The Legacy of French Colonialism in the Francophone Caribbean: Migration, Anti-Haitianism, and Anti-Blackness in Guadeloupe and French Guiana

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The Legacy of French Colonialism in the Francophone Caribbean: 
Migration, Anti-Haitianism, and Anti-Blackness in Guadeloupe and French Guiana

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Abstract

Haiti has a huge migration problem. Thousands flee the country every year due to its political and socioeconomic instability. The locations that Haitians prefer to settle in are the United States, Canada, and France. Haitian people have also migrated within neighboring islands in the Caribbean region. Because of Haiti’s current conditions, every country and the territory in the Caribbean Basin has misconstrued views of Haiti. They are very critical of Haitian people and project xenophobia onto those within their presence. The problem is that these are black-majority societies marginalizing another black-majority society. The question this problem raises is why are these Afro-Caribbean societies so anti-black, or in this case anti-Haitian? This thesis seeks to answer this question and examine the roots of anti-Haitian xenophobia for the Haitian Diaspora that have settled in the French Caribbean territories of Guadeloupe and French Guiana. Both territories are Haiti’s linguistic and cultural counterparts, yet their societies are firm in their rejection of Haitian migrants. Thus, anti-Haitianism exists as a byproduct of French colonization, internalized anti-blackness, and the complexities of Afro-Caribbean identity formation.
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Introduction:

Since the mid-20th century, Haiti has developed a very large emigration problem that it has failed to control. For international organizations like the World Bank and the New Humanitarian, they will contribute that to Haiti’s GDP per capita of $797, its Human Development Index of 169, its vulnerability to natural disasters, and its ranking as the 13th most fragile state in the world (World Bank, Fragile States Index). These are all a part of the flawed narrative that Western media constantly portray about Haiti’s migration problem. However, rather than evaluating their exploitative role in Haiti’s current conditions, the international community would rather shift the blame on Haiti as the ‘poorest nation in the western hemisphere.’ Haiti is an environmentally and culturally diverse country filled with resilient people who are forced to leave their homes in hopes of a better life due to the residues of slavery, colonization, and imperialism that have wrecked any attempts of success in the country. The irony is that Haitian people are forced to flee to countries like France, the United States, or Canada which have all played an exploitative hand in the country’s demise. If not these three countries, Haitian people go to other areas of Latin America and the Caribbean that are equally exploited and have a problem with their presence due to these imperialistic manipulations.

Currently, the United States, Canada, and France contain a sizable proportion of the Haitian Diaspora. However, there has also been a significant intra-migration of Haitian people to neighboring Caribbean states resulting in the formation of intra-diasporic communities. For example, within the Hispanophone Caribbean, Haitian people have a historically notable presence in Cuba and the Dominican Republic. In the Anglophone Caribbean, they have formed large communities in the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos. Similarly, in the Francophone
Caribbean, their population has increased within the French departments of Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana.

As a result of the increased Haitian Migration within their borders, many of these neighboring states have directed anti-Haitian and xenophobic attitudes towards the presence of Haitian people. The other factor that has influenced these views is that Western media and history have always portrayed Haiti as being poor and its people as savages. Even current US President Donald Trump famously referred to Haiti as a shithole country.¹ Much of the Caribbean has internalized this view of Haiti, and as a result, they do not want to be associated with the country or its people. This internalization is most notably seen between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Despite sharing an island and similar histories, Dominican people have ingrained antihaitianismo [anti-Haitianism] into every aspect of life so that they can present themselves as better and different than Haitian people. A lot of international attention and academic research has gone into Haitian migration into the Dominican Republic and the violent treatment of Haitians by Dominicans as seen with the 1937 Parsley Massacre and the 2013 ‘La Sentencia’ [the verdict] constitution change.² The problem is that since such large attention has been given to Dominican antihaitianismo, the migration and treatment of Haitian people in other

² The 1937 Parsley Massacre was the systematic extermination of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic ordered by dictator Rafael Trujillo. It resulted in the deaths of an estimated 30,000-50,000 Haitians. La Sentencia is a 2013 amendment to the Dominican Constitution that birthright citizenship could only be granted to those who have been born to legal Dominican descendants since 1929. It stripped citizenship of four generations of Dominican-born citizens. It is estimated around 250,000-300,000 people, primarily Dominicans of Haitian descent, become stateless.

areas of the Caribbean is largely ignored. As a result, Dominicans are commonly portrayed as the only group of people in the Caribbean region with an anti-Haitian and anti-black problem.

Conversations and research surrounding anti-Haitian attitudes across the other Caribbean islands have increased to show that it is not a problem that is unique to the Dominican Republic. Recently, attention has been drawn to the treatment of Haitians in their fellow Francophone territories of Guadeloupe and French Guiana. Even though these two territories are linguistically, historically, and culturally similar, the Haitian population has also suffered xenophobic treatment at the hands of Guadeloupans and French Guianese. The problem is that “the imagined terrestrial, linguistic, religious, and racial boundaries” that are present in Dominican anti-Haitian nationalist agendas do not apply to Guadeloupe and French Guiana. The Haitian blackness and use of French Creole-based language cannot be considered foreign because it is equally the base of their society (Zacaïr 2-3).

If Guadeloupe and French Guiana have similar Afro-Caribbean roots to Haiti, then how can one black society marginalize the presence of black individuals from a similar society? What then are the roots of anti-Haitian sentiments and Haitian xenophobia in the French Caribbean and the other states and territories in the region? My thesis seeks to answer these questions as I argue that the anti-Haitian attitude and xenophobia present in Guadeloupe and French Guiana is a result of anti-blackness from colonization. It is also a result of state-imposed marginalization done by mainland France towards the presence of immigrants, the neocolonial status of Guadeloupe and French Guiana, and identity formation within Afro-Caribbean groups (Fig.1).
Methodology:

This thesis was designed due to my connection to Haiti as a first-generation Haitian American. As a descendent of the diaspora, I want to use my thesis as an opportunity to explore the issue of migration in Haiti and properly analyze why the country struggles in stabilizing its emigration flows. I will provide an extensive, multidisciplinary analysis of Haiti so that people can understand the historical factors that have led Haiti to have these contemporary issues (see fig. 2). Like every country, Haiti has both a beautiful yet complex history and culture. It was once considered the ‘pearl of the Antilles’ as it was the world’s richest colony (Bellegarde-Smith 6). However, Haiti is often misrepresented in American, Caribbean, and Latin American history and culture. Haiti has and will continue to suffer the consequences of being the world's first independent black state during a time where slavery was the backbone of many economies. As a result of these consequences, Haitian people experience xenophobia, racism, discrimination, and stigmatization in any part of the Americas where they have formed a diasporic community. I want to use my thesis to explore this anti-Haitian treatment outside of the communities in the United States, Canada, France, and the Dominican Republic.

I decided to narrow my focus to anti-Haitianism in the French Caribbean territories of French Guiana and Guadeloupe rather than using other states like Cuba or the Bahamas because those are Haiti’s linguistic counterparts in the Caribbean. Haiti, Guadeloupe, and French Guiana are all products of France’s colonization in the Americas region. They are similar in race, history, and their use of French and a French-based creole. Of the three, only Haiti was able to break free and gain its independence from France in 1804. Guadeloupe and French Guiana have remained colonies of France since the 1600s. In 1946, their status changed as colonies to overseas departments of France which solidified their populations’ statuses as French citizens,
created representative seats to be elected to serve in the Senate and National Assembly in Paris, and elevated their position and laws to being equal to that of Mainland France. Despite of all these ‘benefits’ that may have come with becoming a department, Guadeloupe and French Guiana are still modern-day colonies of France. My thesis will discuss how the post-independent relationship between Haiti and France has impacted Guadeloupeans and Guianese to fear becoming poor like Haitian people. Additionally, I will discuss how years of being under French colonialism has impacted their ability to see themselves as separate from French citizens.

This paper will use a mixed-method approach to analyze the intersection of anti-blackness, French neocolonialism, and Haitian identity formation in both the Haitian diaspora and the residents of the receiving states. Most of the research conducted for this paper will analyze academic journals and articles in the disciplines of history, anthropology, and African studies. The other sources that will be used for analysis are news articles from French media sources that have been translated into English. Images and maps will be also used throughout the assignment because most people are not familiar with the Caribbean due to its geographic position and size.

I will first provide a review of the literature used throughout the paper and address limitations in my research. I will then present a historical overview of Haiti in the 20th and 21st centuries to provide context to the significant events and other political and socio-economic factors that have spurred Haitian emigration. Following that, I will provide profiles of Guadeloupe and French Guiana and the history of Haitian migration to these territories. Next, there will be four case studies on how Haitian immigrants are marginalized in the two territories (see fig. 3). My two case studies on Guadeloupe will be an analysis of a trial involving a popular Guadeloupean host promoting Haitian xenophobia. The second one will examine instances of the
detention of Haitian students and family separations as a result of deportation. My case studies on French Guiana will be an ethnographic analysis of the stigmatization associated with Haitian immigrants and an examination into instances of deportation with Haitian students. I will then place these case studies in dual analysis and explain how anti-blackness and state-imposed marginalization creates the image that Haitian immigrants do not belong. Additionally, I will discuss the relationship between Haiti and France and the legacy of colonization on Afro-Guadeloupean and Afro-Guianese subjects.
**Literature Review:**

The literature surrounding Haitian Migration in the French Caribbean mainly consists of a limited number of articles by French, French West Indian, Haitian, and American scholars, anthropologists, and researchers who use a mix of ethnographic, data analysis, anthropological and sociological methods. Additionally, the literature on this topic is concentrated mainly on Haitian migration in the 1980-2010 era, before the January 12, 2010 earthquake. There is limited literature produced on migration to the French Caribbean after the earthquake and Hurricane Matthew in 2016. Although anti-blackness, French neo-colonialism, and Caribbean identity formation are present in varying aspects, none of the sources include the intersection of these three factors and their influence on Haitian xenophobia. This paper will seek to tie these three facets together to demonstrate their influence in the treatment of Haitian migrants in the receiving states of Guadeloupe and French Guiana. The varying works used in this paper will be critiqued and reviewed in subsections that have been thematically grouped by region, methodology, state, legal frameworks, and historical approaches. The first subsection below will review the literature surrounding Haitian history in the 20th century.

**Literature on Haitian History in the 20th and 21st Century**

There has been an increase in Haitian scholars contributing to the literature regarding the most notable historical developments within the country. Haitian history is often misconstrued in the American and Western Europe lens, so it is important to encompass the works of mainly Haitian scholars in any work relating to Haitian studies. The literature in this thesis considers this factor and includes the works of notable Haitian scholars of African Diaspora Studies and
anthropology. The Haitian literature reviewed in this subsection study key developments in Haitian history that have affected the trajectory of the country.

