her ghost came to whisper in my ear: 'You, darkness, enfolding the spirit of those who ignore your glory.' I raised my head and knew that at the hour of my death I too should say those words. […] I will see everyone I've been waiting for […] I will […] speak to them slowly so they'll understand" 'you, darkness…' Then they will show me the light" (181).

P. 167

"Ya empezó la gran huida – recalcó –. Ustedes se inventan excusas: la lluvia ácida, los herbicidas, la deforestación. Pero las ranas desaparecen de lugares donde no ha habido nada de eso" (132).

"The great flight has begun" (96).

"Lo que he aprendido lo aprendí en libros—recalcó Boukaka desde la puerta—. Pero lo que sé, todo lo que sé, lo saqué del fuego y del agua, del agua y la candela: una apaga a la otra" (133).

"'What I've learned, I learned in books,' Boukaka said emphatically from the door. 'But what I know, everything I know, I took from fire and water, from water and flame: one puts out the other'" (97).

P. 168

"Como mujer y hombre, me estremecí. ¿Quién era el hombre entre las dos? ¿O es que acaso se querían como mujer y mujer? ¿Quién fue la que sedujo a quién…qué se dijo de mí […] qué alegó Martha, qué recuerdos, qué reproches, qué frustraciones desahogó?... (108)

"'Like man and woman.' I shuddered. Which of them was the man? Or did they perhaps love each other like woman and woman? Who seduced whom, which of them took the initiative, what did they say about me […] what did Martha aledge about me, what memories, reproaches, frustrations did she confess?" (78).

"Me sentí de pronto como desesperado, traté de concentrarme en mi recuperación y en la fecha aproximada en que podríamos emprender la expedición a Casetaches. Eso era lo único que debía importarme. (109)

"I suddenly felt desperate and tried to concentrate on my recover – every blow I had revieve still hurt – and on the approximate date when we could set out for Casetaches. That was the only thing I should care about" (78)

P. 169

"Esta noche, antes de salir al campo, escribí dos cartas: una a mi padre y otra para Vaughan Patterson. La de Patterson, que pretendía ser una carta breve y desapasionada, resultó un poco más larga y como cargada de ansiedad"(199).

"Con la carta de mi padre ocurrió todo lo contrario, quise ser afectuoso, empecé por hablarle de Thierry y de su gran curiosidad por los avestruces. Era una forma de decirle que me acordaba del rancho y de los pájaros y que pensaba en él a menudo. Pero la carta me salió tan fría, que me puse a escribir otra, y luego una tercera, y al final rompí las tres" (199).

"tomé una tarjeta en blanco de las que utilizaba para rellenar mis fichas, escribí el juego de palabras que me enseñó mi padre y lo metí en un sobre con su dirección" (200)

"That night, before going into the field, I wrote two letters: one to my father, the other to Vaughan Patterson. The one to Patterson, which was supposed to be brief and dispassionate, turned out fairly long and somehow full of emotion" (148)

"The letter to my father was totally different, I wanted to be affectionate, I began by telling him about Thierry and his great interest in ostriches. It was a way of telling him that I was thinking about the ranch and the birds and that I often thought about him. But the letter came out so cold that I began another one, then a third, and finally tore up all three" (148).

"I took a blank card from the supply I used from my files, wrote down the word game my father had taught me, and put it in an envelope addressed to him" (149).

P. 170

"El último ejemplar de la *grenouille du sang*, debidamente preservado, se perdió con ellos en el mar" (241).

"The last, carefully preserved specimen of the *grenouille du sang*, was lost with them at sea" (183).

P. 171

"Dicen que Agwé Taroyo, el dios de las aguas, ha llamado a las ranas para que se vayan por un tiempo al fondo. Dicen que las han visto partir: animales de agua dulce metiéndose de cabeza en el mar, y las que no tienen tiempo ni fuerzas para llegar al lugar de la reunión, cavan huecos en la tierra para esconderse, o se dejan morir por el camino…

"Parece absurdo, ¿no? Pues, unos pescadores de Corail […] informaron que habían sacado del agua cientos de ranas muertas, y que luego se acercaron a la playa […] y encontraron a los pájaros devorando miles de ranas más" (131)

"They say that Agwé Taroyo, the god of the waters, has called the frogs down to the bottom. They say they have seen them leave: Fresh water animals diving into the sea, and the ones that don't have the time or strength to reach the meeting place are digging holes in the ground to hide, or letting themselves die along the way.

"It seems absurd, doesn't it? Well, some fishermen from Corail […} reported pulling hundreds of dead frogs from the water, and when they came to the beach […] they found the birds devouring thousands of other frogs" (95)

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

FROM LITERATURE TO LIFE

P. 175

Dans la dynamique de la mondialisation et du "Chaos-Monde," le peuple de la frontière, par la puissance de sa charge symbolique représente dans le roman les peuples de la Terre où qu'ils soient. A cet égard, le roman de Philoctète est digne d'occuper une place de choix dans la "littérature-monde." [quotd. in Amedro: 2007]. (169)

"In the dynamics of globalization and the 'Chaos-World,' the novel's symbolic power of the border people translates to all the peoples of the earth, wherever they may be. In this respect, Philoctetes's novel is worthy of occupying a special place within 'world literature'" (my translation).

P. 191

In *Introduction à une Poétique du Divers* (1996), Glissant writes: "Dans la rencontre des cultures du monde, il nous faut avoir la force imaginaire de concevoir toutes les cultures comme exerçant à la fois une action d'unité et de diversité libératrice" (72).

“In the encounter of world cultures, we must have the imaginary strength to conceive all cultures as carrying both a unity of action and liberating diversity” (my translation).

P. 192

“dignes de l’optimisme de Roumain telle que incarnée par *Gouverneur de la Rosée*” (108):

“worthy of Romanian’s optimism embodied in *Gouverneur de la Rosée*” (my translation).

Et savent qu’ils ont un monde à construire. Pedro et Adèle regardent longtemps le ciel nu, libre, par-dessus les clameurs de la frontière. Sur la terre noirâtre, ils dessinent avec leurs doigts (à la vérité on ne sait quoi). Une aile, peut-être ? Cela fait, ils sourient comme s’ils chantaient (147).

“And knowing they know they have a world to build. Pedro and Adèle gaze for a long time at the clear, free sky above the turmoil of the border. With their fingers, they draw, on the dark earth – to be honest, no one knows what it is – a wing, perhaps? And then, they smile, as if they were singing” (214).

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