

7 Vodou Albums Interpreted

(1) Rasin Figye, *Se don nou*

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<p>1.a Nou pral rele Bondye —Rasin Figye! anvan nou lapriyè devan Ginen yo. —Abye, n ap rele Granmèt la anvan. Nou pral met ajenou. pou nou priye nan pye Ginen yo.</p> <p>1.b Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! Lè bounda fache, kote l chita? —Atè!</p> <p>Èzili (Èzili Petwo) o, m pral rele pwen an. —Bilolo! Èzili Mapyang o, m pral rele pwen an.</p>	<p>1.a We're going to call on God.¹ —Fig Tree Roots! before we pray in front of the Ginen. —Oh my, we're going to call the Lord first. We're going to kneel. so we can pray at the feet of the Ginen.</p> <p>1.b Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! When an ass is angry, where does it sit? —On the ground!²</p> <p>Oh Èzili (Èzili Petwo³), I'm going to call the pwen. —Bilolo!⁴ Oh Èzili Mapyang⁵, I'm going to call the pwen.</p>
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¹ The monotheistic base upon which Vodou is established is expressed in the first line of the album. Lines 3 and 4 confirm God's primacy over the *Ginen*, the African spirits. Lines 5-7 reiterate this idea while asserting the place of supplicating and kneeling to the spirits.

² This is a call and response ritual expression that identifies the Kongo Rite. Vodou religion is composed of many Rites which are the rituals and traditions of specific ceremonies. Vodou ceremonies often celebrate more than one Rite; for example, a given ceremony may begin with the Rada Rite, which salutes the Rada spirits, and segues, hours later, into the Petwo-Kongo Rite. On other occasions, Vodou ceremonies may adhere to a single Rite, such as a ceremony for Ogou Feray in the Nago Rite. In Nago and Rada Rites, the canonical spirit-salutations of Legba, Marasa, Loko, Ayizan, Danbala Wèdo and Ayida Wèdo and Sobo and Badè are widely respected. In Gonayiv, Haiti, there are temples that specialize in one Rite such as Lakou Souvnans (Rada), Lakou Soukri (Kongo), Lakou nan Badjo (Nago) or Lakou Dewonvil (Banda), etc. There is much unity in diversity in Vodou. In each respective Rite, ritual utterances are expressed by participants between songs to identify the Rite of the ceremony. This formulaic ritual utterance marks the Petwo-Kongo Rite. The question is, what does it mean? The expression *When an ass is angry, where does it sit?* is used by the central participants of the Vodou ceremony—a lead singer, an oungan, a manbo—with the chorus and initiates responding—*On the ground!* Is this a playful Kongo-style taunt to those angry souls who brood instead of dancing through life?

³ Èzili Petwo is a member of the Èzili family, one of the most prominent families of Vodou Lwa. The Èzili family represents, in varying degrees depending on the manifestation, love, sexuality, protection, defense, motherhood, and the commitment to empowerment.

⁴ Bilolo is an exclamation of joy in the Petwo Rite. It is a Kikongo word and translates to *people get ready to listen*.

