

VODOU AND THE U.S. COUNTERCULTURE

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ABSTRACT

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Considering the function of Vodou as subversive force against political, economic, social, and cultural injustice throughout the history of Haiti as well as the frequent transcultural exchange between the island nation and the U.S., this project applies an interpretative approach in order to examine how the contextualization of Haiti's folk religion in the three most widespread forms of American popular culture texts – film, music, and literature – has ideologically informed the U.S. counterculture and its rebellious struggle for change between the turbulent era of the mid-1950s and the early 1970s.

This particular period of the twentieth century is not only crucial to study since it presents the continuing conflict between the dominant white heteronormative society and subjugated minority cultures but, more importantly, because the Enlightenment's libertarian ideal of individual freedom finally encouraged non-conformists of diverse backgrounds such as gender, race, and sexuality to take a collective stance against oppression. At the same time, it is important to stress that the cultural production of these popular texts emerged from and within the conditions of American culture rather than the native context of Haiti. Hence, Vodou in these American popular texts is subject to cultural appropriation, a paradigm that is broadly defined as the use of cultural practices and objects by members of another culture.

One form of cultural appropriation is cultural exploitation, a concept that is central to the chapter on film and manifests itself as a mode of misrepresentation.

Following in the wake of the early twentieth century, when the U.S. occupation of Haiti denounced Vodou as violent anti-white cult and widespread media frenzy in America sought to demonize the Nation of Islam by relating it to the distorted version of Haiti's folk religion, Hollywood perpetuated Vodou's disrepute to an extent that it can be read as a means to further denigrate growing black resistance to white oppression after World War II. In order to divert from its racist undertone and justify the maintenance of ostensibly oppressive white supremacy, films like *Voodoo Tiger*, *Voodoo Woman*, and *Macumba Love* are not only symbolic of demonizing black resistance as chaotic and random violence but also suggestive of portraying whites as victims of black aggression.

Unlike film, music and literature appropriated Vodou in order to ideologically support the revolutionary course of the U.S. counterculture. Music had a particular impact on the three New Left currents black liberation, feminism, gay rights activism, and their interconnectedness insofar as Vodou in the lyrics of songs such as "Voodoo Voodoo" and "Voodoo Man," "Voodoo Eyes" suggests different gender, sexual, and racial hierarchies. Vodou in U.S. literature such as Reed's postmodern novel *Mumbo Jumbo*, by comparison, disseminates ideologies that are emblematic of buttressing the anti-imperial discourse of the peace movement during the Vietnam War. These ideologies, for instance, suggest mediating between two oppositional sides in order to balance out conflict and are thus significant of resonating with liberal activists who traveled to Southeast Asia in order to negotiate between the U.S. and North Vietnam.

For mom, dad, and Mo

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of Haiti, its folk religion Vodou has repeatedly served as a bulwark of freedom against external and internal powers of oppression. When the Spanish ceded the western third of Santo Domingo to France at the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697, the French renamed it Saint Domingue and turned their newly acquired territory into one of their most profitable colonies. In order to maximize their profits, the colonizers stole Africans and exploited them as slaves. Apart from exposing them to malnutrition, poor housing, and long hours, French slaveholders made concerted efforts to fully strip bondsmen of their African heritage in general and African Vodou in particular since they feared that their native religion provides them with the means to secretly coordinate revolts. In order to prevent potential insurgencies, slaveholders sought to replace African Vodou with French catechism, as this, they thought, allows them to maintain control over their slaves. Their plan, however, failed. Bondsmen managed to retain their African belief under the disguise of Catholicism and were thus able to use coded language and rituals as a mode to incite an upheaval after all. This act of rebellion manifested itself most prominently in 1791. That summer, Vodou not only functioned as communicative vehicle within a secret network across the ethnically diverse slave population but also spiritually empowered the rebels to successfully fight their tormentors. Over the course of the next nine years, the slave upheaval morphed into a large-scale revolution, which gave birth to Haiti, the first independent black republic in the Western hemisphere. Yet, instead of celebrating Vodou for its central contribution to freedom, Haiti's ruling elite perpetuated its demonization, as it "knew all too well the danger and power of slave discontent as well as the potent force of Vodou ritual" (Murrell 63).

This biased sentiment changed, however, throughout the first half of the twentieth century. At this time, occupying U.S. marines sought to subjugate Haiti's masses to their exploitative

system. Nationalist intellectuals of the ethnological and literary movement came to realize this foreign threat. Reminiscing the revolutionary legacy of Haitian Vodou during the struggle for independence, they rehabilitated it in order to revive the Haitians' African identity against white foreign oppression. Yet, when Duvalier, as one of the founding members of the nationalist movement, took over the reign as autocrat under the false pretense as president, he changed his approach and used Vodou as a tool of intimidation with the objective to bend the masses' will in favor of his dictatorship. In response, cultural middle-class critics such as Haitian musicians resorted to the revolutionary legacy of Vodou in order to address and mobilize the masses against the dictator's coercive class politics. Over the course of time, apart from Duvalier's individual abuse of Haiti's folk religion, Vodou cultivated a reputation as subversive force against political, economic, social, and cultural injustice, points of contention that equally resonate with the U.S. counterculture and its struggle for change. Considering the frequent transmigration as well as the transcultural exchange between these two neighboring nations throughout the Haitian Diaspora, this dissertation will examine how the contextualization of Haiti's folk religion in the three most widespread forms of American popular culture texts – film, music, and literature – has informed the various counterculture currents between the mid-1950s and the early 1970s.

This particular period of the twentieth century is not only crucial to study since it presents the continuing rift between the dominant white heteronormative society and subjugated minority cultures but, more importantly, because the Enlightenment's libertarian ideal of individual freedom finally encouraged non-conformists of diverse backgrounds such as gender, race, and sexuality to develop "a growing sense of collective responsibility to end war, poverty, and injustice" (Goffman and Joy 247). Since Vodou has united Haiti's masses in order to achieve the same goals, it is compelling to analyze how the folk religion in film, music, and literature influenced the various counterculture movements, whereas it is important to stress that the impact is not fac-

tually but ideologically situated and therefore suggestive as well as interpretative rather than assertive. That is, the dissertation will investigate what views these popular culture texts create through the use of Vodou and how these perspectives mirror the tenets of the various counterculture currents. Chapter 1 will show how the racist misrepresentation of Vodou practitioners as savages in adventure/horror films between the early 1950s and 1960 ideologically demonized the rise of black resistance to white oppression by portraying blacks as anti-white. Conversely, these films render whites victims of black aggression in order to further consolidate the cry for racial apartheid at this time. Chapter 2 will analyze how Vodou in popular music between the end of the 1950s and the end of the 1960s ideologically influenced the New Left and its diverse movements such as black liberation, feminism, and gay liberation as well as the currents' mutual impact in terms of race, gender, and sexuality. The last chapter examines the ideological intersection between Vodou in U.S. literature of the 1970s and the agenda of the anti-Vietnam War movement. Since Vodou encouraged both militant as well as cultural revolutions, it informed producers of cultural texts such as musicians, liberal activists, and radical pacifists alike.

Historically, Vodou originated in the West African kingdom of Dahomey and translates into "spirit." While its religious structure was purely based on African traditions prior to the arrival of European colonizers, it changed significantly after the invaders enslaved Africans and took them to the New World. Upon its arrival at the shore of Saint Domingue, French slaveholders vehemently tried to eradicate and replace it with Christianity. Instead of relinquishing their religious tradition, slaves continued practicing it under the guise of Catholicism. This does not mean, however, Vodou coexisted and was thus practiced separately from Christianity; rather, over time, Vodou mingled with Catholicism and consequently turned into a form of religious syncretism.¹ Against the expectations of French slaveholders, Vodou adherents benefited from the hybridization, as they were granted access to "two beliefs systems, two modes of functioning,

two worldviews [...] for the divine and a never-ending search for a better life for followers and devotees” (Michel 28).² Thus, as opposed to the widely held Western belief of Vodou as pagan cult and black magic, the religion of African descent is a “way of life and a mode of survival” (Michel 27).

Pivotal to survival is Vodou’s potency to heal various maladies, ranging from historical sufferings to contemporary socio-economic misfortunes. Although the Haitian Revolution eventually terminated the horrors of slavery under French colonial rule and heralded independence, the peasant population continued to suffer from extreme hunger and high mortality rates as a consequence of economic and environmental exploitation, largely heralded by succeeding generations of brutal and corrupt dictatorships over the course of approximately two centuries. In order to withstand these economic, medical, and socio-political maladies, the poor and oppressed have invoked Vodou spirits, or *lwa*, for spiritual guidance and salvation. In return, the spirits require a sacrifice “as simple as lighting a candle before the image of a spirit” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 11) for solving minor problems, while more profound and far-reaching requests for help necessitate “an elaborated and expensive feast for several spirits, which would include dancing, drumming, and animal sacrifice” (2006: 11).

Both Vodou priest, or *houngan*, and priestess, or *manbo*, conduct such ceremonial rituals, which take place within the vicinity of a temple, or *ounfo*, by “organiz[ing] the various liturgies, prepare practitioners for initiation, offer individual consultations for clients in need of divination or spiritual advice, and use his or her own knowledge of herbs to prescribe and prepare remedies to improve health or potions, ‘packages,’ or bottles to bring luck or ensure protection” (Fernández Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 121). Unlike the hierarchy within the Catholic Church, Vodou “is not a system imposed from above; it is a democratic and functional religion” (Michel 28).

This has at least three implications, which are relevant for the scope of this dissertation: first, the

democratic structure allows both men and women to assume the role of a spiritual leader; second, both priest and priestess are autonomous and self-sufficient within their congregation; and third, their authority “is limited to those who voluntarily submit to initiation in their ownfo and is dependent on individuals’ trust in the oungan or manbo possessing the gift of second sight” (Fernández Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 122).

The *lwa* in Haitian Vodou, which constitute the center of spiritual attention and therefore receive the lion’s share of resources and energy, are different from their West African progenitors inasmuch as they address problems arising in the Caribbean. One of the most prominent examples of redefinition is Ogou. While the spirit takes on the task as “patron of metalsmithing, hunting, and warfare” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 17) in Africa, the *lwa* “came to be understood exclusively as a warrior in Haiti” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 17) due to the recurring necessity of resistance to oppressive forces throughout the nation’s history. By the same token, their grouping into several nations, or *nanchò*, such as Kongo, Ibo, Wangol, Nago, Rada and Petro, as they are known in West Africa, have been synthesized into the two latter in Haitian Vodou. Considered as “fundamentally different, even oppositional” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 17), the Rada pantheon hosts the “‘sweet’ spirits [which] are served with sweet food and drink” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 18), while the Petro *lwa* “are characterized as ‘hot’ spirits [whose] possession performance often play at the border of violence and destructiveness” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 18).

Each of the two main pantheons accommodates a number of spirits, whose characteristics match the definition of the Rada and the Petro, respectively, while most of these spirits exist in both pantheons. The most important *lwa* is Legba, a spirit of the Rada pantheon. He is the master and gatekeeper of the crossroads between the physical and metaphysical world. Since he clears the way for other spirits to possess devotees, he must be summoned before any other spirit. Failure to show him respect can result in the deprivation of protection. Visually, he is represented as

an old man with a crutch and a knapsack, who wears rags and smokes a pipe. Another Rada *lwa* is Èzili Freda. Defined as “goddess of love and luxury, a flirtatious light-skinned Creole known as the personification of feminine beauty and grace” (Fernández Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 129), the female spirit turns both male and female possessed into coquettish and sensual devotees. Her visual representation finds expression in the Catholic chromolithograph of Mater Dolorosa. Damballah Wédos, in contrast, is the patriarchal serpent spirit, whose benevolence renders him one of the most popular spirits among believers. Apart from lightning and wisdom, he evokes rain. Hence, adherents usually offer him a permanent water container such as a basin or sink in their *ounfo*. Once possessed by him, devotees “dart out their tongues, snakelike, crawl on the ground with sinuous movements, climb trees of the posts of the peristil, and have been known to land head down from the rafters like snakes” (Fernández Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 127). His visual representation varies between “Saint Patrick crushing the serpents of Ireland underfoot” (Fernández Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 127) and “patriarchal Moses holding the Ten Commandments” (Fernández Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 127-128).

The spirit Ogou, by comparison, has not only undergone a retransformation, as mentioned above, but is also one of those *lwa* that exists *andezo*, or in both pantheons. The dual affiliation ties in with the spirit’s numerous manifestations, in which the deity “plays across the full range of the constructive and destructive uses of power and aggression” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 18). While the former applies to Ogou’s manifestation as politician Ogou Panama and drunkard Ogou Yamson, both the general Ogou Fèray and the heroic soldier Ogou Badagri exemplify the latter. Since devotees conceive the military manifestations, the dominant form of appearance in Haitian Vodou, “in the guise of an old veteran of the ‘time of bayonets’ (the civil wars)” (Métraux 109), they usually represent him “by a saber stuck in the earth in front of the altar” (Fernández Olmos

and Paravisini-Gebert 131). Devotees possessed by him wear red, generally scarves wrapped around head and arms, and wield a sword-like cutting tool such as a machete.

Like Ogou, the Gede has several manifestations, which serve different purposes. To some adherents, the spirit lives in the cemetery from which he regulates the spiritual traffic between the metaphysical and the physical plane and thus constitutes the family of Legba. These manifestations are known as Bawon Samdi, Bawon Simityè or Bawon Lakwa. To others, he symbolizes sexual prowess and fertility, whereas his sexual orientation is ambivalent, that is, it varies between homosexuality and heterosexuality. As trickster spirits, a third manifestation, the Gede “could be a source of laughter and joviality as well as humor in bad taste” (Murrell 78). This, for instance, comes to the fore when the deity oscillates between satirizing and refusing to respect table manners. The categorization of these three spirits is important insofar as they assume a central role in the various primary texts throughout the dissertation.

As with Haitian Vodou, the U.S. counterculture between post-World War II and the 1970s challenged oppression and injustice on a political, economic, and social level due to its definition as “a subversive subculture that opposes dominant values and seeks to replace them” (Brym and Lie 90). It is important to note, however, that the U.S. counterculture did not consist of one but several movements such as the integrationists of the Civil Rights movement, separatists of the Black Nationalist movement, feminists and gay liberationists of various racial and ethnic backgrounds as well as the liberal and radical pacifists of the predominantly white male anti-Vietnam War movement.

Inspired by the struggle for freedom and the restoration of democracy in Nazi Germany, African Americans desired the same rights in their home country. Soon, however, they realized that the freedom to eat in a restaurant of their choice or live in an attractive neighborhood was reserved for white people only. In response to continuous discrimination, blacks in America stood

up for their basic democratic rights and conducted a twofold but disparate approach: the liberal civil rights activists sought equal integration into the larger democratic society, while radical black nationalists envisioned a society in which African Americans would live in their own nation and thus separately from the oppressive directives of whites.

When the Supreme Court landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) outlawed racially segregated schools, the decision invigorated civil rights activists to expand their demands to other realms of the public sphere. In 1955, for instance, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white patron on an autobus. Her refusal sparked a bus boycott that drew international attention until the Supreme Court annulled the segregation ordinance in 1957. That year, Martin Luther King, Jr., a young black Baptist minister from Atlanta, established the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), a nation-wide network of black clergy. Along with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), founded in 1911, the SCLC was the major driving forces behind the Civil Rights movement. The main premise of SCLC was to turn a combination of non-violence, Christian love, and the U.S. constitution into a peaceful tool of protest against racial apartheid in Jim Crow South. Despite their efforts, campaigns of civil disobedience made only slow progress, as white violence was trying to secure status quo. The election of President John F. Kennedy in tandem with the U.S. administration's special emphasis on overcoming deeply embedded social injustices led to a fresh impetus for the Civil Rights movement. This manifested itself most prominently when four black students at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College in Greensboro followed in the footsteps of Rosa Parks and refused to give up their seats at a whites-only lunch counter. In doing so, they triggered a wave of non-violent student protests under the umbrella of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which found particular expression in sit-ins across the South. One year later, in 1961, the interracial Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) organized Freedom Rides into the

South. These protest bus rides were meant “to test the enforcement of desegregation status” (Gosse, *The Movements* 8). The outcome of this test was, however, alarming inasmuch as the Freedom Riders “were met by organized violence in Alabama, where police permitted mobs to firebomb buses and physically attack Freedom Riders” (Gosse, *The Movements* 8).

After the Civil Rights movement temporarily lost momentum between 1960 and 1962, activists resumed their agenda in 1963 when King and others led hundreds of thousands of African Americans into the South. Police Commissioner Eugene “Bull” Connor of Birmingham, Alabama, did not, however, tolerate the arrival of black demonstrators and resorted to police brutality and mass incarcerations in order to keep them from achieving their goals. And even though Kennedy urged the nation to respect the Civil Rights movement, racism remained beyond Birmingham and white violence found another victim with the murder of Medgar Evers, NAACP’s field secretary in Mississippi. In response to the on-going segregation, King along with a quarter of a million people, whites and blacks, marched to Washington, D.C., where he delivered his famous speech “I Have a Dream” in order to inform the nation of black people’s plight. Despite King’s speech, results were limited. Discrimination continued in the South and also comprised the living conditions of African Americans in the North where the white middle-class fled to the suburbs and left blacks with the disastrous repercussions of urban decay.³ In spite of ups and downs, the persistence of civil rights activists eventually came to fruition, as it forced Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act in 1964, a law “which received bipartisan support and banned discrimination based on race, ethnicity, and national origin in all public accommodations and employment” (Gosse, *The Movements* 11). Only one year later, black activists recorded another major victory when Congress echoed the language of the Fifteenth Amendment and passed the Voting Rights Act, which outlawed discriminatory voting practices.

The simultaneously occurring Black Nationalist movement, on the contrary, did not believe in the call for integration, as it feared that the white majority would never allow blacks to gain full political, economic, and social equality, and therefore advocated separatism. At the forefront was the Nation of Islam, the probably most prominent and long-standing black Muslim organization. Founded by Wallace D. Fard in 1930, it evolved from a white supremacist society, whose racist ideologies not only denied African Americans the right to adequate education, employment, and housing but also encouraged whites to publicly humiliate and even kill blacks with impunity. The Nation, as it was referred to, challenged racism by claiming that blacks were the image of God and whites embodied the devil. Driven by this conviction and witnessing the seemingly unstoppable white cruelty against blacks, Malcolm X, whom Fard's successor Elijah Muhammad appointed as his chief minister in 1954, argued that African Americans should establish their own black nation in tandem with institutions that would meet their needs. According to Malcolm X in his 1964 speech "The Ballot or the Bullet," this goal was supposed to happen "by any means necessary." Malcolm X's famous statement included the possibility of violence as mode of self-defense, and thus he "spoke to those who were growing more disenchanted with King's message of integration and nonviolence" (Ogbar 21). After Malcolm X became increasingly disillusioned with Muhammad repeatedly committing adultery, he broke with the Nation in 1964 and founded the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU), a pan-African network for the advancement of black human rights on a global basis. Unfortunately, Malcolm X was assassinated only one year later and therefore did not have sufficient time to see his course flourish.

His legacy, however, inspired succeeding generations of black nationalists. Against its initial rhetoric of non-violence, SNCC came to understand its limitations. While co-founder Stokely Carmichael rejected the use of weapons until 1965, he performed a volte-face and began to embrace militancy in the fashion of Malcolm X later that year. Yet it was not until the March

Against Fear in 1966 that Carmichael popularized the term “Black Power.” As an affirmation of black militancy, the notion not only encouraged blacks to build a united front against white supremacy but also suggested “a call for black people to begin to define their own goals, to lead their own organizations and to support those organizations” (qtd. in Ogbar 75). Similar to the Nation of Islam, Carmichael’s cry for Black Power considered violence as a mode of self-defense, whereas this philosophy was primarily directed at African Americans in parts of the country other than Jim Crow South. For instance, one target audience were blacks in Oakland where “black unemployment rate was more than four times the national average” (Ogbar 78) and “blacks were confronted with police brutality they had little recourse besides filing lawsuits in white courts with white judges, juries, and lawyers, who were often apathetic to complaints of police brutality in black communities” (Ogbar 78). One prominent group that challenged racism in Oakland was the Black Panther Party.

Founded in 1966 by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, was a Marxist organization that served the black community by providing the poor with free medical treatment as well as food and protected them from police violence. As followers of Frantz Fanon, a Martinique-born French-Algerian revolutionary who insisted that the colonized has to oppose the colonizer in order to free himself/herself from psychological and physical oppression, Newton and Seale argued that the police occupy black communities and therefore have to be met with physical resistance in order to free those who suffered from their racist terror. In order to avoid harassment, Black Panthers policed the police. Yet the police did not tolerate being monitored and went after the Black Panthers directly. In late October 1967, two Oakland police officers stopped Newton’s car after the Black Panther’s one-year anniversary party. When officer John Frey instructed Newton to leave his car, an argument broke out and both sides opened fire. Newton mortally wounded officer Frey, whereupon a court charged the Black Panther leader with

manslaughter and sentenced him to life in prison. In response to his verdict, black nationalist leaders such as Carmichael declared his solidarity with Newton and a large “Free Huey” campaign turned him into an icon of revolution. Locking up Newton did not, however, weaken the movement; in fact, “membership rolls of the party expanded precipitously in the summer of 1968” (Ogbar 89). Two years later, the Black Panthers recorded close to five thousand members, spread over twenty states.

While groups such as the Black Panthers sought racial justice, feminists and gay liberation activists advocated gender and sexual equality within the New Left. By the beginning of the 1960s, men still deprived women of their independence and subjugated them to domestic roles such as mothers, wives or mistresses. This changed, however, when Betty Friedan published her seminal *The Feminist Mystique* (1963) in which she “articulated a new brand of rights-oriented feminism just as the civil rights movement peaked” (Gosse, *The Movements* 15). Inspired by Friedan’s writings, feminists such Michigan congresswoman Martha Griffith pushed for the Civil Rights Act “to include the elimination of gender-based discrimination in employment” (Gosse, *The Movements* 15). Congress reacted to her request and added Title VII to the bill, which not only challenged discrimination against women in the workplace but also in higher education and sports. In 1966, women no longer wanted to depend on the benevolence of male policymakers but demanded their own organizations to exert pressure on the government. The outcome was the National Organization for Women (NOW). By 1968, the Feminist movement developed into a full-fledged mass movement of resistance to patriarchy and male supremacy, which manifested itself in 1970 when NOW organized the first nation-wide protest for abortion rights, gender equality in employment as well as education, and free day care for their children. Later organizations such as the Women’s Political Caucus or the Women’s Equity Action League targeted violence against women and pushed legal authorities to prosecute assaults such as rape and wife-

battering like any other crime instead of considering it a “domestic issue.” By and large, the Feminist movement was successful, even though internal discrepancies fragmented its revolutionary course.

One major internal rift was the exclusion of black women from the dominant white feminist discourse since white women feared that black women would impede their struggle due to their extended minority status. As opposed to white women, black women were at the “intersection of oppressive structures” (Roth 77); that is, they not only had to wrestle with racial, ethnic, and class biases but also lacked sufficient resources. Consequently, they were forced to conduct their own liberation movement. Their effort to free themselves from male oppression arose from the ideology of Black Liberation. This ideology supported masculinism of black male revolutionaries such as Carmichael and deprecated the subversive potential of black women. According to Roth, “the truly ‘revolutionary’ Black woman was a supportive one, who kept house while the Black man kept revolution” (84). Furthermore, black men interfered in their reproductive rights by demanding women to stop using birth control. In return, black feminists founded The Black Women’s Liberation Group of Mount Vernon and New Rochelle, New York, a joint organization, which first addressed the suffering of black women. Emerging from the Civil Rights movement, Mount Vernon women such as co-founder and leader Patricia Robinson attacked the rigid gender roles in general and the denial of birth control in particular. In “Statement of Birth Control,” Robinson and her co-authors, black women who were personally affected by inequality and therefore wrote from first-hand experience, “criticized middle-class Black militants for irresponsibly advocating that poor Black women dispense with using birth control” (Roth 89). A second black Feminist group, which grew out of the subversive climate of the Civil Rights movement, was the Third World Women’s Alliance. Working in the anti-imperial and pan-African fashion of SNCC, Third World Women’s Alliance feminists expanded their struggle for liberation to women

of color all around the world. Primarily, the Alliance “was adamant in their insistence that Black militant men were being ‘white’ and middle class when they enforced middle-class gender roles and expected Black women to be ‘breeders’ for the revolution” (Roth 91). Both organizations existed until the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, respectively. Throughout their struggle for equality and social justice, they “incorporated fierce critiques of the injuries caused to women of color by intersecting systems of domination, capitalism among them” (Roth 93).

Equally important but less visible was the Gay Liberation movement and its fight for sexual freedom and equality in an inherently homophobic society. As opposed to Europe, which generated homophile organizations since the late nineteenth century, gay rights activism in the U.S. did not come into effect until Harry Hay founded the Mattachine Society in 1950 and Dorothy Louise Taliaferro "Del" Martin along with Phyllis Ann Lyon formed the lesbian rights organization Daughters of Bilitis in 1955. And even then, apart from rallying for more respectability, both organizations were not strong enough to counter prevalent homophobia in general and violent assaults such as police raids in particular. This changed, however, in 1969 when police harassed homosexual men at the gay bar Stonewall Inn in New York’s Greenwich Village, whereupon a quickly growing crowd of patrons and sympathizers physically resisted their tormentors. Inspired by their courage, gay men all across the nation realized that they no longer had to tolerate homophobia and founded the Gay Liberation Front as well as the Gay Activists Alliance. While the first elevated the acceptance of homosexuality from the private to the public sphere, the latter took it one step further and politicized it by “applying the technique of the ‘zap,’ breaking into public events to embarrass liberal New York City mayor John Lindsay and other officials with shouted demands for equal rights” (Gosse, *The Movements* 33). In the wake of growing gay liberation activism, homosexual men no longer had to fear homophobia as much as they did be-

fore and therefore proudly opened businesses and celebrated their long-suppressed sexual identity in public.

