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Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora

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ROUTLEDGE
Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
New York London

6 Mediating Institutions and the Adaptation of Haitian Immigrants in Paris

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This chapter contributes to the gap in knowledge about Haitians in a symbolically important city of the diaspora: Paris. One might expect Haitians in France to integrate easily because Haiti has been profoundly influenced by French language, culture, the Catholic religion and the ideals of the French Revolution. Little is known, however, about the paths of entry and patterns of adaptation of the approximately twenty-five thousand Haitians living in metropolitan France. In this chapter, I present data collected during the spring of 2003 for a comparative study of how religion influences the adaptation of Haitian immigrants in Miami, Montréal and Paris (Mooney 2009).[1] Of the three countries where I conducted research, France apparently offers immigrants a very friendly welcome to immigrants: according to the ideology of French Republicanism, one must simply become a French citizen and all other differences of race, education and culture will fade into the background.

However, the 2005 crisis in the immigrant French suburbs—*la crise des banlieues*—once again thrust France's immigrant adaptation challenges to the forefront of national debate. The qualitative and quantitative data I present here demonstrate glaring evidence that Haitian immigrants to France are not becoming indistinguishable from the French, neither in terms of culture nor socioeconomic standing. In the wake of the 2005 riots, numerous French scholars and American observers of French immigration trends and politics clamored for more data on immigrant adaptation in France and for a renewed discussion of immigrant adaptation that goes beyond the tenets of Republicanism.

In response to these calls, first, I present data I collected from numerous official French government sources to investigate the paths through which Haitians have entered France, the neighborhoods where they settle and the types of jobs they hold. Taken together, I show that, due to the limited availability of legal channels for Haitians to enter France, their low levels of education and their spatial concentration in the Parisian *banlieue* that isolates them from mainstream French society, Haitians face an uphill battle to earn equal footing with native French. Second, my interviews with Haitian immigrants and my observations of religious and

secular community events demonstrate that leaders of community groups often mediate between individual immigrants and the state. However, the ideology of French Republicanism and the set of state policies it has influenced—including *laïcité*—overlook that immigrants frequently rely on intermediate structures to navigate the complex path towards adaptation. Although for reasons of space, I do not explicitly draw comparisons with Haitians' adaptation patterns in the United States or Canada, my argument that mediating institutions in civil society contribute to immigrant adaptation undoubtedly comes from my immersion in the lived experience of Haitian immigrants in the United States, Canada and France.[2] The French state's relative indifference to such mediating institutions weakens one important source of support Haitian immigrants rely on elsewhere.

FRENCH REPUBLICANISM

French Republicanism emphasizes a unified national identity based on citizenship. It encourages immigrants to replace their identity with French values and culture and discourages political representation based on national origin (Horowitz 1992; Lamont 2000). This model of integration contrasts with the models found in other places where large Haitian communities exist. For example, the American melting pot and Canadian multiculturalism both embrace ethnic diversity and sanction political representation based on race or ethnicity.

French Republicanism has influenced legal and political structures in France in several ways. For example, even as ethnic diversity has increased in France, the French Census does not ask about race, illustrating a broader trend in which "racial and ethnic identities . . . have not been generally understood as legitimate political, or even statistical categories" (Lieberman 2001, 35). Many politicians and commentators on the immigration debate argue that France must protect itself from the disintegrating effects of the United States' model of the cultural melting pot, structural pluralism for ethnic groups, ethnic political mobilization and residential segregation of immigrants (Kastoryano 1996).

Closely related to French Republicanism is the principle of *laïcité*, which was established at the time of French Revolution. *Laïcité* aimed to remove the established church of France, the Catholic Church, from its role in politics and social services. In general, in the United States, private associations, including religious associations, have a large role in providing social services; whereas in France, because of *laïcité*, the welfare state has gradually developed to be the main provider of services (Esping-Andersen 1990).

A second meaning of *laïcité* refers to public expression of religion. As in the development of U.S. ethnic identities, religious identity and associations with a religious inspiration form part the community of North Africans in France. According to one of France's foremost scholars on North African mobilization France, Catherine Withtol de Wenden, "Undoubtedly, Islam as a religion, as well as a collective identity, is now part and parcel of the French political space" (1998, 275). Some actors in the French government view such religious expression as a threat to *laïcité*. One poignant example of this sentiment is the overwhelming support given to a 2004 law prohibiting the Muslim head scarf (and all "conspicuous" religious symbols) in public places.

Haiti and France: From Eighteenth-Century Independence to Twentieth-Century Migration

To what extent do Republicanism and *laïcité* guide our understanding of contemporary Haitian immigrants' adaptation in France? First of all, the Haitian Revolution of 1804 rejected the notion that France's colonies would really benefit from the universal egalitarian ideals of the French Revolution and Republicanism. Haitian slaves acted on their belief that race, language and culture would continue to divide them from their colonists unless they earned full independence from France, even if they were granted French citizenship, as eventually happened in other French colonies of the Caribbean such as Guadeloupe and Martinique. Although relations between Haiti and the Vatican were strained right after the revolution, an 1860 Concordat reestablished relations and the Haitian Constitution granted the Catholic Church special rights and privileges, in particular regarding education (Nérestant 1994). To the present, the Catholic Church in Haiti is engaged in a wide variety of social activities in addition to its strictly spiritual mission. Thus, Haitians who immigrate to France expect the Catholic Church to function in a similar way there as it did in Haiti. However, they encounter a vastly different environment of religion–state relations. As one Haitian leader in France put it:

> In Haiti, we learned Christianity from the French. But when we get here, we find a society where few people believe and the church doesn't have much influence.

