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FAITH IN HUMANITARIANISM
THE STUDY OF TWO FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
IN POST-EARTHQUAKE HAITI

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1 Introduction

"I was inside the house when it happened. I was watching a soap opera. It had not begun yet and then I sensed that the house was shaking, it was trembling, and I left. I didn't know what it was. I didn't think it was an earthquake. Some people thought it was a big bulldozer that went by. I didn't think that either. The only thing I thought was, since I am in house that is trembling, I have to get out. I ran out of the house. There were two other people. They ran out. They stood in the lakou¹. I was only taking care that no house or tree could fall onto me because the shocks grew stronger. The two people came running. They held me. They held me and cried for Jesus. And I was standing there with my strong conviction that nothing is going to happen to me. I was listening to the two people pleading for Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, I never called for anything...because I thought nothing would happen to me. No matter what was going on. I was standing there, without fear. And when the earth stopped shaking I started to see the wounded. And then I remembered my brother who was working on a construction site. And I asked myself if he wasn't lying under concrete? And that was when I started to be afraid. Because I saw the way people were wounded: broken legs, crushed heads, everyone pale. That was when I started to feel fear. I called him, he didn't answer. I started to be afraid, really afraid. Because I thought Makensonn was already dead. I wasn't thinking about anyone else either. Because I knew where they were, they were andeyò². Those houses aren't really houses. Even if they would have fallen down on them – they are lightweight houses – nothing would have happened to those people. I was only thinking about him. A little later I got hold of him. I said: Where are you? He said: I am good. I am coming. And I said: Okay, hurry up! And when he finally arrived I started to calm down more or less. And then there was my sister, too. She was in Port-au-Prince. I tried all night to get news from her. Only early next morning I reached her. And thank God, no member of my family died."

Odney Declesias, the narrator of this story, lives in La Vanneau, a provincial town close to Jacmel in the southeast of Haiti. He is a beneficiary of the housing projects of Caritas Jacmel because the earthquake destroyed his house and he was in need. Despite the fact that he, unlike everyone else, did not call for Jesus when the earthquake happened, he is also a Catholic believer. He rejoins with his fellow faithful in the church.

The study at hand will interrogate the question if it makes a difference that Odney Declesias benefitted from a Haitian faith-based organization (FBO) such as Caritas Jacmel other than a secular organization. It will do so by exploring the actions and narratives of employees and beneficiaries of FBOs active in Haiti. The ethnographic research that substantiates this thesis is set in the context of *Douz Janvye*, the January 12, 2010 earthquake in Haiti.³ Even though the exact number of lives lost is a matter of dispute, it is fair to assume that it was one of the most fatal disasters in recent history.⁴ It

¹ Haitian Creole, compound of houses inhabited by extended family

² Haitian Creole, *outside*, in the countryside

³ Equivalent to *September 11* the date came to be known as *Douz Janvye* in Haitian narration.

⁴ The exact death toll is disputed. Whereas the Haitian government stated the loss of 316,000 lives,

triggered a series of humanitarian and military interventions and was followed by other disasters such as a Cholera epidemic, a disease with an “own preferential option for the poor” (Farmer 2011) as well as the highest degree of food insecurity in decades. All of which caused further suffering and loss of life in the so-called “Republic of NGOs”. Even before the quake the Caribbean state was saturated with a multitude of non-governmental aid organizations (NGOs). Estimations range from 3,000 to 20,000 NGOs on the ground (Ramachandran and Walz 2012). Hence, Haiti is among the countries with the highest per capita ratio of NGOs worldwide. Additionally the country has been under a UN stabilizing mission, MINUSTAH, since 2004, which is the only UN mission in a country of the Western hemisphere. The earthquake sparked one of the biggest series of humanitarian intervention of the past decade, including the “largest single-country response in the history of the Red Cross/Red Crescent” (Lundahl 2013:193).

Many among the non-governmental organizations on the ground do have a faith-based background. Yet the research on faith-based organizations in general and in Haiti specifically is sparse, to the say the least. The thesis is informed by ethnographic fieldwork in Jacmel. The coastal town in the southeast of the capital Port-au-Prince was severely affected by the 2010 earthquake, too. During the first fieldwork stage in 2011 I selected two faith-based organizations with projects implemented in Jacmel and surrounding smaller communities. Like the majority of FBOs in Haiti, both are of Christian origin. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH, engl: Diakonie Emergency Aid) is the humanitarian section of the Evangelical Church in Germany and active in about 30 countries worldwide. Caritas Jacmel is the local section of Caritas Haiti, itself a subsidiary organization of Caritas Internationalis, the second biggest Catholic aid organization.⁵ My fieldwork is set in the recovery phase 1.5 to 3.5 years after the earthquake. Whereas Diakonie solely operates on a humanitarian mandate, Caritas Jacmel is a so-called mixed-mandate organization, doing development as well as humanitarian work.

others presented different numbers. According to UNOCHA 217,300 people died.
<http://www.unocha.org/ochain/2012-13/haiti>

⁵ The largest Catholic agency is the Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité (CIDSE); the Association of Protestant Development Agencies (APRODEV) is the main Protestant alliance; World Vision International (WVI) is the single largest Christian development agency; together with Caritas Internationalis all four had a combined annual income of US\$ 2.5 billion in 2000 (Clarke 2008: 27).

Caritas Jacmel as well as Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe will be analyzed concerning their religious background and motivation, the staff and the beneficiaries, their distributive practice and their relation to overarching regulations and professionalized structures such as codes of conduct and how they translate back to their organizational faith identities. Here, especially the perspectives of the beneficiaries, often disregarded, are crucial for an integral account of aid organizations: “Les personnes aidées ne se réduisent pas au statut de victime, mais sont des sujets politiques, qui ont une histoire et une parole, des droits et des revendications, inscrits dans un complexe tissu social” (Thomas 2013:37).

The two organizations differ highly in the extent to as well as the arena in which faith informs their work. The projects I primarily selected for analysis both focus on housing. As the earthquake created 1.5 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)⁶ it is one of the most important fields of humanitarian assistance in post-earthquake Haiti. I conducted interviews with FBO staff, expatriate and Haitian, as well as with a selection of beneficiaries. Additionally I participated in staff meetings, seminars, field trips, religious meetings and church services.

The following chapter will establish the methodological and theoretical framework used to approach the study of faith-based organizations in post-earthquake Haiti. It will show how the organizations were selected and approached as well as the methods I used to study the dynamics of faith and professionalization in their organizational cultures. The implications of research in post-disaster environment and the positioning of the researcher will be addressed as well.

Chapter three of this dissertation will shed light on the earthquake as an event, as a narrative and a humanitarian catastrophe. First, it will present the perceptions of those people who lived through that day. Their description and framing of the disaster is essential to an understanding of the event. This understanding is indispensable for organizations to support the survivors in psychosocial as much as in material terms. The chapter will show the narratives used to make sense of the immensity of the disaster and the ways in which it affected the Haitian society. The “moment that cut Haitian times in half” (Rainhorn 2012) will be presented as a processual disaster that has a socio-

⁶ With an estimated population of nine million in Haiti before the quake one in six people lost his or her home.

political and socio-economical history of its own as well as a continuity that will proceed to influence Haiti's being in the world – all of which are directly entangled with the variety of inequalities the country's inhabitants are subjected to. The last part of the chapter will show how the earthquake intensified Haiti's dependencies to the aid complex.

Chapter four will provide a comprehensive account of faith-based organizations. It will show how and why they differ from formally secular organizations and why they should be studied as such. The chapter will also lay open the intimate connections between the emergence of the contemporary phenomenon of humanitarianism and religious imperatives to help other people in distress, taking into account the processes of secularization and formalization that aid organizations have been subjected to during the past decades.

The chapters three and four are meant to provide the context that the research is embedded in: the earthquake, the subsequent humanitarian interventions and the phenomenon of faith-based organizations therein. The empirical chapters five, six and seven are based on the insight gained from these contexts.

Chapter five will present the religious background of both organizations, Caritas Jacmel and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe. It seeks to show the ways in which faith forms a basis for their organizational identity and of their intervention in Haiti. It will give an account of the religious faith of staff and beneficiaries of the organizations and show how it relates to, re-appropriates and re-negotiates the overall narratives of the organizations.

The central aspect of the work of the two organizations involved in humanitarian assistance, the provision of aid – most fundamentally goods – will be the center of chapter six. It will present and analyze the criteria and methods used to single out those deemed worthy of their housing support. Especially the ways in which faith is related to the distributive practice will be of concern in this part of the dissertation.

The empirical chapter seven will then focus on another organizational aspect: the embeddedness of faith-based organizations in the “dense professional world of NGOs” (Bornstein 2005). It will show in what ways the increasing importance of professionalization inherent to contemporary humanitarianism influences the work of both organizations on the ground. How does a “neutral humanitarian space” correspond

with codices of conduct, the professionalization of the sector and with faith? The in-between places, the relation between expatriate staff and Haitian staff for example will be examined. Here the difference between what they do “in spite of what they say they do” (Hefferan et al. 2009) is of concern.

Finally, the conclusion will bring together the insights of the past chapters and synthesize them to an account of faith-based humanitarian intervention in post-earthquake Haiti and the intertwined dynamics of faith and professionalization.

The central questions that are guiding this thesis are: How does faith shape the actions – especially the distributive practice – of the two FBOs? In what ways does it make a difference if a house is given by a decidedly religious organization like Caritas Jacmel, or by one that applies “functional secularism” (Ager and Ager 2011) in the field like DKH. How do the FBOs relate to a dense professional world of international humanitarianism, standardized procedures, and codified humanitarian principles? How do the actions, motivations of and dynamics between the key actors (staff and beneficiaries) demonstrate, reinterpret, or challenge the narratives on faith as well as on professionalism?

The hypothesis is that the notions of faith as well as of professionalism are subjected to ongoing negotiations in the different arenas of concern – the regional office, the country office, and the international headquarter – and in the relation of the key actor groups – Haitian staff, expatriate staff, headquarter staff, and beneficiaries – to each other. Depending on the arena either one of the two is more prominent than the other. Every arena and level of intervention of the two organizations is exposed to the dynamics of secularization and sanctification.

The faith component, as a motivational, financial and moral resource of the organizations, is subjected to dynamics of sanctification as well as of secularization, first scrutinized by Michael Barnett and Janice Gross Stein (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012). In differing realms it is emphasized, in others it gets concealed. It is not humanitarianism nor was it ever the religious impulse of charity that initially created the dogmatic boundaries of the religious and the secular. Rather contemporary humanitarianism as a whole can be understood as one of the socio-political realms exposed to the dynamics of secularization and sanctification. By regarding the role of faith as a distinctive factor in

contemporary humanitarian organizations it is indispensable to have a look on the intimate connections between secularism, humanitarianism and modernity.

Ever since Europeans entered the island, Haiti has been a testing ground for various modes of modernity: the French established a proto-capitalist system of plantation slavery in Saint-Domingue – Haiti’s name during French colonial occupation –, the U.S. tested aerial bombing for the first time in Haiti during the U.S. occupation 1915 – 1934, structural adjustment policies in the 1980s have been implemented and tried. Haiti, as well as much of “Latin America has served, and still serves, as a laboratory for modernity in which specific political, institutional, and economic concepts and practices are tested and then re-imported”⁷. In this tradition not only the UN mission MINUSTAH takes advantage engaging in Haiti as a testing ground for various counter insurgency and pacification techniques to be re-imported to other countries such as Brazil (Müller and Müller 2016). Haiti also serves as laboratory for various new approaches in humanitarianism (Schuller 2016) or is even used to acquire experience for otherwise untrained and in that sense unprofessional humanitarians (Redmond 2015).

On the other hand Haiti is afflicted with threadbare bynames such as “the poorest nation in the Western hemisphere”, the “Republic of NGOs” and with narratives of “progress resistant cultures” (Brooks 2010), and of a failed state. The use of those narratives is to make Haiti legible to the world outside through minimally varying “exceptionalisms”. Seemingly positive ones like “the former pearl of the Antilles” or proud ones like that of “the first black republic” supplement the negative narratives on Haiti. The newest buzzword for the positive exceptionalism in post-earthquake Haiti is the concept of “resilience”, meaning that Haitians are people that bend but do not break regardless of what they have to endure (Clitandre 2011).

It was late Haitian American anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot whose academic work built the foundation for the conception of Haitian exceptionalism and an inherently decolonial critique: “Haitian exceptionalism functions as a shield to Haiti's integration into a world dominated by Christianity, capitalism, and whiteness. The more Haiti appears weird, the easier it is to forget that it represents the longest neocolonial experiment in the history of the West” (Trouillot 1990:7). The post-earthquake recovery

⁷ http://www.desigualdades.net/Phase-I/investigacion/desigualdades_sociopoliticas/index.html Last visited May 29, 2016

and reconstruction is another experiment in that sense. The earthquake was the moment that “cut Haitian time in half”, 2010 is second année zero⁸ Haitian history. The catastrophe even comes with a “tabula rasa”-effect, a chance to “build back better”. The manner in which much of the post-earthquake humanitarian intervention in Haiti took place resembles those dynamics:

“Se dessinait alors le terrain vierge, idéal et idéalisé, pour l'intervention de l'aide internationale. Le chaos, la jungle, les scènes de pillage renvoyant aux décors de Mad Max, étaient comme l'autre versant de ce terrain nu, la confirmation en somme d'un territoire sans propriétés ni propriétaires, sans plus d'histoire ni racine” (Thomas 2013:9).

The aim of this dissertation is to shed light on the phase of this intervention in Haiti. As religion plays a pivotal role in the depiction of Haiti's otherness, especially the depiction of Haitian Vodou, the need to study organizations with religious foundations is even more evident. The people encountered by Columbus were regarded as people without history (Wolf 2010), and very important to the consciousness of the colonizer: people without religion, the strongest justification of that time to de-humanize “the other”, to exploit and kill human beings for the colonial sake of power and profit, and above all “in the name of religion” – Christian religion (Rey 1999). The colonial project of Saint-Domingue itself had many uncomfortable intersections with Christian mission. Today, the vast majority of faith-based organizations in Haiti do have a Christian background. This is one reason of the many reasons why it is crucial to scrutinize the work of faith-based organizations in countries like Haiti.

Next to the faith element of the organizations this dissertation will discern the ways in which they locate themselves in relation to the increasing demands of professionalization, codification and bureaucratization intrinsic to the aid world today. This professionalization is connected to the prominence NGOs gained during the past decades. Also as an effect of neoliberal privatization, today NGOs resume roles previously performed by governmental agencies, such as the provision of public services and infrastructure or emergency assistance to people affected by conflict, disaster, and displacement. In the beginning of the 1990s, especially organizations involved in humanitarian crisis launched initiatives to regulate, standardize and codify the ways in which NGOs should intervene in crisis. Further, humanitarian organizations were under

⁸ http://www.lemonde.fr/ameriques/article/2010/01/27/haiti-annee-zero_1297188_3222.html Last visited May 29, 2016

the impression of their failures and misconduct in the Yugoslav Wars and the Rwandan Genocide. The 1994 “Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief” (CoC) is one of the attempts to unify the humanitarian community under a standard of rules of behavior. Most prominently it features the core humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence. The Code of Conduct is of central importance to the humanitarian intervention especially of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe. Yet also Caritas Jacmel is influenced by the professionalization and bureaucratization of the humanitarian sector in a variety of ways. It is the prominence of the role that NGOs came to play in contemporary Haiti especially after the 2010 earthquake that necessitates a closer look on how the two organizations relate to humanitarian principles, and how the professionalization of the sector shapes their identity, narratives and practices as organizations.

2 Of Having Faith in Anthropology – Theoretical Frames and Methodologies for Studying FBOs

In what ways do faith and professionalism matter to the organizations and the people they serve in Haiti? This is the central question underlying the study at hand. To discern the dynamics, practices and narratives central to this questions, an appropriate framework of methodological and theoretical approaches is indispensable.

The following chapter will present the methodological frame used to approach the field of faith-based humanitarianism. It will lay open how I came to select the field as well as the case studies and the sample of interviewees. The precise methods I used for the collection of data and the subsequent theoretical deductions will be given attention. This chapter presents the case studies, in temporal and spatial terms. A special attention is given to the question of language.

Further, the chapter will present the body of theoretical and empirical work that my own reflections rest upon. Next to anthropological theory and ethnographic methods I draw on studies of religion, including the study of sacralized texts, both religious as well as secular ones (like the Codes of Conduct), feminist theory and decolonial thinking.

Finally the chapter will give room for the reflections on the self in the field. The positionality of the anthropologist in terms of gender, religion, class and “race”⁹ is an important factor especially in the setting of this study.

2.1 The Academic Field

Various anthropologists have contributed empirical studies on how FBOs function, addressed the meanings they generate for participants and beneficiaries, and analyzed their discourses and practices. Bornstein (2005) and Hefferan (2007) provided valuable contributions to the ethnographic rapprochement of faith-based organizations in transnational contexts. Adams (2013), Bradley (2011) and Occhipinti (2005) focused on faith-based engagement in national contexts. Barnett and Gross Stein (2012) as well as Benthall (2011) focused on the intersections of faith and humanitarianism. Additionally in the last decade there have been several policy briefings published on a variety of

⁹ The category „race“ appears in inverted commas to make the intention to present „race“ as a social construct and not as a biological fact as clear as possible.

topics related to faith-based initiatives in development and welfare contexts (CDD/ODI 2005, Ontrac 2009 2010, RAD 2011, UNICEF 2004).

An important facet of the academic field is the insight and perspective gained through the study of the anthropology of humanitarianism (Bornstein and Redfield 2011, Minn 2007, Terry 2002, Ticktin 2011, 2014) and of development (Escobar 1995, Ferguson 1994). The field of anthropology of disaster (Fassin and Pandolfi 2010, Hoffmann and Oliver-Smith 2002, Quarantelli 1987) presents another main body of work that my own reflections rest upon.

As I am studying faith-based organizations, there should be attention given to organizational studies and organizational ethnography that focuses on the “everyday experiences of people working in organizations” (Ybema et al. 2009:1). Similarly to Laurie Occhipinti’s study on Catholic social engagement in rural Argentina my own research seeks to “trace the worldview of the organizations through its concrete actions – the programs and projects it chooses to implement, the ways it does so, and its explicit statements about those actions and about its organizational philosophy and methodology – and through implied meanings and understandings that underlie those explicit actions and statements” (Occhipinti 2005:54).

The focus of the study at hand seeks to combine those aspects. It dwells in the universe of humanitarianism, disaster and faith. Haiti provides the setting to this inquiry on international faith-based engagement, whereas the event of the earthquake of January 12, 2010 sets the context.

I am calling the figurations that the humanitarian engagement of the two organizations studied is embedded in the “aid complex”. It is indeed a complex web of institutions, individuals, organizations and regulations that constitute the contemporary body of humanitarian (and also development) aid and disaster response. Even what is subsumed under “humanitarian” ranges widely “from most specialized organizations to amateur groups and even criminals on the lookout to exploit all form of human misery” (Etienne 2012:27). Even more so, it is not only the non-governmental organizations that take credit and have to be held accountable for their actions, but also national governments, intergovernmental organizations, private contractors, military organizations, private and institutional donors and supra-national consortia and their agreements. In the Haitian case most of those organized parties can be found under acronyms like IHRC,

MINUSTAH, HRF, IMF, IOM, ECHO, UN OCHA.¹⁰ Last but not least, Haitian themselves make part of the “aid complex”. Even though their voices are not acknowledged for the most part the staging of their suffering is a form of capital that can be extracted. As beneficiaries they are deemed the indispensable targets of the aid intervention. Ideally they also shape those interventions in a pro-active way.

All of those entities influence the course of a disaster and the success or failure of its subsequent interventions. Often they have conflicting interests. Their spheres of influence differ in extent. All of them are exposed to, thrive in or even set the rules in a competitive system of capitalist accumulation. As Schuller points out blaming individual aid workers or organizations for the lack of progress is as much a dead end as blaming IDP camp residents for “gaming the system”. What is missing to date is a coherent structural analysis of the system itself (Schuller 2016).

I conduct this study as an anthropologist. An anthropological approach is particularly useful when it comes to meanings as lived-reality as well as theory and practice in the aid complex. “This is one strength of anthropological analysis – its ability to discern what organizations, and the people within them, actually do on a day-to-day basis, often in spite of what they say they do” (Hefferan et al. 2009: 18). This is applicable as much to the faith part of the organization as it is to other parameters like the “quasi-sacred quality of humanitarian ideals” (Fassin 2012) engrained in humanitarian work or the parameters of “professionalism” set by international rules and own commitment.

Within those realms anthropology is equipped to provide a “liminal critique” instead of binary oppositions (Bornstein and Redfield 2011). The *raison d’être* of this study is not to analyze which organization succeeded its mission in Haiti, but to show where and how discourses and practices of faith and professionalized humanitarianism within the aid complex met – and where they failed to do so. In much the same vein, anthropologist Didier Fassin states, “our task is not to distinguish between good and evil, but to critique the actual conditions that produce social realities” (Fassin and Rechtman: 2009:280).

To understand particular FBOs and the faith models that fuel their work, one must delineate the historical and cultural contexts in which they arose and in which they continue to function (Hefferan 2010), in terms of the religious context as well as

¹⁰ Schuller mentions that even though organizations like the Red Cross and IOM are not NGOs in the strict sense nevertheless Haitians often perceive them as such (Schuller 2016).

considering their place in the “aid complex” that allows them to exist and act as an organization. To do so, chapter five will provide the respective backgrounds of the two organizations studied.

Even though part of the *raison d'être* of academic scholarship, particularly anthropological one is to distil generalizable conclusions from the study of particulars, the overall goal is not to produce social facts as universals. There is hardly any academic discipline that has interrogated with its own modes of knowledge production as much as anthropology has in the past decades. This process of self-inspection was not limited to a critique of “writing culture” (Clifford Marcus 1986) in terms of writing the Other, but it also meant interrogating about the modes of knowledge production and power in the construction of otherness that anthropology as a whole discipline is build upon. In this line Trouillot states: “The primary focus on the textual construction of the Other in anthropology may turn our attention away from the construction of Otherness upon which anthropology is premised” (Trouillot 2003:19).

Hence, the discipline of anthropology did not invent the category of the Other, but took it as its premise from which all observation, description and theorization emanated. As a result of those reflective processes most contemporary anthropologists are uncomfortable with universalizing claims, of what Trouillot calls “North Atlantic universals” (Trouillot 2003). In light of this study this also includes the universal capacity of the human condition, of dignity and of socio-religious moral values. Anthropologists have tackled the question of what is considered the universal subject of “humanity” (Agier 2010) or in broader terms of “common sense” (Herzfeld 1997) and set it in relation to the practices of individuals and entities within the aid complex. Sometimes with the outcome that applications and understandings of the concept of “humanity” might not be as universal as the system wants to make believe. Through the narratives, histories and shared experiences of people within the aid complex it is possible to locate the graduations of “humanity” created and enforced by the system. This study intends to contribute to this attempt.

When engaging in research on faith-based humanitarian organizations, one has to not only look at religion as a given, but also track the traits of secularization within the organizations. The predispositions of secularism in contrast to other Enlightenment paradigms have been left unquestioned by anthropological knowledge production for

long (Stewart 2001). It was philosopher Charles Taylor (1989, 2007) who provided a coherent analysis of the manifold aspects of secularization and diverging secularisms, yet focusing mainly on the Western world. The acknowledgement of the work of scholars such as Talal Asad (2003), Fenella Cannell (2010), Saba Mahmood (2005) and David Scott and Charles Hirschkind (2005) changed the turf. Noteworthy and applicable is the particular contextualization and critique of secularization from a feminist perspective (Braidotti 2008, Lanwerd 2009, Mahmood 2001, Reilly 2011).

When it comes to individual thinkers, it is especially late Haitian-American historical anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot that has been an important intellectual pillar in terms of his theorization of the manifold modes of knowledge production on the “savage lot” (Trouillot 2003) against which Western hegemony is constructed. Furthermore Trouillot’s path breaking 1995 essay “Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History” allowed me to interpret certain structures and actions within the aid complex also as a continuation of silencing the (colonial) past and parts of the (neo-colonial) present also within the aid complex.

Another main strain of thought substantiating my approach is found in the work of scholars with a background in decolonial thinking such as Enrique Dussel with his ideas on trans-modern pluriverses (Dussel 2008), Santiago Castro-Gómez reflections on the hubris of the zero point (Castro-Gómez 2005) and Haitian sociologist Jean Casimir’s theory on the oppressed culture, *la culture opprimée* (Casimir 2001).

Furthermore, French anthropologist Didier Fassin has provided tools to frame “the sacredness” of the idea of humanity, inherent moral premises, as well as the inequalities inscribed in the hierarchizations of humanity within the aid complex (Fassin 2010, 2012).

Barnett and Gross Stein’s theorization of the dynamics of secularization and sanctification inherent to contemporary humanitarianism was particularly helpful to frame the dynamic aspects of faith and professionalism inherent to FBO intervention in Haiti (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012).

The empirical work of U.S.-American anthropologists Erica Bornstein on faith-based organizations (Bornstein 2005, 2012a), particularly her frame of the “dense professional world of NGOs”, and especially that of Mark Schuller on the impact of NGOs on the

structure of Haitian society (Schuller 2012, 2016) have driven and fueled my engagement with FBOs in post-quake Haiti.

Even though the focus of this research is not the earthquake itself, the events of *Douz Janvye* set the context, and build the framework to the humanitarian intervention that followed. This study will engage with the structure and internal organization of the FBOs, with the people employed by the organization on different levels of exertion of power and differing arenas of intervention: the office, the head quarters, and the field site. Already Fassin, when being assigned for a review of the problems inherent to a specific mission of the medical humanitarian organization *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF), the lack of acceptance in the field for that matter, describes how he had to convince MSF that to do this research he would not only have to look at the ones on the receiving end, but to also the organization and its members (Fassin 2010).

Here, including the beneficiaries is key to understanding the dynamics that FBOs are subjected to as well as influence themselves. The beneficiaries are an indispensable factor to fathom those dynamics, as they are the “most important arbiters of meaning” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012: 22). This study tries to engage with the beneficiary as a category not simply as an add-on, but as an indispensable factor of any study on aid organizations. To do so a minimal degree of willingness to engage with a Haitian perspective as well as at least basic proficiency in Haitian Creole is required from the researcher.

The technocratic term “beneficiary” has to be used with caution though. It is used to refer to those who benefit from certain programs and projects within the aid complex. Yet not only those who are given handouts of food, Non-Food Items (NFI) or bigger assets such as appropriate housing, benefit from projects implement within the aid complex. They are the impoverished target group of the NGOs mission so to say. In fact many more “benefit” from the same program: most directly in the form of those employed by the organizations, national and especially expatriate staff. First of all they benefit financially in terms of salary. Especially expatriate employees are often granted tremendous housing allowances and security excess bonuses (Schuller 2016). Some organizations even provide for partners and children of the humanitarian in the field. Additionally, in most contexts of complex humanitarian crisis it is the affected population itself that does the lion’s share of first aid. This holds true for *Douz Janvye* in

Haiti as for the first 48 hours rescue and emergency care was almost exclusively carried out by the Haitian population alone. The power to define the passive receiving Haitian victims as beneficiaries on the one hand and the active giving foreigners as humanitarians on the other hand illustrates a power relation inherent to the aid complex. This study intends to break open and question the underlying assumptions of those categorizations.

2.2 The Case Studies

My first preliminary fieldwork (May to August 2011) was also my first time in Haiti in general. I flew in to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, travelled overland to Santiago and traversed the border in Dajabón to enter Ouanaminthe, Haiti by foot. I arrived in northern Haiti with a fellow PhD student and stayed at the *L'Université Chrétienne du Nord d'Haiti* (UCNH) in Haut Limbé to learn some basics of Haitian Creole. Subsequently I went to Port-au-Prince for a stopover and finally reached my field site, the coastal town of Jacmel in the beginning of July 2011. The approach to approximate Haiti as well as the field slowly by flying into the neighboring country, using public transport from there, and spending the first weeks in Haiti in the provinces turned out to be a good decision. It gave me the opportunity to acclimatize and adjust myself to what I saw, felt, heard and ate. In contrast to the tautness of freshly wounded Port-au-Prince, I experienced northern Haiti as very laid back and calm. When entering Port-au-Prince and also later entering my field, I felt better prepared, for I was able to communicate and understand better. Upon arrival in Jacmel, I established personal contact to the organizations and started to engage with staff as well as the beneficiaries.

The second field trip was originally planned to take place one year later, in the summer of 2012. Due to the sudden passing of my father I was unable to conduct research at that time. I went back to Haiti from February to April 2013 though. Now having a better understanding of Haiti and some proficiency in Haitian Creole, I directly flew in to Port-au-Prince and traversed to Jacmel quickly. There I more thoroughly focused on the organizational aspects and dynamics of Caritas Jacmel and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH) and their projects of reconstruction. Whereas the first fieldtrip was set in the middle of the short-term recovery (three months to about two years) of the post-disaster phase, the second fieldwork took place in the beginning of the long-term

recovery and reconstruction phase (two to about ten years).¹¹ The research essentially focuses on the period from 2011 to 2013.

2.2.1 The Field Sites

Apart from a couple of weeks of engaging with Diakonie's country office and the National Office of Caritas Haiti in the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince, I spent most of my time in the field in Jacmel.

Jacmel is the capital of the southwestern department of Haiti and one of the largest cities in Haiti. In 2003, the city was populated by 40,000 people. The municipality had 138,000 inhabitants. The commune of Jacmel comprises of 600 km² and is divided into twelve communal sections.

The town is well known for its cultural scene, its carnival and its beaches. Expatriate humanitarians working in the capital as well as diaspora Haitians come to Jacmel for holidays. The town was severely affected on *Douz Janvye*. According to the mayor of Jacmel, 400-500 people died, and more than 4,000 got injured. Around seventy percent of the buildings were damaged.¹²

Jacmel is connected to the capital Port-au-Prince via the Route 4, one of eight national roads in Haiti. The driving distance is 84 kilometers. Depending on the current condition of the road as much as the car and the notorious traffic jams in hubs such as Carrefour, the ride will take two to three hours. *Taptaps*¹³ to Port-au-Prince leave regularly at Portail Léogâne. Transportation is a major issue in Haiti. For example, a trip from Jacmel to Seguin, a small community 60 km to the north east of Jacmel takes five hours due to the bad road conditions. For NGOs, especially when working in surrounding communities, that means that transport takes a good part of the working day.

2.2.2 The Selection of the Organizations

Jacmel has a long history of NGO presence. Already in 1948, the UN implemented a community development project in Jacmel, a pig project, and one of the first UN development projects ever (Lwijis 2012). In comparison to Port-au-Prince though, pre-earthquake Jacmel had quite a minor presence of international NGOs (iNGOs). Postquake,

¹¹ For a coherent time framing of disaster research see Mukherji et al. 2014.

¹² <http://www.mysin Chew.com/node/34251> Last visited March 21, 2016.

¹³ Name for buses in Haiti. Next to motorbikes, they are the most common means of public transport in Haiti.

around 30 NGOs are listed on the 2011 cluster coordination contact list for Jacmel, next to governmental institutions and the UN's civil as well as military components. While this list is not necessarily exhaustive it draws a sufficient picture of the variety of the aid complex in Jacmel in 2011. Among the 30 NGOs seven have been Haitian, seven were based in the U.S., six in France. Plan Haiti, Save the Children, the Canadian and the Haitian Red Cross, KROS¹⁴, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, Caritas Jacmel and Medair were among the biggest NGO having worked in Jacmel post-earthquake.

Among the NGOs listed, seven have been faith-based organizations, two Haitian ones and five internationals (four U.S.-American and one German). The two FBOs I ended up working with were among them: Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH) and Caritas Jacmel.

Often the selection of the case studies is subjected to dynamics the researcher has only limited control over. At times, one simply has to "choose organizations that were willing to cooperate" (Occhipinti 2005). The selection of the organizations started in Germany, before the first preliminary fieldwork. Among the organizations targeted for the study, some had not yet established a full functioning structure by 2011. Others, which have been on the ground for immediate rescue only, already ended their commitment to post-earthquake Haiti. Some organizations did simply not respond to my inquiry. There were organizations that I approached while already in the field, which were unwilling or unable to receive me after they found out about the focus of my research.

My network of personal contacts provided me with better opportunities. A colleague pointed me towards an organization in Haiti. The country director was an acquaintance of his: Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, the humanitarian arm of the large German protestant welfare body. He put me into contact with her and we arranged for me to visit the organization in Jacmel.

In July 2011, I first visited the Jacmel office and interviewed the Program Manager. In August 2011, I was able to visit a range of beneficiaries in surrounding communities, primarily in Bresilienne, as well as to interview key employees. Additionally, I contacted and interviewed the coordinator of the ACT Alliance, the international humanitarian

¹⁴ Haitian Creole, acronym for *Kordinasyon Rejyonal Oganizasyon Sides*, Regional Cooperation for the Organizations in the South East, a Haitian grassroots organization.

network of Protestant organizations that DKH is a member of, in her office in Port-au-Prince.

In the second phase of fieldwork in 2013 it was considerably harder to approach DKH. While the Country Director had changed, Diakonie was busy with consolidation, downsizing the mission in Haiti after three years of extended engagement. The headquarters in Germany seemed to be concerned towards my presence in their field during that time. After some negotiations I was allowed to accompany the head staff during fieldtrips and also conduct interviews with staff, expatriates as well as Haitians.

Prior to my fieldwork I also contacted the German Caritas section to find out about possible visits in the newly established field sites in Haiti. At that time, Caritas Germany was heavily relying on the network of Caritas Haiti to be able to operate in Haiti. Their structure was still in the early stages. I decided against engaging with Caritas Germany as for the course of the research organizations with a pre-earthquake presence in Haiti were more promising in terms of impact.

Hence, I contacted a local Haitian Caritas branch: Caritas Jacmel, where I was received openly. In 2011 I focused on the beneficiaries of the organization. I conducted semi-structured interviews with housing beneficiaries in Breman, Bayard, La Vanneau and St. Helen, all districts of the community of Jacmel. In 2013, I was able to spend five weeks accompanying Caritas Jacmel in the office and at field sites on a daily basis. From Monday to Friday I was present during offices hours from 8 am to 3 pm. I accompanied the different working sections of Caritas Jacmel to fieldtrips to Seguin, Lavout, Cyvadier and Marigot. Additionally, I engaged briefly with the National Office of Caritas Haiti in Port-au-Prince.

With both organizations I was very clear and open about the focus of my research. I told both organizations that I wanted to analyze the faith component of their intervention and how it relates to the “dense professional world of NGOs” (Bornstein 2005). Whereas with Caritas Jacmel I did not sense any doubt or insecurity about my presence in the organizational processes with DKH it was different at least in the second stage of my fieldwork.

2.2.3 The Selection of the Beneficiaries

My work focused especially on the housing projects of both organizations. To approach the work of the FBOs I had to engage with those who were formally benefitting from their presence. In the case of Caritas Jacmel it was staff members who selected the beneficiaries for me to talk to. That happened in three variations. In 2011 I was first introduced to beneficiaries of housing projects in the Jacmelian district of Breman. Accompanied by an employee of Caritas Jacmel, I was shown their houses and briefly introduced. Later I was given their contact details so I could make appointments for further interviews on my own. Those were conducted without Caritas staff members present. The second occasion to meet and talk to beneficiaries was also prepared by a Caritas Jacmel employee. I conducted a focus group interview with eleven beneficiaries in a community in the hills above Jacmel. To get there we took a two hours drive in a 4x4. The group interview happened in the presence of Caritas staff as I lacked the infrastructure and the knowledge to get to this outlying region by myself. Even though I was focusing on the staff interactions on my second field trip in 2013, I nevertheless occasionally came across beneficiaries that I was able to interview.

In comparison, the possibilities to interact were rather limited in the case of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe. Among other reasons this was also due to the short-termed humanitarian cycle of intervention. In 2013, DKH had already closed the field office in Jacmel that has been established after the earthquake. Similarly to Caritas the Protestant organization focused their housing efforts on communities surrounding Jacmel. During my first fieldwork stage I was given the chance to travel from Jacmel to Bainet with a Diakonie driver. From there on we continued to outlying isolated houses where I conducted semi-structured interviews with beneficiaries. During the whole process two Diakonie employees were present. None of the selected beneficiaries or employees of the two FBOs actively requested being interviewed.

2.2.4 The Field of Language

Proficiency in the local language is essential to an understanding of the dynamics within the aid complex. I acquired my knowledge in Haitian Creole during my first fieldtrip in 2011. The first four weeks in the country I spend at a small university, the UNCH in northern Haiti. A Haitian American taught the basics of the language to me. From there on it was mainly jumping in at the deep end.

The Haitian Creole spoken in the north of Haiti differs from that in the capital region and in the south insofar as the impact of the French language is less present up north. As the presence and the influence of foreigners is higher around the capital Port-au-Prince and in the touristic places in the south, Haitian Creole in the south is considered more of a *kreyol fransize*¹⁵ and is therefore easier accessible for people with a background in Romance languages.

As I consciously decided not to situate myself in the circles of foreign expatriate staff, my day-to-day contacts, people I worked with, and the majority of friends were people I spoke Haitian Creole with. The repeatedly expressed astonishment of my interlocutors about my language competencies is telling about how foreigners, *blan*¹⁶, are perceived by Haitians. I encountered non-Haitian people, expatriates that have been working in and engaging with Haiti for years without showing basic proficiency in Haitian Creole. This is a systemic problem as the aid complex in Haiti is divided either in English or French language settings.

Well-trained Haitians are working in the aid complex. They are facilitators who provide the connection between the organizational entity and Haitian reality. Non-Haitian NGO employees basically do not get to meet people they would have to speak Haitian Creole with to be able to verbally communicate on their own. There is always an employed facilitator at hand. Another reason for the incapability to engage in the language are the dynamics of the humanitarian world as a revolving door for a globally travelling expatriate elite “who move from one emergency to another” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012: 22). The places of intervention change quickly. Also the staff of especially humanitarian organizations is replaced frequently.

Their limited contact to Haitian population is also due to security regulations in the humanitarian and development sector. Contract regulations often forbid expats employed by certain organizations to move outside office or compound without escort of security staff or even without a car (Miles 2012). The structures and regulations within the aid complex enable or rather enforce a reality in which expats actually besiege themselves by complying with curfew and red zones. This also affects language competencies of international staff in turn.

¹⁵ Haitian Creole, Haitian Creole inflicted with French

¹⁶ Haitian Creole, white person, foreigner

2.3 Methods and their challenges

The following part will deal with the methods applied to study faith-based engagement in Haiti. I used a variety of methods and data to seek out contradictions or rapport, an approach generally referred to as triangulation. The data used derived from participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and fieldnotes. I also consulted official scripts and documents of the respective organizations.

2.3.1 *The Interviews*

The interviews were semi-structured and circled around the topoi of the earthquake, the actors' religiosity, the aid that has been given or received, touched the topic of the Haitian state and other NGOs – in short the interviewees entanglements with the aid complex on the one hand and religious faith on the other hand. Generally, I did not cut off my interlocutors even if their narratives abandoned the course I intended. I left room for parts that were of particular importance for the person interviewed. This way I was able to discover approach topics and narratives essential to the meaning making of the individual. The centrality of the “earthquake as solidarity” narrative, to be disclosed in the next chapter, is an example for this approach.

In total, I conducted 54 official interviews. 32 interviews have been undertaken with staff (national as well as expatriate) of the two FBOs. Considering the staff size of the two organizations at that time, the number of employees interviewed can be considered representative. Of the 25 permanent employees of Caritas Jacmel in 2013 I interviewed 17. Additionally there are twenty interview accounts of housing beneficiaries, including one focus group interview. Twelve interviews have been carried out with staff of other FBOs and NGOs, pastors, scholars, and other “organic intellectuals” (Gramsci 1978).

The interviews have been conducted in Jacmel, surrounding communes such as Bainet, and communities like Bresilienne and Seguin, in various localities in Port-au-Prince, in Limbe as well as in Berlin, Germany. I spoke to people in NGO office settings, on patios of newly constructed houses in Breman, sitting on brick in front of a tent in Tabarre, in cars travelling to field sites, in churches, in bars, at home.

I referred to the former category of interviews as “official” in difference to more informal conversations I had with people. Official and informal can also be distinguished by the fact that official interviews are those which have been recorded. Other conversations have not been necessarily less informative, though. The knowledge I drew

from those conversation leaves its mark on my work. Yet I only refer to informal conversations with people, who were clear about my role as a researcher. Among those there have been a few to ask me to specifically refrain from directly using either their name or the information they have just provided in my work. Other expatriates formerly employed by FBOs agreed to be interviewed only under the conditions of confidentiality. One employee of an FBO asked me to turn off the recorder during an official interview, to be able to be frank with me. This form of “unusable data” (Hamilton 2009) also refers to insight gained that if published would be particularly troublesome even dangerous for the interviewed person beyond the limits of the aid complex. One person for example was rather critical of the Haitian state including the Haitian president at that time and asked me not to let those parts fall in the hands of whomever, because s/he could have to go to jail for it. For the above-mentioned reasons the majority of names used in this dissertation are anonymized. Additionally, I do not intent do neither glorify nor blame individuals for the challenges encountered in contemporary humanitarianism but to try to relate those back to the overall structure.

The interviews with beneficiaries and national FBO staff were conducted in Haitian Creole. Expatriate staff was either interviewed in English, French or German, depending on the best possible intersection of language skills. Thus, interpreters were not present at any interview. During my first fieldwork in 2011 Haitian FBO staff supported the interviews with beneficiaries by paraphrasing what I was trying to express in a more accurate language.

All interviews were recorded only after seeking consent with the interviewed. I specifically told every interviewee that they were free not to answer any questions they did not feel comfortable with. I repeated this statement before asking people for their experiences of the earthquake to avoid unwanted reviving of traumatic experiences. A few in fact declined to talk about those issues. Senior management has agreed to all interviews with staff. In the case of Caritas Jacmel, the director Père André Valery informed all staff about my presence. He also told the staff they were free to engage and talk to me. A few chose not to be interviewed. The presence of the audio recorder led to insecurities in some instances. In most cases the initial insecurities vanished with the level of involvement in the dialogue. Generally, the formal setting of an interview changed people’s performance towards me. The mere presence of a recording device seemed to trigger a different degree of formalism. People I had known and interacted

with for weeks at least, people I always spoke Haitian Creole with, would now mix Creole with French words or whole sentences in French. With this *kreyol fransize* their voice also would be a pitch lower than usual, their expressions more considerate.

This practice of code switching has been observed in other research context, too. For those Haitians with command of French, the two languages can serve as registers of formality and intimacy (Payton 2013: 234). French is the language officially spoken in bureaucratic contexts. Haitian Creole is identified here as the language of intimacy, the language used when we would meet and talk in the office or in the field. The formality of the request to interview someone temporary changed this relation of friendship and intimacy with some, not with all people.

During the course of my fieldwork I had several Haitians to check and improve the central questions of my semi-structured interviews. First of all for obvious language related mistakes, but also for issues not in line with Haitian realities. I came up with the outline of the interviews before ever having been in Haiti. When faced with actual people I had to realize that some of the questions or the way I engaged with them were simply a dead-end.

Also in terms of engaging with interlocutors I had to learn many lessons. In the beginning I sent text messages to people to arrange a meeting or an interview instead of calling them. This was basically due to my own insecurity of speaking Haitian Creole via telephone, which is considerably more challenging than face-to-face communication. Some did not respond. Others had kin or friends answer or call. It took me a while to realize that for the sake of my own comfort I was not taking the possibility of illiteracy into account.¹⁷

Even though the interviews have been arranged by the organizations and in most situations a local representative of the organization was present, the majority of beneficiaries was open and talked freely. A few seemed to be intimidated, some unnerved by my inquiries. Schuller also reported a form of *fatigue* on the side of beneficiaries that got constantly interviewed, questioned and evaluated by iNGOs to satisfy the demands of NGO bureaucracy. In my own encounters there were a few people who seemed to

¹⁷ In 2015, Haiti had a literacy rate of 60.7 percent. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html> Last visited February 16, 2016.

expect something more from me. Some asked me for my contact or to consider them when I had access to opportunities for Haitians, such as jobs or visa.

A Haitian Creole first language speaker transcribed around 60 percent of the interviews conducted in Haitian Creole to ensure the proper provision of text. Back from the field, I interrogated with the transcripts of the interviews repeatedly. I started to see patterns of narratives and tropes supplement to the structure I had given the interviews. I started to code the interviews along eleven categories identified as central within the narratives of staff and beneficiaries (earthquake, faith, distributive practice, Haiti, development/humanitarianism, Caritas, other NGOs, professionalization, state, health, theodicy).

2.3.2 Participant Observation

Especially during my second fieldwork I was able to intensely participate in the processes and evolving dynamics in the daily routine of humanitarian workers. Additional to the working routine in the office context I attended educational seminars provided by the organizations on such topics as small business entrepreneurship and Disaster Risk Management. I visited inaugurations of shelters and accompanied medical missions to remote areas with FBO staff. Additionally, I also attended church services and meetings denominationally related and unrelated to the specific organizations as well as political gatherings and conferences, where the status quo of Haiti also in relation to the aid complex was discussed.

In the variety of those contexts I was given the opportunity to observe, talk about and reflect on certain standards and norms of working in the aid complex and specific issues related to the faith of staff and beneficiaries. With due time I was able to identify where certain standards were met or unmet depending also on the arena they were put into practice. For example for senior staff humanitarian professional standards such as for example accountability can mean something completely different if exerted towards donors, headquarters, Haitian staff or beneficiaries. Like in Bornstein's fieldwork with FBOs in Zimbabwe, the real action often did not take place at the organizations offices, headquarters and field sites but in the relationship between those places (Bornstein 2005). The practice of multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995) in that sense rather refers to the in-between spaces and places of the aid complex than to immanent

geographical places such as an FBOs country office in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, a field-office in Jacmel, Haiti and the headquarters in Berlin, Germany.

2.3.3 Fieldnotes, Official Texts and Sacred Scriptures

The fieldnotes written were a source of post-fieldwork interrogation. As I will elaborate later, I had two types of fieldwork writing: on the one hand fieldnotes and on the other hand a fieldwork diary. The two of them would of course interpenetrate each other at times.

The field memos I took were documenting such things as surroundings, building structures, people's names, place names, immediate questions or irritations, the course of conversations, and sometimes also seemingly less important observations. Later I would write up more in-depth accounts of social interactions and incidents considered meaningful. When writing fieldnotes I tried to distinguish between what I describe and immediate interpretations that sometimes suggested themselves. I also tried to be as reflected on possible inherent judgment in writing as possible.

In the field situation jotting is considered a "brief written record of events and impression captured in key words and phrases" (Emerson et al. 2011: Chapter 2). When working with Caritas Jacmel for example I was not only writing "things down at the end of the day" (Jackson 1990:15) but also writing in the field situation. As noted by Emerson et al. jotting is a "social and interactional process" (Emerson et al. 2011). It non-verbally communicates to the people present. Depending on the respective field situation this can interrupt the spontaneity of the situation and trigger feelings of discomfort, disrespect and mistrust. For my very own experience, studying FBOs in an organizational context this was not of uttermost concern. Especially in an office setting or at educational seminars it was possible to write down notes, as it was not so much different from what everyone else was doing.

In other situations I would also use my mobile phone to make mental notes to memorize thoughts, observations and statements. I used this method mainly in situations when taking out a notebook was impossible because it would have disrupted the social situation at hand, or because it was simply physically impossible, sitting on a motorbike for example. Later I would write down the whole story. I did use jotting also to complement audio recordings. While attending educational community seminars for example on Disaster Risk Management, I would record the whole seminar and

supplement the audio recording with time marker tagged written accounts of visual and other sensual impressions or additional thought not tangible via audio recording.

After exiting the field, I did interrogate with the fieldwork notes on a regular basis. Approximately one month after leaving Haiti I started to process the field data: the transcripts of the interviews as well as the fieldnotes. First, I repeatedly read through the complete corpus in an attempt of open coding identifying themes and their connectivity to each other. Later I used focused coding as a process of distillation of themes and topics relevant to the research (Emerson et al. 2011).

In addition to semi-structured interviews and participant observation I also interrogated with official text and scripts. On the side of the organizations there are first of all emergency guidelines, and other statutes and strategic frameworks of both organizations such as the 2003 “Caritas Internationalis Handbook for Reflection and Action” or the “Common Statement of Caritas Germany and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe“ on their position towards faith and humanitarianism. I was also given access to a series of internal reports of both organizations. Furthermore in most studies with relevance in humanitarian intervention the 1994 “Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief” will appear most commonly in the form of the ten principle commitments of the code. Last but not least, the Bible as a document was of importance, as many of my respondents referred to it – may that be in form of psalms recited, biblical descriptions of apocalypse or moral imperatives grounded in biblical commandments.

2.3.4 Narrative Analysis

One method of dealing with the data acquired through ethnographic fieldwork is narrative analysis. It is useful in the context of this study, as it discerns how people “organize their understanding of the world” in narratives (Cortazzi 2007:384). The analysis of narratives is invaluable to grasp how abstract concepts such as faith are embedded in and entangled with the lives of people and their actions. Furthermore, in the analytic context of humanitarian intervention it can help to structure the experiences and the identity formation of its practitioners. Especially for the study of faith-based organizations it is applicable. Narrative analysis is a method used particularly in organizational ethnography (Ybema 2009).

There are three types of narratives present in this study. First of all, I analyze the narratives used by my interlocutors to make sense of their actions, experiences and surroundings. Those were provided in formal interview situations as well as in casual conversations. The second type are the narratives central to the official texts studied, such as codes of conduct and mission statements of the organizations. Thirdly, I refer to those narratives I used to frame my own observations in my fieldnotes.

Cortazzi notes that the context in which the narrative is presented matters, too. The formality of an interview situation brings other narrative frames to life than casual conversations. The narrative analysis always has to be presented in the context that informs the narrative as well as the cultural background it is embedded in. In this study narratives are analyzed that derive from interview situations as much as from more informal settings. Meaningful and important comments are mostly articulated in the respective situations that trigger them. On the other hand, narratives on significant events like the Haitian earthquake often institutionalize over time and get a life of their own. Experiences narrated by an individual can merge with other people's stories to a collective narrative (Simpson 2005).

It is the particular method of narrative analysis that is able to discern how formal statements, rules, and guidelines of the organizations are understood, interpreted and re-negotiated by staff and beneficiaries. In those in-between spaces, a researcher can find out what organizations do, often "in spite of what they say they do" (Hefferan et al. 2009). Within the organizational cultures of DKH and Caritas Jacmel the narratives expressed followed the function of representing the organization as a whole. They often seek to positively influence the image that the interviewer holds. As much as this is inherent for an understanding of organizational cultures in humanitarianism, it is similarly significant when the interviewed abandon the formalized corset of "NGO speak" and start to tell what aspects matter to them personally in their role as humanitarians.

As Cortazzi pointed out, narrative analysis is particularly useful to analyze "crisis, or significant events" in people's lives (Cortazzi 2007:384). Without a doubt the events unfolding in the afternoon of January 12, 2010 in Haiti are significant to the community of survivors. Within the narratives encountered on the event of the earthquake for example those of repentance, divine intervention and providence were prevalent. The "Act of God" narratives were substituted with narratives pointing towards

interpretations of the earthquake as acts of nature and acts of humans. In terms of its effects on the Haitian society the earthquake was framed in narratives of rupture, trauma, solidarity, chance, and revelation.

The majority of narratives used in this study have been provided to me in Haitian Creole. The translations in the text are my own.

2.4 The Positions of the Self, Emotions, and Challenges

Anthropology has dealt with the positionality of the anthropologist as well as the discipline as a whole extensively considering the role and responsibility in the production of knowledge on people and systems generally categorized as “other”. Parts of the self are important insofar as they matter to the coming into being of the knowledge produced. This part seeks to look at the research process not only in terms of “doing research” but also as “being a researcher”, as proposed by Cunliffe and Karunanayake (2013).

The following part will discern the different aspects of “being a researcher”: taking and reflecting on positions that come with being a white female anthropologist in Haiti. Reflecting on one's position in the field also and especially means reflecting on one's own gender, class, “race” position. In my case, being a white woman with a middleclass background and privileged access to higher education actually contributed to the circumstances of how I got to Haiti in the first place. Further, it influenced the way I was perceived as well the way I navigated myself through the field. I can criticize the aid complex and its negative consequences sitting in front of a shattered house with a 70-year-old Haitian woman with no significant means to livelihood. Yet I have to be aware that I am part of the system that enables this situation myself. If it weren't for the earthquake, I probably would not have been granted a scholarship for research on Haiti so quickly. Also I do belong to the receiving end of people being paid for going to Haiti. Essential to anthropological fieldwork is to “require a keen understanding of what aspects of the self are the most important filters through which one perceives the world and, more particularly, the topic being studied” (Behar 1996:29). That meant I had to locate myself in the complex figurations of the Haitian aid complex. A seemingly self-evident question from the side of Haitians as well as foreigners was which NGO or

institution I was working for. This is due to the fact that for the vast majority “I more closely resemble the foreign humanitarians” (Schuller 2016) than anything else.¹⁸

That practically meant not only entering the field with and on the ground of privileges, a German passport being the most tangible, but also being granted a whole set of new privileges in the field in terms of such things as access to housing, security and last but not least comfort. Where ever I went I was always offered the best possible way to sit and relax. If necessary, people ran to their neighbors to get a chair. Whereas this is also an expression of a more general attitude towards guests in Haiti my status as a *blan*¹⁹ amplified this form of hospitality. There are many other privileges involved being a white anthropologist in Haiti. This entails the privilege to lie about oneself without having to face negative consequences (Wolf 1996). Like many other researchers before me, I for example also lied about being married in certain situations. I presented a fellow researcher as my husband, I simply invented a husband *lot bò*²⁰ or changed the relationship status with my lover from wildly complicated to happily married – just to keep myself out of trouble or for that matter keep people from making advances to me. Yet, for many having a relationship in another country doesn’t mean one can’t have a *ti-menaj*²¹ in Haiti – something that is practiced extensively by foreigners involved in the aid complex, another privilege.

2.4.1 Engagement

For anthropology to interrogate with its own premises as a discipline, historically as well as contemporary, also means questioning the methods and reflecting on ones entrance into the field. One consequence of the manifold dilemmas inherent to the disciplines foundation was the introduction and subsequent theorization of reflexive and collaborative approaches to anthropology. Both entries rely on the fact that we are all embedded in a web of power relations that can not be escaped from no matter how close, embedded, or immersed one considers herself to be. Trying to downplay or even deny those differences is obscuring these eminently political relations of power, and above all pretending to do an objective, value free science. That does not mean that a researcher cannot take actions that aim at making the relationship less hierarchical and

¹⁸ Guilhot provided with a comparison between the anthropologist and the humanitarian in the field (Guilhot 2012).

¹⁹ Haitian Creole, white person, foreigner

²⁰ Haitian Creole, *the other side*, reference to other countries

²¹ Haitian Creole, *“small” relationship*, affair

unequal. Especially reflexive anthropology critically examines those power relations and the position of the anthropologist within.

There have been attempts for a collaborative anthropology for example undertaken by Gay y Blasco and de la Cruz Hernández (2012). Out of the conviction that “ethnographic knowledge is made by ethnographers and informants, and should be owned by both” (Gay y Blasco and de la Cruz Hernández 2012) they – Gay y Blasco, the St. Andrews Anthropologist and de la Cruz Hernández, a Spanish Romnija – conducted research, published articles and presented papers together. Other scholars such as Mark Schuller have engaged in social and political struggle “outside the ivory tower” (Schuller 2010b) by publishing policy papers and reports on topics such as debt cancellation and food crisis, and therewith taking advantage of their role as “experts”. This way a researcher can try to influence policy makers on global issues.

My own initiatives to an activist, collaborative anthropology were very limited, mostly due to the relatively limited time I was able to spend in the field, but also due to my own research design. Yet while staying at the UCNH to learn Haitian Creole, I provided a crash course in German daily over the period of two weeks together with a fellow PhD student. We were looking for less hierarchical ways to show our gratitude for the support we have received. One student said he wanted to learn German, so we offered a daily course that six to eight people attended. Two of the students who joined our course ended up successfully finishing a Masters degree course at a German university later on.

Another option within the manifold entanglements between the immersed and possible actively engaged anthropologist and the anthropologist promoting a critical inquiry that does not solely built upon the representations of the actors in the field, or more generally speaking between engagement in anthropology and humanitarianism, is that of the “anthropologist as witness” (Guilhot 2012). The concept originally derives from the practice of *témoignage*²² in terms of speaking out as a result of MSF’s refusal to observe silently the war crimes committed in Biafra in 1971 as promoted by the Red Cross interpretation of the humanitarian mandate.

²² French, testimony

2.4.2 Gender & “Race”

Within the conduct of anthropological fieldwork there are many dilemmas inherent, some more and others less evident. Wolf labeled feminist dilemmas in fieldwork “contradictory, difficult, and irreconcilable positions of the researcher” (Wolf 1996:1). She identifies three axes of power in fieldwork practices: first, the differing positionalities of researcher and researched in terms of class, “race”, gender, nationality, life chances, etc.; second, the power that is exerted in the research process in terms of exploitation, unequal exchange and the mere definition of the research subject; and finally, the power inherent in the post-fieldwork writing up: the power to represent the other, the construction of knowledge (Wolf 1996).

Some problematic aspects of fieldwork can be traced to the “patriarchal and colonial foundations” (Killick 1995) of the discipline as such. Michel-Rolph Trouillot described the “fetishization of fieldwork” in his account of anthropology in the modern world (Trouillot 2003). Fieldwork, anthropology’s number one method, for a long time was valued over the perceived hardships that a researcher had to endure in the field. Fieldwork, in an inversion of its own theoretical findings, became the liminal phase for the anthropologist, the *conditio sine qua non*, inevitably painful to be successful. Taken from that perspective fieldwork appears to be a self-serving rite of passage to gain academic merits.

Within this complex there is a certain “macho mystique” (Scheper Hughes 1983) at work in the construction of fieldwork even today. It is manifest in how fieldwork in supposedly dangerous places, “failed states” and “feral cities” is constructed a safari-like adventure. The researcher, especially if female, is considered brave, truly heroic for engaging with those places. A senior male colleague in the anthropology department I was affiliated with when learning about my plans to go to Haiti told me bluntly that if I was to go, I could expect to be raped twice a week. That was in 2010. There is still a long road ahead for anthropologists.

Starting with this racist and patronizing remark, my identity as a woman was an issue throughout the whole research process. On a regular basis Haitian men would make advances to me. It was fairly obvious that in most cases those inquiries were not only directed to me as woman, but also and often more importantly directed towards me as a white ergo privileged woman. Most Haitians were very straight about their intentions

and immediate plans to get married to finally get out of Haiti. I was primarily addressed in ways I did consider neither harmful nor offensive. There were only two exceptions to that. One time a man stalked me for several days. After I engaged with one of his relatives for fieldwork related reasons, he actually tricked me into interviewing him to engage me in romantic relationship. He would not let go after I told him I was not interested in that, followed me through the streets and kept on texting and showing up for days up to a point I started to get quite scared. I resolved the situation by talking about it to Haitian friends. Eventually he would stop. The other time, I was addressed in a very disrespectful and sexually aggressive way by a man who suggested I would have sex with him on the basis of the fact that he was a MINUSTAH commander. According to my fieldnotes, the first thought that came to my mind after I got myself out of that situation was that I was astonished that he addressed me like that, in terms of me as a white woman, and that I feared he would treat Haitian women even worse than that. It was one of the moments during fieldwork I painfully got aware of the extent to which I myself had internalized differences and injustices that were constructed over “race”.

Throughout this work I intent to employ a wider definition of feminism, one which is not only limited to “where are the women at”, but also in terms of the fundamental structural inequalities towards non-hegemonic groups and contexts. The basis is a fundamental intersectional approach, a theoretical advancement of the concept of triple oppression, that analyses how different forms of discrimination and domination intersect. Killick for example showed how the anthropologist in the field takes a white male heterosexual role, regardless of hers²³ positioning at home (Killick 1995). This masculinization of the white female researcher actually protects her from certain gender-specific risks to a certain extent. Also, the white female researcher or country director of an NGO transforms into a position to exert power over (mostly non-white) males otherwise usually almost exclusively limited to the male sphere in her country of origin.

²³ In this dissertation I will use pronouns such as “hers” (as a combination of his and her) or “s/he” (as a combination of she and he) in contexts where the gender of the described person is not important to the specific argument addressed. The gender-neutral pronoun *li* used in Haitian Creole inspired this decision. There will also be instances where I will make use of the generic feminine as opposed to the commonly used generic masculine. This use of language is not completely inclusive, as it does not address people identifying in a non-binary way, and will not be applied stringently. Its intention is rather to illustrate the ways in which gender discrimination manifests itself in the language we use, to present alternatives, and to last but not least, let the reader trip over these words every now and then to “de-normalize the norms”(hornscheidt 2012, 2013).

Being white lifts oneself to a certain extent from gender deprivation towards the position most privileged, yet most unlabeled and normalized in the majority of contexts around the world: white, male, middle/upper class, heterosexual. This coincides with the experiences of an Ugandan female doctor working for MSF who “felt her racial status had weighed more heavily than gender on her trajectory through the aid world” (Redfield 2012: 373). My whiteness was the characteristic that inevitably influenced every social relation I engaged in. During my little farewell event at Caritas Jacmel, the director of the organization, Père Valery, said in his usual liturgical and inclusive tone: “Andrea has come to be with us everyday. She speaks Kreyol, she eats our food. She is one of us. The only thing that makes her different from us is the color of her skin”.

Approaching ones position from an intersectional perspective does not only mean finding a position towards the ones different from ones own “race”, class and gender background, but also towards those who roughly fall into the same category. Here again, especially “race” is an important factor. Referring to organizational ethnography, Alcadipani et al. state that “researchers seek to position themselves and are positioned by the researched in complex and evolving ways, with implications not only for research design and methodology but also for identities” (Alcadipani et al. 2015:82). Being in a field research situation shapes my identity. Also the people who Alcadipani et al. call the researched have often unspoken assumptions about my own identity.

For example in several contexts when dealing with white expatriate NGO workers, I felt pushed into a group identity I myself did not feel comfortable with. After having spent months in Haiti living and working in a context where I often was either the only or one of the few *blan*, when engaging with DKH in 2013, I found myself in the middle of conflicts between white expatriate head staff and Haitian local staff. The expats seemingly automatically assumed I necessarily “play in their team”.

Especially troubling was the situation during the process of consolidation. The management let me in on the fact that and how they were slowly closing down the projects and about the structure they sought to maintain after the end of the emergency period. There was a great deal of secrecy about the planned consolidation. Whereas it was clear to all that the mission was being reduced and contracts were running out, the details about the mission’s future were deliberately not made transparent to everyone

among the Haitian staff. Before a field trip with a German-speaking expatriate the Country Director instructed me not to speak to much of the future of the organization in Haiti in the presence of Haitian staff, or: “You can speak English, they do not understand too well anyways. Or even better, you can speak German to each other”. By this, they shared knowledge with me, someone they did know for a couple of days only and that did not work for the organization, but not with people whose livelihood more or less depended on that information. The only rationale reason for this lies in an assumption of a shared identity, for us being on the same team for matters of “race”.

Often when surrounded by expatriates, I found myself in situations where I was listening to narratives I considered offensive, racist and presumptuous. In those contexts I had two options. I was either to confront the person with what I thought of the views s/he expressed and thereby most likely jeopardize further insight and engagement with the organization s/he was representing or to clench my teeth, let the person talk so I can live to tell. Much like Alcadipani who would “rather colluded with them because it helped me talk to people and sustain access to data” (Alcadipani et al. 2015:87), I stayed silent. Even though I tried to matter-of-factly challenge hers arguments, in sum, I decided for the latter and it was a very hard decision. That requested me to put aside a big part of what I consider being my identity: speaking up against what I consider unjust and wrong and calling out those, who perpetrate those actions. Also there I realized something about myself in the field. Like Alcadipani, I too wondered, what would have happened if I had been more expressive? Or vice versa, what would have happened if I would have played along and fueled the racism expressed?

2.4.3 Religion

Other than the categories of gender and “race” that were rather easy at least to assume for my interlocutors, one of the most frequent inquiries made towards me was in fact my own religiosity. Evidently due to the topic of my research, I engaged with people often on the basis of their religiosity. Yet not only in contexts where my role as a researcher was evident, but also in everyday encounters my own religion or the absence of it came to be a source of concern. People I spoke to wanted to know with whom they were dealing. At several points throughout my time in the field, I had to lay open my own religious biography. I did answer correctly that I was not part of any church or other religious institution and that I have never been baptized. Sometimes, when people

engaged me in a further discussion, I would state that I was born and raised in the GDR, a socialist state where religion did not play a prominent role. Hence I had very liminal contact to formal religion as a child. This relation to religion outlived the GDR and persisted in post-socialist East Germany as well as in my life. Yet at different points in my life I was in close contact to religious people and focused on the Anthropology of Religion early on in my studies. It is fair to say that I adopted an intellectual as well as emotional comprehension for a sense of transcendence or the numinous (Otto 2004).

Thus, while I attended many church services in Haiti, I was neither doing fieldwork nor am I writing from a faith-induced position. Just like anthropologist Fenella Cannell I equally consider myself as much a skeptic of the premises of secularism as of religion (Cannell 2010).

Not only in Haiti my religiosity was a matter of inquiry, also in the academic context. When presenting my work I often encountered the same question like in Haiti, yet with a different undertone. Scholars studying religion or worse religious scholars are viewed as biased, partial, under suspicion of promoting a religious agenda, whereas knowledge considered secular is more likely to be viewed impartial, despite of variant *Weltanschauungen*.

During a colloquium session at university a senior scholar stated to be “personally offended” by my theoretical hypothesis of the link between religious imperatives to help of the past and the genesis of contemporary humanitarian action. My experiences in this regard reflect what I would call a certain academic discomfort with religion as well as a variety of assumptions on the religiosity of the “other”.

2.4.4 Emotions

Part of reflecting on the self and its foundations is to be aware of the complex set of emotions triggered by the fieldwork situation. As mentioned earlier, supplement to my field note taking I had another fieldwork diary where I interrogated with myself about myself in the field. This included insecurities, impatience and frustration inherent to the fieldwork experience as well as coping with death and loss, longing and being separated from loved ones.

I decided to keep those two things at least physically separate, not because I think there is an objective reality of my fieldwork and me being the anthropologist on the one hand

and there is this other subjective side, which represents me as the *dramatis personae* of my fieldwork life. To the contrary, I consider myself as one of the subjects in my fieldwork figuration. Both sides quite necessarily interpenetrate each other. Yet I wanted to be able to engage with either side without the overwhelming presence of the other. I made sure though that I would also be able to read both strains as a whole story in retrospective.

Part of engaging with the self in the field is to be clear about the place of ones emotions in the field and the impact they can have on ones positionality. Much like the author of "The Vulnerable Observer" (1996) Ruth Behar, I was faced with death and passing of close family several times during my research. On my first fieldwork I was confronted with the impending death of my grandmother. In retrospect it was an experience crucial for my fieldwork:

One night my mother called and told me "Your grandmother is going to die tonight." That was truly unexpected. I was surprised and I was shocked. I could not afford the next US\$ 3,000 flight home. The journey would have at least taken two full days. According to the exigency of the situation I would have been too late anyways. But I have to go anyways, don't I? Can I return here after? What is going to happen to my fieldwork? Those were the thoughts that ran through my head and immediately ashamed me heavily mere instants after. I was out of my mind, felt trapped, felt guilty, and incredibly sad.

Totally devastated and confused I ran into my friend Michaëlle the next morning. She took me by the hand, sat me down in her little shop for one whole day and talked me through this. Explained things to me, comforted me, gave me advice of what to do. She helped me to get through this and only shortly afterwards I was able to identify this day as the day that something shifted. The inner compass I have been trying to adjust ever since I came to Haiti got better tuned that day. To share the common and I would go as far as to say universal feeling of loss, of losing a loved person – despite the circumstance which are clearly less universal – brought me closer to Michaëlle, but also to myself in Haiti. I lost distance towards the severity of disaster that has happened the year before. Secondly, in this social situation I lost my position as a so-called "participant observer" to Haiti. I was the one in need, I had to be taken care of, I was vulnerable and I was neither an observer nor an outsider to that situation.

2.2.5 Insecurities and Responsibilities

Security certainly was an issue in the narratives on Haiti I encountered before entering the field. After a period of being very enthusiastic about the perceived lack of insecurity in the beginning, I started seeing specific problems later on during the course of my fieldwork. Yet there were only very few moments that I actually felt unsafe. While I conceived being on my own in terms of not being associated with an iNGO as something providing me with security, I also spend most of the time outside of the capital Port-au-Prince where insecurity is a more existential matter for people than in other parts of Haiti. My first encounter with DKH in Port-au-Prince 2013 is a good description of how insecurity became an issue:

We meet and what feels like 15 minutes later we are on the road. A white Nissan patrol. I sit in the back seat on the right hand side. One of the expats sits next to me. The car starts and he expressively looks at his chronometer, sighs and says "27 minutes late!" Then he asks me if I shut the door. I check if I did, by opening and closing the door. I say "yes". He still looks at me with his eyebrows raised and then I realize that this was a rhetorical question, because he saw that I did not lock it from the inside. So I lock it. And I excuse myself with not being used to driving around in locked cars, or cars in general for that matter, having lived in Jacmel, and not having had a feeling of insecurity yet. In an instant I get a fair dose of insecurity poured over me. Dispirited I sit in silence. Some minutes later we cross a neighborhood that I recognize, because a friend lives here. I ask the driver "Sa se Kris Rwa isi a, pa vre? "This is Christ Roi?" He nods. The other expat asks about my inquiry and then adds, "This is a very dangerous neighborhood". That is the neighborhood I stayed the first time I ever came to Port-au-Prince. I stayed with said friend and walked the streets at night.