Another current within the New Left at this time was the anti-Vietnam War movement. Evolving from the nuclear arms race during the Cold War in the immediate aftermath of World War II, protest waves assumed a more concrete form in 1965 when the U.S. sent combat troops to Vietnam. Myriad casualties on both sides the U.S. and North Vietnam including the National Liberation Front, or Viet Cong, the North's communist peasant ally in the South, coalesced several groups from different backgrounds such as student protesters and clerics into one large anti-imperial peace movement. As such, it unitarily pushed for the withdrawal of American soldiers and ultimately demanded the end of the war in Southeast Asia. According to Gosse, "the most rapid growth came on college campuses, as Students for a Democratic Society mushroomed from five thousand members in 1965 to tens of thousands by 1968" (*The Movements* 17). Instead of merely campaigning domestically, Tom Hayden, co-founder of SDS, and other intellectuals also traveled to North Vietnamese in order to mediate and negotiate between both sides. Simultaneously, a network of draft resisters burned their draft cards in order to demonstrate their anti-war sentiment and even encouraged others to follow their course, despite the possibility to face a prison charge.

The anti-war protesters realized the need to push harder and to conduct a different approach in order to make their opinion known to the U.S. administration. In 1968, the anarchist Youth International Party, or Yippies, led by Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, resorted to militancy and disrupted the Democratic National Convention in Chicago after party chiefs announced the nomination of pro-war Hubert Humphrey as vice president. In reaction to their militancy, Chicago mayor Richard Daley ordered his police force to suppress the Yippie rally. The discrepancies between liberal politicians and anti-Vietnam war protesters secured the presidency of Re-

publican Richard Nixon, who sought “‘peace with honor’” (Gosse, *The Movements* 23) as well as “‘law and order’” (Gosse, *The Movements* 23). The implementation of both goals, however, required Nixon to prolong the conflict, which met massive opposition among the anti-war protesters. In 1969, millions of citizens supported the Moratorium, followed by a march on Washington, D.C. where approximately half a million demonstrators convened for the largest anti-war rally to this day. Instead of putting an end to the lost cause in Vietnam, Nixon expanded its military strategy to neighboring Cambodia from where he hoped to infiltrate the Viet Cong. His decision sparked a protest wave across university campuses in the U.S. When three hundred colleges canceled classes and students rallied, the National Guard in Ohio used excessive violence and shot four defenseless participants on Kent State campus. Two days later, Mississippi state police killed two more students on the campus of the all-black Jackson State University. As a result of government-sanctioned violence, militant groups such as the Weathermen, the radical wing of SDS, attacked military facilities in order to weaken the government’s war apparatus from within. In 1973, Nixon finally came to understand that the war was gridlocked and therefore not only began to negotiate peace but also withdrew the last remaining troops from Vietnam. While the U.S. had to accept a defeat on every level possible, the North unified Vietnam by subordinating the South to its communist government.

The struggle for political, economic, and social change of these various movements resonates with the rebellious history of Haiti’s folk religion. Hence, by the means of an interpretative approach, this dissertation will analyze what revolutionary ideologies American films, popular songs and literature on Vodou disseminate and how these perspectives encourage or discourage the revolutionary tenets of the U.S. counterculture. Since Vodou in these three texts emerged from and within the conditions of American culture rather than the native context of Haiti, their incorporation of Vodou is not identical with the folk religion’s application in Haitian cultural

productions and therefore subject to cultural appropriation. Broadly defined as “the use of a culture’s symbols, artifacts, genres, rituals, or technology by members of another culture” (Rogers 474), the notion of cultural appropriation “is inescapable when cultures come into contact, including virtual and representational contact” (Rogers 474) and thus serves as ideal theoretical framework for analyzing the use of Haitian Vodou in American popular culture. Let alone the legal dilemma of cultural appropriation, which does not fall into the scope of this project, the active process of what Rogers casually refers to as “making one’s own” (Rogers 476) entails “varying functions and outcomes” (Rogers 476), depending on the respective type of cultural appropriation.

According to Roger’s typology of cultural appropriation, two out of four categories qualify for the existing examination of how U.S. popular culture texts utilize Haitian Vodou: cultural exploitation and transculturation. Defined as “the appropriation of elements of a subordinated culture by a dominant culture without substantive reciprocity, permission, and/or compensation” (Rogers 477), cultural exploitation “has most commonly been used to reference acts in which aspects of marginalized/colonized cultures are taken and used by a dominant/colonizing culture in such a way as to serve the interests of the dominant [discourse]” (Rogers 486). Benefiting the dominant discourse, in turn, manifests itself in “the connotation of stealing or of in some way using the culture of a subordinated group against them” (Rogers 486). This paradigmatic concept applies to the chapter on film inasmuch as predominantly white Hollywood during the 1950s and 1960s perpetuated the racist misrepresentation of Vodou as savagery and anti-white cult at the beginning of the twentieth century in order to ideologically denigrate the rise of black resistance to racial oppression in the aftermath of World War II.

The second category, transculturation, defined as “cultural elements created from and/or by multiple cultures” (Rogers 477), generates cultural hybrids. As opposed to cultural exploita-

tion, which involves “the existence of distinct cultures” (Rogers 491), that is, the dominant and the subordinate, transculturation involves cultures whose boundaries are “multiple, shifting, and overlapping” (Rogers 491). This logic qualifies for the analysis of U.S. popular music and its appropriation of Vodou insofar as the culture industry and the on-going refugee wave of Marxist musicians from Haiti to the U.S. during Duvalier’s oppressive regime brought Vodou with them and infused the American music scene with the revolutionary function of the folk religion. At the same time, the imported Vodou mingles with already existing local cultural forms. As a result, Vodou in U.S. popular music is a combination of both Haitian Vodou and, as I will argue later on, Hoodoo, a Southern African American magic folk tradition, which developed from Haitian Vodou.

A third form of cultural appropriation, which Rogers does not suggest as a separate category, is the postmodern literary technique of pastiche. Rather than deploying innovation and originality, pastiche recycles pre-existing works, whereas it is not a one-to-one copy or forgery, Margaret A. Rose insists, but an accentuation of distinct features of the artifact, Ihab Hassan stresses. If several works are recycled, pastiche not only juxtaposes but also merges them, similar to a collage in visual arts, which frames an overlap and interconnectedness of several single elements. The literary method of pastiche serves for the discussion on how U.S. literature appropriates Vodou inasmuch as Ishmael Reed, the postmodern author who drew most extensively on Haiti’s folk religion at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, not only followed in the footsteps of Haitian men of letters and adopted the revolutionary folk religion in his writings but also merged it with Hoodoo, a hybridization that he calls Neo-HooDoo. Taken together, Haitian Vodou materializes as both individual religion and component of Neo-HooDoo.

Over the course of time, much has been written on both Haitian Vodou and the U.S. counterculture. In terms of historical scholarship, most accounts revolve around the Haitian Revolu-

tion and the central role of Vodou. As one of the earlier works, Thomas Ott's *The Haitian Revolution, 1789-1804* (1973) argues that Boukman Dutty, a fugitive slave from Jamaica, "used the deep roots of voodoo among the slaves as a communications system to organize rebellion" (47). Patrick Bellegard-Smith coincides with Ott in 1990 and even argues that Boukman Dutty conducted a Vodou ceremony, which "was attended by 200 people and led to the general insurrection of August 22" (40). In later scholarship such *Haitian Revolutionary Studies* (2002), David Patrick Geggus questions previous works insofar as he claims, "there is no evidence of it" (77) but, at the same time, admits that Vodou's pivotal contribution to the revolution "sounds likely" (77). Approximately two centuries later, when Haitians once again fought for nationalism and political sovereignty during the occupation by U.S. marines, Vodou re-emerged as revolutionary vehicle among the masses. In the very recently published *The Spirits and the Law: Vodou and Power in Haiti* (2011), particularly in the chapter "Penalizing Vodou and Promoting "Voodoo" in U.S.-Occupied Haiti, 1915 – 1934," Kate Ramsey delineates how marines sought to demonize and outlaw the folk religion, as they came to realize its subversive potential and role as motivator for the peasant *cacos* rebellion against their imperial invasion.

Anthropological scholarship dates back to the time immediately following the withdrawal of U.S. marines in the 1930s. Melville J. Herskovits's *Life in a Haitian Valley* (1937) refutes the popular misbelief of Vodou as bloodthirsty pagan cult and offers an extensive study on the true nature of the folk religion. According to Herskovits, the first who did away with its misrepresentation, "'Voodoo'," or *vodun*, as it will be termed here, following native pronunciation, is a complex of African belief and ritual governing in large measure the religious life of the Haitian peasantry" (139). Numerous seminal works followed. Zora Neale Hurston's *Tell My Horse* (1938), for instance, complements Herskovits's findings, while Alfred Métraux's *Voodoo in Haiti* (1959) focuses particularly on Vodou's metaphysical background, ceremonial rituals as well as its close

relation to sorcery. The spiritual world of Vodou is exactly what Maya Deren further analysis in *Divine Horsemen: Voodoo Gods of Haiti* (1970). In tandem with a profound examination of various pantheons and affiliated spirits, the anthropologist investigates the role of Vodou clergy, rites, and ceremonial music. As opposed to Deren, who explores the function of music in Vodou, Gage Averill and Elizabeth McAlister examine the role of Vodou in folk and popular music. In *A Day for the Hunter, A Day for the Prey: Popular Music and Power in Haiti* (1997), Averill focuses on diverse genres of Haitian popular music such as Vodou-jazz, *konpa*, and *mini-djaz* and how these forms interact with the politics of both Duvalier dictatorship generations during social movements such as carnivals. The study of street festivals is also pivotal to McAlister's *Rara! Vodou, Power, and Performance in Haiti and its Diaspora* (2002). In her ethnography on *rara*, defined as "the yearly festival in Haiti that [...] belongs to the so-called peasant class and the urban poor" (2002: 3), the religious scholar analyzes how large groups of disenfranchised roaming around the streets of Haiti, challenge the rich, and negotiate power by "conjur[ing] up nightmares about mass uprising" (McAlister 2002: 4).

Likewise, the U.S. counterculture has been covered in numerous historio-political works. Beginning with contemporary studies such as Yinger's strictly sociological essay "Contraculture and Subculture" (1960), which wrestles with the definition of counterculture, and Theodore Roszak's *The Making of A Counterculture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition* (1969), which is the first account to popularize the term, works post-1970s study the various currents of the era in particular. Van Gosse, for instance, provides a concise overview of the different movements and their contact points in *The Movements of the New Left, 1950 – 1975*. James E. Perone and Christopher Gair, by comparison, offer a cultural examination of the counterculture. In *Music of the Counterculture Era* (2004), Perone exclusively looks at

music and how it supported the various currents. Gair's *The American Counterculture* (2007) extends his approach beyond music and additionally embraces literature, film, and visual arts.

On top of that, scholars have written book-length accounts in which they elaborate on the various movements in depths. In *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* (2004), Ogbar discusses how blackness is created through and within the black liberation movement. The notion of liberation is also central to a variety of studies on black feminism. For instance, in *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* (2004), Benita Roth not only problematizes the difficult struggle of women of color against patriarchalism but also interjects white feminism and investigates where they mutually influenced each other. *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (1987), written by former SDS leader Todd Gitlin and thus from a first-hand perspective, delineates the genealogy of predominantly white male organizations such as SDS and more radical factions such as the Yippies as well as their subversive agenda against domestic and foreign U.S. policy, the latter particularly in relation to the Vietnam War. DeBenedetti and Chatfield equally address the anti-Vietnam War movement in their ample *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (1990). As opposed to Gitlin, both authors map the complexity of the anti-Vietnam War movement by tracing it back to the construction of the peace movement in the 1950s Cold War era to its demise in the 1970s.

While a few works such as Charles Murray's *Crosstown Traffic: Jimi Hendrix and the Post-War Rock 'n' Roll Revolution* (1989) and Reginald Martin's seminal *Ishmael Reed and the New Black Aesthetic Critics* (1988) have analyzed Vodou in the music of Jimi Hendrix and the postmodern literature of Ishmael Reed, respectively, none of them has shown how the subversive nature of Haiti's folk religion has ideologically informed the socio-politically agenda of the U.S. counterculture, let alone Vodou in less prominent songs and films in general. Organized around

three chapters and chronologically along the release dates of the various primary texts, my dissertation will fill in this scholarly void by merging the scholarship on Vodou and the U.S. counter-culture.

CHAPTER I.

CINEMATIC VODOU AND THE RISE OF BLACK RESISTANCE

On the night of August 14, 1791, Boukman Dutty, a fugitive slave from Jamaica, conducted a Vodou ceremony and summoned deities in order to seek spiritual strength and guidance for the imminent slave rebellion in the former French colony St. Domingue. The revolt claimed the lives of thousands of whites and mulattos but freed blacks from French slavery and secured Haiti's independence in 1804. Only a few years after the Haitian Revolution was over, the success of the insurgency inspired slave revolts in the neighboring U.S. In 1811, for example, Haitian native and refugee Charles Deslondes led the German Coast Uprising.⁴ The racist slaveholding population in the U.S began to publicly denounce the relative success of the various insurgencies by associating it with the same "black magic" that once spurred French slaves to victoriously overcome racial oppression in Haiti two decades earlier: Vodou.

Vodou and its disrepute as pagan cult continued permeating phases of black resistance to white racial oppression during the mid-twentieth century. Essentially, there were two main currents in the U.S.: on the one hand, liberal civil rights activists such as Martin Luther King, Jr. applied nonviolent tactics like bus boycotts and sit-ins in order to create what the legendary Baptist minister himself referred to as a "'beloved community,' in which diverse peoples could come together and live in harmony" (Strain 2). On the other hand, radical black nationalists questioned the effectiveness of nonviolent idealism and therefore followed the "traditional American ideals to strike back at those who kept swinging at them, or shoot back at those who kept shooting at them" (Strain 2). One of the most prominent black nationalists, who advocated the constitutional right to bear arms for self-defense, was Malcolm X, chief minister with the Nation of Islam. Even though Vodou and the Nation "are located at opposite ends of the religious spectrum in terms of

their attitude to divinity and the nature of religious practice” (Jenkins 112-113), commonly held beliefs falsely associated the latter with the former, whereas it was not the complex and sophisticated belief system of Haitian Vodou but a distorted media commonplace. This incorrect relationship is rooted in the 1930s when popular media declared autonomous black religions such as the Nation as “voodoo-related, with all that implied about primitive violence and orgiastic sexuality” (Jenkins 113) and even the prestigious *American Journal of Sociology* erroneously linked it to the Western imagination of Haiti’s religion in its 1938 published essay “The Voodoo Cult Among Negro Migrants in Detroit.” In regard to the 1930s media frenzy of discredit, this chapter will examine how Vodou in Hollywood productions between the early 1950s and mid-1960s denigrated the Nation and other currents of black resistance in the U.S during this turbulent era.

The origin of Vodou’s misrepresentation in Western film dates back to the U.S. occupation of Haiti between 1915 and 1934. At this time the prevailing racist ideology persuaded U.S. marines that the successful resistance against Western hegemony must be attributed to black magic. It was W.H. Seabrook’s travelogue and pseudo-anthropological study *The Magic Island* (1929) that introduced Vodou as an evil cult and the zombie as a returning undead slave to the America public in the twentieth century.⁵ Hollywood exploited the success of Seabrook’s colonial novel as an inspirational source and began to perpetuate the popular misconception of Vodou as diabolic and cannibalistic cult with Victor Halperlin’s film *White Zombie* (1932). In the years that followed, Vodou-themed films became popular and those released during the mid-twentieth century, specifically *Voodoo Tiger* (1952), *Voodoo Woman* (1957), and *Macumba Love* (1960), portray blacks as religiously and politically violent against innocent whites.⁶

Voodoo Tiger, directed by Spencer Gordon Bennet, tells the story of British Museum researcher and writer Phyllis Bruce (Jean Byron) who hires the famous white hunter Jungle Jim (Johnny Weissmuller) in order to help her find an elusive tiger in Africa. While searching for the

tiger, Jungle Jim learns about a plane crash from Commissioner Kingston (Richard Kipling) who charges the white hunter with the lead of a search party. On their quest for the tiger and the possible plane crash survivors, Jungle Jim, Phyllis, and the rest of the safari encounter a bloodthirsty black Vodou tribe in Crescent Valley, or Vodou country, who is eager to sacrifice the white safari crew members to their tiger god Tambura.

Voodoo Woman, directed by Edward L. Cahn, follows a similar plotline. Instead of going on a rescue mission, Marilyn Blanchard (Maria English) and her fiancé Ricky Brady (Lance Fuller), led by their white guide Ted Bronson (Touch Connors), go treasure hunting in the Vodou country, where they hope to find the gold of the native Vodou tribe. Meanwhile, Dr. Roland Gerard (Tom Conway) experiments with Vodou and Western science in order to develop a method that converts human beings into a half-human, half-monster. On their way to the village in the Vodou country, members of the tribe capture Marilyn and Ted. While Marilyn is soon to become the tribe's Vodou priestess with the help of Dr. Gerard, the Vodou tribe intends to sacrifice Ted and the scientist's white wife, Susan (Mary Ellen Kaye).

As opposed to these two action adventures, *Macumba Love*, directed by Douglas V. Fowley, relates Vodou to various mysterious deaths on a tropical island. When the non-native islander Venus de Viasa (Ziva Rodann) and famous American author J. Peter Wells (Walter Reed) discover a corpse with a long hatpin pierced through the body, Wells believes it to be the outcome of one of the local Vodou ceremonies. By investigating the presumed relation between the series of mysterious deaths and Haiti's religion, he discovers that the black Vodou priestess Mama Rataloy (Ruth De Souza) murders non-believers. Even though J. Peter emerges as a skeptic, she does not dare seek his life; instead, she wreaks vengeance on his son-in-law Warren (William Wellman, Jr.) by intending to sacrifice him during a nocturnal Vodou ceremony.

Hollywood's racist misrepresentation of black bodies and Haiti's peasant religion in the aforementioned films remained largely unchallenged due to the marginalization of commercial African American filmmakers and distributors as well as black independent cinema. Even though blacks "weighed as a market" (Cripps 255), Hollywood's only prominent contribution to racial diversity at this time is what Cripps refers to as "token Negroes" (250). The two most outstanding "token Negroes" were Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier. While Hollywood decided to exclude Belafonte in a long run since his "edgy intensity did not commend itself to conscience-liberals in search of riskfree formulaic reprises of battles already fought," it promoted the career of Poitier since his "performance persona lent itself to a gentle politics of the center" (Cripps 251). Other than Poitier's influence as an actor, African Americans did not have much of a stake in the political economy of Hollywood "until 1963 when Herbert Hill [...] went to Hollywood to resume Walter White's campaign" (Cripps 262). White's campaign aimed at aggressively negotiating labor conditions for blacks in the film industry. Until then and even beyond the outcome of Hill's campaign, whites largely determined production and distribution of commercial films in Hollywood.⁷ And, to make matters worse, black independent films, "defined as any feature-length fiction film whose central focus is the Afro-American community [...] written, directed, and produced by Afro-Americans and people of African ancestry who reside in the United States" (Reid 4), did not gain full prominence until the 1970s (King 4). Consequently, the racist politics of white-dominated Hollywood prevailed between the early 1950s and mid-1960s.

Considering the lack of commercial black cinema and the marginalization of black independent productions as antipodes to Hollywood's institutionalized racism during this era, the commercial film industry was able to demonize Vodou without major opposition. Instead of fundamentally fabricating Vodou, the makers of these films drew on already existing cultural practices and objects of Haiti's peasant religion, a rhetoric that Richard A. Rogers identifies as "cul-

tural exploitation” (486). Cultural exploitation, defined as “the appropriation of elements of a subordinated culture by a dominant culture in which the subordinated culture is treated as resource to be ‘mined’ and ‘shipped home’ for consumption” (Rogers 486), proves highly useful to the dominant culture such as Hollywood’s film industry, as it benefits from the theft by collecting revenues and by disseminating ideologies of white supremacy. Subordinated cultures such as Vodou suffer from consequent “cultural degradation” (Ziff and Rao 9), which is damaging insofar as it has “corrosive effects on the integrity of an exploited culture because the appropriative conduct can erroneously depict the heritage from which it is drawn” (Ziff and Rao 9). By misrepresenting the religion of the Haitian peasantry, the institutionalized racism of Hollywood’s film industry did not merely distort the cultural reality of Vodou but also utilized the misconstrued reality as a mode to decry the rise of black struggle for racial freedom and equality during the politically tumultuous times between the early 1950s and mid-1960s.⁸

Voodoo Tiger, *Voodoo Woman*, and *Macumba Love* erroneously emphasize the Vodou practice of blood sacrifice to the neglect of the religion’s other dimensions. Instead of depicting the cultural reality of animal sacrifices as a mode to appease the spirits and request their religious cure for various maladies, the three films misrepresent Vodouists as practitioners of human sacrifices. Since “From the legal point of view every human sacrifice is a ceremonial murder” (Crowley 840), the intention to sacrifice whites renders Vodouists black homicidal aggressors and thus mirrors the racist dichotomy of white as good and black as evil, a readily articulated view that pervades all three films.

The natives’ attempt to sacrifice Jungle Jim in *Voodoo Tiger* violates the colonial practice of Christianization and thus what whites considered a benevolent “means by which Europe [and America] hoped to regenerate Africa which was then referred to as the ‘Dark Continent’” (Ayegboin 34). This perspective originates in the opening sequence when Jungle Jim burns Wombu-

lu's statue of the tiger god Tambura in order to liberate the natives from their superstition. Worshipping an animal god mirrors the biblical story of the golden calf from the Old Testament, which "has been symbolic of both secularism and pagan superstition for the better part of 3,500 years" (Deloria et al. 370) and consequently renders the Vodou tribe members heathens in the eyes of the white Judeo-Christian viewer. Yet, according to McCarthy Brown, portraying Vodou practitioners as animal worshippers is a misrepresentation of Haiti's religion since devotees pay homage to deities that are based on human-like identities and divided into three different groups: "the *mò*, the dead; the *màwasa*, the divine twins; and the *mistè*, the mysteries, more often referred to as the *lwa*, or, using the term in a more specific sense, the *espri*, the spirits" (2006: 16).

Macumba Love deals with a different source of religious conflict by portraying black Vodouists as fundamentalists. According to *The Psychology of Religious Fundamentalism*, the motivation to express a religiously fundamentalist attitude can derive from sacred texts that are authoritative in their nature and therefore dictate normative behavior. This behavior, in turn, can result in militancy against non-conformists. Anthropologically, however, this paradigm is inapplicable to Vodou since its tenets are not suggestive of militancy against non-believers; instead, "those who participate in Vodou life and rituals believe in creating harmony, in keeping a balance, in cultivating virtues such as justice, beneficence, benevolence, patience, forgiveness, and cooperation" (Michel 28). Taking this into consideration, the film misrepresents Vodou as a religion that sympathizes with fundamentalist militancy against white Western Christianity.

This misrepresentation comes to the fore when J. Peter visits the black Vodou priestess Mama Rataloy in her beachside cabin in order to inquire information about Vodou and its possible relation to the various deaths. During the conversation, J. Peter does not outright dismiss the religion of African descent as humbug and celebrate Christianity as part of Western modernity but is willing to keep an open mind about Vodou and to even consider Christianity inferior to

Haiti's religion, if Mama Rataloy provides convincing arguments. Yet, instead of enlightening him, she insists on expressing her unconditional intolerance of white Western Christianity when she verbally threatens J. Peter with physical retaliation on behalf of the serpent deity Damballah Wédos. While J. Peter offers her his friendship, a sign of good will, she immediately turns down his offer and continues expressing her hostility by responding, "I prefer to be your enemy." Let alone that the film misrepresents the paternal *lwa* as a malevolent rather than benevolent spirit, the very fact that spiritual authority Damballah Wédos dictates Mama Rataloy to execute violence against J. Peter for questioning Vodou and the priestess obeys the spirit's command renders her a religious fundamentalist against white Western Christianity by definition of Hood, Hill, and Williamson.

As opposed to other disbelievers, whose lives she claims throughout the film, J. Peter remains untouched since his white body functions as a site of what Peggy McIntosh calls "conferred dominance" (180). McIntosh's notion implies that a racially privileged group or individual, white men above all, exercises power over one or several non-privileged groups or individuals. This disparate power game, for instance, grants the privileged group or individual "a presumption of superiority and social permission to act on that presumption without having to worry about being challenged" (Rothenberg 117). Shortly before J. Peter leaves Mama Rataloy's beachside cabin, he confidently reassures his superiority by remarking: "[I am] not afraid, so don't bother fixing me; I am in excellent health and reasonably well adjusted; oh yes, and remember, I sleep with a gun." By disseminating and emphasizing McIntosh's paradigmatic concept of "conferred dominance," J. Peter reminisces the privileged position of whites and thus encourages them to oppose blacks rather than fearing their resistance to white Western Christianity.

In addition to religious conflicts, *Voodoo Tiger* renders Haiti's folk religion a source of secular terrorism. Instead of recalling the historical role of Vodouists as black revolutionaries and

resistant to white colonial oppression, the film accuses the devotees of undermining public authority and violating the privilege of lawful land rights, which ensures whites “unnoticed, unharassed, ‘unothered’ movement through public space” (Garner 36). This intertwined dynamic comes to the fore when Commissioner Kingston makes use of an official code that resembles the Land Ordinance of 1902 and consequently nullifies the Vodou tribe’s land rights in order to grant the white search party unrestricted access to Crescent Valley.⁹ Jungle Jim, who is appointed by Commissioner Kingston as leader of the rescue mission, emerges as representative of the state order. However, when Wombulu and his men attempt to sacrifice Jim, Major Bill Green (Robert Bray), and Phyllis Bruce in response to entering Crescent Valley, the Vodouists violate what whites then understood as lawful act and thus derive as terrorists to official authority.

While both *Voodoo Tiger* and *Macumba Love* problematize moments of religious and secular conflict between black and white, the two characters Ted Bronson and Susan Gerard from *Voodoo Woman* do not pose any threat to the Vodou tribe at all. Thus sacrificing both white bodies functions as an example of what Katheryn Russell-Brown refers to as “White-on-Black racial hoaxes” (111). According to her definition, such hoaxes are “typically created as random acts of Black violence against Whites, which matches with the public perception that Blacks run amok committing depraved, unprovoked acts of violence against Whites” (Russell-Brown 111). The Vodou tribe intends to sacrifice Ted, although he has never provoked the Vodou tribe; instead, he vehemently tries to leave the jungle and has no interest in tampering with the natives, let alone being even close to them.