Patrick Bellegarde Smith is a notable Haitian professor of African Diaspora Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and a houngan asogwe, a high priest of Vodou, who analyzes the history of Haiti in his book *Haiti: The Breached Citadel* published in 2004. The book examines Haiti from the era of colonization until the early 2000s where present-day Haiti was amid anti-government protests towards then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The Citadel in the title of the book is a reference to the Citadelle Laferrière, the infamous fortress that Haiti built to protect itself after its independence from France in 1804. As glorious as the citadel is, its current crumbling state reflects “Haiti’s noble past and wretched present” (Bellegarde-Smith 5).

In addition to this struggle, the breach is a reference to the way Haiti has been breached externally and internally which has weakened its developmental capacity. Externally the breach has come from an imperialist interest in the country, most notably the United States and France (Bellegarde-Smith 230). Haiti has also been breached internally by a series of dictator-like governments, military coups d’état, and race and class divisions. This internal breaching is the biggest contributor to Haiti’s migration problem. Throughout each chapter, Bellegarde-Smith examines how Haiti’s present reality reflects the country’s struggle of navigating between the past and the present. Although this text discusses the Haitian migratory process and its rising numbers, its greatest strength is that it gives a detailed historical framework of the country that is necessary for understanding Haiti’s massive emigration issue.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot was a notable Haitian scholar in anthropology and his 1990 book, *Haiti, State Against Nation: The Origins and Legacy of Duvalierism*, examines Haiti under the context of the 20th century and a few years after Jean-Claude Duvalier was exiled from Haiti in
1986. For Trouillot, the U.S. Occupation of 1915-1934, was the significant precursor that enabled the growth of Duvalierism. The other significant precursor is the racial and class divide that has preserved the wealth and control of the country among its mixed-race elite. As he states the occupation “worsened all of Haiti’s structural ills” and “also aggravated some of Haiti’s social problems, notably color prejudice” (Trouillot 107). Despite these significant precursors, Trouillot’s main conclusion is that Duvalierism is a result of the structural organization of Haitian society and that “similar regimes will inevitably succeed unless the relationship between state and civil society is reformulated” (Trouillot 228). Like Bellegarde-Smith, this book provides a strong historical analysis of the background context to understanding Haiti’s present-day state. However, Trouillot failed to strengthen his argument by not including a discussion on Haiti’s migration problem under Duvalier. The migration problem reflects the unformulated structures in society and that is something that this paper will examine.

**Haitian Migration Channels to the French Caribbean**

The research surrounding the routes Haitian migrants use to travel within the Americas is increasing as more scholars take interest in the Haitian communities that have begun to form all over the region (see fig. 4). The analysis of migration patterns to the French Caribbean is mainly concentrated on channels Haitians take to reach French Guiana. The literature review in this subsection will focus on authors using mixed-method approaches to analyze how Haitians have been able to formulate migration routes to French Guiana and the French West Indies despite increasing restrictions from France. It will also analyze the construction of the Haitian migrants in terminology related to immigration: vulnerability and borders.
Cedric Audebert, in his 2017 article “The recent geodynamics of Haitian migration in the Americas: refugees or economic migrants?” delves into the extremities and the multidimensional vulnerability in Haiti to better analyze the dynamics of Haitian migration and diaspora in the Americas. A French human geographer who specializes in Caribbean migration, he defines multidimensional vulnerability as “the interplay between economic, political and ecological dimensions, and gives rise to a broader approach to the notion of insecurity experienced in Caribbean societies” (Audebert 58). He states that the Caribbean Basin is heavily affected by emigration due to socio-economic, political, and ecological factors that have made the region vulnerable. Haitian emigration has a much larger volume and dispersion within the Americas, including a new increasing presence in the states within South America such as French Guiana, Peru, Brazil, and Chile. (Audebert 57).

Ultimately, Audebert argues that the emergence of new migration routes to French Guiana and South America has increasingly blurred the line to treat them as refugees and economic migrants. By providing intermediate immigration action plans and responses, it allows the receiving states to pardon migrants and provide them some basic legal rights (Audebert 67-68). While he offers an analysis of how Haitian migrants are received in French Guiana, what Audebert largely fails to do is to provide a clear visualization of analyzing the geography in which Haitians migrate to French Guiana and South America. He also fails to include the role of international pressure that might have influenced the trajectory of states to consider Haitian vulnerability and roll out intermediate immigration response plans. His argument could have also been strengthened with an analysis of Suriname, a key transient country for Haitian migrants, and the actions that Suriname has taken to both consider Haitian vulnerability and curb Haitian migration to South America particularly to neighboring French Guiana and Brazil.
Handerson Joseph, a Brazilian social anthropologist analyzes the role of the Guianas, Suriname, Guyana, and French Guiana, with Haitian migration in his 2020 article “The Haitian migratory system in the Guianas: beyond borders.” Joseph begins with a historical overview of Haitian migration to French Guiana in the 1960s for economical work. He then analyzes the ethnographic research he collected based on interviews from Haitian migrants living in Suriname, French Guiana, and Brazil (Joseph 202). Joseph’s analysis of his data leads him to conclude that the facets of Haitian migration are multipolar and the Guianas, particularly Suriname and French Guiana act “as a migratory field of arrival, residence, departure, transit, and return” (Joseph 224). Although French Guiana offers Haitian migrants an opportunity for French citizenship, many have decided to make residence in Suriname due to the slightly more open immigration policies and job opportunities (Joseph 224). His methodology of mixing a historical overview, literature review, ethnographic data, and anthropological analysis of the cultures in the Guianas strengthens his analysis of the Haitian migration to the Guianas. Additionally, his work posits the importance of studying Haitian migration channels to the French Caribbean in that the interviews and experiences of these migrants need to be told so that their migration is understood to be both hypervisible and invisible under the realm of borders and undocumented status.

Maud Laëthier also analyzes the Haitian migration channel in Suriname and French Guiana in her 2015 article “The Role of Suriname in Haitian Migration to French Guiana: Identities on the Move and Border Crossings.” A French anthropologist who specializes in Haitian migration and ethnology states that her purpose is to study the difficulties that come when traveling to French Guiana. Many Haitians looking to migrate to French Guiana legally have difficulties obtaining passports, visas, or other legal documents so they will turn to rakètès
[migrant smugglers], who will get them there via the Surinamese route by creating false documents and arranging stays for them along their travels. This option can cost a migrant around $2500-$3000 and the conditions can vary en route but it is known amongst the community that “to travel to French Guiana, it is better to go through Suriname” (Laëthier 233-234). Haitians can only enter Suriname at the capital’s international airport in Paramaribo with the possession of a temporary visa. However, many of these migrants who used a rakète to enable their trip are often arrested at the airports due to their genuine passport being stolen or passports bearing photos or information that don’t match their identity (Laëthier 235-236). To those who make it out of the airport, a taxi driver meets them to drive them to the border town of Albina where they will cross by the Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni River (Laëthier 241).

Laëthier’s article also examines the meaning of borders in the context of migration and how many believe that “by crossing borders, one can achieve fulfillment” (Laëthier 231). She destructs the negative connotations that exist within the context of borders when relating it to Haitian migrants. She states that Haitians are not just border crossers but are boundary builders too. They “build identity boundaries shaping a new collective entity taken out of a whole, the one of the ‘other strangers’, being, in the context of the West of French Guiana” (Laëthier 246). Her work humanizes the difficulties in the Haitian migratory system and emphasizes the importance of not criminalizing the act of migration through her anthropological analysis.

**French Guianese Conflicts with the Haitian Identity**

The literature on the relationship between Haitian migrants and Guianese residents is limited but is increasing as scholarship on the migratory process of Haitian in the Americas—particularly in South America, develops. The contribution of French Guianese and Haitian
scholars and authors to this topic is limited and difficult to track. The paper considers this and utilizes scholars who specialize in the Francophone Caribbean to analyze this relationship. The literature in this subsection reviews the cultural politics that arise with the Haitian presence in French Guiana.

In addition to examining Suriname’s role in Haitian migration to French Guiana, Maud Laëthier also studies the encounters between Haitians and Guianese people in “Identifications and Kinships among Haitians in French Guiana, Observations on a Diaspora.” Using the definition of creolization, Laëthier states that Guianese and Haitian societies have been creolized under the blending and assimilation of French, Indigenous, and African cultures. In French Guiana, Haitian people and elements of their presence, language, and religion can be seen as “dissimilarity within proximity” (Laëthier 82). Although Haitian people have some proximity to the French culture, they are ultimately dissimilar to French Guiana due to Haiti’s earlier severance from France which produced a culture less creolized than the one formed in French Guiana. Laëthier then follows up with a sociological and anthropological analysis of identity, origin, and othering and how a Haitian migrant “plays a primordial role in the imaginary construction of ‘the Other.’” Guianese interactions with Haitians are minimized and marginalized because they have othered Haitians to be seen as dissimilar to the French culture and assimilation that they have attained for themselves (Laëthier 86). Laëthier’s breakdown of identity formation in both Haitian and Guianese cultures is an important analysis because it analyzes the similarities and differences in the routes that both cultures have taken in response to France colonization. Haitian immigrants develop their sense of identity as a deep tie to their nationality rather than through the aspects of creolization that exist within their culture (Laëthier
87). This sense of identity will be discussed in this paper to present how the process of afro-Caribbean identity formation influences the way each island treats Haitian people.

Marc Lony, an associate professor of French at Loyola Marymount University, looks at the role of the Haitian immigrant worker under the context of time and place in “Picking and Unpicking Time, Contextualizing Haitian Immigration in French Guiana.” Lony’s methodology is entirely ethnographic and consists of various to draw in on the multiple perspectives to connect “various viewpoints on the paradoxes of Guiana, aesthetic constructions that belong to the realm of the literary, and Haitian-Guianese views” (Lony 171). Most of the research is centered around a domestic servant and mother named Dieula who works two shifts a day and walks miles to her work in the hot sun. In interviews with her boss Madame Musetter, she praises Dieula’s loyalty to her and her work tactics. But when she says Dieula is unlike other Haitians who say “yes, yes, I’m used to it, I know what has to be done,’ and only messes everything up,” it reinforces the stereotype that many Haitian workers are incapable of doing work, or, more simply, being constructed as just dumb (Lony 176).

Lony also explores the construct of nostalgia and memory across the multiple generations of Haitian people living in the diaspora. Dieula comments about rhythm and carnival dances, and she says she doesn’t participate in these activities in French Guiana because she likes traditional music, which is Konpa, a popular Haitian genre. When she works and cleans, she hums Haitian tunes to herself because it gets her into the rhythm of the task she is doing, and it is “getting back in touch nostalgically with her previous home” (Lony 179). In an interview with Mister Jacques, a Guianese civil servant, he says Haitian children born here of immigrants such as Dieula, are out of touch with their parent’s native country and the image and memory of Haiti for them is nonexistent (Lony 189-191). Lony’s methodology allowed him to unpick valuable insights of
Haitians in French Guiana by gaining perspectives from Guianese employers, Haitian immigrants, and life for the first-generation children growing up in French Guiana. A weakness in Lony’s methodology is that he doesn’t provide a historical analysis of Haiti until towards the end of the article which was slightly counterproductive.