This little piece from my fieldnotes exemplifies how geographies of security and trust, also in ones own judgment of the situation change with the context one is embedded in. Even though I was well aware of the difference between the capital Port-au-Prince and the coastal city of Jacmel when it came to myself navigating the potential risks of the former, me being affiliated to a foreign, non-Haitian NGO meant something completely different, something more dangerous, something more demanding than wandering through Jacmel on my way to the Caritas office or a friends house. All of sudden I felt this spotlight on my face. I felt more white, more *blan*, more exposed than when I was this individual person strolling through Jacmel.

Especially the danger of kidnapping is one of the tropes of insecurity in Haiti. "Waves of kidnappings, hijackings, robberies, rape, and murder target not only the poor but also Haitians with greater means, including Haitians returning from the diaspora and foreign humanitarian actors working in the nation" (James 2011:370). Particularly during the

post-coup era 2004 there have been many abductions. Kidnapping in Haiti is not only a means for small criminal groups to make money but also a method of opposing political groups to terrorize and ultimately exercise power over parts of the population. Despite the fact that there have been a few white individuals that have been abducted (Maternowska 2006), the threat of kidnapping is mostly relevant to Haitian middle and upper class or Haitian diaspora individuals.

Realizing and accepting the responsibilities towards people one engages with is part of the process of becoming, anthropologically speaking. During my time in Port-au-Prince in spring 2013, there was one driver that I nearly got fired by witlessly talking about a road that we took, secondary to the actual point I was trying to make. The glance on the face of his boss changed and she said in a very sharp tone “What road did you take?” Apparently to avoid the next big traffic jam that would have kept us from getting home for another hour or two, we took a road through a quarter that the driver was not supposed to be taking. Formally, the organization kept with the security protocol regularly dispersed by the UN stabilization mission, MINUSTAH, classifying the whole city in red, yellow and green zones. Apparently, we crossed a red zone, one that NGOs are advised not to enter. Even worse, the boss stated, with me the *blan* onboard. She implied that it was a great security risk the organization might be held liable for.

The moment I realized what I provoked with my unmindful exposition I tried to limit the repercussion. I wrenched a half-hearted statement from the expatriate that the driver would not be let go because of that. But in fact I was providing the expatriate staff with a tool to exercise power over national staff. What I did and said actually had real life consequences for the people I engaged with and the figurations they were embedded in. From that moment on, I was more considered with what I did and said in the presence of whom. Engaging with people in the aid complex comes with a lot of responsibilities that the researcher should be aware of. At the least, the researcher should aim at doing no harm and not putting people in problems. The incident with the staff member asking me not to distribute his interview because of what s/he said about the Haitian government is one tangible example about possible negative consequences of engaging with a foreign interrogator. Schuller similarly describes how Haitian staff literally looked over their shoulders to check if it's safe to talk when being interviewed by him (Schuller 2016). In an earlier engagement a person was roughed up because s/he was seen talking to him (Schuller 2010b).

The same responsibility also applies to the beneficiaries I engaged with. In comparison to other researchers I was in the comfortable position of speaking to beneficiaries who were considerably well off: those who actually received a house, the number one need in post-earthquake Haiti. Even though people were still struggling to *cheche lavi*²⁴, to make a living, people were still affected by the structural inequalities and violence of everyday existence in Haiti, they had a place to stay, a house. Others were displaced, with families torn apart by the quake and its “humanitarian aftershocks” (Schuller 2016). Some expected my presence to somewhat result in some form of additional benefit.

2.5 Conclusion

Referring to the dialectical relation of insider to outsider, Martin D. Stringer points out to the idiosyncrasies of subjectivity in research (Stringer 2002). He asks the question if one can understand and theorize faith if not faithful in the same way? What is the ultimate position of approximation or immersion? Apart from religion, the same applies to gender, “race” and class categories. Didier Fassin elaborated on his own research experiences with MSF and ultimately described his being in betwixt and in between as a liminal position (Fassin 2011). Yet this liminality is dynamic and not a static given. It is an ongoing process of locating oneself in the constantly changing field. The presence of the anthropologist and the relations s/he establishes changes the fieldwork environment almost inevitably.

This chapter presented the methods I used to approach the field. I lay open how I came to select the site of the fieldwork, the organizations and their beneficiaries. I presented the strain of theories that my own reflections and analyses are based upon.

With the chapter at hand I tried to do justice to and be reflective about the manifold dilemmas and challenges inherent to being a researcher in the first place, but also to being a white, female, non-religious anthropologist conducting fieldwork on religious organizations in Haiti. The identities embodied in and ascribed to the researcher in the field matter. They matter for the way she accesses the field, and for the ways she positions herself and is positioned in the field. As a result of this, it affects the way in which I generated data in the field as much as the specific content of the data. And that again matters in terms of the knowledge generated from this data, the basis of this dissertation.

²⁴ Haitian Creole, literally *search for life*, make a living

3 The Rupture // The 2010 Earthquake as a Cataclysmic Event

“Men depi yo di tranblemanntè an Ayiti an mwen di ... tèl mayitid... mwen di woy, Ayiti fini. E vrèmanvre li te fini.”²⁵ (Jude Duverseau, Caritas Jacmel)

Tuesday, January 12, 2010, 16:53 p.m. – “ce moment fatal qui a coupé le temps haïtien en deux” (Rainhorn 2012:16), the fatal moment that cut Haitian times in two, the before and the after, Haitian novelist Dany Laferrière writes. The earthquake acted as a magnifying glass that intensified the hardships that Haiti has been dealing with for decades, if not centuries, colonial legacies included. Despite the also often rumored tabula rasa thesis, presenting the earthquake as an opportunity for “building back better”, five years after the disaster it has not proven as “a catalyst for huge, positive change”²⁶ like promoted by the World Bank in 2010 (Fan 2013).

With a magnitude of 7.0 on the Richter scale and a depth of 18 kilometers, “like thirty-five Hiroshima bomb explosions hitting Haiti at once” (Dorsinville 2011:275) the earthquake in its immediate aftermath took between 217,300 (according to UN OCHA figures)²⁷ and 316,000 (according to figures of the Haitian government) lives.²⁸ Additionally, thousands were being disabled and amputated after slabs of concrete hit their limbs.

In Léogâne, the epicenter of the earthquake, 90 percent of the building structure was completely destroyed. In Port-au-Prince, 250,000 residences and 30,000 commercial buildings collapsed according to the Haitian government (Kazama and Guo 2010). 1.5 million people were internally displaced, one in six Haitians had to leave their fallen homes. The Haitian government presented figures that indicated that all over Haiti 105,000 houses were completely destroyed and 188,383 houses seriously damaged.²⁹ The whole civil infrastructure was severely affected. The majority of schools, hospitals, government offices, the head quarter of the UN mission, the cathedral of Port-au-Prince, the National Palace were all but completely destroyed. Next to the loss of lives and

²⁵ “When they said there was an earthquake in Haiti I said ...such a magnitude...I say, wow, Haiti is finished. And really, Haiti was finished.”

²⁶ <http://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/haiti-earthquake-out-of-great-disasters-comes-great-opportunity> Last visited January 11, 2016.

²⁷ <http://www.unocha.org/ochain/2012-13/haiti> Last visited January 11, 2016.

²⁸ An unpublished USAID report written by anthropologist Timothy Schwartz estimated the number of casualties significantly lower. According to Schwartz between 46,000 and 85,000 people lost their lives. USAID later took distance from the report (Schuller and Morales 2012).

²⁹ <http://www.lessonsfromhaiti.org/lessons-from-haiti/key-statistics/> Last visited January 17, 2016.

buildings also human expertise and civic infrastructure was lost in the earthquake. Nurses, police officers, merchants, fire fighters, teachers, aid workers, UN employees, approximately 17 percent of people working in civil service in Port-au-Prince, were dead (Katz 2013). Especially schools and universities were affected. Many students died. Here, Haitians did not only lose their sons and daughters in the quake, but also often the bearers of hope, meaning those with access to education and the prospects of a better live, like stated by a DKH employee:

“It really affected all of our family. Because for the mother, her daughter was the biggest investment she had. She thought when her daughter finished her studies, she would find a job, and she would be able to support her with the smaller children. Of all the children she had, it was her who had to die”.

In the wake of the earthquake other calamities appeared on the screen. The cholera outbreak of October 2010 is among the most severe ones. Until February 2016, *Vibrio cholerae* has killed more than 9,000 people in Haiti.³⁰ The bacterium that was most likely introduced to the island by UN troops³¹ infected 771, 000 people in the same period.

The following chapter will attempt to describe the incident of the earthquake itself. It will do so mainly by reflecting on the perspectives and narratives given by people interviewed during fieldwork, the voices of those who lived through that day. Sometimes the narratives collected support the academic or media output on the earthquake. In other instances they present an additional or even conflicting perception. It will show how people in Haiti rationalized and embedded the event itself and the subsequent interventions in religious and in other terms. The subsequent part will then present an account of the vulnerabilities affecting Haitian society already prior to the earthquake. The chapter will also give insight into the series of interventions, mainly enacted by humanitarian organizations in the aftermath of the earthquake. It will show in what ways they consolidated Haiti’s profound entanglements with the aid complex. The aim of this part is to set the context for the empirical chapters to come. The work of faith-based organizations, additionally to religious life worlds, conceptions and connotations dwells in the same universe as formal secular aid. The emergency situation provided challenges as well as opportunities to both organizations in questions.

³⁰ UN OCHA figures of February 2016. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/node/123972> Last visited May 12, 2016.

³¹ See Piarroux et al. 2011

3.1 Douz Janvyé 16:52 p.m. – Accounts and Narratives of the Event

In what follows, I seek to describe the earthquake with the words and frames that were applied by those who lived through the event. This serves three purposes. First of all, the narratives used to situate the disaster give insight on how people made sense of the earthquake. Secondly, in light of the ongoing silencing of Haitian perspectives in most of the decisive contexts that influence the lives of Haitians, it is of utter importance to present an emic perspective. The earthquake is present and stays crucial through the eyes of the survivors only. Cortazzi notes that in narrative analysis the representation of voice matters as “the sharing of the experience of particular groups, so that others may know life as they know it” (Cortazzi 2007:386). I want the reader to come to an understanding of this event through the core narratives of those people. The majority of categories presented in what follows are bottom up narratives that also guided the course of the research. Finally, the narratives are systems of references that will provide context for a better understanding of the empirical chapters to come. It will help to understand the course of action and motivation of the protagonists of this research, FBO staff and beneficiaries. The significance of certain narratives such as the prevalence of divine contextualization of the earthquake leads the way to further inquiries.

Jean Beauchamp experienced the immensity of the disaster in his home village on the hills above Jacmel:

“There were construction works going on. And then I heard a thing like tou tou tou tou tou tou tou. And I thought, hum, it was a steamroller coming down the hill, because of the way it was growing stronger. I was sitting on a wall. After two, three seconds I saw the earth go like this, the pillar go like that. Pierre was flying. He caught me by the foot. I pulled myself away. He told me: “Don't run, hide!” The earth was going up and down. A pile of dust was going up and down. [...] Night turned into day. I didn't sleep. From time to time the earth was making wouwouwou...[...] The whole night through... I didn't sleep. I said to God, it is only your good will that will get it done. I slept under a bed sheet. The next morning by the will of God, I said to myself I have to get up and start walking, because I have family, too. I descended to the city. When I arrived at Trinity, I turned to the hospital. There were dead people all over the place. There were people with crushed limbs. No matter if gran neg³² or malere³³, everyone was lying down at the lawn of the hospital. Without anesthesia, I saw a young woman with scissors... Everyone helped, everyone contributed. With whatever means, they helped. With scissors they cut off the limbs, put alcohol on it and wrapped it up. Without anesthesia, mezanmi³⁴. And that made me believe I was in a dream. I saw things I have never seen before. And the tomorrow could still be worse”.

³² Haitian Creole, literally *big man*, well respected wealthy person

³³ Haitian Creole, literally *unlucky one*, poor person

³⁴ Haitian Creole, literally *my friend*, interjection used to put emphasis on something extraordinary, spectacular, shocking

Trying to describe something so massive in its impacts, something that transcends the imaginative capacity of most people, is very delicate and seldom does justice to the people affected. Maurice Blanchot's classic "The Writing of Disaster" while referring to the Holocaust as disaster, pointed out to the limits of the mind to grasp the calamitous experience and equally to the limits to describe a disaster. The man cited above described his immediate experience of the earthquake as one with nightmarish qualities that is possibly infinite as "the tomorrow could still be worse". In face of the unthinkable representation can always only be inadequate, it can only insufficiently approximate an affected individual's experiences. What can be said of the disaster can never get close to the tremendous event as such: "When all is said, what remains to be said is the disaster. Ruin of words, demise writing, faintness faintly murmuring: what remains without remains" (Blanchot 1995: 33).

Writing about *Douz Janvyé* is a balancing act between honest accounts, narratives and pictures of a disaster on the one hand side and falling into essentialist "disaster pornography" (Barnett and Weiss 2013) that reinstates the trap of the exceptional, yet nameless horror: "dead black bodies, wherever you look. People without names, without history, without location" (Fischer 2010). The dynamics of Haitian exceptionalism, referred to in the introducing chapter, also apply to the way the earthquake as well as the immensity of its destruction is depicted by aid workers, UN personnel, journalists, and scholars alike. Even the earthquake is unlike anything before, sets new limits of perception, destruction, challenge and poverty. The same ambivalence applies to humanitarian engagement, too. After a disaster humanitarian agencies have to get the extent of damage and loss across to the unaffected to raise compassion, ergo to raise funds (Barnett 2011).

In light of these challenges, the following part will present the stories and narratives of people I interviewed during fieldwork. The interviews generally focused on the person's work for or their benefit of religious aid organizations, within the contextual framework of *Douz Janvyé*. Most people were eager to share their individual accounts of that day, a few preferred not to. In Haiti, with a rich tradition of oral culture and story telling, by the time I asked, the narratives of *Douz Janvyé* have long become full on stories that have been told many times. Simpson describes similar dynamics about the narratives on the Gujarat earthquake: "In the process they have become news, public culture, case notes, legal cases (notably those relating to property and compensation), NGO publications and

the writing of social science – and in a sense part of a collective narrative which will, I suppose, eventually acquire a history” (Simpson 2005:227). The accounts of my interviewees are supplemented by what other scholars, journalists and writers have dispersed on *Douz Janvyè*.

Some of the narratives on the earthquake were very persistent and recurring. After a short introduction on how Haitians semantically framed the event this chapter will present the core narratives on the earthquake being: rupture, trauma, solidarity, chance and revelation. Inspired by the interviews the center of the attention lies within the question who or what was responsible for the event: God, nature or humans.

3.1.1 Names, sounds and tractors – the imaginaries of the earthquake

Haitians themselves in many cases did not refer to the earthquake as *tranblemanntè a*³⁵. In my encounters I came across expressions like *bagay la*³⁶, *evenman sa*³⁷, *seyis lan*³⁸ and *sekous la*³⁹. One interpretation of not giving the earthquake a name other than “the thing” or “the event” is that people avoided naming it not to provoke further misfortune. Other expressions used were: *Douz Janvyè* (January 12) an equivalent to the U.S.-American event as proper name: 9/11 or the onomatopoeic description of the event: *goudougoudou*. Onomatopoeia, the phonetic imitation of the sound of shaking bedrock and buildings embodied in a word, is a common stylistic device in Haitian oral culture, especially in story telling (Dorsinville 2011). Expressions like *brrrrr brrrrr* or *kotokotokotow* run like a thread through most stories told to me and others.

One of the immediate interpretations of the rumbling that the earth released was a truck that must be passing by.⁴⁰ A few intellectuals said that at first they thought it was the sound of train; even though there has not been a railroad system in Haiti since the 1970s. Others thought they heard gunfire (Laferrrière 2011), or the sounds of another *coup d'état* (Dorsinville 2011), sadly an imagination closer to Haitian realities than a locomotive. Writer Yanick Lahens mistook the sound for the roaring of an animal

³⁵ Haitian Creole, *the earthquake*

³⁶ Haitian Creole, *the thing*

³⁷ Haitian Creole, *this event*

³⁸ Haitian Creole, *the quake*

³⁹ Haitian Creole, *the shock*

⁴⁰ This interpretation was shared by former AP correspondent Jonathan M. Katz who even named his book on the Haitian earthquake and its repercussions with foreign aid „The Big Truck that went by“ (Katz 2013).

(Lahens 2011). One person thought a power generator exploded, whereas another imagined heavy rain falling on a cooking fire outside... *kotokotokotow*.

Another pivotal characteristic in the narratives is the anthropomorphization, the humanization, of the earthquake (see Dorsinville 2011). In many accounts the quake is personified, an active entity with an intense relation to the people. In a nearly playful way people describe the earthquake as taking hold of them: *Li pran m, li ale avè m, li tounen avèm, li ale avè m, li tounen avèm wi*.⁴¹ The earthquake dances with people, makes houses, roads, dishes and cars dance and shake. It is a rhythmic description of how inanimate objects are moved by a puppet master, the earthquake. The novelist Yanick Lahens added another, more violent anthropomorphic dimension and vividly described the earthquake as a rapist and the whole city of Port-au-Prince as its victim:

“Le 12 janvier 2010 à 16 heures 53 minutes, dans un crépuscule qui cherchait déjà ses couleurs de fin et de commencement, Port-au-Prince a été chevauchée moins de quarante secondes par un de ces dieux dont on dit qu’ils se repaissent de chair et de sang. Chevauchée sauvagement avant de s’écrouler cheveux hirsutes, yeux révulsés, jambes disloquées, sexe béant, exhibant ses entrailles de ferraille et de poussière, ses viscères et son sang. Livrée, déshabillée, nue, Port-au-Prince n’était pourtant point obscène. Ce qui le fut, c’est sa mise à nu forcée. Ce qui fut obscène et le demeure, c’est le scandale de sa pauvreté “(Lahens 2011:13).

In Lahens’ narrative the earthquake divested the city, leaving its intestines and veins bare open. Obscene, in her words, was not the city itself, but the forced disrobement, the scandal of its poverty. It reflects a dualistic principle in which the feminine is equated with fragility, poverty and indignity, victim of the unfathomable destructive violence of the masculine.

3.1.2 Earthquake as an Act of God, Nature, and Humans

For the affected individual as well as for the collective of survivors of a disaster, the main task is to try to make sense of what happened. After people gave the earthquake one of the many names, they started to ask why it happened. To integrate the incomprehensible into one’s life world people applied interpretations to the act itself.

Enrico L. Quarantelli, early sociologist of disaster, provided the research on disaster with the following classification of interpretations: commonly, depending on the cultural context or one’s position within these contexts, disasters are either framed as an Act of God, an Act of Nature, or an Act of Men or Women:

⁴¹ Haitian Creole, *It takes me, it goes with me, it returns with me, it goes with me, it returns with me, yes*.

„In time, the word disaster was applied more to major physical disturbances such as earthquakes and floods, or what came to be traditionally known as Acts of God. With the spread of more secular and non-religious ideologies, nature was increasingly substituted for the supernatural and the term natural disaster came to the fore. In more recent decades, as it became progressively impossible to attribute all responsibility to God or nature, there arose the notion of "Acts of Men" to go along with Acts of God or natural disasters. In the last few years, reflecting the changed status of women, we now have references to disasters as Acts of Men and Women. In addition, and increasingly so, disasters, in certain intellectual circles, have come to be seen as having their source in society, or, as some recent social scientists have phrased it, disasters are seen as manifestations of the vulnerabilities of social systems“ (Quarantelli 1987).

Quarantelli's classification coincides with narratives provided to me during fieldwork in post-earthquake Haiti. Those interpretative schemes are by no means mutually exclusive, often they are even used by the same person, depending on the context and immediate surrounding of the conversation.

The Earthquake as an Act of God

“On the day of the 12th, I was sitting outside, in front of the house. Francine also. The children were sitting under the patio, eating. And then a moment later I feel something. It takes me off the feet and things start shaking. I look at Francine. She stares back at me. Deep down in my heart I knew that this is what they call an earthquake. The one moment I think it is over. The next moment it grows stronger. And then I realize that the house would bury me and my children that were under the porch. I get up, I had food in my hands in a bowl, I was holding on to it. I take one of the children, the youngest one, by the leg. The moment I take it by the leg and start to run, I look back and I see the house going back and forth. Two more children are staying there. I tell them to run. I say: “Jesus, my children!” I take the smallest one and run away with it. I run and I stumble. But I neither drop the food nor the child that was in my hands. When I stop for a little break, the earth starts trembling again. And I don't feel anything anymore. My heart nearly stopped. That moment I remembered God. I was calling for Jesus. And I start reciting psalm 23. I start to get crazy. I can't continue any longer. And then I call for Jesus again. My oldest daughter shows up and cries for help. I stomp my foot on the ground and say: “Don't scream!” I say: “That is God who does his work, we stop screaming!” And I sit down. And the same moment I say: “Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!” three times. And it decreases. The whole time I did not have the feeling of being afraid, only afterwards it started. The same moment there was an aftershock and I really got scared. I thought I was going to go to sleep and not wake up the next morning, so God will”.

Mirlande, a resident of a rural community close to Jacmel, sums up many of the traits of *Douz Janvyé* narratives: the woman calls for God. Even though she quickly realizes it is an earthquake, she nevertheless attributes it as a work of God. It is that exact thought that soothes her, that gives her comfort and confidence. She turns to God, and she starts

to recite the Bible, the psalm of the good shepherd.⁴² It is extremely rare to find an account of the earthquake, may it be Haitian or foreign, that does not point out to the fact that in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake people were on the streets calling for *Bondye*⁴³ or *Jezi*⁴⁴ (Dorsinville 2011, Thomaz 2010). Many took refuge in a church during the earthquake and rejoined in prayer with their fellow faithful. Also in the subsequent nights, groups of people gathered to sing religious songs „to mark out space together and take ownership of that space“ (McAlister 2012:26).

This accounts for the fact that the majority of the Haitian population is religious and belongs to one of the many faith traditions in Haiti. Next to a growing number of different Protestant churches, the majority of Haitians is still considered Catholic. Many Haitians also serve the *lwa*⁴⁵, meaning their embeddedness in the spiritual lifeworlds of Haitian Vodou (Desmangles 1992).

A Catholic beneficiary of Caritas described the reactions of the faithful: *“Those who knew how to pray prayed. Those who did not know how to pray prayed anyways. Everyone called Jesus. The houngan⁴⁶. There were houngans who did ceremonies to ask Jesus for help. They settled their business on earth”*. God, or faith, acts as a frame of reference in situations that people can hardly make sense of otherwise. Religion in this sense acts as a coping mechanism. The community of believers is a resource. It is a network of safety and security, in material as much as in ontological and spiritual terms (Leutloff-Grandits et al. 2009).

Also the event itself was ready to be framed in religious terms. *“It was the single greatest catastrophe in Haiti’s modern history. It was for all intents and purposes an apocalypse”* (Díaz 2011). Truly the event of *Douz Janvyè* can be addressed as an apocalypse, whether in popular, academic or religious terms. Many people that I interviewed referred to apocalyptic readings of the quake in biblical respects: *“It was because of God, the Bible*

⁴² Psalm 23; psalm of the good shepherd: *“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever”*. (Packer 2001).

⁴³ Haitian Creole, God, literally *the good God*

⁴⁴ Haitian Creole, *Jesus*

⁴⁵ Haitian Creole, deities in Haitian Vodou

⁴⁶ Haitian Creole, male priest in Haitian Vodou

speaks of that, it says when God returns he will look for his disciples, there will be a storm, and a big earthquake", Caritas beneficiary Anaïca Cesaïre stated. Similarly, Michelet Mathelus who benefitted from the housing projects of DKH stated:

"I say it is the work of God. He is able to do that. That is something I heard the old people say. That he sends a message every hundred years. Everyone said it's the end of the world that everyone is going to die. But not everyone died. God does his work the way he wants to, the way he is able to. That is what I thought".

For one, especially in the Old Testament earthquakes were signs of God's wrath. Anaïca Cesaïre referred to the Book of Revelation in the New Testament.⁴⁷ Others interpret the earthquake more broadly as God's way to communicate with people about future events. May that be the Second Coming of Christ or the "Caribbean end of times" (Munro 2015) when everyone will fight everyone, like captured in the quote of Claude Timogene, driver at Caritas Jacmel: *"Well, what I can tell you is that it's the prophecy. It is the prophecy that gets accomplished. They have been telling this for a long time, the child revolts against the father. The child revolts against the mother. One nation rises against another. All of that is the beginning of pain"*. Similarly, Caritas beneficiaries have made the point, that *Douz Janvye* actually has been announced in the Bible.

Within the interpretative scheme or "framework of meaning-making" (Desmangles and McAlister 2010), the question of theodicy is very crucial. After asking who or what is responsible for the quake, the logical following question then would be "why"? If it was within God's power to release those tectonic forces, why did he let it happen? The question of theodicy is centuries old. In its very heart it asks why, if God were a just god, would he cause such a great deal of suffering among his disciples? The 18th century philosopher G.W. Leibniz gave one possible answer. His God did not create the best world, but the best of all possible worlds. All evil and misfortune is necessary and rationalizable through this fact. It was the 1755 Lisbon earthquake – in many respects a seminal event as will be shown later – that made Voltaire question Leibniz in his famous piece *Candide* (Huet 2012).

In Haitian terms, the question of a just God is best addressed in this proverb: *"Jistis Bondye se kabwèt bèf"*, the justice of God is like a bulls cart. This for one means that the phenomenon of justice delivered by the all mighty God itself is very inert, and takes a

⁴⁷ Revelation 16:18 "Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since mankind has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake". (Packer 2001).

long time to present the fruits of its work. Also it can address the negative aspects in terms of effects, “meaning that Bondye, like the sluggish motion of a cart pulled by the mighty bulls, is slow to anger, and that at times his punishment, like the strength of bulls, falls severely on humankind” (Desmangles 1992: 161).

One of the most common narratives about the earthquake is that of divine intervention. In this sense, the earthquake originates in the hands of God. In its most extreme form it is said to have been a punishment for sins, may they be historical or contemporary. The U.S. televangelist Pat Robertson has made the reference to sinful behavior only a few days after the earthquake. He stated that the 1791 ceremony of *Bwa Kayman* – one of the mytho-historical foundations of the Haitian revolution – was in fact a pact with devil, because of its references to Vodou. The fact that the foundation of the Haitian Republic had started with a Vodou ceremony provoked Robertson’s God to punish Haitians with a tremendous earthquake more than 200 years later. It is a crude thesis that has spread through media and scholarly work especially outside of Haiti ever since, but was never mentioned to me directly in Haiti. Instead, an employee of the Salvation Army and protestant believer explained in 2011:

“As a religious person this is my point of view: I think it is a curse. [...] I think it is something that God let happen because people do too many bad things. He wants to correct them. [...] A punishment from God. [...] There is lot of corruption in the country you know. Everything is difficult in this country”.

Other scholars such as historian Claire Payton also encountered various forms of the punishment interpretation. One of her interlocutors explained: “It happened in Chile, it happened in other places without so much destruction. It’s clear that he destroyed the place where there was the most evil” (Payton 2013:242). Especially Protestants of millennial character tended to sanctify the event of the earthquake afterwards (Desmangles and McAlister 2010).

A variation of the punishment interpretation is the interpretation of the earthquake as an act of repentance for the sins committed in one’s live as presented to me by Caritas beneficiary Rachelle Jean:

“In my view, there are people who don’t believe that God exists. And when the catastrophe happened there were people who started to say it’s the Americans who fire their weapons. They don’t know that they are being superstitious. There are others who say that there is a road being build underwater that provoked the catastrophe. Every person has her own explanation. There is one thing I still believe in: only God knows why this happened. [...] I

experienced it in the provinces. In Port-au-Prince the disaster brought repentance because they live without the Bible. It allowed them to learn to live together, red together with black. In this moment, you find all sorts of people obliged to work together for them to survive. That moment was a testimony for many people”.

Jean here adds another perspective: one of the city as a hotbed of sin. People living in the capital are said to not live according to the teachings of the Bible, thus they have to be taught to do so by creating a situation that forces them to stick together. The massive tremor gives them the opportunity to repent their sins and to renew. In this light, Haitian sociologist Laënnec Hurbon came to the following conclusion:

“The faithful who survived attribute their luck to the benevolence and grace of God, but the tendency to believe in a punishment sent by God to purify the earth and assure the final farewell of Haiti is shared by the majority of Catholics and Protestants” (Hurbon 2012:140).

Yet Hurbon’s theory is not consistent with my findings. Most of my interviewees have been of Catholic faith. The punishment theory was first and foremost encountered in the narratives of Protestant Christians of evangelical kind. Père André Valery, the head of Caritas Jacmel, joins this interpretation:

“Well, this question [of theodicy] has been there for a very long time. For centuries they have been asking this question. Through the Haitian earthquake, in Haiti there were many people who solved the question. And their answer is that God punished us Haitians because we do so many bad things. There are people who say, okay, they understand that to be normal. God wants us to change, to not be evil anymore. So God punishes us with an earthquake. Well, that is the opinion of some churches...mostly of the sects”.

Catholic believers if they referred to the theory of punishment at all, they spoke out against it. Manouchka, a Caritas Jacmel employee, told me:

„God never punishes his children like that. That’s nature. You know, God forgives. Seven times, 97 times. God forgives. Nature is the only thing that does not forgive. It just leaves you like that, without a word. [...] God created nature, that’s true. God created nature and God created humans. But the humans do what they want, nature does what it wants do to. But God forgives them”.

Instead of claiming that on *Douz Janvye* God sent a punishment to Haiti, Manouchka strengthens the nature of forgiveness of her God. Desmangles and McAlister found similar evidence within the narratives of Catholics in Haiti. They understand their responsibilities as educators, of scientific reasoning, too. Against the backdrop of the fact that the majority of schools in Haiti are run by Catholics, this is utterly important: “We asked people to understand how the world works and to understand the laws of physics”, one Catholic theologian confirmed (Desmangles and McAlister 2010:75).

For the people I encountered, their relation to God comes with a strong sense of devotion. A Protestant pastor of Baptist denomination from northern Haiti subjected himself to the divine and refrained from questioning of what he saw as Gods actions. In his view this also included punishment interpretations:

“And he is the only one who has the reason to say, this is why I did that. So, the earth shakes, who can make that happen? That’s God. So I have nothing to say. I just said praise God, because I am still alive. [...] I would not try to question that. I just have to accept it and glorify the life of God to give me the chance to see his greatness, his wonder. He is the only one who can do that. I have nothing to say about that. So whatever questions you would ask me about it, I just keep quiet. I say that’s from God”.

The strongest narrative I encountered was that of a very persuasive devotion to divine providence among Haitians, regardless the origins of the quake: *“You don’t know where it comes from and you don’t know where it does not come from. And then the prayer, you pray to God. You call for God and tell him that you are in his hands now. That is how we live”*, a beneficiary of Caritas contested. Likewise the beneficiaries of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe expressed a strong devotion to the divine, like Rose Herivaux:

“I said ‘God, I am in your hands’. You put me here. I know that everything that is done happens through your force. If you want people to die they would have died already. Yes, I said, Jesus, I put my heart in your hands. To be protected by your hands. Because there is no one else to call, it is only you I call”.

The Haitian God is called *Bondye* regardless if addressed by Catholics, Protestants or Vodouissants⁴⁸. He is the creator god⁴⁹ (Desmangles 1992). *Bondye* is considered the good God, one that is just and venerable, all wise, all knowing, infallible and omnipotent: *“God knows why he did that. Everything that he does, he does it for a reason”*, Wideline Josue, who benefitted from the DKH housing program, stated. An elderly man from the rural community of La Vanneau, likewise a beneficiary of a FBO housing project, vividly narrated his immediate experience of the earthquake and connects it to his faith in Gods providence:

“My head got dizzy. I looked at the wall and the house was dancing. I got free, and the house started dancing and then it crashed. It was a house made of cement blocks. I got out of there and it collapsed. Then I took a rest next to the tree... and saw all of what had happened. My wife came and splashed water in my face... I have no problem. It is God’s

⁴⁸ People who “serve the lwa” in Haitian Vodou.

⁴⁹ Here the *Bondye* of Vodou and the *Bondye* of Christians are nearly alike, except for two differences: In Vodou *Bondye* is THE principle, his disciple deities, the lwa, who descend unto humans are mere representations of this principle. Secondly, *Bondye* is a *deus absconditus*, an absent God so “transcendent he cannot be bothered with petty human problems” (Desmangles 1999:162). No Vodou ceremony is dedicated to *Bondye*, as humans are considered too weak to receive God.

work. If humans do it, they do it on their own. But if God does it for them...I am not afraid of that”.

In a disaster that disconnects the self from almost every aspect of one’s life world, the one entity people relied on was God himself. People expressed those words with a genuinely deep confidence. Haitian theologian Jules Casseus described this as the “*Bondye bon*⁵⁰ mentality” of the Haitian people. In Casseus’ most negative interpretation it means that Haitians rely on the good will of God to an extent that they would not take action to better their situation. Here he especially draws on the fact that most Haitians have many children without being able to feed them properly. They say it is God who gives them their children and if he wouldn’t want them to have so many, they would not have so many, *sedyevele*⁵¹, so God will (Casseus 1977). Casseus calls it the “spirit of fatalism”. His analysis shows similarities to the comments of a New York Times author who identified religion, the progress resistant traits of Haitian culture in general, but especially Vodou as one of the factors that are holding Haitians back (Brooks 2010). The fatalism that Casseus is referring to was found also among other context of Latin American popular religion. Others interpret the stoic fatalism expressed in *moun mouri pa pe santi*, dead people are not afraid of their smell, as an innate “resilience” of Haitians (Munro 2015), elsewhere described as the spirit of *kenbe la*, hanging on (Schuller 2016). In fact, it is rather a question of exegesis: *Bondye bon* can mean a certain sense of resignation towards all mighty powers, yet it can also mean a form of surrender or devotion to an all-embracing good God.

“It is a work of God. Man is not able to do a work like that!”, 65-year-old Wideline Josue explains. From this perspective no saint, no angel, no *lwa*, and no deity below the force of the all-knowing creator has the power to influence in that way. In a very similar way the aid received post-earthquake is contextualized: *“It is the work of God. It is God who sent them to save the Haitian people”*. Josue continues to explain that God not only sent the earthquake but he also sent NGOs and aid workers to help people in their misery. The prevalence of those narratives in my interviews is no exceptions. Schuller encountered the same narrative in his study on IDP camp residents: “A foreigner, an NGO, comes to our aid here when God touches its/her/his heart” (Schuller 2016:158).

⁵⁰ Haitian Creole, *God is good*

⁵¹ Haitian Creole, *so God will*

To sum up, within the “Act of God” interpretation, I encountered some variations. On *Douz Janvye* while the earthquake was still rumbling, masses of people called out God’s name for help and for comfort. The reference to their global belief system eased people’s bewilderment. Religious networks proved to be places of spiritual and material refuge in the aftermath of the earthquake. Concerning the reason for the earthquake, the majority of my interlocutors construed the event as an act of divine intervention. To some it was foreseen in the Scripture as the final apocalypse. A few saw it as God’s means to punish his disciples for the sins they committed. Others found repentance in the destructive force of the disaster. In the words of Rachelle Jean the earthquake gave people a chance to establish a newfound sense of solidarity among each other. Regardless of the objectives behind his deed, people devoted themselves to what they interpreted as God’s will that was enacted through the disaster. The vast majority of narratives affirmed an unshakable trust in divine providence and the belief in the actions of a good God.

The Earthquake as an Act of Nature

“It is a phenomenon that exists in every country. It is because of the plates that have something to do with where we live. And when the movement makes the plates displace it does so in a way that it impacts the earth, it vibrates. I think it is neither God nor Satan who does that. You know it is something that exists in every country. There are zones that are extremely vulnerable, on fault lines that can make the earth tremble any given moment”.

Robenson Placide, a driver employed by DKH in 2011, presented this conception to me during a three-hours drive to visit beneficiaries in remote regions. Despite the fact that the educational system in Haiti is insufficient and education is not granted to everyone, many of my interlocutors were taught about earthquakes as a phenomenon in school. Natural disasters were part of the pre-quake school curriculum, Rachelle Jean confirmed: *“In the ninth grade I had a teacher that taught us geography. He told us about natural disasters and he said: ‘We here in Haiti, we are talking about that, but we are not prepared. If something would hit us, there wouldn’t be anyone left in Haiti’”.*

In some of the narratives presented earlier, the interpretation of the earthquake as a natural phenomenon already showed through. Additional to the classification of the earthquake as a divine act, the interviewed also presented with different, not necessarily conflicting interpretations. The same person that presented the „earthquake as punishment“ theory earlier, being a scholar and a religious person, explained his take on the events as a scientific person: *“So the earthquake happened from a scientific view*

simply because Haiti is located on a fault region. There is this fault line going on in this region. And you know there was an earthquake 200 years ago in Port-au-Prince. And I think after 200 years it happens". Like most religious persons he abstracts between two sorts of concepts. Despite some who claim that faith and reason are diametrically opposed entities with no overlapping areas, many of my interlocutors did integrate both concepts into their narratives.

The three categories "Act of God, Nature or Humans" are not mutually exclusive. They can coexist within the life worlds of a single individual. For overtly religious people though even if they present with various explanations, the Act of God thesis always singles out as the master narrative. They might identify the earthquake as an Act of Nature, a tectonic calamity, yet it is God who is in control of nature. A Baptist priest stated accordingly:

"Okay, this is a natural catastrophe. I can interpret it like the rain. How can I say, why it is raining? I can say the sun is shining. Everything you know comes from God. [...] God owns the land. He does whatever he wants, you know [...] So I don't want to say anything about God. God does whatever he wants, because he owns the whole world, you see? So when the wind blows, who can make that happen? That's God."

Samson Neptune, a young Lutheran pastor, rendered this thought more precisely:

"God knows everything. And no one can escape that. I believe it is a natural phenomenon but with all due reserve I have to say that it is not like nature surprises God. It doesn't surprise God. God knows about everything that happens. But we can't say it is because the evil of humankind, no. I don't believe that. I believe it is natural, but under the control of God".

While people claimed that the pervasive corruption in Haiti caused God to unleash the earthquake, others conceived nature as a persona that reacts to the way it is treated by humans: *"I met an elderly person who told me that normally nature has its way to react to pressure. So it reacts with natural disasters, hurricanes, and earthquakes. S/he said that it is the result of how people utilize nature. Well, someone told me that. Many people say it is because humans do too much evil"*, the Lutheran pastor Neptune continued to explain.

The Vodou priest Erol Josue described the earthquake as a reaction of Mother Nature rising against environmental mistreatment (Desmangles and McAlister 2010). It is likely the same nature addressed in the earlier quote of Caritas employee Manouchka, who said that nature, other than God, does not forgive and forget what has been done to it.

Père Valery the head of Caritas Jacmel was among the first to present the Act of Nature thesis on *Douz Janvye* to me:

“So, the phenomenon is natural. I am not talking about the damage. The phenomenon itself is natural. The earth will always be shaking. The phenomenon is natural. But the way humans are confronted in face of this phenomenon is another thing. For example Chile, they were used to that already. They are better equipped, more developed”.

Père Valery adds a political dimension here by separating the phenomenon from its effects. Whereas the phenomenon is natural in the sense of a quite ordinary and explicably geological event, the effects address the reasons for the vast damage and destruction the earthquake caused. The director of the local FBO situates the disaster in the complex web of trans-regional inequalities fundamental to the catastrophic dimension of the earthquake.

The Earthquake as an Act of Humans

The narratives on *Douz Janvyé* as an Act of Humans are considerably less fruitful than the other two categories. The majority of the very first mental classifications of the earth shaking were things caused by humans: a tractor that passes by, gunfire shots or a locomotive, though. Among the reasons articulated, there also have been some rumors like that of the bomb that was fired below the earth. Here also geopolitical narratives come into play as the ones responsible were either said to be the U.S. or late Venezuelan president Chavez.

Some of the narratives already heard can be re-consulted in the context of Acts of Humans, too. In a broader sense, if human misbehavior, may that be corruption or the adherence to the false religion, caused God to unleash the earthquake, than the Acts of Humans are the complicating actions that lead to the climax of the tremor. Also the interpretations of the Act of Nature kind are rooted in misbehavior of humans who are working, pressing and opening the earth, cutting down the trees, mistreating the environment so nature reacts.

In 2015 the United States Geological Service (USGS) has released a study that shows that it is actually physically possible for earthquakes to be caused by human interaction with nature. Especially the practices of hydraulic fracturing (known as fracking), waterwaste injection and enhanced oil recovery are able to induce earthquakes. The motivation for the study was a dramatic increase of seismic activity in the U.S. between 2009-2014.⁵² Other sources also list mining as an earthquake-inducing factor. As there is a rapidly

⁵² http://www.usgs.gov/blogs/features/usgs_top_story/6-facts-about-human-caused-earthquakes/ Last visited May 18, 2016.

developing run on the gold mining business in Haiti this is something that has to be observed carefully in the future.

Another explication came from Evens Laurent, a Caritas Jacmel employee working in the agricultural sector of the organization. He presented this explanation during a focus group interview with beneficiaries of the housing projects in La Vanneau:

“In my view, it is ourselves who caused the earthquake in the way it took place. Because there was more and more heat that entered the earth. Before, the earth was covered with trees. Now that we have devastated and destroyed what was there without replacing it, more heat enters the earth. The fault lines heat up faster. Because before, when you walked around you had the feeling you are walking on a sponge. The leaves of the trees formed a sponge”.

He goes on to describe the process of erosion as a result of deforestation that makes the earth more permeable and vulnerable, in his view also towards earthquakes:

“Before, when the rain was falling, before the drops would fall on the soil, they would touch the branches of the tree. That crashed its force. The water was descending on the tree. It was going to the roots of the tree. Not only had the soil more manure. It was able to provide with a lot of food. But now it cannot provide with so much food, because there is no manure left to enrich the soil. There are also not so much trees anymore to slow down the force of the water. So the drops of water that come down, they fall directly on the soil. They tear the soil apart. They create a channel that eats up the soil. So now there is more heat. Before, there was more fresh air. Now more heat enters the earth that goes down all the way to the fault lines and causes tremors. You can find those more often nowadays”.

Deforestation and the resulting process of soil erosion are not a new phenomenon to Haiti but are tightly entangled with the colonial plantation system. Already in the 17th century trees were taken down on a big scale to make room for sugar plantations. Nowadays only three percent of Haiti’s surface is covered with forest (Dolisca et al. 2007). Deforestation especially in Haiti is a problem with a multitude of aforementioned interdependent socio-economic and political causes and simultaneously a variety of hazardous effects.

Laurent’s thesis is in line with the contested thesis of members of the American Geophysical Union. In 2010, Wdowinski et al. stated that deforestation and erosion processes in the Léogâne area co-caused by hurricanes put so much stress on the underlying fault line that it ultimately caused a rupture, resulting in the earthquake (Wdowinski et al. 2010).⁵³

⁵³ <http://www.wired.com/2011/01/can-hurricanes-trigger-earthquakes/> Last visited May 11, 2016.
<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/green-living/why-the-haiti-earthquake-may-not-have->

To sum up, the events of *Douz Janvyé* have been contextualized in different ways by beneficiaries as much as employees of the faith-based organizations in questions. The predominant earthquake narrative was that of divine intervention. Despite the negatives impacts of the disaster people considered themselves as guarded by divine providence. Nature or humans have been side-narratives to the all-embracing expression of God's power. The prominence of the narrative creates a bond between the staff and the beneficiaries of the organization, at least with Caritas Jacmel. Both groups, with slight differences, contextualized the disaster in religious terms. Likewise the beneficiaries perceived the aid delivered as a consequence of the earthquake as something that was sent from God.

Next to the causes ascribed to the earthquake, people also rationalized their effects. The events of *Douz Janvyé* were manifest in narratives of rupture, trauma, solidarity, chance and revelation.

3.1.3 Earthquake as Rupture

What marks all narratives given is the immediate bewilderment, the incomprehension, and the failure to make sense of one's immediate environment. Capturing the narration of the 2011 earthquake in Japan Rónán MacDubhghaill recounts:

"Confronted with a traumatic event, we're bound to resort to creative escapism. The event is too big to comprehend: it tears apart any perception of the way things are, and how they should be. Rooms are not supposed to bounce about like a box shaken by a petulant child. If we are unable to attach some meaning, it will drive us mad. [...] It is not that we are unable to understand the earthquake. We can understand its causes and effects through scientific measurement and analysis. But the actual experience is still a numbed incomprehension that cannot be measured. During the quake we were unable to feel fear, as fear is not immediate, but comes later. The most immediate thing was paralysis; we were unable to feel"⁵⁴.

Similarly, the anthropologist Laura Wagner describes her experience of *Douz Janvyé*: "I had never known such a loss of control, not merely over my own body, but of reality [...]" (Wagner 2010:16). In its most paradigmatic sense, DKH beneficiary Wesley Rozier expressed his confusion with the situation: "*I basically did not understand what was going on. Only afterwards I understood*". What happens within the minds of people can be described as the break in the legibility of the world (Blumenberg 1986). With a disaster the normal order of things vanishes (Anderson 2011), it inverts reality and extracts confidence. "I looked up at the motionless starry sky", PhD student Laura Rose Wagner

been-a-natural-disaster-6275044.html Last visited May 11, 2016.

⁵⁴ <http://mondediplo.com/blogs/a-narrative-of-disaster> Last visited May 15, 2016.

recalls her first post-earthquake night, “It seemed strange that the stars could remain fixed above us while the whole world moved” (Wagner 2010:20). The state of “ontological security” (Giddens 1984) is suspended when people are unable to make sense of their immediate environment, when they do not understand what they are seeing or feeling, nor know what would be the appropriate reaction. The anthropologist Erica C. James goes as far as to describe “insecurity as an ontological state of being in Haiti” (James 2011:357) produced by various kinds of catastrophes, may their nature be political, economical or environmental.

The limits of time and space that one’s mind and reason are used to, are abrogated during the course of a disaster. The disaster changes everything, the world that one was used to, and the horror might never leave again. Samson Neptune, the young pastor from Jacmel, describes his disquietude: *“One feeling I had was that the world would never go back to normal. The earth will never stop shaking ever again. Because every moment we were talking there were many little shocks. That means that you question everything; if the earth ever will be kind again”*.

Others had apocalyptic sentiments culminating in the certitude that no one can possibly have survived this event: *„I thought everyone died“*, an elderly man from the province of Bainet said. Caritas Jacmel employee Evens Laurent, who was *andeyò*⁵⁵ when the earthquake took place, vividly described the hours after the earthquake, his journey back to Jacmel and the confusion caused by the earthquake:

“We weren’t in control of us. We were totally out of our minds. We haven’t heard from our families at all. Auguste had given us a little vision, told us Jacmel vanished. And it starts to get dark. We are blank. We descend [to Jacmel]. We thought all life had vanished. When we arrived at Remon someone called me. Also B. gets a call. The person I was talking to only said two words and then the communication was cut off. I said woyyy... this man had to be under the earth already. You see what I imagined? He is beneath the earth already, with his telephone in his hands. He checks if he can still talk. He cannot talk”.

Most commentators focused on the fact that the tremors only took less than a minute, less than 60 seconds, some say 35 seconds. That so much destruction can take place in such a short period of time, that “eternity lasted less than sixty seconds” (Trouillot 2010) and yet changed so much in the lives of people and the fate of a whole nation is puzzling to the human mind. Wagner vividly describes what an earthquake in its abruptness does to one’s perception of time and being itself:

⁵⁵ Haitian Creole, *outside*, in the countryside

“In the first moments after the quake, as I lay unable to move and each aftershock seemed about to crush me, I was fully convinced I could reverse everything if I just concentrated hard enough. The earthquake had taken place only a couple of minutes before. It seemed impossible that time could not be coaxed into running backward, that something so cataclysmic could happen in a few seconds. The relationship between time elapsed and chaos resulting was incommensurate and therefore fixable. I could not conceive of powerlessness. Like a child or a god, I felt sure I could control the universe” (Wagner 2010: 23).

Another facet of the earthquake as the unthinkable was that there were also people who did not realize the whole extent of the disaster. Even though by the time they grasped that it was an earthquake, many thought of its limits as very local, that only their quarter or even only their road was affected – their immediate environment. As the earthquake also cut down almost every means of communication, telephone, Internet, radio, for quite a while people did not learn about the full extent of the destruction.

3.1.4 Earthquake as Trauma

“As I pass the crossroads to go home, the house already crashed. It is already down to earth. I am really shocked. My brother passes by in that moment, I cannot call him, I wave at him like that. I cannot talk to him. My tongue is tied”.

Mackenson Baptiste is one of four drivers employed by Caritas Jacmel. The disaster paralyzed his tongue. The earthquake is evident as disrupting the order of things so strongly that it paralyzes the senses and the ability to speak. Obviously the tremor had severe effects on the psyche of people, too. Many among the survivors left that day wounded, physically and spiritually. Even though studies have shown a high prevalence of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among earthquake survivors (Cerdà et al. 2013), as many met the clinical criteria for diagnosis, I will refrain from using the concepts of “psychological” trauma or PTSD because this clinically divided box leaves no room for other mechanism of coping, especially in contexts like Haiti with a less strict division between body and mind and other conceptions of the self (Farmer 1988). More importantly, my interlocutors did not use those words. They spoke of the condition of being *twomatize*⁵⁶, though. “The word “trauma” has been heard lately from the mouths of international specialists describing earthquake survivors. Of course this kind of situation calls for attention and care, but will people be willing to accept help? It is difficult to treat an illness denied by the population and the person most concerned. The only thing recognized as discomfort here is merciless pain that refuses to abate after three days” (Laferrière 2011).

⁵⁶ Haitian Creole, *traumatized*

Laferrière here refers to “trauma” as something that is forced onto Haiti by the outside. The concept of trauma can have an universalist and universalizing notion that shifts the discourse from the causes of violence and suffering to the victimhood of the ones affected by it. “The uses made of the concept of trauma even contrive to render the inequalities they reveal almost invisible” (Fassin and Rechtman 2009:283).

Regardless the words and concepts one decides to refer to the reaction of the self to a disaster, it was a shock different from the ones people are used to. Toussaint Duffault, another driver working for Caritas Jacmel, stated how in spite of the hardships he has seen in his life, the earthquake brought him to his knees:

“Well, for me, it is something that since I was born, now I am 51, I have seen for the first time in my life. It troubled me because I am a human being...I have a heart. I have a normal heart, like everyone. I was able to watch people wage war, kill each other. Those things were no problem for me. But something like that brought tears to my eyes”.

After the first emergency period, stress related problems continued to interfere with the lives of Haitians like Wilner Saint-Cyr, an animator employed by Caritas Jacmel: *“It really stressed me. Sometimes now I get under stress...Every little noise I heard made me afraid. You see the ground dance with you. And you fall. You see how the earth is shaking with you. It was really hard. And it stayed. This affected me a lot”.*

Most people who survived the earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Jacmel and Léogâne suffered, and still suffer from a condition referred to as *“psychoses beton”*, the fear of staying in buildings made of concrete (Dorsinville 2011). The effects of this psychosis of course were stronger for people who were caught inside of buildings on *Douz Janvye*.

This psychosis can elaborate into a cultural condition. The earthquake itself can turn into a cultural trauma, with the means to affect the identity of Haitians as a collective for the decades to come, something “that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness” (Alexander 2004:1). In 2011, one and half year after the event, a Caritas animator explained that the earthquake continued to interfere in people’s lives: *“But the earthquake never really stopped. You can feel it until right now. Many fault lines will stay with us. It was a big shock for me”.*

The earthquake is present in the lives of people through stories, news, and memory and is conditioned to affect them beyond the survival of *Douz Janvye*. Without having been present January 12, 2010, it soaked into my very own belonging to Haiti’s socio-spatial

fabric, too. In 2011, after weeks in the provinces sleeping under toll, the first night I did ever spend in Port-au-Prince, was also the first night I spent in a house made of concrete in Haiti. I was awoken to the rocking of an earthquake the next morning. It had a plus four magnitude, only minor, but enough to wake me up. Ironically, by the time I realized that it was an earthquake it was already over. The second thought coming to my mind was “Well, it’s over now, you might as well continue your sleep”. It took me another second to make sense, to locate myself in the present, to realize the full extent of my first original insight and rush out of bed, out of the room and into the baffled faces of my hosts.

From that moment on, whenever I entered a building made of concrete, the first thing I would do is to locate the closest pillars and ultimately the fastest way out. Every sound unfamiliar to my ears would give me small seconds of rupture. It is something that I learned to do. Despite people not talking about it too often, I recognized them doing it as well. And it seemed to be a permanent condition, of something that is not able to be unlearned. Plenty of times in the past years I was sitting in the huge library writing this exact dissertation. The library was under construction, also during opening hours. Countless times when I felt a subtle vibration of some big machine working somewhere behind the walls, my heartbeat skipped for a second or two, because of the horror to be buried under rubble on Potsdamer Platz. A train in Manhattan, rumbling underneath people’s bodies can trigger this as well: “We all have our aftershocks”, Nadève Ménard explained from a survivor’s perspective (Ménard 2011:111).

Many expatriate NGO workers accustomed to clinical approaches to trauma and mental health did seek professional psychological support once they returned to their countries of primary residence:

“Yes I did. It's the first time. It's the only time I did. It's related to this trauma. I was not even gone from here that I had [...]. I have friends who live in the same area where I live. I said "Okay, who do you see as a post-traumatic support in the region?" So I got a few names. I made some appointments. And my appointment was set before I arrived. And that was very very helpful. It's something we are not really equipped to deal with. You go through these traumas all the time you know. [...] A very, very traumatic event. People had horrible losses. I mean it's a major trauma for me. But I didn't lose my family, I didn't lose my car, I didn't lose my passport, I didn't lose my money, I didn't lose my house, I didn't lose my office. I didn't lose anything. I didn't even have one scratch. And it's a major trauma for me”.

The quote of a DKH country director makes tangible how the earthquake affected everyone present in more or less severe ways.

3.1.5 Earthquake as Solidarity

One predominant and possibly the most powerful post-earthquake narrative was that of the exorbitant solidarity among Haitians. Those descriptions start with rescuing others from the rubble, and continue with spending the subsequent nights side by side, sharing supplies but also supporting each other long term. In the direct wake of the earthquake for at least 48 hours the Haitian population could only depend on one another. Despite a lack of foreign media attention on this matter, the first rescue teams were the Haitians themselves, getting others out of debris, removing masses of concrete “often with bare hands” (Katz 2013:105). Anthropologist Wagner, on fieldwork in Haiti in January 2010, confirms:

“Most people who were buried in the rubble, including myself, were rescued not by technologically sophisticated foreign search-and-rescue teams — though those were the rescues that were covered by international media — but by their friends, family, and neighbors, by previously unknown bystanders. They were rescued, in other words, by ordinary people — most of them, in fact, very poor — who had few tools and no disaster training, but who were compelled by the emergency to do whatever they could to save the people around them” (Wagner 2014: 165).

Disasters are said to have an equalizing effect (Greenberg 2012, Fassin 2012). This frame of reference is used to refer to the impartiality of tectonic forces on the one hand and to the temporary blurring of social and class boundaries in post-disaster contexts on the other. The first argument points out to the fact that an earthquake is indifferent if it hits a shack or penthouse:

“It is true that the earthquake did not discriminate on social grounds when it struck: if anything, the middle classes were disproportionately affected, as they were the ones most likely to be buried under the concrete of collapsing office blocks and administrative offices. But those 39 seconds of dreadful equality passed in the blink of an eye: the very moment the tremors ceased, the chances of survival were conditioned by money, power and influence” (Leak 2013:397).

The chances to get to a hospital, to be drawn out of the rubble by a professional rescue team or even flown out of the country was depending on the social and economic status of an individual, and also as we will see later, on the question of race.

Yet in the very first time after the quake, Haitians could only rely on one another as human beings, as was shown above. *Tout moun se moun*⁵⁷ – everyone is human, like a very popular Haitian proverb states. There was no other working structure, institution or organization to rely on other than the immediate neighborhood of *moun ayisien*⁵⁸, Haitian people. *Nou te tout fè yon sel* – we were all one – was the number one narrative that many accounts of post-disaster Haiti circled around. Often it was uttered with a glance of bittersweet nostalgia, like by Nephthalie Moreau, one of the youngest employees of Caritas Jacmel:

“That was a day that was really... not only was it a Haiti for all Haitians. But because of the earthquake you have seen all Haitians becoming a family. One was living with another. One was helping another. That is something that really left a mark. It is something that the country didn't have before. Though after a while people started to devour each other again, during the post-earthquake time, they solidarized with each other”.

One of the very first Haitian proverbs I was taught was *Manje kwit pa gen met*, cooked food doesn't have an owner. The sharing of food is one of the main pillars of Haitian solidarity and generosity in everyday life and the practice predates *Douz Janvyè*. Yet especially in the tremendous need after the earthquake people said they supported each other, shared what they have. Maxine Geffrad, a nurse working for Caritas Jacmel stated that, *“there was no difference at all. All were one. When you go out, others tell you to come here, come there, come here. We all slept together on the streets. Everyone ate together, everything. There was no difference”.*

Anthropologist Wagner similarly and very poignantly describes a young woman living in an IDP camp:

“Chrismène's attitude was similar to that of many Port-au-Prince residents: they identified the post-quake moment as a time of solidarity, generosity, and community, but said that those things had not lasted beyond the immediate emergency. Yet as we sat and talked, one of Chrismène's neighbors came into her tent, and handed her boiled plantains in sauce in a metal bowl. “She brings you food?” I asked. “Yes, when they have food.” To Chrismène, this appeared completely unremarkable. “What is she to you?” I asked, which means, “How is she related to you?” “She isn't anything to me, non? But the way things are now, we're like family.” To me, this seemed remarkable, and poignant – a sort of urban, post-disaster permutation of the traditional rural lakou. It was as though these ordinary acts of sharing were so obvious and expected to Chrismène that they did not even register as being part of the same tradition of community that was amplified in the minutes and days after the quake” (Wagner 2014: 168 f.).

⁵⁷ Haitian Creole, proverb, *everyone is a human being*

⁵⁸ Haitian Creole, *Haitian people*

As the quake leveled the buildings of Port-au-Prince, Léogâne and Jacmel it also leveled the manifold class-difference for a short period of time. Rich and poor alike, Catholics and Protestants, small merchants and businessmen slept *à la belle étoile*⁵⁹, under the canopy, the night of *Douz Janvyé*:

“You had the bourgeoisie of Jacmel sleeping next to tibatjo⁶⁰ with the poor people. It is not a lie. We were all one. January 12 the earthquake happened, January 13 Madam Jacques Caroli was sleeping on the square. Every grande bourgeoisie, every grande mulatto, every big man.... slept on the square...with the poor. They pissed in the same spot. They ate in the same spot. You understand. Excuse me, they farted in the same spot. We know those people would be very careful not to sit down next to a poor person normally. But Douz Janvyé put them together”.

Evens Laurent goes on to describe the situation that presented itself in the domestic airport of Jacmel:

“Everyone in Jacmel came to the aviation field. It was like a big camp. Everyone who could walk got up and went to the field for the night. There was nothing that covered their heads, nothing that separated them. They slept a la belle étoile. Some others who couldn't come to the field, they stayed at the central place in the city center. They slept on the floor. That's what I told you before. There was no mulatto, no black, neither rich nor poor. We were all one. We were all in the same place. On that occasion there is a nice story. No one called Ogoun⁶¹. Everyone called for Jesus, everyone, even the houngan. Everyone called for Jesus. Everyone was Jesus”.

Here, Laurent, a faithful Catholic himself, impressively described the blurring not only of class hierarchies in the immediate wake of the earthquake, but also of those interdependently related to class, religious boundaries:

“Every houngan left his business behind and called Jesus, Jesus. I tell you, that day there was no Protestant and no Catholic. Everyone said “Jesus, save me”. This day, Douz Janvyé there was no religion. There was no Catholic, no Pentecostal, no Protestant...Everyone just said “Jesus save me!”.

All religious groups called on the one power they agreed on to be the most powerful in the given context. Like shown above, the religious contextualization of the earthquake is the one most persistent in Haitian narratives. In spite of disputes between religious groups, most tangible in the sometimes very aggressive agitation of some fundamentalist Evangelical churches against Haitian Vodou, the overwhelming experience of the disaster, the generalized solidarity that characterized the first days after *Douz Janvyé*, also led people to discard conflicts over religion.

⁵⁹ French, under the canopy

⁶⁰ Haitian Creole, Person who practices Vodou

⁶¹ Haitian Creole, lwa of war and metal, deity in Haitian Vodou

Generally, the findings about post-disaster solidarity in Haiti are backed up by other post-disaster experiences. Subsequent to the massive landslide in Venezuela of December 1999, Fassin reports: „[t]he magnitude of the catastrophe and the sharing of misfortune combined to create a feeling of solidarity and compassion, at least during the first days after the event.“ (Fassin 2012:187). Schuller, like the majority of observers of post-earthquake Haiti tells similar stories of *youn ede lot*⁶², one helps the other, and points out to the most important fact: that those stories are not the exception (Schuller 2016).

Unfortunately in most contexts the blurring of social fault lines is of temporary nature only. “The earthquake can remind us that in death we are all equals, but it cannot erase the social, economic, and cultural injustice that has fed the structure of Haitian society for two centuries” (Trouillot 2010: 57). Once people were able to “make sense” of their environment, could cash their social and economic capital again, societal order was reestablished. Yet one of the outcomes of that time was the reminder that an idea of solidarity – may it be called *konbit*⁶³ or *tèt ansanm*⁶⁴ – once very powerful, something that seemed to be long lost, at least within urban contexts, could be revived. In rural setting the immediate solidarity was also set for medium-term. Many among the beneficiaries of DKH in the community of Bainet were people who used to live in Port-au-Prince, but had family ties to Bainet. Wesley Rozier, who was granted a house by DKH reported: “*The kids went to school in Potoprens, me too. The house where we lived crashed. And I did not want to live in a tent. So I came here*”. A Baptist pastor from Acul du Nord stated that the shocks and especially the aftershocks were felt throughout the whole country:

“Even though it wasn’t so heavy here in the northern area, we felt it. We felt it deeply. Because many of the families who were hurt, they came in this area and my church was very involved in the situation. We have provided food, clothing and even temporary shelter to them. So, we felt it and we supported it”.

After the earthquake between 500,000 and 630,000 people fled to the provinces relying on what the impoverished peasant society had to offer (Jean-Baptiste 2012). This rural exodus in reverse did not last long though, as the majority of people returned to Port-au-Prince within the next six months (Bengtsson et al. 2011).

⁶² Haitian Creole, *one helps the other*

⁶³ Haitian Creole, form of collectivized labor in rural Haiti. See Smith 2010.

⁶⁴ Haitian Creole, literally *heads together*

Additionally to the support within the country, families and friends outside Haiti also gave valuable support.⁶⁵ Informal aid through cash transfer was something that actually reached people in a fast and non-bureaucratic way. It provided Haitians with the kind of help they were asking for (Versluis 2014). In 2010, remittances to Haiti accounted for US\$ 1.5 billion, a number that rose to US\$ 2 billion until 2014.⁶⁶

In Jacmel, in the weeks subsequent to the quake the solidarity took a variety of forms. People remained in groups of ten to 15 families, consisting of extended family and neighbors. Those *“groupes solidaires”* acted as groups of primary support. One of the biggest advantages was that they did not have to live in one of the IDP camps around.

The narrative of reinforced solidarity is something that also other observers referred to. The opposing narrative though is one of Haitians being selfish, only seeking individual advantages over collective solutions regardless if rich or poor. This narrative is mainly brought forward by foreign aid workers: *“My theory is that Haiti is populated by a very very big amount of egoists”*, a DKH expat stated in 2013. The same person continued to describe the country as one in which *“dog-eat-dog”* is the general rule. Schuller in a similar context identified this as a strategy of aid workers to shift the blame for unsuccessful intervention first on Haitians as individuals and then on the collective in general (Schuller 2016).

3.1.6 Earthquake as Chance

Despite the inherent multifold tragedy that was unleashed by shaking bedrock many people, Haitians and non-Haitians alike, referred to the earthquake as a possible opportunity, a chance, for individuals as well as organizations, and the whole of the nation. The earthquake comes as *“a blessing in disguise”*, because more buildings were fallen than there are standing, which lead to a *“massive rebuilding of that country”*⁶⁷, said Pat Robertson, already known for his earthquake as a punishment for the *“pact with the devil”* theory. While most found Robertson’s remarks crude, to say the least, similar thoughts have been uttered on a regular basis.

⁶⁵ The Haitian diaspora is one of the biggest in the world, relative to Haitians living in Haiti. In the U.S. alone nearly one million people reside. Neighboring countries such as the Dominican Republic, Cuba and the Bahamas are home to Haitians, but also Brazil, Canada and France.

⁶⁶ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.CD.DT> Last visited May 19, 2016.

⁶⁷ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/video/2010/01/13/VI2010011303724.html> Last visited May 18, 2016.

The chance to rebuild the country was framed with the “building back better” slogan promoted by the International Community and first and foremost by Bill Clinton in his role as co-chair of the IHRC, the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission. The idea that as the disaster had happened, one can now just as well look at it from the bright side, had reached the level of organizational dogma among aid organizations. The Program Manager of DKH stated: *“There are countries which know how to utilize a natural catastrophe to get the country on track with development”*. Barnett identifies disaster as a sort of humanitarian “spiritual awakening” that can also come in a secular guise. He reminds of the U.S.-policy towards Haiti, to “build back better” is to re-imagine, to re-start Haiti. To begin anew (Barnett 2011). The Haitian writer Lahens who spoke of the tabula rasa effect of the quake also saw the disaster as chance for the overcrowded capital to relax. In 2011, she hoped that the people who fled for the provinces were given a chance to establish a new life *andeyò*, outside of the city (Lahens 2011).

From a religious point of view, the earthquake was interpreted as a chance for renewal, as the sins and sinners were washed away. Haitian as well as U.S.-American evangelicals celebrated a revival one month subsequent to *Douz Janvye*. The seismic shocks were the labor pains of the new Haiti, they said and after three days of prayer revival they pronounced Haiti new born, delivered by Jesus Christ himself (Desmangles and McAlister 2010). Also within the former narrative of the earthquake as repentance presented by the Caritas beneficiary Rachelle Jean there is one good thing waiting in the end of the chain of events: the earthquake made the people of Port-au-Prince repent and forced them to *mete tèt yo ansanm pou yo viv*, to work together to survive. Others stated that the event of the earthquake made them humble: *“I happened to understand something after, I do not complain about anything anymore. I live the way I live”*, Robenson Placide of DKH told me.

Unfortunately, disaster and profit are inevitably entangled. This also and especially applies to the economy of aid. *Douz Janvye* created massive job opportunities especially for aid workers. The circulation of capital released in the post-disaster period was followed by a sheer invasion of foreign NGO staff, especially of Port-au-Prince. International non-governmental organizations did “follow the money” (Binder 2013) released by foreign governments and supranational institutions like the UN or the IMF.

While Schuller suggests aid workers reproduce their middle-class, “Western” way of living, tangible in the restaurants, clubs and super markets in Port-au-Prince (Schuller 2016), I would go even further and say that the emergency status lifts their class status, somehow “boosts their privileged position” (Wolf 1996). They access a quality of life style, in economic as much as in social terms in their receiving countries they would not be able to uphold in their countries of primary residence. They turn from more or less ordinary people to Sahlinish “Big Man” with the power to determine the lives of a multitude of Haitians with one flight from Miami to Port-au-Prince. Their own life and work becomes more valuable and also more valued as we will see. Haiti serves as a career pusher, as an accolade, a triumph on a humanitarian CV that reads: “If you make it here, you make it anywhere”.

The country has the reputation of being a complicated mission: *“It is really difficult to work here. Like Burundi”*, the Country Director of DKH stated in 2013. Yet post-earthquake many very young and inexperienced aid workers came to be in top management positions of NGOs (Miles 2012). “Many foreigners here, NGO workers for the most part, seem almost giddy when I see them at the supermarket, at the gas station, or buying art at the side of the road” (Ménard 2010:50). A DKH expat described the post-earthquake situation at cluster meetings at the UN logbase as such:

“It was crazy. The meetings down there at the airport, at the logbase, what kind of people walked in there. With the masses of people you thought: Did they come to get help or are they coming here to help? Because among them were people, with a big heart and so on, but not a clue of the matter. They actually hindered the relief because they did not know what to do. They asked questions, that made everyone just look at each other”.

Yet the earthquake did not only produce working places for non-Haitians but also opportunities for local staff. Like most of the NGOs present in Haiti also the Haitian staff of Caritas Jacmel and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe expanded significantly. Most of the jobs provided by international organizations though were frontlines or service jobs. The organizations not only provide with semi-permanent positions but also with forms of day labor especially in rural regions: *“But there is not a lot of work around. When there is a little work it is due to the NGOs, especially Diakonie who give us work here. Who come to the country and give us jobs”*, Michelet Mathelus, beneficiary of DKH stated. Whereas many Haitians got employed for maintenance, security and as drivers, only a few iNGOs employed Haitians in management positions (Schuller 2016). DKH is such an exception as they employed a Haitian national as Program Manager.

A U.S.-trained Haitian national who was unable to find work in Haiti after his university education was hired right after the quake:

“When I came back I couldn’t even find a job. Because in this country if you have your diploma from the United States you are from the elite, the intellectual elite. But even though I had my diploma I couldn’t find a job. I get my job from the earthquake. [...] Because the earthquake created a lot of opportunities as well. Even though there are bad things, there is also opportunity. So sometimes from a religious standpoint, God let this happen in order to convert people, in order to create opportunity, in order to also punish”.

He referred to another aspect of the religious post-earthquake field: many people converted, joined or re-joined communities of worship. *“When it comes to the churches, every church tried to organize prayers, to bring everyone together. They invited people in every zone. It is something that made people come closer to each other, that gave them confidence”*, a man from the rural community of La Vanneau asserted. Religious communities offered a sense of belonging, a way to make sense of what happened and to claim ownership over one’s future. Further religious communities provided the access to means of psychosocial as well as very material means of support. Inter-faith as well as international faith-based solidarity supplied essential goods like food and shelter material. The mere fact that some smaller churches did not crash meant that they could accommodate a relatively high number of people and give them security, like explained by the Lutheran pastor Samson Neptune.

