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Attempts at Reforming Haiti's Education System: The Challenges of Mending the Tapestry, 1979-2004

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INTRODUCTION

For well over a quarter of a century, from 1979 to 2004 and continuing to the present day, Haiti's educational system has been at a critical juncture. In 1982, when Haiti embarked on a major overhaul of education—which came to be known as *la Réforme Bernard*, or the Bernard reform—the country's system of schooling had sunk into a persistent state of crisis, afflicted with such problems as a lack of adequate schools, poor quality of teaching personnel, a high rate of failure on the *Baccalauréat* (baccalaureate) examination, wide disparities between urban and rural schooling, constant teachers' strikes for a living wage, and chronic student protests for improved schools. All of these were a visible signifier that the Haitian educational system needed more than a superficial repair of its tapestry. The school system had become a perennial challenge for Haiti's educational planners to overcome in order to help the country achieve a sufficient level of national development in the global scheme.

After more than 25 years, there has been no comprehensive, longitudinal study of the nationwide impact of the Bernard reform on Haiti's economic, social, and political institutions. Therefore, because a central element of Bernard education reform was the introduction of Kreyòl as an official language of instruction, this paper attempts to contribute to the literature on educational reform by analyzing the unique challenges of implementing a controversial language-use policy in the Haitian educational system that reflects the historical, social, economic, and political contexts of this Caribbean society. To address the multitude of concerns raised in this article, the following questions will guide the analysis: Why was such a dramatic educational reform proposed? What went wrong during the implementation of the reform? Was Bernard education reform a success or a failure?

On this last question, *la Réforme Bernard* undeniably served as a catalyst to start re-orienting the Haitian educational system. However,

while the Bernard reform brought some innovations in the areas of bilingual education, curriculum renewal, and school re-organization, the use of Kreyòl as an official language of instruction to meet the linguistic needs and realities of the majority of Haitian learners was constantly under fire, and became the most controversial feature of the reform. The official mandate of Kreyòl as a language of instruction came as a shock to the general populace, and was considered a bold move at the time by many Haitians. Overall, however, it is my contention that besides the legal recognition of Kreyòl—which created a greater sense of democratic access—the Bernard education reform failed to achieve its intended long-term impact on Haiti's economic structure as well as its social and political institutions. Furthermore, I contend that the Bernard education reform, from its very inception, had no chance to succeed, because the actors and agents responsible for implementing the reform undermined the process. In other words, the Bernard reform was doomed to failure due to a lack of commitment, ownership, and political will on the part of foreign actors as well as local agents.

Given the multiple competing goals of the Bernard reform and the political conditions in Haiti, it was virtually impossible for more than 30 successive ministers of education, each with a limited tenure, to make any impact on the country's educational situation. International funding agencies that supported reform projects were also culpable in the failure of the Bernard reform. There is a body of research indicating that participation by stakeholders in project design and implementation is critical to the success of innovative educational reform initiatives, and that such projects are best supported by the development of "broad, flexible strategies and guidelines."¹ Nevertheless, international funding agencies failed to build these strategic principles into the educational reform projects they sponsored in Haiti. Ultimately, management and implementation of educational reform by international organizations influenced by external forces could not substitute for a domestically-driven broad vision and comprehensive plan for education to support national development.

A NATION DIVIDED: A BRIEF HISTORY OF HAITI'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Historians contend that Haiti has been a divided nation in terms of its geography, politics, society, and economics.² During the first decade following Haiti's independence in 1804, a geographical division—which had its historical roots prior to independence—prevailed, causing bloodshed and a major political rift among the founding generals. The Northern Province under Henri Christophe established a kingdom, while

Alexandre Pétion established a republic in the Southern and Western provinces. In this political and geographic division lie the origins of Haiti's educational stratification. As Michel-Rolph Trouillot notes, "Both Pétion and Christophe had established primary and secondary schools in the areas they controlled, but those institutions were aimed at the urban elites."³ Charles Tardieu (1990) contends that during the nineteenth century, through a series of practices and political discourses, the country's leaders sought to reinforce the elitist class structure that had existed since Haiti's days as a French colony. The polarization between the elite and the masses created a type of "social apartheid," which has continued to permeate all facets of Haitian society and most certainly the educational system to this very day. Haitian social scientist Jean Price-Mars noted this political divide in the early twentieth century: "Il faut aller chercher l'origine de cette funeste séparation de l'élite et de la foule de telle sorte qu'elles forment à l'heure actuelle deux nations dans la nation ayant chacune ses intérêts, ses tendances et ses fins propres." ("One must look for the origin of this awful separation between the elite and the masses, in such a way that it currently creates two nations within one—each having its own interests, tendencies, and ends.")⁴ A contemporary example is the division between urban dwellers (*moun lavil*) and rural citizens (*moun andeyò*), in which two different social realities continue to co-exist silently. Consequently, such a division impacts Haiti's ability to design and implement any well-intended national public policies in education for achieving social and economic justice for all its citizens.⁵

As the French colony of St. Domingue, Haiti certainly had no history of formal schooling, because the children of upper-class property owners and freemen were usually sent abroad for their education.⁶ Nonetheless, free compulsory education for all children was mandated by the first Constitution of independent Haiti,⁷ even though the new nation was overwhelmed by many difficulties, ranging from a lack of international recognition to the forced payment of war reparations to France, in addition to frequent internal power struggles and foreign interventions. This social and economic quarantine of newly independent Haiti had profound effects on the aspirations and hopes for a sound public educational system.

Although the Catholic Church was largely responsible for formal education in Europe and its colonies, the Vatican—acting in accord with the majority of influential world powers of that time—initially refused to recognize the legitimacy of the new nation and left Haiti to fend for itself. By 1860, however, the Vatican formally recognized Haiti as a sovereign nation with the signing of the *Concordat*. Thus began an influx of Catholic missionaries and the opening of numerous Catholic schools. But the elites

of Haitian society had already created an educational system that catered to their needs alone. The establishment of Church-run schools did very little to effectively change the exclusionary practices that had already been established; in fact, the newly founded Catholic schools embraced and continued the practices already put in place by the elite.

Despite these inequities in the educational system, during the latter part of the nineteenth century, Haiti enjoyed a brief period of relative stability and success in arts, literature, and culture. The country had a burgeoning economy, with exports of coffee, cocoa, and other agricultural products to its many trading partners in Europe and the U.S. However, violence in the late nineteenth century offset efforts to expand the educational system, resulting in the closure of many Church-run schools. Political instability continued into the early twentieth century.

As economist Mats Lundahl (1979) recounts, "In 1915, the entire public school system had reached a state of total ruin."⁸ In particular, the impact of education on rural life prior to that time had been minimal, with literacy rates in the countryside near zero. Any statement of the official number of schools opened during the period 1910-1915 would be misleading, as the operation of most was at the mercy of the insurgent *Caco* farmers' guerrilla movement. However, in spite of these many challenges, some minimal efforts to improve Haiti's educational system had begun when the overthrow of President Vilbrun Guillaume Sam and his government halted their implementation. Then, the U.S.—seizing the opportunity provided by Haiti's default on its debt, and by the island nation's persistent political turmoil—invaded Haiti in 1915, occupying it until 1934.

It was at the time of the first U.S. occupation that Haiti experienced its first major educational reform. Although the primary objective of the occupation was to restore political stability and economic security, the effort also aimed to increase productivity and achievement in the country's various educational spheres. In this first attempt to repair Haiti's educational system, both the process and outcomes were particularly distressing, however. The U.S. occupation administrators, in collaboration with local leaders, tried to set up agricultural education in the provinces, but met with fierce resistance by both Haitian intellectuals and the masses for a number of reasons that are well outlined in Léon Pamphile's important work.⁹

The establishment of a system of vocational education that provided a curriculum to the rural population that was different from the general education curriculum used for urban dwellers was perceived as a way to reinforce the social divide. The vocational education curriculum was

placed under the direction of the Service Technique du Département de l'Agriculture et de l'Enseignement Professionnel, newly set up in 1924. Thus began the legitimating of a two-tiered, dual-track educational system, with rural schools teaching the peasants reading and writing but mostly agricultural and industrial skills, while urban schools were exempt from the vocational curriculum. The fact that the two school systems did not offer the same curriculum codified the *de facto* social apartheid between *lekòl lavil* (urban schools) and *lekòl andeyò* (rural schools). Ironically, many teachers and trainers were from the elite and urban middle classes, and were sent to the Central School of Agriculture, which housed the Normal School for teacher preparation. However, many teacher-trainers and would-be rural teachers—uninterested in such positions or in the initiative—chose to leave the profession rather than implement a curriculum they did not support. This only contributed further to the failure of the first school reform attempt.¹⁰

Pamphile (1985) also notes how the blatantly racist attitudes of the U.S. Marines toward the island's citizens resulted in great mistrust by Haitians of the American agenda. U.S. involvement in Haitians' political and economic affairs, continues Pamphile, was "a not-so-veiled attack on their cultural heritage."¹¹ In addition to the mistrust by the general population, there was great opposition to the U.S.-imposed Service Technique from the Haitian government, civil society, and the Catholic Church as well. The mounting frustration from all sectors of Haitian society led in October 1929 to student strikes, which turned into nationwide protests. After the U.S. occupation forces left the country five years later in 1934, the rigid "American vocational system" gradually faded away, but there was still an ongoing effort to facilitate some integration of vocational training with the French educational model that had been in place prior to the U.S. invasion.¹²

A second attempt at educational reform occurred in the post-U.S. occupation period. In 1941, under the government of Elie Lescot, Education Minister Maurice Dartigue—in a now familiar pattern—attempted an educational reform program, which was again to implement a more practically-oriented agricultural and vocational curriculum in rural areas. Many Haitians from rural areas considered *la Réforme Dartigue*, as it was known, to be "old wine in a new bottle," and Haiti's rural inhabitants met it with great opposition. They preferred instead the more traditional, classically-based education that catered to the elites in urban areas.¹³ As for the attitude of the elites themselves, Chantalle Verna, in her analysis of *la Réforme Dartigue*, writes, "the Haitian elite was typically indifferent to mass education because Haitian schools offered classical education that produced candidates for public function."¹⁴

Tardieu (1990) provides an excellent description of the elitist nature of Haiti's traditional French-style educational system.¹⁵ This educational system—which has marked several generations from the late 1940s and continuing throughout the '50s, '60s, and early '70s—has two distinct characteristics. The first is the location of the schools, which were mainly in the capital city of Port-au-Prince and a few other cities. The second characteristic is the use of French as the language of instruction, thus marginalizing the native Kreyòl language and culture. Using this well-established French model, the elite religiously-affiliated schools turned out well-educated individuals who went on to university studies in Europe, Latin America, Canada, and the United States.

