

*Research Project*

# **Religious actors in post-earthquake Haiti, their trans-regional embeddedness and their role in diminishing local effects of global social inequality**

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## ***Situating Haiti within the global net of inequality***

*“Haiti isn't only the poorest country in the Latin American region, its distribution of wealth is also the most unequal in a region that is itself is the most unequal in the world.”  
(Hallward, 2007)*

1% of the Haitian population is in control over half of Haiti's wealth. 72.1% of Haitians are living below 2 \$ a day. 42% don't have access to clean water. 22% of children under 5 are underweight (Hallward 2007, UNHDR 2009).

Literally every peculiarity of inequality can be found in Haiti: economic, gender-, class-, religious-, or ethnic-related inequities.

As Beck recently stressed, it is about time for the social sciences to turn away from “methodological nationalism” and accept the “empirically undeniable growth in links and interactions across national boundaries” (Beck 2010). Haiti is an obvious case study for the necessity of linking local inequalities to a multitude of global processes.

The present inequalities in Haiti are a direct legacy of its challenging colonial past. Trans-regional dependencies pervade Haiti's history up to the present day. The Haitian economy is extremely vulnerable to as well as dependent from external forces. Its future largely depends on the approval of supranational actors like the USA, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

The history of Haiti is closely tied to the history of the colonial powers. “Discovered” in 1492 by the Spanish, annexed by the French in 1697, Saint-Domingue (Haiti's name as a French colony) quickly rose to be the world's most efficient sugar producer as well as the richest colony of France. The fundament for the French wealth was the vast exploitation of slaves. The very half of the amount of slaves brought to the Caribbean worked and died in Saint-Domingue. The distinct history of slavery in Saint-Domingue enabled a successful slave rebellion that resulted in the first black republic in world history. After the foundation of the Republic in 1804 and in the subsequent 200 years, Haiti was faced with a multitude of hardships ranging from forced reparations<sup>1</sup>, political and economic isolation<sup>2</sup>, autocratic and predatory leadership, occupation and heteronomy over privatization and trade liberalization<sup>3</sup> to recurring natural disasters, epidemic diseases<sup>4</sup>, indebtedness, refrained loans, and humanitarian and/or military interventions all of which have a direct or indirect impact on present day Haiti.

The previous decades of Haitian urban history are earmarked by a massive rural exodus. Following Davis, mechanization, food imports, consolidation of small into large holdings and the competition of industrial-scale agro-business, structural adjustment, currency devaluation and state retrenchment all contribute to the formation of slum dwellings in urbanized areas (Davis 2004). In the specific Haitian context deforestation, soil erosion and the constant decreasing of import tariffs due to transnational neoliberal doctrines add up the the recent state of affairs as well. The population of Port-au-Prince increased from 732 000 in the early 1980s to 3 million in 2008 as a result of those developments (Dupuy 2010). The subsequent urban segregation is most obvious in huge slum dwellings such as Cité Soleil, Lasaline and Bel Air on the one hand and gated communities in the wealthier parts of the capital on the other.

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1 France, under Charles X, demanded a high price for the political recognition of the Republic of Haiti: 150 million gold francs (later reduced to 90 million) for the loss of French property, the slaves. In 1825, when Haiti faced bankruptcy as well as the next French invasion, the government agreed to the payment. The Haitians had to pay with money what they already had payed for with their blood. The requested sum took a large part of the state budget of the following decades and was still being paid in 1947, 122 years later. To be able to pay off the reparations Haiti was forced to take out loans from French private banks. This way the Haitians were forced into slave labour, reparation payments, and high interest rates.

2 As the existence of a republic of freed slaves was an intolerable threat to the status quo of all slave holding countries, Haiti got denied recognition by the colonial powers for many decades. This political isolation included economic isolation as well. France granted recognition after the accordance to the reparation payments in 1825, Great Britain in 1833, the USA not before they abolished slavery themselves in 1863.

3 Trade liberalization increased in the 1980s. President for life Jean-Claude Duvalier opened up the economy to foreign markets. Prior to that Haiti was able to meet the biggest part of its food needs whereas today half of the food is imported. Sweatshops spread over Haiti, fostered through the loosening of tariffs and the enhancement of free trade. To the present day Haitians produce (mainly) textiles for foreign companies like Disney and Levis for an average wage of 11 cts an hour. State-property is to a large extent privatized.

4 Haiti's weak public health care system struggles heavily with the two main diseases that affect most poor countries: AIDS and tuberculosis. “The distribution of AIDS and tuberculosis—like that of slavery in earlier times—is historically given and economically driven” (Farmer 2001).