**Guadeloupean Conflicts with the Haitian Identity**

Publications examining the relationship between Guadeloupeans and Haitian migrants are increasing. However, scholarship contribution from Guadeloupean and Haitian professionals and scholars is extremely limited. Similar to the previous subsection on Guianese conflicts, this limitation is also considered. The works of varying scholars who specialize in the Francophone Caribbean are used to discuss this topic. The literature in this subsection examines the conflicts that arise in the Guadeloupean subject in response to their encounters with Haitian immigrants.

Paul Brodwin, an American professor of anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, wrote “Marginality and Subjectivity in the Haitian Diaspora” in 2003. Brodwin seeks to answer this question “What forms of subjectivity emerge in contemporary diasporas, and can anthropologists discern them through single-site ethnography?” (Brodwin 13). Brodwin engages in ethnographic research by interviewing Guadeloupeans and the Haitian diaspora living in Guadeloupe between 1996-1996 in Pointe-à-Pitre to answer this question. He concludes that state-imposed marginality and discursive marginalization influence the imagination that Guadeloupeans have of Haitians (Brodwin 16). In Guadeloupean society, Haitians occupy a liminal position between their homeland and Guadeloupe and the French states posits them as non-citizen (Brodwin 17,26). Haitians are automatically associated with Africa with their darker skin, language, and Vodou religion which contrasts with the French status that Guadeloupeans feel they achieve as French citizens. The subjection of Haitians at the hands of Guadeloupeans
will continue until laws on citizenship are improved so that societal perceptions that will shift to
be more inclusive of Haitians (Brodwin 36).

Philippe Zacaïr is a Guadeloupean professor of history at the California State University
Fullerton compiled his 2010 book *Haiti and the Haitian Diaspora*. In chapter 2, “The Trial of
Ibo Simon: Popular Media and Anti-Haitian Violence in Guadeloupe” he analyzes a notable case
of xenophobia. Ibo Simon, a former musician, and popular Guadeloupean television host used
his platform to spread anti-Haitian rhetoric in Guadeloupe. Simon enabled a heightened sense of
violence and discrimination toward Haitian immigrants even though at the time they only made-up 5 percent of the island’s entire immigrant population (Zacaïr 45). Zacaïr states how the lack
of historiography concerning Haitian immigration is a key factor in understanding the
development in Guadeloupe that enabled Ibo Simon’s behavior. This paper will add to this
chapter and include historiographical elements to provide a deeper analysis of Ibo Simon’s trial
and other instances of anti-Haitian attitudes.
**Historical Overview: The Decline of Haiti**

To understand the problems that have caused Haiti to have a massive emigration problem, it is necessary to understand the developments in the county—both past and present—that have shaped its ability to perform as an effective state. Since declaring its independence from France on January 1, 1804, Haiti, the world’s first independent black state, has unintentionally experienced a decline politically, socially, economically, and ecologically. Before the 1950s, the main event that transformed the climate of Haiti was the U.S. invasion and occupation of the country that lasted from 1915-1934.

**The US Occupation 1915-1934**

In the 19th century, many former European colonies in the Americas and the Caribbean, primarily the Lusophone and the Hispanophone, were gaining their independence.\(^3\) Simultaneously, the United States was developing imperialist attitudes to increase its hegemony within the Western Hemisphere. This can be seen in policies such as the Monroe Doctrine and the Good Neighbor Policy in which the U.S. insisted that they would not intervene in Latin American affairs and instead, would be “benevolent enterprises that would restore peace and stability” (Alexis 271). Additionally, they also began to invest foreign capital in the regions so that they could benefit economically in the region just as the Europeans had previously done.

However, as they emphasized this policy of ‘non-intervention,’ the United States has begun building up its military capacity to intervene in the region to displace any European powers—both former and new—that had begun to garner influence in some countries in the region (Bellegarde Smith, et al 15). In 1904, the Roosevelt Corollary was added as an addendum to the

Monroe Doctrine. It reserved the status of the U.S as the dominant power in the Western Hemisphere “and that it had reserved the right to intervene anywhere and whenever it chose” (Bellegarde Smith, et al 15). The consequences of this corollary were that it resulted in a pattern of invasions and interventions in countries across the region including Mexico, El Salvador, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Cuba, Haiti, and more to protect U.S. economic and political interests in addition to its hegemony in the region (Bellegarde Smith, et al 15).

On July 28, 1915, President Woodrow Wilson ordered 330 U.S. Marines to descend on the Haitian cities of Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien which began the invasion that would last for nineteen years (see fig. 5; Trouillot 100). During the occupation, the U.S. weakened the Haitian economy by limiting their ability to participate in free trade with other nations, increasing their economic dependence on their GDP on coffee exports, and implementing custom duties on imports and exports (Alexis 269; Trouillot 103). A political and social consequence of the occupation was increased power to the mixed-race elite and reinforcing color prejudice, or colorism by installing three light-skinned presidents and showing preference to lighter-skinned Haitians (Trouillot 107). By the 1930s, it was president Sténio Vincent, who began the process of removing the Marines and by August 15, 1934, all troops had departed. By the time the Marines left, all of Haiti’s structural ills worsened (Trouillot 107).

The 1950s-1980s: The Duvaliers, Corruption, AIDS, Swine Flu, & Liberalization

The most significant and disastrous development that has exacerbated Haiti politically, economically, and socially is the familial dictatorship of François Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude (Fig. 6). Their rule spanned from 1957-1986. Scholar Patrick Bellegarde Smith

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4 Also referred to as Papa Doc and Baby Doc. (Bellegarde Smith 130, 136)
describes it “as the worst in Haitian history” and “one of the harshest regimes in the Western Hemisphere” (123). From the 1940s-1950s, Haiti’s economy was bankrupt due to the following factors: the country had finished paying off its independence debt to France in 1947, the lack of diversification in the economy due to dependence on agricultural exports, the lack of industrialization, and soil erosion of farms (Trouillot 140-144). When François Duvalier ran for the presidency, his promise and answer to the end of these crises was “the creation and consolidation of a totalitarian regime” (Trouillot 139).

Duvalier’s rise to power and his ability to implement totalitarianism as Haiti’s president for life is a result of a combination of different factors. First, his rise in popularity can be attributed to his noiriste [black nationalist platform], which appealed to Haiti’s black population who represent around 95% of the population. They have long been disadvantaged by the political and economic control of the 5% mixed-race and non-black elite since the country’s independence (Trouillot 145-146). Second, Duvalier came from a middle-class background and a large part of his social base included a growing class of middle-class professionals, artisans, and shop owners (Trouillot 153). Third, the Haitian army had been trained by the Marines during the U.S. Occupation who taught them how to implement violence and terrorism on a state level including torture and/or murder of government officials, physical violence against women, and limiting the freedom of the press (Trouillot 150-152). As a result of this training, the army became his most crucial tool to instill fear. Another important factor was the backing Duvalier received from the U.S. government. Bellegarde-Smith states that “a successful candidate for president would want to have U.S. support and be able to reassure the public that Haiti would continue to receive U.S. economic aid” (126). The U.S. turned a blind eye to the state terrorism in Haiti because Duvalier
had denounced the Cuban revolution. It is estimated that the U.S. gave Haiti $900 million during the Duvalier Regime (Bellegarde-Smith 132).

Since its independence, Haiti’s political structure has always been authoritarian in some shape or form. It was the use of senseless state terrorism on a wider range of innocent people that distinguishes the Duvaliers as more corrupt than previous administrations (Trouillot 164-166). Francois Duvalier created himself a personalized army, the Tonton Makout [the bogeymen], which consisted of officials loyal to him to carry out violence (see fig. 7; Trouillot 155). The Tonton Makout kidnapped and tortured children, women, and the elderly associated with male family members who opposed him. Rape was also used as a form of torture. (Trouillot 167-168). It is estimated that 20,000-50,000 people were murdered and one-fifth of the population, which included 80% of those working in professional jobs, moved abroad whether by force in exile or voluntary (Bellegarde-Smith 129).

When François Duvalier passed away, his son Baby Doc, succeeded him as president of Haiti on April 22, 1971. At the age of nineteen, he became the world’s youngest non-royal leader (Bellegarde-Smith 130). Under Baby Doc, the same levels of state terrorism persisted. However, unlike his father who sought to politically revolutionize Haiti, Baby Doc sought to economically revolutionize Haiti (Bellegarde-Smith 142). His revolutionary ideas further centralized the country’s wealth to the small elite class and further disadvantaged economic opportunity and means for the working-class majority (Trouillot 183). In 1970, Haiti’s trade deficit had been $12.4 million and by 1980, six years before Baby Doc was overruled, the deficit had grown to $183 million (Trouillot 211). Additionally, it is estimated that $900 million in US aid money that was given to the regime, entered the pockets of the Duvaliers and other Duvalierists without ever entering the local economy (Bellegarde-Smith 132; Trouillot 211).
Under Baby Doc, three main events occurred concurrently in the 1980s that further prompted an exodus of its people. First, the global spread of the AIDS pandemic rapidly shattered Haiti’s image. AIDS had spread rapidly in Haiti due to the lack of sexual education and that the health industry was ill-equipped to handle the spread of the virus amongst the then population of 7 million (Bellegarde-Smith 168-169). Due to this rapid spread, Haiti was stigmatized by the U.S. and other western countries as the origin of AIDS resulting in the collapse of the tourism industry (Bellegarde-Smith 168-169). The second event was the African Swine Fever that broke out in the Dominican Republic in 1981. USAID and US ambassadors feared its spread to Haiti and forced the Haitian government to eradicate its 1 million native black pigs. The Haitian Black Pig was extremely valuable among the rural population not only as a source of food but as a capital source (Bellegarde-Smith 207). The third significant event was that in the mid-1980s, the US government also forced Haiti to liberalize its agricultural sector. This liberalization led to the subsidization of Haitian sugar and rice resulting in a flood of cheap, American goods that undercut local Haitian farmers and forced them into dire poverty. Haiti became import-dependent on these commodities rather and was unable to produce enough for export and to sustain its population (Bellegarde-Smith 149).