Generally, with a distance of more than a year subsequent to the quake when the first interviews were conducted there were many people who were able to refer to the event as something with some good outcomes. Again, Neptune stated: *“There are things that we take as inherently bad, but which are not totally bad. The earthquake is however not a thing that is completely bad. In bad things you can also find good, a positive thing that is created within”.*

3.1.7 Earthquake as Revelation

The topos of the revelatory qualities of the earthquake can be addressed from a variety of angles: revealing the coming of the kingdom of Christ, revealing the immense forces of solidarity among Haitians, or simple the helplessness of people in face of the forces of nature. The word apocalypse itself derives from the Greek word for uncovering or revelation. Munro points out to the polyvalent qualities of the term as:

“one that is used at times symbolically, as a narrative tool to think of humans and societal relationships to time and place; at others, the apocalypse is a means of understanding the lived reality and narrating of the disaster; while at others still, it is an

ideologically charged concept, related to long-standing conceptions of Haiti as a failed, ill-starred nation, for example in political or religious discourse, where it may be used to justify Western economic, military, and political interventions” (Munro 2015:1f).

The Haitian earthquake was read as a “moment of truth”. With the shaking of the earth, the crashing of buildings and the vanishing of countless lives, not only the fault lines presented themselves. The tectonic forces metaphorically revealed more than that. Mostly those discoveries are supremely negative: the blatant poverty of the nation, the abject structural inequalities on every level of society, the structural violence Haitians are exposed to, the inefficiency of an international aid system present in Haiti for decades, among many others. Much like in Lahens’ “earthquake as rapist” narrative the effects of the trembling earth exposed the open veins (Galeano 2009) of yet another Latin American country.

Yet this topos was mostly mentioned in the narratives of outsiders, intellectuals, journalists and scholars. It was not mentioned in the narratives of the beneficiaries or local FBO staff I interviewed. Above all it is a question of who is revealing and to whom is something revealed to. It is obvious that those things can only be a revelation to people unfamiliar with Haitian realities, or even more so without having to face them personally on a daily basis. No one in Haiti has to be taught about or reminded of the dimensions of chronic poverty and structural violence (Farmer 2004). It’s a matter of everyday struggle. The position from which one looks at Haiti stunned by the tremendous horror of destruction is that of a “blan⁶⁸ as outsider” (Schuller 2010a) to the core.

First of all, the earthquake reminded people all over the world of this one Caribbean nation that only makes headlines when the next *coup d’état* is taking place or so called “food riots” get out of control. Secondly, the extent of damage done to Haiti made it visible to an invasive foreign gaze, tangible to the charitable and profitable world outside and readable to its casual spectators.

To sum up, this part has presented the earthquake in a wide range of possible narrations and interpretations provided to me by my interlocutors in Haiti: as repentance, as solidarity, as apocalypse, as an act of *Bondye*, nature, humans, as revelation, as trauma or as an opportunity. Despite a very high prevalence of the Act of God theory among Haitians, after all there is not one single master narrative.

⁶⁸ Haitian Creole, white person, foreigner

All those interpretations are stones and colors within a kaleidoscope that supplement, overlap or conceal each other depending on the storyteller, the spectator and the angle from which one looks inside the kaleidoscope.

The following part of this chapter seeks to present what there is to be revealed about the events that predated *Douz Janvyé* and contributed to its catastrophic character. It will take the earthquake not as a detached singularized moment, but as a processual disaster, a 500-year earthquake⁶⁹ (Oliver-Smith 2012) that has its roots deep in colonial times and that will continue to affect the fate of the country for the decades to come.

3.2 Pre-quake conditions – disastrous inequalities

An often-iterated narrative after events like earthquakes, tsunamis and hurricanes is that of the so-called “natural disaster”. Disaster studies and especially the Anthropology of Disaster have come to question the “natural” in disasters. There are occurring environmental hazards that have effects. The destructive capacity of an earthquake though is highly dependent on factors such as early warning systems, emergency infrastructure, safe and anti-seismic construction knowledge and the availability and especially the affordability of safe construction material, the proximity of human settlements to dangerous regions, most of which are tightly interwoven with socio-economic status of the region or country affected. The distribution of environmental risks spatially mirrors the (historically generated) unequal distribution of access to power, capital and knowledge. This holds true even within other nation-state contexts as one considers the areas and ergo the population most severely affected by hurricane Katrina in the U.S. city of New Orleans, Louisiana. As a result of profound racial inequalities that lead to an unequal distribution of those risks it was the African-American community that was disproportionately affected by the disaster. Additionally “African Americans were the least likely to be given resources and were the least likely to recover quickly” (Adams 2013).

The first European intellectual to question the “curse” of a natural disaster was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Reflecting on the Lisbon earthquake of 1755, he coevally pointed to the artificiality of “natural” disasters and identified them as a result of urban overpopulation and failed construction (Bornstein and Redfield 2011). He anticipated

⁶⁹ Oliver-Smith used the metaphor of a 500-year earthquake already in reference to the 1970 earthquake in Peru (Oliver-Smith 1994). Coherently, it first and foremost refers to the disastrous consequences of the colonization of the Americas.

arguments of contemporary disaster scholars such as Quarantelli and Oliver-Smith. In many ways the Lisbon earthquake was crucial. It not only severely affected Lisbon, but all of Portugal, parts of Southern Spain and Northern Africa and it was even felt in places as distant as Germany (Huet 2012). It was followed by a tsunami and several firestorms, leading to the almost entire destruction of Lisbon. At least one fifth of the population lost their lives on that All Saint's Day the earthquake happened. Notably, the event triggered the "first pan-European relief efforts" (Barnett 2011), and therefore is qualified for the first "modern disaster" (Pereira 2009).

The year 2010 is a prime example to lay open the unequal distribution of environmental risk factors. There were 22 earthquakes with a plus 7 magnitude all over the world. Haiti, January 12, 7.0 magnitude, more than 200,000 people dead. Chile, February 27, magnitude 8.8, 525 people dead. New Zealand, September 4, 7.1 magnitude, one person died of a heart attack. Of course the exact proximity to the fault lines also has to be accounted for. Yet the earthquake in New Zealand had its epicenter in the metropolitan region of Christchurch, home to 380,000 people. Even though the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince is more densely populated than Christchurch, the exorbitantly higher number of casualties has to be attributed to other factors. "However, there is a fine line between 'natural' and 'human-made' disasters, and while nature has an objective reality, there is a social distribution of risk that is humanly produced." (Barnett and Weiss 2008:11). Another conception for the mentioned risk distribution would be that of vulnerability: "The conjunction of a human population and a potentially destructive agent does not inevitably produce a disaster: a disaster becomes unavoidable in the context of a historically produced pattern of "vulnerability" evidenced in the location, infra-structure, socio-political organization, production and distribution systems, and ideology of society." (Oliver-Smith and Hoffmann 2002:3). A different, less political yet more transfigured conception is that of a misfortune, of fate and mysterious curse.

3.2.1 Colonial legacies

In fact, Haiti has a long history of disasters. The republic itself actually originates from the very first and equally most severe one: the million-fold extermination and enslavement of people of indigenous and African descent, the *maafa*. In 2010, the French president Nicolas Sarkozy, in complete disregard towards historical legacies and post-colonial liabilities, said that the earthquake was "a chance to get Haiti once and for all

out of the curse it seems to have been stuck with for such a long time⁷⁰. In fact, the French Republic has more intimate connections to what Sarkozy calls a “curse” than it is willing to admit: In 1697, with the treaty of Ryswick, the French took power from the Spanish over the Western third of the island Hispaniola. Saint-Domingue, as it was called from then on, rose quickly to be the richest colony of France. First of all, it was the sugar that served best to fill the French treasury. By the end of the 18th century Saint-Domingue was more profitable than all 13 British colonies put together. Two thirds of the sugar distributed all over the world originated from the Caribbean colony (Mintz 1974). This colonial prosperity was a direct result of the violent oppression of enslaved Africans. The exploitation in Saint-Domingue was extraordinarily brutal even by colonial standards. The enslaved had an anticipated life expectancy of seven years once they stepped foot on the island. The demand for a labor force was so high that periodically the “triangular trade” couldn’t keep up with the delivery of what the colonizers considered „resources“. Following several failed uprisings the enslaved allied in 1791 for a rebellion (Dubois 2004). Under the leadership of Toussaint Louverture, they finally achieved hegemony in Saint-Domingue in a battle that lasted more than a decade.

The newly invented Republic of France tried to bring the island under control with a maximum level of military power. Even though the universal human rights claim of the French Revolution was incompatible with the existence of colonies and slavery, France was not willing to apply the revolutionary ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity to its “property“ – the enslaved (James 1989). In the end, the Napoleonic Army failed and Jean-Jacques Dessalines proclaimed the Republic of Haiti in January 1804 – the first black republic in history, the second independent nation in the Americas. And the first modern nation state in the sense that only in Haiti the sublime principles that inspired the other important revolutions of this era, the French and the U.S.-American, were applied: the inalienable, natural rights of every human being.

The successful revolution left one third of the population dead and the fatally prosperous plantation system destroyed. The following political and economic isolation of Haiti founded the ongoing misery of the country. The existence of a nation of freed slaves was a non-tolerable thread to the status quo of the “slave-owning” states. It was the unthinkable that had to be silenced at any costs (Trouillot 1995). Most countries

⁷⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-quake-haiti-development-idUSTRE60E4RA20100116> Last visited May 5, 2016.

denied recognition and laid economic embargos on the young republic. France, under Charles X, demanded a high price for the political recognition of Haiti: 150 million gold francs (later reduced to 90 million) for the loss of French “property”, meaning the enslaved people. 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 paid for with their blood. The requested sum took a large part of the state budget of the following decades and was still being paid until 1947, 122 years later. To be able to pay off the reparations, Haiti was forced to take out loans from French private banks (Oliver-Smith 2012). So the Haitians were forced into slave labor, reparation payments and last but not least high interest rates. In a nutshell, that is part of the “curse” Haitians had to face prior to January 12, 2010.⁷¹

3.2.2 History of disasters in Haiti

The 2010 earthquake in Haiti had a tremendous impact. The extent of loss, the amount of damage and the humanitarian action triggered by it made the quake a singular event in Haitian, Caribbean, and maybe even world history. The majority of Haitians did not anticipate an earthquake to be the next catastrophe to affect the country. There are other calamities more present in the everyday lives of Haitians. Due to its geographical location in the midst of the Caribbean, Haiti is regularly exposed to a series of hazardous environmental conditions. During the rainy season, the risk ranges from heavy rains to fatal hurricanes like Jeanne in 2004 (Beauvoir-Dominique 2012). Between 1900 and 2004 the country was severely affected by 17 hurricanes, 26 floods and seven droughts (Charlier-Doucet 2014). Landslides are secondary disasters to the heavy rainfalls. Their destructive forces are negatively influenced by deforestation and poor housing conditions – all legacies of larger political and economic conditions that originate in the effects of the colonial plantation system on the political as well as on the eco-system (Munro 2015).⁷²

Earthquakes have a recurrent history on the island of Hispaniola. Joel F. Audefroy counted 14 earthquakes prior to *Douz Janvye* in post-Colombian Hispaniola (Audefroy 2011). In 1842, an earthquake struck the northern part of Haiti. Half of the population of

⁷¹ Parts of this paragraph have been published by the author under <https://cirquedelire.wordpress.com/2010/03/07/haiti-%E2%80%93-a-man-made-disaster/> Last visited May 23, 2016

⁷² Martin Munro draws on Derek Walcott’s work to state that „genocide and ecocide were complementary projects in the Caribbean“ (Munro 2015:4).

Cap Haïtien was killed and the nearby palace of Sans Souci destroyed (Dubois 2012). Another quake followed in 1946. On the southern coast of Haiti, there was a series of seismic shocks in 1953. However, there is no such thing as a seismic culture, neither collectively nor individually, Charlier-Doucet states (Charlier-Doucet 2014).

Degg and Homan define a seismic culture as the “adaptation to seismic hazards“ for example by becoming ingrained in aspects of building practices and knowledge transfers (Degg and Homan 2005). Charlier-Doucet identifies the reasons of this “general amnesia“ towards earthquakes in the aging structure in Haiti. Half of the population is younger than 20 years old. Additionally, the lack of institutional continuity due to political instability and also the destruction of scientific structures under the Duvalier dictatorship lead to this specific unconsciousness (Charlier-Doucet 2014). Yet none of the earthquakes precedent to *Douz Janvye* had such a permanent impact on the nation’s consciousness, simply because the dimension of destruction never reached the level of 2010. Rose Herivaux, an elderly DKH beneficiary recounts: *“Those people do not know what they are talking about. They have never seen a thing like that. But I, with my advanced age...It was not the first time that an earthquake killed people in Haiti. It never hit that hard, but it happened before”*.

One reason for the limited destruction of former earthquakes was the fact that “earthquakes were urban disasters. And, at heart, Haiti was a nation of farmers” (Katz 2013: 39). Yet by January 2010, 35 percent of the Haitian population settled in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince and therefore was directly affected by the earthquake. The urban context of the earthquake is essential: *“The experience in Haiti is a very particular experience. You know why? Well, because I looked at other earthquakes that happened in other countries, they happened generally in rural contexts”*, the DKH Program Manager stated.

3.2.3 Developmentalist misgovernment

Without a doubt, Haiti has been standing on shaky grounds. Dominican writer Junot Díaz provocatively calls Haiti the third world’s third world (Díaz 2011). The Caribbean state carries all the insignias of impoverishment: a Gini coefficient, rating the level of wealth and income inequality, that ranks 168 out of 187 countries⁷³ and a rank 163 for the

⁷³ <http://hdr.undp.org/es/content/income-gini-coefficient> Last visited March 16, 2016.

more general Human Development Index.⁷⁴ Haiti remains among the most unequal countries in the world today. The UN Human Development Report one year prior to the earthquake drew an alarming picture: one percent of the Haitian population is in control over half of Haiti's wealth. While Haiti has the most millionaires per capita in the hemisphere, 72.1 percent of Haitians are living below 2 US\$ a day. 42 percent don't have access to clean water. 22 percent of children under five are underweight (UNHDR 2009).

A series of developmentalist actions derive from the significance of this data. The role of foreign interventions in Haitian recent history has to be accounted for, whether in form of direct monetary support to the government or through NGOs. Already François Duvalier established tight connections to the U.S. government in the 1960s, bringing major parts of the state budget in from the U.S. In 1970, 70 percent of national assets came from foreign assistance (Ramachandran and Waltz 2012). Yet it was Jean-Claude Duvalier who really intensified the relations to states and organizations interested in foreign investment in Haiti. Historian Dubois cites a figure of US\$ 584 million in aid that Haiti received between 1972 and 1981, almost entirely from the U.S. (Dubois 2012). As a result of privatization and neoliberal adjustment, also non-governmental organizations began to spread in Haiti in the 1980s. In the following 25 years the number of those organizations – may they be formalized Haitian grassroots-organizations, smaller foreign charities, professionalized global development players such as CARE or developmentalist organizations funded by foreign government agencies such as USAID or the German GIZ – rose without restraint.

The correct number can only be estimated, as there is only insufficient control over the organizations on the ground. There is a serious lack of transparency and accountability on the side of the NGOs towards the Haitian public and the Haitian government (Edmonds 2013). The Haitian government installed an NGO coordination unit (Unité de Coordination des Activités des ONG – UCAONG) in 1989. Even though the Haitian government urges organizations to register, there are many which have not. Reasons might be the bureaucratic shortcomings on the side of Haitian authorities or the lack of trust and estimation of governmental structures by international organizations. Additionally, as NGOs do not register with the government, they also do not pay taxes to the government.

⁷⁴ <http://report.hdr.undp.org/> Last visited March 16, 2016.

The fact that most international NGOs simply bypass governmental structures is the other side of the Janus-faced “failed-state” narrative, like Janjak Casimir, employee of Caritas Jacmel, stated:

“If for example World Vision, another organization, comes here. What are you going to do? What department are you going to work in? There should be a sectioning, that tells you what you can do in what place. The state should have a development plan. But more often than not it’s the NGOs who decide what to do in the country. Sometimes they come because the country is poor. But the state is not structured, does not know anything. They come and they work. They come to work but there should be an order too for the way they work. [...] But everyone does his or her own thing, a small thing here, a small thing there. And they do not offer solutions”.

Thus, today Haiti’s second most used byname is that of the “Republic of NGOs”. Prior to the earthquake, 80 percent of public services have been provided by the private sector (Dupuy 2010). International NGOs facilitated those dynamics. The Haitian state ever since 1991 is thwarted and disempowered through development initiatives of varying actors (Schuller 2012). In *Assistance Mortelle*, a documentary on the reconstruction process in Haiti, the narrator points out to the paradigmatic “memory loss of the institutions” inherent to humanitarian efforts. Schuller quotes a Haitian NGO director saying that while the *blan* lament the ineffective Haitian state, it was them in the guise of WB, IMF, USAID who reduced the public sector through forced structural adjustment in the 1990s (Schuller 2016).

Urbanization

Without a doubt the latest earthquake had the most extensive repercussions for Haiti. Here, most of Haiti’s structural inequities intersect. Whereas in the mid 1900s, 85 percent of the Haitian population has lived in rural Haiti (Haiti Lab 2012), the World Bank reports that in 2014 only 43 percent lived outside of cities in Haiti. Some of Port-au-Prince’s poor neighborhoods are equally densely populated like places such as Calcutta and Mumbai (Etienne 2012). The exorbitant population density in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area is a result of centralization processes initiated during the U.S. occupation in Haiti (1915-1934) and economic interventionism. Especially in the 1980s, neo-liberal adjustment measures, facilitated by Jean-Claude Duvalier, triggered a massive rural exodus (Jean-Baptiste 2012). Trade liberalizations and the focus on an export-oriented industry, the decimation of the Haitian swine population by USAID, led to the almost complete destruction of rural subsistence economy. The Haitian peasantry,

the *moun andeyò*⁷⁵, has been disproportionately disadvantaged and politically as well as economically marginalized ever since. Trouillot in his account of Duvalierism draws a daunting picture of the battle of the Duvalierist state – Haiti’s centralized government set in Port-au-Prince – against the nation, “the nation of farmers” – the Haitian peasantry (Trouillot 1990a). In the 1980s the Haitian government under Jean-Claude Duvalier facilitated foreign neoliberal measures with disastrous consequences for the latter: the USAID ordered decimation of the swine population – the treasury of the peasants –, the collapse of the Haitian rice market as a result of free-trade agreements made in countries with no interest in the well-being of Haitian farmers all but led to the almost entire destruction of peasant economy and triggered a massive rural exodus from the provinces to Port-au-Prince (Oliver-Smith 2010). Additionally, low cost labor garment factories were opened in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. The owners were mostly subcontractors of the export-assembling industries for multinational companies such as Levis or Wal-Mart, therewith extracting Haitian labor with extremely high profit margins. Those who migrated to the capital found underpaid jobs in those factories that happened to have been built next to low-income areas, popular areas, *katye popilè*⁷⁶, such as Cité Soleil. More than 70 percent of IDP residents in a recent survey stated that they were born outside Port-au-Prince and had to move to the capital to *cheche lavi*, make a living (Schuller 2016). To oppose the violence and degradation of the hollow catch phrase of the “poorest nation of the western hemisphere”, one might as well chose the one of “the most open economy in the hemisphere, with the lowest tariffs, a low tax base, and productive resources being drained to pay off debt” (Schuller 2016:32).

Misconstruction

The hyper-urbanization of the so-called “Republic of Port-au-Prince” had of course effects on the building structure. Back in 2010, many buildings were poorly constructed, set up in unsafe places, with unreinforced cement, sometimes insufficiently mixed with other material, without foundation. “*No matter what little money people make, they have to build a house, a building. Sometimes they do not even have a fundament*”, Baintet citizen Wideline Josue stated. Thus, the tremendous fatality of the quake can be considered “*une catastrophe annoncée*”, an annunciated catastrophe (Rainhorn 2012). Even though there has been a safety code for building before the earthquake, there has been no

⁷⁵ Haitian Creole, people living in rural regions

⁷⁶ Haitian Creole, *popular areas*

agency to enforce the code and apply ramifications in case of violation of the building code (Katz 2013).

Many accounts of the earthquake identify concrete as the number one reason for the high fatality rates. Shacks, slum dwellings and houses built in a vernacular kind were less affected than multistory concrete buildings. Vernacular architecture, houses built using local resources such as wood, lime and stone have proven to be more earthquake resistant because the material is more flexible (Audefroy 2011). This building technique is mostly to be found in rural areas. Due to a lack of wood, as a consequence of deforestation, people did not build their homes in vernacular way in the capital.

Most beneficiaries I interviewed identified misconstruction as the primary reason for the destructive capacity and the immense fatality caused by the earthquake. Yet the explanation often ended there. Those working for the FBOs did identify the reason for misconstruction with Haiti's status though:

“That is because we are an underdeveloped country. It is because people don't have the means to build properly. When someone is lucky and makes a little money, s/he buys two bags of cement. Then he does a work that two bags of cement can do. S/he starts no matter what. And ends up with bad quality”.

Robenson Placide, a driver for Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, goes on to identify the reasons for failed construction:

“I think it is because people don't have jobs, they are unemployed. They have no security. They have nothing. [...] And the state is not there, it is like a missionary state. It does not put projects into practice that educates people how to build. There is no field research about how people build, where people build”.

Michelet Mathelus, a FBO beneficiary that used to live in the capital but was forced to relocate to Bresilienne, agrees:

“Other places are not affected like that. But here, in Port-au-Prince, the houses are poorly constructed. When they build houses and they have 50 bags of cement, they build two houses. In Santo Domingo they do not cause damage like that. They put a lot of material, a lot of cement. Here not, neither in the bricks, nor in the walls, nor the foundation. That is why there are so many casualties in Haiti. If the houses would have been well built we would not be victims”.

The lack of appropriate building standards is not only limited to private housing. Also buildings in the public sector were constructed way below standard. Government buildings, public schools and hospitals, administrative offices, buildings financed and erected by the public hand and formally under public control nevertheless collapsed. In

2008, La Promesse, a school in the Port-au-Prince suburb of Petionville collapsed, killing nearly 100 people, mostly school children. The school owner Fortin Augustin, a Protestant minister allegedly stated that “the church school had been built with hardly any structural steel or cement to hold its concrete blocks together; he constructed the building all by himself, saying he didn't need an engineer as he had good knowledge of construction”⁷⁷. For Augustin the decision to build unsafe with low quality material was not due to lack of financial resources, but simply because he wanted to capitalize on the fact that education is a scarcity in Haiti (Katz 2013). Next to extreme poverty and the lack of knowledge in anti-seismic construction, corruption in the building sector is yet another reason for the unstable buildings as well as the unstable foundation of Haitian governmentality.

To summarize, the fatality of the catastrophe is directly related to poverty. Rachelle Jean, a female Caritas beneficiary, locates the responsibility within the limits of state supervision:

“In Haiti we don't have a state that acts responsible, responsibility when it comes to building and construction. Responsibility when someone for example builds close to a river, a ditch, or a channel, the state doesn't supervise when people build. The people build no matter where. That's one. Secondly, they build no matter how. The houses are poorly constructed. That's why so many people died. But if the houses would have been constructed in a good way, the way they ought to be constructed, in the place they ought to be constructed then not so many people would have had to die in this poor state”.

The catastrophe that *Douz Janvye* became to be has been foretold by its history. Haitians, beginning from the horrors of the middle passage, had to cope with violent colonial exploitation, a history of political and economic interferences facilitated by a kleptocratic Haitian elite, resulting in a hyper-urbanization of the overcrowded capital Port-au-Prince that was leveled by the earthquake in 2010.

Even though the image of the annunciated catastrophe functions as a metanarrative, the earthquake itself was in fact announced. Claude Prépétit, Haitian geologist, repeatedly warned the public about the possibility of an upcoming disaster, the last time in December 2009 (Nzengou-Tayo 2011, Lahens 2011, Prépétit 2008). Yet his predictions were not taken too seriously. Writer Dany Laferrière met his childhood friend Prépétit after the earthquake, asking him how he felt when it finally happened: “Honestly, it was a relief. It was the proof that I wasn't crazy” (Laferrière 2011), he said.

⁷⁷ <http://www.macaunews.net/index.php/sid/427823> Last visited March 19, 2016.

The conditions that Haiti was subjected to described above actually set the stage not only to the earthquake, but also to actions undertaken subsequent to the disaster. After January 12, 2010 Haiti was exposed to series of socio-economic, socio-political, and socio-cultural interventions subsumed under the umbrella of “humanitarianism” to an unprecedented extent.

3.3 The Earthquake's Impact on the Entanglements of Haiti with the Aid Complex

As was shown in the previous part, Haiti’s relation to international aid has a long and conflicted history. The earthquake and the subsequent events intensified this relationship. For a period of weeks Haiti and its misery was the center of media attention. Charity events, donor conferences and suffering black bodies have been highly publicized. Billions of dollars have been pledged for the good cause of reconstructing Haiti, to “build back better”. At least half of the funds pledged went to international NGOs. In 2016, six years after, Haiti is still being accompanied by its various threadbare bynames, the “poorest nation in the Western hemisphere” being the one most tenacious. In nearly all sites of intervention humanitarianism presents itself with challenges and difficulties, but “the problems with international assistance being uninvited, uncontrolled, inexperienced and inappropriate probably reached their zenith in the response to Haiti” (Redmond 2015:406).

Even though their work is interlocked, aid organizations, at least in the Haitian context, are highly self-referential entities. They are self-reproducing the parts considered “NGO culture”, especially bureaucracy and hierarchy, yet ahistorical with regard of their own institutional biography and lessons learned, also because their directors change on a regular basis. They suffer from “an incredible disregard for context”, like an NGO worker pointed out (Schuller 2016:218). Yet to only say “NGOs have failed Haiti” – like many do – falls short of the dynamics and realities of post-disaster humanitarian intervention and the figurations of liabilities inherent.

The following part will try to present the complexities and also conflicts of the figurations inherent to the aid complex that crystallized once again after *Douz Janvye*. It can be read tripartite and differentiates between the direct aftermath of the earthquake, medium term as well as long-term effects of the earthquake on Haiti’s entanglements with the aid complex.

3.3.1 *Direct aftermath and Short term*

January 16, 2010: “Newcomers descended the steps of high-class private jets sporting “Earthquake 2010” t-shirts hot off the presses. Stethoscopes at the ready, boxes of granola bars in the backpacks, they posed for team pictures. It was a civilian and a military invasion, a “save Haiti” invasion” (Ivers 2011:296).

In terms of international assistance the direct aftermath of the earthquake was shaped by a massive inflow of humans and resources in the first place. The immediate rescue operations of incoming Search and Rescue (SAR) teams went along with a massive militarization of Port-au-Prince by U.S. troops under the direction of USAID. The third characteristic was the upcoming capitalization of the circumstances. Last but not least, the rest of the world was highly consternated about the tragedy that happened to Haiti. The medialization of the earthquake’s effects acted as a carrier of empathy, a trigger for donations as well as a justifier for actions.

Incapability

In the direct aftermath of the earthquake, the state, public services as well as international structures were absolutely absent. The UN mission itself was severely affected, its headquarters under rubble. For the UN it was one of the biggest and also deadliest disasters in history. 102 employees of the civic arm of the MINUSTAH mission died – “the largest single loss of life in UN history” (Katz 2013).

Anthropologist Omar Thomaz, on the ground during the earthquake, observed a clear structured pattern in the first days subsequent to *Douz Janvyè*: Haitians helped Haitians and the UN helped the UN (Thomaz 2010). The images that were promulgated to people outside Haiti were almost exclusively limited to the latter:

“Il y a d’abord une confusion – entretenue par les médias et les humanitaires – entre efficacité et visibilité. En effet, les premières secouristes sur place, les plus efficaces de tous, ceux qui ont sauvé le plus de vies, ce sont les Haïtiens eux-mêmes. Cette aide directe, de voisinage, se vérifie après chaque catastrophe. A Haïti, trois jours et trois nuits durant, sans aucun soutien de l’Etat, de la Mission des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en Haïti (MINUSTHA) [sic!] – les Casques bleus présent sur place depuis 2004 – et de “l’international”, les gens se sont débrouillés, auto-organisés, aidés les uns les autres” (Thomas 2013:27).

The silencing of local impact, of auto-organization, is one of the necessary narratives of the aid complex. Above that, it follows the dynamics of media representation, in itself a self-fulfilling prophecy. People with little knowledge on Haiti wrote pieces on Haiti in a

very short time, often copied the work of others working under similar conditions.⁷⁸ This way, a story is repeated so often, that it can only be true to the eyes of the reader.

While Haitians as Haitians, as individuals, got active immediately, there was little to no coordinated response on the side of organizations and institutions, local or foreign, actually responsible to support the Haitian population: the Haitian Department of Civil Protection, multitudes of international and national non-governmental organizations, the stabilization mission of the UN. One reason for their absence in face of the immediate disaster is the lack of organizational disaster preparedness, at least a lack of preparedness for an earthquake like that: *“Well, I have to tell you, Caritas Haiti, as well as Haiti itself and every other organization there was in this country was not prepared for this event. When I say not prepared, I mean they did not have enough knowledge and they did not have enough capacity to face this event”*, Mackenzy Ernst, Coordinator for Disaster Risk Management at the National Office of Caritas Haiti stated. The predominant narrative regarding the capabilities to respond was *nou pat pre*⁷⁹, we were not ready for this. Likewise Emmanuel Auguste, the Program Coordinator at Caritas Jacmel, stated:

“Douz Janvyè took us by surprise. It destroyed everything and caused a lot of problems in the country, in the region, in the city, in our lakou⁸⁰, in the family, etc. It was really horrible. While we had a very good 2009, there was no hurricane, no nothing... a very good year. And then it took us by surprise. It troubled us a lot”.

Both organizations in question, Caritas Jacmel as well as DKH stated that they were incapable to react in the immediate aftermath of the quake: *“And A. is the Head of Mission, so I am like, okay. What do we do? You know, Katastrophenhilfe⁸¹... And she said: ‘Well, we are not doing anything’. I said: ‘Okay, that’s a fair decision’. I mean, it’s okay to not do anything if you are not ready to do anything. It’s better actually”*, an expat employed by DKH at the time of the earthquake stated. Similarly, Redmond in his account of professionalization of humanitarian assistance states: *“Any help is not always better than no help”* (Redmond 2015:407). Remarkably this decision to “not do anything” when

⁷⁸ Confronted with my criticism on his article „Ein wie von Geisterhand gepeinigtes Land“ (A country seemingly tormented by ghost hands), FAZ correspondent Josef Oehrlein responded he had to write the piece quickly, he had no time for further research on Haiti, was actually on his last day of holidays, and the earthquake happened while he was on a plane to Buenos Aires.

⁷⁹ Haitian Creole, *we were not ready*

⁸⁰ Haitian Creole, compound of houses inhabited by extended family

⁸¹ German, *emergency aid*

not ready stands in sharp contrast to what is being described as the “just-do-something humanitarian mentality” elsewhere (Schuller 2016).

SAR Operations

The very first outsiders to set foot in Haiti post-quake were militaries and rescue teams. SAR teams from around the globe flew in to conduct with expertise and professional equipment what Haitians did with their bare hand and elementary tools: dig out survivors from the debris. Within a time frame of eleven days 62 rescue teams from countries such as Mexico, Cuba, Israel, Iceland, Luxembourg rescued between 132⁸² and 211 individuals⁸³ (Katz 2013). Search and rescue was the most urgent exigency in the post-earthquake days because many were simply trapped under fallen concrete, sometimes even without being wounded. Each time a person was successfully liberated it “was like an earthquake in reverse” (Katz 2013:72).

Despite the equalizing effects of disasters mentioned in the former part, already hours after the earthquake the inequality between those whose lives the SAR teams saved in the first place and those whose lives were not saved became apparent. The SAR teams focused their resources and efforts mainly on buildings frequented by expatriate elites: supermarkets and hotels. The first U.S. rescue teams went straight to the UN headquarters, as many as six teams simultaneously focused on the Montana, a first class hotel where some 200 foreigners, the majority of whom UN workers, were assumed (Katz 2013). Katz indicates a multitude of reasons for this imbalance: the lack of governmental reporting and coordination structures, language problems in relation to Haitian nationals but not to foreign officials, who sent teams to the places they knew, and last but not least: security issues. Yet while the SAR teams might not have been actively and consciously discriminating against Haitians, the way they maneuvered through the city and the debris clearly replicated the structural as well as spatial inequities that have been characteristic for the presence of foreign staff in Haiti in the past. Even within what was considered “foreign” there were tangible hierarchies like this report from Montana shows:

⁸² http://philanthropyaction.com/nc/a_lesson_from_haiti_are_search_and_rescue_teams_worth_it/ Last visited February 22, 2016.

⁸³ The SAR operation in retrospect triggered question about best practice and efficiency. The 70 people strong SAR team dispatched by the UK for example could only save the lives of three people (Redmond 2015). Last visited May 22, 2016.

“Knowing that it is not true that *tout moun se moun*⁸⁴, when the Guadeloupian, located under the rubble of the Montana hotel, knew that his rescue depended on his best use of European French when answering the third question: 1.) Are you all right? 2.) Do you need water? 3.) What’s your nationality?” (Spear 2010:37)

There have been other survivor’s testimonies reporting that people came looking not generally for survivors but for specific people. A woman was left under rubble on three occasions for giving the wrong name before being finally rescued (Peck 2010). Yet Spear’s example is the most shocking as it suggests that the rescue of a Guadeloupian person would not have been given priority unless assumed of being of European descent.

A similar dynamic could also be observed in other situations around the same time: Louise Ivers, an U.S.-American physician working for the NGO Partners in Health (PIH) drove through Port-au-Prince in an UN vehicle boarded with people in utter need of assistance. After a quick look in the car the guard at the gate of the Argentine Military Hospital facing the UN log base rejected Ivers with the words: “No Haitian nationals can be taken care of here; we are full” (Ivers 2011: 300). Glancing through the gates, Ivers identified the lie of the overcrowded hospital and started arguing about the assertion of the acting head of the UN that they would be granted entrance, but nothing helped. She and the badly injured “Haitian nationals” were turned away.

Humanitarian organizations seldom get tired of repeating that their assets and their assistance are distributed on the basis of need alone. In this case, a military hospital under the command of the UN made a decision not on the basis of need, but on the basis of nationality. Didier Fassin, in his account of humanitarianism, elaborated on the inequality between those whose lives are sacred and thus saved and those whose lives are sacrificed (Fassin 2010). Ivers’ case makes it bitterly clear where the fault lines of the hierarchies in humanity run: it’s a question of nationality and above all like the former examples indicates, a question of “race”. The expertise in European French as superior towards Caribbean French or Creole acts as a life saving tool. European French is the marker of racial differences, a heritage of colonial construction of racial inequality that outlived the Haitian Revolution and remains a serious threat to black people’s lives and survival up until today.

⁸⁴ Haitian Creole, proverb, *everyone is a human being*

Militarization

At the same time SAR teams were flying into Haiti, a massive militarization of the country took place. An often-cited figure is that of 22,000 U.S.-American troops (Vorbe 2010) embarking in Haiti (and being held offshore in naval vessels) within the first weeks after *Douz Janvye*. Essentially that exposes one critical aspect of the nexus between humanitarianism and security. Whereas Colin Powell, former U.S. Secretary of State, got criticized in 2001 for calling U.S.-American NGOs in wartime Afghanistan “force multipliers” (Powell 2001), now the situation seems to be reversed: in the context of the Haitian earthquake U.S. troops were officially on a humanitarian mission, on the ground to secure the infrastructure of the humanitarian intervention. Here military troops were the “force multipliers” to the humanitarian invasion. As a matter of fact, the “U.S. military worked under the direction of the U.S. agency for international development (USAID)” (Ivers 2011:305). TIME magazine called the run to save Haiti a “compassionate invasion” (Katz 2013) – exposing the intimate connections between military and humanitarianism. Others, focusing more on imperialist or neo-colonialist aspirations, called it the latest U.S. occupation (Spear 2010, Vorbe 2010).

Additional to the U.S.-American troops there were some 13,000 MINUSTAH staff, including additional 2,000 military and 1,500 police, as well as civic staff on the ground. “Security was the overriding foreign concern of the response” (Katz 2013:82). Mullings et al. describe the events subsequent to the Haitian earthquake a further act of “humanitarian dispossession”, a neoliberal tool to disempower Haitians, made possible through an ethnocentric, racialized discourse on the “uncivilized and dangerous black man” (Mullings et al. 2010). This was particularly apparent in the immediate weeks after the quake when reports of a country on the edges of civil war, looting and shooting violence dominated the news and retroactively justified the foreign militarization of the country. In February 2010, Camille Chalmers, director of PAPDA, the Haitian Platform for Alternative Development, was concerned that the first response was “a military response. It is a militarization of humanitarian aid. [...] I don’t think we need 32,000 soldiers to distribute humanitarian aid” (Mennonite Central Committee 2010).

In this regard, a big matter of indignation on the side of Haitians as well as non-Haitians was the fact that within 24 hours after the quake the U.S. military took control of all strategic entrances to Port-au-Prince: the airport as well as the seaport. Stories have been told among aid workers that U.S. military flights carrying troops as well as jets with

U.S. American charity VIPs have been favored over international cargo planes boarding desperately needed medical supplies.⁸⁵ Whereas 22,000 troops were flown and shipped in immediately, it took a week for the first international humanitarian cargo flights to be given clearance to land on the *Aéroport International Toussaint Louverture* in Port-au-Prince. A freelance humanitarian employed by DKH was on one of the first planes on January 19th:

“We took a cargo plane to Haiti. One week after the earthquake we arrived here. It was one of the, no the first humanitarian flight that entered. The airport was blocked. The Americans took control over air space, because the control tower was destroyed. Normally we would not have been allowed to land, but our pilot was an old stager from Montevideo. One year before pension. So he just said “Mayday! Mayday! Mayday! I only have fuel for 20 more minutes!” They cleared the landing field and we descended. Otherwise they would have sent us to the Dominican Republic, or Miami”.

Aid organizations like MSF or the American Red Cross equally complained about their flights with medical staff and equipment being redirected to Santo Domingo, delaying their arrival in the affected zones for days. But not only humanitarians complained, also France and Brazil officially protested against the prioritization of U.S. military flights. Nelson Jobim, the Brazilian Minister of Defense, felt obliged to state in this very context that as Brazil is leading the UN mission MINUSTAH it would not relinquish command duties in Haiti to the U.S.⁸⁶

Obviously, the run on Haiti was not only of charitable and altruistic kind, it was also a struggle over power. U.S. troops had to be faster than Cubans, Venezuelans and other nations. They had to plant their flag, much like NGOs who “planted their flags” in mountains of debris (Schuller 2016) and defended their hegemonic position in this hemisphere. Haiti being settled in the front yard of both the Americas, is of high geostrategic value. It is a struggle over meaning and interpretation about who is saving the world, but also a spatial battle. Port-au-Prince is said to host the fifth largest U.S. embassy in the world, following China, Iraq, Afghanistan and Germany, all places of major geostrategic importance (USA International Business Publications 2013).

⁸⁵ MSF as well as the Red Cross scandalized the fact that on January 18 an aircraft boarded by U.S. Governor Ed Rendell was given priority over their cargos. On the way back Rendell actually took 53 Haitian children considered orphans with him, without necessary papers or governmental permission (Schuller 2016).

⁸⁶ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/jan/17/us-accused-aid-effort-haiti> Last visited May 24, 2016.

Capitalization

The post-disaster period in Haiti was a showpiece in how to “capitalize on catastrophes”, and everyone was involved: non-governmental organizations, their donor agencies as well as private contractors. Humanitarian and development organizations had to “follow the money” their governments pledged to disperse after the earthquake (Binder 2013). A Caritas Germany coordinator reported about a certain pressure on humanitarian organizations to follow the emergency regardless if they have any functioning structure on the ground. So instead of using resources to support other working structures, the logic of the system of visibility and performance urged them to be one among the 10,000 NGOs. Besides the pressure to get involved, there are also direct incentives associated with humanitarian intervention in immediate crises for “a good emergency can keep an agency running in the black for months” (Barnett 2011:42). This reminds of the fact that aid organizations are subjected to and follow the logics of global capitalist market system. They have to act “as if” they were private profit companies to establish and uphold themselves.

Schuller identified the expression “NGOs are making money off of us!” as very common among IDP camp residents in post-earthquake Port-au-Prince (Schuller 2016). Humanitarian engagement cannot be viewed outside of a globalized capitalist market, it produces value, commodities, provides the Western labor market with thousands of jobs, companies from the global north with thousands of assignments. In fact, some big donor institutions do bind the pledging of money to certain NGOs to a variety of postulates like the contracting of specific companies. In 2013, the Guardian summarized the findings of a study on the allocation of funds to Haiti: “about 94 percent of humanitarian funding went to donors' own civilian and military entities, UN agencies, international NGOs and private contractors. In addition, 36 percent of recovery grants went to international NGOs and private contractors”⁸⁷. A 2005 statistic indicates that 93 percent of USAID funds went back to the U.S. (Schuller and Morales 2012). One of the strongest criticisms on the Haitian Reconstruction Fund (HRF), a World Bank managed multidonor trust fund responsible for the organization and allocation of recovery funds, was that they actually allowed funds to be earmarked by donor governments simply by not calling the funds earmarked but “preferenced” (Willems 2012).

⁸⁷ <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2013/jan/14/haiti-earthquake-where-did-money-go> Last visited May 24, 2016.

Even the project of the Clinton Foundation, Bill Clinton being Co-Chair of the IHRC himself, imported the material and contracted a highly disputable U.S. company to build hurricane shelters. Clayton Holmes, at the time it was contracted was undergoing a lawsuit in the U.S. for providing formaldehyde-infested trailers to people made homeless by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Additionally, trailer residents were admonished to evacuate the trailers in event of a hurricane. Yet in 2010, the hurricane shelters imported to Haiti by Clayton Holmes were actual trailers and above all tested with heavily increased levels of formaldehyde. The mayor of Léogâne, where the shelters were established, in drawing the connection to the affected black population in New Orleans stated: "We'll take this as a black thing" (Doucet and Macdonald 2012:81). This is a clear example of how racism and capitalist interest intersect. On the account of the latter the anthropologist Erica Bornstein renders the diversity of interests more precisely when she states "Ideas of helping and humanitarianism, although not capitalist per se, are correlative components of transnational accumulation" (Bornstein 2005:69).

Not only NGOs do profit from disaster. Crisis of any kind proves to be extra lucrative for profit-oriented private ventures. A prime example for disaster capitalism. The term that was introduced by Naomi Klein's "Shock Doctrine" quickly got applied to the Haitian earthquake context (Dupuy 2010). On February 1, 2010, three weeks after the earthquake Kenneth Merten, the U.S. ambassador to Haiti, authored a cable to Washington that declared: "The gold rush is on" (Herz and Ives 2012). The earthquake was "an opportunity that cannot be missed" (Dupuy 2010:19), an opportunity first and foremost for those, who were able to capitalize on the event. An ECHO representative was cited on similar situations in the Balkans in the 1990s: "There are also cases of private companies that call themselves aid organizations for tax reasons or distribute products as humanitarian aid to create a local demand and get into the market" (De Cordier 2009:675f).

First of all, NGOs need contractors and importers. A big part of an organizations budget actually goes to contractors, often even in the organizations country of origin. Often NGOs rather increase the GDP of lets say Germany, than support the local economy of the country in distress. Converting calamities into cash proved to be an asset in the Haitian market, too. The humanitarian presence, the presence of people and structures that needed to spend money, extended the profit margins of certain products and services. For instance the prices for rental cars and safe housing, in terms of

construction as well as security issues, skyrocketed in Haiti after the earthquake (Schuller 2016).

One of the most visible short-term effects of the disaster was that Haiti after decades of being ignored by most parts of the world, returned to the consciousness of the world. For days without end Haiti, its suffering and unimaginable loss made headlines in newspapers, magazines, TV and radio news, online and offline. TV journalists were broadcasting live from collapsed Port-au-Prince, even before most rescue teams were present. To make a long story short: the Haitian earthquake was one of the most heavily publicized catastrophes in history. Needless to say, this often went down at the expense of the dignity of the victims, alive or dead.

The images of the suffering body reproduced by international media outlets are becoming valuable for humanitarian organizations, too. Those images as physical expressions of disaster and poverty become a commodity of the highest value. They are iconized, not only by religious aid agencies, but also by secular ones. On a theoretical level Agier debated that humanistic universals inscribed in humanitarianism are defined by equality. However, the opposite of this equality is not, Agier continues, inequality, but suffering incorporated by the ones who gradually diverge from the universalized condition of humanity: the vulnerable, the handicapped, etc., in short the beneficiaries of humanitarian as well as development organizations (Agier 2010). The victim's suffering is commodified, even fetishized to some extent, by the hands of hyper-medialization. This effectively follows the logics of an extractivism that is characteristic for the relationship between Latin America and the rest of the world from the 15th century onwards. Anthropologists recently started to theorize those contexts under the term of the "suffering slot" (Robbins 2013).

Of course, ostensibly those images are used to raise funds. The "Hope for Haiti Now" telethon only ten days after the earthquake was the most widely viewed telethon in history and raised US\$ 58 million in private donations (Mc Alister 2012). By the end of march 2010, New York hosted an international donors conference called "Towards a New Future for Haiti" to mobilize and assemble resources for the Haitian reconstruction among what is widely considered the "International Community": the U.S., the UN, the European Union and other single countries such as Brazil and France. It raised about US\$ 9.9 billion and brought to life the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC).

To sum up, the direct aftermath of *Douz Janvye* was shaped by the overall incapability of the organizations on the ground to properly respond to the disaster. While SAR teams started to come in 48 hours later to dig out people trapped in hotels and supermarkets, Haitians themselves have already done the better part of the job to rescue friends, family and neighbors from the rubble. The second group that made their way into the country were military troops, mainly dispatched by the U.S. Finally, the earthquake prepared the ground for a variety of actors, NGOs, contractors, politicians to capitalize on the event.

3.3.2 Housing and shelter - Medium term

After the first days of search and rescue operations and primary emergency relief the early recovery phase started. The earthquake left 1.5 million homeless, thus the most urgent exigency in that period was housing. While chapter six of this dissertation will take a closer look on housing as the main focus and distributed asset of the two FBOs examined, the present part will give a more general summary about the habitat sector as one of the main pillars of the post-earthquake aid-complex.

Nation in rubbles

Before one could even think about building anew, the rubble of the fallen houses had to be cleared. Also the houses labeled “red”, indicating the immediate risk of collapse, by the MTPTC, the Haitian Ministry of Public Works, had to be taken down. According to the UNDP, ten million cubic meters of rubble had to be removed, “equivalent to 4,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools”⁸⁸. This alone was a mammoth task. It would have been for any nation. It took the city of New York nine months to clear Ground Zero, 612 cubic meters of rubble, in the aftermath of 9/11. In Haiti, about half of the rubble was recycled for infrastructure or reused by the communities, the rest had to be disposed in dumping sites around the capital. Until October 2011, 40 percent had been cleared.⁸⁹ The collapsed National Palace with its slumped cupola, itself a symbol for the devastated country, had to serve as a symbol for the slow progress in rubble removal. The clearance only started in September 2012 and was undertaken by J/P HRO, the NGO of U.S. celebrity Sean Penn. The fact that an U.S.-American NGO was tearing down the presidential palace was considered a disgrace among some Haitians. It also can be viewed an irony of history as already the erection of the National Palace was completed by U.S. naval engineers during the U.S. occupation 1915-1934.

⁸⁸ <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40026> Last visited May 24, 2016.

⁸⁹ <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40026> Last visited May 24, 2016.

Altogether the debris removal was a cost-intensive encounter. The IHRC estimated US\$ 400 million for the clearance of rubble in all affected areas of the country.⁹⁰ An opportunity mainly for U.S. construction companies contracted to do the job. Many aid organizations tried to employ Haitians in so-called “Cash-for-Work” (CFW) programs to clear the rubble from the streets. It was part of their early recovery programs, also of strictly humanitarian organizations. This form of day labor provided many with the means to substitute their lives, at least on a small scale. Most organizations paid the minimum wage of 200 gourdes, the equivalent to US\$ 5, per day. Its general aim is to get money circulating again, and therewith to stimulate economy. USAID alone speaks of 350,000 people they employed for short-term work. Yet “Haiti Grassroots Watch”, a coalition of several local grassroots organizations was highly critical of the CFW practice for undermining the general concept of work as well as undermining government legitimacy. Altogether “Haiti Grassroots Watch” attests CFW program to be a sedative of political stability to keep people from taking to streets to demand housing, like happened in post-earthquake Mexico in 1985 (HGW 2012).

While the rubble was being cleared, people urgently needed accommodation. 1.5 million people were considered internally displaced after the earthquake.⁹¹ Approximately 630,000 people fled to the provinces in the immediate aftermath of the quake, yet the majority returned to the capital in the subsequent months as the provinces could not provide subsistence for all (Jean-Baptiste 2012). Back in Port-au-Prince they most likely lived in one of the more than thousand IDP camps that spread all over the city (Schuller 2016).

Anba tant - IDP

Affected by the “psychoses beton” people did not trust the concrete over their heads anymore, so they preferred to live *anba tant*⁹² even if their own house didn’t collapse yet. For weeks after January 12, people’s lives continued to be disrupted by tectonic aftershocks. Later, houses got repaired, or people learnt to live with their fears. Others lived within the camps because many aid organizations exclusively delivered services

⁹⁰ http://www.clubmadrid.org/img/secciones/Stategic_Plan_for_the_Remainder_of_ICRH_Dec_2010.pdf
Last visited May 24, 2016.

⁹¹ While those are official UN figures there is to say that the UN only considered people in encampments bigger than 500 people. There have been many smaller camps and structures. The unofficial number of IDPs thus has to be higher.

⁹² Haitian Creole, literally *under the tent*, referring to a range of insufficient accommodation from a stretched bed sheet to transitional shelters.

and assistance to camps and failed to support other structures. Anthropologist Wagner states: “In the case of post-quake Haiti, formal recognition hinged on receiving an ID card and registration number from IOM or the Red Cross, and with it access to direct food aid, food vouchers (*kat*), hygiene kits, and relocation money” (Wagner 2014:56). DKH tried to also support existing neighborhood structures like the *gwoupes katye*⁹³, but according to the former Country Director, was drawn into the camp management dynamics by the simple fact that it had been the first organization to be delivered with tents in Jacmel.

The IDP camps were tangible markers of the veritable humanitarian crisis that got hold of Haiti (Schuller 2016). The problems inherent in IDP camps were manifest: unhygienic conditions, lack of privacy, sexualized violence especially but not exclusively against women. 22 percent of IDP residents were victims of violence in the camps in 2011 (Muggah 2011). The same year anthropologist Mark Schuller conducted a study on Port-au-Prince IDP camps. Among the eight camps he focused on “even the best among them lacked basic services” (Schuller 2016:47). Schuller vividly described the challenges of good intentions, of the dynamics of an aid complex and the bad consequences inherent to it. One major consequence of the camp structure promoted by NGOs was the disintegration of family structures as a result of the distributive practice of NGOs. Often, food was giving to families regardless of size. Many families simply split up to receive an appropriate amount of food aid, encouraged by the reward structure introduced by the NGOs. Also sexualized violence against women was facilitated by the camp structure as well as by the distribution practices. As Schuller reports, many women were forced into sexual interactions in return for ration cards by the gatekeepers installed by NGOs (Schuller 2016). Additionally, the interventions undertaken by NGOs were accompanied by culturalist assumptions: “They are lazies. They take advantage of this disaster. They just sit around in the camp, waiting for aid. They don’t make any effort”, an aid worker of an NGO involved in IDP camps said (Schuller 2016:175). Despite several narratives presented by NGO workers and foreign aid personnel indicating that Haitians would only be living in camps to “scam” the services provided by NGOs, studies showed that more than 90 percent of residents desperately wanted to leave the camp situation (Schuller 2016).

⁹³ Haitian Creole, *neighborhood groups*

Shelter and displacement

What was subsumed under the term “shelters” varied from bed sheets, a simple tarp, over tents, to so-called “T-shelters”, meaning transitional shelter. The latter term was mostly used to refer to a simple plywood construction surrounded by tarp and a tin roof construction. In 2011, by the time of my first fieldwork T-shelters were a big matter of discourse, within the NGO community as well as among the ones affected by them. Despite the fact that the Haitian government as well as the so-called shelter cluster, a conglomerate of NGOs, UN agencies and other institutions involved in post-earthquake accommodation, set a moratorium for T-shelters in 2011, 16 months after the disaster, some NGOs kept importing T-shelters way past the humanitarian emergency phase instead of providing more durable and sustainable solutions to the housing problems. One NGO worker explained that even though they were not the best choice in cost-effect and sustainability, they raised an asset more valuable in the aid complex: visibility (Schuller 2016). In Jacmel, the site of my fieldwork, the faith-based organization MEDAIR got in trouble with the mayor of the city, who would no longer tolerate T-shelters to be put up in the center.

Not only the immediate victims of the earthquake were suffering from internal displacement in camps and the forced evictions out of them, but also those who were spared from destruction at first. Many renters got kicked out by their landlords because the owners needed the house for themselves and their families. Yet Haitians were not only displaced by Haitians in need of housing, also by aid workers. Often the sheer presence of foreign humanitarians sets processes of enforced inequalities into motion. In Haiti, this form of humanitarian gentrification, more thoroughly studied in other intervention sites (see Büscher and Vlassenroot 2010), is visible in how the presence of humanitarians shapes the re-configurations and re-appropriation of the urban space in post-earthquake Port-au-Prince. The earthquake not only destroyed a large part of the housing structure of cities like Port-au-Prince, Léogâne and Jacmel, it also led to an immense increase in rental charges of the living space left. Especially in the capital the major part of unaffected living space is rented to foreign NGO and UN workers who push the rents higher through their mere presence (ironically many of them work in projects that focus on housing efforts). Most NGOs pay monthly housing allowances of several thousand U.S. dollars to their foreign staff.⁹⁴ Long-established residents are no longer

⁹⁴ Schuller reports of one NGO director with a monthly housing allowance of US\$ 8,000 granted by her

able to compete with the horrendous housing market prices determined by foreign NGOs budgets. Thus they suffer from a structural displacement to far outlying districts that offer no infrastructure of whatsoever.

The challenge to relocate the displaced was a mammoth task with many obstacles. Relocation in most cases meant moving their tents and IDP status from one place that was contested by the landowner to another place less contested. The first and foremost obstacle was the question of land ownership. Land property in Port-au-Prince was in the hand of a few unwilling to share (Katz 2013). Even if they tolerated camps on their land in the beginning, soon many, mayors as much as priests would call the police and other armed forces to make people leave. On public ground like that of Place Boyer in Petionville the government actually paid residents an equivalent of US\$ 500 to leave.

The latest IOM figures of October 2015 indicate 64,680 individuals still living in one of the 66 IDP camps left.⁹⁵ While some 53,000 households have been provided with rental assistance by IOM, the reduction from 1.5 million IDPs not necessarily illustrates a transition to a better situation as many simply were violently evicted from campsites without being given an adequate alternative. Their poverty was not eliminated, it simply moved out of the focus of the aid complex as funds began to be reduced, partly due to a “Haiti fatigue” among donors. To date there is no study able to coherently keep track with this group of people. While the earthquake disrobed Haitians to use Lahens’ narrative frame, the current situation does not mean that the poor parts of society are properly clothed now, it simply means that the spectators identifying and capitalizing on their abject poverty moved to the next place of intervention.

IHRC

The midterm post-earthquake period was characterized by the work of the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC). It was formed in April 2010 after the New York “International Donors Conference Towards a New Future for Haiti” and headed by former U.S. president and then UN special envoy to Haiti, Bill Clinton, and then Haitian Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive. The IHRC officially was “the planning body for the Haitian recovery”⁹⁶, evaluating and approving any relevant recovery project. Haitians should be represented in parity in the commission, next to “representatives of donors

employer (Schuller 2016).

⁹⁵ <http://humanitariancompendium.iom.int/haiti/2015> Last visited December 18, 2015.

⁹⁶ <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/2011/154141.htm> Last visited December 19, 2015.

that had pledged at least US\$ 100 million of reconstruction assistance or debt relief (the United States, Canada, France, Venezuela, the EU, Japan, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and a few others)” (Farmer 2011:156). In 2011, the U.S. State Department declared that “to ensure that the reconstruction is Haitian-led, the U.S. Government coordinates all its recovery assistance through the IHRC”⁹⁷.

The IHRC was in office during the emergency phase of 18 months from April 2010 to October 2011. Yet most accounts of the commissions work attested exactly the opposite: neither the lead nor even the co-management was on the Haitian side. “In reality, Haitian members of the board have one role: to endorse the decision made by the director and Executive Committee”, Haitian IHRC members complained in an official protest note (Willems 2012:42). According to Willems the commission also failed to uphold its guiding principles of transparency. Even board members complained about the lack of access to important documents and minutes (Willems 2012). Additionally, some observers expounded the problematic fact that while Bill Clinton was UN Special Envoy and co-chair of the IHRC his marital partner Hillary Clinton was in office as U.S. Secretary of State.

Miles certified a general pattern of exclusion of Haitians from the recovery process (Miles 2012), also in the efforts of coordinating relief operations. The cluster meetings of UN OCHA took place in the heavily guarded UN log base in Port-au-Prince. Representatives of Haitian grass roots organizations were repeatedly denied entrance. The lack of language skills on the side of foreign staff also hindered participation. At first the meeting were held exclusively in English, later only in French. Seldom translation into Haitian Creole was provided for. In Jacmel, the first cluster meetings were organized and hosted by a local organization: KROS⁹⁸. According to the former Country Director of DKH, soon the meetings took place in the MINUSTAH log base. At first, Medair wanted to take the lead in the cluster meeting, but then the Red Cross came in and naturally took over, saying they had the lead in all the cluster everywhere else, so they would also lead this one.

⁹⁷ <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/2011/154141.htm> Last visited December 19, 2015.

⁹⁸ Haitian Creole, acronym for *Kordinasyon Rejyonal Oganizasyon Sides*, Regional Cooperation for the Organizations in the South East

Cholera

The reconstruction efforts were also hindered by another event. In October 2010, the earthquake was joined by a second disaster: the outbreak of Cholera. The waterborne disease most likely was introduced by UN soldiers in a Nepalese battalion near Mirebalais in the center of Haiti. Failure in wastewater management infused infected feces into the Artibonite River. It took the bacteria little less than three weeks to reach the camps of Port-au-Prince (Walton and Ivers 2011).

The epidemic was a major setback in the recovery efforts. It highlighted the severity of the housing crisis, too. Overcrowded encampments with next to no sanitary structure provided a fertile soil for the disease to spread.⁹⁹ Medical Anthropologist Paul Farmer calls it the worst nightmare of a doctor working in a camp (Farmer 2011). Cholera is treatable, yet it operates very quickly. It can degrade a healthy adult in mere hours, even faster with the more vulnerable: children, elders, pregnant women, those with a weakened immune system due to tuberculosis and HIV/Aids. With cholera the body loses fluids and electrolytes so quickly, that they cannot be replaced without the essential medical infusions (Farmer 2011). In rural Haiti for its lack of medical infrastructure this acted as a death sentence in many cases. A lack of knowledge about cholera as well as traditional burial rites amplified the expansion of the bacteria in rural regions.

Despite all evidence including epidemiologist research that proved the Haitian cholera strain to be a perfect match with one found in Nepal 2009 (Piarroux et al. 2011), the UN up until today has neglected liability. As of February 2016, more than 9000 people died, 771,000 people got infected with cholera in Haiti.¹⁰⁰ In 2013, several institutions and individuals filed a lawsuit against the UN for neither testing nor treating its Nepalese soldiers for cholera, nor taking care of correct water waste management during mission. The Southern District of New York dismissed the case in 2014, claiming the UN cannot be sued due to its immunity. Meanwhile in 2015 humanitarian organizations reported a new rise in cholera cases in Haiti.

⁹⁹ The epidemic also had the effect that people fled IDP camps, especially those with non-existing sanitation for fear of catching the disease (Schuller 2016).

¹⁰⁰ UN OCHA figures of February 2016 <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/node/123972>
Last visited May 12, 2016.

3.3.3 Long term effects

Many among the organizations, which came to Haiti after and essentially for the earthquake, were humanitarian organizations. Organizations like DKH, which have been present before the earthquake considerably expanded in size, in terms of employees as well as of budget. Yet humanitarian organizations act on a limited humanitarian mandate:

“The purpose of the complex apparatus of humanitarian intervention is not to implement the long-term agenda of economic development; it is not the promotion of democracy; it is not advocacy for human rights. Its purpose is to provide an immediate response as dictated by the emergency imaginary with its emphasis on apparently sudden, unpredictable, and short-term explosions of suffering” (Pandolfi 2011:228).

In Haiti, in the context of what has been dubbed a “complex humanitarian emergency” the limits and fault lines of a strict humanitarian approach became tangible. Humanitarian aid has its strict set of victims, as Jean-Michel Clersaint, Program Manager of DKH, reported:

“Imagine, before the earthquake you lived in a house, you were poor [...]. But I was in a much better place. The earthquake happens and your house is not damaged at all. But my house crashed completely. I came to be vulnerable. In terms of the framework of humanitarian intervention we have to find people who are victims of the earthquake. [...] And now you live in dire poverty, your house is not good, even though it did not crash. And you see the way they help me. That is a source of tension. All of that happens in humanitarian action, it contributes to social inequalities, indirectly”.

Similarly fighting cholera without addressing the necessity of access to potable water seems like a quixotic project. Other aid workers shared the critique inherent in Clersaint’s statement, pointing out to the fact that humanitarian assistance should include a reconstruction approach (Schuller 2016). The “project mentality” inherent to the aid complex mostly does not allow for sustainable solutions that Haitians can profit from for a longer period of time. In recent years though, there has been increased attention given to a more sustainable vision also of humanitarian aid. The strategy to link relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) aims “to create a more seamless fit between short-term life-saving interventions and long-term efforts to reduce chronic poverty or vulnerability” (Mosel and Levine 2014:1).

Generally, the humanitarian emergency cycle seldom exceeds 18 months. The exit of the organizations is ideally being planned for from the very beginning. The strategies as well as the effects of the exit of humanitarian organizations are an understudied phenomenon and should be more closely observed. Yet it is an area where many NGOs

keep their cards close to their chests. In 2013, the headquarters of DKH for example was reluctant to provide access to their office in Port-au-Prince during the time they called “consolidation”. This specific situation will be given more attention in chapter seven.

Considered from a long-term perspective, the earthquake intensified Haiti’s entanglement with the aid complex. The US\$ 9.9 billion in funds pledged at the donor’s conference in New York were to be dispersed in the five to ten post-earthquake years (Willems 2012). The Haitian Reconstruction Fund (HRF) will be allocating reconstruction funds until the end of 2017.¹⁰¹

Another long-term factor of the heightened foreign NGO presence is a “brain drain” of skilled personnel from the public sector (Redfield 2012, Schuller 2007). This situation, even though already visible in the decade prior the earthquake, intensified considerably with the influx of aid organizations. A Haitian employee of an international NGO earns considerably less than a *blan* doing the same job. Yet the salaries are still higher than what the Haitian government is able to pay. Well-educated Haitians prefer to work in the aid business rather than in public institutions. Together with the distribution of the money pledged for relief and reconstruction to NGOs rather than to the government institutions, this leads to a further decapitation of the governmental structures of the Haitian state, bound to be of a “failed” kind.¹⁰²

Another side of the medal is that jobs in the aid complex for Haitians are mostly limited to front-line and sometimes middle management staff. Schuller describes the inequalities inherent in the internal hierarchization of NGOs as “internal colonialism”. He cites examples of Haitian staff with decades of experience in the aid complex being replaced by younger, less experienced but better paid expat staff (Schuller 2016). Haitian staff employed by Caritas Jacmel expressed similar things:

“The NGOs do not solve the problem of the country. Quite the contrary, they solve their very own problem. There are many NGOs, I see them employ many Europeans... the Spanish, who come to work here. There is an economic crisis in Spain. Instead of using Haitian resources and employ them in the NGOs, they take others without experience...who were jobless. They make them come here to work. They don’t solve the problem. They make us poorer. I could have found work instead of those people. But they take my place. They put

¹⁰¹ <http://www.haitireconstructionfund.org/faq#question17> Last visited May 24, 2016.

¹⁰² Not paying local staff the equivalent salary to expat staff and still paying more than governmental institutions are two sides of the same highly problematic medal. Redfield refers to this as to many contradictions in humanitarianism as double binds (Redfield 2012).

me in misery. And the same way that they put me in misery, they put many people in misery”.

In this statement, Jude Duverseau, an engineer employed by Caritas Jacmel unveils the inequalities and hierarchies writ large within the economic interdependencies of the aid complex.

In light of the challenges of the reconstruction process, the election of Michel Martelly for president in 2011 imposed the country with a new mantra: Haiti was now declared as “open for business”. While more than a million people were living in tents, plans were being made to turn Île à Vache into a tourist paradise. In 2013, the Haitian government under Martelly issued a decree that annulled the land rights of the residents and declared the whole island a “zone of tourism development and public utility”.¹⁰³ Other features of the open business include export-oriented monoculture with serious effects on food sovereignty of the poor, as well as the latest plans for gold mining in Haiti that human rights organizations are more than concerned about regarding environmental as well as land rights under attack (Global Justice Clinic & Haiti Justice Initiative 2015).¹⁰⁴

The reconstruction process is part of that business. A third of the IHRC approved U.S. projects went to Caracol, a garment industrial park in the north of Haiti, dubbed “the flagship of reconstruction”. When it opened in 2012 it envisioned employing 65,000 people by 2017. By 2015, only 7,000 people have been working there. 450 farmers have been displaced from fertile soil for the construction. 750 housing units constructed by USAID were proven to be faulty.¹⁰⁵ Successful reconstruction has still a long way to go from there.

What role did take Haitians in the reconstruction process, if not in the IHRC as shown above? The capacities of Haitians themselves are seldom framed in a realistic manner. First of all, Haitians were the ones saving the majority of lives on January 12. Those actions have neither been documented nor made public in a coherent way. Between

¹⁰³ www.huffingtonpost.com/beverly-bell/reconstruction-or-haitis_b_5606282.html Last visited May 22, 2016.

¹⁰⁴ Both Tony Rodham, the brother of Hillary Clinton as well as Jean-Max Bellerive, co-chair of the IHRC with Bill Clinton are involved in VCS Mining, an U.S. mining company to be granted the first exploitation permit from the Haitian government in 50 years. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/role-of-hillary-clintons-brother-in-haiti-gold-mine-raises-eyebrows/2015/03/20/c8b6e3bc-cc05-11e4-a2a7-9517a3a70506_story.html Last visited May 6, 2016.

¹⁰⁵ http://cepr.net/blogs/haiti-relief-and-reconstruction-watch/second-usaid-contractor-suspended-following-caracol-housing-debacle?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter Last visited May 24, 2016

2010 and 2014, Haitian remittances, personal cash transfer to Haiti, largely stemmed by the Haitian diaspora, accounted for US\$ 8.4 billion, World Bank figure show.¹⁰⁶ This is a massive amount of money, also in light of the resources provided through other channels. Of the US\$ 13.5 billion pledged to Haiti, US\$ 3.1 billion have been private donations, leaving US\$ 10.4 billion to the “International Community”.¹⁰⁷ Putting aside the fact that the World Bank remittances figures do not provide information on the economic situation of neither sender nor receiver, nor does the “International Community” coherently allocate the percentage of funds going directly back to the sending countries through earmarking and contracting, to contrast the two shows that financial support from the diaspora has to be regarded as an equally significant factor in Haitian lives and survival. In Canaan, an IDP encampment without NGO support, residents themselves invested US\$ 64 million (Schuller 2016).

Comparing those numbers begs the question what is considered aid and support and what else is considered as “informal”. If we follow the logic of the aid complex, 211 individuals rescued by a joint million dollar SAR team operation accounts for heroic humanitarian action. The countless and faceless – because not mediatized – individuals that rescued other people, Haitians or foreigners, from the debris are neither given the ranks of fellow humanitarians nor any form of acknowledgement from the outside. Humanitarianism erects and upholds a relationship of power. The differentiation between formality and informality within the aid complex is an expression of the unequal distribution of power in definition as well exertion of aid.

3.4 Conclusion

The 2010 earthquake took at least 250,000 lives, destroyed major parts of the building structure of Port-au-Prince and left millions of people homeless. The events that unfolded after *Douz Janvye* are a showcase for the fact that earthquakes are not merely shifts in the tectonic structure that cause the immediate death of people. They unfold underlying social inequalities as well as socio-historical and socio-political interdependencies of one country with other states, regions, and supra-national institutions. Particularly in the past 100 years Haiti served as a laboratory of humanitarian, military and economic intervention for the International Community. The Haitian earthquake gave way to an intensified struggle over the sovereignty of

¹⁰⁶ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.CD.DT?page=1> Last visited May 24, 2016.

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/s1104/text> Last visited May 24, 2016.

interpretation as well as over the hegemony in disaster response in the so called "Republic of NGOs", having the highest ratio of NGOs per capita worldwide. The earthquake triggered a "massive influx of international NGOs with varying capacity, levels of professionalism and resources" (GPPi/URD 2010:33). Within this process Haitians were denied ownership over their own tragedy (Doucet and Mac Donald 2012).

One of the most persistent bottom-up narratives of *Douz Janvye* was the eminent level of solidarity that the catastrophe evoked. In the first days post-quake people were dug out of debris, taken care of, fed and supplied by fellow Haitians, sometimes complete strangers. The fact that everyone regardless of social, economic or religious background met to spend the nights subsequent to the quake *a la belle étoile*, under the canopy, accounts for the equalizing tendencies of the earthquake. *Youn ede lot*, one helps the other, was the slogan of those days. Many people stood in for one another, shared the little they had. Unlike the predictions of panic mongering media and foreign governments that purported the idea that it is in catastrophe that people cut the social contract and fall back into a Hobbesian state of chaos and unrest, verifiably the opposite was the case. As Haitians were used to taking their fate in their own hands, they did not lose time waiting for state, NGOs or the UN to come to save their brothers and sisters from under the rubble. Those involved and affected as well as observers picture the atmosphere in the days after the earthquake as extraordinary quiet and calm (Katz 2013, Wagner 2014), which is the norm and not the exception in post-disaster contexts.