A closer look at the curriculum and pedagogic materials in place prior to la Réforme Bernard reveals that French was not simply the language of instruction. The textbooks were also written specifically for French students, and with all their foreign cultural contents, the texts had no relevance to the Haitian students' realities. The pedagogical perspectives and orientation of the curricular materials were French to the point that, by the time students completed their formal education, they were so enamored of French culture that they often aspired—and even affected—to be French, wishing for the social capital such an identity would provide. Sociologist Laennec Hurbon (1987), in his analysis of the negative consequences of using Haitian traditional schooling to impose the code of the dominant society, argues that such a situation predictably led to the alienation of students from their homeland.¹⁶ By setting up French language and culture as the ideals to achieve, the educational system relegated Kreyòl, the Haitian native language—and thus the culture of Haiti itself—to second-class status, thus further devaluing and marginalizing the nation and its people. Such educational practices served to maintain the elitist class structure originally set up by the colonizers; that exclusionary structure was perpetuated by the country's leaders through the schools and other institutions long after the colonizers left, and it remains a major challenge even today.

STATE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM LEADING UP TO THE BERNARD REFORM

The nature and degree of the social and economic divisions that have characterized much of Haiti's history were still present in its educational system in the early '70s, prior to the Bernard reform. The continuing struggle to establish the compulsory and free system of education mandated by its Constitution had been one of the greatest challenges facing the Haitian state during its 170 years of independence.

Nevertheless, in the early '70s, some urban public schools, notably those located in Port-au-Prince and other major cities, were relatively well provided for by the Département de l'Éducation Nationale (DEN). This minor bright spot in the urban sector was in contrast to rural public education, which was poorly financed and directed by the Département de l'Agriculture. This dichotomy was evident when the curricula, educational outcomes, and student populations of urban and rural schools were compared.¹⁷ For example, although more than 70 percent of the population lived in rural areas when the Bernard reform was launched, rural schools had fewer students enrolled than urban schools. According to Bernard Hadjadj, "After almost a century and a half of independence, the enrollment ratio for school-aged children in rural areas was 10 percent in 1950. Twenty years later, the situation had hardly changed, given that the enrollment ratio was estimated at 12 percent in 1970."¹⁸

The failure of the Haitian state to deliver on one of its constitutional guarantees impelled many citizens to open private schools, both lay and religiously-oriented, to respond to the educational needs of the populace. In the time leading up to the Bernard reform, both primary and secondary private schools, as well as private universities, vastly outnumbered their public counterparts, raising many concerns about the quality of education being dispensed. In the early 1970s, enrollment in private schools rose by almost 150 percent at both the primary and secondary levels.¹⁹ The bulk of these private schools were for-profit operations, and many of their teachers lacked adequate education and pedagogical training. These private institutions were virtually free to operate outside the regulations established for public schools by the DEN.²⁰ Just as great differences existed between urban and rural public education, there was also considerable disparity in quality between public and private schools, as well as notable variation in quality among the many private schools. Although the public schools were hardly a model to which lay private schools could aspire—with the former lacking staff, materials, and adequate facilities, and being typically far worse than most private religious institutions—most private schools also failed to deliver a quality education.

The only exceptions to this decadent schooling system were a small number of religious schools (primarily affiliated with the Catholic Church but later including some with Protestant affiliations) that were modeled on the French educational system. These schools had high curricular standards and offered an excellent quality of education, but they served only the Haitian elite.

The persistently low enrollment in the more heavily populated rural areas could be attributed to a host of factors, such as an insufficient number of schools widely scattered throughout the countryside. The persistent infrastructural challenge of poor roadways made these scattered schools even more inaccessible to many would-be students unable to walk long miles to the nearest school—especially those suffering from severe malnutrition or illness. Although there was no actual tuition for public schools, parents were required to provide for their children's uniforms, books, notebooks, pencils, and other school materials, in addition to paying registration fees. This financial burden was too great for many rural poor families. The presence of children in school also meant fewer members contributing financially to the support of the family, since rural family survival often depended in part upon child labor, either inside or outside the home.

Moreover, many rural schools, both private and public, produced minimal numbers of graduates from primary grades, when compared generally with urban schools.²¹ Every year, large numbers of students were kept back to repeat a particular grade—multiple times, in some cases—so that enrollment rates remained constantly higher in the lower grades.²² The high rate of student retention resulted in a greater number of over-age students in lower grades, as well as a high dropout rate prior to the level at which students would attain full literacy—deemed to be achieved around year four at the elementary level, the end of what was to become the first cycle under Bernard's *École fondamentale* model. In her research, Jacomina de Regt (1984) cites the following factors as producing student grade retention and the high dropout rate:

- a) severe and chronic undernourishment that affected the cognitive development of students;
- b) overcrowded and otherwise poor classroom conditions;
- c) teachers ill-trained to educate students in multilevel classes;
- d) ineffective, outdated pedagogical methods, including the problem of instruction being conducted only in French—a foreign language for the vast majority of unschooled Haitians and one that even educated individuals had only imperfect mastery of.²³

De Regt further notes that although some of these problems existed in many urban private schools as well, they were not of the same magnitude as in the rural areas. According to de Regt, "The urban private schools were three times as efficient as rural schools in producing graduates."²⁴

Many other factors that contributed to the alarming state of education affected all other areas of Haitian society as well. According to Simon Fass (1988), less than ten percent of the country's national budget from the early 1970s through the late 1980s was earmarked for education, while the Haitian military, during that same period of time, was allocated well over fifty percent.²⁵ The lack of financial resources was exacerbated by outdated teaching methods emphasizing rote memorization and daily recitation of texts focused on French classical content that was far removed from the realities and the life experiences of students, especially those born and raised in the rural areas.

Another blow to Haiti's educational system and the nation's prospects for development was the massive displacement of the Haitian intelligentsia to Francophone West Africa, Europe, Canada, and the U.S. This unprecedented migratory movement started in the mid '60s, persisted throughout the '80s—this does not even include the exodus of Haitians from other socioeconomic strata who fled by boat, particularly to the U.S.—and continued into the '90s during the pre- and post-electoral democratic experience in Haiti. Fass analyzes the effect of this large-scale “emigration of trained professionals,” including the many seasoned educators and university professors who were leaving *en masse*. According to Fass, this flight of human capital affected all sectors of Haitian society, particularly the schools and universities. Factors contributing to this “brain drain” included: limited opportunity for advancement, political repression, and difficult working conditions with very low salaries. Finally, the low efficiency of most schools (other than the small number of elite, private, urban schools) resulted in a poor quality of education, thereby wasting an enormous amount of human capital—a huge financial and psychological loss for the Haitian state.

IMMEDIATE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE BERNARD REFORM

The post-American occupation period had produced a series of despotic governments backed by the U.S., until the 1957 election of François (“Papa Doc”) Duvalier as president. In 1964, through constitutional maneuvering, Duvalier changed the law and appointed himself “president-for-life,” ruling Haiti with an iron fist for seven more years. Shortly before his death, he transferred power to his son, Jean-Claude (“Baby Doc”) Duvalier. The Duvaliers' power grab and kleptocratic rule led to Haiti's impoverished condition,²⁶ and as a result, since the mid '60s Haiti has carried the label of “poorest nation in the Western hemisphere.” In the '70s and '80s, under Jean-Claude (“Baby Doc”) Duvalier—who assumed power at the age of 19 upon the death of the elder Duvalier in 1971—the nation only suffered

more misery, with massive unemployment and chronic illiteracy, which resulted in growing tension between the regime and the opposition.

By the mid '70s, there was clear recognition that Haiti's educational system needed to be changed.²⁷ The Bernard reform was initiated during the dictatorial regime of Jean-Claude Duvalier partly as an attempt by the government to respond to pressure from the funding agencies of donor countries to raise educational standards and increase access to schooling. Against the backdrop of the political and social turmoil of the Duvalier regime, the Bernard reform seems to have served a double purpose. First, it functioned as an attempt by Baby Doc's government to defuse the growing opposition and discontent with the regime's record of human rights violations during the administration of U.S. President Jimmy Carter. Second, the Bernard education reform functioned as a buffer that enabled the Duvalier regime to make bold promises of national development through universal basic education. Educational planners argued that an educated labor force was needed to help the country enter a period of rapid economic growth. Thus, la Réforme Bernard allowed the Duvalier regime to buy time while securing international aid under incoming U.S. President Ronald Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), and—at the same time—to remain in power by appeasing the growing number of opposition and international critics. And there was a genuine concern as well as a clear consensus that education needed to improve in order for Haiti to move forward.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR REFORM

From 1972 to 1976—prior to the official announcement of the Bernard reform in 1979—the process had already started with the creation of l'Institut Pédagogique National, known as IPN. (Table 1 charts the chronological evolution of the educational reform, capturing some of the key elements of the reform trajectory summarized in the narrative.) During those years, the mission of IPN was to overhaul the entire educational system. Thus, IPN began a pilot elementary program using Kreyòl as a language of instruction and as a subject of study. Another important action during that period was the reunification of urban and rural schools under the new Département de l'Éducation Nationale (DEN). Among all sectors of Haitian society, such a major decision qualified as definite progress in the attempt to shift to a new educational paradigm—although among the Haitian elite, which was primarily concerned with maintaining its social and economic status, the support for the reunification could probably be considered lip service. In his analysis of the political history of school quality in the late '70s, Fass (1988) states, "Whatever the nature of

conjectures about what might have been, 1976 seemed to mark a turning point in the qualitative evolution of Haitian primary schooling.²⁸ By late 1977, IPN had established a national committee of key pedagogic advisors, who were charged with developing new cadres of teachers to help facilitate the reform. All technical assistance came directly from IPN, which served as a national laboratory for the ministry of national education. During that period, IPN teacher-training staff conducted several training institutes and workshops to help develop pedagogical training manuals, as well as student textbooks and teachers' guides in Kreyòl. In addition, educational Kreyòl-language radio programming was developed for distance learning.²⁹ The IPN technicians took charge of the development of curricular materials and experimentation, as well as teacher preparation and all other major curriculum tasks, laying the groundwork for la Réforme Bernard.

