

Women Possessed

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Eroticism and Exoticism in the Representation of Woman as Zombie

*They are dead bodies—zombies, the living dead, corpses
taken from their graves who are made to work in sugar mills
and the fields at night.*

—*White Zombie*, 1932

There's no beauty here . . . only death and decay.

—*I Walked with a Zombie*, 1943

IF IT IS TRUE that, as Edward Brathwaite writes, traces of African religion, fragments of ancestral rituals, echoes of African deities form “the kernel or core” of Caribbean cultures, it is also true, as Joan Dayan has argued, that the local or folk religions that germinated from them have been for the West the “mark of savagery” that has justified invasion and imperialism.¹ Pro-Western ideologues of “progress” and “civilization” have derided ritualistic practices of African origin as proof of the Caribbean folk’s inability to embrace “modernity,” of their incapacity for emancipation and sovereignty. Given a glimpse of Caribbean people’s resolution to assert their autonomy, they are quick to invoke the titillating figure of the zombie as representative of the Afro-Caribbean folk as bogeyman.

In Haiti—Zora Neale Hurston wrote in *Tell My Horse*—“there is the quick, the dead, and then there are zombies,” “the word which never fails to

interest tourists."² Katherine Dunham, American dancer and Vodou initiate, offers two possible definitions of a zombie: a truly dead creature brought back to life by black magic "but by such a process that memory and will are gone and the resultant being is entirely subject to the will of the sorcerer who resuscitated him, in the service of good or evil"; or, "most likely," a person who, as a result of being given a potion of herbs brought from 'Nan Guinée by a bokor, "falls into a coma resembling death in every pathological sense" and is later disinterred by the bokor, who administers an antidote and takes command of the traumatized victim.³ Zombies, Alfred Métraux argues, can be recognized "by their vague look, their dull almost glazed eyes, and above all by the nasality of their voice, a trait also characteristic of the 'Guédé,' the spirits of the dead. . . . The zombi remains in that grey area separating life and death."⁴

Wade Davis's anthropological research into the ethnobiology and pharmacopeia of zombification (recorded in his two books on the subject, *The Serpent and the Rainbow* and *Passage of Darkness*), has gone a long way to demystify a phenomenon long believed to be solely the result of sorcery and black magic.⁵ Under rare circumstances, Davis argues, administration of the zombie poison (the formula for which appears in *Passage of Darkness*) provides the means by which an individual might be made to appear dead and be consequently buried. Disinterred later by a bokor who delivers an antidote, the traumatized victim remains under the control of his or her victimizer. Zombification, far from being the result of arbitrary sorcery performed by the bokor for his own personal gain, Davis contends, is a "social sanction" administered to those who have violated the codes of the secret society known as the *Bizango*, "an important arbiter of social life among the peasantry," a force "that protects community resources, particularly land, as they define the power boundaries of the village."⁶

Sorcery and poison have long been the *Bizango's* traditional weapons, however, and disclosure by Western researchers of the secret formula and of the local institutions in whose service it is administered has done little to dispel the belief in Haiti that anyone whose death is the result of black magic may be claimed as a zombie.⁷ Zombification continues to be perceived as a magical process by which the sorcerer seizes the victim's *ti bon ange*—the component of the soul where personality, character, and volition reside—leaving behind an empty vessel subject to the commands of the bokor. Disclosure has done even less to allay the dread induced by the prospect of zombification. In the various Western horror genres the zombie may be a terrorizing, murdering creature, but Haitians do not fear any harm from zombies, although they will shun them; they may, however, live in fear of being zombified themselves. When Dunham stubbornly insisted on an expedition to visit a bokor reputed to have seven zombie wives, a frantic hotel housekeeper tearfully urged her

to reconsider, earnestly cataloguing the dangers to which she was exposing herself: "Surely Mademoiselle would be made into a zombie wife or, worse still, sacrificed to one of the bloodthirsty gods and eaten by the priest and his chief hounsi, all of whom were men. Some part of me would be left unsalted for the zombie wives, perhaps not even cooked."⁸

Death in Haiti, Maximilien Laroche has written, takes on "a menacing form in the character of the zombi . . . the legendary, mythic symbol of alienation . . . the image of a fearful destiny . . . which is at once collective and individual."⁹ The accursed fate conjured by the myth of the zombie is that of the Haitian experience of slavery, of the disassociation of people from their will, their reduction to beasts of burden subject to a master. This connection is stressed by Haitian writers and scholars whenever the subject is raised, and it is at the core of many theories of Haiti's sociohistoric development. "It is not by chance that there exists in Haiti the myth of the zombi, that is, of the living-dead, the man whose mind and soul have been stolen and who has been left only the ability to work," René Depestre has argued. "The history of colonization is the process of man's general zombification. It is also the quest for a revitalising salt capable of restoring to man the use of his imagination and his culture."¹⁰

Visitors to Haiti are often regaled with tales of necromancy, blood sucking by *soucouyants*, and zombification—grist for the mill of sensation-seeking foreigners; the victims in the tales, more often than not, are "preferably virgins."¹¹ William Seabrook's *The Magic Island*, credited with serving as inspiration for *White Zombie*, the first "zombie film," tells the tale of Camille, "a fair-skinned octoroon girl" sponsored by her aunt and uncle in Port-au-Prince society, who marries a rich coffee grower from Morne Hôpital, "dark and more than twice her age, but rich, suave, and well educated."¹² Although apparently "not unhappy" during her first year of marriage, the girl nonetheless seems troubled by her husband's occasional "nocturnal excursions." On the "fatal night" of their first wedding anniversary she is told to put on her wedding dress and make herself beautiful, and is taken to an outbuilding, where a magnificent table is set. There she is forced to sit with four propped-up corpses who will, as her husband tells her, presently drink with her, clink glasses with her, arise and dance with her, and (ominously) "more." The terrified girl runs away screaming and is found the next morning lying unconscious in the valley below her home, "her filmy dress ripped and torn, her little white satin bride-slippers . . . scuffed and stained," terrorized, cowering, hysterical, and "stark, raving mad." Seabrook asks his readers to ponder "what sinister, perhaps criminal necromancy in which his bride was to be the victim or the instrument" the husband had been anticipating.

Seabrook's tale is of particular interest because it brings together a number

of elements that are always present in accounts of the zombification of women: the coveting of a beautiful, light-skinned or white upper-class girl by an older, dark-skinned man who is of lower class and is adept at sorcery; the intimations of necromantic sexuality with a girl who has lost her volition; the wedding night (in this case its anniversary) as the preferred setting for the administration of the zombie poison; the girl's eventual escape from the bokor in her soiled wedding clothes (the garment of preference for white or light-skinned zombie women); her ultimate madness and confinement in a convent or mental asylum.