To most Haitians the events of *Douz Janvye* were a temporary break in the legibility of the world (Blumenberg 1986), a rupture not only in perceiving and understanding the immediate environment the immediate perception of the physical world, but also of the transcendental life world. The faith in God and in divine protection offered explanatory models and social cohesion in this period of elevated ontological uncertainty. Religious communities provided affected individuals with means of spiritual support, but also access to basic goods and services, a social security network in times of crises. Many interpreted the earthquake as an act of divine intervention, others added theories about tectonic shifts or environmental degradation.

The majority of humanitarians aim at improving living conditions of people in sudden distress, want to do something to counterweigh the immediate effects of global injustices and unequal distribution of resources, power and capital of various sorts. Yet

as the previous chapter has shown, the phenomenon of humanitarianism itself at times reinforces the very inequalities it seeks to diminish or even creates additional ones. The events prior and subsequent to the Haitian earthquake are a prime example for this dilemma. The disaster triggered an endless series of secondary hardships: humanitarian gentrification displacing Haitians from the centers of the affected cities; the “brain-drain” of Haitian employees from public institutions to affluent international organizations; the cholera epidemic as a result of improper waste-management by the UN mission killed thousands and hindered the reconstruction process considerably. The situation of Haitian women, the bearers of the country's economy, worsened excessively. They were a group extremely vulnerable to the dynamics that unfolded with the earthquake. Countless cases of rapes committed in the post-earthquake IDP camps were reported (d’Adesky 2012), sexual exploitation and abuse heightened within the Haitian society as well as was triggered by the foreign presence.

Fassin recounts the inequalities in the value and qualities of lives within humanitarianism. He describes hierarchies of humanity especially when it comes to the differentiation between foreign humanitarians, expatriates and national staff. In violent conflict, the lives of expats are given a specific value for example by groups who kidnap them for ransom. The expat becomes a precious commodity whereas the national staff simply gets shot (Fassin 2010). In times of immediate disasters like the Haitian earthquake the international staff gets supported or rescued out of the country, sometimes even against their will, whereas the local employees are literally left outside the gates of embassies and airports for the struggle of survival. Clearly this is not about the value of all human beings but about some human lives that are seen as more valuable than others. Those sentiments were also tangible in the cases of Haitians left outside the gates of foreign military hospitals and the practices of the SAR teams.

This chapter presents the earthquake itself as well its implications and effects from a variety of angles: the Haitian perspective, a historical perspective as well as in terms of the reinforced entanglements with the aid complex triggered by the event. At the beginning of my research I defined the earthquake only as the starting point, the narrative frame of my focus on faith-based interventions in Haiti. Any other event that may have triggered a humanitarian response from FBOs would have done the same for me, I thought. Yet the centrality of the earthquake as an event in itself increased, the more involved I got with the lives, narratives and stories of Haitians on the ground. The

earthquake as an act originating in the hands of God was an all-embracing narrative I encountered with the ones I engaged with. I suggest that a food crisis, civil war or may be even a hurricane would not have triggered such a persistent reference to the divine. Thus, faith-based organizations for their set of beliefs share an inherent understanding of this specific interpretation of reality with their beneficiaries in Haiti. In comparison to a more secular organization, institutions like Caritas Jacmel are able to bond with their beneficiaries over a religious contextualization of the event. Thus, the subsequent part will theorize the category of “faith-based organizations”, embed their emergence into a socio-historical context and relate their positions within the aid complex to secular modernities.

4 Of Faith in Humanitarianism – The Particularities of Faith-Based Organizations

A: *Now I say: Woy... I went outside, I run into the cathedral, into the church. Now that I enter the church...*

B: *...You went into the church after the earthquake happened?*

A: *During the earthquake...*

B: *DURING the earthquake???*

A: *Yes! Because I didn't know what was really going on. During the earthquake I was in the church. Now, there was a prayer going on, I went to the prayer.*

This immediate experience of the earthquake tellingly describes the significant place of faith for many among the Haitian people in face of the disaster. Collapsing buildings particularly caused the high mortality rate of the quake. In light of that fact, seeking shelter in a building appears to be as counterintuitive as irrational an act. Yet the church in that case is not a concrete brick building that would mean yet another threat to one's survival. For this person as for many others it is the place of cosmological explanation. It represents the materialized community, a transcendent sphere that symbolizes security, solace and stability, even if the building itself was about to fall into pieces. Faith in that case acts as a form of knowledge that helps "making sense" of and reconfiguring one's world. As shown in the previous chapter, the vast majority of beneficiaries framed the earthquake as well as the subsequent humanitarian aid in religious terms. Faith plays a vital role in the lives of the majority of people affected by the earthquake – as well as in lives of the people trying to alleviate the effects of the earthquake. Manouchka Beauchamp, who narrated her experience, belongs to both sides: as a Haitian woman living in Jacmel, she was personally affected by the disaster, as an employee of a Haitian faith-based organization, Caritas Jacmel, she was one of the humanitarians active in post-disaster relief.

Also for other humanitarian practitioners religious faith remains among the foremost motivations. Besides the individual motivation of the employees, a multitude of the various transregional humanitarian organizations that are active in today's sites of intervention do have a faith-based background. To name only a few, organizations such as Caritas, World Vision, Catholic Relief Services, Islamic Relief or the Salvation Army all have missions in Haiti, among other places around the world. Due to the geographical proximity to the United States the percentage of smaller faith-based initiatives of individual church groups or bilateral church partnerships (Hefferan 2007) is very high

in Haiti as well.¹⁰⁸ Many of the contemporary secular aid institutions were founded on strong religious grounds and were embedded in a Christian moral universe. The humanitarian commitment of personalities such as Henry Dunant, Florence Nightingale and Albert Schweitzer was highly driven by their faith in the teachings of Christ (Bornstein and Redfield 2011).

According to Bornstein and Redfield it is Christianity that “played a particular role in the emergence of both the aid world and the secular order of institutions that surround it” (Bornstein and Redfield 2011:11).¹⁰⁹ Organizations like Oxfam and Amnesty International were originally founded on Christian principles (Bradley 2011). In a process of codification and professionalization embedded in a larger process framed as “modernization”, the religious traits in the various humanitarian motivations got secularized, its Christian elements removed. For a long time, religion used to be a taboo in development theory (Ver Beek 2000). The academic focus on the role of religion as a significant variable next to such categories as gender, ethnicity, “race” and class was very marginal. Religion was either framed in a “secular reductionist” way, focusing solely on the spiritual categories and leaving the manifold material aspects of religion aside, or connected with “materialistic determinism” (Clarke 2007) that neglected transcendental motivations of human behavior, such as certain humanitarian impulses.

Yet Humanitarianism was, and I would suggest still is, deeply influenced by a certain sense of transcendence, the (un-)conditional love for the stranger, the neighbor, the other, the alter ego. In organizations that are motivated by religious faith one finds the idea of a common humanity created in *imago dei*, which according to Linden represents the “roots of a Christian understanding of human dignity” (Linden 2008). The sacred duty of almsgiving is a fundamental feature, at the least in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism and therefore relates to the humanitarian work of faith-based organizations. “*I believe in God, I believe in the church, too and I believe in sharing.*”

¹⁰⁸ In a study conducted in 2009, Jean-Jacques counted 127 of the 406 NGOs registered with the Haitian office for the coordination of NGOs, UCAONG, to be faith-based (Jean-Jacques 2009). While this list does not present a realistic amount of NGOs present in the country, as it only shows those formally registered with the Haitian state, in my view it draws a realistic picture on the amount of faith-based organizations as opposed to secular NGOs in Haiti.

¹⁰⁹ This thesis intends to look specifically at Christian organizations in Haiti. For that reason the selection of reviewed literature rather focuses on the Christian perspective of humanitarianism. For an account of the genesis of humanitarianism in other religious contexts see for example: Jonathan Benthall and Jérôme Bellion-Jourdan 2003. *The Charitable Crescent: Politics of Aid in the Muslim World*. London: I.B. Tauris or Erica Bornstein 2012a. *Disquieting Gifts: Humanitarianism in New Delhi*. Stanford: University Press.

Sharing is something that helps people a lot”, an employee of Caritas Jacmel stated in an interview. Here ideas of solidarity and wealth distribution become apparent.

Thus, a crucial question is: where do transcendence and humanitarianism, faith-based or not, intersect today? What defines those “forces of compassion”¹¹⁰ that, according to Michael Barnett are the driving energies behind contemporary humanitarianism? He takes up the transcendental notion of “the humanitarian” to point to the belief in something that transgresses the material life worlds, “which can embody a religious form, but not necessarily”(Barnett 2011:20). He finds the transcendental within the notion of humanity and of an International Community that also secular agencies employ. The so-called International Community at times appears to have an unspoken self-conception, a secret consensual bond not unlike a secular *ummah*¹¹¹. Whereas secular aid organizations – if they refer to an idea of humanity at all – rather operate on the basis of an “immanent humanism” (Taylor 2007), faith-based organizations like Caritas Jacmel are more direct with their reference to a human community as well as religious morals and values. They apply an idea of holistic development of the human condition, for their beneficiaries to reach a higher level of humanness, *pou yo vin pi moun*, so they can be more human, like Father André Valery, the Director of Caritas Jacmel stated.

During the last decade, the visibility as well as the theorization of so called faith-based organizations (FBOs) and their humanitarian and development initiatives started to increase. The scholarly work of people like Erica Bornstein, Jonathan Benthall, and Michael Barnett represents a seminal effort in that area. Among other things, their work shows that faith-based initiatives are more intensely funded, tackled and controlled today. On the one hand, particular historical events like 9/11 initiated a closer, at times suspicious look on religious aid organizations. On the other hand this dynamic can also be linked to a general resurgence of religion that is taking place in many parts of the world. To many this is not a big surprise as the “formations of the secular” (Asad 2003) always were an idiosyncratic phenomenon invented in Euro-America. The “traveling idea of secularism” (Taylor 2007) influenced, but never fully permeated all of other world regions to the same extent. It remains a very contextual phenomenon.

¹¹⁰ Edited volume: Bornstein, Erica and Peter Redfield 2011. *Forces of Compassion: Humanitarianism Between Ethics and Politics*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press.

¹¹¹ Arabic, *community*, used mostly in religious contexts

Nevertheless a post-secular era is being announced, at least for parts of what is considered the “Western world”. Die *Entzauberung der Welt*, the disenchantment of the world in the processes of enlightenment, which Max Weber (Weber 1995) once analyzed turned into disenchantment with the outcomes of the promise embodied in the “project of modernity”.

4.1 Locating faith-based organizations

The attempt to define faith-based organizations is as challenging as every effort to categorize and operationalize heterogeneous dynamic phenomena. The multitude of religions, religious institutions and faith traditions is hardly to be brought under one umbrella. The same applies to the various organizations involved in humanitarian and development interventions. The boundaries between humanitarian commitment driven by individual faith, collective religion and a transcendent idea of humanity are blurry and hard to sum up in one definition.

In recent years scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds have theorized national and international FBOs, in disaster, development as well as in contexts of social welfare studies (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012, Bornstein 2005, Clarke 2008, Clarke and Jennings 2008, Hefferan 2007, Jeavons 1997, Sider and Unruh 2004, Smith and Sosin 2001, Thaut 2009). Clarke and Jennings established the most useful definition for the aim of this research. They define a faith-based organization as “any organization that derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within faith” (Clarke and Jennings 2008:6). In this view, a one-person social initiative that is motivated by religious faith, a medium-sized organization with funding structures, staff and benefactors as well as large international entities like World Vision can be included.

Moreover, the disciplinary background from which the phenomenon is theorized is relevant. FBOs have been studied in various fields, ranging from Political Science, Economics, Sociology, to Human Geography and Cultural and Social Anthropology. As a trained anthropologist I look at the organizations not only in terms of organizational structure. The main foci are the people embedded in those structures and the ongoing processes of negotiation that are being carried out within as well as between the structures and the people who represent them. Especially the figure of the beneficiary as

a political subject (Thomas 2013) within the entanglements of the aid complex is central to the study at hand.

The field in which FBOs get involved in is of importance for the study. Some FBOs solely focus on the countries of their origin; others intervene only in international contexts. A FBO working in a development context might have different self-conceptions than a similar organization working in a humanitarian surrounding. As this study is mainly concerned with organizations operating in the humanitarian phase in post-earthquake Haiti, it is relevant to look at the entanglements between humanitarianism and faith.

The anthropologist Didier Fassin designates three characteristic factors to humanitarianism: first of all, time. Humanitarianism acts in a limited temporal sphere, a state of exception, an emergency. Secondly the object of its actions is important, which is primarily saving lives. The third defining feature of humanitarianism is the spirit of the intervention itself: the foundation for getting involved with the misery of others in the form of emotions, most strongly visible in the application of moral sentiments (Fassin 2012). Those moral sentiments often have a religious foundation. Furthermore, faith-based initiatives, in contrast to secular encounters, mostly address and frame issues in moral terms (Bornstein 2005). Thus, for the analysis of faith-based organization the third, the motivational and intentional aspect of humanitarianism is crucial.

There have been several attempts to categorize faith-based organizations and to conceptualize the differences between such organizations. Sider and Unruh categorize six types of FBOs: faith-saturated, faith-centered, faith-affiliated, faith-background, faith-secular partnership, and secular. Jeavons analyses FBOs by looking at their self-identification, their resources, their objectives, their decision-making processes, the distributions of goods, and their organizational background (Jeavons 1997).¹¹² Most typologies draw a line between denominational organizations and those, which focus primarily on evangelism as the far end of the spectrum. The motivations of the employees of the organization, those designated humanitarians, are another factor that has to be taken into account. Remarkably, whereas most typologies take into account the human element on the side of the practitioners, they disregard the beneficiaries and their perceptions as a decisive factor of the evaluation of FBOs.

¹¹² For more approaches to the categorization of FBOs see: Clarke 2008, Jeavons 1997, Sider and Unruh 2004, Smith and Sosin 2001, Thaut 2009.

Evidently, what is subsumed under the term varies considerably in size, focus, theological orientation, and motivation (Hefferan 2010). “Agencies of the same faith often differed more than faith agencies did from secular organization”, Barnett and Gross Stein recall in their examination of faith-based engagement (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012). An FBO like Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe in many of its features has for example more in common with an organization like Oxfam, a secular agency, than it does resemble Christian Aid, even though both FBOs are members of the Christian ACT Alliance.

The few existing anthropological studies on FBOs focus mainly on development organizations. That largely accounts to the fact that anthropological research – very much like developmental projects – ideally is a long-term endeavor. Anthropological studies of humanitarian intervention often do not have a long preliminary lead-time as they – very much like humanitarian organizations – react to situations deriving from more or less sudden emergencies.

Anthropologist Erica Bornstein conducted the most prominent account of trans-regional faith-based initiatives. She focused on two evangelical FBOs, World Vision International and Christian Care, and their programs of child sponsorship in Zimbabwe. Their development projects were a “morally defined form of cultural intervention” (Bornstein 2005:169). She focused on the political implications and the tight interdependencies between faith, the state and trans-regional institutions. Her work “attempted to show how the faith of Christian development forms sites of struggle over meanings, over transnational financial accountability, and over expectations, met and unmet” (Bornstein 2005:170).

Furthermore, Laurie Occhipinti analyzed two Catholic organizations in the Salta province of northwest Argentina. Both organizations belong to the progressive spectrum of Catholic social doctrines. Occhipinti’s work focuses on the teachings of Liberation Theology and the specific kind of development work that derives from it. She critically examines how the two organizations position themselves in an indigenization discourse and entangled land claims issues: “As religious organizations, they take a holistic interest in the human condition. Their motivation is not economic maximization, or improved living conditions, or growth, to the extent that a secular development's *raison d'etre* [sic!] is economic, or educational, or any single issue or set of issues. Instead their

driving force is social justice, interpreted broadly and inclusively” (Occhipinti 2005:192). Yet she shows at what points their visions diverge from the interests of their beneficiaries and produce discontent, unveiling the ruptures of this specific kind of development. Occhipinti’s work furthermore points out to one advantage of long-term ethnographic fieldwork: the possibility to address the beneficiary as an important category of analysis.

Those two monographs can be seen as the starting point of a broader trend. Obviously there is an increased need as well as a higher awareness for a critical evaluation of faith in humanitarianism and development in recent years. Academia as much as policy institutions seem to have discovered the “elephant in the room” that faith-based humanitarian engagement is. The impact of religion on contemporary societal processes in general and in humanitarian and development efforts in particular has been underestimated and ignored in the dominant public, political and academic discourse of the past. The “taboo” of religion (Ver Beek 2000) led to a neglect of one of the main driving forces within the contemporary aid world. Most importantly, religion plays an important role in the lives of the majority of people primarily targeted by humanitarian aid. Secondly, religion remains among the main motivations for humanitarians to join humanitarian missions and organizations. Therefore “research in this area is essential for understanding the nature of contemporary humanitarian activities” (Minn 2007:3).

Only recently the interest in faith-based organizations as a particular phenomenon within the study of development and humanitarianism started to grow (Brondo and Hefferan 2010, Ferris 2011, Occhipinti 2005). Within the studies on FBOs there seems to be a tendency to focus first on countries and initiatives in Africa, Asia and North America (see for example Bornstein 2007, Bradley 2011) rather than Latin America and the Caribbean. Secondly most studies look at organizations within a nation state context, mainly in the U.S.

The study at hand will overcome those omissions by examining trans-regional initiatives and their entangled global flows and fluxes of ideas and values, secular and religious alike, people and money.

4.1.1 The organizational side

The influences of faith-based initiatives on the social sector of countries like the U.S. and Germany is enormous. In the late 1990s faith-based groups ran 70 percent of U.S. food pantries and soup kitchens and more than a quarter of emergency shelters and transitional housing programs (Vaughan and Arsneault 2013). In post-Katrina New Orleans, it was faith-based non-profit organizations that played the largest role in reconstruction (Adams 2013). 18 percent of all U.S. non-profit organizations are faith-based (Wuthnow 2004, cited in Hefferan 2010). Between 2001 and 2005 US\$ 1.7 billion of USAID funds were channeled to 179 FBOs in the U.S. (Hefferan et al. 2009). According to latest figures World Vision International's annual income is close to US\$ 3 billion. Hopgood and Vinjamuri argue that the organization's success is precisely "because of, not despite, its religious credentials" (Hopgood and Vinjamuri 2012:37). In 2005, Diakonie, the social service organization of the Evangelical Church in Germany, provided more than one million nursing and care places in the numerous hospitals and social service stations they run all over the country (Golbeck 2010). In the executive board of VENRO, the umbrella organization of development and humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Germany, the majority – six out of ten – members represent a Christian faith-based organization.

On the other hand the rise in visibility of FBOs is related to intensified humanitarian and development action as forms of non-state, non-military intervention in countries and regions of the global south in general, but also on a national level. The outsourcing of social services to private, non-governmental organizations like FBOs is a result of neoliberal imperatives that favor market-led solutions for poverty over governmental responsibilities (Brondo and Hefferan 2010). Some of the world's largest NGOs actually provide more aid than respective governmental agencies are capable of and willing to (see Smillie and Minear, cited in Ferris 2005). There are NGOs whose annual income is higher than the GDP of some of the countries they operate in (Karajkov 2007). Often bilateral and multilateral aid is channeled through NGOs rather than going to local governments. That leads to a further decapitation of the latter, enforcing their reputation as "failed-states" (Bornstein 2005), a phenomenon that is particularly obvious in Haiti.¹¹³

¹¹³ The intimate connections between the aid complex and the Haitian status quo was given attention in chapter three.

Public sector funding is on the rise globally. Many NGOs receive large parts of their budget from governmental agencies like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Through third party funding Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe receives parts of its project budget from *Auswärtiges Amt* (AA), the German Foreign Ministry. Such entanglements and related interdependencies carry inherent political risks. At the outset of the involvement of German troops in the war in Afghanistan their role was designated as one of humanitarian assistance. In the same way U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell's statement on NGOs as "force multipliers" in conflict (Powell 2001) can be contextualized. Those developments call for a critical re-assessment of the "non-governmental" in the term "non-governmental organization" ¹¹⁴ Here, also the humanitarian principles come into play. The principles of neutrality and independence admonish humanitarian organizations not to render themselves financially dependent from third parties, especially governments or even warring parties. The aim is to keep them from influencing the course of their mission and avoid that humanitarian aid is used as a political instrument. Those principles are part of a larger development of professional rules and standards and an overall process of professionalization of the humanitarian sector that is going to be examined more thoroughly in chapter seven of this dissertation.

4.1.2 The religious side

For the study of faith-based organizations it is not only important to look at the organizational side, but also frame the space that religion inhabits in the mission of those organizations. To do so it is crucial to methodologically as well as theoretically differentiate between religion, faith and spirituality. Religion can be framed in various dimensions: the personal dimension including patterns of everyday life, inner dialogue, individual motivations and personal faith. The social, community dimension aims at the intersection of religion with societal processes, civil society, and community building. The core question is how religion does shape the organization of human coexistence here. The third dimension is concerned with the organizational, institutional form of religion: churches, clerical hierarchies, and in the specific case of this study, faith-based organizations (Bradley 2011, Rakodi 2012). This thesis intends to look at religion not only in its institutionalized forms but also from the perspectives of personal belief, faith

¹¹⁴ An insufficient attempt to deal with those dynamics on a theoretical level are neologisms such as "government-organized non-governmental organization" (GONGO).

and practices that influence the behavior of communities and collectives (Lunn 2009). Chapter five of this work will focus on the intersection of faith and humanitarianism on the side of the practitioners as well as the recipients of humanitarian aid. The analysis is rather based on the religious life worlds and “meaning as it is lived” than on theology or a formal prescription “of what religion should be like” (Knibbe and Versteeg 2008).

Especially when entering the realm of humanitarian intervention, a broad ontological concept of the religious is advisable. Elisha stresses that “[t]he ontological condition of faith is linked to the pursuit of radical intersubjectivity, an experience of continuous subjection to and reliance upon divine agency” (Elisha 2008a:57f). Yet the notion of a God, a divine being, is not indispensable for religious experience or faith in general. Individuals in the search for meaning can have religious experiences or a belief in something sacred or divine without belonging to a certain church, or believing in Jesus Christ or Allah - “a religion beyond God” so to speak (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012). This insight becomes particularly important when looking at contemporary humanitarianism. A devoted humanitarian who believes in the dignity and value of human life no matter what ethnicity, gender, nationality or religion s/he belongs to does have faith in hers principles and is motivated by it. “Secular humanitarian agencies see themselves dwelling in a moral universe that transcends the here and now” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012:23). Why then, one has to speak of faith-based organizations at all? Because “[t]he world, of course, never became secularized, and neither did humanitarianism, which is why the sector maintains the distinction between faith and secular agencies” (Barnett 2011:20).

In this context it is important that religion with its manifold faith-tradition is not a static concept but in constant flow and flux. There is an ongoing negotiation of religiosity and faith within FBOs, between FBOs and beneficiaries and FBOs and donors. It may also mean completely different things to all of these entities and involved individuals.

4.2 Religious roots of humanitarianism

“For I was hungry, and you gave me food; thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you welcomed me...Inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these who are my brothers and sisters, you have done it to me.” (Matthew 25:35)¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ (Packer 2001)

It is this very Bible verse that is crucial for unwrapping the entanglements between religion and humanitarianism. It interweaves notions of materialism, alterity, solidarity, the transcendent love for the stranger (Bornstein 2005) and last but not least humanity – the main characteristics that contemporary faith-based humanitarianism is based upon.

The genesis of today's humanitarian action is tightly interwoven with a certain set of norms and directives that originate in religious thoughts on morality, human dignity, and also justice. Contemporary humanitarian encounters can be seen as secular expressions of religious traditions of caring and giving that predate Médecins Sans Frontières, Oxfam and the World Food Program (Fassin 2010). In humanitarianism one finds “an imperative of sympathy, of Christian witness, of Jewish traditions of responsibility to 'the other'. Of deontic moral principles of the worth of each human life [...]” (Calhoun 2008:74).

Religious directives to help are different from secular individual choices of getting involved with the suffering of others, insofar as a righteous Muslim or Christian believer has to give and to share. It is not a moral choice of an individual, not a personal form of altruism, but a socio-religious duty (Bornstein and Redfield 2011), an obligatory, sacred, and collective act that is also tightly interrelated with the idea of salvation, for “*it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God*” (Matthew 19:24).

Sharing wealth as a form of responsibility towards the community is one of the main features of religious communities everywhere. Most of the major religions do have the notion of alms as a religious obligation inscribed. In Islam it is the *zakāt*, in Christianity the alm, in Judaism *tzedakah* or *tikkun olam*, and in Hinduism *seva* and *dān* that takes care of the ones neglected by the system. In the Abrahamic religious traditions, all wealth belongs to God. Therefore *zakāt* and alms in general can be seen as instruments of wealth redistribution, economic development and reconstruction (Benthall 2011). The Hebrew word *tzedakah* literally translates not into “charity” but into “justice”, evidently characterizing the socio-political dimension of this religious obligation (Bornstein and Redfield 2011). It transcends the notion of sharing as an individual charitable act into a collective responsibility derived from a religious tradition. The contemporary sentiment to care for people in need in other world regions interconnects

with the biblical demand to “love thy neighbor”. Neighbor in the original as well as the current humanitarian context does not only mean the person next door but all people, the entity of humankind (Kierkegaard cited in Hill 2006).

The historical development of different faith traditions especially within Christianity was a decisive factor in the emergence of present humanitarianism. The Kierkegaardian distinction between Christianity as the belief system and Christendom as the power structure (Kierkegaard 1968) opens the conception of a multitude of “Christianities” rather than the idea of one homogeneous “Christendom”. In the decades subsequent to the Protestant reformations many believers turned away from institutional religion by questioning the jurisdiction and interpretative sovereignty of religious authorities like the Holy See. Later, “[a]nticlerical politics in revolutionary Europe” initiated the turn “of the sacred from God to the individual and the community” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012:25). In fact, it was within the church, through the attempt to purify religion that the process of secularization was initiated (Taylor 2007, Casanova 2011). The Christian theologian St. Augustine used *saeculum* to describe life in the worldly sphere as compared to a life dedicated to religion (Nikolov 2008).

Accordingly the emergence of Christian humanitarianism is a result of the differentiation of Christian belief possibilities that initiated the manifold processes of secularization in Western societies. “[E]vangelicalism was perhaps most important for the development of humanitarianism” (Barnett 2011:53). The various Christian reform movements for example of spiritual awakening and revivalism changed the perspective on “this world and the next”. A religious interpretation that enabled the individual to save herself represented an alternative to the view that humankind is inherently sinful and awaits devotionally its unchangeable God given fate. This relation between individualism and Christian movements according to Maldonado Torres predates Christian reformation and was already initiated when modernity introduced ego-politics to the spheres of theo-politics and a “new God is born: modern Man” (Maldonado-Torres 2014:652). Grosfoguel frames the same dynamic as idolatric universalism, where the Christian God was replaced by the “ego” of the Cartesian “cogito ergo sum”, the “I” of the modern man (Grosfoguel 2012). Both scholars set modernity and Christianity in temporal as well as epistemological relation to the “invention of the Americas” (Dussel 1995).

The very etymological foundation of the word links humanitarianism to religion. The English word “humanitarian” dates back to the early 19th century. It was used “to describe a theological position stressing the humanity of Christ, and subsequently efforts to alleviate suffering or advance the human race in general” (Bornstein and Redfield 2011:15), paving the way to a “religion of humanity” (Calhoun 2008). Likewise the modern language of human rights has some of its roots in religious thought. Derrida points out to the “underlying notion of transcendence that justifies the valuation of human rights” (cited in Feldman and Ticktin 2010:11).

Both human rights advocates as well as humanitarians have an epistemological overlap with religious discourse: the crucial category of dignity is often stressed by religious aid organizations when addressing the status quo of their beneficiaries. This notion does not belong to religious encounters exclusively; also formally secular organizations apply the term, especially those working in the human rights sector. Yet the Christian interpretation states that “[t]he roots of the Christian understanding of human dignity, which underlies the promotion of both human rights and human development, lie in the doctrine of creation found in the first book of Genesis”, human beings being created in *imago dei* (Linden 2008). One also finds the concept of dignity as a category in official scriptures of contemporary international governance (Bornstein and Redfield 2011). This is particularly obvious in the first article of the German constitution of 1949: “The dignity of man is inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all public authority”.¹¹⁶ Several other constitutions of member countries of the European Union and beyond denote the protection of human dignity as the highest principle. Former Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a Catholic priest highly influenced by Liberation Theology, continuously claimed that he wanted to elevate the Haitian people from “misery to poverty with dignity” (Aristide 2000). The notion of human dignity is constructed from a religious perspective but transcends this category to reach the level of a human condition (Occhipinti 2005) and the “absolute value of the human person” (Ferris 2005).

Recent scholarship on the history and significance of humanitarianism also applies vocabulary that refers to religious connotations without being explicitly religious when

¹¹⁶ Art. 1 GG: „Die Würde des Menschen ist unantastbar. Sie zu achten und zu schützen ist Verpflichtung aller staatlichen Gewalt”.

for example talking about the “sacredness of humanity” and the “inequalities between those whose life is sacred and those whose life may be sacrificed” in the course of humanitarian action (Fassin 2010). Contemporary secular humanitarianism also has its sacred texts, like Dunant's “Memory of Solferino” and rituals like the Humanitarian Day at the UN dedicated to the memory of humanitarians killed in mission. An employee of DKH, one of the organizations targeted in this study, acclaimed that whereas in the headquarters the biblical Decalogue is the guiding source, the organization's Ten Commandments in the field is the Code of Conduct, meaning the “Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief”.

According to Lunn, the entire field of development is grounded in religious – especially Christian – ideas (Lunn 2009). Rist goes further and denotes that development itself takes the form of a quasi-religious dogma when he states: “it is part of our modern religion” (Rist 2008:21). “Paradoxically, whilst there is the skepticism of religion and religious mission, development itself has a mission – or even is a mission – in the way that it is conceptualized and practiced.” (Hovland 2008:180). In the same vein, development workers are labeled the “new missionaries” or the children's children of the former colonial masters. In fact, there is an undeniable link between the decline of colonial states and the emergence of development and relief agencies (Bornstein and Redfield 2011). The proposed continuity of missionary attempts of the past and current humanitarian and development interventions will be discussed later in this chapter.

Humanitarian organizations operate within the binary opposition of the religious and the secular. Yet humanitarianism did not create those opposing categories but “they are an effect of the world in which it exists” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012: 27). To think of the religious and the secular in strictly binary terms is misleading. It is rather helpful to address the non-static and dynamic aspects of both phenomena. Therefore, it is more constructive to address processes of secularization and sanctification, like Barnett and Gross-Stein proposed. Whereas secularization is codified “in the growing role of states and commercial enterprises, the centrality of fundraising, encroachment of earthly matters such as governance, processes of bureaucratization and professionalization, and the kinds of evidence that are required to demonstrate effectiveness.” Sanctification is “evident in the insistence on a space free of politics, and in the calling of a humanitarian ethic that acts first and asks questions later, insists that motives must be innocent and

altruistic, and guards against a world in which interests and instruments trump values and ethics” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012:8). Secularization and sanctification are mutually dependent, multilayered as well as multidimensional processes and strategies, too, that shape the face of contemporary humanitarian encounters. Depending on the specific arena organizations may also switch and shift between the two ends. In other contexts humanitarian organizations themselves maintain and draw on the boundaries of the religious and the secular to distinguish themselves from each other to strengthen their own identity and, last but not least to create niches and diversity in a competitive market of humanitarian assistance.

4.3 Humanitarianism in secular modernities

The normative assumptions underlying the theory of secularization were tightly interwoven with notions of progress, rationalization and modernization. Modernization as one of the preconditions of mainstream development discourse also implied secularization, the renunciation from supposedly pre-modern religious forms of knowledge towards a modern, rational, scientific, and in its very heart westernized *modus operandi*. Yet “[a]ssumptions about the integrated character of 'modernity' are themselves part of practical and political reality” (Asad 2003:13). Secularism here is a subcategory of a singularized modernity that helped to establish and justify a relational system of epistemological power and factual political domination. The theory of secularization as proposed by Peter L. Berger in the 1980s, stemming from an “unexamined Enlightenment view of religion” (Reilly 2011) partly evolved into a self-referential narrative tightly interwoven with a broader epistemological approach, to use Wendy Brown’s words, of an “imperial and unreflexive Western civilizational discourse of rationality and secularism” (Brown 2009:13).

The way modernity and a narrow conception of secularity were intrinsically tied to each other had its repercussions for the way religion was framed within the humanitarianism/development discourse. Analogous to the “Northern perspective on dichotomies of sacred and secular” (Ver Beek 2000) religion was constructed the antidote to development. Still, it is often viewed as something backward that must be overthrown for real development to be realized (Bradley 2011). But “the secular is not simply an 'opposite' to religion, or even to the 'rational'; it is, rather, a multi-layered category with a complex history” (Hovland 2008:172).

The “formations of the secular” (Asad 2003) in Euro-America are a particular phenomenon that did not take place to the same extent in other world regions (Davie cited in Hovland 2008). Even within the realm assigned “Euro-America” those secular formations were not an all-embracing homogeneous process. They refer not only to the separation of state and church or in the case of this study of institutional development and religion, but also to various other dimensions. Casanova defines the process of secularization by a decline of religion, the privatization of religion as well as the functional differentiation of religion (Casanova 2011). Whereas the first condition is empirically rebutted in most contexts, the latter two phenomena can be observed in many societies and nation-states. For Maclure and Taylor, secularism as a necessary but not sufficient condition of contemporary democracy, is defined by two principles: the equality of all different (religious) positions that are held by people in a given society and secondly, a maximum degree of freedom of conscience that is compatible with equality (Maclure and Taylor 2011).

Secularism in the countries where the concept originated today constitutes a “condition in which transcendent modes of belief represent one option among many” (Lynch 2011:206). According to Taylor, this is the defining feature of what he calls the secular age: whereas in former times it was impossible for the individual to position herself outside the realm of God, today religiosity, the belief in God, is optional, one choice among many others (Taylor 2007). Yet Taylor's account of secularization deals with Western societies and derives from his position as a Canadian philosopher and Catholic believer. He fails to take into account the “colonized other” for the configuration of Western modes of modernity and the process of secularization. Especially when dealing with trans-regional faith-based humanitarian intervention a Western conception of secular modernity cannot be the sole point of departure.

Despite a rather complex analysis of the various facets of secularisms, or formations of the secular, undertaken in the last decades within mainstream Euro-Western liberal discourse, the secular is still used tantamount to rationality, progress and impartiality (Reilly 2011). Religious humanitarianism then is constructed as the antidote, being above all: biased. The discourse on religion in target countries of humanitarian intervention as well as the supposed neutrality of humanitarian action represents what Santiago Castro-Gómez frames as the hubris of the zero point, *el hybris del punto cero* (Castro-Gómez 2005), the blank positionality of the Western knowledge system. The

necessary narrative of neutrality in humanitarian intervention mirrors this disparity of the belief in the unmarked, neutral center and the subsequent neglect of alternative perspectives on modernity, like for example the concepts of “multiple modernities” (Eisenstadt 2000) or trans-modernity (Dussel 2012).

Especially the country of Haiti plays a particular role in the contestation of the idea of one single modernity. Its depiction sways between revolutionary universalism and an often-emphasized exceptionalism of a country beyond comprehension (Clitandre 2011). The Haitian Revolution of 1804 went in many ways beyond and radicalized the demands of freedom and equality, articulated by the two revolutions it succeeded, the French and the U.S.-American. It completed the ideals of the French Revolution exactly by defeating the violent system of colonial domination the French profited from for centuries. Evidently, the universal achievements and emancipatory impacts of the Haitian Revolution have been systematically silenced by Western historiography (Trouillot 1995, Fischer 2004). Today, Haiti is deemed a failed-state with a high vulnerability to dictatorship, social unrest and insecurity as well as “natural” disasters like the earthquake of January 12, 2010.

Religion plays a dominant role in the unfolding of those narratives of exceptionalism. Haiti’s “resilient faith” in face of a protracted complex humanitarian crisis is often emphasized. Simultaneously Haitian Vodou is blamed as a socio-cultural trait that causes the economic as well as social “backwardness” of the Haitian people and keeps them from progressing. Done so by New York Times author David Brooks only two days after the earthquake – his suggested solution for the Haitian tragedy being what he calls “intrusive paternalism”, locally conducted but steered from the outside (Brooks 2010). Religion here – especially but not exclusively formally non-Christian religion – plays the role of the quasi anti-modern trait par excellence. The normative insistence on the correlation between secularism, modernity and progress despite other evidence gradually affects religions like Haitian Vodou – thought of as non-Western – more than it does affect Christianity.

This way of rationalizing Haiti’s misery is deeply embedded in and evolves from colonial domination. The very idea of modernity is inseparably interwoven with the project of colonialism. Moreover, the categories of modernity/coloniality again are interlinked with politics of religion, from the 15th century up until today. According to Enrique

Dussel, the Western conceptualization of modernity was and only could be born in 1492, with the conquest of the Americas (Dussel 1992). It originates in the Europe of the free cities from the 10th century, “but is born when Europe constitutes itself as center of the world system, of world history, that is inaugurated with 1492” (Dussel 1996). It does so only through the dialectical relation to a non-European alterity. The so-called “conquest of the New World” itself was embedded in religious politics of Late Middle Ages Europe. Columbus was stalled to wait for the fall of Granada, the final act of the *Reconquista* to drive out Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula in early 1492, before being sent to discover new worlds and possibilities for domination (Grosfoguel 2013).

The Caribbean as the entry point of colonial domination over the Americas was paradigmatic as it served to be “Europe’s first colonial backyard” (Mintz 1998). The Caribbean slave plantation was a proto-capitalist “modern system” (James 1989) and the Atlantic a “revolving door of major global flows over four centuries” (Trouillot 2003). And yet theo-politics were an indispensable part of colonial domination. The populations that Columbus encountered were written as subjects without religion (Maldonado-Torres 2014). Before being the “racialized” other, they were the other to Christianity. In later époques the Catholic doctrine *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* – outside of the Church none are saved – facilitated the enslavement of African populations to the consciousness of those who were profiting from it (Rey 1999). Furthermore, according to Terry Rey it was and only could be the Catholic hierarchy that provided the legitimizing power for the colonial domination. Actually, it was the church that owned three-fourths of the slaves in the colonial French Antilles (Rey 1999). This “earlier colonial Catholicism” (Edmonds and Gonzales 2010) influenced the fate of former Saint-Domingue, as Haiti was called during colonization, over the course of centuries and manifested the tight entanglements between Catholicism and the Haitian population.

The Catholic Church was one of the main driving forces behind the violent colonization of the Caribbean as well as one of its main profiteers. “But full-fledged Christian globalization took form within colonialism. And conversely, colonialism was shaped by Christianity. Missionaries usually aspired to both a more far-reaching and a deeper transformation of colonized people than did either administrators or business interests” (Keane 2007:43). This is particularly evident in the prominent role that the Catholic Church occupies in primary education in Haiti, past and present. Until today the Catholic Church remains a strong institution in Haiti, despite the enduring prevalence of Haitian

Vodou and the growing influence of Protestant churches. Like Erica Bornstein (Bornstein 2005) analyzed for Christianity on the African continent, also the churches in Haiti, Catholic as well as Protestant, can no longer be regarded only as a mere force of colonialism. Instead, many churches are indigenized and make up a big part of Haitian self-identity. Basquiat states that “[r]eligion (whether Vodou or Christianity) has been the underlying force of political, economic and social change” (Basquiat 2001:31) in Haiti.

Nevertheless, scholars stress the continuity of missionary endeavors and contemporary development and humanitarian action, adding a further yet contested element to the entanglements between religion and the aid world. The overlaps are not engraved in the name “humanitarian mission” only. For modern humanitarianism those “uncomfortable parallels” (Ager and Ager 2011) challenge the background and the contemporary justification of humanitarian intervention that was left unquestioned for a long period of time. Colonialism was understood a humanitarian encounter by its brokers, framed in theological terms. European colonial powers were the agents of the *mission civilatrice*, and Christian missionaries their fore fighters (Calhoun 2008:78).

For the case of colonial Africa, Manji and O’Coil describe colonial philanthropy through missionaries as a form of governance that was on the one hand culturally and mentally colonizing the people. On the other hand, the initiatives were also motivated by the fear of potential uprisings. “In short, charity was not only designed to help the poor, it also served to protect the rich” (Manji and O’Coill 2002:570). Giving people too little to live, but too much to die is a narrative often used in the context of the Haitian poor. Today, as Greenburg analyses, next to the humanitarian and development expats it is the personnel of the UN mission, the MINUSTAH, that perceive their work as a civilizing mission (Greenburg 2013). In essence she describes the continuation of “colonial trusteeship” through UN staff as the new entrepreneurs.

Clearly, there are intimate epistemological, historical and political connections between conceptions of modernity and secularity, colonial missions and humanitarianism that appear to present themselves in a magnified way in Haiti. The following part will now discern the specific ways in which FBOs intervene in the lives of people.

4.4 Virtues and ruptures of faith-based humanitarianism

In the 19th century, when the contemporary phenomenon of humanitarianism evolved (Asad 2013) there was no need to differentiate between humanitarians with or without faith. It was indisputable that for example Henri Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross Movement, was a devoted Christian and that his engagement was guided by his faith. Since then, many processes of structural, socio-political and socio-religious differentiation took place. A religious worldview is not self evident any longer, but one option among many (Taylor 2007). Still, it is an option, also for humanitarian engagement. Precisely because secularization did not take place to the extent that religion itself went into a retreat, the humanitarian domain draws the line between organizations with a distinct religious background and those without a religious system of reference.

Most of the social, political and economic processes and decisions that secular NGOs are subjected to also apply to faith-based organizations. There are certain characteristics that distinguish the work of faith-based organizations from the initiatives of formally secular ones though. This part will illustrate the differences between the ideal-types.

4.4.1 Virtues

FBOs do have the opportunity to provide aid through channels “not necessarily open to secular agencies” (Thaut 2009) like local religious communities and networks. Other NGOs “*do not reach out as far as we do. Also we have church representatives everywhere*”, Dr. Frantz Pelissier, a physician at Caritas Jacmel confirms. Local churches are not seen as competitors the same way other existing aid agencies are. In many cases, FBOs are embedded profoundly through local church structures (Samuel and Sugden, cited in Thaut 2009). Thus they have a more direct approach to the people they sought to assist. Additionally to technocratic categories of development and assistance where effectiveness is measured “entirely in material terms” (Taithe 2012:168), FBOs often add value and meaning about social life, too and therefore provide a more holistic vision of the improvement of human conditions. Faith-based initiatives do provide a “space in which to negotiate and contest realms not evident in strictly economic discourse, such as good, evil, morality” (Bornstein 2005: 170). The religious discourse on the suffering body, the value and dignity of all human life is more familiar, closer to lived realities of the beneficiaries than categories of vulnerability and resilience, impartiality and Disaster Risk Management that formally professionalized secular NGOs often apply:

“The spirituality of charity and justice that informed, and informs, the development discourse of the Christian agencies was, and is, more in tune with that of the majority of poor recipients of development aid from governmental and NGO donors, than the secularity of other agencies. It is doubtful if development is particularly meaningful for the rural and newly urbanized poor, and issues of poverty are often debated within the idiom of religious symbols, narratives and duties, particularly those relating to justice in the divine dispensation” (Linden 2008:89).

Benthall applies the concept of “cultural proximity” to these contexts to explain the advantages of faith-based organizations over secular ones (Benthall 2012). People who share one faith can build upon a solid collective identity and a common sense of dignity (Bradley 2011). Faith is a very strong identity marker that most secular organizations lack (Hopgood 2012).

Faith in humanitarian contexts can also have an equalizing effect because the common believe in God can allow people to engage in less hierarchical ways with each other. Religion can serve as a bridge between the poor and the non-poor (Clarke/Jennings 2008). Their shared faith in the life and teachings of Christ might be the only common denominator in everyday live between a middle class male from the U.S. Midwest and a female small scale merchant in the southeast of Haiti. Moreover, it is their shared faith that inspires thousands of so called “religious voluntourists” (Fogarty 2009) from the U.S. to take a plane to Haiti and provide spiritual and sometimes also material solace to their brothers and sisters in faith for a short period of time. Faith can also act “as an analytic lens through which the poor rationalize and often challenge their marginalization” (Clarke and Jennings 2008:1). Through their rootedness in a local context faith-based projects are more likely to be set in a long-term scale than secular ones, offering stability and trust to their beneficiaries (Ferris 2005, Occhipinti 2005). Caritas Jacmel for example celebrated its 25th birthday in September 2013. Emmanuel Auguste, the Program Coordinator explains that through the religious foundation of their work: *“It is our work, our great apostolic work that strengthens us...it is the reason why we are still around”*. This apostolic work motivates employees of religious organizations “to endure hardship and personal sacrifice for a longer period of time” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012:20). Additionally, employees of FBOs are less likely to belong to a class of traveling expatriates “who move from one emergency to another” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012:22).

Furthermore, the level of embeddedness in local structures correlates with the degree of accountability. The closer, longer, more intensively they work in a given local context, the more accountable they can be held and hold themselves to the people they assist. As most religious organizations draw on a set of strict moral codices based on their religious identity, they are also more “likely to behave consistently with their principles” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012:20). *“We in Caritas, we make the maximum effort to maintain our dignity as an institution of the church. We will not do everything”*, an employee of Caritas Jacmel coherently stated. Their faith not only requests obedience to religious directives, it also enacts compassion and commitment. That does not necessarily mean that formally secular NGOs lack both, “but merely that the motivation felt is not expressed through such elaborate symbolic narrative that stresses the forging of bonds between those who have and those who are without” (Bradley 2011:118).

Through their embeddedness with local religious institutions, FBOs are able to reach inaccessible areas usually disregarded by other aid agencies that especially in the Haitian context heavily rely on given infrastructure to serve their own as well as the needs of their beneficiaries. In Haiti, most relief work is coordinated from the country’s capital Port-au-Prince. Organizations like Caritas Jacmel regularly conduct daytrips to remote regions within the diocese to provide the population with basic services otherwise non-existent:

“We go to work where a lot of other organizations do not even arrive. We are used to arriving somewhere, to leave the car and continue walking. We do this for seven hours. We walk by foot to reach those who are far, far away so we can provide them with some healthcare. That is our strongest asset. The others go as far as their cars go. They don’t go by foot. It is the mission of Caritas to help people to “vin pi moun”. Help the poorest”,

Maxine Geffrad, a Caritas nurse recounts. They do so via local partners: people affiliated to the church. In remote regions with little foreign or NGO presence it is often churches and church-related organizations who function as a mediator and agenda setter as they provide important information on states of humanitarian emergencies and therefore are indispensable dialogue partners for NGOs.

In comparison to secular agencies faith-based ones are less dependent on governmental support. They are also less exposed to the media governance of crises and their immediate relief because often they build upon the stable church networks mentioned above. As notions of brotherly love and alms are fundamental to Abrahamic religions, FBOs have a large potential for commitment and voluntarism. They are able to mobilize

a vast number of volunteers within the communities to serve as lay practitioners in development (Ver Beek 2000). According to Hopgood and Venjamuri, small scale donors who are motivated by their faith are more loyal, generous and committed, used to making a donation every week, than the ones who occasionally donate to secular organizations. *“The fact that Caritas is an organization of the church facilitates fundraising”*, Mackenzy Ernst, Coordinator at the National Office of Caritas Haiti, stated. Secular organizations lack an institutionalized space like a church where donations for certain humanitarian projects are collected on a regular basis. Especially faith is an effective tool to raise funds among believers (Bradley 2011).

Moreover, religious organizations are believed to be more sensitive to people in distress in times of conflict or disaster than for example governmental agencies (Lunn 2009). Faith and spirituality are important factors for strength and recovery and post-disaster and post-conflict situations (Walker et al. 2012). Religious knowledge plays an important role in the way affected people perceive, contextualize and deal with disasters. Faith has been identified as an important aspect in post-disaster recovery (Kraft 2015). Religion promotes social cohesion to the least for the community of adherents. It is a resource, social capital that can ensure the access to social networks of spiritual as well as material support (Leutloff-Grandits et al. 2009) especially in times of disaster and distress. This became very clear in the months subsequent to the Haitian earthquake. Self-help structures were organized through church structures. The number of adherents in many congregations increased significantly in the year following the earthquake. Olivo Ensor observed similar dynamics in post-hurricane Honduras where conversion rates grew over six percent after the disaster (Olivo Ensor 2003). To belong to a specific community enables the access to specific resources of spiritual, psychological or material kind. Faith-based communities can create social capital as “[r]eligion can play a crucial role by facilitating the building of social capital, defined as the networks of social connections and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Thomas 2004:138).

Religion can also be a tool for emancipation and a catalyzer for social and political change most prominently demonstrated in the era of Liberation Theology in Latin America. In Haiti, one of the crucial social movements in the overthrow of the Duvalier

regime of the late 1980s was the *ti-legliz*¹¹⁷ movement. Local base congregations triggered the emergence of democratic structures and channeled social mobilization. Until today the ITECA, the Haitian Institute of Technology and Community Organizing, which was founded by leaders of ti-legliz movement continues to organize and speak out for a bottom up and sustainable vision of Haitian development (Schuller 2016).

Yet every trait of an organization has a Janus-face, a disadvantage inscribed. The literature available on faith-based organizations appears to focus on the virtues and advantages of FBO activity. Especially the body of literature written in the last 15 years seems to apply a defense tactic, an apologetic exercise that seeks to do justice to the neglected and mistreated religious phenomenon and set the record straight. Even though I agree that it is important to dismantle the prevailing narratives of secular modernity, progress and development, I am aware of the manifold blind spots that come hand in hand with the enthusiastic defense of faith-based activities in the aid complex. In this study, I try to balance the perspectives and analyze where faith brings a benefit to humanitarian assistance and where it hinders it. I will try to focus on the perceptions of the people involved, the FBO workers as well as the beneficiaries.

4.4.2 Ruptures

Clearly there are many challenges, dangers and disadvantages that supplement the mentioned virtues of religiously inspired assistance. “The old proverb stating that 'the road to hell is paved with good intentions' seems particularly appropriate for analyzing and evaluating the efforts of faith-based organizations.” (Adkins 2009:115). Critics of faith-based development and humanitarian agencies stress the danger of either partial assistance or proselytization exerted by the organizations. In the course of this study the suspicion aimed at FBOs especially in relation to their distributive practice and the underlying humanitarian principles will be coherently analyzed throughout the empirical chapters six and seven.

Above all, it is post-development critique that analyzes initiatives of church related, faith-affiliated agencies as a neo-colonial, missionary intervention, a continuation of efforts to subordinate other world regions. There is a lot of validity in these claims, especially when looking at the role the Catholic Church played in the colonization of Latin America in epistemological as much as in material terms (Edmonds and Gonzales

¹¹⁷ Haitian Creole, literally *small church*, base church

2010). Yet a too narrow conception of those entanglements fails to acknowledge the fact that today the churches are no longer mere components of colonialism, but – according to Bornstein – do have an inextricable presence in postcolonial identity of former colonies in Africa, Latin America and Asia (Bornstein 2005). What is often overseen in the critique of postcolonial Christianity is that most churches are indigenized today. In Haiti for example, most churches are led by Haitians pastors, which adapted the teachings of Christ to Haitian cultural and social realities. Unfortunately, the critique of Christianity in Haiti often goes along with the false imaginary of stagnating culture, with romanticized and exoticized images of “untouched black people” that are supposed to be allowed to practice the religious traditions they *always* have been practicing before being exposed to white culture. Yet this is a positivist and inherently essentializing thought that builds on notions of “origin” and “purity”, neglecting the possibility of positive appropriation of formerly oppressive structures. Cultural and religious traditions are always results of cultural contact, cultural change and negotiation, in fact “there are no origins to begin with” (Kristeva 1991).

Nevertheless, legitimately the role of evangelism in present day faith-based activities is as much a challenge as it can be a threat to the impartiality of humanitarian intervention. The phenomenon of 'disaster evangelism' particularly addressed to people in sudden distress often comes into play in the aftermaths of catastrophes. The inherent concern is that evangelical groups are “buying” people with relief assistance (Olivo Ensor 2003), ultimately forcing them to convert to their specific religious orientation. The proselytizing incentives of some evangelical church-related groups in Muslim countries for example can and often do fall back on the whole Christian community as such, on international Christian FBOs and also on secular organizations like the Red Cross (Ferris 2005).

Most popularly the critique of faith-based organizations aims at the ever-growing number of evangelical churches spreading all over the world, especially but not exclusively economically vulnerable countries. Though there is an undeniable link between for example foreign policies of the U.S. and the implementation of U.S.-evangelicals in Latin America especially in the middle of the 20th century and the sometimes too neatly fitting individualizing discourses of evangelical churches and the neoliberal elite, to focus the critique solely on the very heterogeneous evangelical

groups on the one hand and to generalize it on religion as a whole on the other hand is far too shortsighted. Dussel showed how Latin American Protestantism implicitly co-founded the movement of Liberation Theology and that evangelicals in contemporary Latin America are also the products of a certain desire of the people, too (Dussel 2011).

Whereas faith can be a catalyzer for social action, it “can also act in an exclusive way by forming the sole platform for engagement with a chosen group of recipients “ (Bradley 2011:117). The above-mentioned virtues of being closer to the people, better embedded and stronger involved can come to be a disadvantaged in certain situations, too. Members of the community might be disappointed when not being considered for the latest project. The lack of technocratic categories for distribution for example can also produce discontent with the organization as well as jealousy among members of the community. In her Argentinian case study Occhipinti finds that the religious nature of the NGO may limit local people's negotiating power in other ways:

“[T]he direct association [...] with the Catholic Church gives its vision of development and of indigenous life a sense of moral authority. Local people may accept or reject the image that the NGO proffers of their own culture, but its rejection entails a difficult split from a deeply embedded institution, that of the Church“ (Occhipinti 2005:194).

A break with the FBO can lead to a break with the church and vice versa, both of which can have serious repercussions for the individual's life in the community. Bornstein in her case study of two FBOs in Zimbabwe found faith to be a disciplinary tool not only for the beneficiaries but also among employees of FBOs: one's performance as a FBO worker was judged upon one's sincere expression of faith such as the participation in religious rituals (Bornstein 2005).

From a gender critical perspective it is very important to point out to the patriarchal hierarchies inscribed in Abrahamic religions. Especially those of fundamentalist kind hinder holistic liberation. There are certain areas of assistance that orthodox FBOs often refuse to get involved with for doctrinal reasons: the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, family planning, birth control. In 2001 when U.S.-president George W. Bush, a born-again Christian who supported the increased funding of FBOs¹¹⁸ took office, the family planning projects that USAID had implemented in Haiti years earlier lost its funding base and had to close down. The Global Gag Rule forbade U.S. state assistance to organizations, which provide, refer to or lobby abortion services (Maternowska 2006).

¹¹⁸ In 1996 while still being Texas governor Bush supported the Passage of Charitable Choices strongly. It enabled intensified contracting of FBOs by the government (Clarke 2006).

Sometimes FBOs do not get involved for strategic reasons. Many FBOs are performing a continuing tightrope walk between faith and professionalism. At times they downplay their religious identities, their markers to appeal to the most efficient and widespread funding base (James 2011). Yet if they go too far and corrupt their values they are in danger of disappointing their small-scale funding base, the believers and lose their authenticity as a religious organization.

Bradley elaborates on the notion of compassion and examines how it disables dialogue at eye level. In her view “[c]ompassion operates through symbolic projections of an objectified image of suffering. To be expressed it must be directed towards an object of pity and, in the context of the developing world, an image of an underdeveloped “Other” has emerged” (Bradley 2011:119). The image of this “other”, not exclusively reserved for faith-based organizations, is usually very flat and one-dimensional, she continues. And so are the perceptions of the supposed needs of the other: “the complexities of the needs that are present in a community are rendered invisible” (Bradley 2011:121). The process of othering is thus a result of a “romanticization of Christian compassion” (Elisha 2008b).

In her particular case study of a British FBO in the Indian region of Rajasthan, Bradley observes how faith can blind the workers “to the social realities of poverty and suffering” (Bradley 2011:125). She demonstrates that with the example of a faith-based initiative to break the cycle of prostitution for the daughters of prostitutes, traditionally belonging to the group of the untouchables. In the end, to the disappointment of the organization, the targeted women did not bring her female offspring to the implemented school, but their sons. In difference to the perspectives of the FBO workers, sex work, despite social injustice, violence and poor health involved, did grant the women freedom from marriage and financial independence that most Indian women did not enjoy. Instead of taking their daughters out of that business “[e]ducating their boys seemed the best strategy for achieving financial security and perhaps raising their social status a little” (Bradley 2011:128). Quite clearly moral considerations about sex work had played a role in the implementation of this specific project. Again, those valuations are not limited to faith-based initiatives, but there they are legitimated religiously. To the extent that faith can establish and consolidate group identities it can also be “part of a discourse of exclusion” (Stringer 2002:15). Exclusive validity is one of the prepositions

of the orthodox Abrahamic religions. “An organization's faith sometimes hinders this reciprocal dialogue. Having a religion implies certainty that the path of that religion is the right one; people who are convinced that their faith holds all the answers to human existence are less likely to be open to other ways of living and being” (Bradley 2011:120).

To sum up, the downside of the initiatives of FBOs is that they – much like secular NGOs – can reinforce the very inequalities that they seek to diminish. There is a gap between the incentives of the organizations, the desires they produce on the side of the employees, donors and beneficiaries and the economic realities of interconnected markets and interests in the global arena that all aid organizations are depending upon.

In the end, few of the above mentioned critical points could be related to FBOs alone, most do apply to aid organizations in general. Likewise some of the advantages can be brought into existence without the reference to a transcendent system of reference. Religion like faith can be part of the problem and also offer the solutions, like Bradley (2011) stated. The realm of morals and values does not belong to the sphere of faith-based initiatives per se. Not all secular organizations are driven by self-interest and market-led solutions for an abstracted problem of “poverty” the same way that not all religious organizations follow a genuine “preferential option for the poor”. After all, secular and religious organizations alike are worried about the economic constraints that influence their abilities to work with those in need. Secular organizations

“too worry that the drive for efficiency, the emphasis on cost-benefit calculations, and the unrelenting focus on outcomes put at risk their sacred vocation and sense of obligation to help any and all who are suffering. They too worry that the professionalization of staff, the rationalization of services, and the constant need to raise funds can shrink the sacred, as the profane and everyday intrudes more and more into their work” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012:24).

In certain situations, their degree of entanglement with the “dense professional world of NGOs” (Bornstein 2005) is more decisive for their actual behavior than the question where they are situated on the religious-secular continuum. Sometimes this gap even runs through organizations formally active under the same church umbrella. A survey conducted by Caritas Internationalis brought to light a great amount of dissatisfaction in the work of several national Caritas with each other. Southern Caritas criticize that “there is a certain secularism and lack of holistic approaches by northern Caritas” (Caritas Internationalis 2003). I was able to observe similar dynamics within the

international network of the ACT (Action by Churches Together) Alliance in Haiti. Several employees of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe complained about the pressure to perform religion within the network as well as in partnering projects. Evidently, the amount of faith that is put into practice in all aspects of the specific relief work is a constant matter of discourse and negotiation between faith-based and secular organizations but also among the former.

4.5 Conclusion

Faith-based organizations are a significant phenomenon in the humanitarian world, in terms of their sheer quantity as much as in terms of their historicity. Contemporary humanitarianism to some extent emerged from religious directives to help others in need. The founding figures of modern humanitarianism dedicated their work on the account of explicit faith motivations. Beginning in the 1980s, the processes of professionalization of the aid sector went along with a secularization of the religious traits in humanitarianism. Thirty years later, neither the world nor the humanitarian sector became exclusively secular. Thus, the faith in faith-based organizations is an important and timely field of study.

In most humanitarian contexts organizations originating in the West intervene in countries that have been historically oppressed by colonialism. Especially in the case of religious organizations humanitarianism is tightly interwoven with the project of colonialism. The Catholic Church played a more than inglorious role in the most violent forms of colonial exploitation. It provided with the geostrategic and epistemological justification for the “invention of the Americas” (Dussel 1995). At the same time it profited excessively from the subsequent enslavement of African populations. The conditions of modernity in which also humanitarianism dwells are tightly entangled to the *mission civilizatrice* of colonialism. Their influence outlived the former colonies and is still important for the way humanitarian organizations situate themselves and are perceived in contexts considered the “post-colonial” world. Haiti, the locus of this study, is such a place.

In spite of these historical conditions formally secular humanitarianism for its lack of religious directives pretends to navigate a value-free and neutral space against the backdrop of the faith-identity of some organizations. Humanitarianism dwells in a discursive universe of secularity, religion, modernity and progress, floats and shifts

between capitalist accumulation and political domination, the humanitarian imperative and the abuse of its values. Faith values do have a variety of virtues as much as they embody dangers. The highest of its virtue is that of a certain “cultural proximity” (Benthall 2012). FBOs often “speak the language” of their beneficiaries in socio-religious terms. Professionalized “NGO-speak” seldom is meaningful to the populations served by humanitarian organizations. The next chapters will show how disasters, other hardships, and the subsequent initiatives to alleviate suffering are contextualized in religious terms by the majority of Haitian beneficiaries that I engaged with. Technical aspects of intervention are considered tools that are necessary but not sufficient to most faith-based organizations. The aim of Caritas Jacmel for example is to facilitate the integral development of people, to help them to elevate. *To vin pi moun*, literally to “get more human”, refers to the holistic development of the human condition, faith included. “*They others go as far as their cars go. We walk the rest*”, a Caritas nurse cited above exemplified how they reach people in remote areas. Actually her quote is an appropriate metaphor. Whereas secular initiatives use technical vehicles to reach their targets, faith-based initiatives go further, motivated by their faith. They get out of the car and literally “walk the extra mile”.

Yet as we will see in the following chapters faith-based organizations are far from homogeneous. Sometimes certain FBOs have more in common with secular NGOs than they do with their fellow religious organizations. In some situations such factor as the size of the organization, its mandate – whether humanitarian and/or developmental –, if it is intervening from the outside or is local embedded, matters more to their output, the way they intervene and how they are perceived than their faith-background. Faith is put into practice in different ways and first of all on different levels by organizations. A guideline written for headquarters in Europe might have a substantially other faith character than what is actually implemented in the field in Haiti. The primary argument of this chapter, as much as of the whole scope of the study, is that contemporary humanitarianism, regardless if formally secular or faith-based, is subjected to the dynamics of secularizations and sanctification (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012).

5 Of Transregional Christian Engagement – Caritas Jacmel and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe

This chapter seeks to introduce the religious background of both organizations, Caritas Jacmel as well as Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH). I will first focus on the ecclesiastical background and situate their coming into being as aid organizations in a historical context. In what follows I will lay out the guiding principles of the organizations as given in official mission statements and the discourses they apply to legitimate their humanitarian work. Ethnographic material then will allow showing how the “theologies of care” (Lynch 2011) are taken up and interpreted first by the employees of the organizations, but also show how they are translated to and appropriated by the beneficiaries. It seeks to lay open the various ways in which beneficiaries and employees are interlaced and identify with the organizations and their guiding values.

The research centers around the questions in what ways faith informs the work of the organizations and the motivation of the practitioners and how it makes a difference in the promotion of the organizations’ objectives. Caritas Jacmel and DKH vary significantly in their approach on that matter. Whereas Caritas employs strong symbolic narratives (Bradley 2011) of Catholic social teaching, like dignity, humanity, and solidarity, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH) in its work in Haiti rather focuses on professionalized NGO-language and conceals its faith background for the sake of proper adherence to the standards of humanitarian intervention. This is the case for many among European Christian faith-based agencies. James noted a certain reticence when it comes to referring to faith identities (James 2009). The difference between the two organizations in question is particularly evident in the way in which the work of Caritas Jacmel relies on the Christian scripture in theory and practice whereas for DKH the Code of Conduct of Disaster Relief does have a dogmatic character. They “*are our Ten Commandments on the ground*”, an official at the headquarters stated.

5.1 Caritas Jacmel

5.1.1 The Organizational Trinity – *Caritas Internationalis, Caritas Haiti and Caritas Jacmel*

“Caritas is an expression of the Church’s social work. It’s as much part of the Church as going to Mass on Sunday, priests, bishops, and the Catholic communities they serve.”¹¹⁹

Caritas is a translocal organization. In many ways it acts and is perceived as a local organization, yet it is embedded in wider network of Catholic charities and also Vatican jurisdiction. Caritas is translocal in terms of its spatial interconnectedness. This is defined over the access to and the transfer of resources, personnel and funds. It also applies to the circulation of knowledge and the dissemination of guiding values and moral principles that trickle down from Vatican City as the seat of Caritas Internationalis to a variety of world regions. In terms of its targets, impacts, and embeddedness, though, Caritas Jacmel as the local outpost of the global Caritas network can be considered a local organization.

Caritas Internationalis

Structurally the specific organization studied, Caritas Jacmel, belongs to an extensive Catholic network that is formally headed by Caritas Internationalis (CI).¹²⁰ Historically the model of Caritas as an institutionalized social branch of the Catholic Church originates in Germany. The Catholic priest Lorenz Werthmann founded the first Caritas, the *Charitasverband für das katholische Deutschland* in 1897, to respond to the social needs of his times. This prototype of Catholic social organization quickly spread to other countries where local Caritas organizations were founded, like in Switzerland in 1901 and the USA in 1910. Initiatives to form a union of all national Caritas followed. In 1951, Caritas organizations from 13 countries formed a General Assembly that 1957 formally merged into Caritas Internationalis (CI) as an umbrella organization with its headquarters in Vatican City.

Today, CI subsumes 165 Catholic organizations with a presence in over 200 countries and regions. The official role of CI is to animate, coordinate and represent the subsidiary Caritas organizations both active in humanitarian emergencies as well as international development. Accordingly Caritas Internationalis gives itself a mixed mandate statute. In line with humanitarian principles it does not regard categories such as “race” or religion

¹¹⁹ http://www.caritas.org/about/caritas_myths.html. Last accessed on December 6, 2013.

¹²⁰ Not to be mistaken with Caritas International, the German national Caritas.

in the selection of its beneficiaries.¹²¹ CI as a confederation is a signatory and co-originator of the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief*, the primary manifestation of the humanitarian principles in contemporary humanitarianism.

The organizational structure and governance of CI has strong ecclesiastical overtones and Vatican connections (O'Rourke 2010). From a legal perspective CI differs from secular organizations and also from other religious NGOs as it was granted canonical juridical status in 2004. Hence, CI is subjected to and protected by Vatican jurisdiction. Caritas Internationalis is subordinated to the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* – an agency founded in 1971 that regulates the charitable activities of the Catholic Church – as well as to the Second Section of the Secretary of State of the Vatican. The role of both entities in governing and effectively controlling the activities of CI has been strengthened in 2012.¹²² Msgr. Osvaldo Neves de Almeida, official in the Vatican Secretary of State and member of the conservative *Opus Dei* network concludes: “The Holy See, for its part, has the task of following its activity and exercising vigilance in order that both its humanitarian and charitable action and the content of the documents that it disseminates may be in harmony with the Apostolic See”.¹²³ This development forms part of former Pope Benedict XVI's “quiet revolution”¹²⁴ of a church that is “too busy in worldly affairs”. For the time being, it is the last measure taken by the Vatican in a struggle over meaning, autonomy and competencies. In March 2013, a new Pope was elected, Pope Francis, who seems to herald a new era of the Catholic Church. It remains to be seen in what specific ways he will contribute to the renegotiation of autonomy and subsidiarity within the Catholic Church.

Caritas Internationalis is funded mainly by fees collected from the national Caritas members and private donations.¹²⁵ The national Caritas, for example Caritas International, the German Caritas section is financed mainly through the German

¹²¹ http://www.caritas.org/about/Caritas_Internationalis.html Last visited December 6, 2013.

¹²² Every text with „moral or dogmatic content“ has to be approved by Cor Unum, all agreements between CI and NGOs or governmental institutions have to be accredited by the Vatican, the President and the Secretary General of CI have to be approved by a *nihil obstat* (nothing hinders) of the Holy See.

¹²³ http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/corunum/corunum_en/attivita_en/rc_pc_cor_unum_doc_20120502_Articolo_Neves_Caritas_Internationalis_en.html Last visited December 6, 2013.

¹²⁴ <http://www.mondayvatican.com/benedict-xvi/benedict-xvis-quiet-revolution-last-act-caritas-internationalis> Last visited December 6, 2013.

¹²⁵ http://www.caritas.org/about/caritas_myths.html Last visited December 6, 2013.

governmental agencies such as the BMZ and the AA, ecclesiastical donations and funds from the European Union.¹²⁶

The work of Caritas Internationalis rests on the Christian scripture and draws its inspiration from “Christian faith and gospel values” to assist the poor, the vulnerable, the oppressed, and the excluded. The core values of Caritas Internationalis are dignity, justice, solidarity, and stewardship. Its social doctrine builds on the common humanity of the people all over the world regardless of faith background. CI presents itself decidedly political, addressing the root causes of poverty and supporting debt cancellation, fair trade and “aid, more wisely spent”. It directly relates to the traditions of Liberation Theology by stating that CI follows a “preferential option for the poor”.

Caritas Haiti

Caritas Haiti was founded by the Haitian conference of Bishops in 1975. According to official statements, its mission includes the promotion of a society defined by more solidarity and justice as well as humanitarian assistance to the ones excluded from society.