In the 1980s, when large numbers of Haitians began arriving in France, the *banlieue* of Paris were used in public debates to symbolize the failure of immigrant assimilation (Body-Gendrot 2000; Noiriel 1996; Weil 1995). Although the government provided many services to immigrants, such as public housing, economic recession and deindustrialization reduced labor market opportunities for immigrants. Government housing projects in the *banlieue* of large French cities like Paris, Lyon and Marseilles came to enjoy a reputation comparable to American ghettoes—characterized by high crime rates, youth delinquency and school violence (Body-Gendrot 2000). Although changes in the economy were responsible for much of the unemployment and social decay of the *banlieue*, opinion polls of the French

public find support for the argument that some immigrants are too culturally different to assimilate in France (Hargreaves 1995).

MEDIATING INSTITUTIONS AND IMMIGRANT ADAPTATION

Works from classical immigration theory in the United States such as Thomas and Znaniecki's *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1927) saw religion as the center of ethnic communities and viewed religious institutions as indispensable aids to immigrant adaptation. Other authors, such as Oscar Handlin in *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People* (1951) as well as Milton Gordon in *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins* (1964) extended Thomas and Znaniecki's thesis about mediating institutions to religious and ethnic associations of immigrant groups more generally. For example, according to Gordon:

> The immigrant subsociety mediates between the native culture of the immigrant and the American culture. The recognition of this fact is the indispensable prerequisite for the effective use of the communication channels and influence networks of the immigrants' communal life to aid and encourage the achievement of worthwhile acculturation goals. (1964, 244)

In contrast, retaining close ties to other immigrants, according to French Republicanism, would hinder immigrant adaptation. But an alternative view, posited by the American assimilation school, argues that immigrant subsocieties form indispensable intermediaries between newcomers and natives. Gordon, for example, argues that the state must recognize these mediating institutions and cooperate with them to carry out worthwhile goals of immigrant adaptation.

The concept of mediation also appears in debate about civil society and the welfare state. Peter Berger and Richard John Neuhaus, critical observers of the American welfare state, define mediating structures as "those institutions standing between the individual in his private life and the large institutions of public life" (2000, 144). In critiquing much of the way that the state delivers welfare services to the needy, they argue that megastructures of the state "are not helpful in providing meaning and identity for individual existence. Meaning, fulfillment, and personal identity are to be realized in the private sphere" (ibid.). Speaking of mediating institutions does not mean dismantling the welfare state, as some may fear, but rather thinking hard about how the welfare state carries out its goals. Does the welfare state recognize the importance of mediating institutions? What are the limits on the ability of the state to provide citizens or immigrants with a source of meaning? Only once we acknowledge the

limited reach of the welfare state both in terms of resources and meaning can we then refine our theories and practices to include the contributions of nonstate entities to immigrant acculturation and structural incorporation into new societies.

As I argue here, immigration—in particular undocumented immigration or the immigration of asylum seekers like many Haitians in France—challenges the state's ability to define who belongs to the political community. How can Republicanism work as a model for immigrants like Haitians who have so few legal channels to immigrate to France yet nonetheless manage to settle there? Haitians, perhaps not unlike immigrants to France who come from other former colonies, such as those in North Africa, feel compelled to leave their home country and settle in France even if France's colonial history and contemporary social tensions may make them quite skeptical of Republican promises of equality.

This chapter combines descriptive statistical tables from national census data with several months of ethnographic work on Haitians in France. During the spring of 2003, I interviewed thirty Haitian immigrants who attend the Archdiocesan-sponsored ministry for Haitian Catholics in Paris, called the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris, and leaders of seven Haitian secular associations. During that time, I attended weekend and weekday activities at the Haitian Catholic Community as well as activities sponsored by Haitian secular associations in France. I conducted this research in French and in Haitian Creole. I also collected detailed data on Haitian immigration to France from four primary sources:

1. an extraction of data I requested from the French Census Bureau, known by its acronym INSEE[3]
2. the Office of Population and Migration of the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity[4]
3. the Office of International Migration of the French Republic, Statistics and Communications Service[5]
4. the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People (OFPRA)[6]

HAITIAN MIGRATION TO FRANCE

Given the colonial ties between Haiti and France, some movement between the two countries has occurred for several hundred years. Today's Haitian population in France first began to arrive after fleeing the regime of François and Jean-Claude Duvalier, the father and son who ruled Haiti with a dictatorial hand from 1957 to 1986. Until the 1970s, however, most Haitians living in France were either students or professionals (Bastide, Morin and Raveau 1974). This first wave of Haitian migrants in France came from the upper-middle and upper classes of Haiti, mostly

from the capital, Port-au-Prince. They did not see France as their new home country; rather, they were awaiting a chance to return to Haiti under a more democratic system. Many Haitians from this first wave founded associations—in particular, political associations—to promote change in Haiti, although few of these associations have survived until today (Alexis 1998).

Although it is difficult to ascertain exact numbers, Alexis (1998) states that most of the Haitians who were educated in France in the 1960s and 1970s either returned to Haiti or moved on to the United States or Canada. In North America, some Haitians found better employment opportunities, they could be closer to Haiti and they could join larger communities of expatriates, in particular in New York, Montréal and Miami. Increased emigration from Haiti coincided with France's decision in 1974 to end all labor migration (Weil 1995). Despite this change in policy, as the economic and political conditions in Haiti deteriorated under Jean-Claude Duvalier (1971–1986), emigration from Haiti accelerated, in particular to North America but also to France. Little is known about this second wave of Haitians in France. The few studies of Haitians in France that have been published to date (Alexis 1998, 1999a, 1999b; Bastide, Morin and Raveau 1974; Delachet-Guillon 1996) relied on surveys with a few hundred respondents and presented only limited data from the census and immigration statistics.