<p>Mwen gen yon lwa ki danse nan tèt mwen. Jou ti nèg konnen non li, —m ap fè yo kado pwen an. —Ayayayayay! —Se bon!</p> <p>1.c Fè yo wè o. Èzili Dantò, fè yo wè o. —Bilolo! —Amwey! Fè yo wè, Èzili Dantò. N ap fè yo wè, Èzili Dantò Dan Petwo. —Èzili Dantò ap fè yo wè. —Fè yo wè, Èzili Freda ap fè yo wè. —Mètès Èzili ap fè yo wè. ap fè yo wè. Lòt bò zile a —y ap wè n ap navige.</p> <p>1.d Nèg yo di, y a manyen mwen, se pa vre. —Bilolo! Nèg yo pral touye m, yo manti. Nan Sido o, si Dye vle. O, kay o si Bondye vle, woy. —Pwen an, Bondye pa vle non. Maji sou maji, wanga sou wanga, wi, m ap tann yo.</p>	<p>I have a lwa who dances in my head. The day little guys know her name, —I’ll give them the gift of the pwen. —Ayayayayay! —That’s enough!</p> <p>1.c Oh make them see. Èzili Dantò, oh make them see. —Bilolo! —Help! Make them see, Èzili Dantò. We’ll make them see, Èzili Dantò Dan Petwo. —Èzili Dantò⁶ will make them see. —Make them see, Èzili Freda⁷ will make them see. —Mistress Èzili will make them see. will make them see. On the other side of the island —they’ll see we’re sailing.⁸</p> <p>1.d The guys say, they’ll deal with me, it’s not true. —Bilolo! The guys are going to kill me, they lie. Oh in Sido, God willing. Oh, oh house, if God wants, whoa. —The pwen, no God doesn’t want it. Magic on magic, wanga on wanga⁹, yes, I’m waiting for them.</p>
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⁵ Èzili Mapyang is a Lwa *gad*, or a protector Lwa, belonging to the family of Èzili. Her vèvè is a pentagram with an eye traced into its center, indicating her status as a protector. When she arrives in ceremonies her eyes bulge enormously and she is given a dagger for each hand which she holds stiffly to her side. Those who serve Èzili give her ritual hugs; she keeps her daggers in her hands as she embraces her servants. She makes magical potions with water, leaves, perfume and other ingredients.

⁶ Èzili Dantò or Èzili Mabenge is similar to Èzili Mapyang but is considered the mother of all Petwo Lwa. She represents the devotion and protectiveness of mothers for their children.

⁷ Èzili Freda is the “White Èzili.” She is portrayed as a rich and seductive mulatto woman with flowing hair and she represents beauty, sexiness, and love. She is associated with the Mater Dolorosa, a Catholic saint represented as a beautiful woman decorated with ornate jewelry with a dagger piercing her heart. The dagger is also seen in Èzili Freda’s vèvè which depicts a heart being stabbed with a knife to represent her jealousy over betrayal.

⁸ Since Èzili is a sea spirit, there are numerous references to the sea and sailing in her songs. One of her lovers is Agwe, a principle sea spirit in Vodou.

⁹ This is a magic charm or object. *Wanga* are created by Oungan or Manbo and they can be used for good and evil magic. Wanga can bring about misfortune or illness, and it can also bring about prosperity, such as good harvests and fertility. One Haitian proverb says: *Mezi lajan w, mezi wanga w* ‘The size of your money, the size of your wanga,’ which means, *Your success depends upon how much you invested.*

<p>1.e Leyogann m t al achte pwen an. —Bilo, bilo, bilo, bilo, bilo, bilolo!</p> <p>Leyogann m soti ak pwen an. M ap mouri yon jou Dimanch swa. Lè m ap antere, ti nèg p ap konn afè mwen. —M t al achte pwen an. —M t al dèyè pwen an—wi!</p> <p>2.a Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! Lè bounda fache, kote l chita? —Atè!</p> <p>Kòd, yo pote kòd. Yo pote kòd pou yo mare Figye m. —Bilolo! —Amwey! Moun yo pote kòd la, yo pa ka mare m, way! M pa ti kochon, nèg yo di y ap mare li. Figye, m pa ti kabrit, nèg yo di y ap mare li la. Danbala Wèdo (Ayida Wèdo), ti nèg se chen, mare li.</p> <p>2.b Elize, gangan nan Sido, rele lwa yo pou mwen. —Bilolo! —M rele Elize, Elize, Elize, Elize! —Bilo, bilo, bilo, bilo, bilo, bilolo!</p>	<p>1.e Leyogann¹⁰ is where I went to buy the pwen. —Bilo, bilo, bilo, bilo, bilo, bilolo!</p> <p>Leyogann is where I left with the pwen. I'm going to die some Sunday evening. When I'm getting buried, little guys won't know my business. —I went to buy the pwen. —I went after the pwen—yes!</p> <p>2.a Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! When an ass is angry, where does it sit? —On the ground!</p> <p>Rope, they carry rope. They carry rope so they can tie my Fig Tree.¹¹ —Bilolo! —Oh my! The people carry the rope, they can't tie me, oh my! I'm not a little pig; the guys say they're going to tie her. Fig Tree, I'm not a little goat; the guys say they're going to tie it here. Danbala Wèdo (Ayida Wèdo¹²), the little guy is a dog, tie him.</p> <p>2.b Elize, Vodou priest in Sido, call the lwa for me. —Bilolo! —I called Elize, Elize, Elize, Elize! —Bilo, bilo, bilo, bilo, bilo, bilolo!¹³</p>
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¹⁰ Leyogann is a town in the South West region of Haiti that is well known and respected for its rich Vodou traditions.