In its official presentation, Caritas Haiti draws on the well-known proverb “It is better to teach a man to fish than to give him fish to eat”. The spirit of subsidiarity is very much palpable in the acclaimed aim to turn communities into the protagonists of their own development. Guidance and organization are the prerequisite for the technical intervention of Caritas Haiti. Director General of Caritas Haiti, Père Chadic summed up the main goals of intervention:

“For 37 years Caritas Haiti has ameliorated the living conditions of the poorest people. Everyday Caritas translates the social doctrine of the church to the reality of the people it accompanies. Caritas strives to establish more justice and solidarity on earth. We neither wish nor want misery in our country. The love of God – Caritas – will be still necessary in a just society. In this sense, Caritas Haiti renovates its engagement to continue to accompany the communities in their work for the all-embracing development of people. We continue to march the road of hope”¹²⁷.

Caritas Haiti works under the authority of the episcopal conference and is composed of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee as well as the National Office. Next to these managing entities the country is divided into ten dioceses: Port-de-Paix, Cap

¹²⁶ <http://www.caritas-international.de/ueberuns/jahresbericht/> Last visited November 15, 2015.

¹²⁷ <http://communication-caritashaiti.org/?p=50> Last visited May 12, 2016.

Haitien, Fort Liberté, Gonaïve, Hinche, Port-au-Prince, Miragoane, Jérémie, Cayes and Jacmel.

This structure is more or less congruent with the official national division into departments. The ten dioceses are subdivided into 251 parishes. Within those dioceses Caritas Haiti employs 400 permanent staff. Three times a year all diocesan Caritas meet. The General Assembly takes place once a year.

The projects of Caritas Haiti, especially the post-earthquake rehabilitation projects, are mainly founded by other national Caritas such as Caritas Spain, Cordaid, Manos Unidas, but also by secular organizations like Plan Haiti.

The National Office in Port-au-Prince manages Caritas Haiti. The role of this *biwo nasyonal* is solely to coordinate the ten diocesan Caritas offices among which Caritas Jacmel is one. The national office does not execute programs and interventions itself.

Caritas Jacmel

It was in 1988 that Jacmel became a diocese of its own. Subsequently Guire Poulard, the respective Bishop of the diocese founded Caritas Jacmel in October 1988, 13 years after the foundation of Caritas Haiti. The background as a humanitarian body is manifest in its organizational genesis: It was a disaster that functioned as a catalyst for the foundational moment of Caritas Jacmel. In September 1988, the hurricane Gilbert, one of the largest and most destructive tropical cyclones in recorded history, struck the southern coast of Haiti and severely damaged the city of Jacmel, caused landslides and flooding and effectively destroyed a major portion of the regions harvest – for all intents and purposes a complex humanitarian emergency. In reaction to the exigencies that Gilbert left behind, the bishop of the diocese founded Caritas Jacmel to better coordinate the relief efforts of the diocese.

Since 1988 Caritas Jacmel has seen three directors, Gilbert Beaucher, Huiges Beret and the contemporary André Valery. The primary responsible of Caritas is the bishop of the diocese, Launay Saturné. It is him who appoints the director of Caritas, too. The diocese of Jacmel is partitioned into 27 parishes. In 2013, Caritas Jacmel permanently employed 29 people. There is also a set of *jounalye*¹²⁸ that work the land on the Caritas site or

¹²⁸ Haitian Creole, *day laborer*

assist at building lots. Others are referred to as *kontraktè*¹²⁹. “When we have a lot of work of a short term kind we can employ people for some days only...or for some months. For example, when we construct we can employ an engineer for this construction only”, Père Valery explains. Furthermore Caritas Jacmel builds on a large network of people referred to as animators, facilitators, promoters or local leaders that are active on the parish level. Caritas Jacmel intends to visit every small *ti legliz* in the parish, offer their services and look for people interested in *kòlvòl* – kolaborasyon volontè, voluntary collaboration. They act as the interlocutors for the Caritas office. It is their task to report back on necessities and problems in the communities and to support and implement Caritas projects in the different parishes. *Se yo menm ki limye nou* – they are our light, as Caritas Dr. Pelissier describes them.

The Caritas office in Jacmel is structured in three different sectors. Within each sector there are people in coordinating positions as well as other referred to as *animatè*, animators, too. The agricultural sector is responsible for programs dedicated to agricultural reinforcement and environmental protection as well as Disaster Risk Management and Disaster Preparedness. They offer a range of support such as educational seminars, reforestation programs, measures against erosion, and the rearing of livestock. A big part of the support of the agricultural sector is to the organizational reinforcement of peasant associations and the community based *Karitas Pawasyal*¹³⁰ (KP) in resources, as well as technical questions. “We help people to organize, in a way that they are better able to enforce change in their communities”, long-term employee Moise Deronvil stated. The rehabilitation of the housing structure after the earthquake is also affiliated to this sector. The core activity of the health sector is the mobile clinic. At an average of four times a month a medical team consisting of a physician, several nurses and auxiliaries leave for remote regions within the limits of the diocese to provide basic medical service and consultations and to distribute pharmaceutical drugs. They also offer education on nutrition, HIV/Aids, maternal health and hygiene, especially in the wake of the pending Cholera epidemic introduced to the country in October 2010. The sector for *économie solidaire* (EKOSOL) offers educational programs for small-scale entrepreneurs and programs to promote the consumption of local agricultural products. In the past EKOSOL also provided various microfinance

¹²⁹ Haitian Creole, *contractors*

¹³⁰ Haitian Creole, *parish Caritas*

schemes, especially for female merchants. There also used to be a proper sector for the promotion of women's rights that today is organized as a transversal axis for gender equity. It enters in all the other sectors to assure the equality of chances for men and women. When Caritas Jacmel offers seminars or trainings, they try to make sure that there is an appropriate gender balance. Also, women are encouraged to speak up and speak out during those events. In every parish there used to be a woman responsible for the protection of women's rights, *pwoteksyon dwa fanm* (PDF). Next to the sectorial staff there are two people employed for financial management and accounting as well as one receptionist. The non-office staff consists of two people responsible for cooking and maintenance, one gardener and four drivers and two mechanics.

Bimonthly all 29 employees of Caritas Jacmel meet to exchange goals, news and directives. Every such meeting starts with a prayer that is lead by one of the employees.

The head of Caritas Jacmel, Père André Valery entered the organization in 2004. Next to his obligations as the director of the organization, he also serves as a priest in the Sacred Heart Parish, one of the 27 parishes of the diocese. Within the hierarchy of Caritas Jacmel he is only subjected to the directives of and accountable to the bishop of the diocese of Jacmel, Msgr. Launay Saturné.

His second in command is the Agronomist Emmanuel Auguste, generally referred to as Auguste. As the designated Program Director, he is responsible for the planning of projects and the subsequent evaluation. He is authorized to issue directives. Human resource management is his duty, too. Also, he is among those three persons that have been working with Caritas Jacmel ever since it was founded in 1988.

5.1.2 Caritas means love - Caritas Jacmel's Mission in Official Scripts and Statements On The Ground

This subsequent part seeks to carve out the guiding principles and core values of Caritas Jacmel for their humanitarian and development work. In a second step it aims at showing the ways those values are translated into practice and reflected in the work of the practitioners, the staff of Caritas Jacmel.

The mission statement of Caritas Jacmel derives from the overall objectives of Caritas Haiti. It is presented in the entrance of Caritas Jacmel. Their mission is:

“To assess together with the other organs of social ministry of the Church the problems of misery on the level of the diocese, to fathom their causes and to propose solutions on the basis of *justice* and *human dignity*. To participate in the efforts of the people of the diocese to improve individual and collective living conditions, for the *integral fulfillment of the human person*. To stimulate and coordinate *relief* and rehabilitation efforts through the institutions of humanitarian services in the event of natural disasters or caused by human volition. To contribute to the implementation and development of the parish Caritas”.

The ontological and cultural circulation of the major principles of Catholic social teaching is manifest in the mission statement of Caritas Jacmel. The concepts for example of justice and dignity are traveling ideas that are distributed all over the world through the translocal network of Caritas organizations.

Dignity

Caritas Internationalis' main motives and guiding values are reflected in Caritas Jacmel, too. The entire work of Caritas builds upon the inviolable dignity of the human person. “The dignity of the human person is central to everything we do”¹³¹ is the maxim of Caritas Internationalis. Dignity is crucial to the promotion of human development as well as of human rights (Linden 2008). The Catholic conception of dignity is based on the Christian Scripture, the idea that humans are the “living images of God” (Gutiérrez 2013:80). More specifically it derives from the notion of a common humanity created in *imago dei*, the image of God, as presented in the book of Genesis (Gen 1:26-27). Dignity for the social teaching of the Catholic Church is the human *conditio sine qua non*, it reflects the intrinsic “absolute value of the human person” (Occhipinti 2005, Ferris 2005). “As an institution of the church a person has value, one should never underestimate the dignity of people”, Moise Deronvil, Caritas Jacmel employee since 1988 stated, when explaining the basic concept of Caritas work ethos.

Dignity is the pivotal underlying ethos that the Caritas understanding of the humanitarian principle of impartiality rests upon. The common humanity based on the creation in the likeness of God not only accounts for Christians, but for all people. This is how the non-discriminatory distributive practice is justified by Caritas employees. “Someone who serves the *lwa*¹³², s/he is human too. S/he stays human”, Caritas nurse Manouchka Beauchamp explains. Believing in other deities does not detract a person from belonging to humanity.

¹³¹ http://www.caritas.org/about/waht_is_caritas.html. Last visited July 6, 2013.

¹³² Serving the *lwa* is the proper Haitian expression for people who practice Haitian Vodou.

Love

“Caritas means working to help people develop in humanity. Caritas means to love. In some sense to love charity. The message is to strive for people to develop in humanity, to help people to grow. Not only in a material sense, but also in faith. In faith, too ... so you feel, so you believe in God every day a little more. That is Caritas.”

Pierre Estime, a 49-year-old Caritas employee responsible for an agro-ecological project in a settlement in the mountains above Jacmel, touches one of the most important, if not the most important symbolic narrative of Catholic social teaching here: love. It is the bedrock that carries and permeates all other principles. *Caritas* as love is understood to be the highest virtue. “Indeed, of the theological virtues – faith, hope, and love – love is supreme, the highest rung below which is hope and then faith” (Lindberg 2008:108). The intervention of Caritas as an institution in worldly matters rests upon the notion of love. This feature of Caritas is also represented in the corporate design of the organization as a whole. The logo of Caritas is the flaming cross. Whereas the cross is the unique symbol of Christianity, the flames are supposed to symbolize the neighborly love as well as Christ’s burning love for his people. All over the world Caritas is using this logo.¹³³

Lewis identified four dimensions of love in Christian understanding deriving from Greek language: *philia*, the love of friendship, *storge*, as affection, *eros* as worldly love, and enjoyment, and *agape* as the “love grounded in and shaped by faith” (Benedict XIV 2005:7), ethical and unconditional love, the love for humanity. The Greek *agape* translates into the Latin *caritas*. Clearly it is the latter that is crucial for Catholicism. *Caritas*, or charity as translated into English, is the motion of the soul towards God (Brady 2003). The social pastoral of Caritas is relevant when it comes to the subjects of this love, the love of God, coming from and going to God and the love of the other, the neighbor as demanded in Leviticus 19:18, “*and you shall love your neighbor as yourself*”. The concept of “Caritas sums up the entire Christian ethic, the law and the prophets, because the only thing demanded of the Christian is the two loves, the love of God and the love of others” (Lindberg 2008:17).

The exegesis of the character of the neighbor is integral for the interpretation of the humanitarian mission of Caritas. The neighbor though is somewhat different today from what it was conceptualized in biblical times. Even though it might have been applicable

¹³³ <http://www.caritas.de/glossare/logo-der-caritas-flammenkreuz> Last visited May 10, 2016.

to all humankind, the same time this humankind was distant, unthinkable, inconceivable, far. Today, when it comes to humanitarian assistance, the suffering other might still be socially and spatially far but with forced migration through war, poverty and other disasters, and real life media coverage it approaches the consciousness of the self in a more explicit way. Those processes linked to globalization allow that the care for the neighbor now “transcends the confines of national communities and has increasingly broadened its horizon to the whole world” (Benedict XIV 2005: 30).

Subsidiarity

Of particular importance for the course of this research is the principle of subsidiarity. It appears as a leitmotif in the very first interview conducted with Caritas staff and runs through all of the following analytical observations in varying manifestations.

In essence, subsidiarity means respecting the principle of local autonomy. In its most general sense subsidiarity also seeks to define the relation between the church, the state and the people. The former two entities should only intervene in the affairs of the latter when absolutely indispensable. According to the principle of subsidiarity, decisions should be made “*at the lowest level possible and the highest level necessary*”.¹³⁴ Further, the principle not only determines the relation of Caritas in general to its benefactors, respecting their own capacities and independence, it also regulates the relations within the universe of Caritas from the formal highest level of authority, Caritas Internationalis, over the national and diocesan Caritas down to the parish level. The papal encyclical “Caritas in Veritate” determines subsidiarity as an “expression of inalienable human freedom” (Benedict XVI 2009). Benedict XVI directly addressed development aid in the context of subsidiarity:

“Aid must be distributed with the involvement not only of the governments of receiving countries, but also local economic agents and the bearers of culture within civil society, including local Churches. Aid programs must increasingly acquire the characteristics of participation and completion from the grass roots” (Ibd).

It also “respects personal dignity by recognizing in the person a subject who is always capable of giving something to others” (Ibd). The proper exercise of subsidiarity serves as an instrument to guarantee the fulfillment of other guiding principles such as solidarity, dignity, and justice. In that sense subsidiarity can be seen as a technical principle to secure those principles with a wider moral and ontological importance. “The

¹³⁴ <http://www.catholicmoraltheology.com/subsidiarity-is-a-two-sided-coin/> Last visited March 17, 2016.

principle of solidarity, even in the fight against poverty, must always be appropriately accompanied by that of subsidiarity, thanks to which it is possible to foster the spirit of initiative, the fundamental basis of all social and economic development in poor countries” (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004:253).

The principle of subsidiarity in fact came up the first time I talked to a Caritas person involved with Haiti. In 2011, when I was preparing for entering the field, I spoke to a representative of Caritas International, the German Caritas section, about possible engagement. It was him who pointed me to the “*complicated organizational structure*” of the Caritas network subsidiary structured where in his words “*everyone does what s/he wants*”. This trait of autonomy is essential to the narratives evolving around Caritas Haiti.

The question of subsidiarity has already been addressed as fundamental to the overall organizational structure of Caritas. Here it will be shown how the claim of autonomy is put into practice in Haiti. Subsidiarity as the governing principle of Caritas is present in the narratives as well as in the actions taken by Caritas Jacmel. Asked about the governance structure of the network of Caritas Haiti, Père Valery, the director of Caritas Jacmel stated that “*every diocese has its own Caritas, which is autonomous*”. In fact, Caritas Jacmel executes projects through partnerships that compass the national office. Yet the perspective of the diocesan director on the autonomy of his own institutional entity is not entirely congruent with that of the National Office, as Eddy Voltaire explains:

“I understood it is a network under the command of the National Office. Below it there are the different Diocesan Offices. But when I entered, I learned that it is not put into practice like that. And that creates a little problem, because you have a structure that is very hierarchic. That means that the one who is below is supposed to obey the hierarchy, the superior. In practice it is not like that. And it is them who tell me that it is not really like that. That means that the National Office is on the same level with everyone else. It is equality, that is true, but you have problems with the coordination and the management. Because you have a Diocesan Office that you are engaged with and there are certain rules it does not respect. You as the National Office want to coordinate, you are supposed to say “No, you go this way, there you have to go, this is what you have to do”. When you intervene like that with them, they say no, they are autonomous. So you are not the boss of them. You cannot command them like that. You understand? That is the biggest problem in this system”.

Here, the Operations Assistant of Caritas Haiti illustrates the conflict over the interpretation of the principle of subsidiarity active on the different levels of the Caritas hierarchy. Even on the highest level this conflict is evident. It finds its expression in the ongoing struggle about the degree of discretionary power of the Vatican as represented

by its Secretary of State over the affairs of Caritas Internationalis. Very much like the guiding principles of the Catholic Church, also the related problems tend to trickle down from Rome.

Nevertheless, on the Caritas Haiti level those disparities are constantly discussed and re-negotiated. The aim is to have clear-cut demarcations between the different levels, as Voltaire continues to explain:

“But we reflect on what is happening. There are many meetings about that. Our first reflection is to maintain, to handle the structure. The organizational chart... even though they say it is not like that, but we maintain the structure. When I say to maintain it, I mean in the primary documents. That means you define the limits, you make the things as clear as possible. We look at the role of the National Office, and the role of the Diocesan Offices, at our responsibilities and the role of the diocese. Secondly, there are propositions that suggest that the National Office does not enter the operations directly. We come to play the role of a technical assistant. In a sense of the project work, to make the dossier feasible, so they can submit it, for them to find finances. Then we have the different sectors. We develop certain schemes with them that will allow them to improve their capacities and competence so they are able to achieve the project goals”.

The task of the National Office is to coordinate the network of Caritas Haiti. It does not execute own programs but supports the conduction of programs on a diocesan level primarily through guidance and technical support. The Caritas Haiti National Office provides education and seminars to the different diocesan Caritas members. *“We train educators to educate other people”*, a representative of the National Office stated. Those disseminate their knowledge to the facilitators on the parish level. The seminars offered by Caritas Jacmel are an application of the principle of subsidiarity. In the perception of Caritas, by offering knowledge and education on topics like reforestation or disaster preparedness, they are handing over tools to the communities to be able to solve problems on their own terms. That way the higher-level entity, in that case Caritas Jacmel, does not have to get involved. Besides the technical knowledge and moral principles that are propagated in those seminars, the trainers also promote proactivity, initiative, and responsibility within the communities. *“When there is a problem, before you call for Caritas, try fixing it yourself”*, Moise Deronvil told participants of a DRR seminar in Montaj Lavout. The spirit of subsidiarity is further palpable in the urge to encourage and to empower the communities, to turn them the *“subjects of their own development”*. Pierre Estime, who supports peasants in their agricultural projects stated: *“We help them to work their land, with more techniques. In a way so that they can have good outcomes so they can re-ameliorate their living conditions”*.

The diocesan Caritas also have own bilateral cooperation with other organizations that are not channeled through the National Office. This allows them also for certain autonomy on an operational as well as a financial level. Several among the personnel of Caritas Jacmel are employed over project funds from third parties, like other national Caritas and non-Caritas organizations.

Hierarchy

“As Caritas here in Jacmel, we continue to work hand in hand to help Caritas move forward. Because what we want is harmony, mutual respect and hierarchy. You have to respect hierarchy. That is our ordering principle.”

Subsidiarity is directly related to another key asset of the Catholic Church, namely hierarchy as Claude Timogene, driver at Caritas Jacmel, illustrated. Subsidiarity does not imply equality. The Catholic hierarchy itself is not put into question. The gaps between the claim of subsidiarity in theory and the implementation in practice become apparent in the ethnographic material collected that will be given further attention in the following parts. However, there is evidence in official publications of Caritas that refer to the challenges of the principle of subsidiarity, especially in the relation between northern and southern Caritas members. Southern Caritas refer to external funding leading to a lack of autonomy, with the northern Caritas imposing their own rules and agendas. On the other side, northern Caritas complain about the uncertain roles at the different levels, national, diocesan, and parish, resulting in the insight that subsidiarity often is not put into practice properly (Caritas Internationalis 2003). Additionally Vatican jurisdiction increasingly limits the autonomy of Caritas Internationalis through a “call for appropriate management” of the work of Caritas Internationalis.

The concept of Catholic hierarchization is ever present in the structure as well as the demeanor of Caritas Jacmel. Next to his organizational rank, Père Valery through his spiritual vocation as a priest embodies a higher level of authority than the other Caritas employees. Mirroring his divine mandate, he is generally referred to as Pè Valery in Haitian Creole, Père Valery, meaning Father Valery, in as well as outside of the Caritas context. He encompasses an “aura of factuality” (Geertz 1993) that separates him from the rest, even though there is a general, even familiar demeanor in everyday work practice in Jacmel. Food is taken aside for him when he is not present at lunchtime. If present during lunchtime the majority keeps a friendly but respectful distance to him. Many employees face him with a level of subordination otherwise absent in the inner

organizational communication. Then again once a month everyone meets for the so-called “day of the environment”. The aim is to jointly foster and water the on-site garden, to plant new seeds, and to collect trash. The initiative to implement this activity that takes a whole office day came from Père Valery. He wanted to raise team spirit, awareness and set a good example for everyone, inside and outside. That day he changes his priest collar for a ragged t-shirt and attends to the assignment with the lowest regard: the collection of trash. He actively performs the reversal of the hierarchies that he himself is subjected to.

On a more general level, Mackenzy Ernst at the National Office of Caritas Haiti further refers to the relation of a hierarchical structure to the success of development:

“Well, I have to say that when an organization is involved with the church, there are advantages and disadvantages. You know in the church the people are able to listen. They are more accustomed to obey, more accustomed to accept. That means when an organization has a relation to the church its activities can be better realized. It gets through better because you know, in the church, especially in the Catholic Church, there is a hierarchy. It is the priest, the kuri who decides, who says so and so. So the people, the faithful, they are more likely to obey his words without asking questions. But there is a little disadvantage in it too. You cannot do development work without asking questions. You have to have participation. That doesn’t mean there is no participation in our network. There is participation but sometimes there is this tendency of people to accept things without asking questions”.

Whereas the principle of subsidiarity effectively promotes independence and autonomy of lower level entities, hierarchy requires subordination and obedience to higher-level institutions. The level of autonomy and organizational self-determination is constantly negotiated. The ongoing struggle of competencies on the different levels of Caritas in its internal affairs as well as in relation to the Catholic Church can be seen as dynamically moving between those two ends. It is rationalized over the two complementing concepts of subsidiarity and hierarchy.

5.1.3 A Network of Faith – The Organization

Self-conception of Caritas Jacmel

“More often than not NGOs in Haiti are groups that have money and they come and distribute money. We ourselves, we do not have any money as it is”. (Père Valery, Caritas Jacmel)

The self-conception of Caritas Jacmel is grounded in its specific characteristics as a faith-based organization, an organization with tight structural and ontological entanglements to the Catholic Church. In some ways the distinction between what is the church and

what is Caritas blurs, as manifest in staff statements like: *“We are a branch inside the church”* or *“Caritas means the church”*. Caritas employees regard themselves as working for the church. *“Caritas as an institution works in the social domain – an institution of the church”*, Moise Deronvil continues to explain. *“A social pastoral of the church”*, Pierre Estime adds. There are various intersections in personnel, starting with the director also being a parish priest. Correspondingly he holds an organizational as well as a spiritual office. Those who rank high in the Caritas hierarchy also occupy ecclesiastical functions. Additionally, many among the organizations staff serve also as lay people in their own parishes. Also in terms of information the church is an intersectional node where information about Caritas programs are spread. It is within the church structure that the facilitators for the implementation and support of the Caritas projects are chosen. The office hours of Caritas Jacmel are congruent with the Church calendar. The office closes for the preparation of specific Christian holidays. During Holy Week, the last week of lent all office activities get suspended, *“because many among us have church activities to attend. We have a lot of church activities to prepare for that week. I will participate in the Easter retreat, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday...There will be prayers, all those things”*, the nurse Maxine Geffrad illustrates.

Caritas Jacmel distances itself from being generally associated with NGOs. This disentanglement first of all is grounded on an ontological level. Caritas Jacmel regards itself as having a different mission, a different approach than other organizations active in humanitarian and development interventions in Haiti. The spirit of the gospel legitimates this difference: *“The NGOs focus on helping people to make money...No problem. Even though people make money without sharing. We are not like that. We promote spiritual values. The value of sharing. The value of charity. It is in the gospel. It is what constitutes the work of Caritas, it rests on the gospel”*, Emmanuel Auguste, the Program Coordinator of Caritas Jacmel, said. Additionally to technocratic categories of development and assistance where effectiveness is measured “entirely in material terms” (Taithe 2012:168), FBOs like Caritas often add value and meaning about social life, too and therefore provide a more holistic vision of the improvement of human conditions. Accordingly Auguste explains: *“Caritas has a vision of man in his totality. [...] Most NGOs they focus on the material development of people, turning poor people into rich people. But we, Caritas, for us it is not only that. We are working with people on the material, spiritual*

and human dimension, too". His perspective is congruent with the Catholic encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*:

*"This love does not simply offer people material help, but refreshment and care for their souls, something which often is even more necessary than material support. In the end, the claim that just social structures would make works of charity superfluous masks a materialist conception of man: the mistaken notion that man can live "by bread alone" (Mt 4:4; cf. Dt 8:3)—a conviction that demeans man and ultimately disregards all that is specifically human"*¹³⁵.

With Caritas an idea of development is put into practice that is different from solely technocratic ideas of progress. The aim is not to *"turn poor people into rich people"* or *"to help people make money"*, like stated by Emmanuel Auguste, but to develop people also in their humanity, meaning spirituality and moral values as promoted by Catholic social teaching: solidarity, justice, love, and dignity – *Karitas la vle di se travay pou fè moun vin pi moun*. For people to become more human, the integral development of the human person, the promotion of humanity. The expression *pou moun vin pi moun* captures those notions in a unique way.

Employees of Caritas Jacmel not only consider themselves as agents of development and support, but also as pastoral agents: *"You are considered to not only go and work there, but you are a pastoral agent, too. You have to uphold the label of the church. You have to promote the church, too"*, Janjak Casimir confirms. Furthermore, Caritas Jacmel regards itself also as an institution that supports the state in its task to care for its citizens *"to ameliorate the lives of people. The state is not able to do this on its own. So we help"*.

The urge in Caritas Jacmel not to be blended into the conglomerate of what is subsumed under the umbrella term "NGO" in Haiti is a directive from above: *"The Bishops that are responsible for Caritas Haiti, they don't want Caritas to be called an NGO. They want it to be named a foundation, because NGOs do not always have a good reputation in the country"*. The impulse of Caritas Haiti as well as of Caritas Internationalis is to strengthen the Catholic identity of the organization, to promote a distinctive religious interpretation of development on the one hand side and to therewith demarcate the boundaries to other NGOs. In 2012, Benedict XVI made clear that the church at all levels

¹³⁵ Without doubt this prospect as well is highly problematic as seen from a social justice perspective. It represents the ongoing cleavage within the Catholic Church between those forces who fight for a bigger emphasis on spiritual matters as represented by former Pope Benedict XVI and those who opt for a church involved in the establishment of just social and political structures, worldly matters so to say, as represented by Liberation Theologists.

“must avoid the risk of becoming just another form of organized social assistance” (Benedict XVI 2005:31). He “recalled that *Caritas Internationalis* cannot be assimilated into the major Non-Governmental Organizations, even though it carries out with exemplary professionalism and competence roles that they too fulfill, in particular the fight against poverty, the coordination of humanitarian aid and international advocacy”¹³⁶.

Despite the faith background of Caritas, the emphasis on professionalism does meet concerns regarding the often-assumed incommensurateness of a “worldless” faith and the proper and professional conduct of humanitarian assistance, a theme that will be given further attention in chapter seven. Subsequently, in terms of its operation, on a technical and administrative level though Caritas can be easily associated with the conglomerate “NGO” within the aid complex as in many instances it “*acts very much like an NGO*”, Auguste states. Also “*in relation to many institutions, they treat us the same way like an NGO. However, we ourselves we know we are a Catholic foundation. So, when they treat us the same way like an NGO it is in administrative terms*”. The director of Caritas Jacmel refers especially to donor institutions here, which require meticulous reports and the compliance with regulations and codes of conduct. The boundaries between Caritas and the church, between Caritas as a branch within the church and Caritas as part of a larger conglomerate of NGOs providing humanitarian aid to Haitians are porous. Depending on the discursive as well as structural level either one conception is predominant. Nonetheless, they always permeate and interpenetrate each other.

Caritas as a network of faith

“*With Caritas we have a network that really covers the whole nation. And as a network with national coverage if they work together to do what they got to do they will have results. Because it is a structure that reaches every corner.*” (Mackenzey Ernst, Caritas Haiti).

The reason why an organization like Caritas has the opportunity to reach out so extensively lies within the parish structure. Faith-based organizations often do have the capacity to provide aid through channels “not necessarily open to secular agencies” (Thaut 2009), like local religious communities and networks. This is especially true for Caritas Jacmel. Other NGOs “*do not reach out as far as we do*”, Caritas physician Dr. Pelissier confirmed. The network of Caritas stretches all over the country. Through the

¹³⁶ http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/corunum/corunum_en/attivita_en/rc_pc_corunum_doc_20120502_Articolo_Neves_Caritas_Internationalis_en.html Last visited January 18, 2015.

structure of 251 parishes Caritas Haiti is able to reach remote and otherwise inaccessible regions. Caritas Jacmel comprises of 27 parishes. The big advantage is that Caritas relies on the church structure: *“To reach people who are far away, that is our strong asset. Because the church spreads to every corner”*, a Caritas nurse states.

With Caritas Jacmel it is especially the mobile clinic that can be credited with providing a minimum level of healthcare to regions structurally disadvantaged and ignored by the state’s public service and international NGOs. Segen¹³⁷ is one of those places:

Segen. 6th of March 2013

We start our journey at 6 am in the morning. There is Dr. Pelissier, two nurses and two auxiliaries, a driver and me. It is pitch black outside. The day before I was instructed to take enough water and warm clothes. Segen is a place in the mountains above Jacmel, some mere 60 km away from the city. Yet due to the miserable road conditions it takes four hours to get there. Even though we take the SUV with the best shock protection available in the Caritas fleet the trip has repercussions. I get out of the car and my vision is distorted. It takes some ten minutes for my two eyes to focus on the same thing simultaneously again. We pick up J. halfway, he is the facilitator that organized the arrival of the mobile clinic. We finally arrive to a Haiti I have not seen before. Already the route was a lecture in confronting the stereotypes on Haiti. We pass by rich forests that actually very much remind me of where I grew up, carve arches that would make every geologist hold hers breathe. We stop to a small settlement in the middle of a barren landscape with odd stone formations. A huge contrast to the Caribbean scenery at the foot of the mountains. The cold air is filled with the smell of burned charcoal. Thick fog covers the sky. The temperature is way below 10 degrees Celsius, it is freezing. The clothes of the children tell that this here is another kind of poverty than what you see in the city. No electricity, no access to water supplies. Not much else. Nonetheless we are received with a plate of hot food each.

The time passes while we are still waiting for people to arrive. Dr. Pelissier finally begins with the welcome procedure. First he leads the prayer and then he starts off with explaining the concept of the Caritas mobile clinic, reveals it is financed by Plan Haiti. He talks about hygiene, about Cholera, about sending kids to school, about women's rights. “Gason pa gen dwa leve men sou nou.. Men do not have the right to lay hand on you! Organize! Speak!, he claims. After his heartfelt appeal the consultations start. Within the next four hours there will be 34 people coming. Later in the car I calculate that this makes up for 7 minutes per patient. Almost everyone gets a prescription for Vitamins, painkillers, Diclofenac, vermifuge, or pills against hypertension, all of what Caritas has in stock and we brought up the mountain.

If someone has an affliction that cannot be restored with Ibuprofen s/he has to wait for the next mobile clinic in a couple of months to take him or her down the mountains to Marigo or take the path over the mountains to go to Potoprens. Even though the sky is clouded and dark, I haven't seen the sun all day, I can tell that it starts getting darker. When are we going to return home?, I turn shyly to my friend Manouchka. “Lè pa gen moun ankò”. When there are no more people.

¹³⁷ French: Seguin, small community in the periphery of the south-eastern department of Haiti

The work of organizations like Caritas Jacmel is of indispensable value for people in places like Segen. This is made possible by the network of parishes: *“Well, because we have church representatives in every corner”*, Dr. Pelissier confirms. The interlocutors, also called facilitators, promoters, leaders or animators, are crucial for the success of programs designed by Caritas. They are the indispensable interface between the Caritas offices and the local communities. It is the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the respective parish that recommends people to the Caritas office. Those people get a specific training by Caritas and after an exam the ones with the highest competencies, best capacities and last but not least the highest degree of credibility within the community are chosen. It is their task to transfer knowledge to the communities themselves, to prepare and facilitate the implementation of programs and seminars conducted by Caritas and to report back on emergencies and necessities on the parish level. In sum, the facilitators act as agenda setters and mediators, as guide and support, both to the Caritas office as well as to their communities.

Within the parish structure Caritas works through *ti-legliz de baz yo*, small church base communities. One employee of Caritas Jacmel told me that he coordinates nine of those small communities in remote places surrounding Jacmel. That means not only supporting in a material and technical sense, in community building but also in a spiritual sense. He offers orientation in the religious life of the community considering the Catholic rites of passage of the sacraments, baptism, confirmation and communion.

Through their rootedness in a local context, faith-based projects like those implemented by Caritas Jacmel are more likely to be set in a long-term scale, offering stability and trust to their beneficiaries (Ferris 2005, Occhipinti 2005). *“It is our work, our great apostolic work that strengthens us...it is the reason that we are still around”*, Emmanuel Auguste explains. The level of embeddedness of an organization like Caritas Jacmel correlates with the degree of accountability. The closer, longer, more intensively they work in a given local context, the more accountable they can be held and hold themselves to the people they assist. Caritas has been a steady institution in the diocese of Jacmel since 1988, for 25 years by the time of my fieldwork. Several of the 29 employees have been working there for more than ten years. Three of them have even been involved with the organization since the very beginning. Many employees reported on established relations of trust among each other. *“We have a trustful relationship. We are comfortable with each other. One gives the other confidence so we can work together.”*

Well, I think that is the strength. When you work together, you give others confidence and you are better able to work without fear”, Phillipe Louis-Simon, the responsible for the agricultural sector, confirms.

Similarly, one of the four drivers of Caritas Jacmel described his work relation as follows:

“We work like brothers. For example if I have to work today and I have some sort of problem I call another driver. He will cover for me. That means he will do my work for me. He also, he does the same when he has a problem. He calls me and I will cover for him. So we work in collaboration with each other. We respect each other. We accomplish a lot with that and we hope it will work out. For Caritas, for us in Jacmel, we proof that we continue to work hand in hand, also to bring Caritas forward. Because what we want is harmony, that one respects the other”.

For the most part, the Caritas *ekip*¹³⁸ regards the organization as its *fanmi*¹³⁹. Narratives like *“We form a family. A family that is what we are. We rejoin in the church”*, draw the picture of a familiar bond between them. In this context, many employees stated that they know each other or rejoin in the *koral*¹⁴⁰, the church choir. The notion of communion of the Catholic Church seems to extend to the way that working for Caritas is conceived by its staff. Every day lunch is being provided in the refectory of Caritas Jacmel. It is the one time in the day when all the employees meet. Sharing food also is a fundamental affirmation of the cohesion within the group, one that is organized structurally. Breaking the bread together is essential in Christian understanding of solidarity, a ritual confirmation of the community of Christ. That way also the daily common meal in Caritas has an eucharistical significance as a reminder of broader sacred associations. Additionally, as mentioned in former chapters, the sharing of food is one of the pillars of Haitian solidarity in general.

Friday close to 2 pm. Food is served like every day. There is: rice with beans, potato salad with mango, green salad, and chicken legs. Everyone is eating enthusiastically except for Agronomist Auguste: “You all are bad Catholics”, he announces instead with his arms crossed in front of his chest. Some look away sheepish, others continue to chew enthusiastically on their chicken leg. The lady that seems to be in charge with housekeeping says: “I just put it there for you. It is up to you if you are going to eat or not”. Auguste sits in his chair stoically without touching any of the food. Later, when most people already finished lunch Auguste gets his special Catholic treat: a fish.

This excerpt from my fieldnotes exemplifies two things: first of all, the symbolic enactment of Catholic Christianity through the application of religious dietary laws. As a

¹³⁸ Haitian Creole, *team*

¹³⁹ Haitian Creole, *family*

¹⁴⁰ Haitian Creole, *choir*

remembrance of Jesus Christ being killed on Good Friday, orthodox Catholics feast every Friday. In practice they do not eat meat, but serve fish instead. The person that requested to eat fish instead of chicken performed his faith expressively against the indifference of the others. *"You all are bad Catholics"*, he said towards the staff eating chicken.

Secondly, the person that insisted on being served fish on Fridays actually was the person with the second highest position in Caritas Jacmel. Père Valery, the moral and bureaucratic authority in the organization, was not present during this specific lunch. In a way, Emmanuel Auguste had to represent his moral and specifically Christian authority. The higher ones position within the organization, the higher the standards towards ones moral, Christian behavior. Also Auguste is in the position to make such a request of having an extra meal prepared for him. In this specific situation faith as well as hierarchy are being performed symbolically. Additionally, faith is also used to evaluate morals of oneself as well as the others.

Faith is an essential part of the organizational culture of Caritas Jacmel. It seems to be the oil in the motor of the organization. Motivated by their faith employees of religious organizations "might be more willing to endure hardship and personal sacrifice for a longer period of time" (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012:20). In many instances the staff drew on their faith when explaining why they would make certain efforts. Especially the earthquake of January 12 was referred to as a testimony of faith. Gaelle Perelus, a Caritas nurse describes her days subsequent to the earthquake, working around the clock: *"Every day I was working. There was no time to begin, no time to end, either. When we started at eight we sometimes finished at four or five...or until we found a way to help those people"*. Director Père Valery substantiates her account:

"I have this image in my head, of the time we went to the field. Back then they did not have tents yet. Our team was there, right under the sun. The whole day they did receive the injured. They sweated. They served the people until 6 pm, sometimes 7 pm. I believe that for the majority of people that was a work of faith. It was an occasion to show that they really loved their neighbors. Their neighbors in trouble, who needed help...They solidarized with them".

Organizations with a faith identity have a large potential for commitment and voluntarism. They are able to mobilize a vast number of volunteers to serve as lay practitioners in development (Ver Beek 2000). A lot of lay practitioners are involved in a variety of programs that are affiliated to Caritas Jacmel. On a transregional level there is

a regular flow and exchange of lay people as well as Caritas professionals coming to Haiti and vice versa. According to Hopgood and Venjamuri, small-scale donors who are motivated by their faith are more loyal, generous and committed than the ones who occasionally donate to secular organizations (Hopgood and Venjamuri 2012). The faith-background of the organization also facilitates fundraising:

“Primarily there are two advantages. First of all, the fact that it is a church organization facilitates fund raising. You can collect money faster from the hands of people. It is a lot easier if a priest or a bishop launches a marathon. He says that we are going to collect money so we can help a church institution. He will raise money a lot easier. It is easier because people know it is a church institution. S/he knows that it is a church institution that s/he is donating to, s/he knows that they are Christians. S/he knows that s/he has a duty towards God. That is the first thing. The second thing is that Caritas Haiti is part of an international network so that it was lucky enough to benefit from the funds of other churches. For example Caritas Milan can make a fundraising and send it to Caritas Haiti. Caritas Ecuador can do it, too. They can launch a marathon for example. It is citizens of foreign countries who collaborate and send us funds. What makes it a lot easier is that it is the church that launches the appeal. When it is a church institution that launches the appeal the person knows that even though s/he gets nothing in return, s/he makes a testimony in the name of God. S/he provides a proof of faith. And that will come back to her or him. So there is a double advantage. The person knows s/he is doing it for a church institution. Even if s/he would not want to do it for a citizen or a Christian like her, because s/he is Christian s/he knows that someone is watching her from above no matter if Catholic or Protestant. That fact that s/he knows that there is God in the first place is something that acts in favor of Caritas”.

As Mackenzy Ernst at the National Office in Port-au-Prince confirms, religious people who donate to religious aid organizations do so on the basis of their faith. Besides the fact that Caritas as a well established aid organization of the Catholic Church still has a credibility advantage over most secular organizations, the latter also often lack a comparable institutionalized space like a church where donation for certain humanitarian projects can be collected on a regular basis. Faith is an effective tool to raise funds among believers (Bradley 2011).

Caritas as a clerical institution subjects itself to the specific morals and values of the Catholic Church. Phillippe Louis-Simon, responsible for the agricultural sector, explained the difference that makes:

“Caritas is a credible institution, we make people confident. Not only when managing financial issues...for example, the other NGOs, they have a lot of money but sometimes you cannot see what they are doing with it. We in Caritas we make the maximum effort to maintain our dignity as an institution of the church. We will not do everything”.

As most religious organizations draw on a set of strict moral codices based on their religious identity they are also more “likely to behave consistently with their principles”

(Barnett and Gross Stein 2012:20). To make sure that the personnel of Caritas indeed acts in accordance with the moral principles as demanded by the Catholic Church those employed are almost always Catholic Christians. *“They always recruit moral persons, persons who also provide their service to the church”*, Janjak Casimir of Caritas Jacmel explains. Even though there have been people of Protestant denomination working for Caritas Jacmel for example as animators, contractors or *jounalyes*, the core of Caritas staff, those 29 people permanently employed, are all devoted Catholics.

Furthermore, faith-based initiatives do provide a “space in which to negotiate and contest realms not evident in strictly economic discourse, such as good, evil, morality, and witchcraft” (Bornstein 2005: 170). Despite the dogmatic character of the Catholic Church, Caritas is also a place where certain Catholic morals are renegotiated. The discourse on HIV/Aids prevention can be identified as a prime example. The official directive of the Catholic Church everywhere in the world is to promote abstinence and fidelity. For a long time Haiti had one of the highest prevalence rates of HIV/Aids in the world. Accordingly an organization like Caritas with a mandate of improving the human condition also has to confront itself with this specific reality. *“And do they really practice fidelity?”*, asks a Caritas health professional. In practical terms that means when Caritas conducts education on the disease, they say that that there are in fact three ways to avoid catching it: abstinence, fidelity, and using condoms. Even though they make clear that the Catholic Church only promotes the former two strategies, by naming the third they nevertheless openly acknowledge on the ground realities. By no means everyone within the network is in line with prohibition of condoms: *“We normally have big debates about that in the forum, also in the reunions. Because the church is against preservatives [...] the church should reconsider”*, a Caritas Jacmel nurse confirms.

5.1.4 A Testimony of Faith – The Organizational Identity of Staff

“It is because I am Christian that I work for this institution. And when I do my job, I do it with all my heart.”

Much like Nephthalie Moreau, the youngest staff member of Caritas Jacmel, all of the employees interviewed expressed a strong identification with the objectives and mission of Caritas. This identity is mainly driven by their faith in God, but also in the Catholic Church as an institution that motivates people to work for Caritas: *“It is my faith that makes me go to work”*, as Wilner Saint-Cyr, an animator in the EKOSOL sector announced.

As shown above, Caritas is perceived as the social agent of the Catholic Church, ergo employees also regard themselves as working for the church. The vast majority of the people working for Caritas Jacmel have been actively engaged in the church. Before working for Caritas many have been either working in one of the affiliated projects, like Cash-for-Work projects financed by other national Caritas or as service personnel, as a driver for the bishop for example. Three among the 29 people employed by Caritas Jacmel in 2013 have been working with the organization since its beginnings in 1988, for 25 years. The team considerably expanded in size after *Douz Janvye*. Some got their jobs out of a post-earthquake necessity and also due to the availability of funds. The director changed only twice in 25 years. Others have been employed for more than ten years. Phillipe Louis-Simon, the coordinator of the agricultural sector has been around for eleven years: *“In a unique way we are motivated to work, you understand? Despite the fact that sometimes there also can be discouragement, but nevertheless for eleven years I work here, we are motivated enough”*.

In Haiti, the church in general and Caritas as one of the institutional expressions of the church, is regarded as a system of social security (Leutloff-Grandits, Peleikis and Thelen 2009) that the state is incapable to offer. This holds true for the ones directly benefitting from Caritas distribution but also for its employees. It provides a safety net, because it is able to offer stability in employment. Working for Caritas itself is seen as resource by the employees. Even though the mandate of the organization prohibits the dissemination of aid to its own employees, having the opportunity to work salaried for an organization like Caritas is a huge asset: *“They help you indirectly. They help you by giving you a job. This is a big help anyway”*, Pierre Estime confirmed in 2013.

Additional to the shared faith, this also leads to a strong identification of staff with the overall objective of Caritas. Several of the employees have been given the opportunity to travel to other countries with Caritas exchange programs in the past. The engineer responsible for the housing program used to be a youth leader in the Catholic Church. That position not only earned him a trip to Vatican City but he was also rewarded with a scholarship to study in the Dominican Republic. Asked for his motivation to work for Caritas he stated:

“First of all I feel good. I work in a place that I grew up in. That means the church. In church. That is why I do the work that I do with a more contented heart. Because I do a better job. It is an ethical question. I do good work also for the reputation of Caritas, so it

stays the way it is, very grand. As a Christian...not as an engineer...as a Christian. I encounter the people I work with at eye level. I make them happy to work with this institution. Also the beneficiaries. Since it's me who works with them, they are happy to know that it is the church that gave them something. So that the love touches them as well".

Like in other faith-based contexts working for Caritas is seen as a manifestation of faith in everyday life (Bornstein 2005). *"The majority of people who work here are Christians, who have faith",* Père Valery stated. There have been Protestants working for Caritas Jacmel in the past, but not in higher positions.¹⁴¹ In 2013, the office staff was consisting only of Catholics. Père Valery stated: *"We have a lot of Protestants that work for us, but not really in the office. Rather in the field"*. The director of Caritas Jacmel explains this practice with a concept of "cultural proximity" (Benthall 2012):

"However, it is better when we recruit people to find people who are really Catholic, that is better for us. It facilitates the integration of that person into the team. So if it is a person who has another religious confession, for example Protestant, we have certain activities that are proper religious activities, liturgies that we do. If a person comes from another church, s/he does not feel comfortable among the team".

Many among the employees I engaged with referred to what they believed was their moral obligation as Christians:

"It is under the banner of the gospel that we work. It is always God that gives us orientation. It is always the will of God. [...] He created us so we all are well. But unfortunately, in reality we know that we suffer a lot...we suffer a lot. God does not find pleasure in that. That is why we Christians get involved; we cannot find pleasure when people suffer. We have to...it is our aim to find out how we can help to transform the suffering into joy".

Moise Deronvil, whom I accompanied to a series of Disaster Risk Reduction seminars in remote regions, describes his heavenly task as an agent of transformation. Manouchka Beauchamp, who works for the medical sector, goes in the same direction:

"I have a lot of faith. This faith makes me believe that things will change. I believe in that. I am a Catholic Christian. I believe in God, I believe in the church too, and in sharing. Sharing is something that helps people a lot. To love the other is something that helps people a lot. Everything that you do not share, no word, not what you have, makes you a person that is not alive".

Working for Caritas is the consequent implementation of helping and sharing as a socio-religious duty (Bornstein and Redfield 2011). The biblical love for the neighbor, one of the main objectives of Caritas in general, is put into practice.

The own faith is not only considered a crucial factor for the coherence of the team, it is also the prerequisite for being able to transport the values of Catholic social teaching to

¹⁴¹ In Germany, Caritas as well as Diakonie theoretically request their employees to be part of a Christian church and support the diaconal mandate. In practice this largely depends on the local authorities and the respective job position.

others. This is related to the requirement of credibility: *“Yes, it is tied to faith. You cannot accompany people in Caritas without having faith yourself. You make people understand the realities. [...] And then you give spiritual aid. You encourage people, you understand, to get to know God”*, Pierre Estime states.

As mentioned earlier part of the work of Caritas Jacmel is not only to provide material but also spiritual, holistic support. This aspect, the pastoral work of Caritas, is considered to be of benefit for the one who is helping as well as generally a unique feature of the FBOs engagement against the backdrop of other NGOs intervention in the aid complex. Caritas nurse Maxine Geffrad makes it clear:

“It helps you to approach people who are less fortunate, people who are poorer. And that helps you. You find yourself. It helps you to approach people who are the poorest really. Well, we do not say it’s done very very good. But among all the other organizations who say they come to help people who are not able to help themselves you see a big difference between Caritas and them”.

Evidently, working for Caritas Jacmel is a testimony of faith to the employees. Not only to help and share with the ones in need, they also strengthen their own faith through that.

5.1.5 God made him see me – The Beneficiaries of Caritas Jacmel

“God, Holy Lord, our father. We thank you very much for the favors you do us. You made us spent the night well. You made us reunite in the morning for a meeting to discuss what is good for us, for our community. We ask you to assist us. Send us your holy spirit to accompany us for what we will discuss. So it does not condemn us, but gives us benediction. So our community can advance. We ask you all of that, under the power of Jesus Christ, our Holy Lord. Amen Amen. Father, you who gave us the Holy Spirit, thank you president...if it was not for you I would not be here. I tell you. You are here as our chef. So I have to turn to you.”

It was a beneficiary of a Caritas Jacmel housing project who said grace prior to a group meeting in the community of La Vanneau. It is a common occurrence for employees as much as beneficiaries to introduce religious rituals in Caritas events. The integration of religious laity also in spiritual events related to the work of the organization, makes up for a big part of the mutual identification between staff and beneficiaries. Next to being Haitian, being Christian is one of the main markers of identity that binds both groups together.

All of the beneficiaries of the housing program as well as participants of trainings and seminars I have spoken to were members of the Catholic Church. Most people were born into Catholic families, some converted from Protestantism. Especially in Haiti, where the

Catholic Church is taking the leading role in primary education, there is hardly any biography that has not been in touch with the institution of the Catholic Church.

Many reported on occupying an active role within the church. Some organize in women's groups within the church, others are engaged in the overarching *Karitas Pawasyal*. Like many others, Rachelle Jean, who was benefited with one of the houses constructed by Caritas Jacmel, took part in church committees:

"I knew Caritas. I used to participate in Caritas trainings; I helped with Karitas Pawasyal together with a lot of people. I participated in many seminars. I took part in parish meeting with many other people for Caritas. After the earthquake I had to move here, I abandoned that part of town and did not participate in the trainings they gave anymore".

The religious biographies presented to me by Haitians in general were often not following a straight line. Some reported of ruptures and doubts, also of periods of alienation and rapprochement. Asked about her faith and the relation to the church, Rachelle Jean stated:

"Well, my faith...I told you I was married and I am not with this person anymore. We separated. For a long time I neglected the church. I went to the church but I did not participate...I was part of the choir, but when I was finished with my husband, I had to leave the choir. For a long time, I went to the church, but I did not participate in any group. When the choir was singing, I did not take part. I also did not receive the communion anymore. But later I realized that this situation is not good for me. I chose a moment in lent when I went on a retreat in the church, because I wanted to take back my church. After I did the Easter retreat I confessed. After confessing I talked to the priest. After I confessed, he said: „No problem, you can receive the communion“. After this conversation, I received the communion. Ever since I follow the road of the church. Now I joined a choir because I realized that not participating in it in church at all made me neglect going to church a little bit. So I said to myself I have to participate in a choir anyways, so I can still encourage going to church".

Similarly, Magalie Theobrun, a 36-year-old mother of two, talks about her approach to her faith: *"There is nothing it cannot do, there is no thing that is bigger than that. I choose that. It chose me, but I chose it as well. First it chose me that's true, than I build my life on it".* This confident reference to one's faith reflects a certain agency in terms of not subjecting oneself to the overarching religious narrative, very prevalent especially in Haiti. Rachelle Jean wanted to "take her church back" after a period of alienation. Magalie Theobrun chose her faith to be the basis of her life.

As already Bornstein in her evaluation of faith-based efforts in Zimbabwe has shown also "the act of receiving is filled with agency" (Bornstein 2005:171). That holds true for the Caritas beneficiaries I encountered. While all were very contended to be granted a

house by Caritas Jacmel, the vast majority was also very confident and did not subject themselves to a role of passive receiver of charity.

Many expressed the conviction that it was due to a heavenly intervention that Caritas gave them a house. Caritas in general is seen as a mediating instance: *"Caritas takes care of us after God. The other organizations...I don't sense them. After God I feel Caritas, and the other countries who helped us who together with other organizations helped them to do this for us"*, a resident of La Vanneau stated. Especially Caritas employees are considered divine agents:

"It is Caritas that deserves that we say thank you. In the first place it is Mister Evens that I want to thank. If it wasn't for him who saw me in my need and gave me a house, I have to say, Caritas wouldn't have seen me. Mister Evens, thank you very much. It was you yourself who favored me. Who allowed that I have this home now. I have to say, thank you very much. [...] It was the eternal that made Evens see me. It was Evens that saw I deserve it. It was Evens who gave me the house. And I think everyone who is here, it is thanks to him that we are beneficiaries. Brother Evens, thank you very much, may the eternal be with you".

In this case it is especially Evens Laurent, responsible for the housing projects, that is central to the narratives. In the perception of beneficiaries it was God who made him see the ones in need. A personal relation to an employee of Caritas is valued over the reference to the divine. Additionally, houses built by Caritas Jacmel are inaugurated and consecrated with a religious ceremony to protect the houses and their owners.

To sum up, beneficiaries of Caritas are almost entirely active members of the local Catholic parishes. There is congruence, or overlapping to the least, of the social life and communal organization with the parish structure especially in remote regions, like La Vanneau, Seguin, Montagne Lavout. Especially the church choir is a social institution in that sense. It is regarded as a social place, an expression of uttermost religious morality. Religion in the terms of Benthall's theory of "cultural proximity" (Benthall 2012) is one of a multitude of markers of similarity or difference. People who share one faith can build upon a solid collective identity and a common sense of dignity (Bradley 2011). The faith in Jesus Christ does not only unite the beneficiaries who often visit the same churches and church groups. It also acts as strong link between beneficiaries and employees of Caritas Jacmel. Moreover this shared faith permeates all levels of Caritas intervention, from Caritas Internationalis in Vatican City down to Magalie Theobrun sitting on the steps of her house in Breman, Haiti.

5.2. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe

5.2.1 The Evangelical Church and humanitarianism – *The Organizational Background*

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe is the humanitarian section of the *Diakonisches Werk der Evangelischen Kirche Deutschland (EKD)*, the Ecumenical Diaconia of the Social Service Agency of the Protestant Church in Germany. The origin of Diakonie dates back to 1848, when the first Protestant umbrella organization was established as the *Centrallausschuß für die Innere Mission*, the Central Committee for Inner Mission (Golbeck 2010:603). In the biblical sense *diaconia*¹⁴² refers to religious service, but also helping those in need as well as “demanding justice in situations of exclusion, and advocating for those whose voice is not heard” (Golbeck 2010: 603). Diakonie in Germany is one of the largest non-statutory welfare organizations (Golbeck 2010: 603).

The *Evangelisches Hilfswerk*, Evangelical Relief Organization, was founded in 1945 postwar Germany mainly to take care of German refugees and people who lost home as a consequence of Germany’s defeat in WW II. The year 1954 was the beginning of the first coordinated and organized aid intervention to support people in distress outside of Germany and the foundational moment for Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH).

Today, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe is thoroughly embedded in a network of Protestant development work. DKH forms part of the *Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung*, the Protestant Agency for Diakonie and Development that was launched in 2012. This overarching structure is a fusion of *Diakonisches Werk*, the umbrella organization of the welfare work centered on Germany, *Brot für die Welt*¹⁴³, the development sister organization of DKH, and the former *Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst*. DKH, if possible, establishes working co-operation with *Brot für die Welt* to ensure the sustainability of the humanitarian intervention and put the LRRD strategy – Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development –, into practice (Mosel and Levine 2014). Even though DKH presents itself as an own brand, legally it is a division of *Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung* and not an autonomous organization. DKH has not the status of a legal entity itself. This was a problem concerning the

¹⁴² Greek, *ministry*

¹⁴³ German, Bread for the World

registration with the government of Haiti. The humanitarian organization had to be registered under the Protestant Church of Germany.

Today, DKH is active in 40 countries. In 2014, the humanitarian organization was executing 172 projects and programs with a financial volume of 54 million Euro.¹⁴⁴ It usually works through local organizations. Haiti is one of the few exceptions where DKH is present with an office.

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe allocates financial resources from private donations, public funds and third party contributions. In 2014, 43 percent of the funds came from private donations, 38 percent from public authorities. The lions share of those public funds, approximately two thirds was received by the *Auswärtiges Amt* (AA), the German Federal Foreign Office, one third by the *Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung* (BMZ), the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and smaller amounts by the European Commission's Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) and the UN. Seven percent were contributed by DKH's sister organization, *Brot für die Welt*. An additional six percent were received through third party donations (such as other Diakonie country divisions).¹⁴⁵ A German pharmaceutical company as well as a German pop band funded the construction of emergency shelters inaugurated in Haiti in 2013. In total, DKH received € 16.5 million for post-earthquake projects in Haiti.

The Christian humanitarian organization is a member of the ACT Alliance, an umbrella organization with more than 140 members of a variety of Protestant faith-based organizations. Action by Churches Together (ACT) is a distinctive religious conglomerate of humanitarian and development organizations. The headquarters is based in Geneva, Switzerland. In other countries ACT is present through its members:

“In fact ACT does not work like an alliance with more than hundred organizations all over the world. Normally we are represented in the different countries through the member organizations. And we demand the organizations to work together, we constitute forums in every country that has several ACT members”, Magdalena Dupond, ACT coordinator for Haiti stated in 2011.

¹⁴⁴ DKH Annual Report 2014 available at <http://www.diakonie-katastrophenhilfe.de/ueber-uns/transparenz/jahresbericht.html> Last visited May 30, 2016.

¹⁴⁵ DKH Annual Report 2014 available at <http://www.diakonie-katastrophenhilfe.de/ueber-uns/transparenz/jahresbericht.html> Last visited May 30, 2016.

ACT primarily works through the appeal system. Essentially this is a method of allocation and redistribution of funds within the community of ACT members. In Haiti, ACT has eleven member organizations, eight of which had a presence prior to *Douz Janvye*.

Haiti

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe started its projects in Haiti in 2003. DKH primarily intervenes in other countries through local partners. An *“own implementation is the last resort”*, an employee in the headquarters in Berlin stated in 2013. Originally, the programs conducted in Haiti were implemented by a partnering organization and steered from the regional office for Latin America in Colombia. Because of donor skepticism towards the local organizations, Diakonie established a permanent office in Port-au-Prince in 2005. *“Many donors demand that as a precondition. For them to give money, they want someone on the ground. They do not like this model of a European NGO that has a local partner and entrusts everything to the local organization. There are many donors who do not like that”*, the former Country Director Schulz stated in 2011. Subsequent to the disastrous hurricanes Gustav and Hanna in 2008, DKH set up emergency relief projects in the southeastern department of Haiti.

During my fieldwork periods in 2011 and 2013, DKH ran projects in the southern, southeastern as well as the northwestern department of Haiti. In the southern and northwestern department DKH intervened via partner organizations. It carried out projects in the fields of Food Security and Disaster Risk Reduction. In the wake of the earthquake, DKH got involved with emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of houses as well as WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) projects. Additionally to the houses that DKH (re)-constructed, they rehabilitated three schools in Jacmel as well as a health center in Baintet and set up two community emergency shelters in Anse-à-Pitre and Grand-Gosier. The organization intensified its implementations in the southeastern department and opened up a permanent office in Jacmel and two smaller staging posts in Baintet and La Vallée. In spring 2013, by the time of my second field trip, the field office in Jacmel had already been closed though. Like the majority of iNGOs, DKH operates its projects and missions from Port-au-Prince, though the capital itself is not a site of intervention (Schuller 2016).

DKH works on the grounds of a strictly humanitarian mandate: “*We can only go up to a specific point and when it turns towards development, we have to hand it over to someone else*”, the former Country Director Schulz stated. When the humanitarian intervention is completed, ideally those projects are then handed over to Haitian organizations. Usually the Country Director in Haiti is held accountable by the Regional Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean at DKH headquarters in Berlin. The majority of decisions have to be approved by this instance.

While the earthquake had an important impact on the operations in terms of funds, employees and output, by the year 2014, DKH considerably reduced their mission in a process referred to as consolidation. In 2015, DKH fused their operational structure in Haiti with the Lutheran World Foundation, a fellow ACT member organization.

5.2.2 We are all sinners – DKH’s Mission in Official Scripts and Statements

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe is the humanitarian arm of the Evangelical Church in Germany. The following part seeks to scrutinize how this background is mirrored in the organizational identity and self-conception as a humanitarian organization. First of all, the overarching Diakonie as an organization positions itself visually as church-based. The logo of the general Diakonie consists of the so-called *Kronenkreuz*, the crown and cross. As it is part of the cooperate identity of Diakonie, DKH also uses this logo. It seeks to symbolize the initial letters of I and M of the *Innere Mission*, the inner mission, the founding institution of Diakonie in 1848. In Diakonie’s online representation it reads: “The sign is supposed to encourage the employees of Diakonie: The cross as a reference to hardship and death, the crown as a symbol for hope and resurrection. The connection of cross and crown shall symbolize the confidence that hardships can be overcome, because Jesus Christ overcame hardship and death”¹⁴⁶.

In official publications DKH presents itself decidedly Christian: “Together with the worldwide community of Christians, and based on the Christian concept of humanity and on having overall responsibility for God’s creation, it provides unconditional humanitarian aid, irrespective of the political, religious and cultural affiliation of the victims”¹⁴⁷. In this 2011 publication the organization draws on a common spiritual community of Christians as the starting point for their humanitarian engagement

¹⁴⁶ <http://www.diakonie.de/kronenkreuz-12033.html> Last visited May 24, 2016.

¹⁴⁷ DKH Annual Report 2011. Available at <http://archnet.org/publications/9298>. Last visited May 16, 2016.

dedicated to all human beings as divine creations. In a 2004 common statement published jointly with Caritas Germany, DKH positions itself in its work as inherently faith-based, too. They state that the Christian faith is the motivation as well as the principal basis of their humanitarian action. Therein human dignity as a consequence of people being created in *imago dei* is the starting point of everything that follows. Drawing on the teachings of Christ, they as Christians see themselves obligated to help, without any differentiation. Additionally, Caritas Germany and DKH state they do not “have the right to divide people into “good” or “bad” and to treat them differently. God alone is entitled to this right. In his eyes we are all victim and culprit in one person and need his reconciliation” (Caritas Germany and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe 2004).

In the same vein Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel, head of DKH and *Brot für die Welt*, approaches dilemmas encountered in contemporary humanitarianism:

“In humanitarian aid we are continuously navigating through ethical dilemmas. So we better be honest about those dilemmas. And to speak about the fact that we are navigating through these dilemmas instead of always pretending that we are on the one and only pure side. I can deal with that from a Christian perspective relatively well, because my theological ancestor – I am Evangelical – Luther said that we are all sinners. That means I don’t have to aim that everything will be resolved in a hundred percent ethically unambiguous way, because it won’t. To me it is important what you can achieve in the end. That I will not realize the Kingdom of God is pretty obvious, theologically speaking”.

Füllkrug-Weitzel, who is an Evangelical pastor, too, draws on the concept of the sameness in sin as the basis of a collective religious identity. Hannah Arendt, in her dissertation on the conception of love in Saint Augustine’s thinking, has prolonged this argument to the concept of neighborly love, the very foundation of Christian charity: “The reason one should love one’s neighbor is that the neighbor is fundamentally one’s equal and both share the same sinful past” (Arendt 1996:106).

In the social work of Diakonie in Germany, in the official publications as well as in the headquarters of DKH, the organization’s Christian background and motivation is focused and promoted. The humanitarian organization even strengthened the focus on its Christian identity in past years, as stated by a headquarters employee in 2013. In other arenas, such as field missions but also humanitarian conferences this is not necessarily evident in the same way. At a humanitarian meeting held by MSF Germany, DKH president Füllkrug-Weitzel, while presenting a 45 min talk on the challenges of humanitarian intervention referred to their church background only once and quite cryptically. “In comparison to other organizations we have a distinct take on the subject

of war”, she said. I addressed the Christian background of DKH and asked for the role it plays in the humanitarian intervention. The immediate reaction was a defensive one. At first she did put the focus not on faith, but on professionalism only to come to what she believed were the Christian roots of this kind of professionalism:

“Thank God, the involvement of the church and professionalism are not mutually exclusive. Thank God, quality and involvement of the church are not mutually exclusive. And thank God, we believe that we as a church-based organization have to provide extremely high quality. And that has something to do with the humanitarian principles. You can check that on our website, the ethical principles of humanitarian aid and what this has to do with our involvement as a church. We are not a missionary organization [...]. We make no secret of the fact that we are a church-based organization. But we also do not make a secret of the fact that, if you want you can find many examples in the New Testament, it is not a requirement to be a Christian to be helped by a Christian. Rather it was also the ethical principle of Jesus that everyone who is in need of care is partaking in it, regardless of his background, religious or national or whatever. What appears to be secular here is inherently Christian. Rather one might ask oneself if what you can find in international law does not also have Christian roots. But this is a rather unpopular question“.

Füllkrug-Weitzel extends arguments of scholars of humanitarianism such as Bornstein (2005), Barnett and Gross-Stein (2012) and Fassin (2010), who analyzed contemporary humanitarianism as secular expressions of certain religious traditions. In her statement she also makes the “unpopular” claim that humanitarian principles such as neutrality and impartiality, considered the quasi-sacred milestones of secular humanitarianism, themselves derive from the teachings of Jesus Christ.

5.2.3 A lucky coincidence – *The Individual and Organizational Identity of DKH Staff*

Shortly after the earthquake DKH had 26 staff members in Haiti. None of the employees died on *Douz Janvye*. By 2011, when I first spoke to Diakonie staff in Haiti, the size of the team expanded to seven additional expatriate employees as well as more than 70 Haitian employees. In 2012, the zenith of the intervention, DKH was maintaining three local offices in Jacmel, Bainet and La Vallée next to the one in the capital Port-au-Prince. At the same time the number of employees rose to 111. During my second visit in 2013, with 24 employees the team size already considerably diminished due to the process referred to as “consolidation” by head staff. The goal was to hand over the projects and maintain an operational structure with not more than three to four local employees by the end of 2014.

Even though DKH positions itself as a faith-based organization, religiosity has varying significance in the different arenas of the organizations. The main distinction here is religion as a matter of private devotion and religion as a shared identity that is acted out

collectively. To differentiate the varying levels of the impact of religion within DKH I will look at the Haitian staff, the expatriate staff and the headquarters staff.

Haitian staff

As the majority of Haitians in general, also many among the local employees of DKH identified as Christian. They performed their religiosity with religious paraphernalia such as rosaries and crosses. One driver for example always had a psalm book at hand in his car. Others would cross themselves when passing religious buildings or undergoing possibly dangerous situations. Some also prayed during work. One of the expatriates commented on that:

“Yes, it takes place...they do it very discretely. Sometimes I also see it when we drive, when there is a delicate situation, then you see the people taking their cross in their mouth, when they drive up a difficult road. That they are seeking for divine support. Also the belief in spirits, good spirits and bad spirits, some people cannot sleep under one roof because their spirits don't get along. That is very present here”.

One of the most instructive examples was Robenson Placide, a DKH driver with whom I visited beneficiaries in the remote area of Bresilienne in 2011. The long hours we spent in the car to drive through this region gave us a lot of time to engage in discussions. Even though Placide was born into a Baptist family, he converted to Catholicism because he went to a Catholic school: *“I was born Protestant, Baptist. Then I went to a school of Christian brothers, you know they are Catholic. I was basically raised there as a child. A cousin of mine became a priest. I was always in church, do the mess, and do this work. I am a person, who can identify as Catholic”.*

Yet he goes on explaining that he actually does not consider himself very religious: *“But basically I don't really have a religion that I apply. I am rather a believer. I know that the earth was done by itself, that the sky was done by itself”.*

He was raised in a very religious environment, even more so in an educational system that demanded him to go through all the required rituals of Catholicism. In those terms the DKH employee identifies as Catholic, but not as an active practitioner of Catholic Christianity. Every time we passed a church though on our twelve-hour trip to and through the ample community of Bresilienne and back to Jacmel, he made the sign of the cross. It was part of his everyday habits. Still he spoke of himself as a believer: *“I am a believer. It is not like I don't pray at all because I still know, that there is a force that exists”.* During the earthquake he was holding a meeting in the provinces. Even though he did not accredit the event itself to divine intervention, he tended to God anyways:

“At the time of the earthquake, when I entered Port-au-Prince, with all that I saw in Port-au-Prince, I said to myself, well maybe God knows why I was not in Port-au-Prince at that time. I cannot give him the responsibility for the earthquake. But that moment, he chose for me to be in the place I was. Like he has a mission for me to finish, so he wanted me to be in a place where he could protect me”.

Even though he confirms a meaningful relationship to God, he does criticize the institution of the church, mostly for the selling of indulgences and thereby passing on responsibilities: *“You have to go to church, so as a sinner you can be purified. No. I think it is the effort of everyone for himself or herself, you know, to try to end things that are bad in their own homes: ambitions, pride, racism, things that make you live in a bad way”.*

Placide is one of the few people I encountered in Haiti to make the statement of not being an actively engaged believer. He explained to me that he doesn't go to church often, maybe one or two times per year. He profited from good education, and presented distinctly scientific explications for the earthquake and as well as a sharp political analysis of the Haitian status quo. Like many people I interacted with in Haiti, also Placide abstracts between two sorts of concepts, a religious interpretation of the earthquake for example as well as a recognition and support of an analysis based on natural science, without totally dismissing either one of them. He identified not as an active Catholic Christian but as a believer, because he knows, that *“there is an existing force”* that influences his life as well. The organization that he chose to work with, DKH, was not integrated in his narratives in terms of his own faith.

Similarly, the Program Manager of DKH, the Haitian national Jean-Michel Clersaint, only rarely referred to religion at all. Instead he expressed a strong commitment to the professional conduct of humanitarian intervention. One time he told me that for a short period of time he studied anthropology and became very interested in Christology as well as Liberation Theology. Yet he stated to keep those things separate from his job: *“But I do not share this. I try to differentiate them, I don't mix them”.*

Religion played only a minor role in the organizational culture of DKH in Haiti. In the direct wake of the earthquake, there was a prayer led by one of the employees, a French pastor. Most employees, regardless if expat or Haitian, faithful or not, took part in it to find some sort of solace. There was at least one occasion in which the religiosity of staff, the Haitian staff for that matter, created dissent. Within the post-earthquake staff care there was an incident that Dorothea Becker, the regional responsible for Latin America and the Caribbean at DKH headquarters brought to my attention. Someone lead a

ceremony framed as psychosocial support. Within this ceremony there were Vodou components to be found. Becker explained to me that because of the Code of Conduct, the neutrality of DKH, the organization could not tolerate the exercise of Vodou in the premises of DKH. The people responsible left the organization on their own terms. When I interviewed the Program Manager on the ground on the irritation caused by the ceremony, he put it in perspective:

“Well, they did a ceremony for interiorization for psychological support. We call it technical support. You understand...there was prayer, too. A universal prayer, but it was not a prayer for Protestants or for Catholics. And there was a “Wisdom Circle”. They sit in a circle...and everyone expresses herself, everyone liberates himself. People cry...people are shocked. Everyone expresses what makes him feel bad. [...] It was not a prayer. It was psychosocial support. There was no...we were in a universal prayer... there was no religion. It was very interesting”.