Susan, a second innocent white character, emerges as another arbitrary act of black violence against whites. The tribe’s determination to sacrifice her derives from her husband, Dr. Gerard, after he finds out that his wife intends to escape her domestic confinement against his will. By liberating herself beyond the household, Susan is emblematic of what Betty Friedan re-

fers to as “drastic reshaping of the cultural image of femininity that will permit women to reach maturity, identity, completeness of self” (496).¹⁰ Yet her emancipation is heavily contested by her husband, who holds on to the conservative values rendering women inferior to and dependent of men and thus seeks revenge for her insubordination to his patriarchal rule by handing her over to Vodou tribe Chief Chaka as offering for the imminent nocturnal Vodou ceremony. His desire to publicly execute his wife mirrors a mode of punishment that is rooted in, but not limited to, “the period in Western history of intense witch hunting and executions, generally the mid-15th to mid-18th centuries” (Guiley, “Burning Times” 42). Although none of the tribe members were in prior conflict with the white woman, Chief Chaka honors Dr. Gerard’s request without hesitation and pillories his wife.

In order to further underscore and consequently consolidate the racist dichotomy of black as evil and white as good, the three films do not merely misrepresent blacks as aggressors but also whites as their victims. In reality, male Europeans colonizers in Africa considered white women as sexually unattainable and physically unsuited for carrying out physical labor in the tropical environment, while they fetishized black women as sexual objects. Black men, by contrast, were denied the right to sexually engage with white women but coercively exploited as cheap or even free labor power in various colonies such as Portuguese Angola or British South Africa. Taken together, colonizers subjugated and thus victimized both black men and women.

The three imperial texts reverse the colonial stratification by depicting white characters as victims of black Vodouists. When Jungle Jim identifies Vodou as “bad medicine” and consequently burns the tiger god statue since it “means only one thing, murder and fear,” he complies with Adam Smith who “advocated that Christianity would be a useful institution in the colonization of hostile societies” (Ayegboyin 34). Apart from their allegedly good intention to pacify violent colonies, Jim and Major Bill Green, co-leader of the search party whom the tribe members

also attempt to sacrifice eventually, act under the official sanction of the colonial government when the rescue team ventures into Vodou country. Since Christianization was “a moral duty to the rest of humanity [that is, non-Western civilizations]” (qtd. in Ayegboyin 34) and the Colonial Office established itself as rightful successors after it superseded pre-existing local governance such as kingship and council of elders, the white characters are not only ethically obligated to bring about peace but also emerge as justified colonial authorities. Hence, being assaulted for their benevolence and lawfulness victimizes both men in white perception.

J. Peter’s son-in-law Warren from *Macumba Love* falls victim to Mama Rataloy through the process of scapegoating. Originating during biblical times and defined as the belief that blame, hate, prejudice, and other negative connotations “can be transferred from one person or object to another” (Douglas 3), the notion, according to Williamson, “assumes that, overall, white people have the power to make scapegoats of black people, to manage them sufficiently to create the illusion that they want to see” (199).¹¹ The film reverses Williamson’s paradigm when it shows Mama Rataloy transferring her personal and unfunded animosity against J. Peter to Warren. While the author intimidates Mama Rataloy by affirming his whiteness and consequently keeps her at bay, Warren has never been in conflict with the black Vodou priestess and is thus clearly the victim; in fact, he even emerges as defenseless when one of Mama Rataloy’s men abducts Warren by cowardly sneaking up behind the young man in the dark, a commonplace setting in horror films that connotes blackness with evil and thus further accentuates Warren’s role as white victim of black aggression.

Both white women, Phyllis and Susan, are presented as victims of black male sexual violence. Their representation in *Voodoo Tiger* and *Voodoo Woman*, respectively, is implicit rather than explicit. At no time, the black natives overtly and unambiguously express their sexual desire for these white women, as miscegenation and racial intermarriages were illicit in America and

European colonies due to the fear of whites losing control over their self-proclaimed superiority.¹² Consequently, the black Vodouists subtly demonstrate their lust when they brutally tie the women to a pole with their arms crossed behind their backs. Since the pole can be read as black phallic power penetrating their crossed arms as symbol of the female genitalia, Phyllis and Susan emerge as coercively subjugated to black male sexuality. While the films demonize the desire of black men for white women as an act of primitive sexuality and show white women as being repulsed by black male lust in order to ideologically secure white purity against black defilement, historical reality of sexual politics presents a different race and gender paradigm. Similar to white men lusting for black women as their concubine, white women fantasized about intimacy with black men. Yet, since white men tabooed such relationship and consequently deprived white women of their feminine sexuality, “the white woman’s fantasy of being raped by a black man is ‘in some way the fulfillment of a private dream, an inner wish’” (qtd. in Loomba).

Since all three films – *Voodoo Tiger*, *Voodoo Woman*, and *Macumba Love* – were released in the U.S. between the early 1950s and mid-1960s, their representation of blacks as aggressors and whites as their victim functions as a mode to ideologically sully the rise of black resistance to white racial oppression during these politically tumultuous years. The onset of this period is marked by repercussions from World War II. During their fight for democracy in Nazi Germany, African American soldiers learned what freedom means. Whether enjoying the company of white women or being treated equally in restaurants, the war encouraged African American veterans to ameliorate their living conditions at home by spreading the gospel of egalitarianism experienced in Europe. Yet knowing that political, economic, and social equality was unheard of in the U.S., particularly in the racially bisected South, black veterans had to stand up for their rights. The postwar motivation for change laid the foundation of the subsequent Civil Rights and

Black Nationalist movement. These currents of resistance opposed racist organizations such as the pervasive Ku Klux Klan, which ensured that the color line privileging whites remained intact.

Klan members built their ideology on militant Christianity. In order to morally justify the maintenance of whites as racially superior to blacks, the KKK turned to ancient scriptures in the Bible, claiming, “God ordained that white people should rule the world and that they should have dominion over persons of all colors” (Quarles 155). However, what the Klan presented was a modified version of Christianity, known as Christian Identity. As followers of this movement, the KKK held the view that white people were racially and religiously pure, while blacks emerged as racially impure and were even associated with Satan whose sinful wickedness sought to befall and distress their souls. White fundamentalist preachers even condoned violence in their sermons in order to protect the South and its culture from the immoral and sinister contamination of blacks as well as their sense of entitlement for racial equality that emerged from the victory over fascism. This white evangelical crusade of racist self-righteousness is symbolic of motivating Jim when the white hunter from *Voodoo Tiger* burns the tiger statue of tribe chief Wombulu. By combusting the taxidermied animal and declaring “we do the same thing until we wipe out Vodou,” the film depicts Jim as heroic defender of white Christian supremacy against black defilement. Disseminating an ideology that is suggestive of legitimizing white religious violence against blacks consequently vindicates the internationally famous murder case of fourteen-year-old Emmett Till as well as the Mack Charles Parker lynching incident.¹³

Four years after Emmett’s murder, in 1959, racist accusations of black men raping white women did not come to an end but drew attention to Mack Charles Parker. Parker was charged with sexually violating June Walters. Although the evidences were circumstantial at best, meaning that lie detector tests “kept registering negatively or inconclusively” (Smead 16), and testimonies were ambiguous, the white community in southern Mississippi was convinced that Parker

was guilty as charged. Instead of holding a fair trial against Parker, white racist Southerners turned to lynch laws and shot him in order to ensure that he would not escape punishment by using money and attorneys of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. While ex-deputy sheriff J.P. Walker was the executive mastermind behind the lynching, co-organizer and southern Baptist preacher James Floren Lee “gave it inspiration with his Biblical invective, chapter-and-verse reference to the black man’s innate inferiority, and wrathful tirades against Parker” (Smead 36).

When Wombulu and his men attempt to sacrifice Jungle Jim in revenge for his justified act of destruction, the film ideologically disparages the rise of black self-defense as chaotic and violent assault on legitimate white Christian supremacy. This motif is suggestive of demonizing the Black Panther Party under the leadership of Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seale, and Eldridge Cleaver. As contemporaries of Emmett, these men sought to protect young blacks in the mid-1960s. In order to ensure their safety, Black Panthers asserted their constitutional right of bearing arms. Even though the Black Panther’s aggressive approach came too late to resist Emmett’s murders, his lynching encouraged its members to protect other young African Americans from future incidents of white violence. Likewise, militant black resistance had a bearing on the white community in Poplarville. During the Parker case, many whites were afraid that blacks would not only receive financial aid and legal counsel from the NAACP or the Communist Party but also arms, “should they desire to commit acts of violence” (Smead 78). In fact, “The wife of the mayor kept a loaded gun by her bed because, as she put it, ‘We was scared of them damn niggers more than what the reporters might turn up, to tell you the truth’” (Smead 78).¹⁴

During the post-WW II era, blacks not only responded to the threat of white religious violence but also drew on religion in order to actively challenge white supremacy. For instance, strongly influenced by Marcus Garvey and his idea of black self-determination, Malcolm X

turned to Islam in order to mobilize blacks and create an economically, politically, and socially self-sufficient black community in the U.S., a society that was independent of and thus free from white directives. Since “Fard apparently recognized that no successful liberation movement among African Americans could afford to divorce itself from the Bible as an authoritative canon” (DeCaro 1998: 13), Malcolm X drew on it as a reference book by directly and distinctively tailoring his reading of it to the freedom struggle of blacks against white oppression. In doing so, Malcolm X rejected the Christian scriptures and replaced them by biblical interpretations that criticized racial inequality in the U.S. By the means of these renditions, Malcolm X not only held white people accountable for the death of Jesus, whom the Nation believed to be black instead of white, but also declared them as devils and even “told his audience that President Eisenhower was a ‘modern Pharaoh’ who was oppressing the black nation” (DeCaro 1996: 104). In response to the oppressive nature of white supremacy, Malcolm X prophesied, “Finally, Allah (Fard) would return in an airplane and light a match, setting an inextinguishable fire that would consume the white man’s world” (DeCaro 1996: 106) and “the devils’ heads would roll in the streets of New York City, and that their blood would flow in the gutters” (DeCaro 1996: 106).

Yet, to Malcolm, violence did not function as mode of armed revolution but as a tool of self-defense, noting that “in cases where the federal government had ‘proven itself unable or willing’ to protect blacks, they ‘have a right to defend themselves’” (qtd. in Wainstock 92).¹⁵ Malcolm X anti-white militancy based on “fundamentalist religious beliefs, as dictated by the Nation of Islam” (Davis 2010: 27) is symptomatic of reflecting the fanatic persona of Mama Rataloy, whose hostility to Christianity builds upon on Damballah Wédos as her spiritual authority. However, while Malcolm X propagated religious fundamentalism as a mode of self-defense and liberation from white oppression, *Macumba Love* creates an ideology that suggests black zealotry as

unconditional hostility against the complaisance as well as benevolence of white Western Christianity and is thus evocative of denigrating the nothing but protective approach of Malcolm X.

While “his personal behavior was nonviolent” (Wainstock 92), Malcolm X’s militant rhetoric inspired his adherents to take up arms. The murder of Medgar Evers, NAACP field secretary in Mississippi, for instance, incited black journalist Thaddeus T. Stokes to propose bodyguards for civil rights activists from within the African American community in case the government fails to provide sufficient protection.¹⁶ Stokes’s recommendation was even backed on a political basis when Adam Clayton Powell, Democrat and Representative of New York, “suggested that unless action were taken to stop such atrocities, black Americans should employ stronger measures to achieve equality” (Strain 81). Since such statements induced fear among whites, *Macumba Love* is suggestive of ideologically demonizing black proponents of self-defense by portraying Mama Rataloy and her propensity for violence as bloodthirsty savagery resorting to human sacrifices.

When J. Peter assures Mama Rataloy that he is superior to her and that he will use his gun in order to defend himself, this scene functions as a stark reminder of white supremacy. More problematically, it creates a view that encourages white violence against blacks and that firearms are specifically the privilege of whites. Notably, during the late 1950s and 1960s, white police officers believed to be in the right when they resorted to excessive violence against blacks. Denied service by a white restaurant manager and then placed under arrest, two of four black brothers were assaulted and shot while under police custody. Joseph Romeika, the arresting officer claimed that he acted in self-defense after one of the men allegedly threatened him by gesturing to pull out a gun. The suspect, however, was unarmed. Despite the inconsistency of Romeika’s version and eyewitnesses contradicting the policeman’s story, the district attorney dropped the charges against him. Outraged by this scandalous decision, the New York chapter of the NAACP

organized a five-month protest campaign, “seeking [...], the indictment of the police officer” (Biondi 62). Still, charges were not pressed, as the U.S. attorney general “lacked proof that Officer Romeika had intentionally tried to deprive Charles Ferguson of his Fourteenth Amendment [every citizen’s right to equal protection of the laws] right to due process when he fired his weapon” (Biondi 66).

Within their frenzy of allegedly justified violence against blacks, law enforcement officers even cracked down on obviously unarmed civil rights workers. In Birmingham, Alabama, “the police department often attacked marchers with police dogs, high-pressure water hoses, and billy clubs” (Moore 53). When prominent nonviolence proponent Martin Luther King, Jr., for instance, led a Good Friday protest march from the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on May 2, 1963, in order to object to segregation in America’s arguably most racially divided city at that time, sheriff and notorious racist Eugene T. “Bull” Connor ordered his arrest and commanded his officers to take the more than 1,000 participating children into custody. The following day, Connor further tightened his aggressive actions and prevented the activists from leaving the church. Whoever left the building was subject to apprehension and faced excessive police brutality, as “the police beat demonstrators and fired on them with water cannons” (Wolcott and Head 199). As a result of police brutality against activists, leaders of the Civil Rights movement urged the White House and the Justice Department to pass a law that would provide access to public accommodations, regardless of one’s race, color, religion or national origin. After some initial difficulties, this demand eventually came true as Title III of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Black resistance during these incidents as prime examples of racial conflict is significant of mirroring the ideology in *Voodoo Tiger* when Jungle Jim attempts to liberate the plane crash survivors. While both historical cases present moments of black resistance to white state-sponsored terror and discrimination, the film disseminates an ideology that vilifies blacks as sub-

versive to the legitimate white-dominated power structure privileging white socio-political demands. Celebrating white violence as a justified counterinsurgency tactic during the scene when the white hunter physically attacks the black Vodou tribe members, in turn, is symptomatic of ideologically justifying police cruelty against black resistance. Any attempt to challenge the various incidents of police brutality in order to initiate racial equality, whether it was the NAACP chapter in New York or the SCLC, is emblematic of ideologically sullyng as public threat against the white official state order. Such disrepute is equally represented in the films such as in the scene when the black Vodou tribe members challenge Jungle Jim's use of violence as colonial counterinsurgency tactic by intending to sacrifice him.

Similarly, when *Voodoo Woman* portrays the black Vodou tribe members resorting to unprovoked force against the white male character Ted and the white female character Susan, the film disseminates an ideology that is symbolic of denigrating black resistance as arbitrary violence against white civilians. This perspective serves the racist cause of whites insofar as it skews historical reality, meaning that white racist civilians terrorized black women and men rather than vice versa. While the majority of racist assaults were directed at black men such as the nefarious lynching of Emmett Till or the beating of prominent musician Nat "King" Cole for undermining the racially segregated society privileging white Christian patriarchy, white aggressors did not spare black women from racist violence, either. For example, in 1956, Lucy Autherine, a young African American woman, applied the University of Alabama. When Lucy arrived on campus, an angry white mob consisting of 1,200 people awaited her. According to Lewis, "Almost as soon as the mob began to gather at the university, they scene became violent and increasingly uncontrolled" (2006: 78). Since Lucy merely responded to the Supreme Court decision *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), she did not provoke any conflict; rather, she made use of her constitutional right and is thus identifiable as victim of arbitrary racist violence, needless to say that racist violence is al-

ways unfounded and therefore never justified.¹⁷ Yet, instead of protecting their only black student and bringing an end to racist assaults on-campus, “Lucy was suspended on the grounds that it was not safe for her to continue her studies” (Lewis 2006: 78).

The notion of space equally serves as a source of conflict in *Voodoo Tiger*. When Commissioner Kingston is portrayed as legitimately abrogating the Vodou tribe’s land rights, the film generates a perspective that is suggestive of entitling whites to deny blacks access to space and their protection of that claimed space. This view not only reflects but also, to make matters worse, ideologically justifies the ongoing racial segregation of residential neighborhoods in Philadelphia, as a prime example of majorly disintegrated postwar cities. Racial discrimination of space in postwar cities such as Philadelphia did not go unheard but drew resistance. According to McAllister, the Philadelphia Housing Association and the American Friends Service Committee led local civil rights activist groups to the highest level of the Pennsylvania state government and persuaded the Fair Employment Commission to add housing discrimination to its agenda. Terry Chisholm, supervisor of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (CHR), however, complained in an interview with the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, “The law has not yet significantly altered the house-seeking and buying progress of the Negroes in Philadelphia” (qtd. in McAllister 131). The reason was due to a loophole that allowed communities to “alter the state code to fit local conditions” (McAllister 131), which again was supported by the Philadelphia city council “that made only the sale of non-occupied houses subject to the antidiscrimination statute” (McAllister 131). Despite various anti-discriminatory laws, Philadelphia’s private housing market remained largely segregated until 1970.

It was mostly the interplay between realtors and white residents that contributed and maintained racial exclusion. While “The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) refused to invest in racially mixed neighborhoods, channeling most of its funding to predominantly white areas”

(McAllister 124), “Real estate agents and brokers played the largest role in this process, because they held a strategic position within the housing market” (McAllister 124). This particular position was based on written and unwritten covenants that confined African Americans to residential areas in North, West, as well as South Philadelphia and thus excluded them from living in white neighborhoods. Commissioner Kingston is emblematic of reflecting the function of real estate agents and brokers in this context, as both are emissaries of an oppressive establishment that seeks to privilege white space rights.

White on-site housing managers harassed black women in their own apartments by restricting their autonomy. PHA staff, for instance, conducted unannounced apartment inspections. If the tenants were not at home, they would let themselves in. According to Levenstein, women “complained about staff who inspected households much more thoroughly, turning down bedspreads to make sure beds had clean sheets, checking under cupboards for vermin, and judging the cleanliness of toilets and walls” (107). If the condition of the apartment did not meet the expectation of the housing personnel, the tenant would receive a low evaluation score. An accumulation of low evaluation scores was very problematic, as it could eventually lead to eviction. The invasion of black space is evocative of mirroring the scene when Jungle Jim penetrates the Vodou Country. Yet, while *Voodoo Tiger* propagates an ideology that authorizes whites to invade black space, inspections without the consent of the tenant and primarily directed at African American tenants over the fear of disorderly households were not merely unethical and legally questionable but also racist. Whites tenants, in comparison, were usually not associated with creating a filthy living environment and thus hardly ever underwent such invasive scrutiny.

In addition to racially segregated residential neighborhoods and inadequate public housing, the division of space along the color line in postwar Philadelphia entailed a variety of socioeconomic problems for African Americans. One severe predicament was the denial of fair em-

ployment and equal income. While blacks experienced a temporary economic improvement immediately after World War II, particularly in the industrial sector, the relocation of firms to predominantly white suburbs and the resulting inaccessibility to higher-paid employment left African Americans with lowest-level income jobs and vulnerability to layoffs during the 1950s. According to Thomas J. Sugrue, “blacks were overrepresented in unskilled industrial and service jobs and underrepresented in sales, management, and the professions” (225). Instead of addressing the economic deficiency, *Voodoo Tiger* diverts from this particular problem; in fact, by depicting Vodou country as self-sufficient space and the natives as reluctant to interact with the white outside world, indicated by the natives’ effort to restrict access to their territory along Dundee Pass and only access into Crescent Valley, the film creates an ideology of blacks being economically independent.

Similar to the campaign against racial discrimination on the public housing market, political postwar activist organizations adopted a more radical approach in order to bring about equal employment opportunities for African Americans. According to Sugrue,

From the mid-1940s through the early 1960s, Philadelphia’s major civil rights groups – the NAACP, the Committee on Equal Job Opportunities (CEJO), the Armstrong Association (Philadelphia’s Urban League affiliate), and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) – set out, through hundreds of behind-the-scenes meetings, to persuade employers to hire blacks for ‘breakthrough’ jobs, primarily ones involving contact with whites such as those of department – store salesclerks, telephone operators, secretaries, and bank tellers. (223)

Being frustrated with the inefficiency of gradual liberalism and the persistence of racial discrimination in the workplace, 400 clerics in Philadelphia initiated what Sugrue describes as “selective-patronage campaign” (226). The agenda of this campaign followed a direct action approach when it demanded the hiring of blacks before whites. The Tasty Baking Company was the clerics’ first target. Instead of initiating a political campaign and urging for the hiring of token blacks, the ministers demanded the executives to employ a considerable number of African Americans in

jobs other than unskilled trades and thus in higher-paid positions, ranging from bakers to chemists. After the company refused to comply with the clerics' demands, about 80 percent of black Philadelphians joined a boycott under the slogan "We don't sell it and we don't buy it" (qtd. in Sugrue 226). The boycott was a success. Six months later, Tasty Baking Company gave up and employed two black clerks, two black delivery drivers, and four black female production workers. This and other selective-patronage boycotts, Sugrue asserts, "were more effective than earlier breakthrough campaigns. [Reverend] Leon Sullivan estimated that two thousand blacks moved into new jobs as a result of the boycotts" (226).

The success of the Ministers' campaign against job discrimination of African Americans inspired political civil rights organizations to change their strategy. Both Philadelphia's CORE and NAACP chapter deviated from their initially peaceful and relatively conservative stance in the early and mid-1950s and pushed their strategies in a more activist and militant direction. Although rather unsuccessful at first, CORE became more influential in 1961 when "activists picketed stores and restaurants and vocally entered the debate about workplace discrimination in the city" (Sugrue 227). A. Leon Higginbotham, local NAACP branch president, assigned executive director Thomas H. Burrell in 1962, who defied employment discrimination on an "individual, case-by-case basis" (qtd. in Sugrue 227) and demanded employers to be held accountable for racial inequality on the job market rather than making employees struggle for fair hiring and employment procedures.

In order to further denigrate black resistance against white oppression, *Voodoo Tiger*, *Voodoo Woman*, and *Macumba Love* not only propagate an ideology that renders blacks aggressive to whites but also portrays whites as victims of black aggression. Like the cinematic victims Jungle Jim, Major Green, Warren, Ted, Phyllis, and Susan, white historical figures also attempted to represent themselves as innocent and bystanders. For instance, during the onset of the race riot

in 1946 Columbia, Tennessee, numerous armed black residents of “The Bottom,” a predominantly African American neighborhood between East Eighth and East Ninth Street, awaited armed whites who were prepared to forcefully invade the black vicinity.¹⁸ Shortly before the state forces moved in, “James Beard, the owner of a small auto repair shop and the son of Columbia’s former fire chief, and his companion Borgie Claude headed down an alley toward East Eighth Street” (O’Brien 19), while a group of approximately fifteen other whites watched.

As Beard and Claude pushed further into the black neighborhood, they drew closer to their offenders and consequently exposed themselves to assault; in fact, “As the pair made their way down the alley, shots from atop one of the buildings in the area zinged toward them. Both were struck, and both quickly hightailed it back up the street” (O’Brien 19). At first glance, this scenario is suggestive of victimizing Beard and Claude insofar as they fall prey to the numerically superior and heavily armed black dwellers. *Voodoo Tiger* is symptomatic of ideologically underscoring the victimization of Beard and Claude when Jim and Major Green claim their status as colonial authority and venture into Crescent Valley. Similar to Beard and Claude, both white cinematic characters walk into an ambush where they are attacked by a numerically superior group of heavily armed blacks, even though they believe that their whiteness entitles them to roam freely and in an unimpeded manner.

While the men seem to be victims of black violence, they do not emerge as such in the larger historical context; instead, Beard and Claude are identifiable as aggressors since they brought half gallon of gasoline in order to burn down the black business district and get to the Stephensons, who were hiding there. In addition to its nature of securing white triumph, the attempted lynching was also act of religious violence, as most whites from eastern Maury County shared the ideology of Lost Cause. Similar to Christian Identity, this civil religion sanctioned violence for the purpose of securing white Christian supremacy against black infiltration ever

since the Confederates were defeated and the Thirteenth Amendment outlawed slavery in 1865. And even though Jungle Jim's persona as heroic defender of white Western Christianity justifies religious violence in *Voodoo Tiger*, acting on behalf of Lost Cause and its racist tenants urging for aggression against blacks, further accentuates Beard and Claude's identity as assailants. Hence, opening fire on Beard and Claude was merely an act of self-defense, especially after a white mob lynched Cordie Cheek in 1934 and Tennessee senator Kenneth D. McKellar opposed a federal anti-lynching law, whereupon "For Maury County blacks, the message was crystal clear: any defense afforded African Americans against would-be lynchers in the future must derive from within their community" (O'Brien 86).

Unlike blacks in Maury Country, the four Ferguson brothers were not able to resort to self-defense the same year when arresting officer Joseph Romeika deadly wounded two of the men for alleged possession of a firearm. Since the period between the end of WW II and the early 1950s recorded a rise of white racial violence against blacks as a mode to secure white supremacy against the influx of socio-economically self-confident African Americans to New York, the two shot brothers are not only identifiable as scapegoats of white hostility insofar as policeman Romeika and the white restaurant manager transferred their racial prejudice to the Fergusons; being unarmed and solely complaining about the racist treatment in the coffee shop further buttresses their role as victims of Romeika's use of lethal force, supported by biased Judge Hilbert Johnson who "declared that 'four fellows going out looking for trouble – they are going to get just what they are looking for'" (qtd. in Biondi 62). Similar to the Ferguson brothers, Warren from *Macumba Love* is exposed to racial violence, even though he is innocent. Yet, while the black men fell prey to white police brutality in historical reality, the film attains the reverse effect by representing Warren as scapegoat of black hostility and is thus redolent of ideologically ren-

dering Romeika victim of the Fergusons and their “excessive” use of violence as act of self-defense.