¹¹ Trees are fundamental symbols in the Vodou religion. The Lwa inhabit the trees, and Vodou ceremonies often incorporate trees into ritual as libations and sacrifices are poured out at the base of the tree to feed the spirit or spirits in the tree. Many *Lakou* Vodou in Haiti have trees dedicated to a specific spirit and sometimes the tree is adorned with a flag or a symbol of the spirit that resides in it. *Lakou Souvnans* and *Lakou Kajòj* in Gonaïves, for example, have trees linked to specific spirits. These trees are considered to be sacred and can be found in all *Lakou*, or Vodou yards.

¹² Danbala Wèdo and Ayida Wèdo were the first Lwa created by God. They are thought to be the mother and father of all Lwa and are represented as snakes in some of their *vèvè*. Like the larger Rada Rite itself, they are represented by white objects such as eggs, flour, clothing, etc. Ayida is identified with the rainbow. During possession, the horses of Danbala will typically fall to the ground, make snake-like movements, and will hiss in order to identify themselves as Danbala or Ayida.

<p>Mwen pa konnen konbyen lwa ki gen nan lakou sa. —Rasin Figye! —Wi, w al rele lwa yo, wi m prale! Rele lwa yo pou mwen—wi! —Ayayayayayay! —O wi, wi, wi, wi, wi, wi!</p> <p>2.c Wèdo, m rele Wèdo. Agawou Wèdo Yo pote kòd o, pou yo mare mwen. M pa ti kabrit mesye; yo pote kòd. —A, a, a, a, a! M pa ti kochon, Bondye, moun yo pote kòd. Men m pa rele ti bèf, yo pote kòd.</p> <p>2.d Sa m ap fè a, se don m li ye. Sa m ape fè a, se don m li ye. —Bilolo! —Anwey sa se don pa m li ye. Yo met mache vin gade —y a tande nouvèl, ayayay!</p> <p>3.a Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! Lè bounda fache, kote l chita? —Atè!</p> <p>Ede m kase fèy la. Pitit mwen malad, w a ede m kase fèy la. —Bilolo! Maladi pa rete a moun o. —Amwey, o!</p>	<p>I don't know how many lwa are in this yard. —Fig Tree Roots! —Yes, you'll go call the lwa, yes I'm going! Call the lwa for me—yes! —Ayayayayayay! —Oh yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes!</p> <p>2.c Wèdo, I called Wèdo. Agawou Wèdo¹⁴, oh they carry rope, so they can tie me. I'm not a little goat, guys; they carry rope. —Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah! I'm not a little pig, God, the people carry rope. But I'm not known as little cow, they carry rope.</p> <p>2.d What I'm doing, it is my gift.¹⁵ What I'm doing, it is my gift. —Bilolo! —Oh my, this is my gift. They can walk to come see —they'll hear the news, ayayay!</p> <p>3.a Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! When an ass is angry, where does it sit? —On the ground!</p> <p>Help me break the leaves.¹⁶ My child is sick, you'll help me break the leaves. —Bilolo! Oh sickness is no joke. —Oh my, oh!</p>
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¹³ The Petwo-Kongo praise word *Bilolo!*, like the Rada equivalent, *Ayibobo!*, reflects reduplicative linguistic processes such as the repetition of one or more syllables.

¹⁴ Agawou Wèdo is a Vodou Lwa associated with storms, wind, thunder, lightning, and earthquakes. He is a powerful and “intensely violent” Lwa served in the Danwomen, Rado, and Petwo rites. Agawou is considered “violent” because he engages in behavior that can hurt the human (*chwal*) possessed by the spirit such as standing in basins filled with broken glass.