The structural adjustment policies of the International Community turned Haiti into “a supplier of the cheapest labor in the Western Hemisphere [...] and, on the other hand, one of the largest importers of U.S.-produced food in the Caribbean Basin”. On March 10, 2010 former U.S. president Bill Clinton testified before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the trade liberalization policies concerning the Haitian import tariff on rice that he pushed through during his time in office in the 1990s were a mistake and a catastrophe for the Haitian economy (Dupuy 2010). The Haitian state as well as a big part of the variety of local and global NGOs operating in Haiti have largely failed in diminishing the negative effects of globalization (Schuller 2007).

### ***The current situation***

The earthquake of January 12<sup>th</sup> worsened the situation in Haiti to a large extent. It claimed approximately 300 000 lives, destroyed a large part of Port-au-Prince and caused major damage in cities like Jacmel and Léogâne. Millions of people are affected by the magnitude 7.0 earthquake and its aftermaths. As the quake affected mainly the seat of government Port-au-Prince 17% of the government employees got killed, most of the governmental building structure was destroyed. The earthquake left the Haitian state incapable of immediate action.

Despite disaster relief and enormous sums of aid pledged from private personas, the International Community and transnational NGOs, the living situation for the affected Haitian has not improved much so far. Nine months after the quake only 15% of the international aid has reached Haiti. The 1.15 billion US Dollar of aid pledged by the US government is held back by the US Congress up to this day. The Haitian government is by large means left aside in the decision making process. The big donor countries as well as the World Bank, the IMF and the IDB make up the majority in the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC). The Haitian president René Préval is a non-voting member. Even though he has a veto right, he is not expected to use it due to anticipated repercussions. The Prime Minister of Haiti, Jean-Max Bellerive, who is the Co-Chair of the Commission together with Bill Clinton, stated that the Action Plan of the IHRC manifests Haiti's dependence as well as its subordination to the International Community (Dupuy 2010).

“Indeed, this is the challenge that the privatized, NGO-dominated aid delivery system – undertaken with the near total exclusion of the Haitian state, which has received only about 1% of aid money – poses to hegemonic understandings of human rights.” (Schuller 2010:27). The NGOs define who gets access to food, water, sanitation, decent shelter, and education. The role of the various international NGOs operating in Haiti is under harsh critique, their non-governmental status under suspicion: “the implicit role of the overwhelming majority of the so-called “non-governmental” organizations – many of which receive large proportions of their financing from state-funds – is to

reinforce existing system of domination and exploitation” (Vorbe 2010) and leads to the application of terms such as “neocolonial humanitarianism” and “disaster capitalism”.

There are 1.5 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs), one in six people in Haiti, who – if they are fortunate enough – live in one of the various tent camps in and around Port-au-Prince. Until August 2010 only 10% of the IDPs had a tent, 40 % of the camps did not have access to water, 30% did not have toilets of any kind (Schuller 2010). The disastrous hygiene conditions are leading to a range of secondary diseases. To make matters worse, the atlantic hurricane season is not yet over.

The Caribbean state of Haiti is due to various reasons extremely vulnerable to environmental hazards. But disasters like the earthquake of January 12<sup>th</sup> are not “natural” ones: „understanding the disaster means understanding not only the tectonic fault lines running beneath Haiti but also the deep economic, political, social, and historical cleavages within and surrounding the country” (NACLA 2010:13).

### ***The Religion in Haiti***

In a recent article Sociologist Peter L. Berger stated that the secularization hypothesis – modernity necessarily leads to a decline of religion – is falsified today. It would not even apply to the USA with its reputation of being the most progressive of all countries. Religious groups, especially protestant ones, are advancing in both the Americas and Africa. Religion plays a vital role in the lives of a huge part of the world population. Haiti is by far no exception.

In Haitian history several examples of religion being a catalyzer for social protest and the (temporal) overcoming of injustices can be traced. In quotidian life religious faith can serve as a counterbalance to macro-structural inequalities. Respective religious communities in Haiti shape the life of their adherents by giving meaning to life as well as by implementing factual strategies to improve the living conditions of the community. They can support the coping with crisis and stabilize the community.

On the other hand conservative and dogmatic exegesis of theological fundamentals can also act as a stabilizer of existing conditions of social inequalities. Religious fault lines can be sources of inequalities as well.