Whites, who resided in or dwelled nearby black public housing areas, were likewise situated as victim of black crime. This motif is suggestive of tying into the identity of Ted from *Voodoo Woman*. Comparable with Ted, whites did not want to reside close to blacks, as they were afraid of robbery, rape and, even worse, murder; in fact, whites took advantage of their economic power structure in order to keep the geographical color line intact. In the 1950s, for example, Rose Helper “found that 80% of realtors refused to sell blacks property in white neighborhoods, and 68% refused to rent them such property” (Massey and Denton 50). Since they resisted any engagement with matters in black neighborhoods, being exposed to incidents of black crime encouraged them to view and consequently present themselves as victims. Yet historical reality suggests a more complex pattern. When white bar owners opened their business in or close to black neighborhoods, “turning a profit at their [blacks’] expense” (Levenstein 116), they were the ones who attracted crime, among other things. Therefore, whites were at least co-responsible for crime in low-income public housing areas.

As a result, black residents emerged as victims of whites, particularly of those who attracted crime. In response to their victimization, African Americans public housing tenants started various initiatives. Block groups, for instance, sought to eliminate or at least diminish illicit activities within working-class quarters. “In 1953, one North Philadelphia block group observed that ‘people don’t feel safe from attack, purse-snatching, molesting or worse.’ The group sent petitions to the mayor and the city council asking for an increase in the police force assigned to their neighborhood and the restoration of foot patrolmen to their streets” (Levenstein 116). While blacks historically emerged as victim of whites, *Voodoo Woman* rather suggests the reverse and

thus ideologically supports racial segregation of neighborhoods under the false pretense of saving whites from black aggression.

In addition to maintaining a spatial divide along the color line, both *Voodoo Woman* and *Voodoo Tiger* emphasize sexual segregation between white women and black men when the natives coerce Phyllis and Susan into black male lust. This scene is significant of mirroring the landmark case of Emmett Till. Like the black Vodouists, the teenager from Chicago was accused of sexually subjugating a white woman, in this case Carolyn Bryant, when he, according to her statement in court, “jumped between the counters to block her path, raised his hands and held her waist, reassuring her: ‘Don’t be afraid of me, baby. I ain’t gonna hurt you. I been with white girls before.’” (qtd. in Whitfield 17). Similar to Phyllis and Susan, Carolyn emerges as a victim of what racist white southern patriarchs then considered black defilement of their honor and purity. In order to protect white women from such sexual assault and maintain white superiority, Jim Crow laws determined racial and gender segregation between white women and black men. Both films support and encourage this racist view when they depict Phyllis and Susan saved from their black tormentors and back in the loving arms of their white savior Major Green and Ted, respectively. To make matters worse, heroically rescuing the two white women by physically attacking the black assailants ideologically not only legitimizes but also glorifies the nefarious lynching of Emmett Till and Mack Charles Parker as honorable acts of white supremacy.

While the media frenzy of the 1930s demonized Vodou in order to ideologically sully the Nation of Islam as black cult that sought to wage a race war against whites, *Voodoo Tiger*, *Voodoo Woman*, and *Macumba Love* perpetuate this trend as a means to undermine currents of black resistance against white oppression during the politically tumultuous times between the postwar years and the 1960s. For instance, *Voodoo Tiger* creates a view that suggests blacks as secular terrorists to the white official state order legitimately abrogating land rights and is thus emblem-

atic of disparaging black activists pursuing the racial desegregation of residential neighborhoods as hostile. Instead of portraying black religious violence as a mode of self-defense, *Macumba Love* dismisses it as fundamentalist hostility against the complaisance and benevolence of white Western Christianity. Historically, this twisted ideology is indicative of vilifying Malcolm X and those who followed his course of militant resistance to white supremacy, on the one hand; on the other, the glorification of white supremacy, as embodied by J. Peter, encourages white violence such as police brutality, a pervasive and prevalent pattern of white dominance at this time. Reversely, the three films present whites as victims of blacks. This, for instance, comes to the fore, when *Voodoo Tiger* and *Voodoo Woman* depict white women as prey of coercive black male sexuality. The engendered ideology consequently suggests the maintenance of sexual segregation between white women and black men in order to secure white supremacy from black defilement, which, in turn, excuses acts of racist brutality such as the lynching of Emmett Till.

Spreading fear cannot only result from visual images but also from sound effects; in fact, sound effects can affect the viewer more intensely than images, as “we cannot turn away. Closing our eyes only serves to intensify our experience of the sound because of lack of interference from visual input; putting our hands over our ears rarely shuts out the sound completely” (qtd. in Donnelly 94). The horror cinema, for instance, draws on deeply pitched strings or drones, “where tension is built through anticipation” (Donnelly 90), and uses unresolved dissonance, which evokes an eerie feeling of uneasiness. At the same time, music also has a liberating aspect, an effect created by freedom songs.

CHAPTER II.

VODOU IN U.S. POPULAR MUSIC AND THE NEW LEFT

In 1959, the Troupe Folklorique paraded on a historical float through the streets of Port-au-Prince in order to render homage to the slaves who escaped the French colonial tyranny, while the audience enjoyed free transportation, drinks, and food, all provided by Dr. François “Papa Doc” Duvalier (Averill 1994: 221). By hosting such carnivals and entertaining the lower class, the dictator deployed a patronage of popular politics that won him widespread support among Haiti’s black population. Duvalier’s political rhetoric grew out of *Noirisme*, a bourgeois revolution that sought to reverse the racial stratification by “advanc[ing] the political agenda of Haiti’s black middle class and masses against the mulatto elite using the notion that only Blacks could authentically represent the masses” (Averill 1994: 225).¹⁹ Pivotal to the challenge of hegemonic Europhile norms and the reinvigoration of an “authentic” African identity in Haiti was the rehabilitation of the traditional but demonized folk religion Vodou.²⁰ On the one hand, the belief system allowed Duvalier to reach the masses as *moun-pa-yo*, loosely translated into “their guy;” on the other, Vodou served as a ruthless means to intimidate and undermine his political critics. Duvalier appointed sorcerers of the secret Vodou society Bizango²¹ who drew on iconography such as zombies and Masonic symbols such as skulls in order to spread fear and consequently control the lower class; beneath such symbolism operated a network of the dictator’s thuggish secret police, the *tonton-makout*.²²

At the same time, Vodou and its contextualization in popular Haitian music served the Marxist middle-class as a cultural weapon against the devastating social conditions in Haiti in general and Duvalier’s oppressive politics in particular. Although Haitian middle-class Marxists dismissed Vodou as savagery, they realized that it was essential to convey their critique of the

emerging dictatorial regime to the masses. Based on the high illiteracy rate in Haiti, “some 85 percent of the population had been using the songs of Vodun as their main learning vehicle” and therefore Haitian Marxists bands “decided to use the music of Vodun as the basis for their compositions” (Fleurant 58). Regarding the use of Vodou as leftist agent for a cultural Marxist revolution in Haiti, this chapter will examine how Vodou in U.S. popular music between the late 1950s and the 1970s informed the New Left.

The history of freedom songs in Haiti dates back to 1791 when the organizers of the Haitian Revolution gathered in Bois Caïman and chanted their first revolutionary hymns during the invocation of African ancestral Vodou deities. By praising these deities, the slave insurgents sought spiritual energy for their imminent fight against the French oppressors. This spiritual strategy continued into the time when U.S. marines occupied Haiti during the first half of the twentieth century and peasant rebels, the *cacos*, resisted the invaders. In the 1960s, Vodou infused the music of Haiti’s freedom culture, or *kilti libète*,²³ and its revolutionary struggle against Duvalier’s dictatorial regime, which exploited the lower class and deprived the middle-class of its economic opportunities. Socialist activists found themselves politically isolated after the Haitian Communist Party was dissipated in 1947 and Jacques Alexis’s Party of National Accord withdrew its support in response to Duvalier’s intimidating counterinsurgency strikes such as anti-communism pogroms. As a consequence, student activists in the 1960s changed their agenda from political agitation to predominantly cultural resistance, hoping to bridge the class cleavage between them as middle-class intelligentsia and the larger illiterate peasant class for what Averill refers to as a “broad-based anti-Duvalierist organizing” (1997: 94). The best tactic to communicate with and win the support of the lower class as collective revolutionary force against Duvalier’s dictatorial regime, the students thought, was “to develop a peasant-style music and poetry (in Creole, not in French)” (Averill 1997: 95). Some student activists therefore founded bands

whose Creole songs included elements of Haiti's peasant religion Vodou in order to attract the lower class to their cultural Marxist critique of the dictator's oppressive regime.²⁴

The anti-Duvalier Marxist campaign did not remain unanswered. In 1968, Haiti's dictator cracked down on unions, the Creole culture movement, schools, universities, and even the National Organization for Literacy and Community Action (ONAAC), as he feared communists would infiltrate these organizations. In response to Duvalier's counterinsurgency tactics, members of cultural Marxist organizations escaped the dictatorial regime and fled to the U.S. where they constituted "the nucleus for new leftist cultural organizations in the diaspora during the 1970s" (Averill 1997: 97).²⁵ While most of the *kilti libète* groups did not survive the 1970s, they influenced numerous talents, "notably Ti-Manno and Manno Charlemagne, who would become central in the more broad-based opposition movement of the 1980s" (Averill 1997: 118), the years when François Duvalier's son and successor Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier continued his father's oppressive reign.

Simultaneous with the era of *kilti libète* bands in Haiti, U.S. Cold War politics gave rise to a musical freedom culture in America.²⁶ The concept of freedom at this time, however, was heavily contested and thus subject to ambivalence. As opposed to the communist East that mirrors Isaiah Berlin's concept of "positive liberty," meaning that "certain governments tried to mold their citizens, determining which needs were true and which were false," the Eisenhower administration exemplifies Berlin's counter-concept of "negative liberty," defined as "the freedom to choose in one's private life aside from the intervention of the state" (Saul 14). Yet, while this democratic right applied to the white heteronormative majority, individuals and groups of various minority backgrounds were largely denied the opportunity to choose freely. And even though the Kennedy-Johnson administration attempted to ameliorate minority inequalities, most of its reform programs such as the Great Society and its war on poverty remained incomplete. Taken together,

both the Eisenhower and the Kennedy-Johnson administration largely excluded minorities from participating in democracy.

The New Left focused on improving socio-political injustice during the decades that followed World War II. Up to that point, the only true participants in democracy were white heterosexual men. However, the postwar economic boom as well as the possibility of social mobility among those who did not conform to this dominant heteronormative discourse and therefore dwelled on the margins of society called forth a “common commitment to extending democracy to all” (Gosse, *The Movements* 3). Although the New Left unitarily consisted of the socio-politically disenfranchised and those who functioned as their agents, it was not a single movement but to borrow Gosse’s term “a movement of movements” (*The Movements* 1), meaning that the various interests groups “learned from one another, adapting similar strategies of confronting authority, exposing injustice, and provoking change” (Gosse, *The Movements* 3) but ultimately had their own agendas. Feminists, for example, opposed gender and sexual discrimination in the public and private sphere. Sexual equality, in particular, was also at the forefront of the gay liberation. The movement was the least visible current until it took a major turn in 1969 when it left the private sphere and pushed for homosexual freedom in the public arena. The cry for a political platform was not limited to gender and sexuality but also addressed race. Deriving from the interracial protests of the civil rights movement seeking integration into white American society, black power activists of the late 1960s no longer contented themselves with assimilation but pressed for self-determination. Simply put, blacks wanted “the power whites already had” (Gosse, *The Movements* 18).

Minority music, first and foremost African Americans artists, supported the struggle for equality by presenting a voice of dissent to the U.S government’s postwar understanding of freedom due to the rise of black consciousness. Rhythm and blues (R&B)²⁷ demonstrated a “pattern

of creation and consumption [that] reflected a mood of rising optimism about the possibility of black integration into a genuinely equalitarian, pluralistic America” (Ward 3), whereas advocating racial, gender, and sexual equality was at the forefront. Despite their effort, R&B artists did not openly profess their support, as they were afraid of white racist retaliation; rather, “most Rhythm and Blues singers were equally cautious about publicly associating themselves with formal Movement activities – at least until the black power era” (Ward 13) and therefore “eschewed explicit discussion of the black struggle in their songs until around 1967” (Ward 14). That does not mean, however, R&B artists did not implicitly inform the struggle for racial as well as gender and sexual equality in their songs prior to the second half of the 1960s. One of these artists was African American diva and chartbuster LaVern Baker, whose success spanned the years between 1955 and 1965. Although she suffered from racial discrimination on the popular music market, which is to say that white performers covered her songs as “sanitized versions, bolstered by racist sentiment” (Gulla 92) without rewarding her financially or artistically, she prevailed against the division along the color line based on her popularity among the growing white adolescent audience. And even when British rock invaded and soul overhauled the U.S. popular music market, Baker managed to compete with the newly arising musical styles of the 1960s.

Similarly, evolved from R&B and subsumed by rock ‘n’ roll, the classical doo-wop era, represented by bands such as The Silhouettes and The Del Vikings between 1955 and 1959, reflects compelling issues of that time, meaning that “the lyrics of their songs spoke almost exclusively to the topic of young, idealistic love” (Gribin and Schiff 30). Similar to R&B, singing about emancipated sexuality, especially sexuality intersecting with race and gender was socially subversive at this time and thus induced anxiety among the conservative and white parental generation.

Acid rock musicians seized the ideology of R&B and doo-wop. As a heterogeneous amalgamation of blues, jazz, soul, folk, rock 'n' roll, funk, and electronic, acid rock, also known as psychedelic rock, between the mid-1960s and early 1970s, opposed the conservative "establishment." Against conservative resistance to social change and progress, which maintained social, political, and economic inequalities, acid rock musicians championed the freedom of marginalized groups within democratic society. One of the most prominent representatives of the acid rock era was guitarist Jimi Hendrix. Yet, despite or perhaps because of his identity as an African American, the rock musician inflamed racial tensions. He was not merely criticized for his interracial band, the Jimi Hendrix Experience, featuring a white British drummer and bassist; black power leaders also "disapproved of Hendrix's rock genre as performance medium inappropriate for a Black man" (Perone 2004: 78). Nonetheless, he retained his musical style and refused to let anyone dictate him what it meant to be black and what type of music is appropriate for blacks. Even though George Lipsitz claims Hendrix "transcended race" (qtd. in Onkey 193), the musician remained faithful to his cause of advocating blackness.

Despite different musical backgrounds, these African American artists share one specific commonality: similar to their Haitian counterparts and their cultural Marxist struggle against Duvalier's oppressive class politics, all of them produced songs whose lyrics draw on Vodou and reveal criticism that informed the Feminist, the Gay as well as Black Liberation movement. For instance, LaVern Baker's "Voodoo Voodoo," produced by Atlantic in 1958 but not released until 1961, revolves around a girl who is enchanted by a Vodou practitioner and his supernatural love spells. In order to make her surrender to his love, he casts a love spell on her by combining one of her teeth and a strand of her hair with various animal body parts and features, all contained in a little box. Both doo-wop bands The Silhouettes and The Del Vikings also draw on love as central theme in their 1958 songs "Voodoo Eyes" and "The Voodoo Man," respectively. "Voodoo Eyes"

tells the story of a man, who is enamored by a woman's eyes. Being unable to resist her charismatic gaze, he consequently falls for her. Yet, to him, it is not a regular moment of love at first sight but an uncanny feeling, which he has no explanation for since he no longer has the power to control his mind and body. As opposed to "Voodoo Eyes," The Del Vikings sing about a mysterious "voodoo man" in their song of the same title. In order to win his beloved, the male Vodou practitioner casts a spell on a piece of clay replicating the person. Jimi Hendrix's songs, the long blues jam "Voodoo Chile" released on *Electric Ladyland* (1968), tells the story of a child born into a fantastic world. While the mother succumbs to the consequences of the infant's birth, mountain lions look after the child and set it on an eagle's wings, which carry it beyond eternity and back.

The integration of Vodou into U.S. popular music is an example of transculturation. Defined as "a process whereby cultural forms literally move through time and space where they interact with other cultural forms and settings, influence each other, produce new forms, and change the cultural settings," transculturation generates "cultural hybrids – the fusing of cultural forms" (Lull 242-243). This paradigm applies to Vodou in U.S. popular music insofar as within globalization, "a set of conditions under which such acts occur" (Rogers 491), the culture industry like sound recording companies but also migrants to the U.S. escaping the Duvalier regime such as Haitian musicians contributed Haitian Vodou and its function as revolutionary vehicle to the American music scene, whereupon African American musicians appropriated it for their own cause. Yet, despite their common African cultural heritage, the appropriation of Vodou by African American performers is not identical with Haitian Vodou; rather, since boundaries within transculturation "are, [...], multiple, shifting, and overlapping" (Rogers 491), meaning that "imported cultural elements take on local features" (Lull 244), Vodou in U.S. popular music emerges as a hybrid, a blend of Haitian Vodou and African American cultural forms. If Haitian Vodou and

one or several African American cultural forms mix, the emerging amalgamation “proliferates the interplay between competing cultural discourses and perpetuates their irresolvable contradictions” (Boggs 437), which is to say that Haitian Vodou and African American cultural forms may contrast with one another to an extent where they even assume opposing stances. These adverse positions, in turn, are suggestive of informing mutually antagonizing currents within the New Left. Even though all currents within the New Left sought political, economic, and social justice, group-specific strategies and goals impeded each other, as it was the case with the predominantly male black liberation movement and black feminism, for instance.

Gender, race as well as sexuality, three central aspects of the New Left agenda, resonate with the three songs “Voodoo Voodoo,” “Voodoo Man” and “Voodoo Eyes.” Gender diversity not only finds expression in songs on Vodou but also assumes a central role in Haitian Vodou. Yet, gender heterogeneity in Haiti’s folk religion “cannot be understood without attending to the role of religion, as well as history” (McAlister 2000: 142). Indeed, gender diversity among practitioners in regard to religion derives from the “decentralized, nonhierarchical structure of the Vodun pantheon [in] which both male and female spirits (*lwas*) perform miracles regardless of their gender” (Bellegarde-Smith 26). Historically, the role of the Vodou priestess has been an inseparable part of Vodou ever since the Haitian Revolution during which “A *manbo* (‘female Vodun priest’) whose name has been lost officiated with the male Vodun leader Boukman Dutty at a ceremony at Bois-Caiman” (Bellegarde-Smith 26). Her heroics paved the way for future priestesses and ensured that women gained wide recognition alongside Vodou priests, or *houngan*, until today. The religiously and historically determined gender diversity within Haitian Vodou thus explains why these songs not only draw on either male or female practitioners but both genders alike.

While religiously and historically both women and men are equally eligible to assume the role of a clergy, their power position along the lines of gender roles, however, varies socio-geographically. The male priest serves as patriarch in both spatial spheres rural and urban areas alike. In the countryside priests raise young men “to the expectations of male privilege and power” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 6) and thus effectively secure patriarchal hegemony, which is the reason why “nowhere in the countryside do they [Vodou priestesses] effectively challenge the spiritual hegemony of the male” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 7). By comparison, “The urban Vodou temples run by men tend to mimic the patriarchal structure of the rural extended family” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 7). “Voodoo Voodoo” reflects the patriarchal power structure in the verse when LaVern Baker harmonizes, “I wouldn’t be any good for nobody else”/ “If he couldn’t have me all for himself.” That it is about a relationship between a woman and a man comes to the fore since Baker sings from the first-person perspective. The male practitioner in “Voodoo Man,” by comparison, represents the patriarchal power structure of a *houngan* since he equally demonstrates authority over his counterpart, indicated by his dominant demeanor and intimidating personality. Yet his beloved is not a woman but a man. This relationship emerges from the fact that the all-male band sings from the first-person perspective. On that account, the gender disequilibrium in “Voodoo Voodoo” disseminates a perspective that portrays superiority of men to women, while “Voodoo Man” renders some men superior to others.

As opposed to rural parts of Haiti, urban centers are not exclusively male-dominated but have experienced a shift toward an increase in female authority.²⁸ In cities the *manbo* functions as matriarch of a fictive kinship network.²⁹ Since the fictive kinship equates or at least widely overlaps with members of the denomination, the priestess equally serves as clerical head of the Vodou temple. As female leader of a spiritual community, the *manbo* is in charge of initiating new members into her congregation, which “manifests itself most clearly in the communion of human

and lwa achieved through possession” (Fernández Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 134). During moments of possession the initiate communicates with the spirits by entering a trance-like dance. This dance finds expression in the lyrics of “Voodoo Eyes” when Bill Horton, lead singer of the all-male band The Silhouettes, sings, “Under the spell”/ “Spell of those voodoo eyes”/ “As if in a whirlpool”/ “I’m spinning around.” Since the fictitious *manbo* – similar to a real Vodou priestess – possesses the sole power to transfer knowledge, or *konesans*, of initiation, the male singer is dependent on and thus subordinated to the female practitioner in the song. Hence, considering the song’s gender imbalance, this verse projects an ideology that renders women superior to men.

Like the comparatively egalitarian gender roles, sexual equality is also inherent in Haitian Vodou. Against the by and large homophobic Haitian society, its folk religion tolerates heterosexuality, homosexuality, bi-sexuality, transsexuality, and any other form of sexual identity among practitioners as well as adherents alike. While the Catholic Church “would banish it from the religious sphere except in terms of condemnation and control” (McAlister 2000: 142), Vodouists consider sexuality a “life-affirming value” (McAlister 2000: 142), especially in regard to the country’s extensive history of political, economic, and social hardship among the masses. The centrality of eroticism in Haitian Vodou finds expression in the sexuality of the spirits, which is enacted on and through the body of the practitioner.

The dominant female heterosexuality of the spirit or goddess Èzili, strictly speaking the manifestation of Èzili Freda, empowers the female practitioner in the love song “Voodoo Eyes.” Apart from her glamorous appearance, “Freda is above all an icon of romantic love, a coquette and fiercely heterosexual femme. She parades around the ritual space batting her eyes at the men” (McAlister 2000: 132). The priestess enacts Freda’s aggressive and outgoing approach of signaling her heterosexual desire to men when Horton harmonizes, “Someone who enchants me”/ “She will taunt and tease me”/ “With those voodoo eyes.” Since the male protagonist is incapable of

resisting the priestess's libido and even experiences a feeling of intimidation during their encounter when the female practitioner ridicules his male heterosexuality, the lyrics suggest that the heterosexuality of the priestess emerges as the dominant sexual identity from this power play.

In contrast to superior female heterosexuality, the Gede spirits, "the most explicitly sexualized divinities in Vodou" (McAlister 2000: 138), promote both male heterosexuality and male homosexuality since "it is not uncommon for them to be ambiguously gendered and ambiguously sexual" (McAlister 2000: 140). On the one hand, McAlister identifies the Gede as male and heterosexual. Their sexual power and dominance, in turn, is demonstrated by "a huge wooden phallus [that] is kept on the altar in case such an attribute is suddenly required by the god" (Métraux 113). The male Vodou practitioner enacts the dominant heterosexuality of the Gede in the verse of Baker's love tune when his heterosexuality takes full control over the woman and thus emerges as the superior sexuality, indicated when Baker sings, "He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me"/ "He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me"/ "Just about as mixed up as a girl could be"/ "He done a voodoo voodoo voodoo-ed me." On the other hand, McAlister reads the Gede "as a counterpart to the heterosexual masculinity" (2000: 140) and consequently "open to homosexual possibilities" (2000: 142). The Vodou priest in The Del Vikings love song "Voodoo Man" performs the Gede's dominant male homosexuality when he aggressively woos his equally male counterpart. The sexuality of his beloved, however, is not indicative of homosexuality but heterosexuality since he expresses disquiet at the male practitioner's attempt to win him as sex partner. By adding the facet of sexuality to the gender paradigm, Baker's song promulgates a view that prioritizes male heterosexuality over female heterosexuality and thus stands in stark contrast with the ideology of The Silhouettes tune "Voodoo Eyes." The Del Vikings song, by comparison, disseminates an ideology that renders male homosexuality superior to male heterosexuality.

Sexual hierarchies in these songs are not only created religiously by enacting the spirits' sexuality but also through magic since in Haitian Vodou "no precise frontier can be laid down between the religious and the magic" (Métraux 267). Consequently, apart from religion, both *manbo* and *houngan* practice magic, which happens with the "right hand," meaning that they practice magic as a sympathetic means such as providing help. This particular kind of help, or "treatment," could manifest itself as love spell to heal a broken heart or protection against an evil act of sorcery ordered or performed by a hostile fellow being. The latter type of magic, commonly referred to as black magic, is usually ascribed to a *bòkò*, or sorcerer, who "'serves with both hand'" (Métraux 267), meaning that his intention is to spiritually harm and heal people alike. Magic, however, is not limited to Haitian Vodou but particularly pivotal in Hoodoo due to its definition as "a system of African-American folk magic common to Louisiana and the Southern States" (Malbrough 3). Since it developed from Haitian Vodou, Hoodoo shares various commonalities with Haiti's folk religion. For instance, similar to Haitian Vodou, Hoodoo practitioners perform magic in order to accomplish anything from harming to healing, whereas the line between the various practitioners carrying out the latter function is equally blurry. Zora Neale Hurston uses root doctor and conjurer interchangeably. More recent scholarship such as the *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* differentiates by relating a root doctor to spiritual as well as physical healing, while a conjurer practices both spiritual healing and harming (Lewis 2005: 422). Both the male practitioners in "Voodoo Voodoo" as well as the one in "Voodoo Man" mirror this inconsistency, as they spiritually heal a broken heart by performing a love spell and therefore could belong to either one of the four above-mentioned practitioner categories.

