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EXPLORING NARRATIVE VOICE IN EDWIDGE DANTICAT'S THE DEW BREAKER AND THE FARMING OF BONES

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Most critical analyses of Edwidge Danticat's works have primarily focused on context-based theories to explore the Caribbean people's historical, cultural, psychological, and political realities. However, there has been inadequate emphasis on her narratives' artistic and textual elements, particularly the examination of recurring narratological poetics. This paper aims to investigate the narratological poetics of narration (voice) in Edwidge Danticat's The Dew Breaker (2004) and The Farming of Bones (1998) within the corpus of Caribbean literature. Using a qualitative approach, the research seeks to demonstrate the extent and purposes of deploying classical narratological poetics of narration (voice) in selected texts. The study argues that narratology offers unique insights into deciphering narrative structures and that narratological poetics/tenets are effective tools for studying narrative techniques. The research shows that the shift from homodiegetic to heterodiegetic narration and the shifting narratorial alliances from one character to another within a heterodiegetic narration allow The Dew Breaker, and by implication narrative texts, to represent different individual consciousnesses as they recreate their experiences. This is what lends The Dew Breaker its narratorial complexity, beauty, and aesthetic dexterity. The paper also reveals that narrative levels in The Farming of Bones add different perspectives and diversity to the narrative act of the text and increase the complexity and narrative aesthetics of the text. The research further demonstrates that intradiegetic narrations have both explicative and thematic functions in The Farming of Bones. The study argues that the classical narratological poetics of narration (voice) can determine the extent to which readers are guided or manipulated in relation to any given narrative text. Overall, Danticat's narratives' meanings and artistic complexities are influenced by the application of narration (voice) poetics, which serves to represent Haitian/Caribbean realities.

Keywords: Poetics of Narration (Voice), Edwidge Danticat, The Dew Breaker, The Farming of Bones, Narratology

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Introduction

This paper explores the poetics of narration (voice) in Edwidge Danticat's *The Dew Breaker* (2004) and *The Farming of Bones* (1998) within the corpus of Caribbean literature. The research assumes that these texts contain narratological elements of narration (voice), a key tenet of narratology. Narratology, rooted in formalist/structuralist theories, examines the commonalities and distinct features of narratives (Bal, 1999:3; Prince, 1982:4). Its primary task is to elaborate and describe the functions of instruments used in narrative processes for better understanding. This paper analyses the structural elements of narration (voice) that make Danticat's texts similar to and different from other narratives, thereby expanding the critical tradition of Caribbean narratives. The research identifies and analyses the narrative structures and elements of narration (voice) in the selected texts within classical narratology to understand their usage and purpose in Danticat's works.

Booker and Juraga (2001:17) recognized Edwidge Danticat as a pivotal Caribbean woman writer, noting her role in enhancing the literary ties between the United States and the Caribbean. Danticat is acknowledged as a significant contemporary Caribbean female writer and a diasporic author of Haitian descent in America. Carraro (n.d:25) asserts that Danticat is "probably the best-known contemporary novelist of Haitian descent writing in English," with her talent evident since 1994. Her works include the award-winning debut novel *Breath, Eyes, Memory*; the short story collection *Krik Krak* (1996); *The Farming of Bones* (1998); *The Dew Breaker* (2004); *Brother, I'm Dying* (2007); and *Create Dangerously: The Immigrant Artist at*

Work, which is regarded as her manifesto on the intellectual's responsibility (Carraro, n.d:2425; Pfeiffer, 2008:83; Debacker, 2011:6). This paper focuses on the narrative poetics (voice) in *The Dew Breaker* (2004) and *The Farming of Bones* (1998).

The Dew Breaker (2004) is described as a cohesive novel and a short story cycle, detailing the life of a ruthless Tonton Macoutes member who reinvents his identity after the fall of the Duvalier regimes, eventually facing his daughter's accidental discovery of his past (Carraro, n.d:25). *The Farming of Bones* (1998) recounts the horrific 1937 massacre of Haitians by Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo. It is written in response to the lack of official acknowledgement of this historical trauma (Debacker, 2011:6). Thus, this paper explores

Caribbean literature, focusing on Edwidge Danticat's *The Dew Breaker* (2004) and *The Farming of Bones* (1998) as unique narrative constructs within Caribbean women's writing. Scholarships indicate that most studies on Edwidge Danticat's narratives have primarily employed context-based theories to explore Caribbean historical, cultural, psychological, and political issues (Carraro, n.d:13; Falquina, 2014:171; Counihan, 2012:37; Thompson, 2014:8; Vega-González, 2003:47; Davis, 2001:65; Timothy, 2001:135; Chen, 2014:222). However, there has been insufficient focus on the artistic and textual elements of her works, particularly the analysis of recurring narratological poetics. This research addresses this gap by validating the viability of the poetics of narration (voice) to illustrate their use in representing Caribbean realities in selected texts. Consequently, the paper argues that narratology provides unique insights into decoding narrative structures and that narratological poetics/tenets are effective tools for studying narrative techniques.