The religious strata of Haiti is primarily occupied by three actors: the Roman-Catholic Church, a multitude of Neo-Evangelical congregations and Haitian Vodou. The designated research will specifically take those religious actors into account.

## The Roman-Catholic Church

The presence of the Roman-Catholic Church in Haiti is strongly tied to colonial history. First Spain and then France ruled the colony and imported their religious beliefs. The *Code Noir* (1685) regulated the handling of slaves within the French Empire. All slaves had to be baptized, were obligated to go to church and the Roman-Catholic denomination was the only one allowed. The plantation owners only half-heartedly followed the *Code Noir*. At first, the time spent in the church would draw off time spent on the plantations and therefore reduce the effectivity of the slaves. Secondly, baptism would have changed the status of the slaves but their inhumanity was by large means the moral and rhetoric justification of their violent exploitation.

After the revolution the recognition of the Haitian Republic was denied by the Roman-Catholic Church, as it was denied by most other powers. The schism lasted for 56 years until the Concordat of 1860. Haiti was basically cut off from foreign religious impact for more than half a century. This fact contributed to the uniqueness of the present religious life in Haiti.

Within the Haitian Catholic Church liberation theology<sup>5</sup> has contributed a lot to recent Haitian history. The resistance to Duvalier's predatory government was mainly channeled through small *organisations populaires* and community based church groups, *ti legliz*. The *ti legliz* were inspired by liberation theology. Charismatic priests openly denounced the regime and demanded social justice (Greene 1997, Hallward 2007). Among the most famous was Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the subsequent president of Haiti, who was called to be the leader of the grass-root movement *lavalas*<sup>6</sup>, consisting of church community groups, women organizations, peasant organizations, trade unions and several other small organizations from civil society. Even though the clergy was supportive of the new social project of the *ti legliz* in the beginning, it later turned its back: "The Church hierarchy, influenced by the anti-Communist Vatican of Pope Jean-Paul II and Cardinal Joseph Ratziger (sic!), and the events in Nicaragua and El Salvador, used the threat of communism to discourage political leadership from the Haitian Church" (Greene 1997). Because of his ongoing political activity Aristide was expelled from the Salesian order in December 1988. Nonetheless he got elected Haitian president in 1990.

The church community groups widely act as mediators who claim participation and social justice. Furthermore, Catholic schools are still the main and foremost means of education in Haiti (Joint 2006).

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<sup>5</sup> This Christian movement developed in the 1950s in Latin America as a reaction to the conservative approach of the Roman Catholic Church, which for too long had been the church of the wealthy, towards the growing social inequalities and injustices in the region. It was most famously propagated by the peruvian priest Gustavo Gutiérrez in the 1970s.

<sup>6</sup> Haitian Creole for flood or avalanche.

## Neo-Evangelical groups<sup>7</sup>

Evangelical groups started to expand in Haiti in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The US-occupation of Haiti (1915-1934) cleared the way for several US-based Neo-Evangelical churches. During the last century the religious strata has been featured by a strong competition of the formally dominating Catholic Church and the constantly growing number of Evangelical groups (Metraux 1989). By the turn of the century an estimate of one third of the Haitian population was identified as Protestants of some form<sup>8</sup>. Evangelical Christianity, more precisely Pentecostalism, is the worlds fastest growing religion (McAlister 2009). Especially in the so-called „Third World“ regions which are defined primarily over means of economic underdevelopment the Pentecostal mission is the most successful. „Indeed the historical specificity of Pentecostalism is that it is the first major world religion to have grown up almost entirely in the soil of the modern urban slum“ (Davis 2004:27).

Nowadays Haiti is saturated with a huge variety of Christian groups. Next to every church and mission group has its presence in Haiti to provide humanitarian and spiritual relief. From an Evangelical perspective, Haiti is considered the devils stronghold because of its association with Haitian Vodou. It is therefore perceived as the “religious other”.

Yet, those groups can contribute to a dissolving of social hierarchies and inequalities. In the religious world-view of many Neo-Evangelical groups race-, gender-, and economic inequalities are consequently dissolved and the world solely separates in believers and non-believers.

During the violent post-coup era (1991-1994) Evangelical churches were reported to give asylum to persecuted individuals (James 2008) as well as to activist peasant groups who could not count on the help of the Catholic Church any longer (Greene 1997).

On the other hand there is an indifference towards material conditions of life before death implanted in Evangelical theology, which can signify an indifference towards poverty as well (Hallward 2007).

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<sup>7</sup> “Evangelical” refers to a variety of different protestant groups such as Baptist, Adventist or Pentecostal Churches.