THE BERNARD REFORM IS LAUNCHED, SUSPENDED, RESUMED

On May 20, 1979, Haiti's then Minister of Education, Joseph C. Bernard, announced to the nation a series of dramatic measures aimed at reforming Haiti's educational system, outlining five major goals:

1. establishment of basic education for all school-age children by the year 2000;
2. introduction of Kreyòl as an official language of instruction;
3. restructuring of primary and secondary grades;
4. revamping of pedagogy;
5. adaptation of curricula to students' reality as a catalyst for social and economic development.

As stated earlier, the objective of the Bernard education reform was national development: it envisioned that more students would complete school with academic skills that could contribute to Haiti's economic growth.

One of the major initiatives of the Bernard reform was the attempt finally to end the separate curriculum and administration of rural and urban schools that dated to the first U.S. occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934. The goal of this consolidation of the urban and rural educational systems under the ministry of national education was to guarantee that all children, regardless of where they lived, would be given the same educational opportunities.³⁰

1972-1976	L'Institut Pédagogique National (IPN) is created with the intent of revamping the educational system. A pilot primary program using Kreyòl as language of instruction is established. Urban and rural educational systems are centralized under the Department of National Education (DEN).
1977	IPN organizes a corps of pedagogic advisors in order to provide important cadres to facilitate the overhaul of the Haitian school system.
1979	<i>La Réforme Bernard</i> , or the Bernard reform, is officially announced on May 20. IPN provides technical assistance to the Ministry of Education and serves as a laboratory for the development of curricular materials and experimentation with teacher preparation.
1979-1980	A National Curriculum Committee is formed with the mandate to define the curricular content, scope, and sequencing of the newly reformed schools.
1980-1982	The first cycles of the curricular materials developed by IPN are piloted in selected public, parochial, and private schools.
August 1982	The first official document about the educational reform, known as <i>Le livre vert</i> (the green booklet), is published.
1982	The reform comes to a standstill when the new ministry of education (MENJS) places a moratorium on all reform activities.
1987	IPN is restructured. Educational reform activities are resumed. The 1987 constitution makes Kreyòl one of Haiti's two official languages.
1987-1988	Curricula of the three cycles of <i>l'École fondamentale</i> are implemented.
March 1989	The MENJS mandates the national implementation of curricular materials of the three cycles of <i>l'École fondamentale</i> .
July 1991	The official administration of the 6 th level exam takes place for the first time.
1991	Following the coup d'état against President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, IPN is shut down indefinitely.
September 1995	The first examination of the 9 th year of <i>l'École fondamentale</i> is organized. President Aristide (restored to power) announces the government's purchase of school supplies and buses; refurbishing of schools; 90,000 scholarships for the poor; prohibition of registration fees, etc. Aim is to improve education levels and reduce Haiti's 80-85% illiteracy rate.

Table 1. Chronological Evolution of the Reform

January 1996	With the organization of the États Généraux de l'Éducation comes a mandate to develop the National Education Plan (PNEF) for 2004.
May 1997	A memorandum of agreement is signed between MENJS et l'Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), to develop a program titled, «Français Renforcé/Classes bilingues», with a total of ten partner schools scattered throughout three geographic zones: a network of four schools in Port-au-Prince; a network of five schools in Cap-Haïtien; and one school in Furcy, Kenscoff.
July 2003	The basic educational reform program developed under Haiti's National Plan for Education and Training wins support with a \$19.4-million loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

Table 1 (continued). Chronological Evolution of the Reform

The period from 1979 to 1982 can be characterized as the planning years of the Bernard reform—the initial phase of the implementation process that would occur at selected public schools. The reform program continued the effort already begun by IPN to create a national curriculum and relevant instructional materials that would better meet the needs and realities of students than the traditional French system with its heavy emphasis on classical education. From 1979 to 1980, a National Curriculum Committee led by Rosny Desroches, who was affiliated with IPN, had a mandate to define the curricular content, scope, and sequencing of the newly reformed schools. From 1980 to 1982, IPN conducted a pilot study of the curricular materials for the first cycle of basic education.

In late August 1982, with the publication of *Le livre vert* (the green book), the first official document on the educational reform became available. The implementation of the reform commenced in October 1982 with a pilot program of the first cohort of students participating over a ten-year time span in the restructured primary grades, known as l'École fondamentale. The pilot program was to conclude by the 1991-92 academic year, according to the education ministry's planners.³¹ Also in 1982, the major restructuring component of the Bernard education reform took effect with passage of the *Loi sur la Réforme de l'éducation* (Educational Reform Law), which refashioned the old linear model of six years of primary schooling followed by seven years of secondary education.

The new model contained three cycles within primary schooling: one cycle of four years, followed by two cycles of three years each, together constituting the ten years of l'École fondamentale, or basic education. Following completion of the ten years of primary education, students

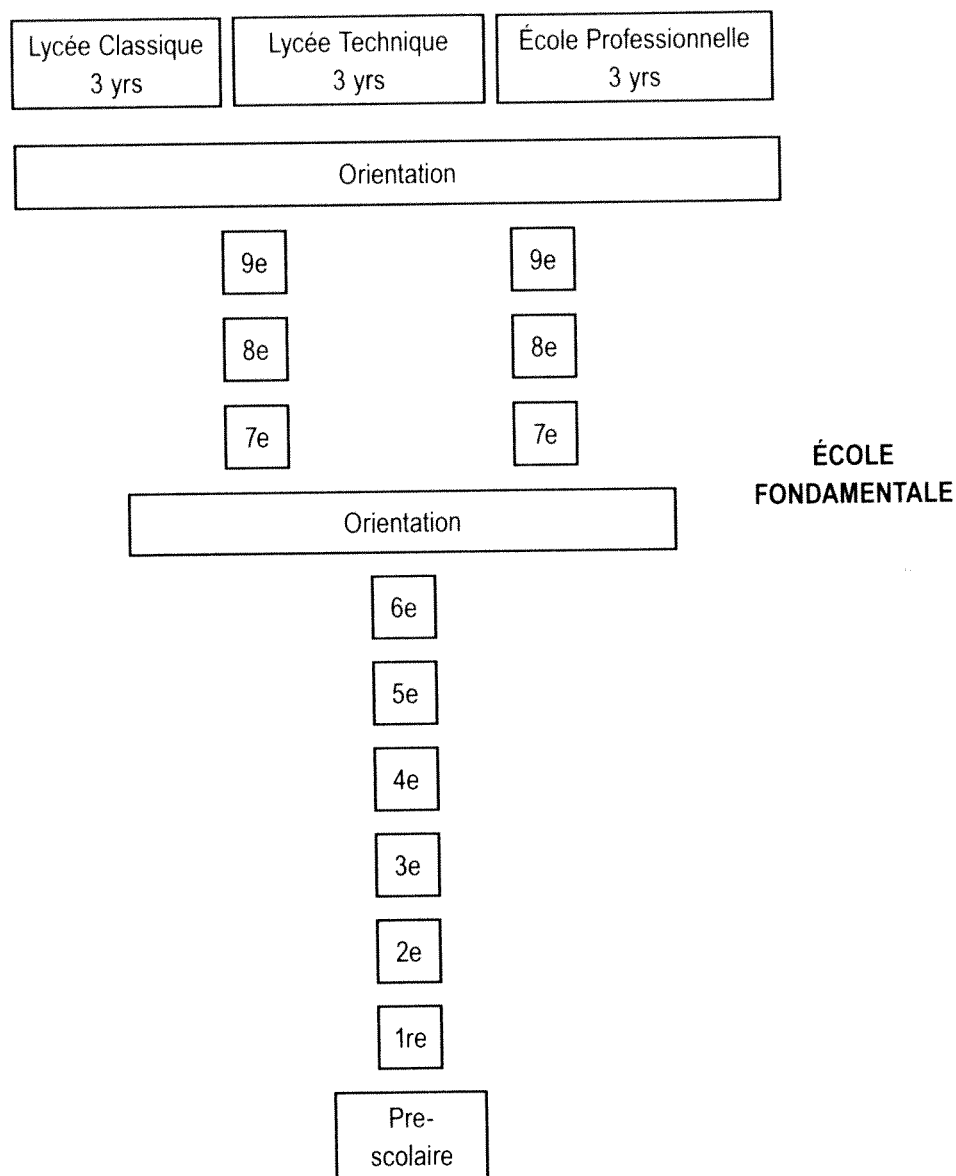


Table 2. New Structure of the Reformed Educational System (1982). Source: *La Réforme Educative (Eléments d'information)* (Port-au-Prince: Département d'Éducation Nationale, 1982), 26.

could continue on to three years of secondary schooling. Two educational tracks were available at the secondary level: academic and vocational, each leading to a baccalaureate (classical or technical, respectively). Table 2 provides a schematic detail of the new structure of Haiti's educational system under the Bernard reform.

Although the Educational Reform Law established a five-year schedule for implementation, not long after publication of *Le livre vert* in 1982, progress came to a standstill when the new ministry of education, baptized the Ministère d'Éducation Nationale, Jeunesse et Sports (MENJS), issued a moratorium on all reform activities, which remained in effect until Duvalier's fall from power. No plausible rationale was ever given for halting implementation of the reform, but there is no doubt that the volatile political situation on the eve of Duvalier's departure into exile, coupled with a lack of international funding, can be counted among the internal and external factors that prompted the suspension. In fact, schools were not a safe place: Duvalier's paramilitary forces were responsible for the barbaric killings of three children going to school in the town of Gonaïves. Amid such social turmoil and political instability throughout the nation, it became almost impossible for any education minister to carry out any meaningful school reform, which required strong, legitimate governance to implement the mandates.