¹⁵ Vodouists are called by the Lwa to serve either as Oungan, Manbo, or Ounsi by way of dreams or life experiences. Thus, those who are in service of the Lwa in Vodou regard it as a gift of the Lwa, the ancestors, and also from God.

¹⁶ A significant percentage of medicines are derived from plants; Vodou also includes traditions of plant-based healing (see Vonarx, Nicolas. 2011. *Le vodou haïtien: entre médecine, magie et religion*. [Québec]: Presses de l'Université Laval). This song shares themes with, *Fèy yo sove lavi mwen nan mizè mwen ye o. Pitit mwen malad, mwen kouri kay gangan, Simbi o [...]* ‘Oh leaves, save my life from the misery I'm in. My child is ill, I run to the house of the gangan, oh Simbi [...] (see Hebblethwaite *et al* 2012:187).

<p>Maladi pa rete a moun o. Ede m kase fèy la, pou m soulaje zanfan yo. —M pral kase fèy la. —M pral manyen fèy la.</p> <p>3.b Twa fèy tonbe nan basin nan. —Bilolo! Twa fèy tonbe jou rezon an. —Twa fèy tonbe nan demanbre mwen. Amwey o, m a rele gran Èzili o. Kote m ap mete lwa yo?</p> <p>3.c Dan Petwo, m pa bezwen lajan yo, m p ap travay pou yo. —Bilolo! —M pa bezwen lajan pou sa yo, m ap travay pou yo, ane a kout o. Se pa mwen menm ki manman w, ane a kout o! sa w kwè y a fè mwen? —Wi, Dan Petwo silamasal doki a, pa rele m papa! M ap rele Dan Petwo, Petwo, Petwo, Petwo —Bilo bilo bilo bilo bilo bilolo!</p> <p>3.d Lafanmi yo, sanble. Eritye yo, sanble. Lafanmi yo, sanble. Nou p ap kite lakou a tonbe! —Bilolo!</p> <p>4.a Respè pou fanm yo—se sa nou vle! Mesye, respè pou fanm yo —se sa nou mande alò!</p>	<p>Oh Sickness is no joke. Help me break the leaves, so I can soothe the children. —I’m going to break the leaves. —I’m going to touch the leaves.</p> <p>3.b Three¹⁷ leaves fell into the sea. —Bilolo! Three leaves fell on the day of the reason. —Three leaves fell in my demanbre.¹⁸ Oh help, oh I’ll call the great Èzili. Where shall I put the lwa?</p> <p>3.c Dan Petwo¹⁹, I don’t need their money, I’m not working for them. —Bilolo! —I don’t need money for this, I’m working for them, oh the year is short. It’s not me who’s your mother, oh the year is short! What do you think they’ll do to me? —Yes, Dan Petwo the <i>silamasal doki</i>,²⁰ don’t call me papa! I’ll call Dan Petwo, Petwo, Petwo, Petwo —Bilo bilo bilo bilo bilo bilolo!</p> <p>3.d Families, assemble. Heirs, assemble. Families, assemble. We won’t let the yard fall! —Bilolo!</p> <p>4.a Respect for women—that’s what we want!²¹ Men, respect for women —so that’s what we’re asking for!</p>
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¹⁷ The number 3 is a common figure in Vodou songs and in Haitian culture. Jil and Jil (2009) place the number 3 in the context of Kongo numerology, pointing out the notions of *twa wòch dife* ‘three fire stones,’ the three-legged Kongo cooking cauldron, and *twa fèy* ‘three leaves.’

¹⁸ A Demanbre is a gathering of extended family where members of the family feast and honor the ancestral Vodou Lwa.

¹⁹ Dan Petwo is the name of a Lwa, a Vodou priest, and a king in the Kongo who reigned over a unified Kongo.

²⁰ This is an example of *langaj* in Vodou songs, which is the presence of African language fragments.

²¹ This song criticizes male sexism. Beside the moral aspect, there is no explicit appeal to religion. The song illustrates the social critique present in many Vodou songs.