The 1990s-2010s: Aristide, Coup’s d’état, and Natural Disasters

By the 1980s, anti-Duvalier movements had rapidly spread within the country as did Baby Doc’s popularity with the United States. They ordered him to step down and on February 7, 1986, Baby Doc left Haiti and lived in exile in France (Bellegarde-Smith 142). In the last half of the 80s, Haiti had gone through interim presidents. In the 1990 election, Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected as president of Haiti in what was described as a “free, fair, and honest”
Aristide, a priest born into the peasantry class, had gained social mobility through the church, and had “emerged as the conscience of the nation.” He had a socialist vision to transform Haiti by redistributing wealth to improve 90% of the population (Bellegarde-Smith 227, 235, 238-239). He faced many threats from the wealthy class, the middle class, the Church, the army, and foreign powers who had economic interests in Haiti: the U.S., the Dominican Republic, Canada, France, Venezuela (Bellegarde-Smith 238). In September 1991, the army overthrew Aristide in a coup d’état and was forced into exile in Venezuela. Fearful of oppression, 40,000 Haitians, escaped Haiti by boat and fled to the U.S. (Bellegarde-Smith 241-245).

After a few years of military rule and international outcry due to human rights abuses by the military, Aristide returned from exile and was reinstated in October 1994 to complete his term (Bellegarde-Smith et al 36). In 1995, Aristide abolished the Armed Forces of Haiti (Bellegarde-Smith 247-248). This raised the eyes of the Clinton Administration because, without an American-trained army, they would not be able to control Aristide and Haiti (Bellegarde-Smith 31). Aristide was elected president for a second term in the 2000 election. However, social unrest continued to become widespread due to the increasing poverty and the lack of democracy with the different political factions. In 2004, Aristide was overthrown by a rebel group in another coup d’état (Bellegarde-Smith 256; Bellegarde-Smith et al 35). As a result of the coup, the UN deployed peacekeepers on a mission, MINUSTAH- United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. Since 2004, MINUSTAH and other NGOs have been a permanent presence in the country, which has resulted in Haiti being seen as a “virtual trusteeship of the international community, which is itself serving US strategic interests” (Bellegarde-Smith et al 31, 33, 35).
Following the social and political unrest that spread rapidly in Haiti 1990s-2000s, the 2010s era was marked by natural disasters. On January 12, 2010, an earthquake of 7.0 struck Haiti. 250,000 people died in the earthquake, 300,000 people were injured, and 5 million people were displaced. It also severely decimated Haiti’s infrastructure, since many buildings were poorly constructed. Between 2010 to 2020, around $16 billion in international aid was given to Haiti to aid in reconstruction after the Hurricane (World Vision). Six years later, Hurricane Matthew hit Haiti on October 4, 2016. Designated as a category 4 hurricane, it resulted in 546 deaths, 2.1 million people severely harmed, and 1.4 million people requiring some form of humanitarian assistance (World Vision). Haiti, although filled with rich culture and history, has been living in a constant series of unfortunate events at the hands of the U.S. and France, which has plagued the country and has forced thousands of people abroad.
Guadeloupe Overview

The project examines the factors that contribute to the xenophobia Haitian people face when they intra-migrate in the Caribbean to Guadeloupe. A profile of Guadeloupe and a historical overview of Haitian migration to the island will serve as a brief introduction to the case studies (see fig. 8; see fig. 9).

Profile and Overview of Guadeloupe

Guadeloupe is a small archipelago in the Caribbean consisting of six inhabited islands and is situated between Antigua and Barbuda and British Montserrat to the north and Dominica to the south (Refworld). The current population of the island is 400,162 inhabitants. Most of its population is concentrated in its two principal islands are Grande-Terre and Basse-Terre (BBC). Furthermore, 40 percent of the population live in the economic capital of the archipelago which is Pointe-à-Pitre rather than the administrative capital of Basse-Terre where about 10 percent of the population lives (PAHO) Since the 1630s, Guadeloupe has remained a territory of France and is one of the oldest colonies in the world (García Muñiz 537). Guadalupe, together with Martinique, French Guiana, St. Barthélemy, St. Martin, and Haiti, makeup the Francophone Caribbean. Population-wise, the Francophone Caribbean makes up 22 percent of the entire Caribbean population (Barker 35).

During colonization, Guadeloupe became a site of sugar, coffee, and cacao plantations that depended on the exploitation of enslaved African labor (Palmié 146). France abolished slavery on May 27, 1848, and all who lived in the archipelago, whether black or mixed-race gained French citizenship (Paton 299). Between the 1890s and 1920s, movements were led in Guadeloupe by black and mixed-race deputies and senators to introduce bills into French
parliament requesting that the island be a full-fledged separate department of France. On March 19, 1946, Guadeloupe and Martinique became DOMs, départements d’outre-mer [overseas departments]. Guadeloupe’s status in France is similar to Puerto Rico’s status as a commonwealth of the United States. DOMs follow the same institutions and legal codes of the metropole. However, there can be differences in the legislation, meaning some law can strictly benefit France, so as a result, many legal disparities persist between the metropole and the DOMs (García Muñiz 540-541). Since becoming a department, Guadeloupe has been in constant cycles of déparlementalisation [departmentalization] to fit the constitutional systems of France " (García Muñiz 537, 541).

The present-day population of Guadeloupe is a mix of Black, European, Amerindian, and Indian ethnic groups (PAHO). It is estimated that 75 percent of the population is black and/or mixed race, 11 percent white, 9 percent East Indian, & 5 percent other. Economically, compared to France whose GDP per capita is $40,493, in Guadeloupe, GDP per capita is $25,479 (World Bank, Région Guadeloupe). Guadalupe’s economy heavily depends on mainland France and has “little opportunity to tap other Caribbean markets” due to the “low volume of trade in the Caribbean” (PAHO). Guadeloupe’s economy is also dependent on tourism, and the production and export of bananas, rum, and sugar (PAHO). Furthermore, Guadeloupe has a high unemployment rate of 23.5 percent compared to France that has an unemployment rate of 8.45 percent (PAHO; Fred).

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5 Metropole is a term used to describe and/or separate Mainland France from its overseas territories. (García Muñiz 540-541)
6 Départementalisation is the transformation and assimilation of France’s territories to becoming departments. (García Muñiz 537-541)
History of Haitian Migration to Guadeloupe

In Guadeloupe’s population of 400,162 people, around 4 percent of the population is foreign-born, and half of that foreign-born population is Haitian (PAHO). According to anthropologist Paul Brodwin, in 1999, it was estimated that around 24,000 Haitian people were living in Guadeloupe (16). According to James Ferguson in his report on “Migration in the Caribbean,” he estimated in 2003 there are around 15,000 Haitians in Guadeloupe (23,25). In a 2013 report on Guadeloupe’s migration profile completed by the DESA, Department of Economics and Social Affairs of the UN, it is estimated that around 15,063 Haitian people live on the island (DESA).

Of the 15,000 estimated Haitian people, 80 percent have legal residency and for the 20 percent who do not have it, “as non-citizens, they remain vulnerable to arrest and deportation under French immigration law” (Brodwin 16; Ferly 60). Only a small portion of these migrants were former professionals in Haiti that are fluent in French and Creole and can easily assimilate in Guadeloupe. The overwhelming majority of the Haitian immigrant population comes from the rural and urban under-class sectors of Haiti who are usually illiterate and do not speak any French (Ferly 60). This illiteracy is a result of Haiti’s lack of state investment in public education and the inaccessibility it creates by mandating course instruction only be taught in French which is a foreign language to the rural and urban working-class. Consequently, these class sectors are unable to achieve social mobility in Haiti and as a result, they are forced to migrate for better opportunities.

The first group of Haitian people, primarily Haitian men, arrived in Guadeloupe starting in the mid-1970s due to the violence of the Duavliers and the worsening economic deprivation and political recession (Brodwin 17-18). During that period, unemployment and the cost of
living had risen in Guadeloupe. When the Haitians arrived, they came as sugar cane cutters during a bitter unionization struggle in the sugar industry that was declining in Guadeloupe.

Unbeknownst to them:

Haitian men were used as strikebreakers by the owners of sugar plantations, and in 1975 they became the target of violent opposition (including lynch mobs) led by pro-union Guadeloupans. Although the violence was quickly quelled by progressive politicians and Catholic activists, it left an enduring image of Haitians as opportunistic foreigners opposed to the interest of the ordinary citizen of French Guadeloupe, while also making many Haitians reflexively distrustful of Guadeloupans (Brodwin 18).

Despite the strikebreaker incident, Haitian immigration continued to increase after the 1980s due to their willingness to do poorly paid agricultural work. There was also a greater surge of migrants that began to arrive in 2004 after the social and political unrest that followed Aristide’s second coup d’état (Ferly 60). In addition to agricultural workers, women and men who worked as small merchants and unskilled laborers in Haiti also began to arrive. Today, Haitian people can be found in Guadeloupe working as domestic helpers, gardeners, construction workers, unlicensed retailing/traveling vendors, cockfighting, and within the tourism industry (Brodwin 19; Ferly 61). Due to their residency status, social mobility is limited for them, and they are forced to remain in the informal and working-class sectors. Their status also makes them more vulnerable to being exploited or abused (Ferguson 26).
French Guiana Overview

As stated, this project will analyze the factors that influence Haitian immigrants who have been socially othered in French Guiana. This section will begin with a profile and overview of French Guiana. It will conclude with a historical overview of the arrival of Haitian immigrants into French Guiana (Fig. 10 and Fig.11).

Profile and Overview of French Guiana

French Guiana is located along the northern coast of South America and is bordered by Suriname and Brazil. French Guiana is the largest territory in the French Caribbean as it consists of 83,534 km² of land, of which 94 percent of it is covered by the Amazon Rainforest (PAHO). With a population of 300,843 people, French Guiana also has the lowest population density in the Caribbean of 3 people/km² (Worldometer; PAHO; Barker 35). 90 percent of the population lives along the coastline, mainly in the capital city of Cayenne since the majority of French Guiana is covered by the Amazon rainforest (Barker 35; PAHO). Although French Guiana is geographically located in South America, it is considered a part of the Caribbean because the Caribbean Basin refers to “the islands within and adjacent to the Caribbean Sea, as well as the coastal areas of South and Central America that share a common cultural and economic history” (Barker 26). The countries of Belize, Guyana, and Suriname also fit into the definition, because their culture and history are similar to the islands within the Caribbean than to that of their Spanish and Portuguese-speaking neighbors.

Like Guadeloupe, French Guiana has also been under French control since the 1630s (García Muñiz 537). After France’s tremendous loss of Haiti in 1804, the world’s richest sugar-producing capital, more focus was put on transporting more enslaved labor to French Guiana to
fuel sugar demands. For a brief period during the 1820s, French Guiana, Martinique, and Guadeloupe had produced more sugar than Haiti did at its height. However, they were unable to continue that by the end of the decade and instead turned to produce other commodities such as rice (Tomich 314). As a result of the abolition movements that started to spread across Europe, and the influence of the Haitian Revolution, enslaved people in French Guiana received emancipation and gained French citizenship on August 10, 1848, about two months after Guadeloupe did (Paton 299).