Soon after the departure of Baby Doc Duvalier in February 1986, IPN was restructured and all educational reform activities resumed. With an upsurge in the school population, and given the new political climate of post-Duvalierism, the ministry's team of pedagogic experts did not waste any time during the 1987-88 academic year in finalizing the curriculum for the three cycles of l'École fondamentale. Less than a year later, in March 1989, the government officially decreed that all schools begin full implementation of the curricular materials of l'École fondamentale. Economist Mats Lundahl (1992) notes that the post-Duvalier provisional government increased spending on education but also points out, "the extent to which rural areas have benefited from *government* actions in the educational field during the past ten years is open to considerable doubt, since most of the expansion has taken place via private schools while public expenditure has been heavily concentrated on salary increases rather than on an expansion of other aspects of education."³²

The legal mandate for reform and the token increase in education spending were positive steps, but were insufficient for the provisional government to regain the confidence of students, parents, teachers, and school principals. In July of 1991, the examination of the sixth level was

officially administered for the very first time, but by the end of that year, the political situation in Haiti had become very unstable and unsafe, following the September *coup d'état* against President Jean-Bertrand Aristide after seven months in office. Also in 1991, IPN was shut down indefinitely by the military government of General Raoul Cédras—a major setback for educational planners. Nonetheless, some of the reform initiatives continued through the efforts of civil society under the auspices of organizations like the Fondation Haïtienne de L'Enseignement Privé (FONHEP), Office National pour la Participation et l'Éducation Populaire (ONPEP), and other NGOs and church-affiliated groups.

When Aristide was restored to power in 1995, he announced numerous measures aimed at improving educational levels and reducing Haiti's 80-85 percent illiteracy rate: the government's purchase of school supplies and buses; refurbishing of schools; 90,000 scholarships for the poor; prohibition of registration fees, etc. With this seeming return to democratic order, the MENJS organized the evaluation of the ninth year of l'École fondamentale in 1995. In 1996, the ministry—with financial support from several foreign donors and international agencies—organized a historic conference dubbed Les États Généraux de l'Éducation. This weeklong gathering in the town of Montrouis (70 kilometers north of Port-au-Prince) brought together several hundred local and foreign experts charged with the goal of developing a national educational plan. The enthusiasm generated by the participants at the États Généraux de l'Éducation was unprecedented, and in 1998, the MENJS issued the *Plan National d'Éducation et de Formation (PNEF)*, which became the new blueprint for change in Haitian education. Because so many aspects of the Bernard reform had been delayed by the instability, coups and counter-coups, provisional and contested elected leadership that marked Haiti in the 1990s, the target date for achieving the new plan's goal—establishing universal access to education for all school-age children—was set for 2004, to coincide with Haiti's bicentennial celebration.

FEATURES OF THE BERNARD REFORM

It is important to note that there were some additional specific initiatives that the Bernard reform set out to accomplish from 1980 to 1986 and beyond. These initiatives reflected many of the proposed universal general benchmarks used by school reform projects in other developing nations. Though these features appeared very realistic and easily attainable, in many instances, they did not materialize as anticipated. These key features and initiatives included:

- increasing the nation's school enrollment rate by five percent each year;
- modernizing educational facilities;
- creating a larger workforce of skilled or managerial workers;
- improving the general quality of life, resulting in healthier children and adults, better agricultural techniques earning higher crop yields, etc.

It was the hope that these ambitious, broad goals would help to create a more educated workforce, able to contribute to the social, economic, and political development of Haiti. In addition to the structural changes in the educational system that the Bernard reform attempted, it also endeavored to bring about behavioral changes in everyone from school directors to students and their families. In order for reform to succeed, Haiti would need to undergo a national conscientization and change in attitude toward education and its role in national development.³³

One clear departure from traditional educational practices was the reformed policy on student grade retention. Under the Bernard reform, within the first cycle of four years of l'École fondamentale, automatic (social) promotion from grade one to grade two and from grade three to grade four was to take place, rather than the grade retention that had been widespread prior to the reform. Classroom evaluations, rather than a standardized national examination, would occur between grades two and three. Students would receive three evaluations each year in grades 4, 7, and 9, and could be either promoted or retained with other groups according to ability. In l'École fondamentale, the same teachers would remain with their classes from grades one to two and from grades three to four. Educational planners entertained the hope that students who attended school for only a limited amount of time would achieve functional literacy if they had the same teacher in those early grades.

The reform also underscored the importance of teacher training in pedagogy and methodological innovations. De Regt (1984) documents the many programs and training services offered by the seven national teacher-training schools (L'École Normale Supérieure) to allow teachers who were already in the classroom to earn teacher-training equivalency diplomas.³⁴

Perhaps most importantly, the reform attempted a major linguistic transformation in the country. The new curriculum made provisions for schooling in Kreyòl in grades one through four, along with three

months of school readiness skills, focused particularly on reading, writing, computation, and environmental science. A discovery approach to learning was implemented, one that utilized the experiences and skills of the students. New textbooks, teachers' guides, and resource materials were developed and reviewed by the DEN's National Curriculum Committee. With the need for curriculum standardization due to regional variations in dialect, the curricular materials developed by the national curriculum team represented the only educational resources to be used in schools throughout the country, and were distributed to all public schools as well as private rural schools. Wealthier urban private schools were to buy these resources. (Although the government did not have true jurisdiction over private schools, these institutions were expected to adopt the language-instruction policy.)

RESISTANCE TO THE LINGUISTIC ASPECT OF THE REFORM

Among the many features of the Bernard reform, the mandate to change the language of instruction from monolingual French to bilingual Kreyòl-French was the most controversial; it was the reform measure that was most strenuously resisted by many segments of Haitian society, both privileged and poor. Dating back to the years following Haiti's independence, there had been several proposals to use Kreyòl in the initial primary grades "as a means of integrating all Haitians into the educational system." After much debate, French won out, as it was the language of social status, power, and influence among elite and educated Haitians, according to Kate Howe.³⁵ With the nation divided after 1804, the northern Kingdom under Henri Christophe introduced its subjects to the English language, but this was a short-lived regional experiment. In his best-known essay, the eminent nineteenth-century Haitian theoretician and writer Demesvar Delorme declared in 1870: "Ce pays parle français" (This country speaks French).³⁶ French became the sole language of instruction used at all levels of education, and it had been the exclusive official language for well over 175 years at the time of the Bernard reform.

Patrick Bellegarde-Smith (1990) analyzes how the Haitian elite's obsessive fear of losing social position manifested itself in the systematic elimination of Kreyòl and Vodou from school curricula and textbooks. The intent of such a practice was to silence the multiplicity of voices and manifestations of Haitian cultural identity that convey a discourse of hope—"indicat[ing] an ideological coherence and potential power that can be exercised by peasantry and urban poor." Bellegarde-Smith characterizes the linguistic situation in Haiti as comparable to that of a "newly decolonized/created state."³⁷ Thus, there is a long history of

members of the Haitian elite and *petite bourgeoisie* using French to maintain their social position. French language and cultural norms and values have been (and to some degree still are) held up as the model to which to aspire.

Since the late 1980s, Haiti—as a founding member of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, an international body of so-called Francophone nations—has participated in regular summits on *francophonie*. Throughout the past two decades, in Haiti and elsewhere in the French post-colonial world, there has been a continuous effort, both internal and external, to revere *francophonie*. Such reverence for the French language in Haiti seems to argue against the implementation of Kreyòl, as well as many other local indigenous languages in French post-colonial Africa and Asia. Today in many critical circles, *francophonie* is increasingly viewed as a post-colonial euphemism used by France to maintain its spheres of influence and grandeur, by keeping its former colonial territories globally connected linguistically through French high culture, customs, and traditions. Thus, under the guise of *francophonie*, the French language, culture, and worldview continue to thrive across many continents, creating a model of European “high culture,” while placing indigenous popular cultures and national languages under siege as subalterns. This Eurocentric vision has become internalized among high-status Haitians, leading them to value French language and culture over Kreyòl long after the French had gone.³⁸

In light of this history, it is hardly surprising that the linguistic policy change mandated by the Bernard reform—that is, the use of Kreyòl in classroom instruction—became a principal challenge for the planners. With Kreyòl becoming an official language under the 1987 Constitution, there was the impression that French was losing ground. Thus, the linguistic policy change was a traumatic event for many diehard Francophiles. The lack of support among a sizable segment of society for one of the most important goals of the reform was a serious obstacle to implementation of the reform's initial phase.

Rodrigue Jean (1988) notes that the greatest resistance to the Bernard reform was in the parochial and private schools. Given that the ministry of education did not have full jurisdiction over the curriculum offered by those sectors, the government's enforcement actions were very limited, as parochial and private schools in 1980-81 enrolled the majority (57-65 percent) of students in the primary grades. Many private and parochial schools catered to students from middle- and upper-class families. In these circles, the reform was considered too drastic a change from the traditional French-only system. Of course, in a private school context, parents as

customers have the right to demand a particular type of education, and these parents demanded that their children continue to receive a solid education in French classics so that they would be well prepared to continue their education abroad in French, Canadian, or American universities. Therefore, educators at these private and parochial schools resisted implementing the Bernard reform; in spite of their skepticism and ambivalence, however, many educators and parents alike supported the teaching of Kreyòl as a subject, but preferred that subject area content be taught in French.³⁹

But resistance to the elevation of Kreyòl was less a reflection of hostility toward the use of Kreyòl in schools than of opposition to the educational reform itself. For opponents of the Bernard reform, the inclusion of Kreyòl was too abrupt, nationalistic, and Haitian-centered; they insisted the change would isolate Haiti. For the majority of the Haitian elite, an education in Kreyòl undermined the traditional role that schools had played as a "gatekeeper" and as a means of maintaining social divisions. The transmission of knowledge in Kreyòl would diminish the role of French, depriving the middle and upper classes of their elite status. Both upper- and middle-class Haitians worried about losing certain privileges that they had been granted or could aspire to even with minimal fluency in French.⁴⁰

Albert Valdman (1986) attributes the persistently low level of literacy in Haiti to a conscious effort by Haiti's elite to perpetuate the social, economic, and political divide already in place. The sole use of French, states Valdman, was "more of a social marker than a means of communication." Haitian peasants' term for French—*lang achte* ("bought language")—cleverly describes their alienation from this tongue: it is an expensive commodity, useful for social advancement. However, many peasants cannot "buy" it because even if they make it to the "store," they do not have the currency necessary for the purchase.⁴¹ This sociolinguistic control of the majority (rural poor) by a minority (urban elite) is one example of the various practices that have consistently excluded the majority, maintained social divisions, and limited the distribution of knowledge among all classes—an obsession among members of Haiti's elite.⁴²

It is ironic, then, that the majority of Haitians from the lower socioeconomic classes also objected to the linguistic aspect of Bernard education reform. In addition, surprisingly strong opposition to the linguistic policy change emerged from lower-class and poor families who sent their children to the sizable number of private schools referred to as "*les écoles borlettes*" (lottery schools),⁴³ mainly because of their lack of educational standards and poor quality of instruction.