<p>Mesye jèn gason k ap maltrete fanm yo. Fòk nou pa bliye, mesye, se yo ki manman nou. —Mesye gason yo, medam yo se manman nou, se vre. Yo fè manje, yo lave, yo pase. Medam yo fè manje, yo lave, yo pase. Lè solèy kouche, nou rele yo manman.</p> <p>Mesye, nou gen lè bliye ke se nou menm menm ki manman nou? Mesye, nou gen lè bliye ke se mwen menm ki ba nou tete? Mesye, nou gen lè bliye ke se mwen ki konn okipe nou? Mesye, nou gen lè bliye ke se mwen menm ki konn ba nou lanmou? Mesye, poukisa k fè se mwen menm menm nou pi maltrete?</p> <p>5.a Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! Lè bounda fache, kote l chita? —Atè!</p> <p>M pa te la, gade m antre. Mwen antre pou m al bay Rasin nan jarèt, way o! —Bilolo! —Abye, n ap ba yo jarèt, se vre. Nèg yo bliye sa Rasin fè pou yo. Nèg yo bliye sa Ginen fè pou yo. Se te nan yon ti katye yo rele Bwa Kayiman e. Pitit Rasin nan, fè seremoni an. Mwen di Boukman fè seremoni sa. Jodi a, Ayisyen nou la e, nou devan blan mannan yo. —Mas Konpa men djaz ou!</p>	<p>Men, young men who are mistreating women. You must not forget, men, they are your mothers. —Men, the ladies are your mothers, it’s true. They cook, they wash, they iron. The ladies cook, they wash, they iron. When the sun sets, you call them mother.</p> <p>Men, you must have forgotten that we are the ones who are your mothers? Men, you must have forgotten that it is I who breastfed you? Men, you must have forgotten that it was me who took care of you? Men, you must have forgotten that it is me who gives you love? Men, why is it that I’m the one you mistreat the most?</p> <p>5.a Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! When an ass is angry, where does it sit? —On the ground!</p> <p>I wasn’t here, look I came in. Oh I entered so I could strengthen the Roots²², oh my! —Bilolo! —Oh my, we’ll strengthen them, it’s true. The guys forgot what Roots did for them. The guys forgot what Ginen did for them. Hey it was in a little neighborhood they call Bwa Kayiman.²³ Children of the Roots, do the ceremony. I told Boukman²⁴, do this ceremony. Today, hey Haitians we are here, we’re ahead of the poor white people. —Mas Konpa, here’s your group!</p>
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²² Roots or *Rasin* refer to hereditary Lwa and traditions. They are different from the Lwa and traditions that can be purchased from *bòkò*. They are traditions that one inherits directly through biological family and they are considered to be pure, benign, and fundamental.

²³ Bwa Kayiman is a village as well as a forest in the northern plain of Haiti. It was the site of a Petwo ceremony that consecrated a violent slave rebellion, and ultimately paved the way for the Haitian Revolution and War of Independence (1791-1803).

²⁴ Boukman was a Jamaican-born Vodou priest who, along with Cécile Fatiman, led the Bwa Kayiman ceremony.