Citizenship gave black Guianese “rights, manhood suffrage, and elected representation in French parliament” (Macpherson 478). It also consolidated a black and mixed-race elite political elite that began to call for more autonomy from France in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Gaston Monnerville was the delegate from this black and mixed-race class of political elite, sent from French Guiana, who would represent the polity in the discussions for départemetalisation held in France during the 1940s (Macpherson 478). In March 1946, French Guiana achieved DOM status. The hopes that pro-departmentalists wanted with DOM status started to diminish as unemployment and decline in agriculture contrasted with the development of the metropole (Macpherson 479).

Demographically, present-day French Guiana is considered an ‘ethnic mosaic’ and one of the most diverse polities in the Caribbean (PAHO). The ethnic group breakdown is 66 percent Black and/or Mixed Race, 12 percent White, 4 percent East Indian, 4 percent Chinese, 4 percent indigenous, and 10 percent other (Britannica). Similar to Guadeloupe and the rest of French Antilles, French Guiana has a GDP per capita of $18,313 which is lower than France’s $40,493 per capita (PAHO; Population Data). The main exports are rose essence, gold, rum, and timber (Atlapedia). It also has a high unemployment rate of 21 percent (PAHO). As with the other
polities in the French Antilles, French Guiana’s problems, as a result of départementalisation, are the “overwhelming dependence on French imports, unemployment and underemployment, ... and a standard of living based on budgetary transfers from France” (Macpherson 480).

History of Haitian Migration to French Guiana

Among French Guiana’s melting pot of ethnic groups and cultures, one out of three people, or 38 percent, are foreign-born. The Surinamese, Haitians, and Brazilians are the largest foreign-born groups with Surinamese-born people representing 39 percent of the foreign-born population, Haitians representing 27 percent, and Brazilians representing 22 percent (PAHO). It is estimated that there are around 30,000-40,000 Haitian people presently living in French Guiana (Ferguson 23). Many Haitians in French Guiana compete for work with Surinamese and Brazilian migrants in the dangerous working conditions of the mining and logging industries (Ferguson 26). Besides a slightly higher standard of living and job opportunities, the main reason for French Guiana’s high immigrant population is that they are unable to enforce border protection along their land borders with Brazil and Suriname due to the vastness of the Amazon rainforest. As a result, many migrants who want to move to French Guiana without proper documentation, find it easier to cross through its borders with Suriname and Brazil (Ferguson 26).

The first wave of Haitian migrants arrived in French Guiana between 1963-1965. They primarily came from the rural communities of the southern departments of Haiti (Laëthier 84, Laëthier 232, Joseph 202). They traveled by boat with Lucien ‘Lili’ Ganot, a French landowner of an essential oil power plant in a village of southern Haiti. In the early 1960s, Ganot decided to develop a farm power plant in Cayenne, French Guiana and wanted to bring the 100 people that
worked at his plant with him to work for him (Laëthier 84, Joseph 2020). In 1963, he received authorization documents from both the Haitian and French governments to take the trip to French Guiana with his workers. This small group of Haitian workers came with permanent visas with no expiration dates and were, for the most part, well-received by the local population and Guianese General Council (Joseph 202-203). The number of Haitians from southern Haiti living in French Guiana had increased by the end of the 1970s due to the communal and familial networks of the original workers who came from southern Haiti (Laëthier 232). These networks explain why there is an overrepresentation of Haitians from Southern Haiti in French Guiana (Laëthier 84; Joseph 203). In the 1980s, the number of Haitians started to significantly increase due to economic crises in the country, and the Guianese’s need for larger workforces in their logging industries. These migrants also steered towards immigrating to French Guiana because American and Canadian governments started to close their borders and restrict the number of Haitians coming in due to the spread of the AIDS pandemic (Laëthier 85).

As France started to become more restrictive about immigration policies in the metropole, these policies started to translate over to the DOMs. In 1980, the number of Haitians in French Guiana started to decrease due to the new compulsory requirement of having an entry visa. As restrictive as this policy is, it only decreased the number of Haitians arriving in French Guiana directly from Haiti. Organized migration networks through Suriname started to form and it ensured entry into French Guiana (Laëthier 85, Laëthier 233).

The new ‘Surinamese route’ is followed by those who cannot obtain a passport, visa, or any of a number of other documents, for example, a written invitation by a relative who is already lawfully residing in French Guiana. They then resort to migration networks, also named filon ‘vein’ in Creole. Of course, there is another more legal filon for entry into
French Guiana: the migrant may buy a short-term visa mentioning the ‘French Departments of the Americas’ and then simply overstay. But the cost is very high. A cheaper alternative is the ‘Surinamese route’ with the rakêtè, the smugglers. These smugglers work with ‘agencies’ (ajans), networks of intermediaries who are distributed along the route. (Laëthier 233).

Up until the 2010s, this migration route allowed for a continued increase of Haitian migrants. However, French President Nicolas Sarkozy wanted to reduce this increase of Haitians. He requested that the Surinamese government tighten their visa requirements and reduce the amount given to Haitian migrants so that they could not enter French Guiana (Joseph 205). After the January 2010 earthquake, other networks to reach French Guiana started vis-à-vis the borders of Brazil, Columbia, and Peru (Audebert 61, Joseph 205).
**Case Studies:**

**The Trial of Ibo Simon**

The most notable instance of an anti-Haitian prejudice and xenophobia in Guadeloupe occurred in 2001 and it involved local musician and television personality Ibo Simon. Simon used his platform and television show to spew out his animosity towards the presence of Haitian people in Guadeloupe. He dehumanized Haitians by describing them as “scum, vermin and dogs” that needed to be removed from the island. Guadeloupe’s economic conditions have not been favorable to the residents of the island, so it became easy to have Haitian people serve as the scapegoat for “virtually every evil in their society.” Ibo Simon’s show provided Guadeloupeans the safe space for them to list their grievances with the ‘threat’ of the growing Haitian diaspora (Zacaïr 43-44). Many Guadeloupeans took his extermination rhetoric seriously and it led to the formation of anti-Haitian mobs. These mobs would verbally and physically harass Haitian street vendors. They would also go into neighborhoods of Pointe-à-Pitre where the Haitian community was present and attack Haitians in their houses (Zacaïr 42). Arsonists would go and set fire on local Haitian businesses (Zacaïr 42,44).

The Friends of Haiti organization sued Ibo Simon and he was arrested by authorities. His three-day trial at the court of justice in Pointe-à-Pitre began on September 5, 2001. The court charged him with “repeatedly calling for racist hatred and violence against Haitian immigrants and other Afro-Caribbeans residing in Guadeloupe” (Zacaïr 42, The Spark Newspaper 2001). The court ended up finding him guilty, ordered for the cancellation and the removal of his television show from the air, and banned him from ever hosting television shows on the island (Zacaïr 42). During his trial, about 3,000 Guadeloupeans gathered outside the court in support of him (Zacaïr 42). This support manifested to this level because Ibo Simon effectively turned the
attention of the poor against the foreign population instead of attacking the French government and entrepreneurs of the wealth class “who alone are responsible for the unemployment, misery, and exploitation which rages on the island” (The Spark Newspaper 2001).

**Family Separation and Detention of Haitian Students in Guadeloupe**

In Summer 2012, two Haitian fathers were arrested by the PAF, Police Aux Frontières [the French border police]. In the first case, a father was arrested and taken to the Morne Vergain Detention Center in Pointe-à-Pitre. The father had been living in Guadeloupe for thirteen years and had a three-year-old son who was of French nationality. On August 10, 2012, the Prefecture ordered his deportation which separated him from his son and sent him back to Haiti, where he had no remaining family ties left. On August 28, another father was arrested by the PAF while working at his job on a construction site for lacking residency papers. His arrest was considered illegal because he had a legally recognized French child whom he regularly took care of which granted him the right to reside in France and “therefore protects him from any deportation measure.” Despite this, his deportation to Haiti was ordered a few weeks later (La Cimade).

In May 2016, two high school students of Haitian origin in Pointe-à-Pitre were arrested by the PAF due to their inability to provide their *titre de séjours* [resident permits]. The parents of the two students had their legal residency papers but the students did not. As a result, the two students were subjected to a deportation order back to Haiti despite the fact all their family lived in Guadeloupe. Amid their trials, they were still required to study for their BAC exams so that they could earn their baccalauréat [baccalaureate diploma]. The principal of their school-provided support to the two students and emphasized that they were both hardworking students (Franceinfo 2016). With support from their principal and their lawyer, the Prefecture at Pointe-à-
Pitre granted the two students an exceptional order of admission which was to be reviewed after three months (Franceinfo 2016)

Guianese Views towards Haitian Immigrants in Ethnographic Research

In Marc Lony’s “Picking and Unpicking Time, Contextualizing Haitian Immigration in French Guiana,” he conducted interviews with Guianese individuals and Haitian immigrants based in Cayenne. In one interview with Mister Jacques, a Guianese civil servant, the different waves of Haitian migration to the island were detailed. As the number of Haitian people started to rise, Jacques said that the Guianese population started ostracizing them by saying “Haitian women were breaking up families, the men were idiots; the gardeners cut everything that grew, they pretended to be mental retards in order to be accepted or get what they wanted; they had AIDS, they were stealing Guianese land” (Lony 190). In school, he describes how Haitian children had a “particularly tough time” due to the ostracization they received from their pupils and teachers (Lony 190).

In another interview, Lony talked with a Haitian resident, Dieula, who moved to French Guiana in 1988 and became a naturalized French citizen. She describes how for the 20 years she has lived there; she has no time for leisure as she is always working from dawn to dusk. When describing the difficulty in housing for Haitian immigrants, she says almost all new immigrants live on a lakou, a courtyard that belongs to a Guianese person. On these lakous, a landlord constructs solid, small houses with the majority being poorly built, and then, they charge the immigrants rent (see fig. 12; see fig. 13). Although these simple houses are better than the ones

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7 Lakou is Haitian Creole for yard. It also refers to how in the countryside of Haiti, houses are organized into a lakou of homes for family members and neighbors. These lakous are mini communities where the people share kitchens, latrines, and cisterns. Most of the daily life in the lakous is organized by parents or elders (Laëthier 90).
in Haiti, they are not in nice areas of the city. For the Haitian migrants that can save up money, they build houses on vacant lots that they find because they want their houses to look like the ones of Guianese citizens. However, the process is not entirely legal. When landowners find out Haitians have built houses on their lands, they take it to court because “The Guianese are not happy about people taking their land, even if there is nothing built on it” (Lony 193). Once the authorities come to evict, she describes the process as a TV scene because “The police are there to oversee and the bulldozers destroy the houses. OK, it’s sad for the families, the kids cry, but that’s the way it is” (Lony 193).