In the public schools as in the private-school sector, many parents and educators were skeptical about the introduction of Kreyòl as a language of instruction, which they considered too radical. In their view, the traditional curriculum used by the elite schools was what their children should study if they were to have any hope of improving their socioeconomic condition. The linguistic mandate of the Bernard reform was viewed by the lower socioeconomic classes as a change that would forever relegate their children to a "Kreyòl ghetto" and deny them access to social advancement. François Latortue (1993) describes the source of this resistance from lower-class and poor urban dwellers:

The National Pedagogic Institute (IPN), commissioned to implement the reform, has encountered numerous difficulties, one of which is the opposition among many members of the urban elite and middle class, as well as from certain members of the peasantry and lower class, to the use of their own language—Kreyòl—as a language of instruction. This seems to be a normal reaction for those who still stubbornly believe that Kreyòl is an inferior language.⁴⁴

In her analysis of the roles of French and Kreyòl in shaping Haitian immigrant ethnic identity, Flore Zéphir (1996) reveals that Haitian immigrants cling to the "idea that knowledge of French connotes higher social class, a higher level of education, and a more refined and cultivated lifestyle. Conversely, it is their belief that a lack of knowledge of French or a state of Creole monolingualism means lower social status, no education, and lack of refinement."⁴⁵

But in fact, this cultural competition between French and Kreyòl had been a major obstacle limiting poor Haitians' access to both languages, which are an integral part of Haiti's cultural heritage. Members of the elite and upper middle class had access to both languages and were for the most part bilingual-biliterate in Kreyòl and French (or in some cases multilingual). But poor Haitian peasants and urban dwellers for the most part spoke only Kreyòl and often could not read or write that language. De Regt (1984) describes the situation encountered by Kreyòl-speaking children entering the school system under the pre-reform system of French-language instruction: "the gap between the classroom (*Francophone environment*) and the home (*Creolophone environment*) generates a duality in the early childhood experience which negatively affects intellectual and emotional development."⁴⁶

RESPONSE TO OTHER ASPECTS OF THE BERNARD REFORM

In addition to the largely negative reaction to the linguistic policy change initiated by the Bernard reform, "the public reactions to various aspects of the reform were mixed," according to Rosny Desroches, who noted that the Haitian public responded to this historic undertaking with "animosity and skepticism."⁴⁷

To understand the reaction, it is important not to lose sight of the political context in which the reform took place. Many political analysts viewed Duvalier's discourse of "economic revolution" as empty rhetoric, tainted by liberalization politics and used as a desultory attempt to comply with the human rights policies advocated by U.S. President Carter's administration. While the measures and initiatives of the Bernard reform appear to have been well-intended, a sound rationale and clear vision were lacking. Leslie Voltaire, who served as education minister from 1990 to 1991, under the first Aristide-Préval *Lavalas* government, recounts: "I am telling you, one of the major problems I encountered in the national education system is a lack of objectives. We are educating people badly, and we don't know why we are educating them."⁴⁸ The lack of sound rationale and clear, measurable objectives, coupled with an ambivalent public attitude and skepticism, impeded a systematic implementation with quantifiable benchmarks.

Although there had been a consensus prior to the launch of the Bernard reform that Haiti's educational system needed transformation, there was no agreement among the various factions in Haitian society about what shape such a transformation should take. Many educators and pundits alike greeted Bernard education reform with skepticism, and predicted its ultimate failure. Those negative perceptions of the Bernard reform, combined with a lack of interest among the stakeholders, contributed to the hostile reception and the failure of the implementation. Much of Haitian civil society viewed Bernard education reform as an attempt by "outsiders" to further control what the masses of illiterate adults and unschooled Haitian youngsters needed. This view may have found credence due to the fact that the bulk of the reform efforts were financed by international institutions from donor countries; the Haitian state invested very little. Latortue captures this situation: "The [Bernard] reform was a step in the right direction toward solving the problem of education in Haiti. Unfortunately, it did not attract the interest that it deserves ..."⁴⁹

Some observers may perceive that the Haitian masses cannot distinguish between what they want and what they need. However, a review of the social history of Haiti from independence to the present day

reveals the total absence of a social contract between the masses and the state apparatus. Lundahl (1992) asserts:

... We may begin by noting that in an historical perspective, certain policy failures almost appear to be "structural" as well—in the sense that they have come to assume an almost permanent character ... successive Haitian governments have pursued a *laissez faire* policy. Very little has been done to improve the situation in the countryside. Essentially, the Haitian peasants continue without access ...⁵⁰

Viewed in the context of this history, the Haitian masses' resistance toward a government-sponsored educational reform project can be understood as a way of conveying their discontent with the *modus operandi* of the state apparatus. The response to la Réforme Bernard in the 1980s was similar in nature and degree to the reception that greeted la Réforme Dartigue in the early 1940s. Both reform movements were perceived by many as empty rituals at best, and as a waste of time and resources at worst. The failure of both reforms was widely regarded as a failure of Haiti's political class and civil society.

CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING THE REFORM

The persistent problems that impeded the Bernard education reform were a reflection of Haitian society as a whole. The data in Table 3 help capture some of the key educational events, occurring in the midst of political instability, from the beginning of la Réforme Bernard to the present.

As noted in Table 3, since the Bernard reform was launched in 1979, Haiti has had 32 different ministers of education. For the past thirty years, Haiti has experienced extreme political instability, which has affected all facets of life and permeated many institutions, including the educational system. Such instability has undermined the role of education in a democratic society, further weakening any prospects for national development. In fact, Haiti's political instability erodes its fragile institutional structure, producing parasitic actors and corrupt functionaries, who further subvert the functioning of the Haitian state. Political corruption in the educational sector was observed as early as the 1960s, when Haiti's educational system was—to use Lundahl's term—"Duvalierized,"⁵¹ with even the foreign-sponsored "desirable education and scholarships ... monopolized by the Duvalierists." The political culture of Duvalier's dictatorship gave rise to the unending political instability that has followed, which has resulted not only in stagnant development and economic growth, but has further eroded

Political context: Heads of State and Prime Ministers	Number of Education Ministers	Key Educational Events
1979-86: Jean-Claude Duvalier	6	May 1979: <i>La Réforme Bernard</i> officially announced.
1986-88: National Council Government headed by General Henri Namphy	2	New 1987 Constitution with its Universal Declaration on Human Rights ratified. In addition, Kreyòl declared an official language of the state by the Constitution.
1988: Leslie F. Manigat, president. Martial Celestin, prime minister. (5 months)	1	
1988-89: Gen. Henri Namphy, military government (3 months)	1	
1988-90: Gen. Prosper Avril, military government	2	
1990-91: Ertha Pascal Trouillot (10 months)	2	World Conference on Education held at Jomtien, Thailand in March 1990
1991: Jean-Bertrand Aristide, president. René Preval, prime minister. (7 months)	1	
1991-92: Raoul Cédras (military <i>coup d'état</i>). Joseph Nerette, de facto president. Jean-Jacques Honorat, prime minister.	1	
1992: Raoul Cédras, military government. Emile Jonassaint, president. Marc Louis Bazin, prime minister.	2	

Table 3. Political Contexts and Key Events of the Bernard Reform, 1979-2008

1993-94: Raoul Cédras (coup d'état). Jean-Bertrand Aristide (in exile in U.S.). Robert Malval, prime minister.	1	National Education Plan (PNEF) launched. 1994 Regional Conferences on the National Education Plan (PNEF).
1994-95: Jean-Bertrand Aristide, president. Smarck Michel, prime minister.	2	Funding schoolbooks and tuition for the poor.
1995-96: Jean-Bertrand Aristide, president. Claudette Werleigh, prime minister.	1	
1996-99: René Preval, president. 1996-97: Rony Smarck, prime minister	2	États Généraux de l'Éducation and publication of the National Education Plan 2004. Education Conference in Dakar, Jan 26-29, 1996. Haiti signed the adopted resolution.
2000-04: Jean-Bertrand Aristide, president. 1999-2001: Jacques E Alexis, prime minister. 2001-02: Jean M. Cherestal, prime minister. 2002-04: Yvon Neptune, prime minister.	4	Official launching of the second phase of the National Literacy Campaign, Feb. 5, 2003. Publication of Le Plan National d'Éducation et de Formation Permanente. Launching of the foundation L'Observatoire Permanent de l'Éducation in Oct. 2002.
2004-06: Boniface Alexandre, president. Gérard Latortue, interim prime minister.	1	
2006-08: René Preval, president. Jacques Édouard Alexis, prime minister.	1	Release of the document <i>Education for All</i> , June 2007
2008-present: René Preval, president. Michèle Pierre-Louis, prime minister.	1	

all aspects of Haiti's social fabric through corruption and criminality. Thus, the political situation has made it practically impossible for teachers, school directors, or (particularly) education ministers to carry out any meaningful component of the reform initiatives. Given the perennial institutional weakness and the high attrition rate among government officials, particularly ministers of education, long-lasting and sustainable reform initiatives have been doomed to fail.

Although few statistics are available, it is well-known that many teachers and school directors did not fully embrace the reform initiatives. But it was not only their political will to carry out the reform that was lacking; their technical ability, in many cases, was insufficient. In a 1987 interview, Frantz Lofficial, a former head of Haiti's education ministry, acknowledged the scarcity of data to make informed educational reform decisions, but also noted that "access to school increased, but the quality of education decreased."⁵² Within that context, the antagonism of teachers and school directors toward the reform can be understood as a reaction born of fear: many poorly qualified teachers and administrators felt threatened by the reform.