As seen in Table 6.1, the largest growth of Haitians in France occurred in the 1980s. Notably, these figures only include Haitians who do not have French citizenship. From 1982 to 1990, the Haitian population of France increased from 4,724 to 12,311, an increase of 161 percent. Growth was slower in the 1990s, going from 12,311 to 15,666 in to 1999, a growth rate of 27 percent.

In order to obtain more detailed information on Haitians in France, I worked with a statistician at the French Census Bureau, INSEE, to extract data from the 1999 census.[7] By choosing the nationality of origin category on the French Census as the primary unit of analysis, I was able to identify the following persons of Haitian national origin: (a) Haitian citizens residing in France; (b) persons of Haitian origin who have become naturalized French citizens; (c) Haitian citizens born in France. Using this definition of Haitian origin, as we see in Table 6.2, the 1999 French National Census counted nearly twenty-five thousand Haitians in France. As French law requires the children of foreigners born in France to choose their nationality when they turn eighteen, some of the Haitians citizens living in France were born in France (23.3 percent of all Haitians).

Table 6.1 Growth of Haitian Immigrants in France (Excluding Naturalized French Citizens)

	Total	Men	Women	Total Growth	Growth Rate
1982	4,724	2,344	2,380		
1990	12,311	5,768	6,543	7,587	161%
1999	15,666	7,409	8,257	3,355	27%

Source: INSEE, Census, CD-R6. Taken from the 1982, 1990 and 1999 French Census.

Table 6.2 Haitians in France by Nationality at Birth and Current Nationality

	Population	Percentage
All Haitians in Metropolitan France	24,911	100.0%
Haitians Nationalized as French Citizens	9,245	37.1%
Haitian-Born Haitian Citizens Living in France	9,874	39.6%
Haitian Citizens Born in France	5,792	23.3%

Source: INSEE (1999) Census. Author's Extraction.

To understand what paths Haitian immigrants have taken to enter France, I collected data about Haitian migration to metropolitan France from the *Départements d'Outre Mer* (DOM), or overseas departments, of the Caribbean, namely Guadeloupe, Martinique and Guyane. I further examined detailed data on the number and types of visas given to Haitians to enter France legally, and I investigated how many Haitians have regulated their status once in France either through the Private and Family Life Card or by requesting political asylum. Tables 6.3–6.8 and Figure 6.1 summarize my findings.

Tables 6.3 and 6.4 show that, although the 1999 French Census counted 27,349 Haitians living in France's Caribbean DOM—just slightly more than in metropolitan France—only 6.1 percent of Haitians residing in metropolitan France reported moving there from the Antilles.

Before moving on to consider more detailed data from the French Census about Haitians' place of residence, occupation and other socioeconomic indicators, it is important to note that French Census data may not accurately reflect the Haitian population of France. Because French immigration policy offers few legal channels for working-class Haitians to migrate to France, many Haitians in France enter with tourist visas and then remain

Table 6.3 Haitians Living in the French Antilles, 1999

	Total	Percentage
Guyane	15,432	56.4%
Guadeloupe	10,444	38.2%
Martinique	1,470	5.4%
Total Haitians Living in French Antilles	27,349	100.0%

Source: INSEE (1999) Census. Author's Extraction.

Table 6.4 Haitians Whose Place of Residence Changed from the French Antilles in 1990 to Metropolitan France in 1999

	Total
Total Haitian Population in Metropolitan France	24,911
Haitian Migrants from Guyane to Metropolitan France	1,211
Haitian Migrants from Guadeloupe to Metropolitan France	215
Haitian Migrants from Martinique to Metropolitan France	89
Total Haitian Migrants from French Antilles to Metropolitan France	1,515
Percentage of Haitians in France who Migrated from French Antilles to Metropolitan France from 1990 to 1999	6.1%

Source: INSEE (1999) Census. Author's Extraction.

undocumented. Haitian leaders in France estimate that the census largely undercounts Haitians, and they suggested that fifty thousand Haitians live in France, not the approximately twenty-five thousand counted in the 1999 census. Of those immigrants, leaders believe that approximately 20 percent of Haitians are undocumented. One detailed study of Haitians in France corroborates these assertions. Delachet-Guillon (1996) collected official French data from both national and municipal authorities and calculated that there were over thirty thousand Haitians in France in the early 1990s, nearly twice the official census estimate from 1990.

Further support for the assertion that many Haitians enter France clandestinely comes from French migration authorities. In order to investigate the types and number of legal visas Haitians have received, I visited the documentation center of the Office of Population and Migration of the French Ministry of Employment and Solidarity.[8] Every year, this office publishes a report entitled *Immigration et présence étrangère en France* (Immigration and Foreign Presence in France) that tells how many visas were given to people from different nations to immigrate to France. Prior to 1993, Haitians were classified under the rubric of "Other Countries of America," thus I only present data for the period from 1993 to 2001.