<p>5.b Dye, ala kote lafanmi m yo malonèt o. Gade m kouche lopital, yo pa vini wè mwen. —Bilolo! —Adye, moun sa yo mechan, se vre. Y ap tann se lè m mouri pou yo ban m yon sèkèy o. Y ap tann se lè m mouri pou yo ba m yon sèkèy o. Jou lanmò mwen, y a va kontan. Jou lanmò mwen, y a va rejwi. Lè y ap rele lwa anba dlo, lè w monte, Kazo, w a pale avèk yo, lanmò pa yo dèyè la.</p> <p>5.c Sa ki panse gen de bondye, gade chita moun sila yo, k ap goumen pou relijyon. —Bilolo! —Adye, kite yo goumen, se vre. Bondye kreye chak moun ak desten pa yo. Bondye kreye chak moun pou fè chemen pa yo. Volonte Bondye ki fè mwen la. —kite m sèvi Ginen an. —kite m sèvi Ginen an, Makaya, m ap sèvi Ginen m.</p> <p>6.a Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! Lè bounda fache, kote l chita?</p>	<p>5.b Lord, oh how disloyal my family is. Look I'm lying in a hospital, they don't come to see me. —Bilolo! —Oh my, these people are truly evil. Oh they're waiting for when I die so they can give me a casket. Oh they're waiting for when I die so they can give me a casket. The day of my death, they'll be happy. The day of my death, they'll rejoice. When they're calling the lwa from under the water²⁵, when you rise, Kazo, you'll talk to them, their death is behind here.</p> <p>5.c Those who think there are two gods, look at those people sitting, who are fighting for religion.²⁶ —Bilolo! —Oh my, let them fight, it's true. God created each person with their own destiny. God created each person to make their own path. God's will is why I'm here.²⁷ —let me serve the Ginen.²⁸ —let me serve the Ginen, Makaya²⁹, I'm serving my Ginen.</p> <p>6.a Afoutayi!—Yi! Bila bila—Kongo! When an ass is angry, where does it sit?</p>
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²⁵ This is probably a reference to the Vodou ritual (*wete mò anba dlo* 'bring the dead back from under the water') that occurs one year after the *desounen* death rites. The *desounen* separates the deceased from his or her Vodou spirits and transfers them to a living descendent. In the *bring the dead back from under the water* ritual, the soul of the dead ancestor is called forth from a *govi* 'clay pot' by a Vodou priest and asked to communicate with the living members of the family via the priest. Following Deren's (1953) description, the deceased can chastise or make recommendations to the living.

²⁶ This song critiques interreligious conflict, asserts the centrality of *Bondye* (God), and argues the *Bondye* destines people to serve the *Ginen* (spirits).

²⁷ This song demonstrates the henotheistic foundations of Vodou.

²⁸ *Ginen* is a term used by Vodouists to refer to the dwelling of the Vodou spirits, the servants of the spirits, and the posthumous resting place of Vodouists. *Ginen* also more broadly refers to Africa and those in the diaspora who work to preserve connections to Africa and African traditions.

²⁹ This is a Kikongo word that signifies a Vodou rite, and a family of Lwa that includes Simbi, Èzili Mapyang, Loko Atisou, and Wangita. Makaya is also a forested mountain in Haiti where the Lwa are thought to reside.

<p>—Atè!</p> <p>Manman m te pale mwen, pou m pa t sèvi ak moun sa yo. Moun ki pè soufrans la, se yo ki pi kriminèl. —Bilolo! —Adje, yo pi kriminèl, se vre. Ayayay! Valè mache yo mache, yo pa sa touye mwen. Valè lite yo lite, yo pa sa jete mwen. Sa k ap bwè avè w la, k ap manje avè w la, o way o. Fò w pa bliye se li k ka detwi lavi ou.</p> <p>6.b</p> <p>Balmannan o—lwa m nan—ki mache lan nuit o, vin rakonte mwen sa w wè. —Bilolo! —Amwey, vini rakontre m, Balmannan, manman, manman. Wi! A minwi yè swa, m rakontre ak dyab la. Yon bò l se san, yon bò l se dife. Je dyab la ret tou limen. Dyab la griyen dan l sou mwen, m tounen lafimen dife. Gen granmoun pase granmoun. —Wi, Balmannan, mannan, mannan, mannan, mannan, mannan, mannan mannan, li mache nan nuit o! —Bilolo!</p> <p>6.c</p> <p>Sa mòn ta ye. Menm si m ale la, m pa pral dèyè lanmò a. —Bilolo! —Manman nan, m p ap al chèche lanmò a, souple. Ayayay! Wi! Y al nan simityè sèt fwa, pou detwi lavi mwen. Yo ale devan Bawon sèt fwa pou detwi lavi frè w la.</p>	<p>—On the ground!</p> <p>My mother told me, not to deal with these people. People who are scared of suffering, they are the ones who are the most criminal. —Bilolo! —Oh my, they are truly the most criminal. Ayayay! As much as they walk, they can't kill me. Try as they might, they can't make me fall. Those who are drinking with you, who are eating with you, oh my oh my. You must not forget it's he who may ruin your life.</p> <p>6.b</p> <p>Oh Balmannan³⁰—my lwa—oh who walks in the night, come tell me what you saw. —Bilolo! —Oh help, come tell me, Balmannan, mother, mother. Yes! At midnight last night, I encountered the monster. One of its sides was blood, the other side was fire. The monster's eyes stayed lit up. The monster grinned at me, I turned into smoke. There are adults who are beyond other adults. —Yes, Balmannan, mannan, mannan, mannan, mannan, mannan, mannan, mannan, oh she walks at night! —Bilolo!</p> <p>6.c</p> <p>Sa mòn ta ye³¹ Even if I went there, I won't go after death. —Bilolo! —My mother, I won't go looking for death, please. Ayayay! Yes! They went to the cemetery seven times, to destroy my life. They went in front of Bawon³² seven times to destroy your brother's life.</p>
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³⁰ Balmannan is a fearsome female Lwa in the Kongo-Petwo rite; she is sometimes referred to as *manman* or mother.