A review of the literature on zombification reveals, interestingly enough, that most accounts of zombified young girls draw on the same basic tale—"the most famous Zombie case of all Haiti," according to Hurston—that of the death in October 1909 of Marie M., a young upper-class woman. In one of the earliest accounts I have come across—offered by Harry Franck in *Roaming through the West Indies*—the young daughter of a prestigious family dies of loss of blood at the hands of her grandmother "and a prominent man."¹³ She is buried with much pomp, the grandmother replacing with coffee the embalming fluid that was poured down her throat. Five years later, after a rumor of her existence has reached a priest through a confessional, a person believed to be the same girl is discovered in a hill town. She is wild, unkempt, demented, and has borne three children. The coffin is dug up, and in it is found the wedding dress in which she had been buried, but the autopsy proves the remains to be those of a man whose legs have been cut off and laid alongside the body.

Métraux tells the story—interesting to him "in so far as it is typical of this kind of anecdote"—of a girl from Marbial who is engaged to a young man she very much loves but who is "unwise enough to reject—rather sharply—the advances of a powerful *hungan*."¹⁴ The spurned lover utters numerous threats, and a few days later the girl is suddenly taken ill and dies in the hospital at Jacmel. Her coffin proving to be too short, it is necessary to bend the corpse's neck to fit it in. During the wake someone inadvertently drops a lighted cigarette on its foot, causing a slight burn. Some months after her burial, unconfirmed rumors spread of her having been seen in the company of the houn gan, and a few years later, during the antisuperstition campaign, the houn gan is said to have repented and returned the girl, her neck bent and with the scar of a burn on her foot, to her home, "where she lived for a long time without ever recovering her sanity."

Hurston tells of how the beautiful young daughter of a prominent family dies "in the very bloom of her youth" and is buried. Five years later, a group of her schoolmates claim to have seen her in a house in Port-au-Prince. The news spreads like wildfire throughout the city, but by the time the house is

searched all occupants have disappeared. Her body is exhumed, and it is discovered that the skeleton is too long for the box and the clothes found are different from those the girl had been buried in. They are neatly folded beside the skeleton "that had strangely outgrown its coffin." It is said that the houn gan who had held her had died and his wife wanted to get rid of his zombies. Later, dressed in the habit of a nun, the girl is smuggled off to France. This was, Hurston concludes, "the most notorious case in all Haiti and people still talk about it whenever Zombies are mentioned."¹⁵

Arthur Holly, a Haitian doctor who claimed to have treated the young woman in question, offered this terse version in *Les Daimons du culte Voudou et Dra-Po*. "The young daughter of our intimate friends was believed to be dead and was consequently buried. She was disinterred by a Vodou practitioner and recalled from her state of apparent death three days after the funeral. She is alive today and lives abroad. I was one of the physicians that attended her during her illness. The case is not a unique one in our annals."¹⁶ C.-H. Dewisme, in an attempt to trace information on the case for his 1957 work on *Les Zombis ou le secret des morts-vivants*, found countless versions of the story: in some, as in Hurston's, she is discovered by former classmates; in others, friends of her family on a hunting trip come across her in a garden, eating with her hands "like a beast."¹⁷ Found to have completely lost her mind, she is taken to the United States, where she is examined by the most famous neurologists and psychiatrists, who declare themselves powerless to help. In despair, her parents place her in a convent in France, where she dies many years later.

Jacques-Stephen Alexis, one of Haiti's foremost twentieth-century writers, offers a fictional version of the story in "Chronique d'un faux-amour" (Chronicle of a false love). Alexis's tale, the first-person narrative of a young zombie confined to a convent in France, couches the familiar elements of the story in an aura of unfulfilled sensuality: "Here I have been for ten years awaiting my first night of love, the night that will awaken me and bring me back to daylight, the night that will wrench me from this uncertain and colorless hinterland where I vegetate, where my head rots between two realms."¹⁸ Back in Port-au-Prince, "the most beautiful and the richest," she had fallen in love with a young man, an "almost swarthy mulatto," "not too dark-skinned"—that would have been "an almost inexpiable crime"—but of doubtful social extraction, "although said to be very rich." (She dismisses the skin-color difference with a question—"Am I not light-skinned enough for both of us?") She is taken on a visit to his adoptive father, "an old Crésus, former satrap general, and today a great lord of the plain, a grand feudal planter who cannot measure what he owns, they say, *nègre-z'-orteils* [toeless negro] though he is" (135).

From the moment the old man enters the text, Alexis posits the young protagonist's awakening sensuality (her fiancé is the "salt, spirit, beauty" who has "opened the doors of life to her") against the old black sorcerer's soiling desire. "His gaze winds a forest of tangled-up lianas around me, a syrupy gaze that glides from my forehead to my nape, down my neck, my shoulders, running through my body like a cascade of ants with lecherous stings" (137). Coveting her as a madonna at whose feet he wishes to worship, he gives her the zombie poison to inhale in her wedding bouquet, and she collapses during her wedding ceremony, appearing dead to all while perfectly conscious of the grief and lamentation surrounding her. She recovers her mobility when she is disinterred and the antidote is administered; but, unable to escape despite a fierce struggle, she is condemned to live as a zombie, dressed in her white wedding dress embroidered in silver and her bride's veil until the old man dies and she is sent to her convent in France.

The various versions of the story of Marie M.'s zombification posit sexual desire—the erotic—as a fundamental component of the zombified woman's tale, hinting at, although never directly addressing, the urge to transcend or subvert race and class barriers as one of the repositories of the sorcerer's lust. The various accounts emphasize the girl's whiteness or light skin against the sorcerer's darkness (the bokor with the seven zombie wives of Dunham's *Island Possessed* is described as the darkest Haitian she had ever met); her wealth and position against his lack of social standing (a result, more often than not, of the darkness of his skin); and her buoyant, love-filled, wholesome desire against his sinister, debasing lust. The underlying truth behind this tale is that victim and victimizer are separated by insurmountable race and class obstacles that would have precluded a legitimate union even if the victim had not been physically revolted by the victimizer, as she often is; her social inaccessibility lies at the heart of her heinous zombification.

The story of Marie M. constitutes the "master narrative" of female zombification in Haiti. Its fundamental elements—found tantalizing by both Haitian and Western researchers, writers, and filmmakers—reappear throughout the century in works as disparate as Hollywood's *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943) and Depestre's *Hadriana dans tous mes rêves* (1988).