Table 6.5 demonstrates that, between 1993 and 2001, few Haitians (5,133) entered France with work visas. Unlike the census data, however, the data in Table 6.5 do not allow me to distinguish between Haitians who migrated to metropolitan France and those who went to the Antilles. However, as I was interested in how many Haitians received visas to immigrate to metropolitan France, I thus further consulted data from the Statistics Department of France's Office of International Migration (OIM) that indicate where new Haitian migrants settle. Table 6.6 shows that, in the two years when the highest numbers of work visas were given to Haitians, more than 90 percent of those workers immigrated to the

Table 6.5 Official Sources of Haitian Migration to Metropolitan France and *Les Antilles*, 1993–2001

Year	Total	Salaried Workers	Non-salaried Workers	Statutory Refugees	Family Reunification	Members of French Families	Family Members of Refugees	"Private and Family Life Card" (Including Territorial Asylum)**	Visitors	Beneficiaries of Reexamination
1993	3,208	1,643	476	386	361	187	57	n.a.	98	n.a.
1994	1,927	910	193	283	309	148	20	n.a.	64	n.a.
1995	1,375	476	186	57	235	132	17	n.a.	272	n.a.
1996	788	134	93	72	119	175	22	n.a.	173	n.a.
1997	1,865	139	200	72	158	159	45	n.a.	283	809
1998	1,929	129	330	52	236	152	20	n.a.	237	773
1999	1,360	56	69	61	342	104	17	556 (1)	111	34
2000	1,764	43	14	82	480	70	22	1,004	45	2
2001	2,087	37	5	210	517	97	37	1,131	44	5
Total, 1993–2001	16,303	3,567	1,566	1,275	2,757	1,224	257	2,135	1,327	1,623

Source: Immigration et Présence Étrangère en France, 1993–2001, André LeBon.

Antilles. As we can see in Table 6.6, from 1993 to 1994, an extremely small number—only around one hundred Haitians—received work visas to immigrate to Paris and its suburbs. In 2000, only nine Haitians migrated to Paris or its suburbs with a permanent visa as a salaried worker, a very clear indication that immigrating to France as a worker does not represent a viable option for Haitians.

If few Haitians come to France with work visas, what other legal channels exist? Few Haitians migrate to France as refugees. Table 6.5 shows that, despite the numerous political upheavals in Haiti, in particular the coup d'état from 1991 to 1994, only 1,532 Haitians and their family members came to France as refugees between 1993 and 2001.

Not surprisingly, after work visas, family reunification visas constitute the largest category of visas (2,757) given to Haitians to enter France (see Table 6.5). The next largest category of entry is the Private and Family Life Card (2,135). The Private and Family Life Card, which was created in 1999, grants temporary residence to migrants already on French territory and who have a compelling reason not to return to their home country (other than fear of political persecution, which would qualify them for asylum). Even though the law creating this category was only passed in 1999, from 1999 to 2001 this was by far the largest category of legal migration from Haiti to France for those years.

Next, I examined which categories of the Family and Private Life Card were most frequently given to Haitians. In Table 6.7, four important categories have entitled Haitians to obtain a Private and Family Life Card: spouses and parents of French citizens (649), personal and family ties (615), residence in France for the last ten to fifteen years (593), and minors who have lived in France since the age of ten (275). Although the Private and Family Life Card has allowed several thousand Haitians in France to adjust their status temporarily, it is not a permanent residency card.

Data from the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People, known by its French acronym OFPRA, show how many Haitians have applied for asylum in France. As we can see in Figure 6.1, the number of Haitian asylum seekers has risen rapidly since 1999.

Table 6.6 Entry of Permanent Workers by Department and Haitian Nationality, 1993, 1994 and 2000

Year	Total	Paris	Guadeloupe	Martinique	Guyane	Suburbs of Paris	Other Depart.
1993	1,643	33	1,286	1	226	88	9
1994	910	31	38	3	784	49	5
2000	56	4	32	0	14	5	1

Source: OMISTATS, Annuaire des Migrations 1993, 1994 and 2000.

Table 6.7 Haitians Holding a Private and Family Life Card, 2000–2001

Year	Total	Spouses and Parents of French Citizens	Spouses of Scientific Researchers	Minors in France Since the Age of Ten	Personal and Family Ties	Residence in France for the Last Ten to Fifteen Years
2000	1,004	274	1	149	282	298
2001	1,131	375	2	126	333	295
Total, 2000–2001	2,135	649	3	275	615	593

Source: OMISTATS, Annuaire des Migrations 1993, 1994 and 2000.

However, Table 6.8 shows that as the number of Haitians seeking asylum increased, the number of acceptances decreased. From 1981 to 2006, the total number of first decisions (including first demands and reexaminations of earlier cases) on Haitians seeking asylum in France reached 37,355. Although 16.5 percent of those requests were accepted, the acceptance rate dropped sharply in the last ten years. From 1996 to 2000, only 14 percent of Haitian asylum applications were accepted, and from 2001 to 2006, only 8 percent were accepted. Because the political and economic situation of Haiti has not improved, one can assume that most asylum seekers whose claims were rejected—along with their accompanying family members—remained in France. The census figure of twenty-five thousand Haitians in France appears very low when we consider that, in light of data from OFPRA, 31,183 Haitians (excluding their accompanying family members) have had their asylum requests rejected in the last twenty-five years.

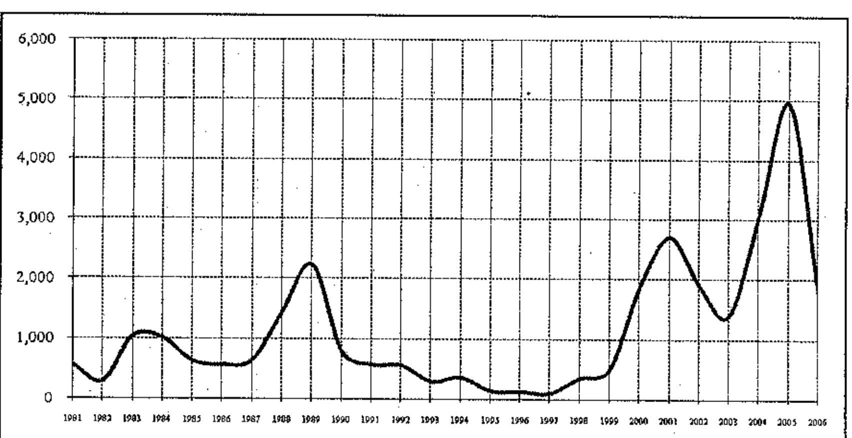

Figure 6.1 Evolution of new Haitian asylum requests in France: 1981–2006.
Source: OFPRA.