Evidently, there are different contextualizations of the situation at work between the headquarters in Berlin and the ones responsible in Haiti. While it is not possible for me to coherently analyze and dissolve the situation, as it was not possible to talk to people actually present during this event, the dissent it caused has a significance of its own. The religiosity of the Haitian staff is a matter of discourse, ostensibly in professional terms. To avoid a possible violation of the Code of Conduct, the need of people, Haitians in post-disaster stress, to tend to prayer is reframed as a non-religious, technical act.

To sum up, with a few exceptions in the wake of *Douz Janvye*, faith was not displayed in a collective way by Haitian staff. Even though on the individual level the religiosity of Haitian employees is noticeable, the organizational context of DKH as a strictly humanitarian NGO did not provide with a framework to facilitate collective religiosity.

Expatriate staff

In the following section I will present three people that worked for DKH in Haiti as expatriate employees. All of them occupied management positions. I will focus on their organizational biography and identification as well as their relation to the faith aspects of working for an FBO as much as in a religious environment.

Antje Schulz

The former Country Director Antje Schulz has shaped the organization since the beginning of the permanent presence of DKH in Haiti in 2005. When I first met her in 2011 she expressed a clear-cut stance on religion. Even though she was baptized in the Protestant-Lutheran tradition, she stated that religion does not play an outstanding role

in her life. For her employment by DKH, even though not demanded back when she got contracted, it turned out to be a benefit nonetheless. She stated her faith to be:

“Evangelical-Lutheran. Always have been. And I always stayed in church by choice. Not that I have been a regular churchgoer, but...phhh. I found the discourse of many of my friends and acquaintances about why one could not stay in church or why one would not want to pay church taxes, not necessarily convincing. For me it turned out to be a lucky coincidence. I did not have to make something up” [when working with DKH; A.S.].

When it comes to employing people in Haiti the opposite is the case for her. An explicitly religious motivation to work for DKH was rather a hindrance to be employed by Schulz: *“And it is interesting, because some actually identify with it. Well they come to a job interview and they think they can convince me by showing off how well versed they are in the Bible. That’s rather something that makes me suspicious”.*

In July 2011, when I first engaged with the organization, Schulz was actually about to leave the organization. Even though narratives of other people involved with DKH suggested that the dissociation with DKH did not solely happened on good terms, Schulz did not mention any of that during our talks. In October 2011, she starting working with the German Red Cross, also in the position of the Country Director for Haiti.

Mike Bennani

The Logistics Manager Mike Bennani is a long-time expatriate employee of DKH. During the past years DKH contracted him as a consultant. Mere days after the earthquake, he was sent to Haiti and has been coming back on a regular basis ever since. He proactively refers to himself as a Christian:

“Yes, well in Denmark most people are Protestants. That is our state religion. The Protestant Church. After the reformation we expelled the Catholics. Today there are as many Catholics as there are Jews, approximately 5000 more. But I was in the Balkans for many years. It is my adopted country and my friends are Catholics. So I turned quasi-half Catholic. My goddaughter is Catholic and as a godfather you have to join the church”.

Next to identifying as Christian, he also identifies with the organization of DKH as a whole. He has been working with them for 20 years. In fact, he has a background in military and started working in the humanitarian field during the Balkan wars in 1994. In the past two decades he has worked in most of the humanitarian crisis around the globe. He refers to himself and is referred to by others as the “firefighter” of Diakonie. Whereas others refer to the organization as “Diakonie”, Bennani uses the pronoun “we” when he speaks of Diakonie in Haiti and in other countries. He states that he actually likes working in humanitarian conflict zones, also in Haiti: *“It is a way to stay fit*

somehow. Ah, because if you have done more or less everything it can get trivial very quickly. That's why a mission like Haiti still excites me".

In sum, Bennani identified as Christian and showed a high level of self-commitment to the humanitarian mission of DKH.

Sandra Bertrand

The third expatriate humanitarian I am going to present is Sandra Bertrand. She worked for DKH at the time of the earthquake, came back in September 2012 and filled the position as Country Director in January 2013.

She, like Schulz, is also a non-practicing Christian. As a child she was baptized in the Catholic Church. During an interview conducted in March 2013, she expressed a very critical yet reflected take on the role of religion in society:

"I am French-Canadian. We were colonized by the English and it's a colonized country. It's Canada. And then it's a country built of immigrants. They were also sending not only les Jesuits, but the religious people to convert the First Nations, the ...natives. And it was a very very Catholic, French-Catholic community in Quebec. And all the social services, all the social backbone of the community was provided by the, health services, hospital, education, looking after the poor...it was all, all religious, done by the religious institutions. So even if I wanted to say myself "Okay I was baptized, I was never asked about it, I am not, you know, going to church and bla bla bla". I can't help it. My community, we are raised with Christianity, Christian moral codes and code of behavior also".

When it comes to the influx of religion in humanitarian aid she is highly skeptical. For this reason she made sure she would not have to perform religiosity when working for DKH:

"And for me it is very important not to have any religion at all in any of our humanitarian work. And this is...when Diakonie approached me, they sent me an email and asked me to come and work for them. [...] And that was definitely part of the questions I was asking, you know. I know you are a church-based organization, what are my obligations toward the church activities. Is there prayer every morning or any other time? Am I obligated to attend Services? Anything at all? And plus, because I could, you can see on the website that all the activities, there is no mention of any church oriented actions. So I said okay, that's there, in the activities in the programs, in the projects. Is it really like that in the field? Plus, are there any obligations for me? And in the office, do they pray or ... and I remember discussing this also with Antje and she said: "No, no, no, don't worry".. I said, you know this is very important to me. If I feel I have to go to church, I feel like I not even wanna go to the mission."

That exact matter was one of the reasons why she felt uncomfortable in the ACT Forum, the meeting of members of the ACT Alliance in Haiti: *"So that's the other thing probably that me personally, Sandra, have a hard time with, because there are some quite religious*

people, during the ACT Forum meetings and they come with their different objectives, lets say. Some are shared, and some are not."

Infact, all of the overhead expatriate staff I encountered expressed discomfort about the work with ACT in terms of the need to perform religiosity. Bertrand continues to explain her unease with religiosity in humanitarian conduct: *"This is not Diakonie, this is Sandra. Ahm. I am not sure. I think this is a Christian faith, Christian goodness of 'I want to help others regardless' and it's a bit difficult for me personally sometimes to work that way. I look more for, try to look more for a bit more efficiency and less Christian charity"*.

Especially on this matter but also on others, Bertrand dissociated from the organization, distinctively stating, *"this is me, Sandra, not Diakonie"*. With her I felt that the identification with the organization and the Haiti mission in particular was not as intense as with the other two expatriates analyzed. She also made clear not to speak for DKH in general, because the headquarters was very enthusiastic about its engagement with and role in the ACT Alliance. In 2013, by the time of the interview with Bertrand Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel, the head of DKH and *Brot für die Welt*, was also heading the ACT Alliance.

While the identification with the organization, at least at the stage of intervention that we met, was not palpable, she strongly identified with being a humanitarian in general. She started using the pronoun *"we"* and *"us"* repeatedly when talking about general humanitarian ethics and standards: *"We are all humanitarians, wanting to do something"*, she stated during a discussion on humanitarian principles.

Concerning the religiosity of Haitian employees, she also reported of praying taking place: *"it is okay, but still awkward"*, she said. In the post-earthquake period she distinctively remembered one significant prayer that took place:

„Well once there was a prayer after the earthquake by one of our staff, Jacques. He is a French guy. Like French, but had like spent 20 years in Haiti with a Haitian wife. And he was also a pastor. Some days after the earthquake many of them were living in the backyard. We had set up some tents and Jacques really really wanted to have a prayer. So I went. Everybody went. And I used it as a time for me ahhh, let's call it meditation, to just recueillir and he did whatever he did and I did my own stuff. I did it out of respect for him, but it was the only time. If he was gonna start asking this every day I would not have and I could have left. [...] But I know it was a comfort for him and some of them and it was an extreme situation. So you know during an extreme situation like I could attend a mosque prayer if you know..."

Bertrand expressed a quite utilitarian, desacralized approach to religion. In times of ontological crisis that an event like an earthquake can trigger, she can accept a sort of comfort entailed in religious rituals, for herself but also for the sake of the coherence of the team.

Similarly her motivation to return to Haiti to work for DKH was actually not so much a career choice as it was a personal decision. She was present during *Douz Janvyè*, described herself as traumatized and demanded to be flown out several weeks after the quake when new DKH emergency staff was coming in. The experience of the earthquake personally affected her heavily. Upon her arrival in her home country, she sought professional help. Several times between 2010 and 2012 she was approached to return to work in Haiti and she always declined. Until September 2012 when she felt ready for it:

"It's a personal thing. I want to complete the cycle. [...] But it's an incredible process and I've learned a lot about myself. I mean it's a personal trauma, which you turn into a personal growth. And you try to make something out of it. And after maybe two years I started feeling more like "Okay, maybe I could return to Haiti you know". And I thought, I even told myself I will return to Haiti cause I wanna complete the cycle for myself. Whenever it happens, it happens. Facing back the same office, the same people, just talking about, when I, you know, reconnecting with people about their losses. And also spent some time together. It's a very intense moment. This link will never be lost, it will always be there. You know. Hm, I am glad I came".

To conclude, while all of them were baptized Christians, none of expatriates I engaged with did consider herself as a faithful practicing believer. Especially Bertrand and Schulz expressed strong reservations towards the influence of religion in humanitarian intervention. Neither of the expatriates expressed that faith was the motivation underlying their humanitarian vocation. All of them manifested a strong conviction of the humanitarian principles as laid down in the Code of Conduct, though.

Headquarter staff in Berlin

My encounters with headquarters staff of DKH were of rather brief nature. I visited the headquarters of DKH in Berlin twice, to interview staff on the Haiti mission but also on their own religious motivation. By the time of my visits there were 32 people engaged in the headquarters. The director of the organization, Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel, has a religious vocation as a pastor, too. As mentioned before all people actively working in the DKH headquarters are required to be Christians. Everyone working for Diakonie in higher or educational positions is subjected to the so-called ACK-clause. *The*

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen in Deutschland e. V., the Council of Christian Churches in Germany, is an association of 23 Christian (Orthodox, Protestant, Catholic and free) churches active in Germany. Nowadays, one has to be member of a Christian church to work in the headquarters of DKH, whereas when Schulz started working with DKH in 2005, it was not like that, she said. Before, it was possible also for Muslims to work in the headquarters. Today it is not like that anymore.

The Program Coordinator Katrin Landow stated that the institutional connection with the church was not primarily important for her. She explicitly differentiated between church and faith:

“And I feel the same way about the focus. Well, I like... on the one hand the whole house is characterized by it, I don’t think that’s too bad. And the other thing concerning humanitarian aid is the orientation on the Code of Conduct that I specifically find attractive. Well, I would rather think of it as problematic if it weren’t like that, for the work as such”.

There are two general foci in the headquarters: faith and professionalism.

According to Landow the faith component as a motivational factor differs individually:

“It varies, depending on how oneself is marked by it. And how the own life is shaped by faith. It differs from employee to employee. Also the commitment in the church itself, also in the private sphere. Or at work. While of course there can be a partial tendency that someone who is marked by it also likes to work for a church organization”.

During the interview conducted in the headquarters in Berlin, a printed version of the CoC was literally sitting between Landow and me. She positioned it there in the beginning of our conversation and continued to point at it as if the physical presence of the CoC would enforce the arguments she was putting forward.

Professionalism is mainly enacted through the reference to the “Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief”. *“The Code of Conduct is our Ten Commandments in the field”*, one of the Regional Coordinators at the headquarters, stated at the annual meeting in June 2013. On the other hand there has been an increasing focus on being Protestant on the level of headquarters in the past years, he stated. This was partly due to impulses gained from the design of a new communication strategy commissioned to a scholar, which included the recommendation to strengthen the church identity of DKH as a brand with a standout feature in the competitive field of humanitarian organizations.

While I had this conversation with the Diakonie employee, a Christian youth rock band was rehearsing next door for a concert they were going to give later. During the annual

meeting there were also morning prayers scheduled. Bertrand reported of a similar situation some years earlier:

„At HQ, Diakonie HQ, I was there once, on my way from Pakistan stopped over in Germany and then to Canada. And there was a, just before Christmas. It was during the afternoon of the day where they do their religious celebrations. And they had to, the staff working at HQ had to go to church. They were not like this having to go to church, but it was really not seen well if they weren't gonna go to church. Or to mass, or whatever their thing was that they were doing, the Christmas thing“.

Dorothea Becker, the Regional Coordinator responsible for the Haiti mission is a Catholic. Even though we did not engage in a discussion on her particular motivation to work for DKH as a faith-based organization, on the day we met, she performed her faith discretely. She wore a golden chain with the picture of a Catholic saint around her neck.

In summary, the vast majority of DKH employees I engaged with expressed a strong commitment to the humanitarian principles. In contrast, faith did not act as collective identity marker in the Haiti mission of DKH. While the majority of employees, expatriate as well as Haitian, are religious in a variety of ways, their faith is not shared in organizational life. It is neither enacted through narratives and rituals nor through religiously justified moral principles guiding the collective work in Haiti. Only in the exceptional state of ontological insecurity like the post-earthquake period was religion performed in a collective act.

5.2.4 The solidarity of “them against us” – *The Organization of a Community*

While I was not able to spend continuous weeks accompanying the everyday work life of DKH in the same way I did with Caritas Jacmel, I joined staff for several-day fieldtrips to specific project sites and inauguration festivities in 2011 and 2013. My experience of engaging with DKH staff in 2011 differed a lot from the situation in 2013. First of all this was certainly due to the fact that DKH was slowly reducing its mission as stipulated in the country strategy. For an organization intervening on a humanitarian mandate, this is an ordinary procedure. Yet there was also something else that seemed to make a huge difference. Evidently there had been a clear and important break in the organizational biography of DKH: the departure of former Country Director Schulz in summer 2011.

In March 2013, I experienced the organizational atmosphere as shaped by mutual distrust and what felt like an overall lack of coherence and motivation to work together. The Country Director that followed Schulz, Gorski, was already gone by the time of my second fieldwork. The director of that time, Bertrand, came to Haiti in September 2012,

officially to support Gorski. Yet he was already suspended by that time. Parallel in 2011, a case of corruption was discovered in one of the provincial offices. A foreman was charged for having sold construction material worth of € 7,000. He was immediately discharged. After a short comeback period for Gorski, he finalized his time with DKH and Bertrand was asked to head the organization. Headquarters as well as the new director Bertrand were uptight about the reasons for his departure. *“Not everyone is cut out to work in Haiti”*, was the maximum of explanation I was provided with.

Bertrand had signed a contract until May 2013. In March 2013, she stated that she was not planning to prolong it. During the 2013 annual meeting at the headquarters in Berlin, I got to know the person destined to be the successor of Bertrand. He unenthusiastically referred to his future jobs as to liquidate DKH’s presence in Haiti.

The time I spent with DKH in 2013 was almost entirely under the impression of a great division that ran through expatriate and Haitian staff. It was palpable in most encounters between the two groups. During my interactions with DKH one and a half years earlier, I did not have the same impression. Bennani confirmed this when he talked about the former Country Director Schulz:

“It was a big family during that time. The size of the organization. She knew everyone. She managed everything closely. It was a “One-Woman-Show” with various helpers. Everything had to be signed by her. A centralized structure like that only works up to a specific size. Then it transforms into a bottleneck and hinders the relief”.

With the growing size of the organization, responsibilities had to be transferred to other people. Evidently, creating a work atmosphere of coherence and mutual identification is easier in a smaller organization than in one with more than hundred employees. Maybe the fact that Schulz had been heading DKH in Haiti for the past six years played a role. The majority of employees I engaged with talked in good terms about her. Robenson Placide, the driver cited earlier, reported that the DKH team reacted very emotional at the meeting she announced her departure from the organization. She had a good standing in her team as well as in the humanitarian community in Haiti. She was very accustomed to Haitian culture, and spoke Haitian Creole fluently.

This was different for her successors for the most part. In most situations their assessment of Haitian realities were not conform to my own experiences. In an effort to explain what she conceived as a Haitian culture of egoism and individualism and the general lack of solidarity in Haitian society, the 2013 Country Director Bertrand actually

defined the clear frontline of her working experience: *“I don't see a lot of sense of solidarity. I find a lot of people will cheat their neighbor for their own personal gain, or own personal survival. There is solidarity amongst themselves against us. Against us the expats. Or the ones that are not considered Haitians”*. Mistrust was a big issue on both sides. Similar narratives such as *„they cover for each other“* were repeatedly expressed either in my presence or directly towards me.

Especially one field trip to Anse-à-Pitre for the inauguration of an emergency shelter allowed me to properly observe patterns of paternalism and exclusion exercised by staff against one another. The night before the inauguration day two Haitian employees came to the hotel where the expatriate staff was staying. I penned my perception of the situation later on in my field diary:

The four of us sit at a table. After dinner Claude and Manno are coming to report on the state of the art. Both are standing in front of the sitting Sandra with their heads bent down. It is a bizarre situation. They seem like confessing boys. The biggest problem: there is not enough white paint, they realized yesterday. While both of them repent to their superior, Mike bends over and whispers the first complete German sentence towards me: “Die Jungs kannst du echt in der Pfeife rauchen”, you can completely forget about those guys.

The following day of the inauguration presented a series of indignities to the Haitian staff:

Meanwhile JM and the rest of the Port-au-Prince team are arriving at the hotel, half past nine, on time. JM greets me cordially. Until everything is paid for and we are ready to leave, it takes a while. Meanwhile Mike has been standing stiffly and stony-faced on the same spot with his bag in his hands for about ten minutes straight, ready to depart. As we arrive at the shelter the big inspection starts. The first deficit that Mike spots is a small white fingerprint on the blue painted outer wall. He points towards it and is told that a child must have done this. He tells me and rolls his eyes. He obviously does not believe that. For the next hour, he strolls through the building with a clipboard, a pen, and a frown. Sandra too, but she seems less concerned. A Haitian employee is sitting in the main room that is prepared for the inauguration ceremony, also with a frown on his face. I sit down next to him and he says: „Gen moun ki pa janm satisfye“, there are people who are never satisfied. They wouldn't act like that if a German had built it, he says resigning. I am afraid that he is right. He goes in and out, touches base with Claude and Fredson, with a frowning face. Then they laugh. Inside he hides his eyes behind shades when Mike enters the room. I feel horribly awkward in this situation, especially because I feel I am pushed into a “we”, from all sides, that I do not want to go into.

Sandra is less strict than Mike. She says that she is contented, except for some smaller things that still have to be done. Yet she is annoyed that they have not been completed after all this time. She is obviously uncomfortable with the role of the flogger, she can't do it, it does not suit her well. However, she also does not seem to find a more emancipatory way to deal with the staff. She points me towards the nails in the rafters. In some spots they are not clenched.

Not a hard job that takes a lot of time, she is right. "I would do it myself if I had a hammer", she says.

Many have fresh paint on their skin and their cloths. So do I, later on. She says, „You have to speak strong to them for things to happen“. She also says that she knows that the Haitian staff is really pissed off by her. She puts words in their mouths. I ask if someone has spoken to her in this tone. She says no, „but it is written all over their faces. They say, ‘Of course Madame, you are right, one should do it like this or like that and tatatata’“. She finishes by saying “It is really difficult to work here. Like Burundi“.

Meanwhile Mike is angry about the negligent work and the sloppy coat of paint. You just have to love them, otherwise you would hate them, he mumbles. A blind person must have installed the sink, he says. Because it is a bit lopsided. Also the doorframe, and so on and so forth...

The previous extract from my fieldnotes is supposed to exemplify the many little interactions that stand for the deep division between expatriate and Haitian staff encountered in 2013. Differences, boundaries and hierarchies were performed on a regular basis, through statements and bodily performances by expatriate as well as Haitian staff. While there may have been solidarity and a sense of community within those two groups, the organization as a whole did not show a high level of coherence in 2013. Many reasons for this are at hand: DKH was in the process of consolidation, many employees had already left the organization. While in the years prior to 2013, DKH through its employees, implemented projects particularly meaningful to staff as well as beneficiaries, now the better part of the work could be labeled as a “clean-up” in administrative terms – a process a lot harder to collectively identify with than providing earthquake victims with housing. Yet the most manifest problem in my view was the division between expatriate and Haitian employees. It was surely facilitated by the change of organizational coherence due to the departure of Schulz, the often changing expatriate staff in executive positions, and the overall (short-term) cycle of humanitarian intervention. On a grand scale though, the problems encountered reproduced the inequalities inherent to the aid complex as such. The specificities of those circumstances will be examined from a different perspective in chapter seven.

5.2.5 God touched their hearts – Beneficiaries’ Religious Re-appropriation

The majority of DKH beneficiaries interviewed were living around Bainet and Bresilienne, communities in the western part of the arrondissement of Jacmel. Many of them were returnees who used to live in Port-au-Prince, but migrated back to their families in the provinces because they lost their home or their livelihood in the

earthquake. They are among the more than half a million people who fled the capital in the wake of the earthquake (Jean-Baptiste 2012). In contrast to the majority of those, the DKH housing beneficiaries I engaged with did not return to Port-au-Prince in the following months, but stayed in the provinces. The prospect of being given a house influenced this decision.

All of the DKH beneficiaries I spoke to self-identified as Catholic Christians. They expressed strong religious convictions, framing the earthquake in religious terms, but also capturing the aid they received in religious terms. Wideline Josue, a 65-year-old woman who used to live in Port-au-Prince when the earthquake hit the country, ascribed her survival to the volition of God: *“God made me benefit from his grace, he spared me from being hit by the blocks. I had no idea that the rest of the house could have collapsed above my head. God sent other people to find me beneath the rubble and to pull me out of it. The house did not collapse above me”*.

Even though she did not always lead a good life, through sparing her from dying in the earthquake God gave her absolution. Like many in Bainet and Bresilienne, she is of Catholic faith, too. For her, like for those cited in chapter three, the earthquake was an opportunity to repent:

“I have been bad, I have been a sinner. But God made me benefit from his grace. That is because he is a living God. He is a capable God. He is a God that has a lot of power. I had no hope in life. First of all, I did not die. Well, I knew I would not be able to stand up and walk. I thought I was going to be caught in the rubble like an animal. But God gave me his grace. And I will never stop to thank him for that”.

Much like the way Wideline Josue perceived the ones who saved from the rubbles, also the humanitarians are seen as having been sent by God. Most of the beneficiaries of DKH did not know that DKH was from Germany or that it was a religious organization. Nevertheless they drew on religious narratives to explain how they happened to get support from the organization. People expressed gratefulness to DKH, but also interpreted the aid as a gift of God in the first place: *“I found help. It is a great thing they did for me. I wouldn’t have been able to do it all by myself. It is a big thing they did for me. It was God who touched people’s hearts so they did it. They did it for me. In any event I ask for God to always protect them. For God to look after them for me”*, Wideline Josue stated. More generally this is applied not only to DKH but also to all aid organizations that came to Haiti post-earthquake:

“That is God’s work. It is God who sent them to come to save Haitians. Because when you look at it, I was in need for a house. I could not do it. They gave it to me. That’s something. I thank God. When I go to bed and when I wake up, I always pray for the people who gave me a house. I always pray to God for them; also for the other organizations that do the same thing. Not every person has the same opinion. But I have the right to see people for what they did for me. I can pray to God for them. It is the grace of God that created those people. You should pray for them everyday so that God blesses them. So they can encounter someone in need the same way I was in need”.

Beneficiaries of DKH re-appropriate the religious faith otherwise absent in the relation between the faith-based organization and its beneficiaries by re-interpreting the organization and the people working for them as agents of the divine.

DKH closely cooperated with local authorities to implement their housing projects. Additionally to their offices in Port-au-Prince and Jacmel they opened two smaller staging posts in Bainet and La Vallée de Jacmel from where they coordinated the construction. Through this temporary permanence they were able to establish local presence, acceptance and accessibility. The CASEC¹⁴⁸, the local authority in rural sections, often was the link between the organization and its beneficiaries. Michelet Mathelus, a father of six, explained how he was awarded with a house by DKH:

“I did not have a house. I met with the CASEC. He told me to register with the office in Bainet. I went there to register, but at that time Diakonie did not accept new registrations. With the help of the CASEC I met the engineer at a reunion. He came. God did that for me. God did that for me, he put him there, he came, and he gave us a house”.

While many of the responses I got during my interviews expressed a certain devotion to God’s will in terms of the religious fatalism addressed by Casseus (1977) and others, this also meant holding him accountable. 63-year-old Rose Herivaux fiercely stated: *“I said to God, it is you who did, you fix it. Yes, it is you who is going to fix that. I can’t do anything myself anymore. It is the Lord above who messed it up, it is him who is going to fix it”.* The inhabitant of the community of Bresilienne continued: *“I am open to give Christ my heart. I know there is only one route that God laid out for me on earth. He tells me to follow, I always follow him”.*

While the vast majority of DKH beneficiaries expressed a deep devotion to God, in some instances their faith was used by the organization to prevent people from theft or assisting in corruption: *“We always tell people that the money is coming from the church. That it is from a bunch of people like you who go to church and who make donations. So we explain that if you steal this money, it is as if you steal from people who are poorer”*, the

¹⁴⁸ French, *Conseil d’Administration de la Section Communale*

Program Manager explicated. Here Haitian staff draws on the community of believers – *people like you* – to make their beneficiaries identify with the organization to fight corruption in their humanitarian intervention.

In difference to the likewise Catholic beneficiaries of Caritas Jacmel, the beneficiaries of DKH could not bond with the humanitarian organization over religious rituals, narratives and contextualizations. Nevertheless they re-framed their benefits in faith terms and embedded them in religious life worlds. To them it was God who motivated the employees of DKH to help them out of their misery.

5.3 Conclusion

First of all, faith is an important element for both organizations, Caritas Jacmel as well Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe. Both historically derive from the structure of the churches, in fact both from German churches. The faith in Jesus Christ plays a profound role in the headquarters of both organizations. The intervention in the lives and miseries of other people is legitimated theologically, through the common creation in *imago dei* as well as the sameness in sin. The scripture is a major point of reference. For both, the self-conception as a Christian organization necessitates the unconditional love for the neighbor, victims of war and disaster. Also their beneficiaries in Haiti express a very similar faith and Christian worldview. They almost entirely share the interpretation that the aid granted to them in form of houses originates in divine intervention. In their eyes it was God who sent the aid workers of Caritas Jacmel as well as DKH.

Both organizations are signatories of the Red Cross Code of Conduct in Disaster Relief. That means that they formally dedicate themselves to the conduct of intervention under the guidance of the humanitarian principles, as laid out in the CoC. Even their funding structures are similar. Both organizations are embedded in translocal networks of development aid and disaster relief.

The role that faith plays for the organization in the specific aid interventions in post-earthquake Haiti is disparate, though. For Caritas Jacmel faith is an inextricable part of their working *raison d'être* in dogmatic as well as in practical terms. It is constantly performed and also used as a measurement of morality, also in relation to its interventions. *“We cannot do just anything, because we have to maintain our dignity as a church”*, one employee explained. The enactment of faith through certain rituals and prayers is an inherent part of the everyday routine of working for Caritas Jacmel. It is

integrated in the concept and the mission of the organization. The team of Caritas consists of active Catholics who also engage in church activities. The head of the organization is a priest himself. His superiors within the hierarchy of the network are also religious experts. All of the 29 people permanently working for Caritas Jacmel consider themselves Christians. Caritas employs what they call “moral persons”, which in this context is an equivalent for people active in the church. Christian faith acts as the motor of Caritas intervention. It is literally the glue that holds everything and everyone together.

Caritas Jacmel intervenes on the basis of a very tight network of parishes, small churches and intermediators. Like that they can reach every remote corner of the diocese.

Whereas DKH has strong ecclesial ties in Germany it does hardly cooperate with any churches in the field. Its focus lies on the professional humanitarian practice. The Code of Conduct is their Decalogue for the field. Instead of relying on church networks on the ground, they cooperate with civic infrastructures like the Haitian Department for Civil Protection or the local authorities such as the CASEC.

Even though there are certainly Christians working for DKH in Haiti, it is not part of the employment policy. To the contrary, because DKH does not want to be regarded as a religious organization in the field, the former Country Director Schulz refrained from giving jobs to people overtly motivated by their faith. Haitian Christians who are employed to work for DKH in Haiti do so not because, but despite the fact they are Christian.

That is different in the headquarters in Germany where one is required to be part of one of the accepted Christian churches. Faith is enacted first of all through the requirement to be Christian and through certain rituals in the work routine, like devotions. Although the faith motivation of the employees in Berlin differs, there seems to be a certain expectation to perform faith in the organizational context. While the shared Christian faith seems to play a role in the headquarters in Berlin, it is largely absent in the organizational life in the field. Even though faith matters to individuals within the organization, it is not a collective marker of identity. It is not performed collectively. Only in exceptional situations like the earthquake of 2010 did staff meet to pray and mourn together.

Whereas the shared faith in the teaching of Christ and the obligation to work for the disadvantaged is a marker of identity through all levels of the Caritas hierarchy, there is a certain discontinuation in DKH. The faith motivation and identity of the organization as well as its practitioners in the headquarters is not translated to their mission in Haiti. Mostly this is due to commitment to the Code of Conduct. Religiosity and professionalism were constructed as antidotes by head staff, too.

A main reason for this diverging implementation of faith in the varying arenas of the organizations is to be found in the mandates though. Caritas Jacmel acts on a mixed-mandate, which means that they get involved with development and humanitarian issues. DKH solely operates its missions on a humanitarian mandate.

The mandate comes with many restrictions and limitations. Humanitarian operations are limited in time, employees usually are less immersed in and detached with the culture they are intervening in. Often those missions are less sustainable, in socio-economic as well in socio-cultural terms. Whereas development tends towards the economic element of a political economy, humanitarian action concentrates on the physical conditions of people suffering from the effects of an unjust system of global political economy (Bornstein and Redfield 2011). Even though DKH acts on a humanitarian mandate, it differs from other strictly humanitarian organizations in that it has a continuing presence in the country and also tries to focus on a LRRD strategy – Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development instead of doing emergency relief only.

The difference in mandate is an explanation for why they don't put a stronger focus on their faith identity the same way it is done in the headquarters. It might also partially account for the different working atmospheres and internal relations within both organizations. The pullout from the mission is an essential part of the intervention of a humanitarian organization like DKH. That means that stability in employment is not a given. Long-term engagement and subsequent identification with the NGO and its mission is rare in those contexts. But this is only a partial explanation for the atmosphere of frustration, mutual distrust, even disdain that I encounter at DKH in 2013. The limitations of the humanitarian cycle did contribute to the lack of inner coherence.

Yet the problems encountered are also a symptom of a more general antagonism in the aid complex. They act as an effigy of the difference in power between Haiti and the world outside, a prolongation of colonial hegemony. Despite smaller acts of resistance as

weapons of the weak (Scott 1985) on the side of the national staff, the expatriate staff will most likely end up with the upper hand in this struggle over power and meaning. The reference to humanitarian principles does not create a mutual basis for an organizational identity that integrates all levels of intervention. Humanitarianism is a motivational factor for DKH but the enthusiasm for the Code of Conduct is nothing that unifies the organization as whole with its beneficiaries. As laid out in Chapter four, technocratic categories of relief and development are less meaningful to people on the ground. The discourse on humanitarian professionalization is only very conditionally able to sustain a collective identity, let alone one able to surpass socio-political boundaries engrained in the dynamics of the aid complex. The enthusiasm about the Code of Conduct as the secular counter narrative encountered with head staff does not trickle down to the addressee of the intervention. Instead, even though technocratic narratives are applied by the organization, they are re-appropriated with religious narratives by the beneficiaries.

6 Of Lottery and Hard Decisions – The Distributive Practice of FBOs

Distributing benefits is the *raison d'être* of the multitude of organization involved in the Haitian aid complex. It is this exact practice that has to be observed carefully to find out how organizations translate their self-conceptions as humanitarian organizations into practice. “The problem isn’t the presence of NGOs but it [sic] how they distributed aid, the management”, the head of a Haitian NGO stated in the wake of the earthquake (Schuller 2016:190). The chapter at hand will focus on the central practice of Caritas Jacmel and DKH as the pragmatic expression of their mission: the distribution of benefits. The cardinal question is on what grounds the organizations decided to give what benefit to whom. What narratives did they use to justify their distributive practice? What rules and standards did they refer to to vindicate their actions?

The core benefit of both organizations in question was housing. In humanitarian doctrine it is four aspects of human life that have to be re-established for a community to recover from an emergency: food, shelter, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), and medical care. Especially in post-earthquake Haiti with an extensively destroyed building structure housing was the number one need after the emergency phase. Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and Caritas Jacmel both provided families in Jacmel and surrounding communities with permanent housing. Hence, the focus of this chapter will lie on the housing projects of the two organizations.

Next to this fundamental benefit, the organization also provided other means of support. The distribution of benefits of humanitarian organizations is not limited to the goods distributed only. It can be extended to the diffusion of knowledge like educational seminars and last but not least the possibility of employment, may that be a permanent position or Cash-for-Work programs only. It is not only the immediate recipients of aid that benefit from the organizations, but also those employed by them. This holds true for national as well as expatriate staff – even though there is an immense gap in income and privilege between the two groups. The global flow of funds and donations, especially after an earthquake as extensively covered by media as the Haitian one, allows personnel of the relevant organizations to expand considerably. For other FBOs, like the Salvation Army for example, spiritual relief also accounts for a distributed benefit.

The core of the chapter will focus on the role that the specific position as faith-based organizations plays for the way the organizations distributed their benefits. It will

introduce the housing projects of both organizations, point out the challenges inherent to the reconstruction of the housing sector in Haiti and show how Caritas Jacmel and DKH responded to them. Following, it will present the criteria applied to select their housing beneficiaries and discuss the narratives of both employees and beneficiaries that those decision were embedded in. In a final step, it will also consider the benefits of knowledge and employment diffused by both FBOs.

6.1 The Housing Projects

One of the most urgent exigencies in post-earthquake Haiti is the provision of housing. The earthquake destroyed 70 percent of the building structure of the capital Port-au-Prince and an equal amount in the coastal city of Jacmel, the locus of this study. In 2011, the World Bank noted a deficiency of one million housing units in Haiti (Levine et al. 2012). Nationwide 1.5 million of the 10 million inhabitants were left homeless in the immediate wake of the earthquake. Many of those had to live in the thousands of IDP camps, especially in Port-au-Prince (Schuller 2016). The internal displacement also affected Jacmel. People got pushed from the city's center to outer lying districts: A beneficiary of Caritas Jacmel, a mother of two in her early forties, stated about her whereabouts prior to *Douz Janvyè*: *"I was living in another place. I was living in the city. I was going to church in the Cathedral. Now, after the catastrophe, I left the city. I started to go to the Sacred Heart church"*.¹⁴⁹

In the wake of the disaster, more than 600,000 people migrated, mainly from Port-au-Prince to the countryside (Lundahl 2013). Many of the beneficiaries I engaged with are people who had to resettle from Port-au-Prince: *"After January 12, the house got only fissures, but it was only rented. The people also had no place to live anymore so they claimed the house back from us. I had to relocate. I went to live in the house of a friend"*, a Caritas beneficiary from La Vanneau recounted. Of the people migrating from destroyed Port-au-Prince, the majority returned within the next three months (Bengtsson et al. 2011). The houses provided by the two organizations though, gave people the chance to rebuild at least their homes, if not their lives, outside of the capital.

By the end of my fieldwork in April 2013, Caritas Jacmel has constructed 157 houses in Jacmel and surrounding communities. All houses were manufactured of reinforced

¹⁴⁹ This quote also shows how the geographies of belonging are structured in religious terms, too. Often, the habitat displacement goes along with a displacement from the parish structure people were embedded in.

concrete and had the same scale and outline of 25 m². This type of house included a kitchen area, a patio and two living rooms. Depending on the location and the bedrock, different foundations were chosen to secure anti-seismic construction.

In April 2010, four months into the post-earthquake period, DKH was the first organization in the region to already focus on the construction of permanent housing instead of transitional solutions. DKH had the advantage of having focused on the reconstruction of the housing sector already before the earthquake. Prior to 2010, hurricanes were considered the number one threat to people's habitat. In 2009, 15 houses have been built to withstand hurricanes. They also proved to be earthquake-resistant in 2010. DKH used the two prototypes of those houses, one of wood and one of cement, as models for the anti-seismic construction in the post-earthquake rehabilitation. The houses finally erected had a standard size of 25 m².

At first, DKH (re-)constructed 300 houses in Jacmel. DKH also rehabilitated damaged houses. When doing so, Diakonie used and restored the preexisting architectural structures. The UN Habitat coordinator in Jacmel honorably mentioned the organization for doing so. Accordingly the houses differed in size and outline.

By the beginning of 2013, 2,000 houses got repaired or constructed, partly with the financial support and project partnership with other NGOs such as the Austrian *Nachbar in Not*¹⁵⁰ and the Canadian Red Cross. Additionally, DKH conducted the reconstruction of school buildings and several community emergency shelters for the event of disasters like inundations, hurricanes and earthquakes. Beneficiaries were requested to help out with the construction of their houses, especially in remote regions where material could not be transported by trucks anymore from a certain point onwards.

Both organizations constructed houses using cement as building material in their post-earthquake intervention. Yet especially in rural Haiti the wattle and daub technique¹⁵¹, "a wooden structure filled with stone and bound together with a mix of lime and earth" (Audefroy 2011), is widespread. This building technique verifiably responds better to seismic movements than structures build with concrete. Many first hand survivor testimonies presented to me took reference to this fact, like the one by Thérèse

¹⁵⁰ "Nachbar in Not", neighbor in distress, is a conjoint initiative of the Austrian public television ORF, the Austrian Red Cross and Caritas Austria.

¹⁵¹ French, *clissage*, Haitian Creole, *klisay la*

Lafleur, a beneficiary of Caritas Jacmel: “I ran to my child. It was in a house, an old house, a “*kay balkon*”, with an upper story and a balcony, made out of wood. If it wouldn't have been a wooden “*kay balkon*”, I would have lost my child. The house would have collapsed above her. Blocks would have buried her. God protected her for me”. Even though they have been proven to cause more casualties than wooden houses and despite the “*psychoses beton*” (Dorsinville 2011) that derived from that experience, many people, also among the beneficiaries of DKH and Caritas Jacmel, preferred cement houses, *kay an blok* (Audefroy 2011).

The mere structure of the house was not the primary problem though. The initiatives to rehabilitate the housing sector were faced with many obstacles in post-earthquake Haiti. The right to appropriate forms of housing is formally guaranteed by the Haitian Constitution of 1987. In Article 22, the state recognizes “the right of every citizen to decent housing, education, food and social security”¹⁵². The Haitian government, historically as much as contemporary, is largely unable to provide this constitutional right to the majority of Haitian citizens though. Especially after *Douz Janvye*, the provision of land was the number one challenge for public authorities and international organizations engaged in the reconstruction of Haiti. Caritas Jacmel as well as DKH solely provided housing to people holding land titles. This can be considered problematic for a variety of reasons.

First of all, the majority of Haitians, especially in urban areas, are renters. In Port-au-Prince the number is as high as 70 percent.¹⁵³ Most of them practice *affermage*. In this form of hereditary leasehold a person rents land from another person for an unspecified amount of time. The tenant will have the right to build on the land. In that case, the house will belong the tenant, the land to the landlord. This is a popular strategy for absentee landowners, affluent Haitians living in the diaspora for example, to avoid their land being squatted. After the earthquake, many landowners demanded their land back. People who rented did not only lose their houses to the earthquake, but also the place where they lived. Many among the beneficiaries of DKH have been displaced from living in Port-au-Prince, their house destroyed or demanded back by the landowner. Meanwhile, the price for housing skyrocketed. In some parts of Port-au-Prince the rental prices more than doubled (Schuller 2016). Additionally, the disproportionately

¹⁵² https://www.oas.org/juridico/mla/en/hti/en_hti-int-const.html Last visited May 18, 2016.

¹⁵³ www.sandradurzo.org/Projects/Haiti/RAT_Shelter-Report.pdf Last visited May 19, 2016.

increased presence of international staff employed in the aid complex contributed to what can be called humanitarian gentrification (Steinke 2012). Personnel of international organizations, humanitarian or development organizations, consultants, employees of private enterprises or the United Nations reside in the affluent parts of Port-au-Prince neighborhoods such as Petionville, Peguyville and Pacot. It is not uncommon for organizations to rent flats for prices as high as US\$ 5,000 per month. That furthers the processes of urban spatial segregation as Haitians, unable to compete with high rents, are forced to displace to poorer neighborhoods, where they in turn force people to migrate to the outlying periphery of Port-au-Prince, or even to IDP camps. To sum it up, the pressure on tenants was especially high in the aftermath of *Douz Janvyè*. They were especially vulnerable to the protracted crisis in post-earthquake Haiti. As the two organizations were unable to build on land that did neither belong to them nor to the beneficiary, they were not able to support this group of people.

A second hindrance to the reconstruction of the housing sector was the fact that the cadastral system was not well established in Haiti. In fact, there is no overarching central land registration working. In 1984 attempts to set up such a system have been initiated with the *Office National du Cadastre* (ONACA). The office did not establish full-working capacities due to the lack of technical and financial resources though (Levine et al. 2012). Last but not least, the few registry offices existing prior to the earthquake were buried under the rubble. That did not only mean losing the specific documents but in many cases also losing qualified personnel and necessary structure for the regeneration and re-organization of the cadaster apparatus. DKH for its part found ways to work around the problem of missing ownership certificates: *“Together with the police and the mayor's office a procedure was developed. They went to the police with testimonies and the mayor's office confirmed that. And when we had this paper, when the families could present such a paper, then we accepted that as proof for land ownership”*, the former Country Director Schulz stated in 2011.

6.2 Categories of Beneficiary Selection – Vulnerability Assessment and Lottery

The aid distributed in the aftermath of the earthquake can be divided into immediate relief and rehabilitation. Immediate relief concerns the very basic features of human existence: food, emergency shelter, medical assistance, water and sanitation. The housing programs that are the center of this analysis – the practice of distribution of

both FBOs – are part of the rehabilitation cycle. Both periods presented with different approaches towards the selection of beneficiaries. The following part will focus on the two phases of intervention and show on what grounds the organizations decided to distribute what benefit to whom.

6.2.1 tout moun viktim – Emergency phase distribution

In the emergency and early recovery phase, in the first days and weeks, the need was overwhelming in Haiti. *Tout moun viktim*, everyone is a victim, was the core narrative in this respect. Nearly everyone was in need for support in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake. The narrative accounts of people on the ground testify that no one was left unaffected by the disaster. Individuals as well as organizational structures were left incapable when faced with the immensity of the disruption caused by the earthquake. *“The thing happened Tuesday. On Wednesday, we still did not know what to do. Because it was the first time we have been faced with a reality alike. On Thursday, I assembled the team”*, Père Valery, the director of Caritas Jacmel, stated.

Caritas was among the first organizations in Jacmel to provide support. On the 14th of January, two days after the event, the director of Caritas Jacmel assembled his staff to discuss the immediate actions. They gave priority to the mobile clinic. Caritas nurses went into the already established provisional camps and provided medical supplies as well as medical assistance to people with broken extremities, open wounds and high blood pressure. Caritas bought water and food and distributed it among people. In those first days the distribution of services and goods was not carried out along hierarchies of neediness, for the simple fact that the need and destruction was so overwhelming and the organizations themselves affected. The Program Coordinator of Caritas Jacmel stated:

“Well, everyone needed aid. It was not written in the faces of the people. For example, in the humanitarian phase we say that we give the aid to those who are most deprived. But at that time everyone needed aid. In that sense we did not have any criteria. [...] Before 2010 when we distributed tents, we gave to those who were in the direst need. They said we do not have to do that...because everyone is in need. [...] Also with the people who came and ask, we did not have a choice. Everyone was in need, we were not able to distribute. That was really difficult for us. We realized that. You understand, for us, everyone was in need”.

Whereas humanitarian organizations are usually requested to provide assistance on the basis of need alone, in the direct wake of the earthquake they were unable to establish

such criteria due to the overwhelming need they encountered. The Program Manager of DKH talked in equally honest terms about the problems of the immediate intervention:

“I won't lie to you. We are very much concerned about the weaknesses of the intervention. Because there are things that we didn't take into consideration. We had to react quickly and that had implications for the communities on the ground and the selection of the beneficiaries. That caused a lot of problems. Imagine, after the earthquake everyone was a victim. So how do you want to prioritize when everyone is a victim? Thus, this was a great source of conflict”.

The earthquake disrupted the everyday lives of everyone involved, the perception of the surrounding world was shaken to its core. Categories and standards of distribution fell into oblivion in the face of the quasi-apocalyptic immense destruction. *“We did not have a choice other than to give to the people who asked for it”*, Auguste, the Program Coordinator of Caritas Jacmel said. There was no immediate indication, no points of reference to guide people through these first hours and days. For those capable to help others, ethical dilemmas were to be found behind every corner. Especially for people involved and affected themselves it is extremely complicated to establish a course of action. Even a highly professional and often praised organization like MSF needed 13 days to operate „in optimum conditions“ in post-earthquake Haiti (Brauman 2011).

Caritas Haiti on all institutional levels admitted that the situation overstrained the capacities of the organization. Mackenzy Ernst, the Coordinator for Disaster Risk Management at Caritas National Office in Port-au-Prince, stated:

“In the aftermath of January 12, 2010, there were a lot of other organizations who came, especially Caritas from other countries, to help face this event. But like I said, given that we weren't prepared, there was no coordination structure yet. There was no protocol that said how an organization was supposed to help another. So there was a little chaos. There was a lot of disorder in the way that the emergency response was provided”.

Like every institution, from the Haitian Department of Civil Protection to the UN mission stationed in Haiti, Caritas Haiti was in no way prepared to react to a catastrophe of that dimension. Additionally other national Caritas rushed into the country and required help with logistics and infrastructure. Three weeks after the earthquake Caritas Jacmel got delivered with the first emergency kits via shipping route from the Dominican Republic. Caritas Jacmel also provided what is considered psychosocial support, especially in the rural regions:

“We had people that had been stable, in a camp, but there were zones where people were really traumatized. So people left to find them. We passed their houses to talk to them. There were people not really open to listen to what we had to say. But we made them

responsive. We learned to convince them, that it is good for them. We made them amenable”, Gaelle Perelus, a nurse working for Caritas Jacmel reported.

Caritas Jacmel also distributed funds to send kids back to school as fast as possible. According to employee Maxine Geffrad, after two months all children returned to school. Anaïca Cesaïre, who was benefited with a house confirms: *“After the earthquake it was Caritas who helped me. I had no foundation. Those who used to pay for school died in the earthquake in Port-au-Prince. Caritas paid the school fees for three of them, otherwise they would not have gone to school”*. After an emergency phase of six months, Caritas began with the rehabilitation of the housing projects in July 2010.

Like Caritas Jacmel, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe suffered from a momentary paralysis in the immediate wake of the earthquake as well. The first couple of days after *Douz Janvyè* the organization was unable to provide emergency aid. Yet not to immediately get involved was a conscious strategic decision as Sandra Bertrand of DKH recalls the Country Director saying and confirms *“it's okay to not do anything if you are not ready to do anything. It's better actually”*.

Mere 48 hours later, the DKH head staff assembled in Port-au-Prince and started to organize the relief action. By that time the headquarters in Berlin got into contact with the Country Director and requested an immediate response. The decision to focus the relief efforts on Jacmel was taken shortly afterwards. DKH officials were very cautious about their first cause of action, especially in the emergency phase: *“You don't go driving around Port-au-Prince, throwing tents off a big truck. That's not the way to make it work”*, Bertrand emphasized.

The DKH regional office for Latin America in Colombia opened an emergency office in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, to support the relief efforts to Haiti. The emergency aid started off with an assessment of the situation in Jacmel and surrounding communities. It was conducted in close cooperation with the mayor's office, the Department of Civil Protection and KROS¹⁵⁴, a local conglomerate of base organizations. On January 19th, the first plane with emergency kits from Germany arrived in Port-au-Prince. In fact, it was the first humanitarian flight to be granted clearance to land by U.S. military, which took control over the airport after the earthquake. On board were also

¹⁵⁴ Haitian Creole, acronym for *Kordinasyon Rejyonal Oganizasyon Sides*, Regional Cooperation for the Organizations in the South East

two expatriate employees of DKH to support the office in Port-au-Prince. One of them was deployed as Acting Country Director. Supporting and partly exchanging the expatriate employees on the ground was a measure initiated by DKH headquarters. They sent *“somebody that can have a colder head... You are facing these aftershocks so many times a day. And the people who don't have the emotional attachment. So you can be both. The person that is affected. We call them the affected and the non-affected. So you need them both for a proper balance. Those two always clash, but you need them both”*, Bertrand stated in 2013.

A couple of days later, a convoy with tents and other emergency stock reached Jacmel. The cooperation with the local organization KROS facilitated many processes. KROS allocated 250 people to help with the arrangement and distribution of emergency kits. It was also through them that DKH came across groups that joint forces in solidarity to avoid having to go to the numerous IDP camps already established in town. DKH decided to support those neighborhood networks, the *groupes solidaires*, too as they were disregarded by organizations with a focus on camp management:

“People do not have a culture like that. You see that people stay in their house. They stay with the family, they regroup but they don't have this idea of population displacement...people were not like this. Two million people displaced. You see people set up camps. Everyone who stays in the camps does not bother you. They are at home. This was a phenomenon. Finally the cluster listened to us. Some of them could not change their propositions, so they had to make T-shelters anyways”, the Program Manager Clersaint stated.

The organization then targeted 1,000 people in Jacmel and another 1,000 in the community of Bainet. Even though DKH wanted to refrain from the IDP camp dynamics it had to get involved as they were the first organization to be delivered with tents. They distributed the tents, also to other organizations, and then focused on the dissemination of non-food items, hygiene kits and kitchen kits. The rehabilitation cycle and therewith the projects to reconstruct the permanent housing sector in Jacmel started in April 2010.

6.2.2 Selection of housing beneficiaries

In the direct aftermath of the disaster, organizations were mostly incapable to discern between those they deemed worthy of their assistance and others who they considered less in need. When the two organizations started building houses for people though, they established standards and criteria for the selection of their beneficiaries. The following part will present the way the future house owners were chosen by the organizations. It will show how the employees as much as the beneficiaries framed the

criteria and methods applied, and how they interpreted the overall assistance.

Tiraj o sò – The distribution of houses by Caritas Jacmel

“This man came down the road. He came over to talk to me. He asked if I was already inside a program. I said no. He came over to have a look on my fissured house. He is someone I have known for a long time. He took a look at my house, a close look, and said “Well, I am gonna put your name on the project list”. And so he did put my name down. And then they did the drawing. It is with luck. The girl that did the withdrawal was already a beneficiary. The beneficiaries, they were 12 out of 30. It was fortune that we were drawn. When they arrived at number 7,8,9, they pulled my name. I was a beneficiary. Thank God, I am telling you I was happy. Did my friend put me in this position?! I think in his eyes I have lost a lot. I am crushed a lot. I am devastated. But God knows many things. Because it is with the church I march. I serve the church. I know what I lost will be replaced through the goodwill of God. Beside the house...I got the house as a first step...like a first candle of light. I know God can also give me the rest”.

During a group meeting with beneficiaries of the Caritas housing projects in La Vanneau, a small settlement in the hinterland of Jacmel, Anel Mercilus, a man in his fifties explained how he happened to become entitled to a house. His quote assembles many of the characteristics of the local Caritas intervention in Haiti. First of all, Caritas Jacmel is an organization with intense ties to the local communities. Facilitators and other employees of Caritas Jacmel are members of the communities. They are in lively exchange with the communities, on a professional level and sometimes also in everyday life. The ones who come to evaluate the destruction of the houses are more often than not familiar to the beneficiaries. Secondly, the method used to finally select from the group of possible beneficiaries is a lottery. The people involved thirdly interpret the result of the drawing as an Act of God. Those exact narratives were found in many of the stories the beneficiaries shared with me.

There were basically two options of becoming a beneficiary of the Caritas housing projects. Either people were chosen by lot or personally selected by either Père Valery or his second in command, Agronomist Auguste, the Program Coordinator of Caritas Jacmel.

For the first option, the one that was generally applied, the Caritas team did an assessment of the damaged building structure, and the overall situation of the household and inscribed everyone they deemed indigent into a data record. Religious criteria were not applied. Possible beneficiaries had to complete forms and hand them in. A verification of their declaration followed: *“We control and verify if this specific person does need a house really. [...] There are people whose houses are destroyed, but they have*

money. So they are not in”, Père Valery explained the measures of control. Then the Caritas office arranged a lottery event where the future beneficiaries got drawn. Jude Duverseau, the engineer responsible for the housing rehabilitation described the process like that:

“There is a team that does an evaluation of one zone...A team that assesses the needs of people. And they see that many people need a house. They say, “Wow, the people on that hill suffer a lot. We would like to give them a house”. But now there are so many people who ask for houses. We could not provide for everyone. We realized that there are so many people in need. They registered the names of the people. They did an application for them. And then they put the names in a bowl, called a child, a small child, to tear the names. The names that came out, those people got houses”.

According to the immense destruction of the housing sector, the need for housing was exhaustless. Constantly there are new people added to the data record that is kept by Caritas Jacmel. The realization of the housing projects is highly dependent on the global flow of finances. Caritas Jacmel is contingent upon funds granted by donor institutions: *“There is still a long list. Every time a country or another foreign institution wants to make a donation to Caritas, Caritas says okay we make you a gift, we give those people houses. And so they are added in the bowl”*, Duverseau continued to explain.

In 2013, I met with a 54-year-old Caritas beneficiary in the Jacmelian district St. Helen who stated that she waited years until she finally received the call: *“They called me and I brought the paper. The land title. I went there with the land title. And they invited me to a meeting. And then they started. I was in the selection for one year, two years”.*

The procedure to assess the target groups and individuals for the housing projects is not very different from the way other organizations approached the selection of their beneficiaries. Caritas Jacmel subjects the possible beneficiaries to an assessment of their house, their family structure and their financial situation to evaluate their entitlement to assistance. The semantic categories to identify people entitled to assistance are *moun defavorise*¹⁵⁵, *pi pov yo*¹⁵⁶, *moun ki pa kapap ditou*¹⁵⁷. The important difference to the humanitarian modus operandi of other organizations lies within the final step of the selection. By applying the lottery method the final judgment is dispensed from the organizational force. Caritas Jacmel does so, on the one hand to elude the ultimate differentiation and hierarchization of neediness, but also to avoid misgiving and

¹⁵⁵ Haitian Creole, disadvantaged people

¹⁵⁶ Haitian Creole, *the poorest*

¹⁵⁷ Haitian Creole, people without capacities, literally *people who cannot at all*

skepticism on the side of the recipients as the final decision is not made by a person but depending on the interpretation of the beneficiary by fate, chance or coincidence. For Caritas Jacmel this is an expression of distributive justice, a method against discrimination. *“Everyone is okay with it because it is done in front of all. They can see it. Those who are lucky, they pray to God ‘Make it be me! Make it be me’”*, Jude Duverseau stated. This way the organization also cannot be criticized for the outcomes of the selection. The person who is actually conducting the drawing is chosen among those who already benefitted from the housing projects. This way the suspicion of manipulation for the sake of their own advantage can be ruled out in advance. During my interactions with the beneficiaries I did not come across accusations of fraud.

The broad agreement on this modus operandi first of all derives from the acceptance that Caritas Jacmel enjoys in the communities. Secondly, it pays credit to the fact that those vernacular methods might be considered more reasonable and in some ways more transparent by the local population than seemingly opaque technocratic assessments of vulnerability applied to finally select beneficiaries. The drawings are called *tiraj o sò* in Haitian Creole, which literally means the “drawing of destiny”. Here destiny refers to a transcendent reality beyond the sphere of influence of human beings. People who are chosen ascribe their luck to the volition, the goodwill of God. The beneficiaries are the chosen ones in the most literal sense. In the end, it is God who directs their ways. The majority of beneficiaries, not only of Caritas Jacmel but also of DKH, perceive their entitlement to humanitarian aid as an Act of God, a testimony of divine providence. Even though the employees of the organizations provided the assistance in the end, it was God who sent them. Caritas employees are seen as agents of the divine in that way.

The second possibility of being selected by either Père Valery or Agronomist Auguste is applied less often than the first. It is reserved for people whose lot is considered especially hard, people handicapped as a result of the earthquake for example. Jude Duverseau describes this method of selection as follows:

„First of all there are the Christians in the parish, they put up whoever person. For example they see that someone does not have a house...they see someone who sleeps in a tent...S/he gives to Protestants, s/he gives to people without religion. And then agronomist Auguste comes along, comes to see me together with Père Valery, and he says „How are you?“ He sees the way that people live. And then he tells me in what way I can make them benefit a house”.

Especially Père Valery in his additional function as a clergyman is considered as someone who serves his duty under the auspices of God, even more so than the other regular employees it is him who executes the will of God. Père Valery explains the grounds on which he makes his decisions: *"Someone who is really old, or a handicapped and you can see this person is basically broken down, they don't have to be in the lottery. Those people are prioritized"*. Duverseau, the engineer, adds:

"Those who are troubled the most, those who are in the biggest emergency. When it rains, they are drenched. Their livestock is drenched. They have inflamed feet. Their livestock is drenched, because they sleep under sheds. Well, that's a real urgency. They don't go in the lottery bowl, they are given to in a more direct way".

Père Valery and his Program Coordinator Auguste are considered moral persons; their ability to make such decisions remains unquestioned. Especially Père Valery takes up a special position within the office structure. This also reflects the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church in general and Caritas as the expression of the pastoral mission of the church in particular as outlined in chapter five.

Of the 15 beneficiaries of the Caritas housing projects I interviewed, none stated a religious affiliation other than Roman-Catholic. All were embedded in the parish structure of their respective communities. This structure acted as a network where knowledge and information were distributed. The vast majority expressed a strong religious contextualization of the disaster, of their benefits as well as their everyday life: *"I don't have a problem. It is the work of God. When God is doing this, I am not afraid"*, one elderly woman stated.

When I inquired the nexus patterns of distribution and the religious affiliation of the beneficiaries, Caritas employees always pointed to their non-discriminatory selection practice: *"We don't select people on the basis of their religion. As if we come as Catholics and only serve Catholics. No! [...] There are people who are not Catholics. It is for everyone. Imagine, it is a Vodouissant who is in need, a Catholic, too, a Protestant, too. We serve everyone"*, Manouchka Beauchamp stated. When confronted with the observation that the selection nevertheless takes places within the parish structures more often than not, the nurse countered:

"Even though it is done in the church, Vodouissants participate in the church, too. Protestants...not everywhere you find Protestants participating in the church. Not everywhere. But there are places. Sometimes there are celebrations where Vodouissants, Protestants, everyone participates. For example when there is a parish fair or saints days."

It is for everyone. You have something nice going on. You cannot say 'I do not follow this logic'. If you want a nice thing to happen, you have to follow this logic".

This quote makes palpable the fact that religious boundaries are fluid and porous instead of stable and enclosed. Even though one person identifies with a certain religion in one context does not preclude that the same person will have another frame of religious reference in a different situation. The religious networks supplement each other. In many cases the parish structure is one of the primary ordering principles within the communities.

Furthermore, Anaïca Cesaïre, a 45-year-old mother of five presents with her own interpretation of why she was selected for the housing project: *"Because I was in need. I have five kids. They don't have a place to sleep. A neighbor that works for Caritas made me benefit from this house"*. Caritas Jacmel is an organization deeply embedded in the social fabric of the respective communities they serve. On many levels there is a lively interaction. Employees and beneficiaries cross paths in seminars, in church, at the market, even in the *lakou*. In remote regions it is the facilitator who acts as a link between the communities and Caritas. Whereas this could be interpreted as an act of patronage or even nepotism a supplementary reading is possible. The solidity of ties between the organization and the beneficiaries can also allow for a high level of accountability. In comparison to organizations without profoundly embedded structures, Caritas can be directly held accountable for possible flaws in the execution of their mission.

The distribution patterns of Caritas in some ways reflect the Haitian proverb *"Bondye konn bay men li pa konn separe"*. It literally means, "God gives but he doesn't share", in the sense of not dividing his gifts among the people. It is the employees of Caritas that are perceived as divine agents that have to fulfill this task. In a situation where the need is overwhelming Caritas Jacmel refrains from applying a hierarchy of need, a "moral economy of lives" (Fassin 2010). They preselect those worthy of their support and then leave the final decision up to a more objective entity, the lottery drawing, which is then again reinterpreted as God by the beneficiaries. Levine in his assessment of humanitarian action in post-earthquake Haiti confirms: "Local people know how to come to an understanding in their own society" (Levine et al. 2012). This statement is particularly appropriate to the distributive practice of Caritas Jacmel.

Vulnerable decisions - The distribution of houses by DKH

“We have those selection criteria because it is really important in the framework of humanitarian action. It is not for everyone. That means it is possible that you have two poor people, two people whose situation is not good, and you have to decide whom to give a dollar. You have to decide, that's what's not good.” (Jean-Michel Clersaint, Program Manager DKH)

In their intervention sites in Jacmel, Bainet and La Vallee, Diakonie worked closely with a number of local institutions and organizations. They cooperated with local governmental authorities such as the mayor's office, the *Direction de la Protection Civile* (DPC) and *Comité Départemental de Gestion de Risques et des Désastres* (CDGRD), and in the case of remote localities, the *Conseil d'Administration de la Section Communale* (CASEC). Especially in the direct wake of the disaster DKH cooperated intensely with KROS, a local non-governmental conglomerate of more than 50 base organizations, to target groups in need of assistance:

“We were among the first organizations to provide aid in Jacmel. And we could do this through KROS. They already had a structure, they were organized. So they voluntarily did an assessment. Because for us, the first thing is to have an assessment with a vulnerability analysis. That allows to define the type of action we are going to conduct. After the assessment and after we defined what group is vulnerable we come up with criteria that we apply. So that we can reach out to those who are the most vulnerable”, the Program Manager of DKH stated in 2011.

KROS volunteers accessed neighborhood committees in Mayard, a district of Jacmel, to target vulnerable groups. DKH then distributed tents to the affected. Additionally, the families that were living in DKH tents were provided with emergency kits. Subsequently a second evaluation took place that focused on the habitat structure of the targeted families. Those in DKH tents, holding a land title, whose house had been made uninhabitable by the earthquake, were granted either reconstruction or a new house by DKH. This way 300 houses were (re-) established. In retrospective DKH self-critically stated that it would have been better to jointly do the targeting of groups with KROS. They suspected a conflict of interests, as KROS volunteers were regarded as biased coming from the affected areas themselves.

After the assessment of available land titles, the criteria that DKH applied to select their housing beneficiaries, were the following: the affected housing structure, the size of the family, the number of children below the age of five, the number of pregnant women, single mother households, and the number of handicapped people, respectively those unable to generate income. To apply and effectively control those criteria was not

always easy: *“It is supposed to be done in a transparent fashion. We try to establish that with the criteria, but we don't have a base. People also lie. If someone says s/he has ten children, are you supposed to wait until s/he lines up all of the children?”*, the Program Manager asked. The fact that DKH concentrated their housing rehabilitation efforts on rural zones like Bainet and La Vallee made it even more complicated. Especially in the community of Bainet, the houses are widespread, distant. For some houses it takes a whole day to get there and back.

The final decision of whom to give the houses according to the hierarchization of vulnerability parameters was taken by the organization itself. The Program Manager explained that this was one of the hardest parts: *“That is what is not good. You have to choose. Also in regard of the dynamics on the community level. How do you explain that to people?”*, he asked. The hierarchization of the vulnerability criteria, weighing them up against each other to come to a final decision, was something not evidently comprehensible to the communities they served.

KROS as well as local authorities provided DKH with lists of possible beneficiaries. In both cases the selection turned out to be not completely a-political. Also the lists that have been handed to DKH by the CASEC in Bainet had to be readjusted when irregularities were detected. Furthermore DKH admitted some trouble considering the selection of beneficiaries:

„In the summer of 2010, DKH arranged a research to be conducted on how far the refugees were involved in the decision making process. Participation. Selection of beneficiaries and so on. That is really important and we neglected that. We were provided with lists by KROS, but those were not completely apolitical. And she [the researcher] disassembled the whole thing and detected who should be in and who shouldn't. We provided transparency in retrospect”.

In the region of Bainet, DKH also identified a lack of proper targeting and vulnerability mapping that led to what they referred to as *saupoudrage*, a method of indiscriminate distribution that is literally “sprinkled” over the region. Generally, at least in Bainet people got provided with houses relatively quick. One beneficiary inscribed himself at DKH office with the help of the in September 2010. His house was inaugurated on July 22, 2011.

To my knowledge, the religiosity of the beneficiaries did not play any role in the selection processes. DKH did not register it or made any other reference to it during its intervention. This is due the humanitarian principles of impartiality and neutrality that stipulates that aid shall be given on the basis of need alone, and it shall not be used to

further a particular political or religious standpoint. Despite the efforts undertaken by DKH to refrain from its religious background many beneficiaries of the organization interpret their work as an Act of God anyways. Former Port-au-Prince resident Wesley Rozier stated: *“Thank God, we were not buried. Afterwards God was talking to me, he touched everyone. And then he touched Diakonie. When I came to live here, I was given a house”*. 65-year-old Wideline Josue similarly attributes her privilege of being given a house to the divine: *“It is a big thing they did for me. It was God who touched the hearts of the people so they came to help me. They did the house for me. In any case I ask God to always look after them”*.

To sum up, DKH primarily used vulnerability mapping to select the beneficiaries of their housing projects. Similarly Caritas Jacmel applied criteria to examine and control who is eligible to receive a house. While Caritas organized a lottery drawing, DKH executed the final decision itself. Both organizations only assisted people who were in possession of land titles. Unintentionally they therewith reaffirmed existing social disparities. Those who have been living in dire poverty before the earthquake had only marginal chances of benefitting from the housing projects after *Douz Janvyè*. This way, the Program Coordinator of Diakonie concludes, humanitarian intervention tends to sustain social inequalities:

“Imagine, before the earthquake you lived in a house, you were poor, no money, not good at all. I was in a much better place. The earthquake happens and your house is not damaged at all. But my house crashed completely. I came to be vulnerable. In terms of the framework of humanitarian intervention we have to find people who are victims of the earthquake. [...] And now they see the way I intervene. That is a source of tension. All of that happens in humanitarian action, it contributes to social inequalities, indirectly”.

Concerning the selection of the beneficiaries, one has to bear in mind that in complex emergencies like the Haitian earthquake it is not only the ones who have been directly affected by the quake that need support, but also those who are affected by those exact root causes that abetted the destructiveness of the disaster. The ones suffering from structural inequalities resulting in chronic poverty:

“The consequence is that because someone fell victim, she receives all of that. S/he receives a nice house. And the other person does not, because she is not a direct victim. Between two people, it is the one who came to be victim that receives humanitarian aid. It is a series of things that are extremely complex and also extremely difficult to tackle”,

Clersaint concluded his insight into the contradictory nature of humanitarian action. While in the direct aftermath of the earthquake everyone was a victim, *tout moun victim*, in later phases of the intervention the victimhood of people was a matter of contestation

6.2.3 Knowledge and Employment – Other Parameter of Distribution

“Caritas itself does not select the people to work with. We work with Catholics, Protestants, Vodouissants. Whatever kind of people, we work with them. We give all of them help. All come to the seminars. There is no problem with them”. (Gaelle Perelus, Caritas Jacmel)

Next to the emergency relief and the reinforcement and (re-)construction of houses, both organizations also allocated other benefits. With Caritas Jacmel, I participated in several seminars and accompanied a field trip of the mobile clinic. The seminars either focused on small business entrepreneurship or disaster preparedness. DKH and Caritas Jacmel both implemented Cash-for-Work programs in the post-earthquake period. DKH also focused on food security projects, providing seeds as well as trainings to the population. I accompanied the head staff to the opening ceremony of an emergency shelter in Anse-à-Pitre, a border town in the Belle-Anse-Arrondissement, in the Sud-Est-Department of Haiti.

Knowledge

EKOSOL, short for *économie solidaire*, is one of the main sections of the Caritas Jacmel office. They focus on aspects related to the financial well being of Haitians. During my time at the office in 2013 they provided several seminars on livelihood and financial management. Wilner Saint-Cyr, one of the animators of this section, explains: *“It is something that we do with our heart. For us in the church this is what we do. We accompany them. If someone was kneeling before, we make him or her stand straight. So they can use their own heads tomorrow. That is why we provide this training”.*

The training is mostly directed at people running small businesses, mainly market women, *ti-machann*¹⁵⁸ who sell peanuts, mango or artisanal products. The 28 people participating came from all over the diocese of Jacmel. Two thirds were female, the rest male. On the second day of the four-day training I sensed some dissension between the organizers and the participants. A Caritas Jacmel employee explained to me that people complained about the fact that only 10 of the 27 parishes were participating, and others like Les Cayes Jacmel and Marigot were not represented. She stated that it is the local parish priest, who selected the ones to be sent to Jacmel. His decision depends on the success of the individuals for example in school or in other areas of life. Many of the participants are said to be part of the church choir. As mentioned in the former chapter,

¹⁵⁸ Haitian Creole, *small merchant*

the choir is a social space especially constituted by the morality of its members. To verify their participation people had to sign a list every day. Next to such information like name, gender, and contact details, people were asked from what parish they were coming. To join the seminar some had to travel several hours from places such as Montaj. The Caritas office paid the transport for people to Jacmel. During the four-day training Caritas provided food to the participants, breakfast and lunch, as well as places to sleep.