IN 1932, as Haitian resistance to American occupation intensified, American film audiences were treated to *White Zombie*, the first entry in the zombie-movie genre, a minor classic distinguished by its elaboration of two seminal elements of the zombification myth: its portrayal of Murder Legendre as a Haitian "Voodoo" sorcerer (played with peculiar eeriness by Bela Lugosi), a fiend who uses zombies as workers in his sugar fields; and its focus on the ensnaring of a young white woman into Legendre's evil magic, the woman who is even-

tually transformed into the "white zombie" of the title.¹⁹ The two elements intertwine in this macabre tale as they intertwine in the ideology of vilification of Haiti as the land of "Voodoo"—an ideology that has sustained American indifference to the fate of the island and its people. The terrorized Haitian peasant, transformed into a terrorizing zombie lost in the depths of his own unspeakable horrors, literally comes to embody "a fate worse than death"; all sympathy for his plight is transferred to the virginal white heroine lustfully coveted by the evil "Voodoo" sorcerer, the quintessentially innocent victim who must be rescued from her zombification before she is basely violated by racially impure hands.

Madeleine, the young protagonist of this precedent-setting tale, a fresh arrival to a phantasmagoric tropical island where walking cadavers roam the roads, is blissfully in love with a freshly scrubbed young man she met on board the ship that brought her from the United States. Enraptured by her newly found love, she is deaf to the entreaties of a rich planter who covets her, a weak man controlled by Legendre, from whom he seeks help in securing the zombie poison through which he will seek to gain possession of the girl. Given the potion to drink as she literally walks down the aisle, Madeleine falls into a death swoon at the altar and is buried in her wedding gown during what would have been her wedding night. The wedding-night motif, with its promise of carnal fulfillment, emphasizes the erotic quality of her deathlike vulnerability, as does the flimsy shroud (the wedding dress) in which she is buried and in which she will spend most of the movie. The erotic nuances of the plot intensify when Legendre (depicted as a swarthy native), filled with lust at the sight of the lovely and now will-less creature, battles the (clearly white) planter for possession of the young woman. Confronted in a later scene with the notion that Madeleine may not be dead but zombified, her hapless (and now temporarily disheveled and unshaven) husband's reaction needlessly encapsulates the sexual connotations of the developing plot. "Not alive . . . in the hands of natives . . . better dead than that!" The climactic scene of the film finds all the principals on the edge of a high cliff, death looming far below them, and its resolution reaffirms the cultural and racial hierarchies: when Legendre dies (killed by the white planter in a belated burst of decency), the zombies topple off the cliff to their deaths, while the sweet Madeleine is released from her stupor and restored undefiled to her rightful lover.

In 1943 Hollywood returned to the zombie genre in an eerily fascinating entry, *I Walked with a Zombie*,²⁰ loosely based on Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. The young protagonist of the novel, Betsy, a Canadian nurse, comes to the island of San Sebastian to care for Jessica, the wife of a plantation owner. Jessica has been transformed into a zombie by a "Voodoo" curse and is now a soulless shell, weeping eerily at night and at the mercy of the "Voodoo" drums

beating unnervingly after every sunset. As in *Jane Eyre*, the young nurse falls in love with the master of the estate, and the romantic triangle is eventually dissolved through the death of the zombie, who is shown to have been an unfaithful wife. (She is killed by her lover—her brother-in-law—while he is in a trance.) *I Walked with a Zombie* has been described by critics as an “enchanted film possessed of a subtlety at odds with the conventions of its genre and a beauty which might be described as otherworldly”—a not inaccurate description.²¹ The movie is indeed at odds with the conventions of the zombie genre in its “imposing respect” for the supernatural, its positive presentation of Vodou, and its “evocative link to unstated themes of the island’s tragic racial history and the life-death symbiosis which governs the lives of the central characters.”²² Alma, a black servant played by Teresa Harris, for example, persuasively argues for the superiority of Vodou over Christian medicine; and another black character, a singer played by famed Calypsonian Sir Lancelot, provides an authoritative narrative voice as he relates in song the history of Betsy’s employers, the powerful Rand-Holland planter family.

Although thematically the movie strives to shed light on the island’s history of oppression through its representation of the realities of plantation life, it is nonetheless dependent visually (and it is a strikingly visual film) on black/white oppositions that leave intact the identification of blackness with “Voodoo” and of Vodou with what is only half comprehensible and half frightening. And at the core of the movie’s visual representation of blackness is a Vodou ceremony that has a white woman zombie as its centerpiece.

The scene, the longest and most haunting of the film, implicitly links slavery to the state of living death embodied by Jessica, while eroticizing Jessica through its accumulation of sexually charged motifs. The sequence begins with Betsy and Jessica’s journey through the rustling cane fields to a Vodou ceremony, a true voyage of penetration into a strange and foreboding world punctuated by the increasingly spellbinding beating of drums. Throughout the sequence the cinematographer alternates between shades of black and white, tracking swiftly the women’s movements from light to shadow; the camera plays with the contrast between the women’s light billowing costumes and the dark menacing shadows surrounding them, outlining the image of their pale faces against that of the imposing figure of Carrefour, the black guardian of the crossroads, a zombie himself, “who materializes with disquieting suddenness on their path” (see Figure 5).²³ At the ceremony itself the eroticism of the drumming and frenzied dancing of the initiates menacingly frame Jessica’s passive, semiconscious *fjåure*. Dressed in a robe reminiscent of that of a vestal virgin being offered for sacrifice, she steps into the black vortex, the black bodies rustling past her as did the canes, their near touch eroticized as emblematic of the forbidden, her passivity alarming in that she is unable to fore-



Figure 5. The appearance of Carrefour in the cane fields in *I Walked with a Zombie*.

stall the taboo touch. Her only shield is Betsy’s presence, that of a white woman possessed of her will and conscious of her whiteness as a symbol of authority.²⁴ Beautiful, virtuous, generous, and—as the camera constantly reminds us—white, Betsy guides Jessica through the menacing gauntlet unscathed, as she will guide Jessica’s once-tormented husband into a new path of “Voodoo” free love.