It is against this backdrop that this paper, using a qualitative research approach, investigates the narratological poetics of narration (voice) in *The Dew Breaker* (2004) and *The Farming of Bones* (1998) to show the extent and purposes for which the poetics are used in the narrative process.

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Narratology as a Theory of Narratives

Narratology, often attributed to Tzevan Todorov, is defined as the study of narrative structures (Phelan, 2006, as cited in Amerian & Jofi, 2015:183). It aims to describe the constants, variables, and typical combinations in narratives and explain their interrelations within theoretical models (Fludernik, 2006:8). According to Prince (1982:4), narratology examines the form and function of narratives, exploring their commonalities and differences. Scholars such as Fludernik (2006:36) trace narratology's origins to Todorov, Barthes, and Greimas, reaching its peak with Gérard Genette and others like F. K. Stanzel, Mieke Bal, Seymour Chatman, Gerald Prince, and Susan Lanser. Prince (1980:4) notes that narratology significantly evolved in the twentieth century, drawing scholars from diverse fields, including literary analysts, linguists, philosophers, psychologists, psychoanalysts, semioticians, folklorists, anthropologists, and communication theorists worldwide. Notable contributors include Barthes, Bremond, Genette, Greimas, Hamon, Kristeva, Todorov (France); lhwe, Schmidt (Germany); Eco, Segre (Italy); van Dijk (Netherlands); Chatman, Colby, Dolezel, Dundes, Georges, Hendricks, Labov, Pavel, Scholes (North America); and Lotman, Toporov, Uspenski (U.S.S.R.).

Narratology as a theory of narrative can be applied from two broad perspectives: the classical, and the postclassical strands. The classical strands, spanning from the mids 1960s to the early 1980s, are very much interested in investigating what narratives have in common as well as what enables them to differ narratively from one another (Prince 2008:1, and Amerian & Jofi, 2015:184). Fludernik (2005) affirms that classical narratologists are chiefly concerned with developing terminology to describe textual diversity and institute "a number of key categories for a narrative grammar and poetics". Nünning (2009:54) further elucidates that they prefer "describing textual features within a structuralist and formalist paradigm".

The second strand of narratology, which is postclassical, has always been interested in non-verbal and non-fictional storytelling, audio-visual media, and the cultural and historical contexts of narratives (Sommer, 2004)). Herman (1999:8) as cited in Meister (2015:60), notes that contextual/postclassical narratologists shift from "text-centred and formal models to models that are jointly formal and functional – models attentive both to the text and to the context of stories". Nünning elucidates that, it "tends to focus on issues like context, culture, gender, history, interpretation, and the reading process, highlighting those aspects of narrative bracketed out by structuralist narratology".

This research work adopts the classical narratological point of view whose basic tenets and assumptions will be used in this study as tools of analysis. This implies that the present work is interested in exploring the textual features of the selected narratives within the classical narratological tenets.

Basic Tenets of Classical Narratology

Basic tenets are the "fixed set of critical tools and concepts with which literary works are evaluated" (Chatman, 1978). To formulate these general laws that preside over narrative texts, the classical narratologists "developed a terminology to describe textual diversity and… instituted several key categories for a narrative grammar and poetics" (Fludernik, 2005:43). Key among the elements/tenets of this terminology are story and plot; time, narration (voice); and focalization. Of the five (5) key tenets mentioned, this research is delimited to the application of the poetics of narration (voice). Narratologists have classified the discussion of narration based on the person, tense, and levels to facilitate understanding due to its complex nature, thus:

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1. Classification by Person: Narration can be classified based on the person of the narrating or narrative voice. According to Bal (1999:22), as soon as there is language, there is a speaker who utters it. In following the Genettean model, there are two types of narrating person or voice: homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narratives:

a. In a homodiegetic narrative, the story is narrated by a narrator, referred to as a homodiegetic narrator, who is present as a character in the story he/she tells. A special kind of homodiegetic narration is the autodiegetic narration in which the narrator is the protagonist of his/her story (Jahn, 2017: N3.1.5).

b. In a heterodiegetic narration, the story is rendered by a heterodiegetic narrator who is absent from the story he/she tells.