Then again, the affiliation of the fictitious practitioners is discernable in terms of their modus operandi. As opposed to Haitian Vodou, practitioners of the African American folk magic tradition first and foremost utilize natural objects such as roots, hair, and bones. Since the male

practitioner in “Voodoo Voodoo” performs a love spell by placing various personal items such as a flick of the girl’s hair into a little container, which resembles a *gris-gris*, a charm for love spells that is comprised of “small cloths bags filled with [...] HAIR AND NAIL clippings” (Guiley, “gris-gris” 148), he emerges as a Hoodoo practitioners rather than *houngan* or *bòkò*. His identity as such is further underscored by the verse in which the woman thought she took on animal features, lines that reflect the experience of blues legend Robert Johnson of the early twentieth century who is said to have been cursed by a Hoodoo spell and therefore “died crawling on his hands and knees, barking like a dog” (Murray 108). The practitioner in “Voodoo Man” is equally identifiable as Hoodoo practitioner, as he also employs natural objects in order to accomplish his love spell. His clay bust replicates his beloved and thus resembles a Hoodoo fetish doll. Even though both practitioners are affiliated to Hoodoo, it still remains unclear whether they are conjurers or root doctors.

Determining the exact role of the Hoodoo practitioners is, however, essential in order to understand how sexual hierarchies in these songs are created. While a root doctor performs spiritual healing without self-interest,³⁰ a conjurer is out for personal benefit since he “typically receives payment in return for his or her goods and services” (Anderson x) such as casting love spells. Translating these definitions into the cultural context of “Voodoo Voodoo” and “Voodoo Man,” both male Hoodoo practitioners assume the role of a conjurer insofar as they seek personal gain. Their personal gain does not, however, aim at monetary profits but at curing their own broken hearts since the beloved do not return the Hoodoo practitioners’ affection. Hence, both conjurers resort to love spells in order to manipulate their beloved into sharing their feelings. The act of manipulation through love spells comes to the fore when the woman voices moments of mental confusion about her emotions. As opposed to the woman, the man in “Voodoo Man” has not yet been manipulated but senses it could happen at any time and therefore begs the conjurer,

“Don’t cast a spell on me.” As the Hoodoo conjurers have the means to impose their desire onto their beloved and change their emotional state, their sexuality takes up the superior position.

Yet, as opposed to Vodou and the creation of sexual hierarchies through the irrefutable power of the spirits, sexual hierarchies construed by humans in Hoodoo may be subject to resistance. This is rooted in the history of slavery. Although conjurers predominantly aimed at manipulating white slaveholders as mode to harm them, this trajectory changed throughout the nineteenth century. According to Chireau, “More typically were instances of *intra*racial harming in which blacks were believed to have worked harming magic against other blacks” (77). As a natural response, black victims disdained the manipulative assaults of conjurers. Both the woman in “Voodoo Voodoo” and the man in “Voodoo Man” represent these victims and their disdain. The woman disapproves the conjurer’s bending of her mind when she expresses her depreciation of his actions, while the man demonstrates his dislike when he prompts the conjurer to refrain from putting a spell on him. Their objection is emblematic of criticizing sexual hierarchies prioritizing male heterosexuality over female heterosexuality as well as male homosexuality over male heterosexuality. The opposition to gender and sexual hierarchies in these songs resonate with the Feminist and Gay Liberation movement during the New Left era, as mentioned earlier.

Like gender and sexuality, race occupies a central position in Haitian Vodou. After slave insurgents triumphed over the oppressive colonial government and the declaration of independence marked the first black-ruled nation in the Americas, Haiti became a symbol of black pride. While Haitian Vodou “provided an institution through which the African past of the slaves was perpetuated” (Nicholls 31), its practitioners continued to embody black racial identity. As a result of this tenor, the racial identity of the fictitious *houngan* in “Voodoo Voodoo” and “Voodoo Man” as well as the *manbo* in “Voodoo Eyes” equally emerges as black. By adding their racial identity to the gender-sexuality dualism, “Voodoo Voodoo” propagates a hierarchy that prioritiz-

es black male heterosexuality over black female heterosexuality, whereas the racial identity of the black-female-heterosexuality constellation derives from Baker herself since the African American R&B performer sings from the first-person perspective, as mentioned elsewhere. In contrast to LaVern Baker, The Del Viking band members need to be further complicated in terms of racial identity. Unlike the majority of doo-wop bands, The Del Vikings were not exclusively black but biracial. Thus the relationship between the black Vodou priest and the white band members renders black male homosexuality superior to white male heterosexuality, on the one hand; on the other hand, the relationship between the black Vodou priest and the black band members propagates an ideology that suggests the prioritization of black male homosexuality over black male heterosexuality. When complicating the gender-sexuality dualism of “Voodoo Eyes” by interjecting race, the tune promulgates a position from which black female heterosexuality is viewed as superior to black male heterosexuality, whereas the latter racial identity stems from the all-black band The Silhouettes whose members also sing from the first-person perspective.

By relocating the discussion on racial identity from the realm of religion to the sphere of magic, where the male practitioners in “Voodoo Voodoo” and “Voodoo Man” assume the role of a Hoodoo conjurers, the previously criticized gender-sexuality hierarchies in both songs undergo an additional race critique. Barring a few white exceptions, conjurers were and still are primarily identifiable as black since they originally derive from African slaves who were brought from Haiti to the North American continent, prior to 1804 under French colonial rule and afterwards under U.S. governance. By adding the aspect of racial identity to gender and sexuality, “Voodoo Voodoo” and “Voodoo Man” criticize sexual hierarchies prioritizing black male heterosexuality over black female heterosexuality as well as black male homosexuality over black and white male heterosexuality.

By comparison, Jimi Hendrix voices racial issues in his song “Voodoo Chile” through ceremonial practice, strictly speaking the crossroad ritual, rather than through devotees. In Haitian Vodou the crossroad, “the most important of all ritual figures” (Deren 35), denotes the intersection between the physical and the metaphysical world, whereas the latter lies within a cosmic mirror. Hendrix’s reference to the crossroad metaphor in “Voodoo Chile,”³¹ however, is not based on his own knowledge, as he “was *not* a Voodoo initiated in any formal sense” (Murray 112), but dates back to blues man and legend Robert Johnson. Born in Mississippi in 1911, Johnson experienced the harsh reality of white dominion over blacks in the racially segregated South, which he bemoaned in his blues. After his wife died in childbirth at the age of fifteen, he decided to turn to the spiritual world of supernatural powers, as it “was nothing less than the complete antithesis of the white man’s power” (Finn 213). Legend has it that Johnson went to the bayous where he was initiated and made a Faustian pact with the devil at the crossroad, selling his soul for unprecedented guitar skills. Whether or not it was the devil he made a pact with remains uncertain; yet that he was initiated and summoned spirits at the crossroad is not too far-fetched, as Haitian slaves brought the knowledge on this particular ritual to the Delta. Since Johnson “was possessed by the idea of death” (Finn 217), which is to say that he wanted to escape the white cruelties of the physical world by entering the metaphysical sphere where he believed his big guardian angel would strengthen his black consciousness against racial oppression, he probably invoked Papa Legba rather than the devil. Two years later, Johnson returned from the swamplands and allegedly was the best blues guitarist one has ever heard playing thus far. Apart from his unique musical capability, “Johnson’s genius lay in his realizing that music could be used as an antidote to the suffering in his life, as a defence against the evils perpetrated by the whites” (218).

Inspired by Robert Johnson, Jimi Hendrix adapted his legendary experience at the cross-road into the lyrics of his songs, albeit metaphorically and thus occasionally distorted. As a blues man, Hendrix claimed the inheritance of Johnson's supernatural origin and prowess about thirty years after the legend's death. Hence, he saw himself as Johnson's descendent, a Vodou child. According to Murray, Hendrix's "self-identification as the Voodoo Child functions as his statement of black identity" (146). Indeed, the African American guitar virtuoso promotes blackness in "Voodoo Child" when an eagle carries him beyond the limits of eternity. Translating this trope into the cosmography of Haitian Vodou, the eagle is emblematic of the big guardian angel insofar as it saves the Vodou child from the white-dominated physical world by taking it to the metaphysical plane where it is free from racial oppression and can thus unfold its black identity. Like the bluesman, the Vodou child returns from the metaphysical sphere to the physical world where it is portrayed in a picture frame. This metaphor corresponds to the cosmic mirror. Yet, according to Deren, not the devotee but "his gros-bon-ange is a reflection on the surface of that cosmic mirror" (35), which is to say that the Vodou child returns to the physical world in the shape of his big guardian angel and thus with a strengthened black consciousness. Hence, ideologically speaking, "Voodoo Child" encourages moving to a space free from racial oppression in order to empower blackness and subsequently return to world of the oppressor in order to encounter the enemy with a strengthened black consciousness. In a narrow sense, it is the periphery of the oppressor's world since the Vodou child is not fully present but merely a reflection in an object that is part of it.

The empowerment of blackness in "Voodoo Child" is not only based on Haitian Vodou but also draws on Hoodoo, strictly speaking on the practice of conjuring. According to Chireau, in several accounts of African American oral history conjuring equates with witchcraft insofar as both seek destruction by inflicting harm on others. As Vodou child, Hendrix receives a witch's ring from the eagle upon his return to the physical world. Even though the ring has no relation to

practitioners of witchcraft since they “bring about harm solely through spiritual means or by psychic or spiritually projected powers, without rituals or created objects” (Chireau 86), the Vodou child nonetheless inherits the destructive powers of the witch, as its supernatural powers gained in the metaphysical sphere render him what Chireau refers to as “spiritual agent” (86). As such, he is “assigned the causes of misfortune” (Chireau 86). By possessing this attribute upon entering the physical world, the Vodou child propagates an ideology that condones the infliction of harm or, more generally speaking, violence as a means to secure and defend the previously empowered blackness against white oppression.

Given that the various ideologies in these songs revolve around gender, sexuality, and race, they are in dialogue with and thus informed feminist activism, gay as well as black liberation and their intersectionality. Feminist protest during the New Left era of the 1960s and 1970s, commonly referred to as second-wave feminism, was not a monolithic movement but instead an combination of distinct currents with a common point of departure. While “feminists shared ideologies of general liberation from oppression with men (and with nonfeminist women), ideologies which they extended to address the specifics of gender oppression” (Roth 5), they were also divided along the color line. White feminists, who were considered “a standard conceptualization of what the feminist movement was” (Roth 2), articulated racial biases toward feminists of color such as African American women. Consequently, black feminists fought their own struggle for equality, a course of resistance that grew out of the black liberation movement.

While during the civil rights movement black women such as Fannie Lou Hamer functioned as significant key figures alongside black men, their roles changed when black vanguards of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) superseded the previous generation of interracial activism and propagated Black Power and Black Nationalism as the two cornerstones of the Black Liberation movement. The two black liberation leaders Stokely Carmichael

and Charles Hamilton rebuilt “traditional gender roles as a means of remaking the revolutionary Black family as part of Black Liberation ideology” (Roth 82), which is to say that the social structure of the movement shifted to a “masculinist discourse and practice” (Roth 84), while black women became “secondary to men” (Roth 82). Apart from reducing black women to supportive roles such as secretarial work, the conventional black masculinist philosophy demanded “male warriors for the revolution” (Dubey 18) and thus subordinated black women to the patriarchal reproductive system privileging male heterosexuality over female heterosexuality. In order to implement a strong black nation, prominent Black Arts movement leader Imamu Amiri Baraka, known as Everett LeRoi Jones before he renounced his slave name, imposed an anti-birth control resolution onto black women during the Black Power Conference held in Newark in 1967. In doing so, he further deprived black women of their sexual freedom of choice.

The motivation to dominate black female heterosexuality dates back to 1965 when Daniel Moynihan published *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*. The article “renders African American intimate arrangements into the obstacle of outcome” (Ferguson 2004: 121), whereas “the family was imagined as that institution that prevented many African Americans from ‘moving ahead’” (Ferguson 2004: 121). This problem, Moynihan argues, is rooted in slavery. During this time, “gender and sexual devastation [within the black family] replaced the male patriarch with a female head” (Ferguson 2004: 122). This non-heteronormative conformity caused the absence of masculinity, which Moynihan views as “innate to men and biologically driven” (Ferguson 2004: 121), and thus “hindered the progress of Black men, and, by extension, that of the Black community itself” (Roth 86). The absence of masculinity is, however, not the only reason for a delayed progress; eventually, “the state would take the place of the absent patriarch in the African American family and would regulate African American familial practices” (Ferguson 2004: 123). In order to remove the black matriarch and take over, the state drew on invasive and

denigrative measures. According to Johnnie Tilmon, chairwoman of the National Welfare Rights Organization, "the discourse of black matriarchy presented black mothers as unscrupulous and 'incompetent'" (Ferguson 2004: 123). In response to this dilemma, male black liberationists demanded, "the patriarchal family had to be reinstated so as to right the historical wrongs done to the Black male" (Roth 86). Among other privileges, the reinstatement of patriarchy included a sexual hierarchy privileging black male heterosexuality over black female heterosexuality.

Yet Moynihan's black matriarchy theory was by far not the only reason for male black liberationists to dominate the heterosexuality of their black female counterparts. Within an interpretative system, cultural texts such "Voodoo Eyes" are equally responsible. Even though the song portrays black female heterosexuality as superior to black male heterosexuality, the position is not evocative of encouraging the course of black feminism since feminists did not seek sexual supremacy but sexual equality. Instead, the perspective is emblematic of being accountable for subordinating black female heterosexuality since it functions as a controlling image. According to Patricia Hill Collins, one example of controlling image is the black matriarch, who "represents the sexually aggressive woman, one who emasculates Black men because she will not permit them to assume roles as Black patriarchs" (78). Like the image of the black matriarch, the *manbo* in "Voodoo Eyes" demonstrates black female heterosexual aggressiveness, which she uses as a mode to render the black male heterosexuality of her beloved inferior and prevent him from gaining sexual mastery. Since controlling images "are designed to make racism, sexism and poverty appear to be natural, normal, and an inevitable part of everyday life" (Collins 68), the song, interestingly sung by an all-black male doo-wop band, ideologically justifies and encourages the male black liberationists' aspiration to reinstate patriarchy and along with it the domination of black female heterosexuality.

As a result of dominating black female heterosexuality within the framework of patriarchy, black male heterosexuality emerges as the superior sexuality. This power position finds motivation in LaVern Baker's "Voodoo Voodoo," strictly speaking in the song's Haitian Vodou component in the sphere of religion. As with the *houngan* in the song and his enactment of the Gede's dominant and irrefutable male heterosexuality as a means to take control over the black woman's heterosexuality, the male black power leaders relied on patriarchal philosophy as authoritative ideology in order to subordinate the heterosexuality of their female counterparts. Since both "Voodoo Voodoo" and the black power leaders go by the same sexual hierarchy privileging black male heterosexuality over black female heterosexuality, the 1958 released song created an ideology that is symbolic of predicting the sexual politics of the Black Liberation movement in the second half of the 1960s.

The song's Hoodoo component in the realm of magic, on the contrary, levels criticism at the sexual hierarchy privileging black male heterosexuality over black female heterosexuality and is thus indicative of reflecting the agenda of the black feminist movement. "By 1968," Roth writes, "Black feminists had responded publicly to the Black Liberationist/nationalist emphasis on traditional gender roles" (86), whereas one particular concern was the denial of birth control. The Black Women's Liberation Group of Mount Vernon and New Rochelle, New York, first addressed this issue. In "Poor Black Women," Patricia Robinson, co-founders of the joint feminist movement and daughter of a Planned Parenthood national board member, along with her fellow writers criticized black male liberationists for imposing an anti-birth control resolution onto them. Similar to the black woman in "Voodoo Voodoo," who disdained the conjurer's privileging of his black male heterosexuality, the Mount Vernon women criticized male black liberationists for subordinating their black female heterosexuality.

Apart from black heterosexual women, black homosexual men were also subject to the interlocking system of racial and sexual oppression. Despite their common race struggle, homophobic reactions against black gay men came from within the ranks of black male liberationists. To them, heterosexual machismo was “synonymous with the revolutionary male ethos” (Watts 233), while same-sex eroticism manifested “a discredited sexuality incompatible with Black manhood and corrosive of the goals of Black revolution” (Byrd 17). As with black women and birth control, Eldridge Cleaver, the Black Panther Party’s minister of information, feared that homosexuality would put the black revolution at risk since same-sex relationships render the reproduction of potential rebels impossible and thus undermine group preservation in tandem with the larger goal of nation building. In order to further justify his homophobia, Cleaver accuses James Baldwin of publicly emasculating straight black men by asserting that homosexual men are superior.³²

Since “Homophobia unified the left” (Gosse, *Rethinking* 173), discrimination against black homosexuals was not merely on the agenda of male black liberationists but also entered the ranks of New Left currents that were dominated by white heterosexual men. Like its global equivalents in the Soviet Union and Cuba, the predominantly white new communist movement in the U.S. “portrayed homosexuality as a bourgeois vice and a symptom of capitalism” (Hames-Garcia 248) and thus considered it “incompatible with socialism” (Hames-Garcia 248). Hence, homosexual Marxists in general and black gay revolutionaries such as African American writer Willard Motley in particular “remain peripheral to socialist thought of this day” (Hames-Garcia 248), as their sexuality was considered detrimental to the course of the movement. Likewise, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) condemned homosexuality “as a bourgeois aberration” (Wei 31) and therefore “was steeped in [...] machismo” (Savran 133), which is to say that the leading social base of the SDS consisted of almost exclusively white heterosexual men, while the

organization's politics marginalized non-white homosexuals such as black gay men. "Voodoo Man" is suggestive of ideologically encouraging these homophobic sentiments. Similar to the heterosexual man in the song, who fears the privileging of black male homosexuality over white and black male heterosexuality and therefore speaks out against it, both black liberationist Eldridge Cleaver and white SDS members were afraid that allegedly non-masculinist black gay men such as James Baldwin and Willard Motley could dominate their masculinist course of resistance and consequently considered it necessary to voice homophobia.

Gay rights activism responded to the prevalent homophobia. While fear of same-sex relationships existed and still exists in various cultures around the globe, successful opposition to discrimination in the U.S. did not erupt until the Stonewall riot on June 27, 1969. Although African American homosexual men participated in the Stonewall riot, they were not active in the Gay Liberation movement until the 1980s. According to *Encyclopedia of African American Politics*, the marginalization is rooted in the black community, which considered homosexuality a cultural and religious taboo (158). The Black Panther Party was a rare exception to the rule. Against Eldridge Cleaver's homophobic outbursts, Huey Newton began to challenge sexism and the Party became "the first, and for many years the only, national African American organization to speak out in favor of gay rights or to make open alliance with a homosexual rights group" (Ongiri 21). During the Black Panther Party's Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention in 1970, Newton issued a position paper. In his statement, the Panther leader elucidated that not only black heterosexual but also homosexual men suffer from oppression and therefore should join forces in order to engender a more powerful revolution against the dominant discourse of white heteronormativity. Similar to the *houngan* in "Voodoo Man," Huey Newton and the BPP celebrated a sexual hierarchy privileging black male homosexuality over white male heterosexuality.

While the intersectionality of race, gender, and sexuality had an impact on nationalism, the concept of nation building was not homogeneous but diverged into different ideological directions. Embarking on the common understanding for the necessity of “political and economic autonomy as the only strategy for black people in a country dominated by ethnic group competition” (*Rethinking* 212), Gosse identifies territorial nationalists such as the Republic of New Africa (RNA) as a distinct type of nationalists, who can be interpreted as being ideologically influenced by Jimi Hendrix’s “Voodoo Chile.”³³ Consisting of former Black Panthers and members of the Black Liberation Army (BLA), the RNA “took Garvey and the Nation of Islam’s call for a separate black homeland literally” (Gosse, *Rethinking* 122). That is, as reparation settlement for crimes against blacks during slavery, the group demanded the secession of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina from the rest of the U.S., which the RNA would then convert into a geographically autonomous space, an independent black nation within white America. “Once sovereignty was achieved,” Van Deburg writes, “the RNA’s present ‘government-in-exile’ would work to ‘consolidate the Revolution’ by constructing new institutions guaranteed to improve the lives of black residents” (145). One powerful institution was *Ujamaa*, a model from Tanzania that seeks “cooperative economics and community self-sufficiency” (Van Deburg 145) which “would serve as a guide for the structuring of the Republic’s economy” (Van Deburg 145). And if the U.S. government refused to cede the five states to the RNA, the separatists would resort to a contingency plan, which intended to buy farmland in Mississippi and develop a prototype community with a national capital. Founding such black community by applying official political processes such as voter organization, the RNA felt confident to gain enough power to bargain with the U.S. government and to incorporate the missing states.

The RNA’s call for a black spatial territory can be read as being ideologically encouraged by Hendrix’s “Voodoo Chile.” Like the protagonist in his song, who promotes the strengthening

of blackness in a space free of racial oppression, the RNA suggested taking over five southern states and bring them under fully independent rule so that black people are no longer subordinated to the dominant discourse of white supremacy but determine themselves racially in regard to politics, economics, social life, and culture. Once blackness is empowered and self-sufficiency is established, the Vodou child suggests returning to the oppressor's world and confronting the present power structure. Translating this trope into the given context, the RNA matches the ideology in Hendrix's song insofar as the black separatist group planned on founding an official governmental form that has the bilateral power to bargain with the predominantly white U.S. government. Yet, as with the Vodou child and its continuance on the periphery of the oppressor's world, the RNA attempted to establish "local branches or 'consulates'" (Van Deburg 145) that would represent the newly formed nation at the fringe of the U.S. jurisdiction and thus with a necessary distance.

If the U.S. government refused to hand these five states over to the RNA, which needless to say was the case, the black separatists "urged a military takeover of the Black Belt in the South" (Gosse, *Rethinking* 122). Indeed, according to Van Deburg, the RNA was ready to "fight a 'people's war' on two fronts" (147). As with every sovereign nation, the RNA founded an official and formally organized army, the New African Security Force, troops that defended the territory against invaders from the outside, in this particular case U.S. authorities. In addition to the internal defense apparatus, "RNA sympathizers throughout the urban North would act spontaneously to open a second front" (Van Deburg 147) along which "urban guerillas would possess a 'second-strike capability' potent enough to divide the U.S. forces" (Van Deburg 147). That is, the RNA ordered assailants to destroy the industrial sector and consequently weaken the U.S. from within. The strategic combination of guerillas and the RNA Security Forces were meant to "bring U.S. representatives to the bargaining table on their knees" (Van Deburg 147). The black sepa-

ratist vision is emblematic of coinciding with the ideology of the Hoodoo component in “Voodoo Chile.” Similar to the protagonist, who assumes the destructive powers of the witch and uses it upon entering the world of the oppressor in order to secure his blackness against white racism, the RNA Security Forces turned to a militant approach as a means to protect the black group’s interest in political, economic, social, and cultural self-determination against the dominant white discourse.

Similar to Haitian popular music and its use of Vodou as vehicle for the middle-class’s cultural Marxist revolution against Duvalier’s oppressive class politics, the belief system in U.S. popular music ideologically informed the socio-political struggle of the American New Left, strictly speaking the course of the Feminist movement, the Gay as well as Black Liberation movement and their intersectionality. Since Vodou in U.S. popular music consists in large parts of both Haitian Vodou and Hoodoo, two cultural forms that can express opposing views, each practice is suggestive of informing currents that stand in stark ideological contrast to one another. Unlike “Voodoo Voodoo” and “Voodoo Man,” “Voodoo Eyes” is an exception insofar as it only contains Haitian Vodou. This component projects a view that renders black female heterosexuality superior to black male heterosexuality. Even though this ideology can be read as being supportive of the heterosexual black feminist discourse at first glance, it has quite the opposite effect since it functions as a controlling image. As such, it is meant to demonize heterosexual black women as threat to heterosexual black men and consequently raises sympathy for the black liberationists’ heterosexist discourse against women. The reinstatement of patriarchy, in turn, is symbolic of being encouraged by the Haitian Vodou component in “Voodoo Voodoo” when the *houngan* creates a sexual hierarchy favoring black male heterosexuality over black female heterosexuality. The song’s Hoodoo element, in contrast, criticizes privileging black male heterosexuality over black female heterosexuality and is thus suggestive of ideologically influencing the

anti-sexist discourse of the joint black feminist movement Black Women's Liberation Group of Mount Vernon and New Rochelle, New York.

The interlocking system of racial and sexual oppression also had an effect on black homosexual men. Both white and black heterosexual men of the New Left feared that the alleged lack of masculinity among homosexual men in general and black homosexual men in particular undermines the movements' revolutionary course. In order to prevent that, members of the new communist movement, SDS as well as the black liberationist leaders such as Eldridge Cleaver articulated homophobia. Their stance can be interpreted as being based on the Hoodoo component in "Voodoo Man" when the man in the song criticizes the conjurer's hierarchy privileging black homosexual men. The Haitian Vodou section of the song, on the contrary, is evocative of ideologically supporting the Gay Liberation movement. As with the *houngan*, the Black Panthers, as the only proponents of gay rights activism at this time, considered black male homosexuality superior to white male heterosexuality.

"Voodoo Chile," in contrast, is significant of informing the concept of nation building, to be precise the RNA's Territorial Nationalism. Like the Vodou child in the blues tune, who proposes an autonomous space where blacks can strengthen their racial identity, the RNA intended to occupy five southern states and establish a sovereign zone of black self-determination. And if the U.S. government refuses to cede these territories to the RNA, the latter would not hesitate to resort to violence as a means to secure its goal of Black Nationalism. The motivation for such decision, in turn, can be read as stemming from the ideology as disseminated in the Hoodoo section of "Voodoo Chile." Similar to the RNA, the protagonist in the song suggests violence in order to protect blackness against white racist oppression.

Violence as a means to an end was also pivotal to the anti-Vietnam War movement. Although this current is part of the larger New Left scope, it differs from black and gay liberation as

well as feminism inasmuch as it wrestled with foreign policy on a bilateral level rather than domestic identity politics. In addition to the scholarship on highly popularized cultural implications such as protest music, there are various accounts on literature; in fact, given that the Vietnam War was not only America's longest war but also the first war that the U.S. lost, the conflict climaxed in roughly "two hundred Vietnam War novels" (Ringnalda 25), whereas "Most Vietnam War novels continue to try to make America's experience with Nuoc Vietnam behave by smelting it down into the traditional narrative of realism" (Ringnalda 26). Apart from explicit contextualization, contemporary authors also problematized the brutal conflict in tandem with the peace movement implicitly by drawing on Vodou and its anti-imperial function.

CHAPTER III.