<sup>8</sup> There is no valid statistical data on the distribution of the various religious groups. The common saying “Haiti is 80 % Catholic and 100% Vodou” does not mirror reality any longer. Still a multitude of Haitians are official Catholics but practice Vodou simultaneously. Even though the Roman Catholic Church launched various anti-Vodou campaigns in the past, their approach is best described as an unuttered tolerance towards the Haitian religion. In contrast, most Evangelical churches have a more hostile approach to Vodou. Coexistence is intolerable from their point of view. A spiritual warfare against the Vodou adherents of “Satan” was proclaimed and especially in post-earthquake Haiti violent assaults against Vodouists accumulate.

## Haitian Vodou

The first African slaves were brought to Santo Domingo as early as in the middle of the 16th century. Over the subsequent 200 years of transatlantic slave-trade various religious beliefs from West Africa were imported<sup>9</sup> which in a random process<sup>10</sup> and under the influence of and synthesis with Christianity formed to what today is considered as Haitian Vodou. The religion is also largely influenced by the experience of cultural uprooting, violent slave exploitation and processes of hybridization.

In comparison to most Christian groups Vodou does not have a clergy nor a superior immanent order (Nicholls 1970). Various local exegeses co-exist. Vodou connects the everyday life of its adherents to the transcendent sphere of the deities which govern their life. It developed an elaborate system of traditional medicine as well as a system of ethics (Metraux 1989, Desmangles 1992). Vodou has been reported as an arbiter of social justice (Taylor 1992). Laguerre describes Vodou as the main religion of the marginalized people, being tolerant and open to cultural pluralism (Laguerre 1989).

During the Duvalier era Vodou was misused to a large extent and was reported as a reactionary force that stabilized the dictatorship. Even more Vodou was faced with a multitude of discrimination and oppressive campaigns in Haitian history (Laguerre 1989).

Even though ex-president Aristide acknowledged Vodou as an official religion in 2003, today it still stands for the “African” in mainstream discourse in and outside Haiti, meaning “the uncivilized”, “the underdeveloped”, literally “the alien” and is drawn upon as an explanation for the devastating situation in Haiti.<sup>11</sup>

In the course of Haitian history Vodou played an important role in perpetuating African consciousness, fostered mainly by François Duvalier and the *noirisme* movement. The Vodou ceremony of Bois Caïman in 1791 is said to have triggered the Haitian Revolution and today plays an important role in the formation of Haitian identity (Apter 2002).

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<sup>9</sup> The quick death of slaves due to the vast physical and psychological pressure of slavery necessitated the ongoing “import” of Africans. The connection to African religious beliefs was therefore never lost but instead constantly renewed. By the time of the revolution three fourths of the slaves were born in Africa. In other American colonies the treatment of the slaves was relatively better. This fact abetted the integration of the slaves into colonial society as well as the identification with their colonial masters. In Haiti this was rarely the case.

<sup>10</sup> Many slaves didn't survive the distressful passage from Africa. The presence of certain deities in the afro-american world sometimes depended on the survival of one sole priest who was “in charge” for a certain deity. This also explains the vast variety of and difference between deities within the afro-american culture (Bastide 2007).

<sup>11</sup> Done so for instance by the Haitian Consul in São Paulo, George Samuel Antoine, who only 2 days after the earthquake and ahead of an interview said: *O africano em si tem maldição. Todo lugar que tem africano tá foda. Acho que de tanto mexer com macumba, não sei o que é aquilo...*

The earthquake of January 12<sup>th</sup> led to a situation where Vodou is getting under enormous pressure and is partially forced underground<sup>12</sup>. Anti-Vodou rhetorics are one of the basis for Evangelical mission. Several violent assaults against Vodou ceremonies have been reported in the aftermath of the earthquake. Some of the missionaries “launched an attack on Vodou that can only be described as a spiritual *dechoukaj* (uprooting)” (Ulysse 2010).

*“The Church in the colonies is the white people's Church, the foreigners Church. She does not call the native to God's ways but the ways of the white man, of the master, of the oppressor. And as we know, in this matter many are called but few chosen.”*  
(Frantz Fanon, 2004 [1963])

All the religious groups taken into consideration in this studies are a legacy of colonial history. Whereas the other groups were and still are mainly dominated by foreign priests<sup>13</sup>, Haitian Vodou developed in Haiti and is not directly dominated by foreign powers, even though it is extensively influenced by Catholicism and historically developed itself in reaction and sometimes in dissociation from the other religious groups. In context of a postcolonial critique it is therefore an interesting field of study.