Other major problems slowing the momentum of the reform efforts included fiscal crises, which affected the delivery of assistance to teachers to help them become literate in Kreyòl themselves in a relatively short period of time, while also re-evaluating the traditional curriculum and pedagogy. And of course, the pace of the reform implementation was slowed considerably by the moratorium on reform efforts imposed in 1982. As of late 1986, for instance, the curricula for secondary schools (first and second levels of academic and vocational tracks), which were to be in place by then according to the original reform plan, had yet to be completed.⁵³

ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BERNARD REFORM

In spite of the many shortcomings of its implementation, la Réforme Bernard in many respects represents by far the most elaborate educational reform project in Haiti's history, having served as a catalyst for achieving some positive gains in schooling. It helped to create an environment for open dialogue on the true meaning and the roles of language, national public education, and global development in an emergent democracy. Thus, the Bernard education reform served as a wake-up call to the nation.

In his analysis of la Réforme Bernard, Fass (1988) applauds the impact of its curricular and language policy changes, and its positioning of education as a "productivity enhancement." For Fass, the reform's ten

years of basic education were to provide children with schooling that would allow them to function within their environment, exercise their rights as citizens, and participate in and enhance the development of the country. Fass also emphasizes the scope of the reform initiative: "This *Réforme Bernard* ... covering both private and public instruction, was in scale and proposed speed nothing less than revolutionary. ... No change of such magnitude potentially affecting so many students had ever been contemplated, let alone implemented in Haitian education."⁵⁴

The changes proposed to Haiti's educational system between 1979 and 1982 appear to have had some far-reaching goals, but the reform—while attempting to address many complex issues—failed to address the essential question: What are schools for? Recall the words of former education minister Voltaire, quoted earlier: "We are educating people badly, and we don't know why we are educating them."⁵⁵ The issues tackled by the reform ranged from a chronically high illiteracy rate to soaring rates of grade retention, high dropout rates throughout the elementary level, and a high rate of failure on the national Baccalauréat exam. All these educational shortcomings were related to lack of access and to the elitist nature of traditional French-oriented educational practices, which used rigorous national exams as roadblocks on the academic path, allowing a very small minority to reach the finish line. For example, statistical data from the Ministry of Education (MENFP, June 2007) indicate that Haiti's illiteracy rate in 2000 was estimated at 57 percent, the highest in the Caribbean. In addition, 38 percent of students in primary schools in 2002-03 were over-age children. The pass rates of students completing the sixth and ninth years of l'École fondamentale in 2005 were a startlingly low 65.5 percent and 57.4 percent, respectively. The pass rate of students completing the Baccalaureate national exams from academic years 2001-02 to 2004-05 were 48.5 percent, 39.6 percent; 43.1 percent, and 48.3 percent, respectively.⁵⁶ Note that, for four consecutive years, the pass rates were well below 50 percent.

The very persistence of the traditional classical French curriculum throughout the past quarter-century can be seen as a failure of the Bernard reform, because many schools—catering to elitist attitudes among middle- and upper-class parents—boycotted the reform and continued to offer the traditional curriculum. There has been some diversification in types of curricula: some schools offer a Canadian-style curriculum, while others—such as Union School—feature an American curriculum leading to a high school diploma or preparing students to take the GED exam. Still other schools, such as Lycée Français, offer a modern French curriculum. Hence, the future educational trajectory of students in these schools will most likely

take them to Canada, the United States, or France. However, these limited new offerings are still generally available only to the offspring of Haiti's elite, as well as the children of the diplomatic corps and international workers. Thus, the system maintains the social stratification that benefits the Haitian ruling class, thereby prolonging a system that works against the interests of the greatest number.

The poor academic performance of students may be linked to low-quality instruction. An analysis of the nation's 22,401 primary school teachers in 1987-88 (72 percent of whom taught in private schools) reveals that only a tiny group of 48 teachers (0.2 percent) had completed a university degree; only two percent had completed the Certificate of Professional Aptitude (CAP), while about ten percent had received a Normal School diploma. Approximately eight percent had passed the Baccalauréat I national exam, and about three percent had passed the Baccalauréat II.⁵⁷

Among the many ambitious goals set by Bernard reform for 1980-86, progress seems to have been made toward only one: that of increased enrollment. During the decade between 1980 and 1990, there was a 3.5 percent annual growth rate in student enrollment. In spite of the period of inactivity when the reform was suspended and the political turbulence caused by Duvalier's departure in 1986, school enrollment increased dramatically during that decade. Fass (1988) notes that, "One thing was clear. By 1986, the share of the school-age population of Port-au-Prince sitting in buildings called schools was larger than in most other cities with comparable per capita incomes."⁵⁸ During the second decade of the reform, the rate of student enrollment growth was astonishing: a startling 11 percent yearly average growth rate from 1990 to 1997. Private schools accounted for more than 92 percent of newly enrolled students; according to Hadjadj, private schools' share of primary school enrollment was 57 percent in 1980-81, while it grew to 76 percent during the 1996-97 school year.⁵⁹ But even the increased school enrollment is less significant than it appears, because the school-age population more than doubled in that period. Thus, the proportion of children enrolled in school failed to increase, remaining considerably lower than 50 percent.

In a bitter irony, as of 2004—the bicentennial of Haiti's independence—not only was Haiti far from having reached universal basic education for school-age children, but adult illiteracy was at an all-time high of 47 percent of the total population, the highest in the Caribbean region and in the Western hemisphere. This was despite Haiti's status as a signatory to an international declaration pledging to meet the basic learning needs

of all children and adults (issued at the March 1990 World Conference on Education for All, hosted by UNESCO in Jomtien, Thailand), and despite the fact that adult literacy campaigns have been prominent in the platform of every government from the late 1940s to the present, with successive programs initiated by the government, civil society, and religious organizations.⁶⁰ The issues of universal basic education and adult illiteracy are inseparable. One can only observe how, thirty years after the Bernard reform was announced, the children it was designed to benefit have grown up to a large degree—to be illiterate or semi-literate adults.

Despite the Bernard reform's consolidation of urban and rural public schools under a single administrative entity, wide gaps still exist between urban and rural schools in terms of quality, curriculum, and teacher preparation. The disparity in quality among urban private schools—particularly in Port-au-Prince—has become even more extreme and divergent. In addition, the brief training provided to teachers in an attempt to upgrade their pedagogical skills did not result in any long-term changes.⁶¹

Compounding the above grim educational statistics are other factors. For example, Colin Mathers, et al. (2001) report that life expectancy at birth for a male in Haiti is 43.8 years (compared to 70.0 years in the U.S.). Mortality of children under five per 100 live births is 120 (fewer than four in the U.S.). Haiti is ranked 153rd out of 191 nations in standards loosely labeled “development.”⁶² Other critical factors included but were not limited to: the undernourishment and poor health of students; and the budget allocated for education, leading to chronically low levels of school access in the countryside.

Various scholars have attributed the failure of the reform to factors ranging from blatant international influence by donor countries (Latortue 1993) to domestic political and economic interference (Jean 1988; Fass 1988). Summing up much of this literature, Gilda Rorro (1992) suggests that one of the major reasons for the failure of la Réforme Bernard was the linguistic issue.⁶³ While it is true that the shift in school language-use policy fueled much of the resistance to the reform effort, it was certainly not the sole reason for the flawed implementation of the reform. Commenting on Bernard education reform in 1987, Frantz Loeffel—education minister in the post-Duvalier government—said, “The transition from one language to another, as well as the successes of other reforms, has been choppy, and the resulting frustration endangers the attempts at change in the post-Duvalier era.”⁶⁴

The linguistic issue was a manifestation of class warfare and the struggle for power in Haiti. Teachers and education ministry personnel have informally reported that whenever educators willingly implemented the initiatives of la Réforme Bernard, many students were reported to learn to read and write in Kreyòl very well, and their transition into French at the end of the fourth year of l'École fondamentale occurred without much difficulty. However, Jean (1988) observes that whenever teachers who did not agree with the reform program were forced to carry it out, their students did not learn to read and write Kreyòl effectively. As a result, many of those students arrived at the third or fourth year unprepared, as compared with their counterparts who had been taught by teachers supportive of the language change.⁶⁵ As for members of the less privileged classes, whose Kreyòl language and culture was supposed to receive validation as a result of this educational reform, their lack of trust and confidence in the country's elites and policymakers greatly contributed to their initial rejection of Kreyòl as a language of instruction. Without debate—perhaps unconsciously—they accepted French as having greater status than Kreyòl.⁶⁶

Nonetheless, the elevation of Kreyòl in educational policy helped to dispel somewhat the negative image associated with Haiti's indigenous language and culture. The use of Kreyòl in schools also paved the way for its full recognition by the Haitian Constitution ratified in 1987, of which Article 5 states, "*Tous les Haïtiens sont unis par une langue commune, le Créole. Le Créole et le Français sont les langues officielles de la République.*" ("All Haitians are united by a common language, Creole. Creole and French are the official languages of the Republic.")⁶⁷

In 1991, former education minister Leslie Voltaire was quoted in *Journal Libète* discussing the educational situation:

Mwen panse pwoblèm sa enòm, ke nou gen yon popilasyon ki pa al lekòl e ki pa kapab al lekòl. E se youn nan pi grav pwoblèm nou genyen pou nou regle nan 5 a 10 zan, pou nou voye tout moun al lekòl. Nou jwenn 60% timoun 12 jiska 15 zan ki pa al lekòl, ki pa al lekòl pou plizyè rezon: y ap veye bèt, y ap travay tè, y ap fè lapèch, etsetera ... Men yo pa al lekòl. Sa se yon pwoblèm pou fen syèk la. ("I think that this is an enormous problem, that we have a population that does not go to school and that can't go to school. In addition, this is a major problem that we have to address within five to ten years, that is to send all school-age children to school. We found that there are 60 percent of children between the age of twelve and fifteen who don't attend school, and who don't go to school for many reasons: they are raising cattle,

they are gardening, they are fishing ... But they do not go to school. This is a serious problem to tackle by the end of the century."⁶⁸

Besides the troubling conditions he cites, Voltaire's quote is poignant for another reason. Prior to the Bernard reform, it would have been difficult to imagine a government minister addressing the populace in Kreyòl – a language that the people could understand, and which has the potential to conscientize in situations where well-polished "discours" in French do not work. Yet despite the political recognition of Kreyòl as a language of instruction and as an official language, it has yet to gain full acceptance within the academy, according to Alain Bentolila and Jeanne Ferguson.⁶⁹

HAITI'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, TODAY AND TOMORROW

The question remains, Is the educational system in Haiti today better or worse as a result of the Bernard reform? Former education minister Voltaire takes a negative view: "A major dialogue on the challenges in Haiti's education must focus on what type of Haitians do we want to educate in 1991, and how are they going to enter the 21st century? The reality is that we are at the end of the 20th century and we did not accomplish much."⁷⁰

But before attempting to pass judgment on the Bernard reform, we should consider sociologist Emile Durkheim's contentions that "education can be reformed only if society itself is reformed"⁷¹ and that "... I regard as the prime postulate of all pedagogy that education is eminently a social thing in its origins and functions."⁷² Thus, a Durkheimian reading of Lucie Voltaire's quote requires us to ask two questions. First, What type of society do we want to construct or preserve? Second, What is the role of schools in constructing or preserving such a society? When we connect the social and political purposes of education, as Durkheim does, we can begin to understand the complex dynamics of Haiti's attempt to reform its educational system.