Awakened by Jessica’s passivity to the possibility of luring her away from Betsy and back to the *hounfort*, however, the mulatto houngan and his subservient female acolytes in subsequent evenings attempt to summon her with the drums, aided by a blond “Voodoo” doll before which he performs a highly eroticized dance characterized by jerky forward thrusts of the hips and groin. Earlier in the film the cinematographer accentuates the film’s sexual imagery as he captures Betsy awakening in the middle of the night to listen to the sound of Carrefour’s shuffling footsteps, framing her as she lays in bed (the movie’s most frequent piece of clothing for the two female protagonists is a flimsy negligee), behind the ornate iron grille that protects her window, with Carrefour’s phallic shadow standing threateningly against the wall that also holds a painting of a menacing, decaying fortress in the Gothic-romance tradition (see Figure 6).



Figure 6. The appearance of Carrefour outside Betsy's window in *I Walked with a Zombie*.

The power of the images evoked by *White Zombie* and *I Walked with a Zombie*—the association of slavery with zombification, the invocation of black/white sexuality as the repository of the erotic, the peculiar power of white virginal women to escape from the threat of zombification unscathed—has proven lasting. They spawned countless B-movie imitations, enough to constitute a subgenre in its own right. In *King of the Zombies* a madman with a zombified wife turns the natives of a tiny island into an army of zombies to be used as mercenaries by a foreign power.²⁵ The wife's niece boldly struggles to wake her aunt from her lethargy but finds herself the centerpiece of a Vodou ceremony in which she is offered in sacrifice, vestallike, as the telepathic medium through whom her uncle seeks to obtain a captured American general's military secrets. In *The Plague of the Zombies* a "Voodoo"-practicing squire in Cornwall raids a local cemetery for corpses he can turn into zombies to work his tin mine, imperiling the heroine in the process.²⁶

More preposterous, and more recent, examples include infamous director and screenwriter Ed Wood's *Orgy of the Dead*, in which a horror writer and his girlfriend visit a cemetery after dark and are taken captive by the Master of the Dead and the Princes of Darkness.²⁷ They are forced to watch various

zombie women called on from the dead to dance topless to please the Master. My own choice for the winner in the ludicrous category is *Revenge of the Zombies*, a 1981 film set in Hong Kong in which a black-magic sorcerer who drinks human milk to stay eternally young preys on young people.²⁸ His antagonist is a young doctor who, aided by a white-magic sorcerer, fights the horde of zombies to save his fiancée from the evil magician's thirst. "I always drink human milk, and that milk keeps my body young," the poor hapless creature had been told. "Margaret, I shall drink your milk every day, understand?" The enduring power of the images these films conjure is evident in our recognition of them as tropes that encapsulate certain ways of looking at the cultural and religious syncretism of the African-Caribbean as exotic, foreign, "unknowable," and ultimately expendable. The zombies in *Zombies of Mora Tau*, which includes an oversexed white woman zombified as punishment, are summarily dismissed by the protagonist. "They're dead. They have no morality!"²⁹ They are images we have come to associate with the outsider's gaze bent on making an-other of the Caribbean native.

IT IS THUS surprising to find these images at the core of Depestre's *Hadriana dans tous mes rêves*, a text in which similar intertwinings of zombification and the erotic seem aimed at emptying Haitian history of its content.³⁰ Set in Jacmel, the story follows the apparent death, zombification, and carnivalesque wake of the beautiful (and white) Hadriana Siloé, the narrator's idealized and erotic object; it is another tale most clearly inspired by the story of Marie M. A substantial portion of the text is devoted to a detailed account of the preparations for Hadriana's wedding, planned as a "carnival without precedent," and of the elaborate Vodouesque wake that follows her death swoon at the altar. This story of a young woman's zombification and eventful restoration to a "rightful" lover is the point of departure for a somewhat peculiar meditation on Haiti's history that succeeds only in denying the significance of the devastating chronicle of its people's fate through its subordination to the narrator's single-minded quest for erotic fulfillment with Hadriana.

In Depestre's text history is depicted as a *jeu de masques*, a carnivalesque parody that reduces to a senseless game of disguises crucial aspects of Haiti's class and race divisions. From its opening pages, the beautiful Hadriana and her prominent French family are depicted by the narrator as the lynchpins of Jacmel's history, of the town's very life. In his description of the carnival figures who dance in ghostly abandon around the young woman's coffin as it rests on the town's main square, Depestre summons three centuries of Haitian history: Indian caciques, Elizabethan corsairs, barons and marquises of Louis XIV's court, black and mulatto officers of Napoleon's Grand Army, Pauline Bonaparte, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Pétion, Christophe, and, discordantly,

Stalin. But this carnivalesque celebration of death exploits the traditional classlessness of the carnival festival to deny the deeply rooted differences that divide Haitian people along class and race lines. In this indiscriminate parade all historical figures, regardless of the nature of their role or the relative value of their deeds or misdeeds, are granted equal significance. No value judgments are made, no irony accompanies the joint dance of Pauline and Toussaint or the appearance of a masque of military officers dressed as maroons. The juxtaposition of the incongruous, irreconcilable images of the Haitian military, with their record of betrayal of the people, and the Maroons who led the struggle for Haitian independence, is characteristic of the profound contradictions that abound in Depestre's representation of history in the text.

This carnivalesque dance of history, which Depestre presents as Jacmel's reverential tribute to the white, virginal Hadriana, further exacerbates the novel's failure to assign differing values to the historical figures he conjures. The people's cult of the dead Hadriana, "whom they loved and admired as a fairy" (51), seems to render null and void the struggle for independence from white control incarnated in the figures of Pétion, L'Ouverture, and Christophe, here seen dancing in homage around the white woman's coffin. Furthermore, in an odd disavowal of the hurricanes, political intrigues, and collapses in the international price of coffee that led to the downward turn in Jacmel's prosperity in the mid-twentieth century, he attributes the city's decline to Hadriana's disappearance, an event that plunges Jacmel into precipitous decay, leaving the city adrift in a sea of woes. "Together with the beauty of his daughter, time, hope, doubt, reason, compassion, tenderness, the rage to live, had also evaporated from the town of Jacmel. It seemed to have surrendered to a somber fate, tossed by waves of evil tribulations which included, in equally devastating measure, unappeasable agents of desolation and ruin, fire, hurricanes, drought, the presidency-for-life, malaria, the State, erosion, the homo papadocus, all blending into each other in a sort of unstoppable osmosis" (111).

Depestre's representation of the devastating impact of Hadriana's death on Jacmel is rendered ironic and illogical the moment it is revealed that through the decades of Jacmel's sorrowful decay Hadriana was not only alive, having managed to flee the sorcerer who had attempted to zombify her, but enjoying relative prosperity in Jamaica, where she had settled with the dowry that was still pinned to her wedding gown when she was buried. The irony intensifies when the reader realizes that the narrator's fulfillment of his erotic quest for Hadriana is in no way conducive to Jacmel's deliverance from the accursed state prompted by her disappearance. Depestre, however, circumvents the legitimate questions posed by Haiti's painful historical legacy as seen through the fate of Jacmel, declaring them to be of lesser importance than the solution of his erotic quest. And the tale ends with the assertion that the

final reunion of Hadriana and the narrator signals the end of the need for a "historical" narrative because "we have chosen to hold to the belief that the joys and sorrows of love have no history" (191).