In Maud Laëthier’s “Identifications and Kinships among Haitians in French Guiana: Observations on a Diaspora,” she describes how in the 1980s, as the Haitian population started to grow, many Guianese mayors in the communes of Cayenne started to blame Haitians for their social ills. With the help of local media and local political discourse, these mayors would spatially marginalize the Haitian presence by pointing out “the rural origins of the migrants, their lack of formal schooling and professional qualifications, their participation in the informal economy” (Laëthier 85). In present-day conversations about the Haitian community, Laëthier states that the Guianese people will “evoke their poverty, analphabetsim, ignorance, violence, and involvement with magic”. They also point out “the color of their skin is considered darker than that of Guianese Creoles.” Guianese residents also believe that Haitian people “fall prey to the magic of Vodou” (Laëthier 86). In addition to the religious-cultural clashes, there is also a linguistic class as Haitians speak creole, and many Guianese speak French (Laëthier 88). In many Guianese conversations, a common insult is to call Haitians a “haïchien” [Haitian dog], a world play of the French words for Haitian [Haitien] and dog [chien] (Laëthier 92).
**Detaining Haitian Students in Guianese Schools**

According to French law, all undocumented immigrants have access to French schools in their main state and overseas departments (BBC). In 2017, during a routine check, Evens Moreu, Diamelo Pascal, and Etienne Jackson were arrested by the PAF due to their inability to provide them their resident permits. These three students, all aged 20 at the time, had been living and attending schools in French Guiana for most of their childhood. Once they were arrested, they were prohibited from attending school, were ordered to stay home under house arrest, and had to report to the Gendarmerie twice a week (Franceinfo 2017). Moreu, Pascal, and Jackson were living under anguish due to the stress of being sent back to Haiti, a place they no longer considered to be home. Additionally, they also had to stress about having to study for their BAC exams to earn their baccalauréats in hopes of continuing with their education after this ordeal.

When speaking to reporters about their situations, the three students said

"*My family lives in Guyana, I no longer have a family in my country of origin,*" says Evens Moreau, a student in first professional baccalaureate. “If I have to leave the country, it stresses me out. I live in a situation which is not possible and I have to take my exams at the same time.” ... “At any time they can come to the establishment or to our home, to send us back to our country of origin, " confides anguished Diamelo Pascal. I want to work here, have a future and a family". "*My goal is to have my bac to continue in BTS*," adds Etienne Jackson, student of Terminale (Franceinfo 2017).

Fabien Tessariol, a delegator from the RESF, Réseau éducation sans frontières [Education without borders]- a French network that campaigns against the removal of foreign and

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undocumented children from French schools, spoke on their behalf to the Deputy Secretary-General managing their case at the Prefecture at Cayenne. After Tessariol’s interview and other delegations from the RESF, they were able to convince the government to re-examine their case and give them resident permits (Franceinfo 2017).

On September 13, 2018, Ernso “Enzo” Beljour, a 21-year-old student from lycée Anne-Marie Javouhey, a high school in Cayenne, was arrested by the PAF because he was not able to produce identity papers. The government subjected him to an OQTF, an Ordinance to Leave French Territory unless his identity could be proven because they were under the assumption that Enzo was an undocumented student. Enzo, who had arrived in French Guiana from Haiti in 2015, was born to a Haitian father who was a naturalized French citizen (Franceinfo 2018). Described as an excellent student, many of his classmates protested the OQTF (Franceinfo 2018). His lawyer, Maître Gay, was able to provide documents to the Prefecture proving Enzo’s French nationality. His father, Junior Beljour, became a naturalized French citizen in 1995, but when Enzo was born in 1997, he only declared it to the Haitian authorities. Since he did not declare Enzo’s birth to the French authorities so that he could also be legally recognized as French, it created an assumption that Enzo was only of Haitian nationality and did not have any legal French residency (Franceinfo 2018). With these documents, the court recognized Enzo’s French citizenship and stopped the OQTF. After spending 19 days in a Cayenne detention center, Enzo was released on October 1st and was able to resume his studies (Franceinfo 2018).
Anti-Blackness Analysis in the Trial of Ibo Simon and in Guianese Ethnographic Research

The commonality that arises out of the trial of Ibo Simon and French Guianese ethnographic research is the underlying anti-blackness that is present in both the Guadeloupean and Guianese communities. Anti-blackness in this case is marginalizing Haitian people as being close to Africans due to their culture, identity, and socioeconomic ills. Anti-Blackness in these cases will be broken down by the perception of Haitians as having AIDS and the stigmatization of Haitian Vodou.

The AIDS Stigma- The “Diseased” Haitians

As previously stated, when the AIDS pandemic was first discovered in the 1980s, the CDC of the United States labeled Haitian people as high-risk carriers of the disease. This label would greatly influence how Haiti’s neighbors in the Caribbean would perceive them. In both Guadeloupe and French Guiana, the synonymous stigmatization of Haitians and AIDS is present. In the case of French Guianese Ethnographic research, Haitians were ostracized as being carriers of AIDS to French Guiana. In the case of Ibo Simon in Guadeloupe, where his words influenced other Guadeloupean media hosts, Haitians started to be presented as a deadly threat coming from a disease-ridden world (Zacaïr 50).

The reason this stigma can be categorized as a form of anti-blackness is that “Haiti is directly affected by U.S. policies” (Accilien 159). Since the US is a dominant power in the western hemisphere, their historical and racialized social othering of Haiti influences how other Caribbean people interact with them (Austin 130). In the eyes of the United States, Haiti is diseased and helpless (Accilien 163). Additionally, as the knowledge of AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa has become globally widespread, the western imagination has also racialized Africa’s
AIDS problem. Their idea of AIDS in Africa is deeply embedded with racist notions about the black subject, a black person’s sexuality, and the association of diseases with black people in the white imagination (see fig. 14; Austin 130). Guadeloupeans and French Guianese view Haitians with greater proximity to Africa due to Haiti’s racial demographics, language, and culture. Due to Guadeloupe and French Guiana’s cultural proximity to the French imaginary, this proximity to African is seen negatively. So, when Guadeloupeans and Guianese fear Haitians as people that are spreading AIDS in their society, they are also upholding the Western assumption that every black body of Haiti and Africa is synonymous with being poor and diseased.

**Stigmatization of Vodou**

Haitian Vodou is a religion that survives as living proof of the many ways formerly enslaved people culturally and spiritually resisted slavery in the Caribbean. It is a syncretic religion and blends African spirituality and elements of Catholicism. Patrick Bellegarde-Smith describes Vodou as “a coherent and comprehensive belief system and world view in which every person and everything is sacred and must be treated accordingly. The cosmological unity of Vodou further translates into a vaunted African humanism” (see fig. 15; Bellegarde-Smith 24). However, the attitudes and misconceptions surrounding the religion of Haitian Vodou are often used “to marginalize expatriate Haitians throughout the Caribbean” because of its African roots. In the Caribbean, these afro-religious practices like Vodou are not seen as legitimate religions. Instead, it is seen as a primitive form of black magic that is both powerful and dangerous (Bellegarde-Smith 22; Zacaïr 47). Many people adhere to the view of Vodou being a form of paganism due to the US Occupation from 1915-1934 as American marines painted the religion as devil worship. In dictionary definitions of Vodou, it is also falsely described as “a body of
primitive rites and practices, based on a belief in sorcery and the power of charms, fetishes, etc.,
found among natives of the West Indies... of African origin.” Another misconstrued, racist
definition is that it is “a religion derived from African ancestor worship, practiced chiefly by
negroes of Haiti, and characterized by propitiatory rites and communication by trance with
animistic deities.” (Bellegarde-Smith 22-23).

In the case of Ibo Simon, he stigmatized Haitian Vodou to present Haitians as a threat to
“defenseless Guadeloupeans” due to their “satanic and machiavelic spells” that they can cast
against Guadeloupeans (Zacaïr 47-48). Additionally, as previously stated, French Guianese
described Haitians to scholar Maud Laëthier as people who “fall prey to the magic of Vodou”
(Laëthier 86). Both Guadeloupean and Guianese societies use misconceptions of Vodou to
stigmatize Haitians as magical and supernatural beings that they need to be wary of. It is a form
of anti-blackness because it presents Haitian Vodou as demonic due to a misconceived view that
this is a religion of black magic that takes people in as prey and influences them to participate in
the use of ‘satanic spells.’ Both cases show how Haitian Vodou is posited as primitive against
the image of their French culture and Christianity. Both societies are rejecting the roots of
African culture that is present in Haitian Vodou and are instead internalizing racist views of the
religion. They also fail to realize is that there is nothing wrong with practicing Vodou.
Furthermore, they are unaware that not all Haitians practice it as many of them also adhere to the
teachings of Catholicism and Protestantism due to Christian leaders and the mixed-race/non-
black elites in the country also painting Vodou as a form of paganism (Bellegarde-Smith 22-24).
**Analysis of State-Imposed Marginalization with Haitian Student Removal from Guadeloupean & Guianese Schools and Family Separation**

The cases involving the detention of Haitian high school students in Guadeloupe and French Guiana and family separation are examples of state-imposed marginalization of immigrants. This marginalization contributes to the image that Haitian migrants are committing illegal acts by coming into France without their required paperwork. This contributes to the dehumanization and criminalization of Haitian migrants and influences the ways that Guadeloupeans and Guianese believe that they should discriminate against them. This section will look at marginalization through the accessibility to residency and schooling, and through the family separation of Haitian families with detentions and deportations. I will analyze French laws and immigration control and their effect on the Anti-Haitian Immigration attitude in the Caribbean.

**Accessibility to Residency and Schooling for Non-Citizens of France**

Since Guadeloupeans and Guianese are overseas French citizens, their political and administrative structures, especially policies regarding immigration, mirrors that of mainland France (PAHO 324). French immigration law states that children of undocumented migrants who are under the age of 18 do not need to apply for a residence permit or a student visa (Lee). In both cases of Guadeloupe and French Guiana, the students were able to be detained because all of these students were over the age of 18. By reaching adulthood, the French government can find loopholes in the CESEDA Code (the Code on the Entry and Residence of Foreigners and Asylum) that was passed in 2004, so that they could deport these students despite them living in
French territories for many years (Defenseur Des Droits 6; Vickstorm). Although CESEDA grants all foreigners and asylum seekers the right to residence,

“There has been a trend towards making the residence of foreigners less secure. Whereas, in 1984, the legislature created the resident card as an ordinary law permit intended for all foreigners planning to live permanently in France, it has now become an exceptional permit that is issued upon successful completion of the integration process. Correspondingly, there has been an increase in the issuance of “temporary” residence permits that are valid for one year. However, the possession of such permits may hinder access by their holders to certain rights (employment, housing, etc.) and consequently, integration” (Defenseur Des Droits 6).