### ***Trans-regional connections and “religioscapes”***

The Caribbean region itself is one of the most interesting fields of studying trans-regional conjunctions because of its historical imperatives, colonialism and slavery and its vast cultural heterogeneity. It is a region where the past enters the present, where the global is traceable in the local. „Moreover, Caribbeanist research on globalization balances macrostructural accounts of the nature, extent, and force of global processes with ethnographic treatments of “globalization from below” that also emphasize how people mobilize local history and meanings to negotiate—and indeed shape—their available avenues within current configurations of global power” (Slocum/Thomas 2003:560).

Trans-regional networks of diaspora communities play a vital role in present day Haiti. According to a recent report of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Haitian Diaspora remittances to Haiti are estimated around \$2 billion per year and thus represent 30 % of Haiti's Gross Domestic

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12 This situation is not a singular one in Haitian history. With the *campagne anti-superstitieuse* beginning in 1930s the Catholic Church, supported by the Haitian state, launched a violent campaign against superstitious practices, namely Vodou, and forced the Haitian religion to go underground. This attempt of “cultural genocide” (Alfred Metraux) led to the foundation of the *Bureau d’Ethnologie* in 1941, which regarded its main obligation in conserving cultural assets on a scientific base (Ramsey 2005).

13 The Catholic clergy in Haiti has been dominated mainly by French priests for a long time. Dictator François Duvalier tried to limit the political power and foreign-domination of the Haitian Catholic Church by expelling several non-Haitian priests (Nicholls 1970).



Product (GDP). The trans-regional Christian networks as well as the Vodou networks support and influence the local communities in Haiti and vice versa.

A basic trans-regional focus is implanted in Catholic missionary ideology ever since. Catholic networks can be found all over the world. Most of the Evangelical missionary churches have their base in the USA. There is an immense trans-regional fluctuation towards Haiti. Each year thousands of Evangelical believers fly from “God's chosen country” to “God's least favored country” to give hope, blessings and financial support to the Haitian converts. However, such transnational religious networks/landscapes can be observed all throughout the world (Schüler 2008). In the context of the earthquake of January 12<sup>th</sup> it is important to stress that a multitude of trans-regional NGOs operating in Haiti are faith-based. Christian NGOs are among the main distributors of aid. Vodou adherents are disadvantaged due to the hostile<sup>14</sup> approach of some fundamentalist groups. Additionally many people lost their identification proof due to the earthquake. The Christian churches generously hand out baptismal certificates that count for identification. Without identification the individual does not gain access to the distribution of humanitarian aid.

There is also a huge trans-regional connectivity between *hounfours* (Vodou temples) in Haiti and those of the vast Haitian diaspora (McCarthy Brown 2001). Vodou adherents in cities like New Orleans and New York have been reported to provide profound disaster relief for the destroyed *hounfours* and affected Vodou communities in post-earthquake Haiti. Here trans-regional networks act as a counterweight to religious-caused inequalities. The connection to Africa is mainly a mythological one: *Ginen* on the one hand refers to the Guinea Coast of West Africa as the factual point of the naval departure to Saint-Domingue and on the other to a mythological landscape, an underwater world to which the souls travel after death. The impact of slavery as well as the idea of a (mythological) origin is transcended through the *Ginen* conception (Apter 2002).

McAlister proposed the term „religioscapes” analogous to Appadurai's „ethnoscapes“ „as the subjective religious maps—and attendant theologies—of immigrant, or diasporic, or transnational communities who are also in global flow and flux.“ (McAlister 2005:251). In context of the trans-regional religious networks active in Haiti her approach contributes to the understanding of religious spaces and theological geographies relevant to the planned research.

Historic and economic imperatives lead to a inner-Haitian polarity between urban and rural areas. Therefore the rural exodus also plays an important role in the restructuring of religious space. The

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14 Religious tensions between Evangelical groups and Vodou adherents worsened after the earthquake. For Evangelicals the earthquake's cause is Gods punishment for the sinful life of Vodou adherents. A prominent representative of this hypothesis is the US evangelist Pat Robertson who stated on January 13<sup>th</sup> that the earthquake was the punishment for a pact made with the devil in Bois Caïman in August 1791.

rural „lumpenproletariat“ brought religious beliefs to the urban space that were traditionally centered around small villages: first and foremost the belief in Haitian Vodou. Beforehand, the Haitian social and religious geography was roughly divided into an urban, educated, mainly catholic, “mulatto” class with access to means of health care and political participation on the one side and a rural, uneducated, “black” peasant class, that the demanding as well as protecting hands of the weak Haitian state was not able to reach on the other side. With the migration into the cities thousands of people with the hope for a better life flood the already overpopulated city of Port-au-Prince and strengthened the belief in Haitian Vodou in the urban space and its peripheries. As mentioned above, Neo-Evangelical churches found a fertile ground for their missionary work in the slums of Port-au-Prince as well.