Rodrigue Jean (1988) contends the failure of la Réforme Bernard was due in part to the absence of a social consensus on the ultimate purpose of such a robust undertaking. Given the inherent complexities of Haitian civil society, no meaningful change can take place without integrating the majority in its conceptualization. In other words, all the stakeholders must take part in the conceptualization of a reform at the initial stage. The educational reform policies proposed by Bernard represented a solid effort to modernize Haiti's educational system, which could have served

as a major catalyst for Haiti's economic development if the nation had endorsed it. Because no consensus in Haitian society had been reached about the nature or extent of needed changes to the educational system when the Bernard reform was launched, the current context of education in Haiti reflects a multiplicity of mini school systems, which resulted partly from the failure of the reform and the fact that the ministry of education did not have full jurisdiction over the curriculum offered by church-run and private schools, therefore limiting the government's ability to enforce the reform. Furthermore, members of the socioeconomic elite sought to preserve the status quo in order to maintain their elevated place in Haitian society. Poor and working-class Haitians, for their part, staunchly rejected the reform attempt—just as they had resisted the Dartigue reform earlier in the twentieth century—even when the reform appeared to have their best interests at heart and seemed beneficial; the reform effort could not overcome the perception that it was a change imposed by outsiders to address what those outsiders felt the masses of illiterate adults and unschooled Haitian youngsters needed.

Klébert Viélot (1975) was prescient in his assessment of the feasibility of change in Haiti's educational system; five years before la Réforme Bernard was announced, he stated that change in Haiti's education must begin with the political structure as well as the political culture. Indeed, from the 1980s onward, Haiti's educational planners have carried out extensive work on national education plans for development and literacy programs intended to eradicate social and economic disparities among different sectors of the population. For example, education for development was the central theme of the 2004 Plan National d'Éducation, which presupposed an integration of secondary-school graduates into the job market or university education. Successive education ministers from the early '90s to the present day have deplored the fact that many youngsters, having completed fourteen years in the Haitian educational system, face a daunting challenge in applying their learning in any practical venue of their environment, and prefer instead to leave the island by any means necessary. Thus, a radical transformation of Haiti's economy as well as its educational system is needed.

There also needs to be a genuine dialogue among all sectors of the population about the importance of schooling and literacy in Kreyòl, and the roles of both French and Kreyòl for national and global development. Should Kreyòl be merely a medium of instruction for children and for adult literacy classes? Should Kreyòl ever replace French as the language of government, or should both languages share the same societal functions in government, school, business, and other settings? Such questions have

been only partially addressed and must still be fully answered. These sociolinguistic and operational questions undoubtedly have long-term policy implications for Haiti's education and development.

Effective and sustainable change can take place, but it will take time and—more importantly—the political will of Haitians from all segments of civil society. If Haiti's educational system could really be reformed and made more relevant and accessible to all school-age children, deep and far-reaching societal changes would be necessary. A comprehensive approach would include innovative ways to tackle the perennial issue of unqualified teaching staff at all levels of the Haitian educational system. However, I would also argue that such innovative changes, no matter how radical they might be, would be insufficient in and of themselves if they were not beneficial to the majority. The need for fundamental, radical changes in the political, economic, and social arenas is paramount before any educational reform can occur. As Ulrich Fleischmann (1984) notes, the educational system cannot improve “beyond a certain point without changing the economic structures of the country.”⁷³

Notes

Special thanks to Amy Ramos at the UCSB Center for Black Studies Research for her exceptional editorial assistance.

¹ For a thorough comparative analysis of educational reform sponsored by the World Bank, see D. A. Rondinelli, J. Middleton, and A.M. Verspoor, *Planning Education Reforms in Developing Countries: The Contingency Approach* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), 31-32. It is interesting to note that two of the authors of this book have worked for the World Bank. The third (Rondinelli) works as a senior policy analyst at the Research Triangle Institute and served as advisor to the Bank and other international institutions.

² See Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Haiti: State Against Nation: The Origin and Legacy of Duvalierism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1989) and Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, *Haiti: The Breached Citadel* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990).

³ Trouillot, *Haiti: State Against Nation*, 51.

⁴ Jean Price-Mars, *La Vocation de l'élite* (1919; reprint, Port-au-Prince: Les Éditions des Presses Nationales d'Haïti, 2001), 98. Author's translation.

⁵ Robert Fatton provides an interesting view of the concept of *moun andeyò* through the lens of the dominant class in Haiti. See R. Fatton Jr., *Haiti's Predatory Republic: The Unending Transition to Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), 86-87.

⁶ For an analysis on the origins and evolution of education in Haiti during the revolutionary through the post-independence period between 1797-1895, see

Charles Tardieu, *L'Éducation en Haïti de la Période Coloniale à nos Jours* (Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie Henri Deschamps, 1990), 105-141. See also Trouillot, *Haiti: State Against Nation*, 51-52.

- ⁷ Following Haiti's independence in 1804, the first official document establishing free and compulsory education was published in *La Gazette Royale d'Hayti* on December 28, 1818 under an Ordonnance du Roi, the creation of La Chambre Royale d'Instruction Publique (New York Public Library, Schomburg Collection).
- ⁸ Mats Lundahl, *Peasants and Poverty: A Study of Haiti* (London: Croom Helm; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 462.
- ⁹ Léon Pamphile, "America's Policy-Making in Haitian Education 1915-1934," *Journal of Negro Education* 54 (Spring 1985): 99-108.
- ¹⁰ A comprehensive analysis of the attitude of the Haitian elite can be found in Magdaline W. Shannon, *Jean Price-Mars, the Haitian Elite and the American Occupation, 1915-1935* (London: Macmillan, 1997). For a detailed historical account of the U.S. occupation, see Mary Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).
- ¹¹ Pamphile, "America's Policy-Making in Haitian Education 1915-1934," 105.
- ¹² For a profile of the educational system during the U.S. occupation of 1915-1934, see Léon Pamphile, *L'Éducation en Haïti sous l'Occupation Américaine 1915-1934* (Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie des Antilles, 1988).
- ¹³ For an analysis of the educational reform initiated by Maurice Dartigue after U.S. occupation forces left Haiti in 1934, see Charles Tardieu, *L'éducation en Haïti*. As Tardieu points out, Dartigue, who served as minister of education between 1940 and 1945, became the wise and sophisticated voice to continue implementing the U.S. education reform plan during the post-occupation period.
- ¹⁴ For an analysis of the attitudes of the elite toward the Dartigue education reform of the late '30s and early '40s, see Chantalle Verna, "Maurice Dartigue, Educational Reform, and Intellectual Cooperation with the United States as a Strategy for Haitian National Development," *Journal of Haitian Studies* 13 (2): 30-31.
- ¹⁵ For a comprehensive history of education in Haiti, refer to Tardieu, *L'éducation en Haïti*.
- ¹⁶ Laennec Hurbon, *Culture et Dictature en Haïti* (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 1987), 71-80.
- ¹⁷ Jamil Salmi, "Equity and Quality in Private Education: The Haitian Paradox," World Bank Education Paper Series, No. 18, May 1998. See also François Latortue, *Le Système Éducatif Haïtien et Développement* (Port-au-Prince: Les Presses Libres, 1993), 67.

Bernard Hadjadj, "Education for All in Haiti Over the Last 20 Years, Assessment and Perspectives," Caribbean Monograph Series 18 (Kingston, Jamaica: UNESCO, 2000), 16.

For an analysis of data on growth in primary school enrollment and in the gross enrollment ratio (GER) in Haiti from 1955 to 1984, see Peter Easton and Simon Fass, "Monetary Consumption Benefits and the Demand for Primary Schooling in Haiti," *Comparative Education Review* 33 (2): 184-85.

During the past three decades, several appellations and acronyms have been used to identify Haiti's national educational agency. Prior to the 1970s, the bureau's name was Département de l'Instruction Publique. Beginning in the 1970s, it was called the Département de l'Éducation Nationale (DEN); then came a name change in the early '80s to Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale (MEN). In the '90s, it became Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Jeunesse et des Sports (MENJS). Since the late '90s, it has been referred to as Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle (MENFP).

Easton and Fass, "Monetary Consumption Benefits," 186-187.

Hadjadj, "Education for All in Haiti," 23-24.

Lucomina de Regt, "Basic Education in Haiti," in *Haiti Today and Tomorrow*, eds. Charles Foster and Albert Valdman (New York: University Press of America, 1981), 123-24. For detailed statistical data on Haiti's schools during the 1970s and 1980s, see also Latortue, *Système Éducatif*, 74-114.

De Regt, "Basic Education in Haiti," 122.

See Simon Fass, *Political Economy in Haiti: The Drama of Survival* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction Publishers, 1988), 10-14, for a statistical report on Haitian government employment and wages expenditures between 1972 and 1981.