Table 6.8 Haitian Asylum Seekers in France, 1981–2006

Year	New Asylum Requests	Cases Reexamined	Total	Decisions	Cases Approved	% Cases Approved	Cases Rejected	Cases Approved after Review by Refugee Commission	% Overall Admitted
1981	562		562	834	490	58.8%	344		
1982	296		296	433	388	89.6%	45		
1983	1,047		1,047	569	348	61.2%	221		
1984	1,015		1,015	1,104	424	38.4%	680		
1985	635		635	1,127	376	33.4%	751		
1986	569		569	1,053	310	29.4%	743		
1987	648		648	601	82	13.6%	519		
1988	1,450		1,450	1,120	285	25.4%	835		
1989	2,240		2,240	1,890	186	9.8%	1,704		
1990	794		794	1,827	269	14.7%	1,558		
1991	577		577	962	260	27.0%	702		
1992	567		567	2,297	520	22.6%	1,777		
1993	301	1,220	1,521	1,460	386	26.4%	1,074		
1994	366	761	1,127	961	283	29.4%	678		

Year	New Asylum Requests	Cases Reexamined	Total	Decisions	Cases Approved	% Cases Approved	Cases Rejected	Cases Approved after Review by Refugee Commission	% Overall Admitted
1995	146	229	375	681	57	8.4%	624		
1996	138	118	256	438	72	16.4%	366		
1997	108	26	134	396	72	18.2%	324		
1998	357	8	365	266	52	19.5%	214		
1999	503	12	515	518	61	11.8%	457		
2000	1,873	13	1,886	1,457	82	5.6%	1,375		
2001	2,713	110	2,823	2,946	97	3.3%	2,849	113	7.1%
2002	1,904	160	2,064	2,269	180	7.9%	2,089	130	13.7%
2003	1,403	152	1,555	1,471	174	11.8%	1,297	122	20.1%
2004	3,067	184	3,251	3,030	215	7.1%	2,815	59	9.0%
2005	4,953	270	5,223	3,655	208	5.7%	3,447	204	11.3%
2006	1,808	391	2,199	3,990	295	7.4%	3,695	197	12.3%
2007	413	265	678	Not available					
Total	30,453	3,919	34,372	37,355	6,172	16.5%	31,183	825	18.7%

Source: OFPRA.

Table 6.9 Haitians in France with Temporary Student Status

Year	
1993	71
1994	88
1995	96
1996	182
1997	159
1998	200
1999	105
2000	93
2001	95
Total, 1993–2001	1,089

Source: Immigration et Présence Étrangère en France, 1993–2001, André LeBon.

Another possible legal channel of migration from Haiti to France—to study—also appears quite restricted. From 1993 to 2001, only 1,089 Haitians obtained student visas to come to France (see Table 6.9).

Taken together, data on the entry and regularization of Haitians in France demonstrate that little of the growth of the Haitian population has come from legal, permanent channels. As many Haitians in France have their asylum claims rejected or try to regularize their status under the Private and Family Life Card, they remain in a precarious legal status.

Data on Haitians' Socioeconomic Profile and Social Location from the 1999 Census

Tables 6.10–6.14 return to data from the 1999 census. The demographic picture of the Haitian population that emerges from these tables is one of a young population, recently arrived with a low to moderate economic position, and a majority of two-parent families. Although overall Haitians in France have moderate levels of education, and a significant minority has higher education, few Haitians work in professional occupations in France.

Table 6.10 shows that within Île-de-France (metropolitan Paris), only 10 percent of Haitians live in the city of Paris itself; the remaining 90 percent live in the suburbs of Paris. The largest concentration of Haitians in Île-de-France is in Seine-Saint Denis, which has 6,787 Haitians or 30 percent of all Haitians in Île-de-France. Three other departments have large concentrations of Haitians: Val d'Oise (4,160 or 18.9 percent), Hauts-Saint-Denis (3,138 or 14.3 percent) and Val de Marne (2,617 or 11.9 percent).

Other data from INSEE (available from the author upon request) demonstrate that Haitians are strongly concentrated in the Paris area, but they live dispersed throughout the suburbs of Paris. Of the Haitians in France, 88.3 percent live in Île-de-France, the region comprised of Paris and its suburbs. Surprisingly, no other region in France has more than five hundred Haitians. The heavy regional concentration of Haitians in the Paris region may be explained by the fact that because so few Haitians obtain work visas, Haitians choose to settle close to their families and social networks.

Table 6.10 Department of Residence for Haitians Living in Île-de-France

	Total	Percentage
Total, Haitians in Île-de-France	22,000	100.0%
Seine-Saint-Denis	6,787	30.9%
Val-d'Oise	4,160	18.9%
Hauts-de-Seine	3,138	14.3%
Paris	2,698	12.3%
Val-de-Marne	2,617	11.9%
Essonne	1,069	4.9%
Seine-et-Marne	840	3.8%
Yvelines	691	3.1%

Source: INSEE (1999) Census. Author's Extraction.

In Table 6.11, we see that there are also slightly more Haitian women than men in France and that the Haitian population of France is young. This gender ratio is another sign that the Haitian migrant flow to France is not a traditional recruited labor migrant flow—such as that of Algerians in France—where men arrive first and then later bring their families over (Weil 1995). Rather, Haitian women often journey to Paris to join a distant family member or friend and then try to sponsor their husbands or close family members.