VODOU IN U.S. LITERATURE AND THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT

On July 27, 1915, a gruesome scenario befell the streets of Port-au-Prince. After president Vilbrun Guillaume Sam ordered the brutal slaughter of over 150 dissidents in the city jail, his political opponent Rosalvo Bono led an angry crowd of the victims' relatives and friends to overturn the government. Driven by fear for his life, the president sought refuge in the French embassy. On the very same day, the mob took the diplomatic mission by storm, dragged Guillaume through the capital, and dismembered him. While the political chaos was merely the pretext for the U.S. marines to occupy Haiti only one day later, the actual motives for the military intervention lay much deeper. According to Nicholls, it was "an interaction between economic and financial factors on the one hand and strategic factors on the other" (145). Strategically, the U.S. proceeded on the Monroe Doctrine to gain full control over the Caribbean in order to build a bulwark against the growing hostility of Germany and its stronghold in neighboring Haiti. Economically and financially, the U.S. encouraged new investment in order to boost local prosperity and integrate Haiti into the larger network of global capitalism. What appeared to be an act of foreign aid at first, however, turned out to be "a unique laboratory for social, economic, political, and administrative paternalism" (Millspaugh 2); that is, under the pseudo-benevolent rhetoric of paternal care and guidance, the U.S. brutally subjugated the lower class to forced labor, or *corvée*, in order to gain most economic profitability. And while the mulatto elite "saw in the occupation a chance to re-establish the political hegemony [...] which had been gradually eroded in the preceding decades" (Nicholls 146), American racism at this time "insisted on treating all Haitians of whatever colour as 'niggers'" (Nicholls 142) and consequently denied the elite the opportunity to re-

sume power; instead, the U.S. installed the puppet president Philippe Sudre Dartiguenave, who represented Washington's imperial interests in Haiti.

Haiti's elite did not condone its submission to the coercive hegemony but spawned a two-fold indigenist approach as mode of opposition to U.S. imperialism: the ethnological and the literary movement. In *Ainsi parla l'oncle* (1928), black intellectual Jean Price Mars, founding member and one of the most decisive representative of the ethnological movement, stressed the importance of their African past in general and the centrality of Vodou in particular for the development of a black Haitian nationalism. Influenced by the ethnological movement, young Haitian men of letters glorified their African heritage as weapon of resistance to the U.S. imposition of Western culture in their writings. Carl Brouard, for instance, celebrated Vodou in his works such as "Hymn à Erzulie" and, as one of the most radical poets at this time, "led to the belief in [...] the capacity to base a new social order on a poetic vision" (Dash 1998: 74). Given the function of Vodou in a literary context as vehicle of anti-U.S. imperialism, this chapter will examine how Haiti's folk religion in African American literature of the 1960s and early 1970s ideologically informed the simultaneously occurring anti-Vietnam War movement.

Vodou found its way into African American literary forms not just since the second half of the twentieth century but became a vital narrative element during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s. On the one hand, New Negro Movement writer Arna Bontemps solidarized with Haitians under the umbrella of burgeoning pan-Africanism against the U.S. occupation by bringing "together the themes of [...] revolutionary possibility" (Renda 282) in his work *Drums at Dusk* (1939); on the other, Zora Neale Hurston's *Tell My Horse* (1938) "is striking for its enthusiastic and emphatic defense of the occupation" (Renda 291) inasmuch as she emphasized the primitivism of the Haitian masses and therefore believed in the necessity of U.S. paternalism. In fact, "Her narrative is reminiscent of the sensationalist travelogues of white American visitors of

Haiti” (Dash 1997: 59) and thus even “seems to outdo Craig and Wirkus in her description of the unpredictably volatile nature of Haitians who ‘are gentle and lovable except for the enormous and unconscious cruelty’” (qtd. in Dash 1997: 59).

Notwithstanding contrasting viewpoints, Vodou persisted as narrative element until the era of literary nationalism between the mid-1960s and mid-1970s insofar as the Harlem Renaissance influenced the Black Arts movement. Similar to authors of the Harlem Renaissance, cultural nationalist writers of the Black Arts movement developed a black aesthetic in which they “supported black cultural traditions” (Kinloch 76) and “denounced what they saw as oppressive conditions in America [such as] U.S. imperialism” (Kinloch 76). Both the affirmation of black life in the U.S. and the denunciation of the dominant Euro-American discourse derive from the “historical stigmatization of those aspects of black American identity and life linked to Africa and the simultaneous valorization of ‘whiteness’ that infiltrated historical Afro-American cultural sensibilities” (Watts 222). Yet, regardless of how much black aesthetic proponents “thought that the culture of black Americans was an unadulterated black culture” (Watts 223), whiteness continued permeating various forms of aesthetic and left black people as “bastard children of the West as well as Africa” (Watts 223). This cross-racial dynamic ties in with Gilroy’s paradigm of the Black Atlantic. Basing his observation on Said, who claims that “all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogenous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic” (xxv), McGee concludes, “if the black Atlantic is the hybrid formation that Gilroy suggests it is, there must be points of instability, borderline positions in which it is not so easy to draw a line between white and black” (11). Indeed, the conflation of cultural boundaries, a phenomenon that Watts refers to as “dynamic mulatto culture” (223) ultimately contributed to the demise of the Black Arts movement since, “There has been and continues to be a denial and

negation of diasporic cultures by those who would construct Western culture as a monolithic universal norm” (McGee 11).

Before the Black Arts movement perished, the two evaluative judgments, broken down into the dualistic concept of “good Africa, bad Europe” (Watts 222), found cultural expression in the writings of Ishmael Reed.³⁴ According to Juan-Navarro, his novels function as both a “historical revisionism” (134), which “causes him to reveal and question the conventions and norms of canonical history” (134), as well as “historiographic revisionism” (134), which aims at “demystifying and deconstructing the mythmaking mechanisms of cultural history” (134). As such, they “frequently refer to the dark areas of the past in order to understand present reality” (Juan-Navarro 134), which is to say that “history is seen as the eternal conflict between the tragic and repressive spirits of Judeo-Christian civilization and the ludic and liberation forces represented by African-American cultures and the indigenous peoples of the Americas” (Juan-Navarro 134). In order to “break open the homogeneous space and temporal continuum of bourgeois or imperialist history and to constitute the plural space of something like Messianic time” (McGee 83), Reed incorporates Vodou in his writings, as “folklore serves in the literature as the antithesis of closed, oppressive systems” (Byerman 3). And even though “fiction does not operate in terms of a simplistically dualistic conflict that shows the triumph of the good-hearted folk over the evil racist, capitalist, or sexist” (Byerman 8), mostly because it “would compromise the folk material by ignoring the historical context out of which it emerges” (Byerman 8), Vodou in Reed’s writings makes an exception. While Vodou “can be manipulated to serve the interests of exploiting powers” (McGee 84), which is historically exemplified by Western horror cinema and its demonization as savage cult as well as Duvalier’s use of Vodou as ruthless mode of intimidation, “this development does not erase the subversive core” (McGee 84). Indeed, Reed “appeals to the subversive core of vodun when he transforms its symbolic practice, which resists writing, into writing –

a writing against writing as the medium of Western metaphysics and ideology, a text against text, a quest for truth that subverts the very principle of truth as origin and end” (McGee 84).

While Reed might not be the only author who contextualized Vodou in his writings during the Black Arts movement era, he is certainly the one who drew most extensively on the belief of African descent at this time; in fact, “terms such as voodoo, hoodoo, and Neo-HooDoo occur throughout Reed’s fiction, poetry, and critical essays” (Juan-Navarro 135). More importantly, however, is the use of these black cultural traditions as “countercultural moment within Reed’s work” (McGee 16) in tandem with the author’s effort to unmask the “oppressive nature of Western culture” (Byerman 218) and to criticize the Vietnam War (Menton 35), which renders his texts ideological informants of the anti-imperialist discourse during the conflict in Southeast Asia. His most celebrated novel *Mumbo Jumbo* (1972) resonates best with this ideology insofar as it uses two out of three temporal levels (Juan-Navarro 144) that tie Vodou and the anti-Vietnam War movement together: the narrative present of the 1920s, when Vodou re-emerged as revolutionary vehicle on the road to Haitian nationalism under U.S. occupation, and the period of the novel’s creation between the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, a phase that coincides with the anti-Vietnam War movement and its struggle against U.S. imperialism.

Synoptically, according to Juan-Navarro’s helpful dissection, Reed’s intricate novel *Mumbo Jumbo* suggests a story line that is organized around one main strand as well as two subplots, spread over fifty-four chapters or segments of different length. The main dramatic plot revolves around an epidemic called Jes Grew. The plague, which turns out to be an anti-plague since it has always “enlivened the host” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 6) rather than bringing about “the body to waste away” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 6), favors black culture, enables multiculturalism and polytheism. Once infected with Jes Grew, the host shows symptoms of frantic dancing. The outbreak of this epidemic is related to the re-appearance of the Book of Thoth, or the Text, an an-

thology that retells the mysteries of ancient Egypt as the origin of black counterhistory. However, since the whereabouts of the Text is unknown, the two antagonists PaPa LaBas, a black detective and owner of Mumbo Jumbo Cathedral, and Hinckle Von Vampton, a white Knight Templar, begin to search for it. While LaBas wants to save Jes Grew and to ensure that the anti-plague will spread nation-wide in order to enrich culturally diverse centers such as Chicago and New York, Von Vampton's only interest is to stop and permanently destroy it. Simultaneously, one subplot tells the story of the white Atonist Path, on whose behalf Von Vampton operates, and its militant arm, the Wallflower Order, which seeks to create a Talking Android. The mission of this fake black intellectual is to undermine the Harlem Renaissance. The other subplot deals with the Mu'tafikah, a multicultural guerilla organization that attempts to steal artifacts from Western museums, also known as Art Detention Centers, and return them to their country of origin in the Third World. The quest ultimately comes to an end when LaBas realizes that the Text is gone, destroyed by black Muslim Abdul Sufi Hamid. With the Text's destruction, the Atonists believe that Jes Grew is extinguished but it turns out that the anti-plague lives on, as it always seeks new texts to thrive on.

Given that *Mumbo Jumbo* was written in a postmodern fashion, noticeably characterized by, but not limited to, its rejection of linear narrative structures, undermining of formal convention as well as its subversion of boundaries between reality and fiction, Reed's appropriation of Vodou mirrors the paradigmatic concept of pastiche. This literary technique, which Fredric Jameson identifies in "Postmodernism and Consumer Society" as one of the most salient and significant features of postmodernism, "is defined as imitation of style" (Gutleben 56); that is, instead of deploying innovation and originality, postmodern authors recycle already existing work. Yet, Margaret A. Rose insists, pastiche is not meant for the purpose of forgery but, as Hassan stresses, to "enrich *re*-presentation" (170). Adhering to the idiosyncrasy of pastiche and given Reed's crit-

ical stance against Western imperialism, the textual device accentuates the revolutionary nature of Vodou in *Mumbo Jumbo*. And as mentioned above, it is not only Vodou but also the African American folk magic tradition Hoodoo, which recurs throughout the novel. On the one hand, Reed juxtaposes both cultural practices and consequently considers them separately; on the other, his use of pastiche, also suggestive of “the blendings of various elements into something else” (Berger 47), hybridizes Vodou and Hoodoo. This “syncretism between voodoo-hoodoo forms and U.S. popular culture” (Juan-Navarro 137) is what Reed proposes as Neo-HooDoo.³⁵ Taken together, Vodou as anti-imperialist tool in *Mumbo Jumbo* surfaces as both Haiti’s folk religion as well as syncretistic component of Neo-HooDoo.

The liberating function of Haitian Vodou in *Mumbo Jumbo* foregrounds within the context of the militant peasant uprising, or *cacos* revolt. Starting off in the late 1860s as bands of “former slaves who ‘harassed the French’ as guerilla irregulars in support of Christophe and Desalines” (qtd. in Renda 140), the *cacos* revolt in Haiti regained momentum during the early years of the U.S. occupation when the invaders reintroduced *corvée* in 1916.³⁶ This brutal system of forced labor required that “Public highways and communications will be maintained and repaired by the inhabitants, in rotation, in each section through which roads pass and each time repairs are needed” (qtd. in Heinl and Heinl 415). While some workers welcomed *corvée* to an extent where they even “had to be sent home” (Heinl and Heinl 416), the majority of peasants developed a growing resentment to the horrors of this cruel labor system. It was not until 1918 when major A. S. Williams finally came to understand that *corvée* was “one of the great causes of American unpopularity among the Haitians” (qtd. in Heinl and Heinl 416). At this point, however, Williams’s realization was too late. Twenty-seven days before the major gave the order to terminate *corvée*, Charlemagne Péralte, an educated and high-ranking military officer who “dubbed himself ‘General in Chief of the Revolution’” (Dubois 255), united Rosalvo Bobo’s old *cacos*, whom he led

against Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, with Zamorist bands from Hinche in order to “to drive the invaders into the sea and free Haiti” (qtd. in Heinl and Heinl 417). At first, the *cacos* launched several assaults against the *gendarmerie*, an American-trained Haitian force that supported and protected the puppet regime of Dartiguenave. While Péralte led estimated 5000 adherents in the North, Benoît Batrville, Péralte’s “Chief Minister of the Revolution” (Heinl and Heinl 418), opposed the *gendarmerie* in the western region of Upper Artibonite. Initial strikes such as the attack on the *gendarmerie* in Hinche on October 17, 1918, remained relatively ineffective. Later offensives such as the one on Maïssade in November, however, turned out to be so severe that Williams was forced to request additional backing from the marine brigade. Upon his request, the U.S. government appointed H. H. Hanneken, marine sergeant and *gendarmerie* captain, who made it his mission to capture Péralte in order to weaken the resistance from within. On November 1, 1919, Hanneken managed to infiltrate the outpost where Péralte was hiding and subsequently killed the *cacos* leader with two bullets through the chest. Meanwhile in central Haiti, Batrville continued resisting what became increasingly more difficult since the joined forces “had aerial support, with the *cacos* serving as targets for the first recorded instance of coordinated air-ground combat, in March, 1919” (Schmidt 103). With the help of advanced weaponry, the militarily superior marines in cooperation with the *gendarmerie* zeroed in on the *cacos* and shot Batrville on May 19, 1920. The death of Batrville simultaneously ended “the last armed *Caco* resistance” (Heinl and Heinl 424).

According to Lemelle, there is evidence that both Péralte and Batrville were “Vodun devotees, if not *houngans*” (Lemelle 90). As such, the *cacos* leaders rallied their men under the banner of Ogou, the Vodou spirit of martial force and war. McCarthy Brown argues that through the imagery of Ogou, strictly speaking its military manifestations Ogou Feray, Sin Jak Majè, and Ogou Badagri, “Soldiers are given powers beyond those of the ordinary citizen” (1997: 70). One

essential power is to wage war on a daily basis, which “is possible because Ogou taps the deepest source of human energy: anger, the final defiant refusal to admit defeat” (McCarthy Brown 1997: 73-74). This psychological driving force of resistance, historically evolving from “the raging revolt of the slaves against the Napoleonic forces” (Deren 62), for instance, came to the fore during the incident in Hinche on October 17, 1918, when “the *Cacos* swarmed in [on the *gendarmerie*], each wearing the scarlet badge of *Ogoun*” (Heinl and Heinl 417), a sign that indicates possession by the war spirit. Despite the conferred power of Ogou, the battle was over in half-hour and casualties on the part of the *cacos* outnumbered the ones on the part of the *gendarmerie* by a ration of thirty-five to two, a massive defeat for the *cacos* rebellion that night.

In chapter 42, the section that unveils most information about the occupation, Reed addresses the *cacos* revolt under the protective powers of Ogou when Black Herman, African American root doctor and occultist, takes PaPa LaBas to the New York harbor docks in order to meet Batrville on his fictitious vessel, *The Black Plume*. After Batrville informs PaPa LaBas and Black Herman about the oppressive nature of the marine invasion, he teaches his guests about Haitian Vodou and its potential to subvert threatening powers by emphasizing that Péralte “rallied the Cacos to his banner of Ogoun War Loa” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 135). Since “Reed wrote *Mumbo Jumbo* after a research trip to Haiti in 1969” (Mvuyekure 355), it is quite possibly that the author addresses the Hinche incident, which is not only indicated by fighting under Ogou’s possession but also by Batrville who adds the year 1918 as time designation to his story. As opposed to Western metaphysics and “its notion of a totalized history” (Hogue 2002: 102), which accentuates the failure of the *cacos* rebellion and thus endeavors to call the subversive effectiveness of Ogou into question, Reed disregards the number of casualties in *Mumbo Jumbo* and keeps faith with the revolutionary function of the war spirit. This finds expression when Batrville does not mention any loss but proudly reports that under the spiritual war power of Ogou,

“we countered by moving in small detachments during the night and ambushing many a Marine patrol” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 135). In this context, Reed encourages revolutionaries to stay focused and to continue believing in their course of resistance against imperial powers, regardless of any recorded losses.

By keeping confidence in Ogou, Reed preserves the spirit’s revolutionary powers. These powers rely on the deity’s ambivalent pantheon affiliation. According to McCarthy Brown, “Ogou should [...] be classified according to the binary system set up by the Rada and Petro pantheons” (McCarthy Brown 1997: 68). Indeed, on the one hand, Ogou in *Mumbo Jumbo* belongs to the Rada pantheon, which comes to the fore when Batrville explains that the *cacos* rallied under Péralte’s banner of Ogou but also stresses that the self-proclaimed “General in Chief of the Revolution” (Dubois 255) “refused to practice the old ways” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 136); that is, he “refuses the Petro” (McGee 94). On the other hand, Ogou in Reed’s novel is associated with the Petro pantheon. Even though Batrville joined Péralte and his *cacos*, the appointed “Chief Minister of the Revolution” (Heinl and Heinl 418) did not necessarily rally under his superior’s banner; instead, since they “made a sacred journey to have Ogoun possesses [them] to know [their] course” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 136) and Batrville “practice[s] the Petro Loa” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 134), he rendered homage to Ogou of the Petro rather than of the Rada pantheon. Given that Ogou mediates “between two opposed ways of being represented by the Rada and the Petro pantheon” (McCarthy Brown 1997: 69), meaning “protection on a day-to-day basis” (McCarthy Brown 1997: 67) on the Rada side and a personality that is characterized as “fierce, severe, and uncompromising” (McCarthy Brown 1997: 67) on the Petro side, Reed suggests an ideology that endorses aggression as a means to protection.

Both *cacos* leaders in *Mumbo Jumbo* propagate Ogou’s revolutionary powers through the playing of instruments. Apart from their religious functions during ceremonial practices such as

the invocation of the spirits, musical instruments in Haitian Vodou serve as a tool of interpersonal communication by producing sounds and rhythms that are codified into a secret language. Both the drum and the conch shell horn, for instance, allowed slaves to exchange encrypted information about the organization of the imminent revolution without running the risk of being caught by their masters and facing harsh punishment or even death. The oppressive nature of the U.S. occupation called for a similar secret strategy of communicative exchange. According to Ramsey, “Almost all of the marine accounts speculate that insurgents used drum rhythms for communication” (132). Indeed, U.S. marine Faustin Wirkus, for instance, describes in his travelogue *The White King of La Gonave* (1931) that he “heard drumming that was ‘plainly a signal to another force on another mountain’” (qtd. in Ramsey 133), meaning that the *cacos* used drums in order to coordinate their rebellion. The same scenario surfaces in *Mumbo Jumbo* when Batrville mentions to Black Herman and PaPa LaBas, “the conch horns and the drums informed the people all over the country that we had returned to our ancient religion” (Reed 136). That “ancient religion” refers to Vodou and its revolutionary history under the war power of Ogou becomes apparent when Batrville subsequently stresses, “The Marines became nervous” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 135), as they remembered what once happened to the French colonizers approximately a century ago. With respect to instruments and their practical purpose as communication tool, *Mumbo Jumbo* disseminates a perspective that encourages revolutionaries to resort to music as a mode to promulgate resistance.

Despite his strong effort to highlight the revolutionary power of Vodou against Western imperialism, Reed ignores the role of women who supported the *cacos* insurgency spiritually as Vodou priestesses. Historically, Bellegarde-Smith concludes from the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom report of 1927, “Because the support of peasant population for guerilla resistance movements is generally necessary if they are to succeed, women’s participa-

tion in the movement was probably relatively high” (83). Madame de Thèbes, for instance, significantly contributed to the *cacos* rebellion by practicing Vodou. After Péralte sent her soil samples from the heavily contested conflict zones, the *manbo* used these for her novena, which “cause[d] the *gendarmes* to become ‘paralyzed and confused’” (qtd. in Heinl and Heinl 419). Yet Reed not only leaves out the spiritual support of women; to make matters worse, he omitted the historical function of women during the rebellion in general and therefore also logistical and material aid, which they provided. According to Davis, “Under the guise of supplying the towns with produce, Haitian women smuggled ammunition and intelligence on U.S. troop movements to insurgents throughout the countryside” (qtd. in Bellegarde-Smith 83). One of these women was Batraverse’s wife. During the conflict years, Madame Batraverse pretended to be a market woman in order to avoid drawing attention. Under this scheme, she was able to “freely ride her bay mule into Port-au-Prince or Mirebalais and pick up supplies and gossip” (Heinl and Heinl 423).

The absence of women during the nationalistic discourse against the U.S. occupation in *Mumbo Jumbo* may be ascribable to Reed’s heavily criticized misogyny. Similar to his Black Arts movement companion Eldridge Cleaver, who complained in *Soul on Ice* “that the black woman has been the silent ally of the white man’s oppression of black men” (Edmondson 81) and thus hinders the attempt to establish Black Nationalism in the U.S., Reed equally accuses black women of contaminating “black nationalism with desires for whiteness,” Edmondson argues (81). Edmondson draws her conclusion from the portrayal of the main character’s black sister in Reed’s later novel *The Last Days of Louisiana Red* (1974). Under the influence of Louisiana Red, “the text’s metaphor for whiteness” (Edmondson 81), the black woman “betrays her family – a symbol of the black community – by going into battle against her family form” (Edmondson 81). Even though Edmondson proves her point by exemplifying the black girl in *The Last Days of Louisiana Red*, this does not mean *Mumbo Jumbo* is devoid of misogyny; in fact, *Mumbo Jumbo*

also carries Reed's misogynistic signature, which is indicated by the fact that it has equally been the "target of so much well-deserved feminist critique" (Gillman 30). Hence, regardless of the example chosen, Reed's novels reflect his pervasive misogynistic stance. In this sense, the author propagates an ideology that incites male revolutionaries to exclude women from the anti-imperial discourse, on the one hand; on the other, reading against the grain, the absence of gender diversity serves to ideologically encourage women to fill in the void and make their revolutionary voices heard in addition to and beyond the ones of their male counterparts.

In addition to Vodou and its anti-imperial role during the U.S. occupation, *Mumbo Jumbo* posits Haiti's folk religion in the American context as component of Reed's syncretistic Neo-HooDoo, "a highly flexible construct in which a common base – seen as multicultural, pluralistic, and participatory – is permanently enriched by new contributions" (Juan-Navarro 137). Since Reed's literary method not only embraces the author's "religious principles" (Rushdy 114) but also his "political motives" (Rushdy 114), Neo-HooDoo emphasizes the revolutionary nature of Vodou and signifies it through PaPa LaBas. According to Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s *Signifying Monkey* (1988), PaPa LaBas originated as Legba, the divine trickster figure of the Fon people in Benin. Upon entering the New World, the spirit underwent the process of "reconfiguration and transformation" (Mvuyekure 354), which renamed the deity PaPa Legba in Haitian Vodou and PaPa LaBas in American Hoodoo. To Reed and "his penchant for syncretic cultural forms" (Juan-Navarro 186) as well as his affinity to conflate fiction and empirical facts, however, PaPa LaBas "does not function as loa" (Mvuyekure 354) but assumes the role of a human subject, strictly speaking a Neo-HooDoo detective and therapist; that is, Reed's figure not only represents Hoodoo but, more importantly, also Vodou. The latter foregrounds when Reed remarks, "He's a Ghede" (*Mumbo Jumbo* 211). In Haitian Vodou, the Gede takes on the task of a trickster, whose

“primary characteristic is the audacity of his back talk” (Renda 289). By possessing this feature, the deity “talks back brazenly to the powerful” (Renda 289).

PaPa LaBas’s resistive characteristic occurs when he stands up to his antagonist Hinckle Von Vampton, who “is reminiscent of Carl Van Vechten” (Juan-Navarro 140). Van Vechten was a controversial figure in the history of the Harlem Renaissance. On the one hand, the white and powerful patron promoted black arts beyond the black community by publishing articles in magazines that primarily served a white readership. On the other hand, Van Vechten “invaded Harlem in the twenties in search of the exotic and primitive, and who then commercially exploited its creative potential” (Juan-Navarro 140). While Juan-Navarro argues, “Von Vampton is a fictional character, who is not intended to literally reflect Van Vechten’s activities in Harlem” (171), Hogue proves him wrong, as the fictional character does mirror the main intention of the historical personality. Like Van Vechten and his articles on black culture in periodicals such as *Vanity Fair*, Von Vampton resorts to “the *Benign Monster*, which is ostensibly devoted to the black arts movement [while] the paper’s true purpose is to authenticate white Western civilization” (Hogue 2002: 101). The ambition to substantiate white dominance is further underscored when Von Vampton creates a Talking Android, “a figure from the black community whose purpose is to undermine its cultural foundation from within” (Juan-Navarro 171) and “to end the influence and increasing prestige of black culture in U.S. society” (Juan-Navarro 186).