For a discussion of the Duvaliers' kleptocratic policies, see Mats Lundahl, "History as an Obstacle to Change: the Case of Haiti," *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs* 31 (1/2, Special Issue: Latin America at the Crossroads: Major Public Policy Issues, 1989): 8.

Several articles were published on this subject in newspapers and journals between 1979 and 1989, in addition to several popular books. The list includes: Frantz Lofficiel, *Créole Français: Une Fausse Querelle: Bilinguisme et Réforme de l'Enseignement en Haiti* (Montréal: Collectifs Paroles, 1979), 77-92; Latortue, *Système Éducatif*; Odette Roy-Fombrun, *Les Problèmes du système Éducatif en Haiti* (Port-au-Prince: Edition Deschamps, 1989). Various working documents and technical reports from the Ministry of Education, USAID, UNESCO, and the World Bank also address the issue of Haiti's education reform.

Fass, *Political Economy in Haiti*, 259.

Other such efforts with educational television programs in Kreyòl were also started at the time at the Télévision Nationale d'Haïti.

- ³⁰ De Regt, "Basic Education in Haiti," 127.
- ³¹ See excerpts of the inaugural speech delivered by Education Minister Joseph C. Bernard to the Haitian nation on May 20, 1979 in *La Réforme Educative: Elements d'Information* commonly referred to as *Le livre vert* (Port-au-Prince: Departement d'Education Nationale (DEN), 1982). It is the blueprint for the education reform (refer to pp. 18-25).
- ³² Mats Lundahl, *Politics or Markets: Essays on Haitian Underdevelopment* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 405.
- ³³ There is a need to establish a conceptual framework within which planners and policymakers may analyze the compatibility between proposed innovations and the environments in which they are likely to operate. Where compatibility is lacking, Rondinelli et al. (1990) suggest that educational planners must analyze whether it is the project itself, the institutional structures, or the management procedures that need modification. If the Haitian elites and policymakers were basing their decision on perceived needs instead of the emergent needs, which are the realities of Haiti, then maybe those decisions should have been re-examined.
- ³⁴ De Regt, "Basic Education in Haiti," 123-24.
- ³⁵ Kate Howe, "Haitian Creole As the Official Language in Education and Media," in *Atlantic Meets Pacific*, eds. Francis Byrne and John Holm (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1993), 291.
- ³⁶ Demesvar Delorme, *Les Théoriciens au pouvoir: Causeries historiques* (Paris: H. Plon, 1870), 182-83. Note that Demesvar Delorme served as Minister of External Relations and became Minister of Public Instruction and Cults under President Sylvain Salnave from 1868 to 1869.
- ³⁷ Bellegarde-Smith, *Haiti: The Breached Citadel*.
- ³⁸ For an analysis of the impact of the French-Kreyòl dichotomy and the role of *francophonie* in Haiti and among the Haitian intelligentsia, see Eddy Toussaint's *Critique de La Francophonie Haitienne* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 2007), 149. The original text in French reads: "Une série de récits anecdotiques sur les rapports où la problématique français-créole est vécue... Le rapport est foncièrement dépersonnalisation pour l'opprimé haïtien puisqu'il est basé sur la préconception et la prémisse que le français est le modèle, l'universel échantillon, tandis que la langue du peuple est désignée comme un dérive, une déformation, un parler incomplet et sous-développé d'un sous-humain qui n'a pas droit au chapitre."
- ³⁹ Rodrigue Jean, *Haiti: crise de l'éducation et crise du développement* (Port-au-Prince: Presses de l'imprimerie des Antilles, 1988).
- ⁴⁰ Yves Déjean, "fransé se danjé," *Sèl* No. 23-24 (1975), 32-39.
- ⁴¹ For an analysis of Haitian sociolinguistics, see Albert Valdman, "The Linguistic Situation of Haiti," in *Haiti—Today and Tomorrow*, eds. Albert Valdman and Charles Foster (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), 82.

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- ⁴² Ulrich Fleischmann, "Language, Literacy and Underdevelopment," in *Haiti—Today and Tomorrow*, eds. Charles Foster and Albert Valdman (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), 101-117.
- ⁴³ See Latortue, *Système Éducatif*, 71-72, in which he describes the phenomenon of the *écoles borlettes*: "À Port-au-Prince, cette situation a créé les écoles dites 'borlettes' qui pillulent dans un très grand nombre de quartiers ... Trois à quatre chambres et des halls d'une maison qui logeraient des établissements allant de la 6ème à la philosophie! Quelques-unes de ces écoles n'ont même pas la reconnaissance officielle. Encore qu'elles correspondent à un besoin de la communauté, elles ne reçoivent en général aucune attention des Pouvoirs Publics."
- ⁴⁴ Latortue, *Système Éducatif*, 95. The original text reads, "L'Institut Pédagogique National (IPN), chargé de l'implantation de la réforme, s'est heurté à de nombreuses difficultés dont l'une est l'opposition des couches aisées des villes et même de certaines couches populaires et paysannes à l'enseignement dans leur propre langue." (Author's translation.)
- ⁴⁵ Flore Zéphir, *Haitian Immigrants in Black America: A Sociological and Sociolinguistics Portrait* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1996), 105.
- ⁴⁶ De Regt, "Basic Education in Haiti," 125.
- ⁴⁷ Rosny Desroches, "La Réforme Bernard vue par le Professeur Rosny Desroches," (speech delivered at L'Institut Français d'Haïti, November 1981) published in *Le Petit Samedi Soir* No. 411 (December 13, 1981): 20-24. Desroches served as the coordinator for the Curriculum Committee during the Bernard reform. Subsequently, he served as minister of education.
- ⁴⁸ For an official perspective on the state of education in Haiti, see "An interview with Education Minister Leslie Voltaire" in *Journal Libète* 20 (10-16 Avril 1991): 5-6. The original Kreyòl text reads: "Map di w, pi gwo pwoblèm m jwenn nan Edikasyon Nasyonal la, se yon mank objektif. N ap fòme moun trè mal, e nou pa konn poukisa n ap fòme yo." (Author's translation.)
- ⁴⁹ Latortue, *Système Éducatif*, 94. The original text in French was: "La réforme se situe, selon nous, dans la ligne de la vraie solution du problème de l'enseignement en Haïti. Malheureusement, elle n'a pas suscité l'intérêt qu'elle mérite."
- ⁵⁰ Lundahl, *Politics or Markets*, 405.
- ⁵¹ Consider that during the late '60s the Ministère d'Éducation Nationale imposed on secondary school students the systematic study of *Les Oeuvres Essentielles* (the Essential Works) of Duvalier, and each year one of the topics to analyze and write about in the Baccalaureate national exam would come from the works of Duvalier as a "thinker" and "historian."
- ⁵² Anne Bridgman, "A Struggle to Learn in Haiti," *Boston Globe*, September 13, 1987, 121-124.
- ⁵³ Fass, *Political Economy in Haiti*, 264.

- ⁵⁴ Ibid., 262.
- ⁵⁵ Voltaire, "Interview," 5-6.
- ⁵⁶ The best single document for detailed statistical data on the educational system is *La Stratégie Nationale d'Action pour l'Éducation pour Tous* (Port-au-Prince: MENFP, June 2007), 45, 155, and 159.
- ⁵⁷ Latortue, *Système Éducatif*, 64-65.
- ⁵⁸ Fass, *Political Economy in Haiti*, 259.
- ⁵⁹ Hadjadj, "Education for All in Haiti," 12-13.
- ⁶⁰ For a comprehensive analysis of the literacy campaign under the Duvalier regime, see "Haiti: 1961-1981: 20 ans de Campagne, Quelle Alphabétisation!!!" in *Le Petit Samedi Soir*, No. 398 (5-11 Septembre 1981): 9.
- ⁶¹ For a thorough analysis of the impact of private schools in Haiti, see Easton and Fass, "Monetary Consumption Benefits." See also Uli Locher, "Primary education in a Predatory State: Private Schools Take Over in Haiti" (paper presented at the Haitian Studies Association Conference, Medford, MA, October 1991).
- ⁶² Colin Mathers, et al., "Life expectancy in 191 countries, 1999," *The Lancet* 357 (2001): 1685-91. See also Sarah McFarlane, et al., "Public health in developing countries," *The Lancet* 356 (2000): 841- 46.
- ⁶³ Gilda Rorro, *Haitian Voices: Considerations for the Classroom Teacher* (Trenton, NJ: Office of Equal Educational Opportunity, New Jersey State Department of Education, 1992).
- ⁶⁴ Bridgman, "A Struggle to Learn."
- ⁶⁵ Jean, *Haiti: crise de l'éducation*.
- ⁶⁶ For an excellent discussion on this issue, see Hurbon, *Culture et Dictature en Haïti*.
- ⁶⁷ Article 5 stipulated: "All Haitians are united by a common language, Creole. Creole and French are the official languages of the Republic." (Author's translation.)
- ⁶⁸ Voltaire, "Interview," 5.
- ⁶⁹ Alain Bentolila and Jeanne Ferguson, "Haitian Creole: A Challenge for Education," *Diogenes* 137 (Spring 1987): 73-87.
- ⁷⁰ Voltaire, "Interview," 5. The text in the original Kreyòl was: "Yon gran brase lide sou pwoblèm edikasyon nou gen ann Ayiti se ki kalite Ayisyen nou vle fòme an 1991, e ki jan Ayisyen yo pral janbe nan 21^{nyèm} syèk la. Paske kounye a, nou nan fen 20^{vèm} syèk la, e nou pa renmèt anyen nan katon an."
- ⁷¹ Emile Durkheim, quoted in W.S.F. Pickering and Geoffrey Walford, "The unpopularity of Durkheim's work on education," introduction to *Durkheim and Modern Education*, eds. Geoffrey Walford and W.S.F. Pickering, Routledge International Studies in the Philosophy of Education (London and New York:

Routledge, 1998), 4.

* Emile Durkheim, quoted in Mart-Jan de Jong and Jacques F.A. Braster, "Educating for Social Cohesion in a Pluralist Society," in *Durkheim and Modern Education*, eds. Geoffrey Walford and W.S.F. Pickering, Routledge International Studies in the Philosophy of Education (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 97.

* Fleischmann, "Language, Literacy and Underdevelopment," 111.

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