French lawmakers participate in the marginalization of immigrant populations by making it increasingly difficult for immigrants to legally obtain residency for children reaching young adulthood. In the case of the two high school students in Pointe-à-Pitre, because of laws allowing undocumented children to live in Guadeloupe without residency papers, only their parents were able to obtain residency papers. It was assistance from their lawyers that influenced the government to grant them a temporary residency permit. Similarly, this happened in the cases of Evens Moreu, Diamelo Pascal, and Etienne Jackson in French Guiana. It wasn’t until their representation from the RESF, Réseau éducation sans frontières [Education without borders] assisted these students to gain residency permits for French Guiana. Despite CESDA being created to consolidate residency for students like these, individuals who are reaching the age of adulthood “encounter difficulties in accessing the right to permanent residence” and “these difficulties compromise their inclusion pathway” (Defenseur Des Droits 7; Vickstorm). These
restrictions inhibit their ability to effectively integrate into society. Furthermore, immigrants that do not have fair access to legal permits create the image that they are committing an illegal act.

In both Guadeloupe and French Guiana, the right to access education for undocumented students is also examined. The 1946 French Constitution and the 1953 European Convention on Human Rights state that all children residing in France have the right to free education (BBC). All refers to any child from the ages of 6 to 16, regardless of their legal status in the country (Asylum in Europe; Lee). When the Haitian students in Guadeloupe and French Guiana were detained, they were required to stay in either house arrest or the local detention center with their access to school suddenly restricted. Although they were older than the age of 16, when education is compulsory for those in France, detaining and blocking them from school is an abuse of their natural right as a human to education regardless of their legal status. Through arrests and detentions, the PAF and French government create the image that undocumented youths do not have the right to a better life and education that is provided in France and its territories.

In both cases, state-imposed marginalization of immigrants towards residency and schooling creates an image amongst Guianese and Guadeloupeans that Haitians are to be feared and judged because they are committing a crime. The students were victimized for the sole reason of living in another place which is something that they had no control of. None of these students chose to leave Haiti by themselves. It was a decision their parents made in hopes that they could seek a better life for themselves in Guadeloupe or French Guiana, whether temporarily or permanently. Also, both cases examined the stress their legal status puts on these students as they had to fight for their right to stay in Guadeloupe and French Guiana while also studying for their exams to earn their baccalauréat diplomas.
Marginalization through Family Separation and Deportation

In 2019, former Prime Minister of France Édouard Philippe stated, “we have to take back control of our migration policy...Our will is to make choices in how we welcome [immigrants]” (France 24). This attitude is carried out in the DOMs by the PAF, Police Aux Frontières, in the form of family separation and deportation. To recap, in 2012, the Prefecture in Guadeloupe decided to deport two single Haitian fathers for lacking residency papers despite the fact they each had a child of French nationality. The two fathers were deported despite the fact they were living in Guadeloupe for many years and had no family left in Haiti besides their now French-born sons. Similarly, in French Guiana, in addition to the other cases involving Evens Moreu, Diamelo Pascal, and Etienne Jackson, 21-year-old student Enzo was almost deported despite having a Haitian father who was a naturalized French citizen.

Haitian Immigration to France took a left turn with France’s shift towards zero-tolerance immigration with the 1993 laws of Interior Minister Charles Pasqua. He tightened entry and residency access making it more difficult for immigrants to come. Concerning deportations, they were authorized “without judicial review on the broad grounds of threats to public order” (Brodwin 19). Once detained by the PAF and sentenced to deportation, migrants are denied the opportunity to their family and friends visiting them in jail (Brodwin 22). In the case of the two Guadeloupean fathers that were deported and the high school students in both Guadeloupe and French Guiana that were almost deported, the lack of residency papers made them appear as a threat to the public order due to their lack of legal identification documents. It is laws and actions like these that contribute to the xenophobia that they receive from the residents.

Deportation and family separation create the image that they need to be removed from society because they are perceived as threats to societal order. They are both inhumane forms of
immigration control. Despite this inhumane treatment, the DOMs continue these practices so that they can marginalize Haitian immigrants and deter them from coming and establishing residency. They also fail to consider the psychological effects that deportation has on the Haitian migrant and their family. The two fathers in Guadeloupe are returned to a country that they no longer refer to as home and their sons are permanently separated from their fathers and are forced to grow up without them. Similarly, the Haitian students in both Guadeloupe and French Guiana were almost separated from their parents and returned to a country where they no longer have a family. They all were hard-working students and wanted to succeed in their new homes and take advantage of the opportunities that were available to them in Guadeloupe and French Guiana.
Discussion: Caribbean Identity Formation and France’s Anti-Blackness in the Caribbean

Although the treatment of Haitian migrants by Guadeloupean and Guianese residents is very much rooted in the anti-blackness, it is also important to look at how they are also victims of anti-blackness at the face at the hands of France–their metropole. They view themselves as one-up from Haitians as French citizens, but the reality is that the white residents in the metropole are always one-up over them. This relationship that France has with its Caribbean DOMs and France’s relationship with Haiti has also influenced the xenophobia that Haitians face in Guadeloupe and French Guiana.

Guadeloupe & French Guiana: Identity Formation as Afro-Caribbeans and Second-Class Citizens of France

The black residents of Guadeloupe and French Guiana have belonged to France since the 1600s as they are descendants of enslaved subjects who became emancipated subjects, and later, as full French citizens in 1946. The Caribbean region is produced and reproduced by creolization—the blending of European, African, and Indigenous cultures. The impact of creolization on the Guadeloupean, Guianese, and other Afro-Caribbean identities has influenced the way they have othered themselves from Haitians. In his influential essay “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” British Jamaican cultural theorist Stuart Hall analyzes this production of cultural identity in the Caribbean. Hall states that cultural identity in the Caribbean can be looked at as “in terms of one, shared culture” being African and that this ancestry is within “superficially or artificially imposed selves” (Hall 223). However, he states that this African presence has been consistently reproduced and traumatized due to colonization. He states that because of these “ruptures and discontinuities,” he argues that “cultural identity...is a matter of ‘becoming’ as of
‘being’” (Hall 225). This second definition acknowledges the shared African ancestry, but it also acknowledges that due to colonization, the multitude of cultures—European, Indigenous, and African—have been forced to shape societies across the Caribbean making each island culturally different from one another (Hall 225).

When looking at Guadeloupean, Guianese, and Haitian identities, although they are the products of French colonialism, they have each developed differently. Haiti has been independent of France since 1804 while Guadeloupe and French Guiana have been colonies of France for over 400 years. As with Hall’s theory, anti-Haitian attitudes develop because they have culturally become more French from being reproduced longer by the racist French model. Their cultures have been injected with French products, media, education, and the French language; the 1946 departmentalization further exacerbated these norms (Brodwin 26-27). The French model also emphasizes the acknowledgment of the racial méstissage [mixture] of French, African, and Indigenous in their identity (Brodwin 26). They have culturally become so French-esque that they have lost elements of their past African cultures and creolized cultures.

When Guadeloupeans and the Guianese interact with Haitian people, in their view, “‘the Haitian’ represents ‘the stranger’” and “‘the Haitian’ plays a primordial role in the imaginary construction of ‘the Other’” (Laëthier 86). They feel that the Haitian culture and identity have a stronger African presence and are less creolized than them. Additionally, the French and the U.S. have always denounced that “what is Haitian is not worth keeping, and this mentality has characterized Western policy throughout the Caribbean and Third World nations in general” (Bellegarde-Smith 35-36). Although there have been movements for independence in Guadeloupe and French Guiana, they have never been successful because “the opponents of independence still invoke Haiti as the best reason to remain a French département” (Brodwin
They fear becoming painted in the media as impoverished and savages like Western media does with the Haitian people. The larger question becomes do Guadeloupeans and Guianese have their own cultural and national identity to achieve neocolonial liberation or is it easier for them to remain a part of the French model?

Despite Guadeloupeans and Guianese having the same rights as the residents living in the metropole, they have always been treated as second-class citizens and neo-colonial subjects due to the blackness of their skin. That can be seen in their levels of unemployment, GDP per capita, housing, and overall standard of living are significantly lower than France at all levels. In 2018, 14.1% of the metropolitan France population lived below the poverty line (The Africa Report). Meanwhile, in Guadeloupe and French Guiana, the poverty rates stand at 19% and 44% respectively (PAHO). It can also be seen in how Guadeloupe and French Guiana principally serve as vacation getaways for French citizens. More effort is put economically towards the tourism industries than to schools or employment (PAHO). The discrepancies in socioeconomic welfare “are the concrete consequence of stolen labor from generations of Africans and their descendants.” France chooses to overlook its participation in slavery and this attitude is represented in the treatment of the French Caribbean (The Africa Report). Although there have been instances where Guadeloupeans and Guianese have denounced France publicly for these socio-economic ills, their problems have more so “become important arguments to denounce the migrants’ presence” or in this case, the Haitian presence (Laëthier 84).

Their second-class treatment can also be seen in the unequal management of COVID-19 in both territories and the development of the Black Lives Matter [BLM] movement in summer 2020. Since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by WHO, more than 9,000 cases have been reported in Guadeloupe. The few hospitals in Guadeloupe lack resources, ventilators, and beds to
The limited number of medical staff is overwhelmed with their increased workload and frustrations with inadequate sources. The biggest hassle to fight the virus is the years-long water shortages that have affected the accessibility of water to the 400,000 plus residents on the archipelago (France 24). In a population with over 300,000 people, French Guiana has experienced over 12,000 cases since the outbreak of COVID-19 (WHO). Similarly, they also don’t have any access to water as the disparity in water to residents is greater in French Guiana. Healthcare is also very scarce in French Guiana. In 2016, for every 100,000 people, there were 55 general practitioners while in France, there were 104 per 100,000 people (Pedram). Mainland France has barely flown over the medical professionals, supplies, water, and to support the population in Guadeloupe and French Guiana in their fight against COVID-19. Without access to water and hand sanitizer, the residents are unable to engage in the most preventive measure of washing their hands to help mitigate the spread of the virus (France 24).

COVID-19 made Guadeloupeans and Guianese further invisible in the government of mainland France. As a response to George Floyd, a Black American father who was killed by Minneapolis police on May 25, 2020, residents of Guadeloupe and French Guiana participated in the global BLM protests to denounce the manner of his death. The protests also became a space for them to criticize the invisibility they feel as French citizens. In the first few weeks of June, hundreds of people in Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe showed up to denounce racism and called for the renaming of a street in George Floyd’s honor (see fig. 16; Franceinfo). In Cayenne, French Guiana, protesters came with a multitude of flags of French Guiana and large signs stating “Stop Killing Us” to also denounce police brutality and call for reparations from France for enslaving their ancestors (see fig. 17; Franceinfo). The BLM movement was heightened by France’s apathetic attitude during the COVID-19 pandemic which has resulted in the massive,
uncontrolled spread of the disease in both territories. The protests allowed Guadeloupeans and Guianese to condemn the historical racist and anti-black practices that exist in France as the movement coincided with the 172nd anniversary of the abolition of slavery in France’s territories in 1848 (Franceinfo).