³¹ An example of *langaj* (African language fragments) in the text.

³² Bawon or Bawon Samdi is the spirit of life and death. He is an important and powerful spirit of the dead who presides over cemeteries. He is also the head and father of the Gede family that is honored in Haiti at the end of October and beginning of November. Purple and black are the colors of this family of spirits.

<p>Etwal pa w la, Agasou, poko file o. Etwal pa w la poko file o.</p> <p>7.a Nou prale o, nan Ginen. —Rasin Figye! Nou pral rele lwa zansèt yo. Pou nou di yo beni nou, n divize. Yo pa t batay pou n ta viv chen manje chen. Yo te batay pou linyon ak lapè. Yo pa t batay pou n ta viv chen manje chen. Yo te batay pou linyon ak lapè.</p> <p>7.b Twòp sitiran pran peyi a. Y antre lè yo vle, yo soti lè yo vle. —Amwey! Yo antre lè yo vle, se vre! Wi! —Sa n ap fè? Yo pa bezwen viza, nou menm, lè pou n al lakay yo, se anpil demach, tèt chaje. Papa Desalin, nou di kote ou ye?</p> <p>7.c Jou konba de Vètyè a, se yon jou m p ap janm bliye. Se pa de san ki koule pou n libere o! —Se vre! —Amwey! Twòp san te koule, se vre.</p>	<p>Oh your star, Agasou³³, hasn't fallen yet. Your star hasn't fallen yet.</p> <p>7.a O we're going, to Ginen. —Fig Tree Roots! We're going to call the lwa of our ancestors. To tell them bless us, we're divided. They didn't fight so we would live dog eat dog. They fought for union and peace. They didn't fight so we would live dog eat dog. They fought for union and peace.</p> <p>7.b Excessive indulgence has overtaken the country. They come in when they want, they leave when they want. —Oh my! They come in when they want, it's true! yes! —What will we do? They don't need visas; as for us, when we go to their house, it's many proceedings, distress. Papa Dessalines³⁴, we say where are you?³⁵</p> <p>7.c The day of the Vètyè battle³⁶, it's a day I will never forget. Oh so much blood was shed so we could be free. —It's true! —Oh my! Too much blood was shed, it's true.</p>
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³³ Agasou is a Lwa who is served in the Dawonmen, Petwo, and Rada rites. He is an aquatic Lwa and is known for his ability to heal. Agasou's origins are in the Dahomian kingdom (Benin today); *Agasu's* lineage claimed to descend from a panther and the princess Aligbonon. Agasu founded the royal dynasty of Allada (from which the term *Rada* is derived) where he is still revered as an ancestor and a spirit.

³⁴ Jean-Jacques Dessalines declared Haitian independence on January 1, 1804, in Gonayiv. As Haiti's first black ruler, Vodou honors Dessalines like no other historical statesman. Dessalines appears in numerous songs. In this song Dessalines is being asked to address the injustices experienced by Haitians who attempt to migrate. The Vodou community of Lakou nan Badjo in Gonayiv has the name of Jean-Jacques Dessalines painted on the outside wall of the temple next to the name of Ogou Badagri. In that way, Dessalines, the military general, and Ogou Badagri, the warrior spirit, are intimately associated.