Nonetheless the religious groups have means of improving the everyday life of their adherents, there is an ongoing and lately intensifying struggle about religious territory in Haiti.<sup>15</sup> Foucault stated that „territory is no doubt a geographical notion, but it's first of all a juridico-political one: the area controlled by a certain kind of power“ (Foucault 1980:68). The urge for predominance especially of the Evangelical Churches intensified after the earthquake. In the challenging situation the Evangelical groups exert their power over the non-believers to gain religious territory.

The reconstruction of Port-au-Prince is just in the beginning. The fact that a vast part of the urban building structure is destroyed due the earthquake enables the immediate observation of the reshaping of the geographical as well as the religious urban space, as space is never given nor neutral, but socially produced (Lefebvre 2007).

The earthquake is the singular dramatic event in recent Haitian history. Subsequent multi-sited fieldwork will enable to witness the reallocation and reclaiming of public as well as private urban spaces by certain religious actors and the concurrent reformation of the Haitian “religioscape”.

## ***Main research questions***

Considering the post-earthquake situation in Haiti, the following interdependent questions are of concern:

(1) How is the distribution of mid-range and long-term humanitarian aid in post-earthquake Haiti structured along confessional lines? What role do trans-regional faith-based NGOs play?

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<sup>15</sup> The conflict between Haitian Vodou and Neo-evangelical churches serves also as a classical example for the distinction between the “West and the rest” that Hall described (Hall 1992). Whereas Vodou serves as the “chaotic alien” in western imagination, the anticipated triumph of Pentecostalism stands for the superiority of western rationalism and discipline.

(2) How do the three religious groups act as arbiters of social equality and improve the everyday life of their adherents? What is the theological approach towards social inequalities of the respective religions?

(3) How are the religious groups of concern embedded into larger global religious networks that seek to minimize the effects of social inequalities?

### **Working Plan**

The fieldwork is designed to select three significant religious communities of the designated denominations. The main research questions will be explored through the participation in the everyday life of selected adherents and the close collaboration with the respective leaders of the religious communities.

The fieldwork also seeks to clarify their embeddedness in and exchange with trans-regional religious networks and the effects of this contact in terms of the downsizing of the symptoms of social inequalities.

Secondly, I will establish contact to at least four NGOs (one religious affiliated and one non-religious, one locally and one globally operating NGO) which work to diminish the effects of social inequality in respective communities. Designated interviews seeks to learn about their guidelines to distribute aid and support to certain communities.

The anthropological discipline is especially qualified to combine those different realms because of its “unique power to work through juxtaposed fields and particular conditions in which lives are [...] shaped and foreclosed” (Biehl 2005). Therefore the main research questions will be explored on the basis of a multi-site ethnography (Marcus 1995). The methodological tools will consist of participant observation and quantitative structured interviews and qualitative semi-structured interviews with religious protagonists and religious- affiliated and non-religious local and global NGOs.

### **Time Table**

Phase	Time	Activity	Place	Duration
1	01.10.2010-30.04.2011	Integration into <i>desiguALdades</i> network Literature studies, Research design Preparation of fieldwork (contacts to actors, familiarizing with the linguistic peculiarities of Haitian Creole)	Berlin, Germany	6 months

2	01.05.2011- 31.01.2012	<b>Fieldwork Phase I</b> Familiarizing with local conditions Establishing of contact to respective actors participant observation quantitative and qualitative interviews	Port-au-Prince and/or surrounding areas, Haiti	9 months
3	01.02.2012- 31.07.2012	Academic exchange within the network, Processing and review of present results, design of follow-up research	Berlin, Germany	6 months
4	01.08.2012- 30.04.2013	<b>Fieldwork Phase II</b> Follow-up fieldwork Clarification of new evolved and open questions participant observation quantitative and qualitative interviews	Port-au-Prince and/or surrounding areas, Haiti	9 months
5	01.05.2013- 31.10.2013	Academic exchange within the network, Processing and review of new results, Final analysis, synthesis, writing up	Berlin, Germany	6 months

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