The Relationship between France & Haiti

When examining the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs about the relationship between France and Haiti, it states that the two have “close ties of friendship and solidarity” (Diplomatie). It also states that their relationship has been strengthened politically over the 2010 decade by visits of high-profile politicians to Haiti including former French President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2010 and President François Hollande in 2015 and by Haiti’s current president Jovenel Moïse’s visit to France in 2017. Economically, trade between Haiti and France in 2018 stood at €72.7 million of which Haitian exports stood at €22 million (Diplomatie). Looking at these facts, it shows that the two indeed have a diplomatic relationship. However, historically, that relationship has not always been like that and is more primarily based on extortion and exploitation.

Haiti, which was called St. Domingue during its colonization, was the world’s richest colony (Bellegarde-Smith 6). The loss of it on January 1st, 1804, when Haiti declared itself independent cost France its most lucrative colony. France refused to recognize its independence. They only agreed to recognition in 1825 when Haiti agreed to pay an indemnity of 150 million Francs to compensate the former slave owners for their loss of property (Bellegarde-Smith 74). Haiti recently paid off the debt in 1947, which by then was twice the value of what the colonists’ claims were (The Africa Report). Haiti has demanded many times for retribution, but all French
presidents have “a history of punishing, skirting or downplaying Haitian demands for recompense” (The Africa Report). Haiti’s independence tax to France drained the Haitian treasury and is “directly responsible not only for the underfunding of education in 20th-century Haiti, but also lack of health care and the country’s inability to develop public infrastructure” (The Africa Report).

It is questionable for France’s Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs to describe their relationship as one of close friends because I look at it as a relationship based on colonial legacy. Out of the 216 years, Haiti has been an independent country, Sarkozy and Hollande are the only French presidents that have ever visited Haiti. From an economic standpoint, France’s exports to Haiti are larger than that of Haiti’s to France. Furthermore, while France grew richer, Haiti’s indemnity stunted its ability to economically prosper. Socially, France marginalizes Haitian immigrants in the metropole and its Caribbean territories. France also continues to deny its history and deny the consequences of slavery. This denial is seen in the present-day racial wealth gap between France and that of Haiti, Guadeloupe, and French Guiana (The Africa Report). France’s relationship with Haiti is always going to be that of anti-blackness because that is how Haiti was established. So no, Haiti and France are not close friends but rather diplomatic because of power struggles and that France has always been in the place of dominance and exploitation (see fig. 18).
Discussion: Haitian Diaspora Communities Amid Xenophobia

Despite the consistent mistreatment and resistance, they have faced from the host societies they migrate to, Haitians have also developed a sense of community within their diaspora in Guadeloupe and French Guiana. In Guadeloupe, scholar Paul Brodwin observes how Haitians have formed a community in Guadeloupe through Pentecostalism and forming Haitian Pentecostal churches. These churches are registered at the Préfecture and all the pastors are documented residents of Guadeloupe. For undocumented Haitian immigrants, “these congregations offer the only formal institutional affiliation available to undocumented migrants” (Brodwin 21). They also provide a safe all-Haitian space where they can speak Haitian creole freely and interact with others about finding jobs, friends, and marriage partners. Most importantly, these churches are usually transnational meaning they have Haitian congregations in other areas of the Caribbean so these networks and connections offer “a low-cost and trustworthy conduit to circulate money, cassette tapes, and letters between dispersed friends and families and hence to maintain transnational linkages” (Brodwin 22). Haitians in Guadeloupe also created a community for themselves by forming a benevolent association in 2012 called Lakay Concept to connect the Haitians living on the island.9 In 2018, Lakay Concept hosted the “Haitian Cultural Week in Pointe-à-Pitre” from May 14th to 19th to coincide with the celebration of Haitian flag day on May 18th. This celebration held at a museum showcased the paintings and sculptures by Haitian artists, Haitian gastronomy such as Soup Joumou–pumpkin soup traditionally eaten on Independence Day and held evenings of cultural programming (see fig. 19; see fig. 20; Kariculture).

Similarly, in French Guiana, the Haitians form communities in the lakous they have

9 Lakay means home or house in Haitian Creole so in English this organization translates to ‘home concept.’
constructed in and out of Cayenne. These lakous are communal dwellings where different Haitian families reside, and these families produce solidarity through mutual aid and assistance. The socialization is organized by “daily cooperation, loans, and the exchange of work” and the functionality of the living space is organized “around the social utility of respect, sharing the same codes, complicity, and familial and affective links” (Laëthier 89-90). Haitians in French Guiana have also created a well-attended feast of their Haitian Flag Day. In a celebration of the holiday that took place in May 2017 at a Cayenne exhibition hall, Haitians and Guianese were able to watch a documentary on the history of Haiti. Afterward, there was an exhibition of Haitian art and crafts, music, and gastronomy. The Haitian community was able to play traditional folklore music while dressed in African prints that pay homage to the colors of the Haitian flag. They were also able to eat some of their staple meats, rice, bean sauces, and desserts (see fig. 21; see fig. 22; FranceInfo). Haitians in French Guiana also maintain their sense of community by passing down the value of education to their children. As a result, their children perform equally as well or better than the Guianese children (Lony 190). This can be seen in the cases of the students who were almost detained– Evens Moreu, Diamelo Pascal, Etienne Jackson, and Enzo– as their representatives argued that they were hardworking students who simply wanted the opportunity to learn and do better for themselves and their family. The diasporic communities in both Guadeloupe and French Guiana strive to maintain aspects of their culture and their identity.
**Conclusion:**

Haiti’s ability to perform effectively as a state is a multifaceted issue. It is the product of colonization, imperialism, societal class divisions, authoritarian governments, and natural disasters. Haitian people migrate not because they want to but because Haiti no longer provides the population opportunities and means of survival. No Haitian wants to migrate to a place where they are not wanted. They do it because they have no other options. However, the new societies that they migrate to, Guadeloupe and French Guiana, do not understand this. They fail to offer compassion and empathy to the political and economic situation. Instead, they choose to look at Haiti through the same lens the United States and France do without realizing the implications by doing this. Their violence and fear towards the Haitians are a result of internalized anti-blackness, French neocolonialism, and identity formation as Afro-Caribbeans.

The key to dismantling anti-Haitianism in the Caribbean region and reducing migration in the Caribbean, particularly Haitian migration, is decolonization. Guadeloupe and French Guiana are no better than the other Caribbean islands because they have a higher standard of living. Each French Caribbean territory is more comfortable remaining a colony of France than becoming independent. Through its involvement in Haiti’s impoverishment, France has ensured its residents in the Caribbean that it’s better to be French than to be poor like Haiti. With this racist conditioning that they receive from France, it provides some context on why Guadeloupeans and Guianese act the way that they do in the presence of Haitians. Instead of working to decolonize their narratives about Haiti, French hegemony has caused them to be both the victim and the perpetrator of anti-blackness and anti-Haitianism.

The larger question that arises out of all this is decolonization possible in the Caribbean? Haiti gained independence from France in 1804. It had the resources to become an economically
and politically successful county. Racism, however, kept Haiti from reaching its true potential. 216 years later, Haitian descendants are now seeking refuge in France through its overseas territories. It’s a tragic irony that is not just unique to Haiti but to every island in the Caribbean that is now independent. For example, Jamaica gained independence from England in 1962, yet hundreds of thousands of Jamaicans have immigrated to England since then in search of a better life. All the islands in the Caribbean remain shackled to their former colonizers in one way or another and this shackle erodes their ability to function as independent states.
Appendix

Fig. 1. Map of Caribbean Basin. Haiti is centered on the map (yellow) next to the Dominican Republic (orange). The island of Guadeloupe (yellow) in the southeast area of the map above Dominica (green). Source: Info Please, 1997.

Fig. 2. Map of Haiti. Source: Greece Maps, September 2017.
Fig. 3. Map of Southeast Caribbean Basin & South America. French Guiana in the southeast corner (brown with a red star) bordered by Suriname (pink) and Brazil (yellow). Guadeloupe in the northern center of the map (purple with a red star). Source: Sutori, 2020.

Fig. 4. Map of a Haitian migrant’s route to French Guiana. Source: Wiley Online Library, June 2018.
Fig. 5. U.S. Marines in Haiti during the U.S. Occupation of 1915-1934. Source: The Washington Post, July 2015.

Fig. 6. Papa Doc (François Duvalier) and Baby Doc (Jean-Claude Duvalier). The father-and-son duo who ran Haiti for almost twenty-nine years, from 1957 until 1986. Source: The Economist, October 2014.

Fig. 7. Image of Tonton Makouts in Haiti during Papa Doc’s Dictatorship. The Tonton Makouts were Papa Doc’s personalized army used to carry out violence against his dissenters. Source: Tumblr, October 2016.
Fig. 8. Map of the Lesser Antilles. Source: Britannica, September 2017.

Fig. 9. Map of Guadeloupe. Source: Maps Open Source, 2020.

Fig. 10. Map of French Guiana’s Position in South America. Source: Britannica, November 2020.
**Fig. 11.** Map of French Guiana. Source: *Lonely Planet*, 2020.

**Fig. 12.** Diagram of formation of Lakous in French Guiana and Haiti. Source: *Research Gate*, July 2017.

**Fig. 13.** Picture of Lakou made of twigs and branches in Rural Haiti. Source: *Instagram*, September 2018.
Fig. 14. AIDS Awareness March in Haiti. Source: *AIDS Health*, 2016.

Fig. 15. Haitian Vodou Ceremony. Source: *L’Express*, December 2016
**Fig. 16.** Rue George Floyd, a road dedicated to George Floyd in Guadeloupe and the surrounding Black Lives Matter protest in Guadeloupe. Source: *France Info*, June 2020.

**Fig. 17.** Black Lives Matter protest in French Guiana. Source: *France Info*, June 2020.

**Fig. 18.** A sticker in Haiti of the modern equivalent $21 billion that Haiti paid to France for recognition of their independence from 1825 to 1947. This sticker demands for France’s repayment of the independence debt. Source: *Wikipedia*, 2020.
Fig. 19. Haitian Flag and Art for the celebration of Haitian Flag Day in Guadeloupe. Source: Kariculture, May 2018.

Fig. 20. Haitian Art for the celebration of Haitian Flag Day in Guadeloupe. Source: Kariculture, May 2018.

Fig. 21. Haitians dressed in African print for the celebration of Haitian Flag Day in French Guiana. Source: France Info, May 2017.
Fig. 22. Haitian food at the celebration of Haitian Flag Day in French Guiana. Source: France Info, May 2017.
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