Instead of being taken in by the exploitative and oppressive intention of the dominant discourse, PaPa LaBas detects Von Vampton’s intrigue and thus comes for the Knight Templar’s arrest during a black arts gathering at the Villa Lewaro. While Von Vampton and his sidekick, Hubert “Safecracker” Gould, who had just declaimed parts of a poem in the guise of a black artist in order to infiltrate the black community, demand an explanation for their apprehension, PaPa LaBas ignores their insistence at first and begins to narrate how Vodou traces back to Osiris and

Isis in ancient Egypt. As laid down in the story, Set tried to eradicate Vodou by persecuting Osiris's guides, who had learned how to practice it, or do the Work. By revealing Von Vampton's relationship to Set during ancient times, PaPa LaBas accuses the former of perpetuating the latter's nefarious heritage of Western dominance into the narrative present, which he then provides as grounds for the arrest. The recognition scene is the moment when PaPa LaBas's identity as Gede comes into play. The trickster's back talk finds specific expression in parody. Defined by Hutcheon's postmodern logic as "capable of performing social critique" (Hogue 2002: 103), it allows the Gede "to expose the truth that official Western history refuses to recognize" (McGee 86). Indeed, rather than "explain[ing] rationally and soberly what they are guilty of" (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 160), which would undermine PaPa LaBas's charge inasmuch as it is scientifically impossible to prove that Von Vampton has survived one thousand years, the Neo-HooDoo detective presents an alternative history, one that eludes logocentrism and is thus able to disclose Von Vampton's connection to Set and along with it the continuous existence of frequently understated Western oppression. Through this section, Reed signals the necessity to question the perspective of the Western discourse and to resort to an alternative ideology in order to elucidate its imperial nature.

Apart from his representation as trickster, PaPa LaBas also retained his task as gatekeeper between two opposite worlds, a religious interconnectedness that is based on the very fact that "as tricksters they [Gede] are mediators" (Gates 6).³⁷ His role as what Byerman calls "the figure in the middle" (231) derives from a long history of various mediums. "Some say his ancestor is the long Ju Ju of Arno in eastern Nigeria, the man who would oracle, sitting in the mouth of a cave, as his clients stood below in shallow water" (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 23), while his "father ran a successful mail-order Root business in New Orleans" (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 23). PaPa LaBas carries on the family tradition as facilitator insofar as he arbitrates between the Western

order, rigidity, and authority, all represented by the Atonists, and “the reduced Other” (Hogue 2009: 155), embodied by the followers of Jes Grew. Even though PaPa LaBas is an adherent of Jes Grew, “a Voodoo-inspired paradigm that symbolizes forces of oppressed freedom, mystery, wonderment, flexibility, diversity and spontaneity” (Hogue 2009: 152) and thus “refuses definition” (Hogue 2009: 149), it is exactly his receptive background as “a pluralist” (Hogue 2009: 159) as well as the anti-plague’s open and heterogeneous character that also render him “representing the intermingling of both Atonism and Voodooism” (Hogue 2009: 167). By representing PaPa LaBas as an in-between figure, Reed deconstructs the binary opposition between white and black with the consequence that “neither black nor white is privileged” (Hogue 2009: 167).

This, for example, manifests itself by the end of *Mumbo Jumbo*, strictly speaking in chapter 54. On the one hand, PaPa LaBas arrests Von Vampton and Gould and, as a result, safeguards the continual existence of Jes Grew against the Atonist Path, knowing that Jes Grew “will come back, and when it returns we will see that it never left” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 204). On the other hand, black loses when PaPa LaBas attempts to prove the existence of the Text. Against the confidence of the Neo-HooDoo detective, the box, which is suppose to hold the Text, is empty. By contenting himself with the temporary absence of the Text and the decision to abandon the quest for it, primarily because it will reappear eventually since it “has no end” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 204), PaPa LaBas concedes a momentary victory to the Atonist Path and its representatives, Von Vampton and Gould. This is indicated when both characters “exchange smiles” (Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo* 196) over the destroyed Text. Overall, Reed presents an ideology that suggests revolutionaries as mediators between the faction they side with and the party they oppose in order to balance out conflicts.

Reed’s writing on anti-Western imperialism reflects the ideologies of the concurrently proceeding anti-Vietnam War movement. Defined as “an amorphous and pervasive social current

that connected the war in Vietnam to domestic struggles” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 1), the movement constituted a variety of organizations, which employed tactics ranging from formal political interventions to popular street protest as well as from non-violent to militant action among men and women of different social, economic, political, and cultural background with the common goal to challenge the imperial decree of U.S. foreign policy in tandem with peace negotiations and the demand to immediately withdraw U.S. military forces. Originally evolving from the Cold War and the international nuclear arms race in 1955, voices of resistance gradually crystallized into a more coherent critique when Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution and authorized President Lyndon B. Johnson to deploy combat troops to Southeast Asia in order to assist South Vietnam with its fight against communism. As subscriber of the Domino Theory, which claims that if one country falls to communism, the neighboring countries will follow, Johnson feared that South Vietnam could be next.

While the U.S. administration justified its military containment policy in Vietnam by demonizing communism as growing threat to the free world of Western capitalism, dissidents resorted to alternative ideologies in order to “challenge the depiction of the Vietnamese as ruthless enemy” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 169). Their task was accomplished by looking at the reverse side of communism. After the Japanese and the French colonized Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh drew on communism as vehicle for nationalism insofar as its deeply embedded ideology of an egalitarian society provided him with the means to unite the masses under Viet Minh, an umbrella coalition of anti-colonial groups against imperial powers and their endeavor to exploit the country and its people by creating oppressive hierarchies. Considering communism as a defense mechanism against invading forces leaves U.S. military interventions as unjustified and excessive imperial aggression against Vietnam rather than as guardian of the free world, a reputation that the U.S. accredited to itself all that much in order to disguise its mission of politically, economically, and

culturally dominating those parts of the world that have not yet adopted Western capitalism. Anti-war protester Dave Dellinger, for instance, unmasked the unscrupulous actions of U.S. foreign policy when he “explored the countryside, where he recorded [...] widespread civilian devastation” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 169). He was not alone. Media representatives such as Harrison Salisbury, associate editor with the *New York Times*, “began a series of reports from North Vietnam in which he detailed the damage done to civilian areas by U.S. bombing” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 168). Had the Vietnam War been a battle against communism as threat to the West, the U.S. would have primarily directed its attacks at Ho Chi Minh, his party, and his strike force instead of myriad civilians. Yet since most of the casualties were civilians, the U.S. administration wanted to ensure that it eradicated potential sources of resistance to their mission of imposing Western capitalism. Questioning the Western discourse by taking non-Western ideologies into consideration is suggestive of tying in with Reed’s disseminated view in *Mumbo Jumbo*. Like PaPa LaBas’s trickster identity as Gede, which exposes the oppressive nature of Western discourse by resorting to a non-logocentric ideology, revolutionary dissidents such as Dave Dellinger and critics like Salisbury disclose the imperial interest by presenting a non-Western perspective of communism.

Herbert Aptheker, member of the American Communist Party, Staughton Lynd, Quaker pacifist, and Tom Hayden, co-founder of SDS, also traveled to Vietnam at this time. Unlike Dave Dellinger, who sought to shed light on the cruelties of U.S. imperialism and therefore presented a rather unilateral perspective, these three activists attempted to mediate between Hanoi and Washington or, to borrow DeBenedetti’s notion, “to form a human bridge for diplomacy” (169). The preceding Logan Act of 1799, however, impeded their mission to bring about peace by facilitating between both sides, as the still legally binding act makes “it punishable by fine and imprisonment for American citizens to discuss with foreign officials matters relating to ‘disputes or

controversies with the United States” (qtd. in Hershberger 35). Regardless of facing severe federal punishment and despite the fact that their passports were not officially validated for travel to this “Communist-controlled portions” (qtd. in Hershberger 40), Aptheker, Hayden, and Lynd embarked on their journey to Southeast Asia on the night of December 19, 1965, in order to pursue their role as mediator between West and East, which was primarily possible because North Vietnam admired U.S. anti-war protesters and thus had a sympathetic ear for them.

Shortly after they arrived, Lynd and Hayden started to facilitate between U.S. and North Vietnamese interests. On the one hand, their goal was to meet American soldiers, whom the North kept as prisoners of war (POW), collect their messages, and pass them on to their families back in the States. At first, North Vietnamese officials dismissed their request. After days of negotiations, the government in Hanoi finally permitted Lynd and Hayden to meet one of the POWs, an American pilot, who “talked warmly about his family, whom he missed dearly, especially his children, because “this is the age when they are really forming their opinions” (qtd. in Hershberger 47). Before Lynd, Hayden, and Aptheker left Southeast Asia, they gave audience to North Vietnam by meeting Premier Pham Van Dong, whose fundamental demand they wanted to take back with them. According to Pham Van Dong, “Washington must withdraw foreign troops from Vietnam and end the bombing. As long as there was no apparent commitment to withdrawing foreign troops from Vietnamese soil, [...], real negotiations could not begin” (Hershberger 48). After completion of their mission, the three activists left for the U.S. on January 6, 1966, but peace was nowhere near yet.

Upon their return, Lynd, Hayden, and Aptheker recorded their experience as mediators in written accounts. Lynd and Hayden co-authored *The Other Side* (1967), which was meant to “help Americans to see the war from Hanoi’s perspective” (Hershberger 46). Despite their effort, *The Other Side* demonstrates “the war very much from an American viewpoint: the perspective

of Americans caught up in theoretical and domestic issues that concerned Americans more than the Vietnamese” (Hershberger 46). While the account of Lynd and Hayden “divides up Vietnam and the Vietnamese in ways reminiscent of Washington’s own mythical division” (Hershberger 46), Aptheker’s travelogue *Mission to Hanoi* (1966) provides “a clearer sense of ‘the other side,’ and of the Americans as well” (Hershberger 46). The role of Lynd, Hayden, and Aptheker as facilitators between the U.S. and Vietnam, whether personally onsite or in their books, is symbolic of mirroring the ideology in *Mumbo Jumbo*. Similar to PaPa LaBas, who mediates between the Western Atonist Path and the non-Western Jew Grew adherents in order to balance out their conflict, the three activists made or, at least, tried to make the U.S. viewpoint accessible to North Vietnam, and vice versa.

When Nixon succeeded Johnson in 1969, he continued his predecessor’s policy of containing communism but adopted a different strategy. After the conservative military regime under General Lon Nol staged a coup against the neutralist reign of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Nixon and Thieu turned the Vietnam War into a broad-based Indochina War by assigning troops into neighboring Cambodia with the intention to dismantle the communists’ hitherto place of refuge and thus weaken the North as well as its peasant guerilla ally, the National Liberation Front, from within. At first, the military expansion did not entail much protest since there was a certain degree of acceptance among the U.S. population. Americans hoped that the military invasion of Cambodia would fortify the government in the South and expedite the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces. The situation, however, changed when the U.S. population came to understand that “the war was being expanded under the pretense of ending it” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 279). In response to it, “protests erupted across the country in the following days” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 279). Even though the majority of rallies remained peaceful, a few American university campuses experienced a wave of violence, among them Kent State University, Ohio. On May 4,

1970, national guardsmen killed four students and wounded thirteen more. While the incident was “raising the American crisis to a new level of anguish” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 279), activists did not give up but maintained their course of resistance.

The activists’ motivation is emblematic of mirroring Reed’s ideology when the author encourages insurgents not to dwell on their losses but to move forward and keep opposing imperial powers. And that is exactly what the dissidents did in the aftermath of the infamous shootings at Kent State as well as other university campuses such as Jackson State University, Mississippi, which faced an insignificantly less dramatic act of violence only ten days later. Similar to Battraville in *Mumbo Jumbo*, who does not address the casualties during the failed *cacos* attack but proudly underscores the heroics of his guerillas and continues believing in the value of his rebellion under the guardianship of war spirit Ogou, the anti-war activists eventually ceased grieving about the losses and resumed their protest, this time with significantly more emphasis. According to DeBenedetti and Chatfield, “more than 100,000 people gathered in Washington on short notice, while rallies took place in other cities” (280). Despite the ultimate realization “that the May demonstration was a fiasco” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 280), mostly because Nixon diverted from the violent incidents during his public appearance and demonstration leaders could not come to terms about a plan of action due to varying perspectives among the highly diverse protesters, New Mobilization Committee leaders did not surrender to the chaotic outcome of the march but carried on their discontent by combining forces with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The goal was to organize “a multi-issue alignment of black and antiwar forces” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 281).

Coalition building broadened throughout the following weeks. The Strategy Action Conference, held in Milwaukee at the end of June, embraced both liberal and radical groups. While liberals kept relying on public protest as a means to end the war in Vietnam, radicals “intended to

go beyond demonstrations to ‘strategies and tactics ... to stop the war’” (qtd. in DeBenedetti and Chatfield 281), in a word, the use of violence. While “violence was seldom employed in antiwar protest [and] used mostly by local right-wing activists or police, especially prior to 1967” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 396), this expedient generally changed in 1970. Concomitant with the attacks on university research facilities, the Weathermen’s drafted their “Declaration of A State of War,” a manifesto that directed their anger against the U.S. government. The Weathermen “was a breakaway faction of the leftist Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), whom the group felt were not violent enough to bring about a ‘revolution’ in the United States” (Simon 96). Their decision to resort to militancy is significant of finding ideological support in *Mumbo Jumbo* when Reed endorses an ideology that seeks aggression as a mode for protection. As with Ogou, who mediates between the hot-tempered Petro and the protective Rada pantheon and therefore combines both qualities, the Weathermen employed violence not only to liberate themselves but also, and more importantly, to protect Vietnamese communists from U.S. imperialism. In order to do so, they began attacking draft boards and soon widened their protective aggression to federal institutions such as military recruitment centers. The various attacks, however, did not cause the desired effect; instead, it divided the radical pacifists into two factions. On the one hand, liberals such as Dave Dellinger urged “‘to stop playacting at violent revolution’” (qtd. in DeBenedetti and Chatfield 282), not least since violence contradicted their pacifist discourse; on the other, Rennie Davis, Sid Lens, and Brad Lytle refrained from backing down. Instead, they “assumed that confrontation could be disciplined, and that this would make a difference in its impact” (DeBenedetti and Chatfield 282). Yet their conception remained idealistic at best since it lacked supporters, who were willing to implement it.

Apart from its strict political agendas, the anti-war movement also had cultural implications. Protest music has accompanied the anti-Vietnam War movement from the beginning of

U.S. involvement in the late 1950s, when the government assigned its first advisors, until the final withdrawal from Southeast Asia in the mid-1970s. By culturally encoding their political messages, musicians made their anti-imperial and peace support publicly known to the population. Barring a few rather unknown exceptions that only received little, if any radio airtime at all, most of these protest songs release prior to 1964 were not specifically tailored to the war in Vietnam but voiced a critical stance against war in general. One notable piece is Bob Dylan's gentle folk song "Master of War" (1963), which heavily criticizes war in general.³⁸ The culture of musical anti-war protest changed by mid-1960s when Congress authorized Johnson to enter the conflict without ever officially declaring war. The growing violence in the wake of U.S. military involvement until 1970 caused "the birth of a heavier type of protest music" (Perone 2001: 14). These mood alterations derived from adding rock elements to folk music. When rallies turned more militant in 1970, protest music went along with it and became even heavier in terms of lyrics and sound. Overall, it is to say that artists laid increasingly more emphasis on rock music elements since they had the effect "to push the 'message' much more strongly" (qtd. in Perone 2001: 15).

The probably most prominent male musician, who criticized the Vietnam War during the onset of the first phase and after Bob Dylan retracted from the protest music scene, was Phil Ochs. According to Perone, his songs "'Draft Dodger Rag' and 'I Ain't Marching Anymore' were the most notable" (2004: 40). By listing physical and mental issues as reasons to excuse the singer from serving in the war, "Draft Dodger Rag" (1965) not only provides potential draftees with ideas to circumvent their induction but also morally supports the simultaneously occurring wave of draft-card burning. Steppenwolf picked up the topic and re-contextualized it with the release of "Draft Resister" (1969), a song that is in "support of draft resisters who had fled to Canada to avoid service in the U.S. military" (Perone 2004: 59) at the end of the 1960s. Ochs's "I

Ain't Marching Anymore" (1965), by comparison, exposes the listener to a history of conflicts in order to demonstrate how much unnecessary blood has been shed throughout the years and that the time has come to stop fighting. The subject of this song resonates with "Handsome Johnny" (1967), in which Richie Havens and co-writer Louis Gossett, Jr. similarly "take the listener chronologically through a succession of wars in which Handsome Johnny, a sort of universal soldier, finds himself" (Perone 2004: 49). As oppose to Ochs's tune, the protagonist in "Handsome Johnny" not only fights the war in Vietnam but also racial apartheid in the streets of Birmingham. By "tying together war and the Civil Rights movement" (Perone 2004: 49), Havens and Gossett, Jr. lambaste domestic racial injustice that has expanded to the international arena, indicated by the disproportionate deployment of African American soldiers as "canon fodder" during the Vietnam War. In addition to white and black male protest singers, female artists equally voiced their anti-Vietnam War sentiment in their songs. Both famous musicians Judy Collins and Joan Baez "appeared frequently at anti-war protests, and apparently to good effect" (Perone 2004: 39). One song, which had a massive impact, was their rendition of "We Shall Overcome" (1963). Originating as "the near-official song of the Civil Rights movement" (Perone 2004: 40), which symbolizes unity against racial oppression, the 1965 version draws on its influence and encourages collective protest against the prevailing power of the U.S. government and its military apparatus.

At the beginning of the second anti-war wave in 1970s, protest music grew louder and more determining, as it made its way into the heavy metal scene, a newly developing subgenre of rock music at this time. Among the first heavy metal bands, which took on the still on-going war in Vietnam, were Black Sabbath with its frontman Ozzy Osbourne. In "War Pigs" on their landmark album *Paranoid* (1970), the band predicts in almost apocalyptic terms that war supporters, or "War Pigs," will burn in hell as punishment for their despicable actions and thus stirs up collective antipathy among the U.S. population against pro-war politicians, or "hawks." Taken

together, messages of these and various other anti-Vietnam War protest songs are symbolic of finding ideological support and justification in Reed's *Mumbo Jumbo*. Like the *cacos* insurgents, who communicated their resistance strategy against the U.S. occupying forces in Haiti by playing the drum or conch horn, American musicians of different gender, racial, and musical background use their songs in order to disseminate their defiance to the U.S. imperial decree in Vietnam.

Unlike musicians, women experienced a negative impact within the anti-war movement. Despite the non-exclusionary policy of SDS, leaders depreciated the membership of women to an extent where they became invisible in regard to their revolutionary function. This was not so much ascribable to their numerical underrepresentation as to "a disgruntlement that ran deeper than statistics" (Gitlin 367). Men "sought them out, recruited them, took them seriously, honored their intelligence" (Gitlin 367), within the organization. However, as soon as SDS and its agenda entered the public sphere such as important national meetings, men "subtly demoted them to girlfriends, wives, note-takers, coffeemakers" (Gitlin 367). This gender gap derived from the patriarchal and non-competitive policy of early SDS. Then, the organization's agenda envisaged men to write statements and organize rallies since the movement's success depended heavily on assertive demeanor, a feature that men thought women did not possess, as they were the "weaker sex" (Gitlin 368) and thus "less competent" (Gitlin 368). Excluding women from actively participating in the revolutionary course against U.S. imperialism in Vietnam is evocative of echoing the misogyny in Reed's works. As with the author, who omits the significant role of women during the *cacos* revolt in occupied Haiti, SDS leaders deprived them of their possibility to become equal members and make crucial decisions.

At the same time, precisely because female insurgents such as Madame de Thèbes or Batraille's wife historically contributed their share to the rebellion during the U.S. occupation of Haiti, Reed's exclusion of female *cacos* revolutionaries disseminates an ideology that is sugges-

tive of motivating feminists all the more to side with their historical counterparts, overcome misogyny, and make their voices heard within the framework of the anti-Vietnam War movement. Indeed, women instigated resistance to the gender devaluating policy of SDS. Initially, in “Sex and Caste: A Kind of Memo from Casey Hayden and Mary King to a number of other women in the peace and freedom movements by Casey Hayden and Mary King, 1965,” the two authors criticize that women are considered inferior to men within the movement. Despite their effort, women kept facing ridicule until “small groups of women [...] started meeting in what became known as conscious-raising groups” (Gitlin 371). What was a struggle for sexual freedom at first turned into a political agenda between 1969 and 1970. At this time, “the tough-talking men of steel [...] were losing their grip on reality” (Gitlin 373), while women “took over some of the mood, the hope, the fury and extravagance of the male-run movement from which it was breaking” (Gitlin 373) and expressed it in New York’s underground magazine *Rat*. After the paper published misogynistic content such as derogatory articles and demeaning classifieds, a group of radical women called Women’s International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell (WITCH) took over and used as special edition to express their ideas about the anti-war movement. For example, poet and anti-war activist Robin Morgan attacks white men on a personal level and suggests an alternative hierarchy within the Left, one that constitutes the oppressed such blacks, browns, and white women, as these groups and individuals would better understand the revolutionary aspect of the movement. As the anti-war current progressed into the early 1970s, “men outside the hard-line factions were miserable with the crumbling of their onetime movement [while] women were riding high” (Gitlin 374).

Similar to the ethnological and literary movement, which drew on Vodou as revolutionary driving force against U.S. occupying forces and for Haitian nationalism by the beginning of the twentieth century, Reed contextualizes the religion of African descent as a mode to ideologically

inform the peace movement and its anti-imperial stance during the Vietnam War three decades later. The embedded ideologies manifest themselves in various ways. For instance, when Reed suggests turning to non-Western perspectives in order to detect the imperial nature of Western discourse, the passage is emblematic of ideologically mirroring anti-war protesters and their intention to unveil the oppressive purpose of the U.S. military intervention by taking the revolutionary side of communism into consideration. Other liberal currents within the movement sought to mediate between both sides in order to balance out the prevailing conflict. Their motif is representative of paralleling with the section in Reed's novel where the author calls the Vodou spirit Legba into play and disseminates a view that aims at reconciling West and East.

Radical faction, on the contrary, deviated from diplomatic missions and employed a militant method by attacking pro-war programs such as military facilities in order to protect themselves as well as the Vietnamese population from further imperial takeover. This is symbolic of reflecting the ideology in Reed's novel when the author appeals to Vodou and its ability to merge the quality of the fierce Petro pantheon with the protective Rada pantheon. Violence not only found expression on the part of the insurgents but also on the part of the State, indicated by the brutal shootings of several unarmed students on campuses such as Kent State and Jackson State University. Yet, instead of surrendering to their losses, Reed projects a perspective that is suggestive of encouraging revolutionaries to continue their course of anti-war protest.

The cultural implications of Vodou in *Mumbo Jumbo* address the protest music scene and feminism within the anti-war movement. When Reed thematizes the *cacos* rebels and their use of Vodou music as mode to propagate their insurgency, the author disseminates a view that is suggestive of utilizing music as vehicle for revolution and thus ties in with musicians, who equally promulgated their anti-war stance with and through their songs. At the same time, Reed discourages men to acknowledge women as revolutionary force and consequently mirrors the misogynis-

tic sentiment of male anti-war protesters. This move, however, is indicative of ideologically motivating women to overcome misogyny and make their contribution to the movement known, a perspective that reflects female protesters such as Casey Hayden and Mary King to challenge their male counterparts and conduct their own course of rebellion.

CONCLUSION

From the early 1950s until the mid-1970s, Haitian Vodou in American popular culture texts such as film, music, and literature has ideologically informed the U.S. counterculture and its numerous currents. Following in the wake of the early twentieth century, when the U.S. occupation of Haiti denounced Vodou as violent anti-white cult and widespread media frenzy in America sought to demonize the Nation of Islam by relating it to the misrepresentation of Haiti's folk religion, Hollywood perpetuated Vodou's disrepute to an extent that it can be read as a mode to further denigrate growing black resistance to white oppression after World War II. In order to divert from its racist undertone and justify the maintenance of ostensibly oppressive white supremacy, films like *Voodoo Tiger*, *Voodoo Woman*, and *Macumba Love* are not only symbolic of demonizing black resistance as chaotic and random violence but also suggestive of portraying whites as victims of black aggression. The victimization of whites in these films, in particular women, are evocative of encouraging and legitimating the use of drastic countermeasures such as brute force, an ideology that resonated with numerous historical incidents such as white police brutality and acts of lynching.

Unlike film, music and literature drew on Vodou in order to ideologically support the revolutionary course of the U.S. counterculture. Music had a particular impact on the three New Left currents black liberation, feminism, gay rights activism, and their interconnectedness insofar as Vodou in the lyrics of songs such as "Voodoo Voodoo" and "Voodoo Man," "Voodoo Eyes" suggests different gender, sexual, and racial hierarchies. These hierarchies, however, do not serve each movement alike; rather, they are symbolic of informing currents that stood in stark contrast to one another. For instance, Haitian Vodou in "Voodoo Voodoo" creates a sexual hierarchy favoring black male heterosexuality over black female heterosexuality and is thus indicative of ide-

ologically supporting black liberationists and their call for the reinstatement of patriarchy. The song's Hoodoo element, in contrast, criticizes privileging black male heterosexuality over black female heterosexuality and is therefore emblematic of ideologically influencing the anti-sexist discourse of feminist movements such as the joint organization Black Women's Liberation Group of Mount Vernon and New Rochelle, New York.

Vodou in U.S. literature such as Reed's postmodern novel *Mumbo Jumbo* disseminates ideologies that buttressed the anti-imperial discourse of the peace movement during the Vietnam War. These ideologies, for instance, suggest mediating between two oppositional sides in order to balance out conflict and are thus significant of tying in with liberal activists who traveled to Southeast Asia in order to negotiate between the U.S. and North Vietnam. Apart from political implications, the contextualization of Vodou in *Mumbo Jumbo* is also suggestive of influencing cultural productions such as the prominent music scene. Protest musicians used their songs as a power tool in order to make their anti-war stance heard and consequently support the political discourse of various dissident groups. Moreover, the absence of Vodou priestesses and women in general as revolutionary force against U.S. invaders in Reed's novel is suggestive of ideologically encouraging women to claim their rightful place as anti-Vietnam War resisters.