When Depestre does ponder the significance of Haitian history, to which an entire chapter is devoted, the question posed is one familiar to readers of his earlier work, that of whether the Haitian people can be seen as a collective zombie. Depestre perceives this zombification in the apparent disassociation of the people's body and their will, seen as the result of the brutality of Haitian slavery and of the Haitian racialist masquerade that assigned positive and negative essences to skin color. It is a dangerous notion in that it debases the Haitian people to "the category of human cattle, malleable, pliable to one's will" (128), denying the people's centuries-long struggle against natural calamities, dictatorship, and repression, which, however unsuccessful, has been nonetheless real. In Depestre's presentation, however, the Haitian zombie emerges as the "biological fuel par excellence, what is left of Caliban after the loss of his identity, his life having been literally cut in two: the *gros bon ange* of muscular strength condemned to eternal forced labor; the *petit bon ange* of wisdom and light, of guilelessness and dreams, exiled forever into the first empty bottle found lying around" (130). The peculiarities of this view of history, which strips the Haitian people of any possibility of self-determination, are underscored by Hadriana's own escape from zombification, which implies that Hadriana, like Madeleine in *White Zombie*, being white, beautiful, and rich, can quickly recover her will, whereas the Haitian people, because they are black, gullible, and poor, are trapped in zombiedom forever. This depiction of the Haitian people as zombies negates any possibility of their transcending a history of colonialism, slavery, postcolonial poverty, and political repression because, as zombies, they are incapable of rebellion. "Let's join our *gros bons anges* in a struggle for freedom': those are words one is not likely to hear from a zombi's mouth" (131).

Hence, in *Hadriana dans tous mes rêves*, Vodou does not fulfill its metaphorical function as the expression of the people's thirst for freedom, a connection established at the fabled meeting at Bois Caiman that started the Haitian Revolution. Depestre's exploration of the history of the Haitian people diminishes them as zombified, will-less creatures, and Vodou, usually a path to revolt and rebirth, surfaces only as the evil power threatening a beautiful white woman—a power represented by the Bela Lugosi-like sorcerer struggling to foil the narrator's efforts to "wrench Nana from death and to light the star of her flesh in our lives" (77). The narrator, like the zombie films, dismisses the historical questions as less important than his concern for Hadriana's fate, and the chapter ends with a forsaking of the meditation on history in favor of a return to the Hadriana quest. "Set aside these disquisitions so falsely

imbued in mythology and in the sociology of decolonization. For the second time in your life Hadriana Siloé knocks at your door in the middle of the night. Get up and bring back the loved one to the home of her childhood!" (133).

Depestre's tale of carnival as a homage to the dead white virgin opens with a carnivalesque metamorphosis: the transformation of Balthazar Granchiré, a notorious womanizer, into a highly sexed butterfly, a sort of winged phallus that goes on a rape rampage, ravaging unsuspecting young women as they sleep. This is the most blatant, though by no means the only example of the deeply rooted sexism that pervades the text. Granchiré's metamorphosis, avowedly a punishment for his sexual transgression with a sorcerer's *femme-jardin*, ironically (and illogically) gives him license to unleash his sexual powers on unsuspecting women, allowing him, and the text, to debase women by turning them into victimized sex objects. Forced sexual "joy" is the fate of the women who fall prey to the butterfly. "The most spellbinding orgasms will wreak havoc in the beautiful lives that your satan of a phallus will have bowed to your pleasure" (26).

The figure of this grotesque *papillon* (butterfly) appears to have been inspired by a famous caco leader of that name, whose military and erotic adventures are narrated by John Houston Craige in his sensationalistic work *Cannibal Cousins*.³¹ Papillon, "a terrible yegg" who earned the nickname by carving a butterfly on the back or chest of those he killed, was reputed to have skinned alive and eaten an American Marine. His tale is narrated by Craige in the context of a discussion of rampant sexuality in Haiti. Young Haitian "bucks," when not in possession of a harem, he contended, "ranged the brush waylaying desirable *tiefies*, or young women, as occasion offered. Occasion offered frequently. The *tiefies* apparently enjoyed being waylaid. Rape, I believe, implies lack of consent. I never heard of a case where consent was lacking in Haiti's black belt" (124). The objectification of women implied by Papillon's rampage and Craige's account is bolstered in *Hadriana . . .* by the portrayal of its protagonist as Sleeping Beauty, a lifeless, inanimate, passively awaiting sex object very much like the passive portraits of the zombified Madeleine and Jessica. Depestre conscientiously "saves" Hadriana from Granchiré's erotic rampage—the only young woman in the novel not "savagely deflowered"—keeping her for the narrator's ultimate pleasure at the end of the text.

The false eroticism of the text, false to the degree that it objectifies female sexuality and is built on male-centered fantasies of erotic dominance, is linked to the racially determined attitudes toward sexuality that I described above as being so intrinsic to zombie films. The text is overly concerned with sexual relations between black men and white women. Not only does Granchiré, black male-cum-butterfly, ferociously attack white and mulatto women, leaving them covered in his semen and their blood, but the text pre-

sents Hadriana's carnivalesque wake as a volcano that "reduces to ashes the legendary obstacles between Thanatos and Eros, overcoming the barriers raised between the sperm of black males and the eggs of white females" (77). The link between a woman's white skin and her role as desired erotic object is highlighted in Hadriana's meeting with the sorcerer who attempts to zombify her. His announcement that once their copulation has been accomplished, "everything that is right side out in your life as a white female will be turned wrong side out to show its blackness" (198) suggests that Hadriana's whiteness will disappear with her virginity. Hadriana succeeds in escaping that fate, but her deliverance only reinforces the correlation between her whiteness and her continued role as desired virginal (white) erotic object. This validation of whiteness, presented for the most part without irony in the text, is stressed when Hadriana enters Jamaica without a visa because "white skin, even more than a diplomatic passport, was tantamount to a visa granted by divine right" (190).