Table 6.12 shows that more than 70 percent of Haitians in France are under the age of forty; in fact, nearly 33 percent are school age (under nineteen years). These data suggest that the majority of Haitians in France are at the age of economic productivity or will enter the labor market in a few years. Haitians—along with other immigrant groups in France—form

Table 6.11 Sex Distribution of Haitians in France

	Population	Percentage
Total	24,911	100.0%
Male	11,588	46.5%
Female	13,323	53.5%

Source: INSEE (1999) Census. Author's Extraction.

Table 6.12 Haitians in France by Age Bracket

Age	Population	Percentage
Total	24,911	100.0%
0–19	8,262	33.2%
20–39	9,297	37.3%
40–59	6,556	26.3%
60–74	623	2.5%
75+	173	0.7%

Source: INSEE (1999) Census. Author's Extraction.

a greater percentage of the young population than the overall population (OECD 2002).

Given the low levels of education in Haiti, the educational attainment of Haitians (see Table 6.13) in France appears relatively high. This may be indicative of self-selection: Haitians who already have moderate levels of education may be more likely to migrate to France than those who have no schooling or little schooling. According to the 1999 census, more than 77.6 percent of Haitians in France had more than a primary school education. The majority of Haitians in France fall within a middle range of education: 44.8 percent had attended at least some middle/high school, and 20 percent had finished high school. A relatively small group, 12.7 percent, had some university education. Given the few opportunities to study at a university in Haiti, those with university education likely obtained these degrees in France.

Table 6.13 Educational Levels of Haitians in France

	Population	Percentage
Total Population Aged Fifteen and Above	19,256	100.0%
Primary School	4,318	22.4%
Secondary School and Vocational School[1]	8,629	44.8%
High School[2]	3,859	20.0%
University[3]	2,450	12.7%

[1]Corresponds to the French Census category of *Collège, classes de 6e à 3e, CAP, BEP.*
[2]Corresponds to the French Census category of *Classes de seconde, première ou terminale.*
[3]Corresponds to the French Census category of *Études Supérieures (facultés, IUT, etc.)*

Source: INSEE (1999) Census. Author's Extraction.

As we see in Table 6.14, Haitians in the workforce in France are mostly classified by the census as laborers and employees. These sectors of the economy tend to have higher unemployment rates, which may explain the high rate of unemployment among Haitians in France. Table 6.15 shows that the unemployment rate of Haitians in France—28.4 percent—is more than twice that of native French, who have an unemployment rate of 12.5 percent (OECD 2002). Lower levels of human capital (education, work experience, French-language skills) likely contribute to the high unemployment rates among Haitians. But other contextual factors—such as inability to attain French residency or citizenship, lack of networks in labor markets and ethnic discrimination also help explain high levels of unemployment among foreigners in France (Simon 2003). Whereas in the United States self-employment could be seen as a way to avoid unemployment, few Haitians in France (133 people, or 1 percent of the total, economically active population) reported being self-employed as artisans, merchants or business owners.

As the French Census does not ask about income, other indicators frequently are used to assess socioeconomic status in France: family structure

Table 6.14 Economic Activity of Haitians in France

	Total	Employed EAP	Unemployed EAP
Total	13,323	5,124	2,021
Agricultural Workers	-	-	-
Artisans, Merchants and Business Owners	133	93	40
Professionals and Higher Education	164	147	17
Intermediary Professions	464	378	86
Employees	4,685	3,389	1,296
Laborers	1,340	1,117	223
Retired	227	-	-
Others with No Professional Activity	6,310	-	359

Source: INSEE (1999) Census. Author's Extraction

Table 6.15 Unemployment Rates of Haitians in France

	Total	Percentage
Total Economically Active Population	13,319	100.0%
Employed Economically Active Population	9,542	71.6%
Unemployed Economically Active Population	3,777	28.4%

Source: INSEE (1999) Census. Author's Extraction.

within households, home ownership and household size. The majority of Haitians in France, 53.7 percent, lived in two-parent, married households. Only about 20 percent of Haitians lived in a home that their family owns; the rest lived in rented housing. The data I collected (tables available upon request) show that 32.1 percent of Haitians lived in homes between 70 and 100 square meters; another 34.4 percent lived in moderately small apartments of 40–70 square meters; and 17.6 percent lived in apartments of less than 40 square meters.

IMMIGRANT ADAPTATION FROM THE GROUND LEVEL

The data I have presented in the preceding section indicate one problem it is difficult to imagine that Republicanism and *laïcité* can solve: the socioeconomic inequalities between Haitian immigrants and native French. Without some amelioration of socioeconomic inequality, it is difficult to imagine a seamless cultural integration of immigrants into French society. In fact, *la crise des banlieues* largely demonstrated how socioeconomic inequality, what the French might call social exclusion, can produce great social unrest.

My fieldwork among Haitian immigrants illustrates an alternative way of viewing immigrant adaptation. I show how Haitian immigrants arrive in France with cultural schemas formed in their countries of origin that they use to build institutions—both religious and secular—to support their adaptation. Quite in contrast to French Republicanism, which emphasizes individual ties to the state, I argue that religious beliefs and narratives provide a type of cultural mediation—or a source of meaning—and that religious and secular associations act as institutional mediators between Haitian immigrants and the French state.

The Haitian Catholic Community of Paris

In Haiti, like many other developing countries, state structures and religious institutions play an important social role. Throughout Haiti's history, religion—whether that be Catholicism, Protestantism or Vodoun—has had a strong cultural and institutional influence on Haitian society (Nérestant 1994). In the 1970s, just as Haitian immigration to France accelerated, liberation theology inspired many Catholic social movements in Haiti that sought to engage politics and social issues. Given that many leaders of liberation theology movements challenged the authority of the Duvaliers and targeted for repression, it is not surprising to find some of these lay leaders and clergy now living in France.