As analyzed in chapter five, the structure that Caritas relies upon for information, service, and accessibility is the parish structure. Together with the parish priests they established a network of facilitators, promoters, instructors, and leaders who reported to and from the communities, who suggested people for education or housing programs. Effectively it is possible for non-Catholics to be included, however, the communication primarily happens within the church communities. None of the housing beneficiaries I have spoken to in 2011 as well as 2013 stated a confession other than Roman-Catholic. This is not necessary true for the people who participate in the trainings provided in the field. Caritas Jacmel also has partnerships to non-Catholic churches. Several of the seminars I attended in rural regions took place in Protestant churches. Phillipe Louis-Simon, the coordinator in charge for the Disaster Risk Management trainings, stated:

“The beneficiaries come from all religious backgrounds. You can also not be Catholic. The project is for the people. Obviously, in a certain project we cannot take everyone in a zone. We always chose a team, but the team is always chosen in accordance with the priest of the zone. We chose people who are in need. We do not put the people because of their religion, if they want so or not”.

I asked if it is the priest who chooses, won't that automatically result in Catholic participants? Louis-Simon responded:

“Not necessarily. In Lavout we have a lot of Protestants too in the team. They receive the training, too. We do not do those things for Catholics only. It is for everyone. It is like that. It is also a demand on the side of our partners. They tell us not to choose Catholics only. We have to choose everyone. So it is for everyone”.

Louis-Simon here points out to a very important aspect: not only does Caritas state that they not solely distribute their assets to Catholics, but to *moun ki nan bezwen*¹⁵⁹, people in need. He also states that this is a demand of the international partner organizations that fund the realization of the seminars. This aspect of organizational cooperation with its requirements concerning the humanitarian conduct as well as international

¹⁵⁹ Haitian Creole, *people in need*

bureaucracy is also tangible in the multitude of lists and forms that had to be completed on a daily basis by Caritas staff.

Employment

Next to material and educational benefits distributed by the organizations, employment should also be regarded as an asset. The teams of both organizations expanded considerably in size due to increased workload and respective funding opportunities. The benefit permeates all levels of employment from expatriate senior management in the offices down to day laborers on the hundreds of housing construction sites. To escape the dichotomy of the actively engaged selfless humanitarian and the passive receiving impoverished beneficiary, I here want to show some examples that make tangible how also the humanitarians themselves benefit from the work of the organization in material terms: by employment.

The main question is on what basis the organizations in question did provide employment. Caritas as an institution of the Catholic Church that in many spaces and situations is indistinguishable interwoven with the church, is very much concerned to employ Catholics for their office only: *“You see, it is Catholic Christians. Well, not exclusively, we have seen Protestants too. In the big frame, the director has to be Catholic, the coordinator has to be Catholic”*, the Program Coordinator Auguste stated in 2013. The field staff, people working as facilitators of the projects on the ground can theoretically be of other faiths:

“In the development projects, in the agricultural projects, we do not stick to the church with the beneficiaries. But with the staff that directs the projects, the ones who make the decision, they stick with the church. But with the beneficiaries, for the goat project, the garden beneficiaries, when we give tools, we give it to everyone. Everyone, regardless if you are in the church, they give it to you”,

Janjak Casimir, one of the four Caritas employees working for the agricultural sector in Jacmel stated. Père Valery explains the preference for Catholic employees through the shared religious habitus that can act as a form of exclusion to people of other faiths:

“However, it is better for us, when we recruit people. When we find someone who is a true Catholic it is better for us, because it facilitates the integration into the team. So if it is someone with another religious confession, for example Protestant, there are certain activities, religious activities, liturgies that we do. If that person comes from a different church he or she won't feel comfortable among the team”.

The employment practice is justified through the fact that working for Caritas also means transporting the value of Catholic Christianity to others, too. Janjak Casimir, who

put continuing emphasis on Christian morality as precondition to be employed by Caritas Jacmel, explains his role: *“You are considered to not only go and work there, but you are a pastoral agent, too. You have to uphold the label of the church. You have to promote the church, too. That is why they always recruit moral people that also work inside the church”*.

Most people employed by Caritas Jacmel had a connection or a history of working for either Caritas or other realms of the Catholic Church before. Additionally to the verification of their proper faith, before entering Caritas Jacmel, possible employees were required to pass an exam to prove skills in their respective fields of expertise. Employment not only provides with livelihood. Even though Caritas employees were exempted from the circle of beneficiaries they did also receive small amounts of financial support after the earthquake.

The size of DKH likewise expanded considerably after the earthquake. In the direct wake of the disaster they implemented Cash-for-Work programs for the affected population in Jacmel. Inhabitants were removing rubble from the streets in exchange for a small amount of cash.¹⁶⁰ The organization also employed a multitude of people on a more regular basis. At peak time DKH staff rose to more than a hundred people. Like mentioned in chapter five the religious affiliation of staff is dealt with differently depending on the level of intervention. Like explicated in chapter five, people employed in the headquarters of DKH in Berlin have to provide proof of their adherence to a Christian church under the ACK clause. On the ground, in the case of Haiti, this requirement in some ways is transformed into its opposite. For expatriate staff such a proof is not required. The religious background of the Haitian staff is not inquired during job interviews at all. Yet, according to the former Country Director, if someone expressed a strong religious motivation it is likely that the applicant is not considered positively. That does certainly not entail that the local staff of DKH has no religious background. The majority has, very much like the majority of the Haitian population. Yet despite its clerical background Diakonie urges not to be considered a religious organization in the field. Next to all sorts of Haitian employees required to execute especially the post-earthquake housing projects, also a multitude of expatriate humanitarians were contracted to support the Haiti mission of DKH. Most of those

¹⁶⁰ For a general criticism of this common practice in humanitarian aid see chapter three of this dissertation.

engagements, especially in the direct wake of the disaster, did not exceed a couple of months. The Haiti of 2010 was a revolving door for “traveling professionals”. DKH even provided so-called “accompanied positions” for expatriates. A French engineer assigned to another mission in an African country was ordered to Haiti for the duration of three months. He brought his partner and the DKH Country Director was told by headquarters to create a job for her as well.

Employment by DKH also entailed some sort of staff care, in material as well as in psychological terms. Schulz reported of regular “Rest and Recuperation” (R&R) granted by DKH to her as Country Director. It is a form of short-term salaried leave of absence. Expatriates employed in Haiti usually went either to the Dominican Republic or another neighboring Caribbean island. When working for the UN, expatriates are granted R&R in Santo Domingo in a frequency of every eight weeks.¹⁶¹

The staff care did not only include expatriate staff but in the case of DKH in fact all people employed in Haiti. During the first months after *Douz Janvye*, the organization excessively provided for their employees. The very first delivery of tents was also provided to Diakonie staff that lost houses or could not sleep inside due to regular aftershocks. Every employee regardless of the salary grade was granted US\$ 300 in cash as well as the possibility of interest free loans. Additionally, five people of the extremely affected low wage sector, maintenance and infrastructure staff, were given individual contributions of up to US\$ 5,000. DKH not only provided material support, but also psychosocial support for everyone involved. Only days after *Douz Janvye*, an expert flew in to provide staff care, like post-disaster de-briefing with the employees. The same person flew into Port-au-Prince regularly over a period of a year and provided continuing psychological support.

To sum up, employment is an important asset that both organizations provided on all levels. One beneficiary in Bainet stated that in his zone DKH is the only institution to provide employment at all. This accounts for the job market in Haiti in general. International NGOs such as DKH are able to provide more attractive salaries than Haitian institutions. Among many other consequences referred to in chapter three of

¹⁶¹ http://www.un.org/Depts/OHRM/salaries_allowances/allowances/rnr201514.pdf Last visited May 24, 2016.

this dissertation, this can also result in a high level of dependency. This can also hinder accountability. Janjak Casimir of Caritas Jacmel explained how:

“Up until today we do not criticize the NGOs, tell them they are not good, because if it was not for them, many people would not have jobs. If they would leave, the unemployment rate would rise. There are many people who find work with them. It does not satisfy us a hundred percent what they do, but there are many people who work, the money stays in the country, it circulates in the country. There are many things that get done. They help us. They help us with education, in other social domains. But finally we do not develop in the way we want to. But nevertheless they are of use for the country. And our state is weak. If it were not for them we would not have certain things”.

The inequalities inherent to the aid complex also manifest themselves in the employment practices of the NGOs. While Caritas Jacmel only employed Haitians, DKH had a mixed team. Even though the Country Director was always an expatriate employee, DKH gave the second highest position that of the Program Manager to a Haitian national.

6.3 Conclusion

The preceding chapter focused on the distributive practice, the basic *raison d'être* of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe as well as Caritas Jacmel. It examined the grounds on which the two organizations distributed their benefits. I put the main emphasis on the initiatives to rehabilitate the housing sector in Jacmel and surrounding communities. Thereby I also addressed the complexities and challenges of the habitat reconstruction in post-earthquake Haiti. Next to housing, I also explored other parameters of distribution such as the means of direct emergency relief, the provision of medical assistance, the access to knowledge through educational seminars and last but not least the possibility of employment by the organization itself.

One of the main findings of this chapter is that the selection of beneficiaries, the distribution of goods, does influence and reaffirm vernacular power structures in post-earthquake Haiti. DKH as an organization with a clerical background but without a cooperative network of local churches relies on the local civic infrastructure like the mayor's office or the CASEC to single out their beneficiaries. Caritas on the other hand establishes access, infrastructure and information, if not provided by the local staff itself, mainly through the parish structure. Even though Caritas as a branch of the Catholic Church with its notable position in Haitian political spheres has the general possibility to work closely with public institutions, it can also function more independently as it can revert to a parallel power structure, that of the church.

All of the housing beneficiaries of Caritas Jacmel that I engaged with were of Catholic faith, those of DKH, too. This for one reflects the religious landscape in Haiti as the vast majority of Haitians consider themselves faithful believers. Especially in the rural communities outside Jacmel the influence of the Catholic Church is still very much all-embracing. Secondly, the fact that Caritas beneficiaries largely arise from the lines of the Catholic Church is an expression of the far-reaching prominent role that the institution occupies. In many contexts, especially in rural ones with lack of any other infrastructure, the church is the basic unit of societal organization. The church structure is the parameter that facilitates the dissemination of information, knowledge and benefits, even more so in zones where public infrastructure is inadequate, if not inexistent.

While all beneficiaries of the housing projects were Catholic, Caritas Jacmel insisted on not actively discriminating against people of other faiths. In theory everyone is worthy of the support of Caritas. When it comes to their distributive practice the organization largely employs the motto “We help people not because they are Catholic, but because we are Catholic” (Knight 2011). Yet the organization of the selection of its beneficiaries is structured within parish limits, meaning a person who actively engages in the Catholic structure is more likely to enjoy the merits of such an affiliation. Faith in this case acts a resource. Additionally one has to bear in mind that the boundaries between the existing religious affiliations in Haiti are not as rigid and enclosed. Instead they often present themselves as fluid and porous. Practically, even more so than theoretically, it is possible for someone who serves the *lwa* or belongs to a Protestant denomination to participate in the networks that the Catholic Church provides.

Even though they are downright religious, too, the religiosity of DKH beneficiaries does not play a role in the selection of the housing beneficiaries. The German organization targeted their recipients not through church networks, but with the help of secular base organizations and public authorities. On one hand this presents the chance for a broader cooperation and accountability that is not automatically given within an enclosed Caritas structure, on the other hand that means that the organization can also get drawn in the center of political conflicts, like the one between KROS and the mayor of Jacmel, to be examined in the next chapter. Furthermore, for an organization like DKH it is harder to actually verify information given by possible beneficiaries, because especially in rural regions they have no sufficient base structure. For Caritas the possibility that fraudulent behavior goes unnoticed is much smaller, because first of all they work through

community facilitators who actually know their communities and would identify and sanction such a lie immediately and second of all, lying to local church institution to get a house is somewhat harder and morally more condemnable than doing the same with an international NGO from Germany that is very discrete about its ecclesial connections. That is also why DKH tells people that the money to build their houses comes from church donations.

The main narrative applied by Caritas Jacmel as well as DKH was that of “need”. Both organizations referred to *moun ki nan bezwen*, people in need, as their generalized targets of intervention. While Caritas added they do not discriminate against people of other faiths in their distributive practice, DKH did not refer to faith at all when discussing their beneficiaries. Rather it was vulnerability that was the keyword referred to continuously. Methodologically the assessment of the target groups of both organizations followed largely the same lines of categorization, like the extent of destruction, the structure of the family, and the overall economic situation. However, the ultimate form of decision-making differs. Caritas applies a *tiraj o sò*, a drawing of destiny. It is a lottery to choose the beneficiaries from a selection of the ones deemed worthy of the benefit. By doing so, Caritas opens up an alternative to an objective reality and professional validation. It adds a transcendent dimension. People who are chosen ascribe their luck to the volition, the goodwill of God. In the end it is God who directs their ways. This vernacular method of decision-making is more comprehensible, easier to integrate into the lived realities of beneficiaries than seemingly irreproducible decisions made by employees of other organizations, who sit in their offices and trouble their heads trying to weigh allegedly objective criteria of vulnerability against each other. While this method is substantial for the ones who practice it and those they are financially depending on, it is not necessarily as meaningful to the beneficiaries. “*You have two poor people and have to decide whom to give a dollar*”, Clersaint of DKH said. In DKH it is a human being to make the ultimate decision, for Caritas Jacmel’s beneficiaries it is God directly who decides over their entitlement to humanitarian aid in form of housing.

Additionally, the high acceptance of the drawing method is due to the fact that Caritas is a local organization, which is highly intertwined with the everyday lives of people. This fact accounts for a certain level of trust but also of control. In comparison to non-local organizations Caritas can be held accountable for its deeds and decisions in a more

direct way as it is so deeply embedded. In other words, Caritas as a vernacular organization cannot afford to be considered corrupt or immoral by the local population. In DKH, while the targeting of beneficiaries is conducted in cooperation with external entities, it is the organization itself that makes the final decision to prioritize one person over the other.

Another significant finding of this chapter is the fact that once being targeted by either organization increases the chances of the beneficiaries to be granted continuing support. In 2010, Caritas beneficiary Anaïca Cesaïre received financial support to send her kids back to school. When I visited her in summer 2011, the house she received was about to be inaugurated. Similarly, people who were provided with the first tents by DKH in Jacmel were also the one's targeted for the permanent housing projects. This indeed is part of the strategy of DKH: a limited geographical area with a population targeted for emergency and rehabilitation response.

Many of the guiding ideas presented in this chapter will be taken up in the subsequent last chapter. The professional decisions and practices of both organizations will be examined through the lens of the humanitarian principles as stipulated in the "Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief". The findings will be embedded in a discussion of the processes of professionalization that shapes the aid complex in general as much as the two organizations in question.

7 Of Humanitarian Principles and Necessary Narratives – Aspects of Professionalization in Faith-Based Humanitarianism

Professional humanitarian assistance rests on the assumption that the humanitarian imperative comes first, and that assistance is given to those who are in greatest need. Here, especially for faith-based organizations a lot is at stake. Due to their faith identity their professionalism is perceived not as a given in humanitarian contexts. First of all, faith is constructed as the antidote to rationality. Within the technical processes of standardization and codification characteristic to the professionalization of the humanitarian sector though, rationality is essential (Barnett 2012). Secondly, FBOs are under the suspicion to privilege people and groups of their own faith-based background or even try to convert them with their aid assistance. Their faith identity is seen as automatically interfering with their impartiality. Thus FBOs have to make a greater effort to be perceived as professional. Stakeholders within the humanitarian community recommend a professionalization in terms of codes of conduct, training, and quality management (Barnett 2009). Against this background it is noteworthy that half of the organizations involved in the creation of the Code of Conduct central to this chapter do have a faith-based background.¹⁶²

Faith-based humanitarian organizations dwell in the same “dense professional world of NGOs” (Bornstein 2005) as formally secular ones. The chapter at hand will show how the urge to professionalize relates to the faith identity of both organizations and how they react to and reproduce the dynamics of “secularization and sanctification” (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012) inherent to contemporary humanitarian assistance.

This chapter will follow up on the discussion of the distributive practice of DKH and Caritas Jacmel undertaken in the former chapter. The specific practices applied by the two organizations actually concern several of the articles of “The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief” (CoC) that will be analyzed in succession.

¹⁶² The Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR) that endorsed the formulation of the CoC in 1991, consisted of CARE, Caritas Internationalis, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Oxfam, Save the Children and the World Council of Churches (WCC) (Walker 2005).

The first part of the chapter will discuss the core humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence as laid down in the Red Cross Code of Conduct. Especially *Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe* (DKH) took continuing reference to the CoC as their source of orientation for the professional conduct of humanitarian assistance. I suggest, that it makes part of the organizational culture of the German FBO. The chapter will then show in what ways the principles of the code are implemented in the missions of both organizations and examine the challenges posed by the principles. As we will see, at times it is enough to “appear neutral” to be able to assist populations in distress. Humanitarian principles can be reduced to necessary narratives, constantly under threat of being undermined by superior dynamics beyond the sphere of influence of the specific organization.

Here, it is the virtue of anthropological research that is qualified to examine those dynamics with “its ability to discern what organizations, and the people within them, actually do on a day-to-day basis, often in spite of what they say they do” (Hefferan et al. 2009:18). I will give special attention to the narratives used to embed the principles into the organizational cultures of DKH and Caritas Jacmel.

The Code of Conduct is one element of a larger development within the humanitarian sector. I will embed the adherence to the standards into a discussion of the principles to then highlight the effects of the increasing professionalization of the humanitarian sector for the organizations on the ground. I will do so by looking at the organizational level as much as carve out the implications of such professional standards for the staff of humanitarian organizations.

7.1 FBOs and international standards and regulations

In the humanitarian context one finds a variety of different standards, guides and inter-agency agreements created and put into practice by iNGOS. There is the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership International (HAP International) Project, the Active Learning Network of Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Assistance (ALNAP), the Sphere Project’s Humanitarian Charter and Minimum standards in Disaster Response or the most recent one, the Core Humanitarian Standard. They all try to provide humanitarian practitioners with orientation to assist people in need in the best ways possible. This study will focus on the Red Cross Code of Conduct because of its value especially for one of the organization examined in this dissertation: DKH.

7.1.2 The Code of Conduct

“The Code of Conduct is our Ten Commandments on the ground”

(DKH headquarters employee in 2013)

„The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief“ (CoC) was published in 1994. The initiative to formulate the code started in 1991 already, as a reaction to the increasing number and complexities of intervention contexts and the simultaneous growing prominence of the humanitarian organizations that intervened (Walker 2005). It was within the French Red Cross that the CoC was initiated (Hilhorst 2005). The CoC meant to guard the “standards of behavior”¹⁶³ of the signatories. In fact, half of the organizations involved do have a faith-based background. For many international organizations operating within the aid complex it serves as a frame of reference.

Much like the Ten Commandments of the Bible, the CoC consists of ten requirements. Articles 1 to 4 of the code are considered the core humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence. The other six articles of the code refer to matters of respect, capacity building, participation, sustainability, accountability, and dignity. The full text of the CoC is added to the annex of this study.

Especially after the publication of the CoC, there have been several complex emergencies that triggered a debate about humanitarian principles, involvement in conflict and the eventual failure to tend to the victims of those conflicts. Next to the Yugoslavian wars throughout most of the 1990s, it was the Rwandan genocide in 1994 that traumatized the humanitarian community and triggered a series of internal evaluations like the one “held the year after [which] sadly concluded that, once political failure led to the crisis, many more lives could have been saved had humanitarian organisations better coordinated and acted more professionally“ (Hilhorst 2002a: 359). The emergence of codices that stipulate principles is an expression of the urge to better coordinate, therefore to professionalize the humanitarian sector, to eventually do a better job assisting people in need.

Within the humanitarian sector, there are so-called minimalist organizations, those who follow a strictly humanitarian conduct and maximalist ones who tend more to sustainable, developmentalist engagement in relief operations (Hilhorst 2005). As we

¹⁶³ <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/publication/p1067.htm> Last visited May 24, 2016.

will see, depending on their mandate, the two organizations studied take different positions towards the principles. In 2005, the vast majority of signatory organizations were mixed-mandate organizations, engaged in both humanitarian and development contexts.

The CoC is voluntary and self-enforced. It is a declaration of intent for the proper conduct of humanitarian intervention. The CoC itself is not integrated in international law. A violation is not subjected to law enforcement and therefore does not have legal ramifications for the individual organization, as long as international or national law is not violated simultaneously. Rather, the CoC is an internal agreement of the 610 organizations that signed it as of March 2016.

The no-postulating nature of the CoC is reflected in the suggestive tone of the whole document. In many of the articles, vocabulary like “we shall” or “we will endeavor”, “wherever possible” or “we will reflect considerations“ is used. Hilhorst in her study on the relevance of the CoC criticizes that in many of its parts it lacks clarity and leaves much room for interpretation. Yet she argues that this can also be seen as the strength of the code. Considering the need to contextualize and adapt aid to the specific challenges encountered in the situation in a contingent way, in matters of the principle of neutrality for example, she states “some situations require strict neutrality, while others do not” (Hilhorst 2005: 364). As Redfield states, neutrality is “as much as strategic weapon of the weak as a hegemonic assumption of the powerful” (Redfield 2011: 57) that is highly dependent on how it is perceived by the involved actors. The lack of guidance, or different, the flexibility of the CoC can act as a tool to maintain the capability to act.

For the two organizations in question, the CoC has different significance. DKH staff on all levels from headquarter coordinators over expatriate staff in Port-au-Prince to Haitian management staff took reference to the CoC as their main source of orientation in humanitarian intervention. Expatriate employees had to sign the adherence to the CoC before working for DKH. Next to the CoC, DKH also signed a common statement with Caritas International, the German Caritas. It presents a guideline in humanitarian relief, too. It heavily references both organizations’ Christian faith as the basis for their humanitarian commitment, too.

Caritas Internationalis, the umbrella organization heading all global Caritas sections, is one of the co-signatories of the 1994 Code of Conduct. Yet in the narratives of Caritas

Jacmel staff the code was less central. Whereas several reasons for this lack of identification are to be found in the self-conception of Caritas Jacmel as a church-based organization with a primary focus on development, one major reason also lies within the nature of the CoC itself. It is entirely written from the perspective of international NGOs and in that way does not concern or tend to problems encountered by local organizations such as Caritas Jacmel as much as it does to DKH. Respecting local customs for example is something that Caritas Jacmel inevitably has to do as a local organization that is highly embedded in the socio-cultural fabric of Haitian society. Likewise, the organization itself represents the “local capacities” that the CoC urges their signatories to strengthen. The CoC does not provide guidance for local organizations for example on how to claim and defend their self-determination within an aid complex inherently dominated by Western iNGOs in terms of ontological foundations and financial capacities.

The following part will examine the core humanitarian principles stipulated in the CoC and their specific meanings for the organizations. It will show how the principles of the code trickle down and are translated to and implemented in the interventions in Haiti.

7.2 The humanitarian principles in theory and their implementation on the ground

7.2.1 Tout moun se moun – *The principle of Humanity*

Article 1: The humanitarian imperative comes first

The principle of humanity certainly is the one stressed the most when the concept of humanitarianism is examined. The world of humanitarianism dwells in the “empire of humanity” (Barnett 2011). The concept of humanity with its quasi-transcendental values is the ontological foundation of humanitarian intervention. According to Donini, it is the highest of all humanitarian principles (Donini 2011).

Theoretically, international NGOs assist people who are strangers to them because they share their humanity with them. The term is first used to refer to an entity of humans, all humankind. Secondly it aims at humanness, a moral imperative of how to treat other people, especially in the context of humanitarian intervention.

In January 2010, former U.S.-president Bill Clinton in his role as the UN special envoy to Haiti said that the disaster “reminds us of our common humanity” (Vorbe 2010:16).

Current U.S.-president Barack Obama similarly justified the humanitarian intervention: "For the sake of our citizens who are in Haiti, for the sake of the Haitian people who have suffered so much, and for the sake of our common humanity, we stand in solidarity with our neighbors to the south, knowing that but for the grace of God there we go" (Obama 2010). Humanitarianism in the words of Obama is tightly interwoven with the notion of humanity. Similarly, Talal Asad explicates:

"It is in the name of humanity that the modern project of humanitarianism intervenes in the lives of other beings to protect, help, or improve them; it is in the name of humanity that progressivist doctrines of freedom are expressed. In other words, it is humanity that is said to suffer, humanity that calls for compassion, defense, and solidarity" (Asad 2013).

The aspects of freedom and solidarity though are highly value-laden and contextual. Despite its secularized character, the principle of humanity as laid down in the CoC is intimately entangled with Judeo-Christian traditions, capitalist values and social individualism (Hilhorst 2005). Yet secular humanitarianism claims to be value-neutral as opposed to faith-based humanitarianism (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager 2013). Many others consider this universalization of humanity in the aid complex in its essence a Westernization of aid. Gordon and Donini identify the way in which humanitarianism with its referential conception of humanity is an exertion of Western epistemic and cultural power (Gordon and Donini 2015).

The universalizing nature of the concept of humanity is as problematic as it is virtuous. It entails the important assumption that every human being has the same entitlement to humanitarian assistance when in need. Yet even if this theoretical predicament would be rightfully put into practice in today's sites of humanitarian intervention, still the underlying epistemological assumptions are deemed highly problematic. For Althusser the problem with the concept of humanity is the "imperial attempt to render humanity a universal ethical and political subject, as history shows us that this can result in the monopoly of the category by a few, and the denial of the humanity of others who do not conform" (Althusser cited in Feldman and Ticktin 2010:10). Humanity in this view is a universalistic, normative claim and the idea of universality in itself is a product of processes of exclusion. Universalism stands against the recognition of difference. "The humanitarian world is based upon the fiction of humanity as an identity and conflates universalism and globalization" (Agier 2010:32). The problem that Agier refers to here is that this conflation of globalization only addresses humanity in terms of a group of

people inhabiting the same globe. Through increased contact and exchange driven by the processes of globalization, people in other world regions move closer to ones own life world. Yet this closeness operates merely in spatial terms. As against a concept fueled by humanism or faith, this shared identity is less likely to substantially motivate the humanitarian practitioners, unless the identity as a humanitarian itself is substantiated with some form of transcendental qualities. Accordingly, Peter Walker refers to the humanitarian principle of humanity “as an article of faith – you can’t prove it, you just have to believe it” (Walker 2004).

Especially the examples cited in chapter three of this dissertation show how in the rescue operations in the direct aftermath of the earthquake the survival of non-white people was given a lower priority on the account of their nationality and “race”. The ideal of universalistic principles in humanitarianism is confronted with a *realpolitik* of the practice of difference and the “moral economy of lives” in interventions (Fassin 2010). With a language of political theology applied Fassin differentiates between those “whose life is sacred and those whose life may be sacrificed” (Fassin 2010).

For religious organizations the idea of a common humanity is based on the doctrine that every human was created in *imago dei*, in the likeness of God. It is exactly on the grounds of that fundament that FBOs get involved with the suffering of others. As was shown in chapter four also secular initiatives apply a quasi-sacred quality to their concept of humanity (Fassin 2010).

The worldview expressed by employees of Caritas Jacmel almost entirely relied on a vision of humanity as God’s creation. In their humanitarian interventions they employed a *vizyon de lòm nan tout entegralite li*, a „vision of man in all of his integrity“. For Caritas Jacmel the integral development of the human person is their primary mandate. They see their task as to facilitate people’s growth in humanity, the completion of their humanness, *fè moun vin pi moun*. Especially in the Haitian context this is of high importance as the ancestors of the Haitian people, the ones enslaved by the colonizers, were deprived of their humanity. In fact, this happened on the basis of the assumption that they were “people without religion” (Maldonado-Torres 2014). They were the „imaginary barbarians“ (Hurbon 1987). In 2011, it is a local Catholic organization that recognizes the humanity of all Haitians, as illustrated in the words of the nurse Manouchka Beauchamp: “A person who serves the *lwa* is human, too. The person stays

human. You cannot discriminate against the Vodouists. It is their faith. This is what they have their faith in. And in the end, Vodou is where we all came from". The former colonizing actor, the Catholic Church, is indigenized in Haiti today, indispensable to the self-conception of the majority within in Haitian society.¹⁶⁴

Next to the overtly religious framing of the concept of humanity in Haitian imagination, there are other contexts in which the humanity of people is addressed. Haitian Creole is filled with proverbs. They transport knowledge and wisdom important to Haitian society. One of the most central proverbs in the language is *tout moun se moun*, literally meaning that every person is a person. It recognizes the equal value of every human being and is applied in a variety of contexts in Haitian every day life. The proverb embodies the concept of humanity.

In 2014, DKH's president Füllkrug-Weitzel similarly illustrates the ways in which the conception of humanity of the humanitarian organization is inherently Christian:

"We demand Christians as individuals as much as parishes and churches to fight for new acceptance of humanity, of dignity and therewith to preserve the integrity of Gods creation, and for mercy and grace as central values. We demand politics to campaign for the preservation and the protection of dignity, the adherence of humanitarian principles and the freedom of action of humanitarian aid in all zones of conflict. This can only happen without discrimination and impartial – in every conflict through all sides. Humanity is just as little partial as international law"¹⁶⁵.

Even though in their official expression DKH refers to the concept of humanity a lot, in the narratives on the ground humanity or the conceptualization of humankind and dignity did not play a significant role.

The concept of humanity can be considered fundamental for the organizational identities of both organizations, DKH and Caritas Jacmel. In official scripts, both reference their conception of humanity as derived from a Christian worldview in general, and from the likeness of God in particular. In the missions examined in Haiti though, the narrative of humanity only played a role in Caritas' conception of their vision of assistance to their beneficiaries. Further, it permeated the self-conception of the organization as a Christian institution in a world of people created in the likeness of God.

¹⁶⁴ Catholicism is the state religion in Haiti. An estimated 80 percent of Haitians are Roman Catholics. The Haitian Constitution of 1987 guaranteed religious freedom and in 2003 Haitian Vodou was finally recognized as an official religion next to Catholicism.

¹⁶⁵ <http://info.diakonie-katastrophenhilfe.de/blog/humanitaet-auftrag> Last visited May 24, 2016.

7.2.2 We help, because we are Christians – The principle of Impartiality

Article 2: Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.

The second principle of the CoC is central to the work of any organization within the aid complex and equally important to the focus of this study. Thus, the distributive practice of the organizations was profoundly examined in the preceding chapter. First of all, the non-discriminatory nature of distribution is stipulated in the second principle of the CoC.

While DKH on almost every level referred to the CoC as a source of orientation to put impartiality in practice, Caritas Jacmel did not reference the CoC directly. We do not discriminate – *nou pa fè diskriminasyon* – were the words used by Caritas employees to refer to this principle.

The beneficiaries of Caritas Jacmel as well DKH referred to themselves almost exclusively as Catholic Christians. Whereas with the Protestant organization DKH this did not raise any questions on impartiality, the fact that a Catholic organization like Caritas serves Catholics could be considered problematic. Especially for faith-based organization impartiality is an issue. Ferris states that while both, faith-based as well as secular organizations can work in broad professional ways, secular organizations are granted a wider leap of faith while faith-based organizations have to navigate the immediate suspicion of not being impartial on the grounds of the faith values that fuel their work (Ferris 2011). The inherent assumption is that FBOs would favor members of their own religious groups over others in their assistance.

Yet as explained in the preceding chapter, the percentage of Catholics targeted coincides with demographic aspects. Jacmel and especially the surrounding communities have a large majority of Catholic Christians (Édouard and Faustin 2009). The influence of Protestant churches as opposed to other regions in Haiti is smaller. Secondly, Caritas works primarily over their parish structure. As examined in chapter five of this dissertation, especially in remote regions the parish structure is not only the place of religious, but also of social organization, in some regions maybe even the only one. It serves as a structure to meet and discuss problems of the community. Also celebrations important to rural communities such as the *fèt patwonan*, the parish fairs, are organized over the parish structure. Like illustrated by Manouchka Beauchamp's quote in the

former chapter, to participate in those networks does not necessarily require Catholic communion. This thirdly means that due to the porous boundaries of formal religion, Protestants or Vodouissants are not automatically excluded from distribution. Actively practicing Catholics are in more advantageous position though.

Impartiality in fact is stipulated in the Scripture: “God shows no partiality” (Romans 2:11, Galatians 2:6, Eph 6:9), “since all people have the same dignity as creatures made in his image and his likeness.” Some, like the Caritas nurse Manouchka Beauchamp, justified their distributive practice in moral terms: *“You are a Christian. If someone comes to you and you don’t assist him or her because s/he is a Vodouissant, s/he dies, it is you who is responsible”*. The nurse refers to an all-embracing responsibility to humankind here. Mackenzy Ernst, the Coordinator for Disaster Risk Management at the National Office explained in detail how the religious basis of intervention facilitates fundraising. The person who gives, does it because s/he knows that God is watching her give, no matter the religiosity of the recipient: *“When it is a church institution that launches the appeal the person knows that even though s/he gets nothing in return, s/he makes a testimony in the name of God. S/he provides a proof of faith. And that will come back to her or him”*. Giving to the ones in need without regard of their religious background is a testimony of the faith of the giver – something that s/he expects to be rewarded for later. Phillippe Louis-Simon of Caritas Jacmel also stated the demand to not only serve Catholics was demanded by the international partner organizations of Caritas Jacmel. In selection of those entitled to their housing assistance Caritas Jacmel applied the lottery method as explicated in chapter six. This procedure can be considered impartial as the organization itself abstained from ultimately selecting their beneficiaries but referred it to an objectified method.

In DKH president Füllkrug-Weitzel’s view the professional standards of humanitarian aid as much as international law derive from the impartiality of Christ, who distributed his benefits on the basis of need alone:

“You can find examples in the New Testament that it is not a requirement to be a Christian to be helped by a Christian. Rather it was also the ethical principle of Jesus that everyone who is in need of care is partaking in it, regardless of his background, religious or national or whatever. What appears to be secular here is inherently Christian. Rather one can ask herself if what you can find in international law does not also have Christian roots. But this is a rather unpopular question”.

In their Haiti mission the organization did seek to approximate the principle of impartiality by applying a precise system of vulnerability assessment. Those who fulfilled the maximum of criteria designed by the organization were given priority.

It is not only the first postulate of the second article of the CoC that is of concern. The code continues stating that “aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone”. Humanitarian principles rest on the assumption that assistance is being delivered equally, regardless of such categories as “race”, religion, nationality, and gender but solely on the basis of need. Yet the reality of humanitarian intervention looks different. Anthropologist Terry cites the example of MSF’s assistance to the victims of religious conflicts in Indonesia in 1999 that resulted in the internal displacement of thousands. When following a needs-based approach the analysis suggests that in the respective conflict it was the Christian population that was in direst need. Yet to avoid being accused of partial assistance, especially since MSF has the label of a Western organization, they were also assisting Muslim communities. Terry concludes “the need to be perceived as neutral in order to remain present outweighs the importance of basing assistance on the greatest need” (Terry 2000:6). This is not an exception. Schenkendorf van Mierop cites a similar example in Myanmar where MSF set up a health clinic in a Buddhist community on the grounds of not wanting to be seen as overtly favoring the Muslim minority that was actually in greater need (Schenkendorf van Mierop 2015). This decision was clearly driven by a complex web of local figurations, which influence the course of intervention and not by the adherence to the second article of impartiality. In fact, aid in the two MSF interventions cited was delivered exactly on the basis of religious membership and not on the basis of need by an organization with a strictly humanitarian mandate.

The religiosity of their beneficiaries did not play any role in the selection process of DKH. The organization did not target their beneficiaries through religious structures like Caritas Jacmel. Next to considerations based on the religiosity of recipients there can be other factors that influence the decision to implement certain projects. Especially one DKH project rose the suspicion to have been installed for reasons other than need alone. A dispensary in Bresilienne was erected with financial means of a German pharmaceutical company. The local population expressed that this form of support did not have priority to them, particularly as the building itself was not considered

meaningful without qualified personnel, equipment as well as medicine. DKH evaluated this project to rather have been donor-driven than needs-based.

Within the emergency and rehabilitation phase of the DKH intervention the multipliers the organization used to target affected populations were not considered completely impartial either in retrospect. As examined in the chapter on distributive practice, KROS volunteers who did the targeting were deemed partial because they came from the affected areas themselves. On that basis DKH feared a conflict of interest. Secondly, the CASEC who facilitated the selection of housing beneficiaries in Bainet handed in lists that were not considered fair by the population. As a reaction to people's complaints DKH verified and adapted the lists.

As was shown, the interventions of humanitarian organizations are not set in a space free of politics, interests and values. That means in practice that impartiality is generally endangered regardless if faith motivates the intervention or others factors such as donor requirements, local politics, personal favoritism and sometimes also the availability and accessibility of land.

In summary, impartiality is a relevant factor for both organizations. Caritas Jacmel justified the unbiased assistance to populations in distress in religious terms. It is their Christian morality that stimulates their non-discriminatory practice. If someone suffers because of deliberately not being assisted by Caritas Jacmel they have to answer to this as Christians. As Caritas intervenes through their wide parish network, their beneficiaries are mostly Catholics. Equally, the majority of Haitians are. Nevertheless Caritas Jacmel claimed to also serve people of other faiths. This is required mandatory by the organizations that fund their projects, too. DKH's conception of impartiality did not so much concern the religiosity of their beneficiaries. Rather other factors such as donor's interests in the implementation of certain projects and possible favoritism of local actors in the targeting of beneficiaries jeopardized that the provision of aid was based on need alone.

7.2.3 You cannot live without politics – The principle of Neutrality

Article 3: Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint

The third article of the CoC is certainly the one most debated within the humanitarian community. The interpretation of the concept of neutrality is highly depending on

context. When the CoC was formulated, rights-based development organizations articulated concerns about the implications of the code for their advocacy for justice and human rights (Hilhorst 2005).

Applied to the work of FBOs, neutrality first and foremost refers to the avoidance of the practice of proselytization. Even though the principle does not forbid proselytization explicitly, it stipulates that the organizations “will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed”. As evangelization is an essential part of Christian religion, this principle is an expression of the concern that the assistance provided by faith-based organizations will be tied to the practice of preaching the gospel.

On that matter article three leaves room for exegesis though. It also states that the respective organizations embody the right “to espouse particular political or religious opinions”. It is this concession that the work and mission of Caritas Jacmel is embedded in. The organization did not refrain from spiritual activities. Staff even used the term evangelization as a transversal axis in their interventions. Eddy Voltaire, Operations Assistant at the National Office of Caritas Haiti in Port-au-Prince, stated: *“Actually it is Catholic. There are always things that are happening in accordance with Catholic events. There are awareness raising actions that are always carried out in the field...like evangelization. That is something that transverses all activities”*.

Père Valery, the Director of Caritas Jacmel, leaves no doubt about the role of faith in Caritas intervention:

“While we embrace the concept of humanity, we also embrace our faith. I don’t know if you have seen it when you have been in the field with our team. We always request that...they don’t always do it, but we always ask them to provide stimulation. For example a spiritual impulse. For example a little prayer with the people. They can also do something that doesn’t concern faith, like an input on health, cleanliness...hygiene, all of that. But normally the spiritual dimension...whatever activity we do in the field, we add a spiritual dimension to it”.

In fact, in all the field missions I accompanied prayer and religious contextualization, next to other forms of animation, was an integral part of the process. Employees of Caritas Jacmel clearly understood their role as pastoral agents that assist people under the auspices of God. Common prayer is a fundamental basis of most activities of Caritas Jacmel, internally as well as with beneficiaries.

Evangelization aims at making people convert to a specific religion or religious denomination. As most people involved were Catholic Christians already, the aspect of coercing people to convert in exchange for assistance was largely insignificant. It bears stating that as opposed to other contexts of humanitarian intervention, Christian faith-based organizations are faced with a large Christian population in Haiti. The organizations in questions largely share the faith with their beneficiaries. While there are differences in denomination, due to the variety of Christian faiths mainly as a result of mission activities of U.S. based Christian churches, the situation of Caritas Jacmel as well as DKH working in Haiti is not comparable to the challenges met also and especially in terms of the principle of impartiality and neutrality in an inter-faith context where a Christian organization would serve a Muslim population for example.

As DKH did rather conceal its Protestant background in the intervention in Haiti, neutrality in terms of religion played a subordinate role only. The one time that religious expression was said to have interfered with the principle of neutrality was the Vodou-inspired ceremony for psychosocial relief referred to in chapter five. It was the headquarters that brought this incident to my attention. According to Dorothea Becker, the Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean in the DKH headquarters in Berlin, political neutrality was a bigger problem than the one of religion. Especially in Baint there was a problem with a certain political candidate that held an administrative position.

The most concrete example of this problem though was the cooperation of DKH with its local partner organization, KROS. DKH has been working with and through the organization since 2008. The first joint project was a food security program in Montaj La Voute. As laid out in the former chapter especially in the aftermath of the earthquake DKH heavily relied on KROS for assessing and targeting vulnerable groups as potential beneficiaries for the emergency relief as well as rehabilitation programs:

"It's like I said, the first delivery of aid that arrived here entirely went through the hands of KROS. Back then we didn't have a warehouse structure yet. Everything got in through the airport in Port-au-Prince and was flown to Jacmel via military helicopters. KROS people were waiting at the airport of Jacmel and drove everything to the KROS warehouse. And they organized the distribution. We basically only tracked that. And then the second aid delivery was a complete package, with tents and emergency kits, including means of the Auswärtiges Amt [the German Foreign Ministry]. And whenever the Auswärtiges Amt is involved everything gets horribly complicated with the formalities of what you have to provide proof for, the distribution etc. And there we said we are not going to do this with KROS".

Antje Schulz, the Country Director of DKH in 2011, stated bureaucratic requirements to be a hindrance to the cooperation with KROS. In the turn of the events DKH got under fire for cooperating with KROS that was perceived as a political actor in opposition to the party in power in Jacmel. This was mostly based on the political aspirations of the coordinator of KROS, Gérald Mathurin. The former Minister for Agriculture in the government of René Préval continued to occupy an active role in the political landscape of Haiti. An expat employee of DKH explained the problem inherent to those circumstances:

“It is always problematic when a politician founded an organization and he continues to pursue a political career. Or they backed out from politics, but there is still a lot that sticks to their record. As a politician you can’t have a clean slate, I think. It is part of the deal to make yourself dirty. Yes, KROS is such a problematic case”.

Schulz continued to explain:

“Because also we were well aware of the fact that many people did not appreciate that we worked together with KROS. KROS and above all Gérald, but KROS in general being his machinery is perceived as a political actor. And they are. And that’s complicated in terms of the humanitarian mandate and the independence from political currents”.

She directly refers to humanitarian principles to vindicate her actions. Even though here she references independence rather than neutrality, it is the latter that said circumstance was usually debated in. The mingling of the two principles shows how intimately they are related to each other.

I inquired if the decision to end cooperation with an actor disliked by local authorities couldn’t also be understood as a political decision. She admitted that partly:

“No, but that means that...well, okay you give in to the law of the government insofar as you give in to the pressure not to cooperate with a partner anymore, which basically also is not true. We continued to cooperate with KROS, only in other ways that were less obvious”.

Despite the pressure applied by first of all the mayor of Jacmel who was not well disposed to the organization anymore for its cooperation with KROS as well as secondly by the headquarters, which was worried DKH would render itself vulnerable because of that, DKH found ways to work around that problem:

“Well, the cooperation basically never really stopped. [...]For example, KROS had up to 500 volunteers that managed all of that and they of course needed money to keep the machinery going. And we co-financed that, through other partners of KROS. That means we supported the wider structure of KROS, the structure that kept KROS going. We were not so visible anymore, but we continued to participate in all of their meetings and the planning continued”.

Additionally a new warehouse built in Jacmel was handed over to KROS when the post-earthquake rehabilitation phase ended in the southeastern department in 2014.

In theory, neutrality appears to be an absolute, non-negotiable category. In practice it is indeed negotiated. It is rather a strategy, a necessary narrative and highly depends on the perception of the actors involved. Neutrality here operates rather in rhetorical terms. DKH formally ended cooperation to appear neutral to key actors involved but in reality continued to work with KROS in other forms. Redfield stated “if one looks beyond nineteenth-century norms as a starting point, then neutrality appears less of a perfect practice and rather as something partial, temporary, and always negotiated.” (Redfield 2011:67) The former Country Director of DKH had to negotiate the terms of the principle with its own headquarters, with donors, with local authorities and last but not least with the local organization in question, KROS. There are graduations of what is considered an infringement to neutrality. The considerations of neutrality highly depend on the perceptions of the actors involved (Redfield 2011). In the end, they came to a solution that was not perceived as an affront to local authorities without cutting the ties and therewith sacrifice the support of a crucial local organization with essential capacities in knowledge as well as in terms of the access to the population.

So DKH changed the format of cooperation with KROS on the basis of two situations: first of all the political vocation of KROS, especially of its leader that stood in political opposition to local authorities. The headquarters of DKH was the entity that applied pressure to the mission on the ground. The Country Director directly referred to the humanitarian mandate as the basic explanation for why the cooperation with KROS had to end. The second rationale for its withdrawal was donor restraints. The German Foreign Ministry that funded a big part of the relief assistance is considered very demanding in terms of its bureaucratic requirements:

“And like I said, the perceptions of many, first and foremost in our headquarters was that we render ourselves vulnerable because of the connotation that is ascribed to KROS. Secondly, there were simply worries about the formal processing... because demanding lists from KROS is not fun”.

The biggest problem with the principle of neutrality is that it is not clearly defined. The CoC is very vague in discerning what situations require neutrality. This is most likely a result of the discussion between strictly humanitarian and rights-based organizations in the founding period of the CoC during the 1990s referred to earlier (Hilhorst 2005). The

Red Cross in Haiti translates the concept of neutrality into *san paspouki*¹⁶⁶ in Haitian Creole, which means without favoritism. Here it gets tangible how porous the frontier between neutrality and impartiality is. Both concepts are often used interchangeably: “Neutrality is a further refinement of impartiality, in that it is a value resting as much in people’s *perceptions* of one’s actions than in the actions themselves” (Walker 2004). Furthermore neutrality is sometimes also used in unison with independence, like done by Schulz in one of her above statements.

It was Jean-Michel Clersaint, the Program Manager of DKH in Haiti, who explained the at times ambivalent nature of this principle lively:

“Neutrality is more or less defined...neither in the Sphere documents nor in the CoC documents. It is rather that you should avoid that the humanitarian action serves as an instrument in the hands of a government for example. That the humanitarian axis does not turn into a tool of politics. You have to watch out for the bad people. [...] It is a guideline, a safe guard”.

In theory the principle of neutrality should provide organizations with orientation. On the ground it tends to also produce contradictions. This ambivalence has implications for the work of and with local organization:

“But in practice you see that it is not like that. And in the specific case when we look at all the organizations that we work together with, like KROS and ATEPAZ... And when we see that they get in conflict with that, we dismiss them. And it is not their fault. You understand? And it is not like that in Haiti only...also in Colombia they made the same experiences. There are many organizations with a social character that have a social base but they also have a political orientation. There are other groups that are not primarily political. For example groups who do empowerment, make people more autonomous, but they are embedded in a political group. They have other social projects, but they are basically political groups”.

To sum up, the principle of neutrality is difficult to grasp. For the two organizations studied it had quite different meanings and implications. For Caritas Jacmel the term itself played a very minor role. They combined their mission to assist people with an overtly religious calling. That also included practices of evangelization. For none of my interlocutors this was framed as something problematic. DKH interpreted their neutrality with a strong reference to the humanitarian principles. Situations that were conflictive in terms of the humanitarian mandate were not entangled with the faith-background of the organization but with the political vocation of their local partners. To be perceived neutral by local authorities and donors, DKH formally withdrew from their cooperation with a local organization. Regardless if this decision is interpreted as an act

¹⁶⁶ Haitian Creole, *without favoritism*

of anti-politics (Ferguson 1994) or a negative form of politics (Redfield 2011), it is a political decision nonetheless: “For religion and politics, whether the individual choice may be neutrality or activism, the result is equally political: neutrality in effect commits one to work within the status quo; activism may require a commitment to change. Both positions are political” (Levine cited in Gill 1998:2). Similarly, a Caritas animator stated during a seminar on Disaster Risk Management in the remote region of La Montagne: *“For a lot of people politics is a dirty thing. But you cannot live without politics. It is the management of the things that guarantee life. It makes the country go forward, it makes the people function. That’s all politics. Education. The school”*.

Despite a neutralizing discourse that is stressed by the majority of NGOs, secular or religious, the practice of development or humanitarian assistance is never apolitical (Occhipinti 2005, Barnett/Weiss 2008). Even when not being political in their motivations, like claiming social justice, or being directly allied with governmental institutions of either the sending or the receiving country, the outcomes, the effects of the work, even the *raison d’être* of NGOs, are political. They can support the state or bypass public structures and therewith weaken the state in its power to control. The state on the other hand can also take advantage of the initiatives of development, use it as a political platform (Donini 2011). NGOs can unintentionally turn themselves into docile assistants of a larger political agenda of governmental institutions and global players. This is the primary concern of the fourth humanitarian principle stipulated by the CoC: independence.

7.2.4 Of cats and dogs - The principle of Independence

Article 4: We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy

The principle of humanitarian independence first and foremost refers to aspects of autonomy from the political prospects of governments, in the receiving as well as in the sending country.

Aid assistance should not be used as a political instrument by donor governments. Yet in the past decades Western states have increasingly instrumentalized humanitarian aid for purposes other than humanitarian assistance (Pilar et al. 2016). In Germany for example, the responsibilities for humanitarian aid only recently moved from the *Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung* (BMZ), the

Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development to the *Auswärtiges Amt* (AA), the Foreign Office, responsible for the foreign policy of the German government. Next to the challenges posed by this detachment of development from humanitarian aid in terms of a sustainable relief to development perspective, the underlying rationale of this decision can be political nature in terms of foreign policy only.

The situation is especially dire as the vast majority of humanitarian organizations depend on funds granted by governmental or inter-governmental institutions. Those funds are not donations in a narrow sense, not gifts, but a big part of the contribution is earmarked. That means that the availability of funds is bound to terms of conditions, like contracts, and specific projects requested to be implemented by donors. Most faith-based organizations are in a relatively advantageous position here. As shown earlier, organizations motivated by faith have a larger potential for voluntarism and a broader private funding base. Almsgiving as a religious fundament is the theological context that facilitates the allocation of funds. With this specific funding background, FBOs can act more independently from public funding.

Like the other principles, also independence is highly contextual. A humanitarian intervention to assist the victims of an armed conflict with the participation of a government as a conflict party presents with different challenges than an intervention in an earthquake-affected society like the Haitian one. The principle of independence interrogates possible dependencies in the relation of the humanitarian organization to governments and public authorities. Especially in the context of an earthquake organizations are well advised to do their best to coordinate their measures with governmental structures. Both organizations had good relations with the local authorities. DKH collaborated with local authorities for the targeting of beneficiaries in Bainet. As analyzed above, in Jacmel the organization sacrificed the cooperation with KROS to maintain good relations to the mayor's office, the local government. Emergency shelters erected in Anse-à-Pitre and Grand-Gossier were handed over to the Haitian Department of Civil Protection (DPC) after inauguration.

For Caritas independence first and foremost refers to the demarcations between the spheres of influence of church and state – one of the pillars of secularization. At this point it is important to note that the process of secularization actually originates from

within the church. It was in an actual attempt of the Catholic clergy to purify religion that initiated the process of secularization (Casanova 2011, Taylor 2007).

For centuries the distinction between church and state has been a matter of debate. The 2005 papal encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* is the latest official document to demarcate “what belongs to Cesar and what belongs to God”. The just ordering of society is a political task and therefore the responsibility of the state. Benedict XVI interprets the role of the church as having an indirect duty, “in that she is called to contribute to the purification of reason and to the reawakening of those moral forces without which just structures are neither established nor proven effective in the long run” (Benedict XVI 2005).

A close cooperation with the state then again has different implications for Caritas than it is has for DKH. Especially in Haiti, where the Catholic Church has the reputation of historical siding with the elite and power structures, Caritas has to be concerned about a too close cooperation with the government. As examined in chapter four, the Catholic Church was one of the main driving forces behind colonialism. The disreputable role of the Catholic Church endured in the Haitian Republic. In its violent oppression of Haitian Vodou for example, it cooperated intensely with the Haitian government (Ramsey 2005). Today, the Catholic Church is not perceived as a foreign actor but as a Haitian institution.¹⁶⁷

Nevertheless, “*the church is obliged to stay away from politics, because the church will always be the church. It stays within in its own frame*”, Claude Timogene, one of the four Caritas drivers, said. Even though as a clerical institution they keep distance to the state, according to Emmanuel Auguste, the Program Director of Caritas Jacmel, they do cooperate and coordinate with the government:

“We always uphold good relations with the local government. Up until now we have a very good relation to the Ministry of Public Health. We hand in our reports. We participate in the “tab sektoryel” they do. With the Ministry for Agriculture we too participate in the “tab sektoryel”. On the Disaster Risk Management level we are one of the leaders of the government platform. Every time there is a disaster, every time there is a threat, they call us to collaborate. From our side too, when we do a project, we always invite them to let them know what we are doing. We invite them to the inaugural ceremonies and they always come”.

The cooperation on an operational level does not coincide with political aspirations and exertion of influence, Auguste continues to state:

¹⁶⁷ The indigenization of the Haitian Catholic Church was also a result of the power struggle between the Haitian dictator François Duvalier and the Catholic Church in Haiti. Duvalier intended to *haitianize* the Catholic clergy (Greene 1993, Johnson 2006).

“Up until now the relation with the authorities are good. Of course on the political level we do not mingle because we are not involved in politics. Naturally everyone has convictions, one respects the other. With the development plan we do not follow that. Behaving like cats and dogs hinders us to work together, but we are made to work together”.

Auguste grants the right to differing positions to the church and the state. On a political level, he says, Caritas does not get involved. Yet the situation changes when a humanitarian crisis affects Haiti or general development is to be achieved. Both institutions have to cooperate, despite the fact that they can be “cats and dogs” to each other at times.

Caritas Jacmel emphasizes its vocation as an aid organization as a necessity triggered by the lack of governmental capacities: *“On the level of NGOs, I am speaking for Caritas also, for all the Caritas there are. They help the government to improve the lives of people. The state would not be able to do that alone. So we help”*, Phillipe Louis-Simon, coordinator of the agricultural sector of Caritas Jacmel stated in 2013.

Independence implies institutional, political, financial and operational autonomy (Schenkenberg van Mierop 2015). There is hardly any organization that manages to maintain its independence on all those levels. “Humanitarian aid can never be divorced from political interests. It is unrealistic to imagine that any human institution, however satisfactorily it may comply with codes of conduct and philanthropic regulations, will be free from politics” (Benthall 2011:119). Additionally, it is not clear where the frontline between cooperation and the exertion of influence runs. Organizations have to navigate through the ambivalences and contradictions of the requirements of this humanitarian principle.

To sum up, all four of the core humanitarian principles stipulated by the CoC influenced the course of intervention of both organizations. DKH drew on the code to justify certain decisions such as the (formal) discontinuance of the cooperation with KROS. Further the adherence to the CoC for DKH is a presupposition of being considered a professional organization. Caritas Jacmel did not reference the CoC directly, yet expressed inherent understanding of the basic principles and the implications for their work. The different codes had varying importance for the organizations though. Whereas neutrality rather concerned DKH, for Caritas independence was a bigger matter of discourse.

All of the four core principles examined are interdependently related. They presuppose each other. Their meanings intersect. At times it gets evident that they can be mere

narratives, important but always incomplete when faced with realities on the ground that consist of complex networks of politics, values and hidden agreements. Sometimes tending to the narrative, being perceived neutral, is enough, like seen in the handling of the situation with KROS by DKH.

International humanitarian organizations try to approximate the essence of such principles as neutrality in spite of the fact that the organizations themselves are not a *creatio ex nihilo*. They are as “culturally tainted” (Hilhorst 2005: 362) as local organizations. International NGOs inherit a particular history of their own. They are socialized and embedded in socio-political, socio-cultural, as much as socio-economic values. Their specific national background can influence the way they act as much as their embeddedness in transregional humanitarian networks. The Code of Conduct and the practices involved are an expression of a broader movement to standardize and professionalize humanitarian assistance. The application of the principles of the code goes hand in hand with other characteristics such as the bureaucratization and technocratization of the interventions. In what follows I will show the effects and dynamics that the processes of professionalization imply for the work of the two FBOs in Haiti.

7.3 Implications of professionalism in a dense NGO world

Both organizations, DKH and Caritas Jacmel, expanded considerably in size during their post-earthquake interventions. This process is referred to as mushrooming by Walker (2004). The growth of the organizations, in financial as much as in operational terms, created new challenges. On the one hand it increased the need to make processes more efficient. The mere size of both organization rose from a handful of staff prior to the earthquake to more than a hundred employees in the case of DKH. Secondly, the growth of a humanitarian organization is most likely connected to new funding scenarios. That means in effect that the organization has to submit itself to and comply with donor regulations. Also in this context as in humanitarianism in general it implies that no gift comes free of charge. Donors demand control and accountability in financial as much as in operational terms.

In what follows I will show the implication that go along with the codification and specialization of the organizations in questions. The definition of standards of conduct derive from the necessity to coordinate and professionalize relief efforts to ultimately

provide assistance that is more effective, accountable and maybe even just. On the other hand, professionalization can turn into yet another tool to enact hegemony and dominance.

Within the examination of professionalization I will give special attention to the character of the expatriate as an expression of the increasing specialization of the humanitarian sector. By definition, expat humanitarians are considered professionals as they are hired to occupy expert positions in the organizations country missions. Often this expertise is constructed against the populations the expatriates seek to serve and sometimes also the Haitians they work alongside.

7.3.1 Professionalism – of buzzwords and hierarchies

Professionalization is as much an outcome as it is a strategy of aid organizations working within the increasing complexities and demands of humanitarian contexts. Today, humanitarian organizations have to navigate through a “dense professional world of NGOs” (Bornstein 2005). In the past two decades, Barnett notes, „the humanitarian sector has bureaucratized, rationalized, and professionalized with an unpredictable passion” (Barnett 2012:188). Being professional in humanitarian contexts has a set of meanings. First of all, it refers to the necessary competencies and skills incorporated by the individual humanitarian. Secondly it implies that the humanitarian organization holds itself but also is being held accountable to their beneficiaries, donors and also employees. Thirdly, professionalization is coined through the set of codes and standards arranged in and through key humanitarian actors. The level of professionalism often is measured through the adherence to those principles. Professionalization furthermore can be identified as the processes of specialization and diversification (Saurugger and Eberwein 2009).

Yet the reaction towards professionalization in humanitarianism triggers reactions from “hostility through to passionate support” (Redmond 2015:403). It is safe to say that the implications of professionalism are of ambivalent nature. Accountability for example implies control. Yet who is to control the conduct of humanitarian action? And in what ways can that control influence the proper adherence to principles such independence and neutrality?

To be accountable to their beneficiaries, employees, and donors, the respective organizations have to be able and willing to self-critically assess their actions. Partly this

is demanded by donors and partnering organizations. Within the research process, both organizations studied have expressed concerns about their post-earthquake measures and admitted weaknesses to me. Especially in the case of DKH it is safe and fair to say that their professional system of continuing internal evaluation is the reason why I can apply a critique of certain aspects of their mission to Haiti. DKH employees in Haiti pointed out many of the weak spots of their intervention to me themselves, in what seemed to be an honest and reflected way.

While there are most certainly positive aspects in the professionalization of humanitarianism, Slim points out to the characteristics of exclusion enacted within the processes of differentiation of the humanitarian world (Slim cited in Walker 2004). Barnett argues that bureaucratization increases the distance between giver and receiver of aid (Barnett 2012). Humanitarian specialists have a “specific vocabulary of mixed languages (heavily influenced with English phrases and acronyms)” (Pandolfi 2011). “Both religious and secular NGOs use a globalized “NGO-speak” to articulate their objectives, assess results, and seek donor funding” (Lynch 2011:205). The use of this vocabulary also serves the purpose to create a sense of belonging among the travelling elite of expats. The 2013 Country Director of DKH referred to this language and concepts as being loaded with buzzwords that are often not inherently comprehended by the ones who use them.

It is not only the language applied that falls into this category. Knowledge about certain procedures, technical or otherwise, is professionalized as a means to exercise and reproduce power (Hefferan 2007). Schuller described how international experts working for NGOs often monopolize technical knowledge (Schuller 2016). When they leave the mission they don't pass on knowledge to local staff to render themselves or their job positions indispensable.

Local organizations like Caritas Jacmel on the account of their financial dependency have to react to the pressure to professionalize from the international partnering organizations. This affects such practices as financial accounting and distributive standards. With the formalization of procedures bureaucratic requirements increase. The agricultural sector for example executes projects on Disaster Risk Management in such localities like Lavout with the financial help of partner organizations such as Cordaid, a Catholic relief organization based in the Netherlands:

“After the project they will do an evaluation. It is a question of justification and transparency. It is normal but our partners who give us money, they are very demanding. You have to spend the money well, you have to provide evidence. [...] Everything you spend you have to write down and they sign everything. Well, that is the principle”, Phillippe Louis-Simon explained.

Caritas Jacmel complies with the bureaucratic requirements of partner organizations. Still there is a tendency to de-legitimize local, faith-based, development initiatives in terms of professionalism. Thus it is important to note that the employees of both organizations Caritas Jacmel as well as DKH that I engaged with were professionals. Working in humanitarian settings was their profession. The majority of people had an educational background and/or extensive experience in agriculture, engineering, medicine or finances.

Even though it emerges from my ethnographic material, I am concerned about the appropriateness of the term “professional” as opposed to “faith-based” or even “unprofessional”. Ferris notes that the word may be used “to exclude those who are simply working in different, rather than in ‘unprofessional’ ways” (Ferris 2011:620). “Professional” in most contexts is used to refer to the adherence to the existing rules and guidelines of humanitarian conduct. The command of the “local language, familiarity with the culture, and even pastoral skills” (Ferris 2011:619) are qualifications that are seldom used to measure professionalism even though they are crucial for local acceptance and also accountability, the overall success of the respective humanitarian operation.

Benedict XVI in his papal encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* stated that: “Individuals who care for those in need must first be professionally competent” and properly trained. Yet he continues, professional competence is crucial but not sufficient. In his view what is needed is “humanity” and “heartfelt concern” to provide the best possible assistance to people in need (Benedict XVI 2005). This approach is tangible in the way Caritas Jacmel recruits its employees. Everyone in the team is actively engaged in the church, many also in the church choir. The concept of morality is an affirmation of proper behavior not only technical terms: *“They always recruit moral persons, persons who also provide their service to the church”,* Janjak Casimir of Caritas Jacmel states. This is also valid for the facilitators active on the parish level. After being recommended by the parish priest, they have to hold an exam to proof their competencies to Caritas Jacmel. Within this

process, their credibility within the community they serve is a factor equally important for their employment.

When it comes to DKH expat professionals it is safe to say that for the most part they inherit professional conduct in terms of standards and regulations. Some can recite the ten articles of the CoC like the Ten Commandments: *“The Code of Conduct is very dear to us. We don’t just sign and say of course you have to behave like that, but we try to get the content to the people”*. Also they specify in their fields of expertise, the management of humanitarian intervention. Yet in terms of the alternative reading of professionalism referred to above not all of them would pass. Except Schulz, none of the expats encountered with DKH had comparable skills in Haitian Creole. Their understanding of Haitian culture seemed somewhat superficial, driven by Western assumptions about the “poorest nation of the hemisphere” and as will be shown later an inherently colonial discourse on civilization.

It was especially the process of consolidation of the Haiti mission of DKH that seemed to be inflicted with a variety of complications. For the senior management this process first and foremost meant fulfilling the requirements of administration and financial accounting as demanded by headquarters and donors, a “cleanup” as referred to by an expat. The person replacing the Country Director in 2013 referred to his job as to “liquidate” DKH’s mission in Haiti. On the other hand, the aim was to reduce the mission of once more than a hundred employees to a minimal operational level, a signpost that would facilitate intervention in the case of further disasters. An expatriate employed by DKH during this time stated that the whole process *“is not easy and now with the consolidation or cleanup action that we have going on, you can witness the imperfections of the past years in retrospective. On the one hand it makes you pull your hair out, on the other hand, someone has to do it”*. For a humanitarian organization this is a normal and necessary procedure. Minimizing the staff size is part of that. *„Most people will find a new job easily“*, the former Country Director Schulz told me in 2013. Yet the dissatisfaction about the process was tangible on every level. Headquarters coordinators were reluctant about letting me engage with the office in Port-au-Prince during this busy time.

National staff seemed hardly motivated for their work. Even though they knew that their contracts would end, the details about the consolidation were concealed to them. Senior management on the ground put a veil of secrecy about the details of the organizations

withdrawal from Haiti. Before going on a field trip, the Country Director instructed me not speak too much about the consolidation process with the accompanying expat in the presence of Haitian staff. She cited examples of other missions where national staff in the eve of the organizational withdrawal took everything from telephone to pen with them. Obviously trust or the lack thereof was a big issue. The atmosphere of mistrust was tangible from both sides. This situation predated the actual consolidation phase. The rupture in organizational coherence initially was caused by the departure of the first Country Director Schulz in 2011. Her immediate successor left before due time. Cases of corruption and mismanagement occurred. Multiple former employees had filed lawsuits against the organization. The consolidation phase was an overall conflictive one.

Accountability for an international humanitarian organization means being accountable not only to beneficiaries and donors, but also to their local staff. During my involvement with the organization in the spring of 2013 this did not seem automatically given. Even though it is generally a very crucial phase, the processes of the withdrawal of humanitarian organizations from their fields of intervention have not gotten much attention from academic research. One reason certainly is the reluctance of organization to let a researcher accompany this highly complex process. On the other hand this is also due to the dynamic nature of humanitarian intervention. In the case of earthquakes for example they react to disaster not planned and foreseen. Additionally the length and impact of intervention highly depends on financial means granted by donor organizations. The so-called “Haiti fatigue” on the side of donor institutions appeared quickly after the initial exuberant attention granted to the disaster. Those dynamics are not always easy to synchronize with the sometimes also inflexible conditions of academic research.

The meanings of professionalism were subjected to negotiation within the organizational culture of DKH. The adherence to professional standards of distribution sometimes also interferes with other principles as much as it enacts hierarchies between expatriate and Haitian staff, as Clersaint, Program Manager of DKH, told me:

“There is one aspect that relates the humanitarian sphere that is called ‘respect local costumes’. There are many things related to our culture that they don’t know about. And they always show you that they don’t have to learn about it, because they already know.[...] For example in 2010, Andrea, Diakonie was the first organization that provided tents to Jacmel. I had a co-worker by my side. I have 600 tents, 10,000 people. They say “One family, one tent”. That means we give 600 tents to 10,000 people. And you think they would let you get in there? I told that Mister that we Haitians have a community-based culture. The tents

are already divided. A bunch of big tunnel tents. I told that man to put two families in one tent. He said, "No, that is against the standard". This Mister told me, that it is against the standards. It was an Italian. But they already lived together".

In the end, the organization accepted the division of tents as practiced by the beneficiaries. Yet it needed an intense confrontation between expatriate and Haitian staff. The local knowledge of the Haitian Program Manager was questioned and delegitimated by the expatriate who first gave preference to an abstract standardized procedure against the assessment of Haitian staff and even the will of the Haitian beneficiaries. Similarly, Clersaint explicated the struggle to explain the contradictions inherent to standardized intervention:

"We had another problem. When giving people a standard house of more or less 25 m², you create a social imbalance, a disparity. That is something that is a reality in the communities. That created a lot of conflicts in the office. The foreigners sit down, talk French, talk German...They don't know about all those contradictions".

This example again shows the hierarchies in valuation of knowledge. It is about whose voice is heard and valued and whose knowledge accounts for being professional. Aspects of professionalization as shown in the last two examples can also be used to exert power.

DKH in many of its aspects can be considered a professional humanitarian organization. The staff employed, Haitians as well as expats, are professionals in terms of applying their professions as agronomists, engineers, etc. in their humanitarian work. Also the decision to "not do anything" until ready to do so in the direct wake of the earthquake referred to in chapters three and six was driven by an inherently professional impulse. A less professional organization might have followed a different impulse in light of the overwhelming need after the earthquake. Intervening without the means and capacities to do so means possibly putting staff as well as the recipients of their assistance in danger and therewith jeopardizing the future ability of the organization to assist. Professionalism is also one perspective to review the circumstances and my own involvement cited in chapter two: A Haitian driver did not act according to the security protocol by taking a route through a so called red-zone. It is a standard rule that the organization applies to keep themselves, their employees, and also guests like me, safe. Regardless of the fact that the driver had more intimate knowledge of the specific place and situation there can be little to no exception to this rule. To enforce them can be regarded as professional as well, even though in the specific situation at hand there were also matters of enacted power imbalances, resistance, and disobedience at play.

As analyzed in chapter five, DKH on the headquarters level makes no secret of their faith-based background. The president herself sees no contradiction between faith and professionalism:

“Thank God, the involvement of the church and professionalism are not mutually exclusive. Thank God, quality and involvement of the church are not mutually exclusive. And thank God, we believe that we as a church-based organization have to provide extremely high quality. And that has something to do with the humanitarian principles”.

In succession Füllkrug-Weitzel connects those humanitarian principles back to the impartiality of Christ’s assistance to the needy. In the field DKH continuously stressed their adherence to the requirements of a humanitarian mandate and therewith justified their background as a professional organization. Bertrand, the Country Director in 2013 stated in humanitarian aid she rather tries “to look more for a bit more efficiency and less Christian charity“. It was the staff on the ground that enforced the binary opposition of faith and professionalism that Füllkrug-Weitzel sought to overcome. In ontological as well as in practical terms faith played only a subordinate role in DKH’s intervention in Haiti.