Depestre's text ultimately resists meaning, as it seems to strive to empty history of its content by placing the erotic quest above it. But the erotic quest itself is deprived of sense in the text because it negates the free erotic *jouissance* of the carnivalesque and the revolutionary aspects of Vodou in the name of the triumph of zombification and the grotesque phallic image. It is an erotic quest that relegates all Haitian people, with the exception of the narrator and his young white beloved, to everlasting zombification, devoid of the will to revolt, deprived by a brutal history of the freedom to desire.

MAYRA MONTERO'S short story "Corinne, muchacha amable" ("Corinne, Amiable Girl") resonates with the tropes familiar to moviegoers, here turned inside out to expose their sexist, racist, and political underpinnings.³² Young Appolinaire Sanglier, "wallowing in the despair of his love like a victim of a blood spell," seeks the aid of Papa Lhomond, a houngan who knows "how to work the living dead," to turn light-skinned and yellow-eyed Corinne into his zombie wife (836–837). He is spurred into action by tales of a French woman abducted and turned into a pliant zombie by a sorcerer from Hinche. Corinne, the daughter of a white priest and a prostitute, is coveted for a beauty that owes much to her being partly white; but she is engaged to marry a politically active man who is deaf and mute, aptly named Dessalines Corail; and she is disdainful of the love-sick Appolinaire. Her zombification on the eve of her wedding will be as much a punishment for her disdain as the means of guaranteeing that, after her marriage to Appolinaire, "she will not become such a whore as her mother." Appolinaire dreams of her as she will be after she returns "from the blue well of the deceased, clean and submissive like God intended, with the pale gaze of those who never think, without that scowl of disgust she gave him every time he came near" (836).

In this story, Montero is interested as much in laying bare the zombification of women as a power rather than an erotic issue as she is in linking this issue to the larger one of the Haitian people's struggle against the Duvalier government, here represented by the dreaded Tonton Macoutes, the regime's feared militia. Set on the eve of an election, with Corinne's fiancé one of the most active workers on behalf of an anti-Duvalier local candidate, the story subtly juxtaposes Corinne's determination to choose a husband freely and the people's struggle to elect a candidate committed to social justice. Both will be denied this right. Montero never dwells on the pathos of Corinne's situation; no sentimentality is wasted on the fate of the brave young girl who has dared to challenge Appolinaire's desire and the Tonton Macoute's wrath. Her individual fate is not Montero's central concern; it is depicted as bound to that of the Haitian people. As she lies in a deathlike stupor in her fresh grave, with Papa Lhomond and Appolinaire racing against time to dig her up before she suffocates, the people, her fiancé among them, are brutally attacked as they seek to exercise their democratic right to vote.

Smoke from old tires floated above the square, and counting on that being the shortest route to the cemetery, [Appolinaire] decided to make his way across through the bonfires. Behind the church, next to the garbage cans of the cabinet-maker's shop, he sighted the first corpses. The faces were covered with sawdust and the spilled shavings had stuck to their shoes. Appolinaire slowed down. He noticed the half-severed necks and arms and concluded they had been killed by machete blows. . . . When he turned the corner, without having the time to avoid it, he found himself facing a mob that was suddenly upon him, dragging him along little by little. Some men were sobbing loudly, their faces covered with blood and their clothes torn. . . . He returned to his house near dawn, avoiding the soldiers piling up bodies on tarpaulin-covered trucks. [844-845, 846]

The living dead remain a disquieting presence in "Corinne, Amiable Girl," another chapter in the narrative of the Haitian people's ongoing struggle for freedom from political and economic oppression. Montero denies the people's zombification through the materiality of their butchered bodies, their "half-severed necks and arms." Appolinaire, encountering Dessalines amidst the mob fleeing the murdering armed forces, sees his rival as "one of those who had been brought back: very rigid arms, a fixed stare, the convulsive grin of the mouth, the bitter grin of all creatures that like to eat vermin" (845). But this Dessalines will not be coming back; his zombielike appearance is but the mask of death. He is soaked in blood, with a wound, "an enormous slanting slash," running across his chest into his gut. The dead bodies piled up anonymously on trucks and the still-living body of Corinne awaiting a rescue into the half-

life of zombiedom represent an unresolved historical quandary from which the zombie as metaphor can offer no deliverance.

IN *LA CATHÉDRALE DU MOIS D'AOÛT* (The Cathedral of the August Heat), Pierre Clitandre transcends the life-death symbiosis of the zombie-centered tales through the reaffirmation not of the sorcery of the bokor but of the life-giving and revolutionary qualities of Vodou.³³ Zombification has always been marginal to Vodou, and Clitandre, leaving the zombie behind, focuses instead on the relationship between history and the Haitian people's ever-changing and renewed body. Like Corinne in Montero's tale, the novel's characters are distinct individuals subsumed into the living body of the people. Although it focuses on John, a *tap-tap* (bus) driver and his son Raphael, the novel is above all a metaphorical tale of a lost people's desperate struggle to recover their history and, with it, the source of precious water that can restore them to fertility and bounty. It celebrates hope and renewal through its emphasis on the carnivalesque and its faith in the regenerating and revolutionary power of Vodou.

Central to the novel is the portrayal of the Haitian people as a body that is the opposite of Depestre's zombie, one that "fecundates and is fecundated, devours and is devoured, drinks, defecates, is sick and dying."³⁴ Clitandre celebrates the materiality of the Haitian people's bodies through hyperbolized, quasi-Rabelaisian, grotesque images that are overwhelmingly, although not exclusively, olfactory. The novel contains literally hundreds of references to the potent bodily smells typical of the Rabelaisian marketplace: unbathed bodies smelling like ram-goats, the abominable stench of rotting flesh, the nauseous smell of plague-ridden corpses, the stink of piss and decay, and the smell of sweat, blood, and bruises. He also presents an image of the body as mutilated, rotting corpse, as it was in Montero's tale; the text abounds in images of crushed hands, burnt bodies, cut-off penises, roasted testicles, sores, and of blood soaking and fertilizing the scorched earth. Death haunts the text, and the people are represented as subject to ever-threatening plagues, natural calamities, and repressive terror. But, as is typical of the carnivalesque, death and the dead body are depicted as stages in the renewing of the ancestral body of the people, not as the limbo of zombification. Thus, the novel treats individual deaths not as signaling an irrevocable end but as natural and necessary phases in the cycle of life. Death asserts life, thus ensuring the indestructible immortality of the people. The death of an individual, as the death of young Raphael demonstrates, is only a moment in the triumphant life of the people, "a moment indispensable for their renewal and empowerment,"³⁵ and is thus, as Corinne's zombification was in Montero's tale, devoid of terror and tragedy.