As the number of Haitians living in France began to grow in the 1970s, Haitian immigrants began meeting informally for prayer. The original group was comprised of only twenty-five Haitian immigrants led by a French missionary priest who had served in Haiti. Several years later, in

1982, the Archdiocese of Paris created a mission to serve Haitians, called the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris. Although two smaller groups of Haitian Catholics also meet for prayer and mass in different *banlieue*, the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris represents the largest gathering of Haitian Catholics in France and is the only such group with a clergy assigned to lead the community.[9]

The founding of the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris illustrates one way that ordinary immigrants seek to transpose their cultural schemas into a new institutional environment. Republican ideology is largely top-down, emphasizing what the state does for immigrants, but such bottom-up efforts should also be incorporated into our theories of immigrant adaptation. The concept of mediating institutions helps bridge this gap between top-down and bottom-up approaches to immigrant adaptation. In order to go from cultural schemas to creating institutions, immigrants must interact in some way with the host environment. In this case, they did so with the support of perhaps the largest institution of civil society in France: the Catholic Church.

Relative to Protestant or non-Christian religions, Catholic immigrants in France benefit from the large network of Catholic institutions, but the institutional environment in France also limits the extent to which these Catholic institutions mediate for immigrants. Clergy and lay leaders of the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris were indeed concerned with social issues of the Haitian community in France, yet several factors limited their ability to effectively engage these issues. As we have seen, Haitians in France are dispersed throughout the Parisian *banlieue*. Thus, there is no central geographical location that unites Haitians. In addition, unlike other Haitian Catholic communities in Canada and the United States, the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris relies entirely on volunteer work from laypeople. The community even lacks funds to pay for a full-time chaplain and must rely on a Haitian priest studying in France to serve them.

Even if the institutional structures of Catholicism in the Haitian community of France appear to be weak, for the active members of the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris, their religious beliefs provided them with tools they used to create a narrative of hope in difficult circumstances. Members of the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris live in the *banlieue*, work in low-status positions and feel like French do not treat them as equals. They turn to their religious community as a source of dignity, identity and community. When attending mass or social programs at the Haitian Catholic Community, Haitians talk about their fear of being stopped and asked for legal papers. They also discuss the difficulties in finding work and housing and raising children.

Among the different types of organizations that provide a space for Haitians to gather, Haitians who come together at religious institutions come into contact with powerful cultural schemas they employ to generate narratives of hope. During my interviews, the Haitians frequently described their close relationship with God and talked in terms like "being bathed in

the faith." When facing great difficulties, many people told me they turn to prayer. For example, one woman said, "Jesus is my role model. He's my best friend. I am nothing without Jesus. I talk to him all day long, just like I am talking to you now." Adherence to religious beliefs and attending an ethnic Catholic mission becomes a strategy for generating narratives of self-worth. During services at the Haitian Catholic Mission, readings from the Bible and sermons both emphasize that Christians in this world are on a "pilgrimage full of tears." Church songs bemoan grief and loss while professing belief in a good God. In other words, Republicanism promises fraternity, equality and solidarity, but Haitians' religious beliefs and practices provide them with a cultural schema that recognizes that such end goals are most often reached while enduring temporary suffering.

Haiti Development

Although Haitians have founded approximately three hundred associations in Paris, most exist only on paper, as fewer than forty of them actually organize activities. Of the forty active Haitian associations, approximately twenty-five Haitian associations in France carry out projects in Haiti, not France (Glaude 2001). Of the approximately ten Haitian associations that sponsor activities in France, their primary concerns are to assist Haitian immigrants in three areas:

1. obtaining legal papers
2. finding employment
3. finding affordable and appropriate housing

Despite the best efforts of their leaders, these associations generally have little or no funding and must rely entirely on volunteer work. Although the leaders of associations all expressed doubts about their own ability to effectively support Haitians' adaptation, the existence of these types of associations once again points to the importance of mediating institutions in immigrant adaptation.

Not coincidentally, the only Haitian association that has been able to work directly with Haitian immigrants and with the French state has close ties to the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris. One of the founding lay leaders of the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris, René Benjamin, founded Haiti Development in 1961 to train Haitians students in France to contribute to social, economic and political progress in Haiti upon their return. But, as more working-class Haitians began to arrive in Paris in the 1970s through the present, Benjamin changed the mission of his organization to support the adaptation of Haitians in France. Although the majority of the members of the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris are not professionals like Benjamin, the religious community was the only place I observed Haitian professionals like Benjamin and several others interacting with nonprofessional

Haitian immigrants on a regular basis. Thus, this religious community helps bridge the class divide between Haitians in France.

Haiti Development's top priority is a direct type of mediation: Benjamin and his small staff help about 150 Haitians monthly to apply to regularize their status in France, either as asylum seekers or, more recently, through the Private and Family Life Card. As the data presented earlier show, many Haitians in France do not have legal papers. To resolve this situation, they often rely on a trusted member of their own community to assist them in interacting with the French state. By providing Haiti Development with funding to assist asylum seekers in completing the paperwork necessary to file an asylum claim, the French state recognizes the need for this type of mediation. In addition to receiving state funding, Catholic Charities of France provides technical and financial assistance to Haiti Development to create programs in French-language training, AIDS prevention, family communication and cooking courses. In part because Haiti Development has obtained funding for its programs, Haiti Development is the only Haitian association in France with a permanent location, daytime office hours and a paid staff.