By contrast, Caritas Jacmel put great emphasis on their faith-background. People working for Caritas Jacmel do not only identify as professionals in terms of their educational and employment history. As shown in chapter five next to referring to themselves as engineers, nurses or agronomists, they consider themselves Christian as part of their professional background. Caritas employees refer to themselves not only as agents of development, but also as pastoral agents. In some parts Caritas Jacmel even dissociated itself from the aid complex as such and other NGOs in particular. They tried to distance themselves from being perceived as an NGO, as stated by the director of Caritas Jacmel: *“The Bishops, the monsignori responsible for Caritas in Haiti, they don’t want Caritas to be called an NGO. They want Caritas to be called a foundation. Foundation, because NGOs here in Haiti, they don’t always have a good reputation”.* In the narratives of staff and beneficiaries this bad reputation was mostly based on the perception that NGOs rather serve their own purposes in terms of generating money and jobs for themselves than to assist people in a sustainable way. Père Valery’s frame of reference is not the humanitarian community consisting of the exact organizations that are not seen well, but the population they serve in Haiti. Caritas Haiti is oriented towards the inside, whereas DKH with its continuing reference to the CoC and demands from the side of donors and headquarters focuses on the perceptions outside of Haiti.

Even though Caritas considers itself a foundation, it too is still very much entangled with the aid complex and perceived as an NGO by other NGOs, donors and governments: *“In reality in our relation with many institutions we are treated the same like an NGO. However, we know that we are a Catholic foundation. When they treat us like an NGO it is in an administrative sense”*, Père Valery stated. Depending on the context the organization also joins the rank of NGOs: *“Sometimes Caritas positions itself like an NGO in the way it acts”*, the Program Coordinator Auguste added. In other instances there is an urge to adapt Caritas to the professionalized language of the aid complex, Auguste continues:

“The president of Caritas Haiti, Bishop Dumas said that he doesn’t want us to be called coordinators. Rather he wants to change the work objective of the coordinators. He wants them to be called directors of operation in the DO, the directorate of operations. But it’s very hard for us to change. And we still did not change... in the network we never changed the name. We still use coordinator in the directorate of operations”.

Professionalism can also be read as a strategy of faith-based humanitarian agencies to survive in the competitive world of NGOs, to make their work more compelling to funding agencies, donors and secular partner organizations (Halvorson 2012). Even though NGOs are supposed to be non-profit organizations they often have to act as if they are private companies, because their work is embedded in the same highly competitive world of capital accumulation. Often the success of humanitarian enterprises is not measured considering its outcome as perceived by the targets of their intervention, their beneficiaries actually being the primary justification of their existence, but in terms of its cost-effectiveness. Professionalization here is also a business strategy. In her analyzes of the work of the humanitarian organization CARE in Palestine Feldman has shown how professionalization model in humanitarianism *“presumed that ‘doing good’ requires efficient, effective delivery – skills that became in some ways more important than ‘inner dedication’”* (Feldman 2011:208).

The application of professional conduct is highly contextual. Disasters immediately create disorganization and chaos on an organizational level. In contexts like post-earthquake Haiti, with no coherent means of supervision and control of the humanitarian interventions, many organizations showed laxity in procedures. Unskilled and inexperienced staff was conducting medical procedures they were not trained to do. In many cases this led to unnecessary repercussions for the affected individuals. Redmond in his account of the manifold organizational and individual failures of post-

disaster surgical assistance to Haiti concludes: “This is clearly unprofessional and would not be tolerated in a less vulnerable, more developed country” (Redmond 2015:410). For one this is due to the „just do something humanitarian mentality“ (Schuller 2016). Yet otherwise it also implies a more reprehensible severe power imbalance and resulting vulnerability of the Haitian receiving population towards the aid complex. The ease with which foreign humanitarians took over whole hospitals for example without taking the limited yet existing local capacities and the right to self-determination into account would be considered unimaginable and intolerable in other contexts. In the winter of 2015, in the midst of the so called „refugee crisis“¹⁶⁸ in Germany, German authorities were partly unable to face the massive influx of Syrian refugees. Thousands were left outside the gates of registration offices in Berlin and elsewhere without being provided with shelter and food, let alone medical care, for days if not weeks. There have been manifold reports of frostbites, miscarriages, broken extremities and cardiac collapses due to the chaotic situation in Berlin. Clearly, the German state did not act according to international law, guaranteeing minimal protection in terms of shelter and care to people seeking asylum. Yet it is unimaginable that a foreign country would send troops or the Red Cross simply taking over the procedures from German authorities in light of this humanitarian disaster¹⁶⁹. Similarly, the failure of U.S. authorities to provide security, rescue and relief to parts of its own population subsequent to hurricane Katrina triggered a public outcry but no foreign takeover of the procedures.

In light of the power imbalances that the humanitarian sector dwells within some scholars call for a necessary decolonization of the aid complex (Slim 2006). The need for that to happen is omnipresent especially considering the post-earthquake years. Counter to that necessity there have been calls for “intrusive paternalism” (Brooks 2010) or “at least temporary international trusteeship” (Heintze 2014) made by several journalists as well as scholars from David Brooks to Hans-Joachim Heintze. Those appeals completely ignore the fact that despite its obvious challenges and deficiencies the Haitian state is still a sovereign state, at least from a juridical perspective. Pandolfi

¹⁶⁸ In criticizing the terminology of the “refugee crisis” Christian Hanke, the district mayor of Berlin Mitte appropriately stated: “We don’t have a refugee crisis in Berlin, but a (deliberate?) administrative breakdown”.

<http://www.berlin.de/ba-mitte/aktuelles/pressemitteilungen/2015/pressemitteilung.412160.php>
Last visited May 24, 2016.

¹⁶⁹ The narrative of a “humanitarian catastrophe” was applied by many German politicians
<http://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2015-12/berlin-lageso-chaos-michael-mueller> Last visited May 29, 2016.

encountered similar same dynamics in post-war Kosovo: “Legally and politically the state of emergency becomes a state of exception, where the rights of a sovereign state are gradually confused with the protean international legal and military forms of tutelage [...]” (Pandolfi 2011).

Despite its challenging and sometimes contradictory nature, present-day humanitarianism and its underlying ethos is not easy to oppose. Bornstein puts it bluntly: “Who would be against clean drinking water?” (Bornstein 2003). It is the moral groundwork, the moral imperative that makes humanitarian efforts seem to elude a critical analysis also of their professionalism qua moral authority. Humanitarianism dwells in a transcendent universe of moral reasoning, ultimately determined by what Fassin calls the “moral untouchability of humanitarianism” (Fassin 2011). Often humanitarianism is largely self-justifying: “it may even be the paradigm of a secular human enterprise that does not need to succeed in order to justify itself. Humanitarianism works, by definition” (de Waal cited in Minn 2007). Humanitarianism intervenes for obvious necessities, the overwhelming need and suffering of people due to disaster, war and displacement. The “just do something humanitarian mentality” (Schuller 2016) similarly springs from this sentiment. It is for this reason that humanitarians and their organization have to submit themselves to an inquiry of their work.

To sum up, professionalism is crucial for the proper conduct of humanitarian intervention. First and foremost it is put into practice to provide accountability for the actions undertaken under the humanitarian banner. Yet being a professional humanitarian does not only mean to know the CoC and to be able to fulfill the requirements of meticulous reporting and financial accounting. It also means having a regard for the context that the intervention is embedded in. This requires forms of knowledge not necessarily demanded in formal aid interventions. Speaking the local language is only one of the parameters important in that regard. For Caritas Jacmel being professional also means not only tending to the physical and material needs but also to be a pastoral agent for the integral fulfillment of human existence.

7.3.2 Travelling Professionals – the Incredible Whiteness of Expatriates in Haiti

While this thesis is not meant to primarily target expats as the object of its study, expatriate professionals make part of the aid complex and are a particular phenomenon

that accompanies the increasing professionalization of the aid sector. While the term itself simply refers to someone who lives and works outside of her or his country of primary residence, in the aid complex the expatriate is someone who is contracted by an aid organization to occupy a management or otherwise expert position in a project country of the specific organization. Even though there is academic critique on the term expatriate because in the popular imagination it is reserved for “white Western migrants”¹⁷⁰ (Fechter and Walsh 2010) in the Haitian context expats are in fact largely perceived of as *blan*¹⁷¹, meaning foreigners, by the Haitian population.

Especially in humanitarian contexts, expats belong to a mobile elite that travels from one emergency to the next. Pandolfi refers to them as a “mobile oligarchy” (Pandolfi 2011). Hilhorst identifies expat circles as “closed communities that are characterized by extensive mobility and a rapid staff turnover (Hilhorst 2002b). This closure also effects the theorization of the category. While there is an increased interest in the study of aid organizations in general, the category of the expat for a long time has not gained enough attention from the side of anthropologists (Fechter 2007).

For the course of this study expatriates are important insofar as in the case of DKH the relationship between Haitian staff and expatriate staff was crucial for the inner coherence and the professional course of the whole mission. As Fechter states “the term ‘expatriate’ indicates luxurious lifestyles, a lack of language skills, arrogance, ignorance, and possibly racist attitudes” (Fechter 2007:5). My experiences with expatriate personnel in Haiti, not limited to the organization in question, confirm many of these assumptions.

Expatriate employees of international organizations are most likely neither more nor less racist than the rest of the society they were socialized in. Yet in the humanitarian context they embody differences constructed over “race” in most extreme forms. Their whiteness is constructed against the “other” they encounter in their sites of intervention. Anthropologist Thomaz stated that the expat stands in a “relationship of exteriority” to the Haitian population. They inhabit a parallel world to that of Haitians, the world of white people, “o mundo dos brancos” (Thomaz 2010).

¹⁷⁰ Fechter and Walsh rather apply the terms „mobile professionals’ or ‘privileged migrants’ to refer to Europeans or North American nationals who move abroad, mostly for work-related reasons, including to countries, which were former colonies” (Fechter and Walsh 2010:1199).

¹⁷¹ Haitian Creole, white person, foreigner

Racism is a historically rooted institutionalized system and a relationship of power enacted over the construction of racial differences that privileges white people in the vast majority of economic, political, social, and cultural contexts on a global scale. This at times is embedded in the humanitarian system as a whole for example in terms of the inequalities in salary between local and expat staff or the different value of lives within this system as stated by Fassin (2011a). The system privileges foreign employees over local staff on most levels. The “expatriate colonization” (Schuller 2016) inevitably influences the relationship between expatriate and Haitian staff. Sometimes racism is also directly put into practice by the behavior of individual expats. Within the intervention of DKH there have been incidents that can be considered racist. For example, one non-Haitian employee of DKH is said to have called a Haitian staff member a “*sal negre*”. Another expat vividly described his view on Haitian society to me:

“My hypothesis is that, and it is not entirely true, but that the country is inhabited to a very, very huge part by egoists. I don’t know if that goes back to the time they came over from Africa. Because they also came from different countries and it’s not a homogeneous bulk. There are Haitians and there are Haitians, and you think they cannot come from the same country. You see Haitians that are so stunningly beautiful they could be on a catwalk in Paris. And you see others and you think “Well, where are they coming from?” Generally they are very pretty people”.

I cite this statement to exemplify how the perception of Haitians is based on constructed racial differences. This person starts off essentializing Haitian culture by applying one negative stereotype to the vast majority of Haitians, traces this perceived collective characteristic back to their origins in Africa, then trivializes the million fold enslavement of people by simply stating they “came over from Africa” and ends up with judging their physical appearances. The worldview underlying those statements cannot but affect the work on the ground and the way Haitian beneficiaries as much as Haitian colleagues are encountered. Most certainly those interactions are bound to not happen at eye-level. In what follows, I will try to show how the narratives and actions of expatriate staff embody those unequal relations.

The figure of the expat, especially in the contexts that aid organizations intervene in today, evokes uncomfortable parallels to colonialism. This is evident in the language context: the working language in most NGOs is the colonial language. Rarely do NGO professionals speak the first-language of their national staff and beneficiaries. The set-up of the aid complex does not make this necessary. Furthermore, Haiti with its obvious challenges as a country in a “protracted and complex humanitarian crisis” is a paragraph,

an ennoblement of the humanitarian curriculum vitae. The “save Haiti invasion” (Ivers 2011) is a partly self-serving action. Humanitarians pride themselves of “having done” such places like Haiti, Burundi, Rwanda and Afghanistan. The use of this vocabulary also serves the purpose to create a sense of belonging among humanitarians (Pandolfi 2011). Often those stories are entangled with heroic and sometimes cynical references to other sites of intervention like this story from my fieldnotes, on a fieldtrip undertaken with two expatriate employees of DKH, shows:

When we passed the lake region next to Fon Parisyen, he said it reminds him of the Tutsi Mountains in Rwanda. She sits in the front seat and says with a smirking smile: “Well, I am sure we gonna find someone with a machete up there in the mountains”. My mouth opens. I cannot believe that she just said that. I am honestly surprised by the level of cynicism about the thousand fold violent murder of people, a genocide. I say: “I am always stunned by the sarcasm of aid workers.” She checks in with me if she got me right. He got me immediately and says, laughing, “Sarcasm is a survival skill. Most aid workers are barking mad”. Then he goes on comparing his work to a boring nine to five office job. He draws the picture of himself as a heroic aid worker while I sit in silence.

In many instances expats articulated comments that deeply violated my sense of human dignity. “*Maybe there will be a hurricane for the inauguration so we can be proven right about the things we criticized*”, an expat said prior the inauguration of a DKH emergency shelter in Anse-à-Pitre. S/he referred to criticism on the work of Haitian employees of the organization that was considered negligent by expatriate staff.

There have been several others incidents that were less obvious in which supremacy and dominance were enacted by expatriates. The metaphor of civilization was chosen by expat staff on more than one occasion to demarcate what they perceived were the differences between Haitians and themselves. During the inauguration of an emergency shelter in a rural region finger food was served to the attendees: employees of the Department of Civil Protection, the mayor of the town, members of local grass roots organizations and DKH staff. An expat stated with awe: “*Wow, that's so civilized, everyone is sitting*”. On another occasion as we were passing the International Airport Toussaint Louverture in Port-au-Prince one expat commented that the airport was slowly getting “*more civilized*”. On the same trip, the Haitian driver stopped the SUV before crossing a mud hole in the mountains. He got out of the car and tested the depth of the hole with a stone. Both expats sit inside the car and observe him from a distance. They laugh at him and one says: “*that must be the tribal way to do it*”.

In an intellectual pastime on what would happen in Haiti without the presence of NGOs, one of the expats claimed:

“Let all foreigners leave, let all NGOs leave. All of us. Foreign companies. Everybody leaves. We were discussing what could we do to really make things change. Let’s everybody leave. That’s it. You leave the island. The island is left with itself. What will they do? “Donnez moi l’argent”¹⁷²? Or will they, okay, kill each other? I don’t know”.

First of all, the utopia of an island “left to itself” obviously disregards the interconnectedness of the world today. It is not about “if” NGOs should assist Haiti, the crucial question is “how” they do so. The minimum requirement should be to turn Haiti’s fate from “misery to poverty with dignity” (Aristide 2000). Apart from that, the expat presents her argument with a deeply culturalist and civilizational undertone. Without the ordering force of foreign institutions, Haitians might simply “kill each other”, she said. This narrative of a society on the verge to fall into an atavistic Hobbesian “state of nature” was used to justify the disproportionately high foreign military presence in the aftermath of the earthquake, too.

Every narrative has a functional context that it is embedded in. I argue, that the civilizational narratives expressed by expatriate staff primarily follow the function of making “sense of themselves” (Cortazzi 2007), and in the Haitian context, to make sense of their presence in the country. Expatriates construct their identities against the backdrop of the “other” they encounter in their missions. This other has to be in need, otherwise their presence – the humanitarian mission being the backbone of the humanitarian identity – would not be justified. Much like MINUSTAH, the UN stabilization mission to Haiti, also expats of iNGOs perceive their work as a “civilizing mission” (Greenburg 2013).

Those experiences are not limited to the field only. In the headquarters of DKH, the Regional Coordinator informed me about an incident that happened in Haiti in September 2010. An employee was supposed to have put a spell on someone else. This situation created a good deal of chaos according to my interlocutor. The person responsible was let go. It was not the act itself that caught my attention, but the way it was framed: the coordinator, a Catholic, who wore a chain with the image of a saint as well as a golden cross around her neck referred to that incident as an act of bewitchment, that seems “ridiculous to us”, she said, but has an impact on the people on

¹⁷² French, Give me money!

the ground. She spoke of superstitious practices that could not be tolerated. Her judgment of the situation was not so much based on the interpretation that it has been a religious expression that would contradict the principles of the CoC, but on the assumption that it was a superstitious, heretic act, seemingly laughable to non-Haitians.

Next to this civilizational discourse the attitude of expats towards Haitians was often inflicted with patronizing remarks. One expat commented about the relation to Haitian subordinates: *"It is a bit like raising kids, you have to give them the feeling they came up with the ideas themselves"*. The same person continued to explain how s/he sought to render the work of the Haitian staff more efficient: *"You have to speak strong to them for things to happen"*, s/he said. Continuously the skills of Haitian staff were contested by expats. As noted in chapter five this went along with a variety of demeaning remarks. Especially one expat did not conceal how little he thought of the professional abilities of some employees. Their abilities of course are constructed against his expertise. *"They wouldn't act like that if a German had built it"*, one Haitian staff member said to me when an emergency shelter built by DKH was inspected. Additionally the professionalism of the expats was constructed against the assumed lack of professional knowledge on the side of the Haitians. Also in other expatriate contexts professional capacities are ascribed to people according to their "race" and therefor valued with higher positions and salaries (Fechter and Walsh 2010).

These are small examples but they all contributed to an unfavorable dynamic between expatriate and Haitian staff. During my interactions with DKH in 2013, I perceived the relationship between both groups as marked by a deep division and a general sense of mistrust. The negative feelings involved were seldom articulated openly, the two groups engaged with each other mostly in a form of superficial cold-hearted politeness. Yet the tension was tangible in gestures, looks, and bitter remarks. Both groups were not very cautious about my presence in these conflicts. The Haitian staff knew I was proficient enough in Haitian Creole to understand the meanings of their comments. Occasionally they even addressed me directly. Likewise expatriate staff articulated their remarks in my presence or towards me. Narratives are influenced by the audience they are articulated to as well as by the context they are articulated in (Cortazzi 2007). By no means were those narratives only expressed in conversations, but also during formal interviews. Knowing that I was a researcher, they obviously did not consider their

comments as problematic. Instead, they acted very sure about themselves, their way of perceiving the world around them and likely, my own agreement.

Astonishingly racism was a topic among expats. Yet what they referred to was not racism towards Haitians, but what they conceived as racism enacted by Haitians towards white people. *"They don't like white people"*, an expat explained. He based this assumption on the fact that Haitian kids were usually following white foreigners and yelling *"blan"* at them on the streets. On another occasion a NGO employee stated he had never experienced as much racism as in Haiti. By racism he meant that he himself as a white person felt discriminated against on the grounds of being white. This reference to "reverse racism" is an illegitimate tool that seeks to conceal the actual unequal systems of power at play, which are historically rooted, economically enforced and culturally justified. Such narratives are more than just a slap in the face for the real victims of racism. They minimalize and trivialize the atrocious experiences of non-white people, past and present. Above all that, they are articulated by members of the very group that historically as much as contemporary profits from the institutionalized system of exploitation and oppression that racism is.

Furthermore, the relationship between expats and the populations they serve, including national staff, is characterized by the application of double standards. Earlier I cited the example of a Haitian driver that was unruly driving through a red-zone of Port-au-Prince. When discussing his wrongdoings, his superiors stated the problem to be that *"they don't think beyond their limited horizons"*. The very next topic they were discussing over lunch was a procedure that required the formal permission of the headquarters. In that particular moment the responsible coordinator was not available though. Both agreed on the strategy to *"do it now and tell later"*.

On another occasion, one expat was referring to immigrants to a European country. He questioned their intentions, but also the negative stereotypes of stealing and fraud that were aimed at them. Then he says *"but it holds true for those who come to the country, because they don't speak the language. Thus they are not able to work there"*. Evidently that holds true for the vast majority of humanitarian professionals working in Haiti, including himself. Yet they are considered a professional elite on a noble mission to help people in need, even though they also capitalize on those circumstances. First and foremost, it is a job opportunity to them. Others, usually non-white people, regardless if

on seasonal work migration, seeking asylum or simply travelling are not granted the same privilege of not having their intentions questioned. Fechter and Walsh further analyzed the postcolonial inequalities underlying the different valuation of migration in that sense (Fechter and Walsh 2010).

The disturbed relationship between DKH expats and Haitian staff was not something only I recognized, it was also to some extent the subject of internal evaluation. The support provided by the headquarters to the field was questioned: expatriate consultants sent to the field did not necessarily meet the demands as articulated by the staff on the ground. Post-earthquake Haiti was a revolving door for incoming expatriate humanitarians. Like other iNGOs, also DKH's Haiti mission had a rapid turnover of expatriate staff. Important for my argument though is the fact that also a lack of integration into the team from the side of the expats was detected. This was also evident in the narratives provided to me by Haitian staff. Several examples in the post-earthquake intervention, like the conflict over the standards in tent distribution cited earlier in this chapter, illustrated the struggle over power, definition and the appropriate course of action between Haitian senior staff and the incoming expatriate staff. The internal evaluation demanded explicit attention to the structures of decision-making for expatriate staff in the future.

My view on the relation between expatriates and Haitian staff is a very particular one. In contrast to my setting with Caritas Jacmel in 2013, I was not able to similarly spend time in the DKH office on a continuing basis over the course of weeks. The DKH headquarters was not able to provide me with that kind of access during what they referred to as the "consolidation phase" of their mission. Thus, my interactions with staff happened mainly on fieldtrips or during the time I was present in the office to conduct interviews with individual staff members. My observations thus arose from particular situations and not from permanent participation in the working routine of staff, like with Caritas Jacmel. Under these conditions, it is all the more surprising how lax expatriate as much as Haitian staff was with their comments and behavior in my presence. My analysis derives from those disruptions.

I did not engage in a discussion on the positions and behaviors of expatriates especially to show them up. It is not helpful to blame individual aid workers within the aid complex for its overall failures (Schuller 2016). Even more so as in terms of measurable

outcomes DKH showed very good results, having constructed more than 2,000 houses for people in Haiti. Yet the expatriates engaged in those interventions make part of and co-create the failures and structural violence of the system as a whole. The disturbed relationships within the team are to some part an effect of the inequalities enacted by the aid complex. My aim was to address those imbalances and, to use Fassin, to “examine ‘where it hurts’; in other words, where an institution or group is divided, what tears them apart” (Fassin 2011).

In my experiences with DKH in 2013, expatriates constructed their identity against the setting they were embedded in, thus also against the Haitian employees. The internal relationship deteriorated since my last encounter with the organization in 2011. The last point I want to make on that matter is the fact that often, next to mandates, official rules and guidelines, it is specific personalities that shape the face and also the mission of an organization to a bigger extent than formalized structures or even a faith background. Redfield equally commented on the humanitarian mission of MSF that sometimes “depends less on treaties than on personalities and a fragile web of local agreements” (Redfield 2011:62)

For DKH this was the case with the first Country Director, Antje Schulz, which directed the mission until the summer of 2011. She was well known for the work she did, at least in Haiti’s expatriate circles. A DKH expat stated that back when she was in charge, the organization was like a big family. As opposite to the expatriate managers that succeeded her, she had an explicit regard for the context that DKH’s mission was embedded in. She was proficient in Haitian Creole as much as in French and was said to have an overall good rapport with the Haitian staff. Like I said, my experience in 2013 was a particular one. My analysis of the relation between expatriates and Haitian staff most probably would be a different one, if I had focused on the staff and work routine during my first fieldtrip in 2011, and on the beneficiaries and their conceptions in 2013. My research design was set to focus on the beneficiaries first, so I could engage with them at the time they were given the houses. Originally unintended, in 2013 I was then able to get an insight on the dynamics unfolding during the process of consolidation. Needless to say, the growth of an organization comes with a whole set of new challenges, especially in professional terms. DKH under the direction of Schulz would have been exposed to those challenges, too. Due to the contextual competencies and the overall

coherence of the mission, the basis for interaction would have been a different one though, also in the possibly more conflictive process of consolidation.

A respectful relation at eye-level between expat and Haitian staff is as important for the success of humanitarian intervention as the formal application of core humanitarian principles. Accountability as a core tool to guarantee the professional conduct of intervention extends beyond the beneficiaries and donors of an organization and should be granted to local professionals employed by the organization as well.

To sum up, the figure of the expatriate humanitarian is crucial to the understanding of the professionalized settings of intervention in contemporary humanitarianism. The expertise of foreign NGO employees is constructed against the perceived lack of professional knowledge on the side of Haitians. The complicated relationship between DKH expatriates and Haitian staff addressed in the former part is an effect of the dynamics within the aid complex that continuously privileges foreign over local staff in terms of money, knowledge and recognition. This unequal relation is further reflected in the ways that expatriate staff patronized Haitian staff and embedded their Haiti mission in a civilizational and partly racist discourse.

7.4 Conclusion

The chapter at hand presented the dynamics of professionalization as a core characteristic of contemporary humanitarian intervention. Within the realm of professionalism especially the „The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief“ played a prominent role in this study. The core humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence arise from the CoC. Those principles were clarified and it was shown how they affect the work of the two organizations in question. Additionally, it was shown how the principles are intertwined with professionalization, bureaucratization and can also be used to some extent to depolitize aid assistance. The concept of professionalism was discussed and further applied not only to the organizations in questions in general, but also to expatriate employees, whose professionalism is usually regarded as a given in humanitarian contexts.

Within this study I applied an integrated approach to professionalism. Professionalism in this frame does not only aim at formal education, specialized training and certification

but also at the level of local knowledge and experience that is mostly a given for national staff but should also be a requirement for expatriate staff. Likewise the considerations of professionalism aim at the formal adherence to codes of conducts, international humanitarian standards, and the core humanitarian principles. Again, this is necessary but not sufficient to guarantee an overall successful mission.

Professionalization is not a unidirectional, inevitable and straightforward process. Caritas Jacmel reacts and responds to the demands of the “dense professional world of NGOs” (Bornstein 2005), too. This is tangible in the meticulous accounting and reporting as required by the donors and partner organizations and the initiatives to adapt to the neologisms of professional “NGO-speak”. Simultaneously Caritas Jacmel dissociated from the bulwark of NGOs because of their negative perception in Haitian society. At the same time Caritas Jacmel maintains and even strengthens its faith-identity, which again does not render the organization less professional. To the contrary Caritas Jacmel, considers the faith of their employees as an extra in professional terms. They view themselves as not only tending to the material needs of people, but also caring for the spiritual wellbeing and the overall integral fulfillment of the human condition.

Caritas Jacmel as an organization embodies the dynamics of secularization and sanctification that according to Barnett and Gross Stein are characteristic for contemporary humanitarianism (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012). The faith of Caritas Jacmel is beyond question. It is not up for debate, also not in humanitarian contexts. Instead it is a given, a steady pillar of Caritas identity as an organization. There had been not a single situation where members of Caritas tried to shy away from the fact that they are a faith-based organization to appear more professional. They did not try to conceal for example the fact that they engaged their benefactors in spiritual animation, prayer. Putting a bigger emphasis on the shared faith identity with the community of their beneficiaries might also allow for engaging with them in a less hierarchical ways than basing their intervention solely on abstract humanitarian principles, considered inherently technical and also stemming from a Western value system by the populations served.

Caritas Jacmel’s sense of professionalism is not only oriented towards donor requirements but also first and foremost directed to the inside, the Haitian population when they decide to dissociate themselves from the masses of international

organization in the “Republic of NGOs”. They focus on how they are perceived by their beneficiaries. Technocratic categories of professionalism, such as abstract notions of neutrality and impartiality as laid down in the CoC are not necessarily meaningful to beneficiary populations.

By contrast, DKH focuses on the perceptions of their mission mostly outside of Haiti. On the grounds of their strict humanitarian mandate and because they are not a local organization, they have to react to the pressure applied by donor institutions in a different way than Caritas Jacmel. The organization had to follow a stance of neutrality in terms of ending the cooperation with local grassroots groups that stood in political opposition to the local government. This is a political positioning in itself though, which also transcends the three actors involved (FBO, grassroots groups, local government) because the decision to do it the one or the other way is also interdependently related to the headquarters in Germany and various donors (German government, European Union, etc.) and their own regulations. Generally, in their interventions in Haiti they turn away from their faith identity, which is very important on other organizational levels such as the headquarters, for the sake of being perceived a professional humanitarian organization, to “appear professional” (Hilhorst 2005). This fact is tangible in the statement made by a headquarters employee: “The Code of Conduct is our Ten Commandments on the ground”. Despite the usage of religious language, the professional identity of the organization on the ground is emphasized against its faith-background. The absence of a narrative or conception of humanity in the expression of DKH humanitarian professionals on the ground for example is in line with the overall course of intervention.

Humanitarian principles like neutrality, impartiality and independence are not ends in themselves. They are not objective criteria. Rather they are necessary narratives whose semantic core can only be approximated. They should be looked at like tools from a toolbox that can be used to meet certain ends in different situations. When an organization treats those principles as means rather than ends it is bound to lose sight with the primary *raison d'être* of humanitarian assistance: supporting populations in distress in the best possible and also in professional terms in the most effective way. Similarly, in their study on secularisms in liberal democracies, Maclure and Taylor state: “That could be called a “fetishism of means”: the separation of church and state and the state’s religious neutrality become values that must be defended at all cost rather than

means that, though essential, are to be defined as a function of the ends they serve” (Maclure and Taylor 2011:29).

In this vein, organizations with a narrow perception of the CoC run the risk of turning into technocratic machines, or “technocrats of misery” (Kouchner cited in Barnett 2012). Principles are not put in practice for the value of the underlying idea itself, but for the sake of proper conduct. This way of dealing with rules and standards is highly self-referential. I had such an experience when working for a German faith-based organization in a refugee shelter in Berlin. People working for the organization seemed to have lost the focus on the human being and instead justified certain procedures like hygiene, security and fire regulations with the threat of control by the authorities, rather than with the inherent comprehension that for example complying with hygiene standards and checking food before handing it out is a tool to protect people from falling ill. Again it was the humanitarian organization MSF that raised caution that during the process of standardization of humanitarian intervention “[i]n attempting to achieve minimum standards for humanitarian action, there is a risk that humanitarian action may simply become a technical and purely professional (vide supra) pursuit” (Orbinski cited in Redmond 2015:412). The principles and professionalized conduct of intervention have to be weighed up against each other and also against other considerations such as autochthonous conceptions.

The humanitarian community is a reflection of the world in which it exists (Barnett and Weiss 2008). That means humanitarian organizations have to submit themselves to the demands and requirements of donor institutions that often measure success in terms of cost-effectiveness. They compete with each other as much as with profitable organizations in a global sphere of capital accumulation. Further, as international organizations that intervene in countries affected by colonialism they reproduce historical as much as economic inequalities inherent to the world today on an organizational as much as on an individual level. This is palpable in the hubris and racism occasionally expressed by expats. To truly professionalize humanitarian organizations should aim at overcoming those inequalities, in structural as well as in personal terms. Even if that necessity might interfere with the proper adherence to standards of humanitarian assistance.

8 Conclusion – Does Faith Matter in the End?

To anticipate the answer to the question posed in the headline: Yes, faith mattered. The study at hand discerned the ways it did so.

What really makes the differences between a house given to a Haitian survivor of the earthquake by a faith-based as opposed to a formally secular organization? This was the first question that this study of faith-based humanitarianism in post-earthquake Haiti embarked upon.

A house is a house is a house. Beneficiaries of both humanitarian organizations examined, Caritas Jacmel and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH), got provided with houses. In fact, the houses were quite similar in shape and size. Both organizations tended to one of the most urgent exigencies in post-earthquake Haiti: housing. Caritas Jacmel built 157 homes until 2013, DKH more than 2,000 (including those reconstructed) in the same period of time.

The organizations differed in terms of the size of their team as much as in their funding base. Whereas DKH had € 16.5 million in funds available for their post-earthquake intervention, Caritas Jacmel is mostly dependent on funds coming in from Western partnering organizations to finance their housing assistance. Caritas considers itself an organization that doesn't have "*any money as it is*". Both organizations are embedded in transregional networks. They both have a faith-based background. One is a local organization with 100 percent Haitian staff members. The other one has its headquarters in Germany and comes to Haiti to implement projects. Their team consists of expatriate and Haitian staff members. DKH is limited by its purely humanitarian mandate whereas Caritas Jacmel is a mixed-mandate organization, similarly operating in development and humanitarian contexts. These are the hard facts.

The study at hand analyzed in what way those differences mattered in the negotiation and balancing of the two dynamic phenomena "faith" and "professionalization" that both organizations are influenced by. They are characteristics of the dynamics of secularization and sanctification that the humanitarian sector as a whole is dwelling in (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012).

Faith is an expression of the actual faith of the humanitarian practitioners, of the clerical background of the organizations, their conception of humanity, and their overall

motivation to get involved with the suffering of others. Professionalization is tangible most in the commitment to international codices of humanitarian assistance like the “Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief” (CoC) for example, the fulfillment of bureaucratic and administrative standards as required by the donor institutions, and the expertise of the employees in terms not limited to their education solely.

With this categorization derived from the analysis of my empirical material I do not intent to strengthen the “religious/secular binary” inherent to contemporary humanitarianism (Lynch 2011). To the contrary, I seek to challenge it by showing how both elements have been present in the work of both organizations. Faith was not the antidote to professionalism. Professionalization as such is not a solely secular process. For a professional conduct to be integral it does not need to be secular. FBOs do not have to conceal their faith-background to be invited into the ranks of professionalism. Professionalism also implies the ability for a holistic perspective on the targets of humanitarian intervention as much as a specific regard for the context the beneficiaries are as well as the organization itself is embedded in.

Both aspects, faith and professionalization, mattered to the two organizations. Yet they had different places within the organizational set up.

For Caritas Jacmel, faith created a “platform for engagement” (Bradley 2011) internally and in relation to their beneficiaries. Especially in the context of the earthquake this is crucial. The majority of people I engaged with in Haiti framed the events unfolding on *Douz Janvye* in religious terms. As shown in chapter three, most beneficiaries interpreted the earthquake as an Act of God. Within those narratives the feature of divine providence was prevalent. In the same vein, the entitlement to the houses granted by the organization was framed as an act of the divine. Employees of Caritas Jacmel were seen as divine agents for providing houses to them. “*It was God who made him see me*”, a beneficiary stated about one Caritas employee. Most of the fieldtrips and seminars I accompanied were framed with common prayer. Caritas Jacmel bonded with its beneficiaries over a religious narrative, a contextualization of the earthquake and an overall worldview.

The shared faith allowed Caritas Jacmel to engage with their beneficiaries in less hierarchical ways. They were equals, at least in faith. The proximity of both groups

facilitated accountability as well. The moral requirements of Caritas “as a branch of the Catholic Church” guaranteed the adherence to Christian principles of behavior. “We in Caritas we make the maximum effort to maintain our dignity as an institution of the church”, Phillipe Louis-Simon said.

Similarly, the entire team of Caritas Jacmel consisted of devoted Christians. They worked for the organization because they were Christian. To help those who are less fortunate was a testimony of their faith to them. They framed their work in professional as much as in religious terms. Above that, their beliefs allowed them to identify with the organization as such, but also with each other. They worked among equals. Everyone, from the Program Coordinator to the drivers, appropriated her or his space within the organization and made part of the whole. It was evident, that Caritas Jacmel was not solely their work place. It was their *fanmi*, their family and the place where they put into practice their vocation as pastoral agents for the integral fulfillment of the human condition, *pou fè moun vin pi moun*, to elevate people from their misery to a higher degree of humanity. They felt entitled to the mission of Caritas and they identify with the organization and their objectives in general, in terms of faith as much as in terms of the humanitarian intervention.

For the beneficiaries as much as the employees of Caritas Jacmel, the faith-background of the organization mattered. The centrality of faith for beneficiaries and members of the organization, this sense of “cultural proximity” (Benthall 2012), is crucial for the acceptance, framing and accountability of aid assistance.

Despite the faith-based background of DKH, in their mission to Haiti, faith played a formally insignificant role. The faith identity of the organization was something that management staff in Haiti even distanced themselves from. If a faithful Christian is employed on the ground, s/he works there not because but despite hers religious background. Nevertheless, the majority of staff members I engaged with were church members, the expatriates included. Yet their possible religious identities were not performed in a collective way, neither with the beneficiaries nor within in the team. The common prayer held by DKH staff in the direct wake of the earthquake as well as religious aspects embedded in other post-disaster means of psycho-social support were exceptions to the general absence of religious faith in intervention.

The recipients of their assistance were faithful believers though. Much like the beneficiaries of Caritas Jacmel, they framed the earthquake, the subsequent entitlement to humanitarian assistance as well as much of their everyday life in religious terms. I argue that the beneficiaries compensated the absence of a religious discourse within their relations to the organization by applying religious narratives to the organization's distributive practice. This way they appropriated this technical act and integrated the sometimes obscure professionalized criteria of selection into their life worlds.

Against the absence of it in the field, faith plays a more prominent role on the headquarters level. A religious expert, the pastor Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel, directs the organization. All staff employed in the headquarters is required to hold a membership in one of the Christian churches of the ACK, *The Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen in Deutschland*. The Protestant background of DKH is emphasized in mission statements and in religious events held in the headquarters. According to one employee, the organization strengthened its identity as a Christian organization in the course of the past years.

This faith identity though did not trickle down to the intervention in Haiti. The absence of religious narratives and practices was explicated by the adherence to humanitarian principles as laid down in the Code of Conduct. I argue that the organization applies a form of "functional secularism" (Ager and Ager 2011) or in my own words a "strategic secularism" that performs religious neutrality as a necessary narrative in their interventions and in other arenas where professionalism matters more than faith.

DKH and Caritas Jacmel can actually be compared in their employment practice. Within their headquarters, the hearts and minds of their intervention, they employ only people who share their faith. The further away they go from the heart to the field, the less important the beliefs of their employee gets.

The central aspect of this study is the distributive practice of the two organizations. It is under this aspect that I chose to show how the faith identities of both FBOs are translated into practice and how they are entangled with a discourse on professionalism most tangible in the reference to the CoC.

In their distributions in the very aftermath of *Douz Janvye* hierarchies of neediness were dispensed in light of overwhelming need. *Tout moun viktim*, everyone is a victim, was

the narrative applied to those emergency circumstances by employees of both organizations. In difference, in the distribution of houses in the rehabilitation phase, criteria of vulnerability got applied. To target their possible beneficiaries DKH intensely cooperated with local authorities such as the CASEC and local NGOs, especially KROS. Caritas Jacmel heavily relied on their parish structures and the facilitators employed as links to the communities.

The parameters used to single out their beneficiaries were similar with both organizations: the extent of destruction of the housing structure, the size of the household, the number of children under five, the number of pregnant household members, single parent households, possible handicaps, and the overall livelihood situation of the affected. DKH chose the ultimate recipients by establishing a hierarchy emerged from those criteria. Caritas Jacmel chose another way: they organized a lottery, in which everyone deemed worthy of their support, according to the parameters above, participated. This way, the organization withdrew from having to take the final decision and handed the responsibility over to abstract forces interpreted as luck, fate, or divine providence. Especially the beneficiaries attributed their entitlement as an Act of God. They considered themselves the chosen ones in more than one way. The second possibility to be given a house by the Catholic organization was to be personal chosen by the two highest ranking members of the team: the director Père Valery or his second in command, the Program Coordinator, Emmanuel Auguste. Their moral authority is connected to their vocation as Christians, especially in the case of parish priest Valery. This entitled them to taking these individual decisions. The method was mostly reserved to those whose lot was considered extraordinary hard.

The vast majority of beneficiaries of both organizations were Catholic Christians. In the case of the Catholic organization this fact presented with some questions regarding their distributive practice. *Nou pa fè diskriminasyon*, we don't discriminate employees responded to the inquiry if they also help people of other faiths. They justified this with taking reference to their morality deriving from their Christian faith. Apart from that, the participation of people from other faith backgrounds in the aid projects were also demanded by the partnering organizations that funded the intervention of Caritas Jacmel. Caritas Jacmel as a vernacular organization chose their beneficiaries within the Catholic parish structure. Yet those networks are often also the places of social and cultural organization not exclusively limited to Catholics. The boundaries of religion

belonging are porous and fluid. Furthermore, especially in the region of intervention, the majority of the population is of Catholic faith. Nevertheless, the demand of partnering organizations to include people formally of other faiths acts as a corrective against possible favoritism.

It is not necessarily faith that is the sole basis for identification. Religion is “merely one marker of similarity or difference” (Benthall 2012) in the complex web of identities embedded in humanitarian interventions. Caritas Jacmel employees also acted as Haitians for Haitians. Caritas Jacmel as a local organization is more thoroughly entangled with local people, conditions, and political circumstances. The organization shows a high level of commitment and solidarity in their urge to serve their brothers and sisters. Except for the “*solidarity amongst themselves against us*” narrative to refer to the relation between expatriate and Haitian staff, a reference to solidarity has not been present in the narratives of DKH. Again, this is also due to the difference in mandate. Purely humanitarian organizations are more intensely bound to the codes and regulations of humanitarian assistance than organizations like Caritas Jacmel, which operates on a development mandate but also assists in humanitarian crisis. As stated by Jean-Michel Clersaint, Program Manager of DKH, local organizations that aim at improving the conditions for Haitians inevitably get caught up in political figurations.

For the part of the expatriates, their identity as humanitarians united them. They shared experiences of “having done” other complex humanitarian crisis. With DKH in 2013 their identity as expatriate was also constructed against the Haitian staff. Their professionalism was constructed against its perceived absence on the side of Haitian humanitarians working for DKH. Some expats showed a patronizing, even racist attitude towards Haitians. Their assessment of them and the situation in Haiti was embedded in a civilizational discourse that showed similarity to the ‘*mission civilisatrice*’ of colonialism. They referred to what they perceived as individual shortcomings of Haitians, like egoism and the lack of solidarity, to rationalize the status quo of Haiti. By their behavior they reproduced the inequalities inherent to humanitarian intervention in Haiti that were shown in chapter three.

Professionalism especially within DKH was mostly enacted by the formal adherence to the Code of Conduct and the application of standardized methods. Especially the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence were continuously referenced to

explain certain decisions and procedures, most tangibly in the discontinuation of the cooperation with the local organization KROS. The CoC was an overall important source of guidance and orientation for the organization.

The humanitarian principles stipulated in the CoC are means to reach certain ends. This is tangible in the statement of Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel, Director of DKH, on the manifold dilemmas of humanitarian aid: *“Luther said that we are all sinners. That means I don’t have to aim that everything will be resolved in a hundred percent ethically unambiguous way, because it won’t. To me it is important what you can achieve in the end”*. In this vein, DKH in Haiti navigated through what Füllkrug-Weitzel referred to as ethical dilemmas. As a reaction to the pressure applied from local authorities the organization ended the cooperation with KROS in formal terms, mainly due to political vocation of the organization. In other ways though they continued to collaborate with the local organization.

On the other hand, as an expression of the dynamics of sanctification (Barnett and Gross Stein 2012), the CoC is raised to a quasi-sacred statute, especially by the DKH headquarters. *“They are our Ten Commandments”*, they said. Those, not solely in biblical terms, are ends in themselves. They have a dogmatic character and remain unquestioned. *“You shall not kill”* is a demand that cannot be negotiated. Of course, those who call themselves Christians often violate the Ten Commandments. Also signatories of the CoC violate its principles. Yet, in difference to the CoC, the biblical Decalogue in its role as the moral foundation of Christian behavior is very clear and hardly leaves room for interpretation. Against that, Hilhorst stated that the suggestive tone of CoC is one of the strengths of the code as it allows organizations to operate in complex figurations not easily divided in *“good and bad”* (Hilhorst 2005). I argue that as a faith-based organization, directed by faithful Christians on the headquarters level, DKH has a certain proneness to a dogmatic exegesis of the CoC. Furthermore, the director of the organization reinterpreted the principles of the CoC as originally deriving from the teachings of Christ. *“What appears to be secular here is inherently Christian”*, she said. Humanitarianism as Barnett stated enacts both, secular as well as religious versions of faith (Barnett 2012). The centrality of the CoC, not only for DKH, is an appropriate example for that hypothesis.

Caritas Jacmel did not reference the CoC directly – first of all because of its local scope. Despite its integration in the transregional network of Caritas Internationalis and the entanglements with various international organizations, Caritas Jacmel is a local organization. The CoC though mainly tends to the challenges encountered by humanitarian organization intervening in conflicts and disaster from the outside. There were aspects of Caritas Jacmel’s intervention presenting with challenges that could easily be interpreted with the CoC, though.

As an organization based in Jacmel, Caritas had valuable capacities in local knowledge. The facilitators implemented in the parish structure enabled the organization to “reach every corner” of their field of intervention. Due to their financial dependency to donor institutions and partnering organization Caritas Jacmel was drawn into the dynamics of bureaucratization most tangible in the meticulous reporting and financial accounting demanded by the donors.

Nevertheless, the scope of the organization was mainly directed inwards. They focused on the way they are seen inside of Haiti. Due to the bad reputation of NGOs in Haiti, they tried to avoid being referred to as an NGO. They rather considered themselves a Catholic foundation.

In the same way, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe avoids being received as a faith-based organization on the ground. They appear very much as a secular organization in most aspects of their intervention in Haiti. This avoidance though does not aim at how they are perceived by Haitians, but by the humanitarian community and their donors. Even though on the headquarters level Füllkrug-Weitzel claimed passionately that faith and professionalism are not mutually exclusive, in the field expatriate management staff enforced this exact opposition. They are looking for a *“bit more efficiency and less Christian charity”*. People who strongly emphasized their faith as the motivation to work for the organization were unlikely to be employed. Expatriate staff felt uncomfortable with the performance of religion in the humanitarian network ACT (Action by Churches Together) that DKH is embedded in.

The discourses of faith as well as professionalism were subjected to appropriation and differentiation within the organizational cultures of the two organizations. Caritas Jacmel fully emphasized its faith identity on all levels of intervention and distanced itself from certain aspects subsumed as professional, as the dissociation from NGOs in Haiti

shows. By contrast, DKH dissociated from the faith-identity of the organization that was strengthened in the headquarters and in turn fully emphasized the professional aspects of their intervention.

What this study showed is that faith-based organizations are far from homogeneous. The two organizations studied differ significantly in the way that faith motivated the work and influenced their practice. Within the figurations on the ground other factors such as the mandate and the local embeddedness matter, too. DKH was constantly limited by its humanitarian mandate. The organization had to be careful that their actions did not get too developmental, too political, and too religious. In terms of the location of the organizations, here is a huge difference between a local Caritas serving Catholics as a result of their entanglements with the lives of people living in one parish, and a foreign Protestant organization without such ties coming to Haiti from the outside preaching the gospel and assisting Protestants only. Contemporary humanitarianism emerged from the womb of religious directives of helping the stranger in need, but also from colonialism. Christian organizations played a particularly unfavorable role in the *mission civilatrice* that colonialism was understood as. Western organizations such as DKH intervening in countries as severely affected by colonial atrocities like Haiti have to be more careful and wary in this respect. A local organization like Caritas Jacmel is not perceived as a threat to Haitian sovereignty and self-determination in the same way international NGOs are. This is one reason why the organization tries to dissociate from being perceived as an NGO in general.

FBOs have to weigh up those implications and finally do what is best for their beneficiaries and the organizational maintenance of the ability to assist them. Caritas Jacmel and DKH have different prerequisites in that matter. DKH in many of its aspects in the field had more in common with other international organizations that intervene on a secular mandate, than with Caritas Jacmel. The Protestant organization constantly navigated the tension between faith and professionalism on the ground as much as in the headquarters. For Caritas with an inherent self-conception as a Catholic foundation, the faith part of their intervention was not subjected to negotiation.

Furthermore Caritas Jacmel was deeply rooted in both spheres, the religious one through their embeddedness in the parish structure of Jacmel and their overall religious contextualization, as well as the “dense professional world of NGOs” (Bornstein 2005)

through their embeddedness in the transregional network of Caritas Internationalis, their cooperation with local authorities, and entanglements with partnering NGOs and donors. The organization was in the advantageous position to be able to navigate both spheres. Caritas Jacmel inhabited both worlds and was able to easily switch between a religious discourse with their beneficiaries and the profanities of bureaucratization necessary in the relation to their donors.

To sum up, faith and professionalism are not mutually exclusive. Both form part of the organizational cultures of DKH and Caritas Jacmel, with varying emphasis within the organizations as well as between them, their employees, their beneficiaries and their headquarters. The faith emphasis of Caritas Jacmel is not the antidote to a presumably modern professional mode of DKH. Both features are embedded in the dynamic relation between secularization and sanctification that the humanitarian sector is influenced by. An increase of the one does not necessarily result in the decrease of the other, as Barnett and Gross Stein (2012) stated. Following their line of argument, they can and do alter each other's character though, as evident in the analysis above. For Caritas Jacmel the demands of bureaucratization grew. In DKH the performance of faith is in a constant process of renegotiation in and between the levels of intervention, the headquarters and the field mission.

This study contributes to the comprehension of contemporary humanitarian interventions. Its outcomes open up new questions and recommendations for further research, though. Especially the consolidation phase of purely humanitarian organizations is understudied. For an integral understanding of the overall mission of organizations intervening from the outside, it is essential to accompany the process of "clean-up" as well. It is in this time that the potential success and failures of a mission get evident. Studying this phase of intervention can only be really successful when it is in the interest of the organization to provide access to a researcher.

Similarly, there is not much coherent analysis of the intervention in the direct wake of disasters and the first emergency relief phase. As earthquakes like the one in Haiti happen without advance warning, there are often no researchers present and even if they are, they are most likely affected themselves. An analysis of this period can only happen in direct cooperation with the organizations, which embark on an emergency mission and of course only if it doesn't directly interfere with more urgent life-saving

matters. A general pre-arrangement with an organization to be sent to the next emergency together with medical and logistic professionals is the only practicable method to get access to the kinds of information essential for an analysis. The organizations themselves should have an interest in that, also in terms of internal evaluation of their missions.

As Fechter (2007) stated the expatriate humanitarian professional is one of anthropology's understudied phenomenon. Western anthropology still shies away from coherently analyzing those parts of human culture too close to its own. Yet for an integral and first and foremost honest understanding of the dynamics that influence contemporary humanitarianism also those who put it into practice have to be examined carefully. This should happen not only in terms of organizational internal evaluation, but also from independent scholars who are able to embedded and analyze narratives and practices of this group in larger contexts of meaning.

Further, I suggest research that combines the dynamics of exceptionalism with that of interventionism. This analysis could build on the work of scholars such as Trouillot (1990) and Clitandre (2011) to show how especially the interventionism, of military and/or humanitarian kind, aimed at Haiti builds upon the notion of the exceptional and serves as a laboratory for various modes and functions of modernity.

In my view, all of those strains of research are important for an understanding of the dynamics and effects of the aid complex on the lives of Haitian people. Maybe their results will contribute to finding better ways than there are now to side with Haitians in the quest to *etabli yon bèl Ayiti*, to establish a beautiful Haiti, like Claude Timogene, a driver employed by Caritas Jacmel, stated.

Abstract in English

The dissertation “Faith in Humanitarianism. The Study of Two Faith-Based Organizations in Post-Earthquake Haiti” interrogates the logics of faith, humanitarianism, and professionalism in the humanitarian interventions of the two Christian faith-based organizations Caritas Jacmel and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH).

Within the context of the complex humanitarian crisis amplified by the earthquake of January 12, 2010 in Haiti, both organizations were actively engaged in the reconstruction of the building structure of Jacmel and surrounding communities.

The research embarked on the question of what makes the differences between a house given to a Haitian survivor of the earthquake by a faith-based as opposed to a formally secular aid organization.

It focuses on the dynamics of secularization and sanctification as central features in contemporary humanitarianism. Within those dynamics especially faith and professionalism were addressed as meaningful aspects. The two faith-based organization targeted were analyzed regarding the ways in which faith as well as professionalism informed their organizational cultures in terms of their actions, most of all their distributive practice, and their inner coherence as faith-based organizations.

The underlying hypothesis is that both dynamics – faith and professionalism – are subjected to an ongoing process of negotiation, appropriation and dissociation, at the different levels of intervention: the headquarters of the two organizations, the offices in the field as well in relation to their beneficiaries, and become apparent in their distributive practice.

This study is based on data drawn from ethnographic fieldwork in post-earthquake Haiti, specifically the city of Jacmel in the southeast of the Caribbean country in 2011 and 2013. Participant observation in organizational processes and semi-structured interviews with employees and beneficiaries allowed for an in-depth examination of the two organizations. A subsequent narrative analysis focused on the framing and effects of the earthquake, and the role of faith and professionalism in the humanitarian interventions of Caritas Jacmel and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe.

Faith and professionalism both shaped, motivated and challenged the two organizations, their employees and their beneficiaries in different ways. The category of faith was most tangible in the church-based background of both organizations and the performance of religious identities, or the absence thereof, in their humanitarian missions in Jacmel. Professionalism was addressed in terms of the reference to and application of the core humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence as stipulated in the “Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief”.

The strategic secularism that Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe – as a German organization intervening on a humanitarian mandate – applied in the field is contrasted with the outright religious vocation of Caritas Jacmel as a Haitian Catholic organization involved in both humanitarian assistance and development. Beneficiaries of both organizations appropriated their entitlement to the houses that the organizations constructed and integrated it into their religious life worlds as acts of God.

This study contributes to the comprehension of the nature of contemporary faith-based humanitarian interventions, the contexts they are embedded in, and the dynamics they are subjected to.

Abstract in German

Die Dissertation "Faith in Humanitarianism. The Study of Two Faith-Based Organizations in Post-Earthquake Haiti" ist im Spannungsfeld zwischen Glaube, Humanitärer Hilfe und Professionalität zweier christlich religiöser Hilfsorganisationen, Caritas Jacmel und Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, verortet.

Im Kontext der komplexen humanitären Krise, die durch das Erdbeben vom 12. Januar 2010 in Haiti verstärkt wurde, waren beide Organisationen aktiv am Wiederaufbau von Jacmel und umgebender Gemeinden beteiligt.

Die Forschung war geleitet von der Frage, inwieweit es einen Unterschied macht, ob ein Haus von einer religiösen oder einer formell säkularen Hilfsorganisation gestellt wird.

Der Fokus der Arbeit liegt auf den Dynamiken der Säkularisierung und Sakralisierung als zentrale Aspekte gegenwärtiger humanitärer Hilfe. Vor allem Glaube und Professionalität wurden als aussagekräftige Konzepte innerhalb dieser Dynamiken definiert. Die zwei religiösen Hilfsorganisationen wurden auf die Art und Weise hin untersucht, in der Glaube und Professionalität ihre Organisationskulturen und Praktiken, allen voran ihre Verteilungspraxen, und ihren inneren Zusammenhalt als religiöse Hilfsorganisationen prägen.

Die der Arbeit zugrundeliegende Hypothese lautet: Beide Dynamiken – Glaube und Professionalität – sind von einem anhaltenden Aushandlungsprozess der Aneignung und Abgrenzung auf den verschiedenen Ebenen der Intervention (dem Headquarter, dem Büro vor Ort wie auch in Beziehung zu den Begünstigten) gezeichnet und werden in den Verteilungspraxen der Organisationen sichtbar.

Die Studie basiert auf Daten, die 2011 und 2013 während ethnographischer Feldforschung in Haiti, speziell Jacmel einer Stadt im Südosten des Landes, erhoben wurden. Die teilnehmende Beobachtung an den organisatorischen Abläufen und semi-strukturierte Interviews mit Angestellten und Begünstigten erlaubte die detaillierte Untersuchung beider Organisationen. Die darauf folgende Narrative Analyse konzentrierte sich auf die Einbettung und die Effekte des Erdbebens sowie die Rolle von Glaube und Professionalität in den humanitären Interventionen von Caritas Jacmel und Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe.

Glaube und Professionalität charakterisierten, motivierten und forderten beide Organisationen in unterschiedlicher Weise. Glaube konkretisierte sich im kirchlichen Hintergrund beider Organisationen sowie im Grad der Performanz religiöser Identitäten in ihren humanitären Missionen in Jacmel. Professionalität wurde vor allem mit Hinblick auf die Bezugnahme und die Umsetzung der zentralen humanitären Prinzipien, niedergelegt im „Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief“, hin untersucht.

Dem strategischen Säkularismus von Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe als einer deutschen humanitären Organisation steht die religiöse Praxis und Berufung von Caritas Jacmel als einer haitianischen katholischen Organisation gegenüber. Die Begünstigten beider Organisationen eignen sich ihre Berechtigung auf die Häuser, die von den Organisationen gebaut wurden, an und integrieren sie in ihre religiösen Lebenswelten als Werk Gottes.

Die vorliegende Studie leistet einen Beitrag zum Verständnis gegenwärtiger religiös motivierter humanitärer Interventionen, der Kontexte in die sie eingebettet sind, sowie auch der Dynamiken denen sie ausgesetzt sind.

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List of Acronyms

AA	Auswärtiges Amt
ACK	Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen in Deutschland
ACT	Action by Churches Together
ALNAP	Active Learning Network of Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Assistance
APRODEV	Association of Protestant Development Agencies
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CASEC	Conseil d'Administration de la Section Communale
CDGRD	Comité Départemental de Gestion de Risques et des Désastres
CFW	Cash-for-Work
CI	Caritas Internationalis
CIDSE	Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité
COC	Code of Conduct
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DKH	Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe /Diakonie Emergency Aid
DPC	Direction de la Protection Civile
DRR	Disaster Risk Management
ECHO	The European Commission's Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection department
EKD	Evangelische Kirche Deutschland
EKOSOL	Économie Solidaire
EU	European Union
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GONGO	Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organization
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HRC	Haiti Reconstruction Fund
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross

IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IHRC	Interim Haiti Recovery Commission
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KP	Karitas Pawasyal
KROS	Kordinasyon Rejyonal Oganysasyon Sides Regional Cooperation for the Organizations in the South East
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MINUSTAH	Mission des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en Haïti
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
MTPTC	Ministère des Travaux Publics, Transports et Communications
NFI	Non-Food Item
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ONACA	Office National du Cadastre
PAPDA	Haitian Platform for Alternative Development
PDF	Pwoteksyon Dwa Fanm
PIH	Partners in Health
SAR	Search and Rescue
UCAONG	Unité de Coordination des Activités des ONG
UCNH	L'Université Chrétienne du Nord d'Haïti
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VENRO	Verband Entwicklungspolitik und Humanitäre Hilfe deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization
WVI	World Vision International

Glossary

<i>anba tant</i>	<i>under the tent</i> , referring to a range of insufficient accommodation from a stretched bed sheet to transitional shelters.
<i>andeyò</i>	<i>outside</i> , in the countryside
<i>blan</i>	<i>white person</i> , foreigner
<i>Bondye</i>	God, literally the good God
<i>bezwen</i>	need
<i>cheche lavi</i>	<i>search for life</i> , make a living
<i>Douz Janvye</i>	January 12, date of the earthquake
<i>fanmi</i>	family
<i>gran neg</i>	<i>big man</i> , well respected wealthy person
<i>houngan</i>	male priest in Haitian Vodou
<i>konbit</i>	form of collectivized labor in rural Haiti
<i>lakou</i>	compound of houses inhabited by extended family
<i>lot bò</i>	<i>the other side</i> , reference to other countries
<i>malere</i>	<i>unlucky one</i> , poor person
<i>mezanmi</i>	<i>my friend</i> , interjection used to put emphasis
<i>moun</i>	<i>person</i>
<i>Jezi</i>	Jesus
<i>lwa</i>	deities in Haitian Vodou
<i>tèt ansanm</i>	<i>heads together</i> , solidarity
<i>tiraj o sò</i>	<i>drawing of destiny</i>
<i>ti legliz</i>	<i>small church</i> , base church
<i>ti menaj</i>	<i>"small" relationship</i> , affair
<i>tout moun se moun</i>	proverb, <i>everyone is a human being</i>
<i>twomatize</i>	<i>traumatized</i>

Map of Haiti



Source: OCHA/ReliefWeb

Interviews

1 Interview Questions

Bio

Ban mwen yon ti kras istwa lavi w.

Ki lè w te fèt?

Ki kote w te fèt?

Kijan ou rantre kòb nan fwaye a?

Ki estrateji w genyen pou cheche lavi?

Ki kote w rete?

Eske w genyen ti moun?

Work

Kouman w te jwenn djòb sa a ak ...?

Kisa w fe egzakteman?

Kijan ou pase jou a? Sa w fè? Ki aktivite okipe jounen an?

Kouman jou a jou pase? Kisa w fe lè w rive etc pp... ?

Pou konbyen tan w te travay ak ...?

Èske w te gen yon lòt djòb ak yon lòt ONG avan sa?

Èske w te poze yon siyati de fwa pou travay ak ONG XY?

Work practice

Ki moun ki resevwa api a de ONG XY?

Genyon metòdisit pou fè seleksyon benefisyè yo?

Metòd sa li pase byen?

Èske li te gen sitiyasyon an lè te gen moun ki pat kontan ak kouman w te fe seleksyon an? Poukisa yo pat kontan?

Gen règ espezyal pou travay ak benefisyè yo, pou fason de tretman?

Kouman ONG la ka ban yon ekilib pou benefisyè yo?

Kouman sitiyasyon sosyal ak politik isitla nan peyi d'Ayiti genyen yon enfliyans pou travay w?

Genyen defi a/challenge nan travay ak ...?

ONG ..., likolabore ak lot ONG?

Kouman relasyon ONG ... gen ak gouvenman Jakmèl?

Ki posibilite benefisyè yo genyen pou patisipe nan desizyon ONG ... ap prann?

Nan ki moman benefisyè kap patisipe?

Èske w pase tan/kwaze ak lot moun ki travay pou ... lè travay fini, lanwit ou byen le weekend?

Èske w rankontre ak kèk benefisyè lè travay fini? Èske w te konnen kek benefisyè avan yo te koumanse resewa èd pa ... ?

Èske w fe pati nan gwoup solidarite, gwoupman katye, yon tèt ansamn, konbit, yon bagay konsa?

Religion

Èske w sefidèl yon legliz? Ki legliz? Depi ki lè? Èske w te manmb youn lot legliz avan? Ki legliz fanmi w ale?

Kisa w panse sou lot relijyon yo?

Ki wol lafwa, relijion w jwe nan lavi w chak jounen an/lavi kotidyen an?

Èske te genyen yon moman nan lavi w lè te genyen yon dout pou lafwa w ?

Kouman lafwa oubyen relijyon enfliyanstravay w?

Gen yon diferans ant yon ONG kòm Karitas/Diakonie e yon ONG ki pa alye / afilye ak yon legliz?

Earthquake

Ki kote w te ye Douz Janvyè?

Kouman Douz Janvyè te pase?

Dapre ou menm / Dapre sa w kwe /tranblemanntè a te pase Ayiti?

Sak eskplike anpil moun konsa te mouri Douz Janvyè a?

Èske w menm te ede yon lot moun pandan epi apre tranblemanntè a? Kouman w te ede moun?

Ki moun ki te ede w pandan epi apwe tranblemanntè a?

Eske yon ONG ... te ede w? Kouman li te ede w?

Ki seri bagay chanje pou w menm, nan lavi w, apre Douz Janvyè?

Haiti

Ki bagay merite chanje pou Ayiti jwenn lavi miyo?

Dapre w menm / dapre sa w konnen, ki chanjman ap fèt ann Ayiti nan 2 lane?

Ki chanjman ap fèt nan lavi paw w nan 2 lane?

Ki wòl w panse ONG entènasyonal yo jwe pou amelyore sitiyasyon moun yo?

Èske w ka site yon egzanp yon ONG ki fè bon travay?

2 Interviews Referenced

Caritas Jacmel staff

André Valery, Director Caritas Jacmel, March 15, 2013 & July 20, 2011
Emmanuel Auguste, Caritas Jacmel Program Coordinator, March 14, 2013
Maxine Geffrad, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 19, 2013
Manouchka Beauchamp, Caritas Jacmel employee, August 12, 2011
Jude Duverseau, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 7, 2013
Pierre Estime, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 11, 2013
Mackenson Baptiste, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 13, 2013
Gaelle Perelus, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 11, 2013
Janjak Casimir, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 5, 2013
Beatrice Thibaud, Caritas Jacmel employee, August 5, 2011
Claude Timogene, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 13, 2013
Wilner Saint-Cyr, Caritas Jacmel employee, February 28, 2013
Nepthalie Moreau, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 14, 2013
Frantz Pelissier, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 6, 2013
Moise Deronvil, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 14, 2013
Phillipe Louis-Simon, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 13, 2013
Evens Laurent, Caritas Jacmel employee, August 9, 2011
Toussaint Duffault, Caritas Jacmel employee, March 13, 2013

Caritas Haiti staff

Eddy Voltaire, Caritas Haiti employee, April 4, 2013
Mackenzy Ernst, Caritas Haiti employee, April 4, 2013

Caritas Jacmel beneficiaries

La Vanneau group discussion, with Caritas staff and beneficiaries, August 9, 2011
Rachelle Jean, Caritas Jacmel beneficiary, July 28, 2011
Magalie Theobrun, Caritas Jacmel beneficiary, July 28, 2011
Anaïca Cesaïre, Caritas Jacmel beneficiary July 28, 2011

Claudette Mesadieu, Caritas Jacmel beneficiary, March 7, 2013

Anel Mercilus, Caritas Jacmel beneficiary, August 9, 2011

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH) staff

Antje Schulz, DKH Country Director, August 9, 2011

Jean-Michel Clersaint, DKH Program Manager, April 1, 2013 & July 5, 2011

Mike Bennani, DKH Logistics Manager, April 2, 2013

Sandra Bertrand, DKH Country Director Haiti, April 2, 2013

Katrin Landow, DKH Program Coordinator Berlin, December 13, 2012

Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel, DKH Director, September 18, 2013

**questions answered during a public talk at a MSF event in Berlin, Germany*

Robenson Placide, DKH employee, August 17, 2011

Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH) beneficiaries

Michelet Mathelus, DKH beneficiary, August 17, 2011

Wideline Josue, DKH beneficiary, August 17, 2011

Rose Herivaux, DKH beneficiary, August 17, 2011

Wesley Rozier, DKH beneficiary, August 17, 2011

Others

Magdalena Dupond, ACT coordinator, August 30, 2011

Samson Neptune, Lutheran pastor, August 18, 2011

The Code of Conduct

for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief

Prepared jointly by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the ICRC¹

Purpose

This Code of Conduct seeks to guard our standards of behaviour. It is not about operational details, such as how one should calculate food rations or set up a refugee camp. Rather, it seeks to maintain the high standards of independence, effectiveness and impact to which disaster response NGOs and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement aspires. It is a voluntary code, enforced by the will of the organisation accepting it to maintain the standards laid down in the Code. In the event of armed conflict, the present Code of Conduct will be interpreted and applied in conformity with international humanitarian law. The Code of Conduct is presented first. Attached to it are three annexes, describing the working environment that we would like to see created by Host Governments, Donor Governments and Inter- Governmental Organisations in order to facilitate the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Definitions

NGOs: NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) refers here to organisations, both national and international, which are constituted separately from the government of the country in which they are founded.

NGHAs: For the purposes of this text, the term Non-Governmental Humanitarian Agencies (NGHAs) has been coined to encompass the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – The International Committee of the Red Cross, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and its member National Societies – and the NGOs as defined above. This code refers specifically to those NGHAs who are involved in disaster response.

IGOs: IGOs (Inter-Governmental Organisations) refers to organisations constituted by two or more governments. It thus includes all United Nations Agencies and regional organisations.

Disasters: A disaster is a calamitous event resulting in loss of life, great human suffering and distress, and large-scale material damage.

The Code of Conduct

Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes

¹ Sponsored by: Caritas Internationalis*, Catholic Relief Services*, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*, International Save the Children Alliance*, Lutheran World Federation*, Oxfam*, The World Council of Churches*, The International Committee of the Red Cross (* members of the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response

1 The humanitarian imperative comes first

The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognise our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster. When we give humanitarian aid it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.

2 Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone

Wherever possible, we will base the provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster victims and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs. Within the entirety of our programmes, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate. In implementing this approach, we recognise the crucial role played by women in disaster-prone communities and will ensure that this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programmes. The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy, can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable relief, and have equal access to all disaster victims.

3 Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint

Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. Notwithstanding the right of NGHAs to espouse particular political or religious opinions, we affirm that assistance will not be dependent on the adherence of the recipients to those opinions. We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.

4 We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy

NGHAs are agencies which act independently from governments. We therefore formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy. We will never knowingly – or through negligence – allow ourselves, or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments. We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor. We value and promote the voluntary giving of labour and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognise the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect our independence we will seek to avoid dependence upon a single funding source.

5 We shall respect culture and custom

We will endeavour to respect the culture, structures and customs of the communities and countries we are working in.

6 We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities

All people and communities – even in disaster – possess capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Where possible, we will strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we will work through local NGHAs as partners in planning and implementation, and cooperate with local government structures where appropriate. We will place a high priority on the proper co-ordination of our emergency responses. This is best done within the countries concerned by those most directly involved in the relief operations, and should include representatives of the relevant UN bodies.

7 Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid

Disaster response assistance should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries. Effective relief and lasting rehabilitation can best be achieved where the intended beneficiaries are involved in the design, management and implementation of the assistance programme. We will strive to achieve full community participation in our relief and rehabilitation programmes.

8 Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs

All relief actions affect the prospects for long-term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognising this, we will strive to implement relief programmes which actively reduce the beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable lifestyles. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programmes. We will also endeavour to minimise the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long-term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

9 We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources

We often act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies. All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. We recognise the need to report on our activities, both from a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness. We recognise the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance. We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact. Our programmes will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimise the wasting of valuable resources.

10 In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognise disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects

Respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner in action should never be lost. In our public information we shall portray an objective image of the disaster situation where

the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears. While we will cooperate with the media in order to enhance public response, we will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over the principle of maximising overall relief assistance. We will avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to the two important people that left along the way:

Walter Steinke (1929 – 2012)

and

Anita Labedzki (1926 – 2015)

Curriculum vitae

For reasons of data protection, the Curriculum vitae is not published in the online version.