America's obsession with Vodou in popular culture texts endured far beyond the 1970s. Considering the myriad of productions, the misrepresentation of Haiti's folk religion in U.S. cinema is probably the most prevalent form of appropriation until today.³⁹ One recurring theme of misappropriation from the early twentieth century is the zombie. Pivotal to the folklore of Haitian Vodou, the figure of the zombie, which "more or less means 'spirit of a dead person'" (Davis 1985: 12), denotes "the rising and enslaving of the living dead" (Murrell 82). Based on the long-standing history of deliberate or inadvertent misunderstanding, which dates back to the Haitian occupation during which travelogues and pseudo-anthropological accounts described the zom-

bification as act of black magic, Hollywood has exploited the zombie “as a malevolent, flesh-eating vampire, a scary skeletal Frankenstein-like monster” (Murrell 82), a manifestation that propelled the marginalization of Haiti’s folk religion. The subtextual implications go even further than that. According to Murrell, “The zombie myth contains misogynist notions; most zombies are either female or associated with women” (82). Indeed, ranging from the early *White Zombie* (1943) to *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (1988), female characters were represented as monstrous zombies. Socio-politically, this depiction, especially in films of the late twentieth century, can be read as sexist rhetoric of patriarchalism against the second-wave feminist movement, which declined by the beginning of the 1980s and resurrected as third-wave feminism in the early ‘90s.

With the onset of the postmodern era in tandem with global market and capitalism during the second half of the twentieth century, it is necessary to expand the scope of the zombie cinema beyond Hollywood. Danny Boyle’s horror debacle *28 Days Later* (2002), which film scholars such as Nicole LaRose identify as flagship zombie film of the British cinema, revolves around a biological disaster that turns almost every human being in England into a blood-thirsty zombie. These cinematic zombies ideologically represent the fear of terrorism insofar as they carry and spread the Rage virus, an epidemic that is meant to disrupt Western civilization. Its sequel, *28 Weeks Later* (2007), directed by Juan Carlos Fresnadillo, complicates the notion of globalization when American-led NATO forces interfere with British sovereign territory in order to reinstate law and order against corruption, chaos, anarchy, and sexual violence, embodied by the zombies. Taken together, *28 Weeks Later* suggests a twofold threat: on the one hand, zombies continue representing terror of Otherness against the West; on the other, the presence of American troops suggests as critique of U.S. imperialism and global surveillance, two aspects that exploited the growing fear of terrorism in the aftermath of September 11.

Similar to the era of the U.S. counterculture, there is a substantial gap on how Vodou in American popular music has ideologically influenced the post-1970s socio-political landscape. And those accounts, which consider songs that appropriate Vodou and/or Hoodoo such as Aerosmith's "Voodoo Medicine Man" (1989), a tune that is interesting to examine insofar as it perpetuates the misrepresentation of both belief systems and even suggests the necessity for a remedy to cure these socio-cultural "maladies," primarily focus on musicological aspects such as history of origin, composition, the use of instruments, and the like.

As with music of the post-1970s, American literature has also continued appropriating Vodou and Hoodoo. Brandon Massey's *Dark Dreams: A Collection of Horror and Suspense by Black Writers* (2004) harbors short stories that appropriate Haitian Vodou as narrative element of African American gothic. Linda Addison's "The Power" explicitly critiques the misrepresentation of Vodou as superstition when the two cousins Angelique and Brenda discover a charm in their grandmother's attic. After Angelique uncritically cites her mother, who claims, "voodoo is uneducated superstition" (Addison 176), Brenda clears up this popular misconception by responding "Voodoo isn't the same thing. Anyway magic is just people using their powers, mostly to help each others" (Addison 176). While magic is part of Haiti's folk religion, it is also pivotal to Hoodoo, as argued in chapter 2, where it serves to heal as well as to harm. The detrimental effect finds expression in Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day* (1988), a novel in which protagonist and conjurer Ruby uses his powers for the personal gain of enforcing love. Sexuality equally comes to the fore in Rainelle Burton's *The Root Worker* (2001). Her debut novel tells the story of Ellen, an eleven-year-old black girl. Most of life, she is afraid of her mother, teachers, the nuns at her Catholic school, and – most of all – of an anonymous root worker, who almost desperately accepts sexual acts from Ellen as payment when the economic situation for Hoodoo practitioners declined in riot-ridden 1960s Detroit. Despite various critical writings such as Kameelah Martin's

most recent *Conjuring Moments in African American Literature: Women, Spirit Work, and Other such Hoodoo* (2013), scholarship on how Vodou and Hoodoo in fiction of the 1980s and onward are symbolic of influencing the socio-political landscape largely lacks completeness and thus offers room for future expertise.

NOTES

¹ Syncretism is defined as “the active transformation through renegotiation, reorganization, and redefinition of clashing belief systems” (Fernández Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert 9).

² While “it can be argued that Catholicism has been Africanized in Vodou, and that this is a far truer statement than its reverse, this does not mean that the Catholic Church has no role in the life of the 85 to 90 percent of Haitians who serve the spirits” (McCarthy Brown 2006: 12). Indeed, the Catholic Church usually administers Catholic sacraments such as baptism, first communion, and wedding. As a result, even though it is originally the religion of the oppressor, “Haitians who are Vodou adepts perceive themselves as good Christians and see no conflict between practicing Catholicism and being a member of a Vodou family” (Michel 28).

³ The Motor City experienced a total of three race riots throughout its history. The first one broke out in 1863 and thus during the American Civil War, followed by an incident in 1943, shortly before the end of World War II. The last riot took place in 1967.

⁴ The German Coast Uprising resulted in a mass rebellion, which aimed at liberating slaves along the Mississippi River about thirty miles North of New Orleans. While a “Bloody revenge on slaveholders was apparently not among the rebellion’s chief ends” (Mason 214), many white New Orleans residents left their homes, as they remembered the bloodshed of the Haitian Revolution that demanded the lives of French slaveholders in Saint Domingue two decades earlier. Although U.S. Army troupes and companies of militiamen shattered the upheaval and killed sixty-six insurgents, fear among the slaveholders remained. While the federal government in Washington planned on admitting French refugees from the Caribbean with their slaves, the Virginia state government sought to tighten controls, as it feared that former slaves, “tainted by the spirit of rebellion” (Mason 215), might mingle with slaves in the U.S. and stir up further uprisings.

⁵ Charles MacKenzie’s *Notes on Haiti* (1830) was not merely the first “blood-curdling account of Voodoo and cannibalism” (qtd. in Opitz) but also the most popular book on Vodou until W.H. Seabrook published *The Magic Island* in the late 1920s.

⁶ This film misrepresents Vodou insofar as it is conflated with the Afro-Brazilian religion Macumba. Similar to the Haitian belief system, Macumba is syncretistic, meaning that it constitutes African-based and Catholic practices, and its adherents worship pantheons of deities, some of them spirits of slaves. Ironically, while Macumba “practically disappeared around 1910 [...]” (Peek and Yankah 788), the 1960 released film portrays it as widely existent at the time of production.

⁷ The barriers of institutional racism in Hollywood even reached out to the prospering era of Blaxploitation films, “a designation used to label studio-produced action pictures featuring black protagonist and marketed to an urban black audience” (Sieving 5). Although, “The boom represents the most significant sustained period of black participation in Hollywood during the twentieth century,” (Sieving 5), not least due to the feature of African American directors, “a black perspective that acknowledges difference of race, class, gender, and sexuality rarely surfaces” (Reid 1). Indeed, as numerous critics claim, Blaxploitation films mostly recycle old stereotypes by portraying black bodies as oversexed gangsters and drug addicts.

⁸ According to Claudine Michel, Vodou functions as “a broadly encompassing worldview, a comprehensive system that shapes the human experience of its adepts in their search for higher grounds and purpose life” (28).

⁹ When the British colonial government introduced its Land Ordinance of 1902, it wanted to ensure that “Africans [...] had no land rights that could not be abrogated by imperial decree” (Maloba 26).

¹⁰ Interestingly, Susan Gerard meets the *Zeitgeist* of Betty Friedan’s seminal work *The Feminine Mystique*, which “has been seen as heralding feminism’s second wave“ since it is “set out to analyse the profound but apparently unnameable dissatisfaction felt by these educated housewives [the classmates who answered her questionnaire]” (Thornham 30), a cause that Friedan refers to as the “feminine mystique.”

¹¹ According to Callanan, “The Biblical roots of the scapegoat speak to its origin in a community ritual based on a need to alleviate feelings of guilt. The Biblical scapegoat, described in the book of Leviticus, is actually two goat: the first killed as atonement for sins, and the second is used as a vehicle for confession and then sent into the wilderness” (87).

¹² Ronald Hyam asserts, “The Southern Rhodesia Immorality Act (1903) protected white women but not black. Similarly the Europeans in 1926 in Papua New Guinea also imposed the death penalty for the attempted rape of a white woman by a black man, and life imprisonment for indecent assault; but black women received no such protection“ (364).

¹³ In 1955, the black teenager from Chicago allegedly said “Bye, baby” to Carolyn Bryant and whistled at her when he left the white woman’s local grocery store. While this was probably meant as a tasteless prank, Jim Crow South viewed it as sinful black defilement of white women and thus as assault on the purity of the white Christian patriarchal southern society. In response to his “threatening” behavior, Carolyn’s husband Roy Bryant and his half brother J. W. Milam murdered the young boy. Instead of sentencing the two white men, an all-white grand jury acquitted them.

¹⁴ This fear, however, turned out to be unsubstantiated. Although blacks considered retaliation against the white lynch mob, those verbal threats were never implemented. Blacks in Pearl River County were too afraid of white lynching terror and therefore surrendered to racial violence.

¹⁵ Malcolm X’s advocacy of violence as a measure of last resort informed Jasper Brown, for instance. As one of the original plaintiffs in the landmark Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), which declared segregated schools unconstitutional, the civil rights activist encountered white harassment one day on his way home. After the white mob prevented him from moving his car, Brown contacted Caswell County Sheriff Frank Daniel in order to request protection. Instead of coming to his rescue, the law enforcement officer fobbed him off by advising him to “get off the street and go ahead home” (qtd. in Strain 79). Since Daniel denied the black man help, even though danger was imminent, four of Brown’s friends escorted him in his car. This, however, did not scare off the white harassers; instead, the white youngsters kept insulting and threatening Brown until he finally pulled into a white person’s driveway. Once again, Brown called Sheriff Daniel. Against his promise to send someone over, nobody showed up, at least not until the white homeowner called the sheriff. After the two deputies left, the young white mob reappeared and continued harassing Brown. Being exposed to the unwillingness of the sheriff department, Brown decided to defend himself by pulling out a handgun and firing at two of the racists, whom he wounded.

¹⁶ When Medgar Evers returned home from a church meeting on June 12, 1963, Byron De La Beckwith, a WWII veteran and member of the white supremacist organization White Citizen Council, shot the black civil rights official in an act of racist aggression right outside his house.

¹⁷ This Supreme Court decision challenged the “separate but equal” doctrine and influenced the landmark case *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka* (1954).

¹⁸ The “Columbia Story” revolves around an African American woman named Gladys Stephenson and her sons from Columbia, Tennessee, who came into conflict with a white service shop owner over a radio repair. The initially verbal dispute between the Stephensons and the store owner William Flemming turned into a physical fight. While the ambulance took Flemming to the hospital, where he was treated for a cut and shock, the Stephensons went to jail. Shortly after, a white lynch mob from Culleoka vicinity in eastern Maury County assembled in downtown Columbia where they threatened, “‘We are going to take them two ‘niggers,’ the Stephenson ‘niggers’ out of the jail and hang them’” (qtd. in O’Brien 11). As soon as the word on the Stephenson lynching was out, approximately one hundred fifty blacks, among them between forty and fifty armed with guns, came together in order to militantly resist the white lynch mob, a reaction that eventually led to a larger race riot.

¹⁹ Léon Dumarsais Estimé, the first black president after the American occupation (1915 – 1934) and several dynasties of mulatto leaders initiated this Afrocentric and racially subversive movement.

²⁰ Catholic and Francophile mulatto president Élie Lescot dismissed Vodou as a relic of savagery and thus banned it during his presidential anti-superstition campaign in 1942.

²¹ Bizango, the “wild side of [the already fiery pantheon] Petwo” (Apter 246), is “often militaristic, concerned with aggression or self-defense. Bizango rites seem to be centrally focused in working maji and consolidating power in both local and national territories” (McAlister 2002: 88). Regarding the militant nature of Bizango, it is not surprising that Duvalier employed it as a scare tactic against Haiti’s masses

²² According to Paul C. Johnson, “The *tonton makoutes*, literally ‘Uncle Satchel,’ refer to a mythic bogeyman who tucks people into his bag never to be seen again. These were Duvalier’s alternatives to the military, who he had already learned to distrust. Instead, he organized and armed a secret police force of peasants, [...], to carry out all unofficial missions of intimidation or the elimination of rivals. A *tonton makoute* in typical uniform wore a soft hat, denim pants, a red bandana, and sunglasses. This is also precisely the sartorial code of the loa Azaka, the peasant spirit also named ‘Kouzen’ (cousin), who carries a straw satchel. The secret police were therefore staged as being ‘of the people’ through the imagery of the most populist loa, even as they were tools of repression” (430).

²³ The Creole notion of *kilti libète* translates into freedom culture and, first and foremost, embraces Marxist musicians, who not only criticized Duvalier’s oppressive class politics in their songs but also used their cultural productions in order to mobilize the masses against his dictatorship.

²⁴ In the spring of 1962, leftist students started the first culturally revolutionary band, Karako Blè (named after the blue denim dress of the peasantry), followed that summer by Vaksin (bamboo trumpet) and shortly after by Lanbi (conch shell). Karako Blè incorporated Vodou in one of their songs when they sang, “‘*Ogou mande tout kè, tout tèt, tout bra*’ (Ogou – deity of war – asks for every heart, every head, every arm)” (Averill 1997: 95). Considering that Vodou spirit Ogou is said to have spiritually empowered slave insurgents with divine energetic forces in order to fight French colonists during the revolution, this line aims at encouraging the oppressed to follow the deity of war once again. However, this time they are motivated to take a collective stand against François Duvalier and his oppressive class politics under the safeguard of Ogou, which “is a protective weapon for those who serve him” (McCarthy Brown 1997: 73).

²⁵ Veterans of groups such as Karako Blè and Vaksin founded famous bands such as Atis Endepandan (Independent Artists), Tanbou Libète (Drum of Freedom), Soléy Leve (Rising Sun), and Ayiti Kiltirél (Cultural Haiti, Boston) in exile, whereas at least the latter two “were associated with the Patriotic Action Movement, ‘the Marxist political wing of the opposition to Duvalier’”

(Averill 1997: 114). Their songs continued resorting to peasant-style music such as Vodou-based songs. Some bands even “rewrote and radicalized peasant songs, transforming them into weapons to use against the dictatorship” (Averill 1997: 114). Atis Endepandan, for example, converted their traditional lullaby “Dodinen” (Rocking) into a Marxist critique, which criticizes the exploitation of the impoverished peasantry and urban proletariat and refers to the lower class as revolutionary force.

²⁶ James E. Perone argues in *Music of the Counterculture Era*, “music of social protest was not invented in the 1960s. The history of such music, even in the United States, goes back more than 150 years” (17). He exemplifies his observation by referring to pro-union songs supporting violent labor protests of the nineteenth century and music that furthered the cause of the anti-WWII movement in the early 1940s. As opposed to counterculture music from the pre-1950s era, politically charged protest songs between the mid-1950s and early 1970s have been increasingly popularized and thus much more prevalent, not least due to the increasing advancement of sound techniques and mass distribution as a consequence thereof.

²⁷ Rhythm and blues is broadly defined as “one of the descendents of a long-standing African-American musical tradition that includes spiritual, ragtime, blues, jazz, and gospel music” (Ripani 4).

²⁸ Even though Vodou priestesses are not equally represented in both rural and urban parts unlike their male counterparts but merely head temples in cities, they still enjoy more privileges than women in other religions such as Christianity “in which women are either totally excluded from the priesthood or play only subordinate roles [...]” (Bellegarde-Smith 27).

²⁹ The fictive kinship surrogates the large rural family and provides mutual comfort and assistance in finding food, shelter, and work in the socially, politically, and economically devastated environment of Haiti’s cities such as Port-au-Prince.

³⁰ Root doctors were particularly important during times of slavery when bondsmen sought mutual help, such as medical treatment, due to the neglect of their masters.

³¹ At the crossroad cosmic energies flow and devotees constantly communicate with their big guardian angel, or *gros-bon-ange*, in order to find guidance and protection in everyday life. Yet, before accessing the metaphysical sphere at the crossroad and communicating with their big guardian angel, adherents have to request permission from Papa Legba, as he is the gatekeeper between both planes. Based on his role, the deity functions as “the means and avenue of communication between them” (Deren 97). In order to make him open up the channel of communication and grant contact with the metaphysical sphere, the devotee has to salute Papa Legba by offering oneself for possession.

³² Norman Mailer had a direct impact on Cleaver’s homophobia when he asserts, “Driven into defiance, it is natural if regrettable, that many homosexuals go to the direction of assuming that there is something intrinsically superior to homosexuality, and carried far enough it is a viewpoint which is as stultifying, as ridiculous, and as anti-human as the heterosexual’s prejudice” (qtd. in Cleaver 110). While Eldridge Cleaver picks up on Mailer’s discredit of homosexuality, he neglects the author’s concern about homophobia, though.

³³ Other forms of nationalism are Revolutionary and Cultural Nationalism. The Black Panthers, for example, sought Revolutionary Nationalism. The main premise of the BBP was the call “for a conscious linkage of African Americans for the worldwide struggle against U.S. imperialism, strategic alliances with other revolutionary groups (white leftists, whether in SDS or the Communist Party), and eventually the formation of a disciplined party along Marxist-Leninist lines” (Gosse, *Rethinking* 121). Cultural Nationalism, by comparison, deprecated any coalition with whites or global revolutionary forces, other than Africans. Instead, as heirs of Marcus Garvey,

cultural nationalists such as Maulana Karenga welcomed separate black institutions and rejected both capitalism and socialism as European concepts, which are ill-fitted for people of African descent.

³⁴ In terms of black writers during this literary era, the novelist and poet emerges as a rather controversial figure. According to Watts, “it is debatable whether or not Ishmael Reed should be considered a participant in the Black Arts movement” (515). Indeed, on the one hand, literary critic Addison Gayle claims that Reed “in no way took into consideration truly important issues that black writers should entertain” (Martin 1988: 37); that is, for example, his “reliance upon the collation of myth for his own rhetorical ends and the organization of an aesthetic partly based on the principles of Voodoo was to put him squarely against the tenets outlined by Gayle, Baker, and Baraka” (Martin 1998: 40). At the same time, Reed diverges from the conventions of the Black Arts writers and theorists. Based on an interview with the novelist, Reginald Martin suggests that in *Mumbo Jumbo* “when Reed has a black man burn the Text of Jes Grew he implicitly offers a critique of the new black aesthetic critics, including Addison Gayle, Baker, and Baraka. These men missed the opportunity to establish and codify the African-American tradition because ‘their perceptions were too narrow and because their standards were at least partly set by training in white universities, which caused them to ignore important parts of Afro-American tradition’” (qtd. in McGee 112-113). On the other hand, Reed sides in his writings with Gayle’s persuasion, which is to say “that white critics have always tried to dehumanize art so that it could not be used as human expression to better the lot, socially, of both the artist and the receiver of the art” (Martin 1988: 31). Gayle’s critique, for instance, comes to the fore in *Mumbo Jumbo*, one of Reed’s novels that will be central to the analysis in the chapter, when “whites are accused of stealing national art treasures from various lands to put into museums to rid the treasures of their ‘magic’ and to possess the material value of the objects” (Martin 1988: 31). His affiliation to the Black Arts movement is further consolidated by his participation and commitment to Umbra Poets’ Workshop, “the most important black writers’ collective of the Black Arts” (Watts 219). Although it was founded before the Black Arts movement and therefore “technically did not qualify as a Black Arts movement writers’ collective” (Watts 219), the Umbra workshop is closely linked to it inasmuch as the writers’ collective embraced novelist and poets who shaped the later literary current. Above all, “Reed’s voice is in this way joined in the chorus of Clarence Major, Addison Gayle, and so many other black writers of the 1960s, whose response to past and present exploitation and alienation of blacks was to condense all evil under one rubric: the white way of doing things had ruined the world” (Martin 1988: 63). Consequently, although Reed does not conform to some norms and even criticizes various tenets of Black Arts movement founders and theorists, it would be erroneous to disregard his affiliation to the current.

³⁵ Since Neo-HooDoo is “parodying all kinds of ‘monisms’” (Rushdy 113), it challenges the restrictive discourse of Christianity, or what Reed refers to as “Cop Religion” (Reed, “Neo-Hoodoo Manifesto” 23). Furthermore, according to Reed’s poem “Neo-Hoodoo Manifesto,” it defies secular Western institutions such as the media, museums, and academia, as they “propagate the Art of Jeho-vah” (Reed, “Neo-Hoodoo Manifesto” 25). In this context, the notion of Art is emblematic of the dominant ideology, whereas Jeho-vah personifies Western culture and imperialism.

³⁶ Scholarly, the name origin of the *cacos* is still heavily disputed. Renda assumes, “The taco, a small but fierce bird native to the island of Hispaniola, probably inspired the name of this tradition” (141), while Mikell claims that the term derives from “*caraco*, meaning ‘a kind of peasant clothing worn in the mountains of the North’” (qtd. in Rowe 288).

³⁷ Chapter 2 provides additional information on the Vodou crossroads and Legba.

³⁸ That “Masters of War” addresses war in general is revealed when Dylan “takes on generals who plot battles far away from the battlefields, heads of corporations who knowingly manufacture weapons and other products whose sole purpose is destruction of life, in short, the entire military-industrial complex” (Perone 2004: 37).

³⁹ Before the end of the 1970s, Vodou found expression in one prominent, yet British film. Produced by Eon Productions and directed by Guy Hamilton, the screen adaption of Ian Fleming’s James Bond *Live and Let Die* (1973) tells the story of several agents whose murders draw investigating British secret agent James Bond (Roger Moore) into the syndicate of mysterious Mr. Big (Yaphet Kotto), who produces and distributes heroine in the cloak of Vodou and its misrepresentation as diabolic cult. Apart from its explicit use as disguise and scare tactic for his drug trafficking business, Vodou ceremonies also have an underlying ideological function: “the black Americans are presented as uncivilized in what can be seen as a racialist film” (Black 209).

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APPENDIX A.

SONG LYRICS

“Voodoo Voodoo” (LaVern Baker):

I thought I was a snake; I started crawling on the ground
 I thought I was a dog; I started barking like a hound
 I thought I was coyote, howling at the moon
 Stumbling and a fumbling like a flip mighty goon

He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me
 He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me
 Just about as mixed up as a girl could be
 He done a voodoo voodoo voodoo-ed me

If he couldn't have me all for himself
 I wouldn't be any good for nobody else
 I kinda think he meant every word he said
 Sprinkling the oogly all under my bed

He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me
 He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me
 Just about as mixed up as a girl could be
 He done a voodoo voodoo voodoo-ed me

Well, he took a little box from out of the wall
 A tooth in the box and little hunk of hair
 He had a leopard spots and neck of giraffe
 He had a zebra's stripes and a hyena's laugh

He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me
 He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me
 Just about as mixed up as a girl could be
 He done a voodoo voodoo voodoo-ed me

He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me
 He done voodoo-doodoo-ed me
 Just about as mixed up as a girl could be
 He done a voodoo voodoo voodoo-ed me

“Voodoo Man“ (Del Vikings):

Bwa-haa-haa

[Spoken, as dialogue]

There's that man again.

Who is he?

Let's ask him.

[Sung]

Who are you?

I am the voodoo man

Who are you?

I am the voodoo man

Who are you?

I am the voodoo man

I'm going to cast a spell on you

Who am I?

The voodoo man

Who am I?

The voodoo man

Who am I?

The voodoo man

Don't cast a spell on me

I'm going take a piece of clay

And turn it to a head of you

Kiss your pretty lips

Then you'll know what I'm going to do

Who am I?

The voodoo man

Who am I?

The voodoo man

Who am I?

The voodoo man

Don't cast a spell on me

I'm going take a piece of clay

And turn it to a head of you

I'm going to kiss your pretty lips

Then you'll know what I'm going to do

Who are you?
I am the voodoo man
Who are you?
I am the voodoo man
Who are you?
I am the voodoo man
I'm going to cast a spell on you

Who am I?
The voodoo man
Who am I?
The voodoo man
Who am I?
The voodoo man
Don't cast a spell on me

“Voodoo Eyes“ (The Silhouettes):

Eyes, voodoo eyes

Magic

Magic all around me

Oh how you enchant me

You with those voodoo eyes

Falling

Rapidly I'm falling

Under the spell

Spell of those voodoo eyes

As if in a whirlpool

I'm spinning around

What a haunting feeling

To know that I have found

Someone

Someone who enchants me

She will taunt and tease me

With those voodoo eyes

“Voodoo Chile” (Jimi Hendrix):

Well, I'm a voodoo chile
 Lord I'm a voodoo chile

Well, the night I was born
 Lord I swear the moon turned a fire red
 The night I was born
 I swear the moon turned a fire red
 Well my poor mother cried out "lord, the gypsy was right!"
 And I seen her, fell down right dead
 (Have mercy)

Well, mountain lions found me there waitin'
 And set me on a eagles back
 Well, mountain lions found me there,
 And set me on a eagles wing
 (Its' the eagles wing, baby, what did I say)
 He took me past to the outskirts of infinity,
 And when he brought me back,
 He gave me a venus witch's ring
 Hey!
 And he said "Fly on, fly on"
 Because I'm a voodoo chile, yeah, voodoo chile
 Hey!

Well, I make love to you,
 And lord knows you'll feel no pain
 Say, I make love to you in your sleep,
 And lord knows you felt no pain
 (Have mercy)
 'Cause I'm a million miles away
 And at the same time I'm right here in your picture frame
 (Yeah! What did I say now)
 'Cause I'm a voodoo chile
 Lord knows, I'm a voodoo chile
 (yeah!)

Well my arrows are made of desire
 From far away as Jupiter's sulphur mines
 Say my arrows are made of desire, desire
 From far away as Jupiter's sulphur mines
 (Way down by the Methane Sea, yeah)
 I have a humming bird and it hums so loud,
 You think you were losing your mind, hmmm...

Well I float in liquid gardens
And Arizona new red sand
(Yeah)
I float in liquid gardens
Way down in Arizona red sand

Well, I taste the honey from a flower named Blue,
Way down in California
And the in New York drowns as we hold hands

'Cause I'm a voodoo chile
Lord knows I'm a voodoo child