Part of the success of Haiti Development also comes from Benjamin's position as a leader of the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris. Participating in a church community allows Benjamin to develop relationships with newer arrivals that generate trust and solidarity. The example of Haiti Development shows how mediating institutions have both a cultural and an institutional element. The narratives generated in Haitian Catholics' religious practice provide a first step towards resolving their lack of social inclusion and Haiti Development connects members of the Haitian community to the French state. Even if French *laïcité* prevents most types of direct support for religious organizations, leaders of secular immigrant organizations may very well derive their legitimacy and trust in the immigrant community from their religious activities. As Benjamin shares in Haitians' religious practice while also directly dealing with the French state, he is a more effective mediator than other Haitian leaders who work exclusively in the secular realm.

CONCLUSIONS

Given that most Haitians in Paris have arrived in the last thirty years, it is too soon to assess the success or failure of assimilation. For that reason, I focused only on the first steps in this process, such as attaining legal papers as well as finding housing and employment. The data I presented demonstrate that, not unlike other immigrant residents of the French *banlieue*, Haitians face social exclusion. First, as many as 20 percent of Haitians in France are undocumented and only 33 percent have French citizenship. Second, despite the fact that many Haitians in France have moderate or even high levels of education, Haitians in France have high rates of unemployment—nearly 30 percent. Third, Haitians live in suburbs of Paris that are

stratified by race and national origin; as a result, they have limited direct contact with French institutions.

Haitian associations—both churches and secular associations—attempt to mediate between Haitian immigrants and the French state but they have met with limited success. During my research, the Haitian Catholic Community of Paris was the only organization joining cultural schemas and institutional resources to effectively mediate between Haitian immigrants and the French state. As debates continue about the French model of immigrant integration, greater attention to immigrants' cultural schemas could provide new pathways for interaction between immigrants and the state that would promote goals of social inclusion and socioeconomic mobility. Adherence to Republicanism may continue to serve as a goal for immigrant adaptation, but greater attention is needed to the socioeconomic location of immigrants as they begin their journey towards adaptation and to how they form associations to support their social inclusion.

Moving beyond the ideology of French Republicanism requires recognition that the state is limited in its ability to provide meaning. Mediating institutions assist in immigrant adaptation both because they generate a space where individuals create meaning and they provide an institutional basis through which ordinary immigrants can have contact with the state. Acknowledging that immigrants create mediating institutions does not imply forgoing the goals of Republicanism or *laïcité* but, rather, paying close attention to immigrants themselves as agents of their own adaptation.

NOTES

1. This chapter was previously published in 2008 in French as "Structures de médiation et intégration des immigrants haïtiens à Paris." *Revue Européene des Migrations Internationales* 24 (1): 80–114.
2. Readers interested in this cross-national comparison of mediating structures and immigrant integration should see my book *Faith Makes Us Live: Surviving and Thriving in the Haitian Diaspora* (2009).
3. *Institut National des Statistique et des Études Économiques.*
4. *Direction de la Population et des Migrations, Ministere de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité.*
5. *Office de Migrations Internationales République Française, Service des Statistiques, des Études et de la Communication.*
6. *Office Française de la Protection des Réfugiés et des Apatrides.*
7. Dimitri Bechaq, a doctoral student in anthropology at *l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* at the time, also collaborated in this data extraction.
8. In French, *le Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité.* I wish to thank André LeBon for his help in guiding me toward the data I needed.
9. Glaude (2001) estimates that there are at least forty Haitian Protestant churches in France that have between twenty-five and three hundred members. Because of time constraints, and because I was interested in comparing how religious institutions support immigrant adaptation in three contexts, I only conducted observation and interviews at the main Haitian Catholic Community of Paris and not Protestant churches or Vodou ceremonies.

7 The Uses of Diaspora among Haitians in Boston

Regine O. Jackson

In addition to the now well-known circumstances that constitute the Haitian diaspora, this chapter focuses on a number of local events that were pivotal in the formation of a diasporic Haitian community in Boston, MA (see Figure 7.1). Specifically, I describe four incidents: the 1974 assault on Yvon Jean-Louis in South Boston, Antoine Thurel's public suicide in 1987, the Merisier murders in Port-au-Prince (1997) and the nomination of Marie St. Fleur for lieutenant governor (2006). Emblems of the decades in which they occur, these events are convenient points of reference for charting the evolution of this community. Each incident also represents a key episode in what Ulf Hannerz calls "the drama of cities" (Hannerz 1980), marking a turning point in post–civil rights era race relations or a shift in how the Haitians living in Boston at the time negotiated belonging. The cases of Jean-Louis and St. Fleur will help set the stage.

INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

A full twenty years after the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the city of Boston erupted in racial violence over school desegregation. On the afternoon of October 7, 1974, a crowd of nearly five hundred students and protesters gathered at the intersection of Old Colony Avenue and Dorchester Streets, a few blocks away from the Patrick Gavin School. From the center of the mob Joseph Griffin, dressed in a checkered lumberjack coat despite the unseasonably warm 78-degree weather, incited a verbal attack against the police that slowed traffic to a near standstill. As thirty-three-year-old Yvon Jean-Louis drove toward the corner on his way to the laundry where his wife, Caridad, worked, a truck stopped in front of him. Griffin spotted him and called out, "Let's get the fuckin' nigger!"

Nearly forty people from the crowd ran to Jean-Louis' green Dodge, broke the windows and dragged him out by the collar. They pummeled him with their fists and the various makeshift weapons they carried: rocks, hockey sticks and bricks. Others vandalized the car. Griffin pulled out a hammer handle that was in his pocket and viciously clubbed Jean-Louis. When Jean-Louis tried to escape to the porch of a nearby house, the