Images of death are counterbalanced in the text by recurrent images of

the people's struggle against death through procreation. "Lost people like to have plenty of children. Fornicate all the blessed day. Say it's their only hope: pickney like the fingers of your hand, faster than death can carry them off. And so the babies come, ten, twenty, thirty at a time . . . faster than death."³⁶ The theme of death-renewal-fertility is underscored through repeated images of blood as a seed buried in the earth and of life springing forth not only from the human body but through fantastic profusions of roses, life-giving rain, and life-affirming eroticism.

Clitandre's interest in the erotic aspects of the grotesque image of the body is also a characteristic feature of the carnivalesque; it turns upside down the bodily hierarchy in which the head rules to make the "lower bodily stratum" prevail. Eroticism, death, and revolt set the tone for the novel from the opening, when John, impotent for a long time, prisoner of a "zombification" of sorts, lifts off the body of a white man making love to Madeleine and flings himself at her. "Three days John and Madeleine spent coiled together, moving to the tune of the serpents' hiss that whispered from their closed teeth. And like a voice from beyond the grave the song of the old madam at the bar was still humming away *Carolina Aca-o Small ear black man enragée*" (6). This image summarizes key aspects of the text: the Caribbean people's struggle against the impotence and zombification forced on them by the white colonizers, sexual activity as a metaphor for revolt, the coiled serpents as a symbol of the Vodou cult of Damballah-wèdo, and the accompanying song from the grave, which recalls the sustaining role of the ancestral loas. The earthiness of the eroticism in the novel, with the recurring images of semen and human blood, is linked to Vodou, the source of the body's (the people's) reinvigoration. "The body is joy and revival," the narrative voice asserts, and this revival of the body is achieved through the Vodou ceremony: "it is reborn every Tuesday at midnight, among the smells of burning oil and essence, in the trance, the bathing of the head, the chants, until being is transformed and the stars fall" (28).

The life-giving power of Vodou pervades the entire text. The *vèvè*, or mystical sign, for Erzulie, goddess of the erotic and divinity of dreams, presides over the first part of the novel. The power of Erzulie—"her *élan*, all the excessive pitch with which the dreams of men soar, when, momentarily, they can shake loose the flat weight, the dreary, reiterative demands of necessity"—imbues this section of the text.³⁷ Conceived in the spirit of expansiveness characteristic of the cult of Erzulie, where all anxieties, all urgencies vanish, the section ends with the prefiguration of the power of laughter, the volcanic laughter that erupts in the world of the lost people like a seismic shock, spreading through the Caribbean region. The supernatural laughter corresponds to the image of the netherworld in folk tradition as the place to which fear has fled after its defeat by laughter. Folk laughter, the cosmic laughter of the lost

people, represents the end of the "mystic terror of the authority and truth of the past, still prevailing but dying, which has been hurled into the underworld"³⁸—the defeat of the forces that have zombified the people. In Clitandre, the resulting image is that of laughter sweeping away the past, including the carnival paraphernalia, because carnival, container of the people's spirit of revolt in its temporarily sanctioned aspects, is no longer needed when true revolution is at hand. "The laugh bore away masks, decorated floats, Carnival devils, whiskers from the moustache of a former general, old dresses of women long buried, banners washed out by the rains, paper flags faded by seasons when hails of bullets re-echoed, and all the things which were passing away, grating or whining, sad and majestic puppets who had set for ever in a hollow grin" (97).

The dreams inspired by Erzulie set the stage for the second part of the tale, which is introduced by the *vèvè* for Petro, an invocation to the spirits of wrath and revolt. The Petro rites in Vodou were born of the rage against the evil fate suffered by Africans transported into the New World, the wrath against the brutality of displacement and enslavement.³⁹ The second part thus focuses on the people's open revolt against the repressive authorities, guided by the Petro loas into calling for "People power now!" (123). The Petro loas, born in the mountains, nurtured in secret, repositories of the moral strength and organization of the escaped slaves that led the Haitian revolution, help Clitandre's people retrieve their lost history of struggle and revolt, awakening them to "another shouting for armed resistance against the great epidemic of repression" (122). Even the fierce wave of repression that follows the revolt of the trade unionists, the focus of this part of the text, can no longer stem the people's thirst for freedom. Raphael, killed during the revolt, articulates the message of the Petro loas in the legacy of historical memory he leaves behind. "He had scraped it (into the old cannon) with the blade, as if he wanted to remove the rust of the Season of Neglect, as if to tell his father to keep his promise. That these brave ancestors who forged this free nation, floating like a bird on the blue Caribbean Sea, should not be forgotten" (128).

In Clitandre's novel, as in Montero's "Corinne, Amiable Girl," the grotesque/carnivalesque image of the human body functions as the repository of history, the vessel of memory through which political change will eventually be accomplished. The eroticized image of the zombified white virgin—ahistorical and insistent on relegating the Haitian people to the forever-zombified margins—has no place in these accounts of Haiti's fate. In Clitandre's account, particularly, the people-as-body is unambiguously true to itself and to its history, and, although dismembered and drained of blood at times, it is never zombified and thus is ultimately indestructible.

AS AN ANALYSIS of Clitandre's *The Cathedral of the August Heat* underscores, films like *White Zombie* and *I Walked with a Zombie*—early entries in Hollywood's formulation of a spectral Haiti that we have seen developed and continued in countless zombie movies and Depestre's *Hadriana dans tous mes rêves*—raise troubling questions about the subsuming of Haitian political history to an erotic quest that privileges the white woman as innocent victim. Together with images from other films of the genre (most recently *The Serpent and the Rainbow*), the images made classic by *White Zombie* and *I Walked with a Zombie* and echoed in *Hadriana* conspire to blur the reality of Haiti, that of a people for whom tragic episodes of oppression continue to be woven into the fabric of their historical present. Slavery and imperialism (and the people's brave struggle against them) color in somber hues the island's past and present history; the "zombification" of the Haitian people and the subordination of their valiant spirit to the demands of a romantic plot that demands a vindicated white heroine are a betrayal of the Haitian people's affirmation that, ideologues notwithstanding, they have the capacity for living in autonomous sovereignty and should not be made to linger on the specter of death.