³⁵ Like several songs on this album, this one takes the form of a *chante pwen* with words of criticism, this time directed at the hypocrisy displayed by the succession of foreign interventions in Haiti and the difficulties Haitians face when attempting to leave Haiti.

³⁶ The battle of Vètyè (Vertières) was a final defining battle of the Haitian Revolution that took place at Vètyè in northern Haiti. Generals Jean-Jacques Dessalines and François Capois led Haitians in a victorious attack against French expeditionary forces on November 18, 1803. Today November 18 is a national holiday in Haiti.

<p>An nou rele Enperè Desalin o. Ede m chante, Papa Desalin o. Voye Iwa Ginen yo vin delivre nou. Peyi a malad o.</p> <p>7.d Ayisyen patriyòt, an met tèt ansanm pou nou sove peyi a. —Pale, pale, pale! Boujwazi, dyaspora, an n met tèt ansanm pou nou sove nasyon an. Nou gen lè pa wè jan pèp la ap souffri. Se pa etranje ki pou vin sove peyi a, se nou menm ayisyen ki pou sove peyi a. Tèt ansanm mezanmi pou sove nasyon an.</p> <p>7.e Chi, chi, chi, n ap kenbe yo. —Bil, bil, bil! Chi, chi, chi, n ap kenbe yo. —Amwey! N ap kenbe yo, wi se vre. —Sègo, n ap kenbe yo, wi se vre. Depi m simen mayi m atè, m ap kenbe yo. Amwey o, depi n simen mayi n atè, n ap kenbe yo. Yo renmen pouvwa ak lajan. —n ap kenbe yo. —Rasin Figye, bon bagay!</p> <p>7.f Fè yo wè o, ayisyen frè m yo, fè yo wè o. —Bilolo! —Amwey! N ap fè yo wè. —Wi, n ap fè yo wè, laboujwazi, n ap fè yo wè! —Fè yo wè, ayisyen lòt bò, fè yo wè! —Ayisyen lakay, fè yo wè, laboujwazi, l ap fè yo wè! Fè yo wè o, ayisyen frè m yo,</p>	<p>Oh, let's call Emperor Dessalines. Oh, help me sing, Papa Dessalines. Send the Ginen Iwa to come deliver us. Oh the country is sick.³⁷</p> <p>7.d Haitian patriots, let's put our heads together to save the country. —Speak, speak, speak! Bourgeoisie, diaspora, let's put out heads together to save the nation. You must not have seen how the people are suffering. It's not strangers who should come save the country, it's us Haitians who have to save the country. Unity, my friends, so we can save the nation.</p> <p>7.e Chi, chi, chi, we're catching them. —Bil, bil, bil! Chi chi chi, we're catching them. —Oh my, we're catching them, yes it's true. —Sègo, we're catching them, yes it's true. As long as I sow my corn in the ground, I'm catching them. Oh help, as long as we sow corn in the ground, we're catching them. They like power and money —we're holding them. —Fig Tree Roots, good stuff!</p> <p>7.f Oh make them see, my Haitian brothers, oh make them see. —Bilolo! —Oh my! We'll make them see. —Yes, we'll make them see, the bourgeoisie,³⁸ we'll make them see! —Make them see, Haitians in foreign lands, make them see! —Haitians at home, make them see, the bourgeoisie, it'll make them see! Oh make them see, my Haitian brothers,</p>
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³⁷ Clearly the Vodou *Ginen* are seen as a means of solving Haiti's problems.

³⁸ Both songs 7d and 7f employ the term *laboujwazi* (bourgeoisie), shedding some light on class consciousness in Vodou culture. These songs seem to encourage solidarity from various social classes in order to show the world a cohesive Haiti for the bicentennial of 2004. In addition to its Vodou themes, this Racine Figuiier album emphasizes several socially conscience themes.

<p>fè yo wè o. Fè yo wè o, Ayiti chanje. N ap fè yo wè, Ayiti chaje, mezanmi! Fè yo wè, an de mil kat la, y a wè n ap avanse. —Woy, se bon!</p>	<p>oh make them see. Oh make them see, Haiti has changed. We'll make them see, Haiti has changed, oh heavens! Make them see, in 2004, they'll see that we're advancing. —Oh, it's good!</p>
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