Notes

1. Edward Kamau Brathwaite, *Rites of Passage. The Arrivants: A New World Trilogy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973). Joan Dayan, "Erzulie: A Women's History of Haiti," *Research in African Literatures* 2 (summer 1994): 5; reprinted in *Postcolonial Subjects: Francophone Women Writers* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).
2. Zora Neale Hurston, *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica* (1938; reprint, New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 179. Katherine Dunham, *Island Possessed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 184.
3. Dunham, *Island Possessed*, 184–185.
4. Alfred Métraux, *Voodoo in Haiti*, trans. Hugo Charteris (New York: Schocken, 1972), 250–251.
5. Wade Davis, *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (New York: Warner Books, 1985), and Wade Davis, *Passage of Darkness: The Ethnobiology of the Haitian Zombie* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).
6. Davis, *Passage of Darkness*, 8–10. One of the earliest of the fully documented cases of zombification concerned a young woman from Savanne Carée, Francina Illéus, known as Ti-Femme, declared dead in 1976, aged thirty, who reappeared after she escaped from her captors. Before her death she had worked as a *marchande*, or market woman. Rebellious by nature, she had left the husband chosen for her by her mother, and, breaking village taboos, she had taken a lover with whom she had a child. Her mother was suspected of asking a bokor to turn her into a zombie as punishment for her behavior. See Bernard Diederich, "On the Nature of Zombi Existence," *Caribbean Review* 12 (1983): 14–17, 43–46. Interestingly enough, many of Hollywood's zombie films employ this punishment function of zombification as a plot element, particularly in the presentation of women zombified as punishment for adultery or lustful behavior. Notable among them is *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943), where the hero's mother (who herself has for many years impersonated a *houngan*, or Vodou priest, in order to get the villagers to follow public health guide-

- lines) arranges for her daughter-in-law's zombification as punishment for an adulterous affair with her brother-in-law. The "zombification" is dismissed by the family doctor and attributed to a pernicious fever. In *Voodoo Woman* (1957) the sultry title creature—amoral, lustful, and murderous—willingly becomes a subject in a science and "Voodoo" experiment that results in her transformation into a hideously scaly, murderous monster who is ultimately buried in a steamy swamp.
7. Davis's anthropological work, supported by scholarship and science, itself fell victim to Hollywood's craving for sensationalism. The film based on his book *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (1988; Universal, directed by Wes Craven, produced by David Ladd and Doug Claybourne) is replete with evil "Voodoo" sorcerers, sexual torture, and cries of "Don't let them bury me. I'm not dead!"
 8. Dunham, *Island Possessed*, 187.
 9. Maximilien Laroche, "The Myth of the Zombi," in *Exile and Tradition: Studies in African and Caribbean Literature*, ed. Rowland Smith (London: Longman, 1976), 47.
 10. René Depestre, *Change* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1971), 20.
 11. Harry A. Franck, *Roaming through the West Indies*, (New York: Century, 1920), 164.
 12. William B. Seabrook, *The Magic Island* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1929), 109–115.
 13. Franck, *Roaming through the West Indies*, 164.
 14. Métraux, *Voodoo in Haiti*, 284.
 15. Hurston, *Tell My Horse*, 194–195.
 16. Arthur Holly, *Les Daimons du culte Voudo et Dra-Po* (Port-au-Prince: n.p., 1918).
 17. C.-H. Dewisme, *Les Zombis ou le secret des morts-vivants* (Paris: Edition Bernard Grasset, 1957), 146–147.
 18. Jacques-Stephen Alexis, "Chronique d'un faux amour," in *Romancero aux étoiles* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1960), 103. All translations are mine.
 19. *White Zombie* (1932), produced by Edward Halperin for Amusement Securites/United Artists, directed by Victor Halperin.
 20. *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943), produced by RKO, directed by Jacques Tourneur, with James Ellison, Frances Dee, and Tom Conway in the leading roles.
 21. Blake Lucas, "I Walked with a Zombie," in *Magill's Survey of Cinema: English Language Films*, 2d ser., vol. 3, ed. Frank N. Magill (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Salem Press, 1981), 1094.
 22. *Ibid.*, 1094.
 23. *Ibid.*, 1096.
 24. Another example of white usurpation of power in the film is the revelation of the identity of the *houngan* as another white woman, a doctor who claims that, unable to guide the blacks to enlightened beliefs, she opted to offer them Western medicine and aids through means they could comprehend.
 25. *King of the Zombies* (1941), Monogram, directed by Jean Yarbrough, produced by Lindsley Parsons, cinematography by Mack Stengler.
 26. *The Plague of the Zombies* (1966), Hammer/20th Century-Fox (U.K.), directed by John Gilling, produced by Anthony Nelson Keys, screenplay by Peter Bryan, cinematography by Arthur Grant.
 27. *Orgy of the Dead* (1965), F.O.G. Distributions, produced and directed by A. C. Stephen, screenplay by Ed Wood, cinematography by Robert Caramico.
 28. *Revenge of the Zombies* (1981), WW Entertainment (Hong Kong), directed by Ho Meng-Hua, produced by Run Run Shaw, screenplay by I. Kuang, cinematography by Tsao Hui-Chi.
 29. *Zombies of Mora Tau* (1957), Columbia, directed by Edward L. Chan, produced by Sam Katzman, screenplay by Raymond T. Marcus, cinematography by Benjamin H. Kline.

30. René Depestre, *Hadriana dans tous mes rêves* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1988). All translations are mine. For a longer, more detailed discussion of the novel see my essay "Authors Playin' Mas': Carnival and the Carnavalesque in the Contemporary Caribbean Novel," in *History of Caribbean Literatures*, ed. A. James Arnold, Cross Cultural Studies 3 (Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, forthcoming).
31. John Houston Craige, *Cannibal Cousins* (New York: Minton, Balch, 1934), 128.
32. Mayra Montero, "Corinne, muchacha amable," in *Cuentos para ahuyentar el turismo*, ed. Vitalina Alfonso and Emilio Jorge Rodríguez (Havana: Arte y Literatura, 1991), 285-306. Translated into English by Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert as "Corinne, Amiable Girl," *Callaloo* 17, no. 3 (summer 1994). Reprinted in *Remaking a Lost Harmony: Short Stories from the Hispanic Caribbean*, ed. Margarite Fernández Olmos and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert (Fredonia, N.Y.: White Pine Press, 1995). References in the text are to the *Callaloo* issue.
33. Pierre Clintandre, *La Cathédrale du mois d'août* (Paris: Editions Syros, 1982). Translated into English by Bridget Jones as *The Cathedral of the August Heat* (London: Readers International, 1987). All references are to the English translation.
34. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 319.
35. *Ibid.*, 34.
36. Clintandre, *The Cathedral*, 15.
37. Maya Deren, *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti* (1953; reprint, Kingston, N.Y.: McPherson, 1970), 138.
38. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 395.
39. Deren, *Divine Horsemen*, 62.