2. Classification by Tense: It looks at the act of narration in relation to time. The act of narration is often associated with time and is commonly depicted in the past tense. However, some novelists use the present tense to narrate actions in the past, known as the "historical present" (Herman *et al*, 2010). Genette (1980) differentiates between "story time" and "narrative time" and proposes four types of narration: (a) subsequent, (b) prior, (c) simultaneous, and (d) interpolated:

a. **Subsequent (Retrospective/past) Narration:** It is the traditional retrospective narration when the character reports later events which took place earlier. Here "the narration takes place after the happening of the events" (Gholami, 2013:49). Most narratives are in this form. This kind of narrative instance is the most common in fictional works, and the general reader of fiction, according to Gholami, considers it to be the only way and he or she cannot imagine any other possibility.

b. **Prior (Prospective/future) Narration:** It is a less frequently found form because of its prophetic and visionary characteristics. Here the narrator tells what will happen, he uses the future tense. In other words, the narration takes place before the events (Gholami, 2013:50). Genette explains that prior narrating "has until now enjoyed a much smaller literary investment than the others…" (p. 219). She also maintains that prior narration is "predictive", and usually expressed "in the future tense.

c. **Simultaneous (concurrent/present) Narration:** It occurs when events are reported as they happen. This kind of narration is exemplified in sports reporting by commentators. It is that in which the act of narration is at the same time as the events that are taking place (Gholami, 2013:50). Genette elucidates that, by contrast to the other two above, simultaneous narrating "is in principle the simplest, since the rigorous simultaneousness of story and narrating eliminates any sort of interference or temporal game" (p. 218). What this means is that "the mark of temporal interval between story and narrating disappears in a total transparency of the narrative". Thus, the time of the story and the narrating are the same.

d. **Interpolated (Retrospective/Past) Narration:** This kind of narration is evident in epistolary narratives, where letters and diary entries alternate between experiencing events and recounting them (Fludernik, 2006). The narrating time immediately follows the events, and it is retrospective but with no great distance between narration and events (Gholami, 2013:50). According to Genette
(1980:217), it is the most complex type of narration since it involves multiple instances, and the narrating can become entangled with the story, particularly in epistolary novels with several correspondents.

3. Classification by Levels: This classification identifies and differentiates the multiple narrating acts that make up the story (Herman *et al*, 2010). Levels of narration show the hierarchies and subordination in narrative relationships between different stories within the same narrative text. In the narration of a story, there may also be another narration; still contained in the second narration there may be another narration. Thus, storytelling can

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occur on many different levels. That is why Barthes (1984 [1981]), as cited in Jahn (2017: N2.4.1), submits that there are "tales within tales". Genette demarcates these levels as extradiegetic, intradiegetic, and metadiegetic narrations.

a. **Extradiegetic narration:** It is the narrative at the first-degree narrative level where the story is the original narrative that is not embedded in any other narrative. Here the story recounted is at a diegetic level and the narrator of such a story is referred to as an extradiegetic narrator (Genette, 1980:228).

b. **Intradiegetic narration:** This comes to bear when another story is told inside the first-degree narrative by a character Fludernik (2006:8). This is a narration at the second-degree narrative level. The character telling that story is called an intradiegetic narrator (Genette, 1980:228).

c. **Metadiegetic narration:** This is a narration that is embedded in the second-degree narrative level by a character embedded within the second-degree narrative level. In other words, it is a narrative recounted inside the second level (intradiegetic). The narrator of such a story is termed the "hypodiegetic narrator" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:97).

Intradiegetic narrations have three basic functions which are: actional, explicative, and thematic functions. These are well captured in RimmonKenan's (2005:95). *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*:

i. Actional Function: This means that some intradiegetic narratives maintain or advance the action of the first narrative (extradiegetic) by the sheer fact of being narrated (p. 95). It can momentarily suspend the continuation of the extra-diegetic (first) narrative level, often creating an effect of heightened suspense (Jahn, 2017: N2.4.6.).

ii. **Explicative Function:** Here, this narrative explains the extradiegetic narrative level by answering such questions as "What were the events leading to the present situation?" In this case, Rimmon-Kenan states that "it is the story narrated and not the act of narration itself that is of primary importance" (p.95). In other words, this narration provides information about events that lie outside the primary action line of the first-degree narrative level (Jahn, 2017: N2.4.6.).

iii.**Thematic Function:** Here, the relationship between the extradiegetic and intradiegetic narrative levels are those of analogy, i.e. similarity and contrast. The intradiegetic narrative corroborates or contradicts a storyline of the extradiegetic narrative ("You are not the only person ever deceived by a faithless lover; let me tell you about [...]") (Barth 1984 [1981]: 232, as cited in Jahn 2017:N2.4.6).

Having looked at narration, its classifications, and functions, it is important to also see the next (the last in this research) basic tenet of narratology, i.e. focalization which is a lot more similar to narrative voice. The study illustrates the extent to which, and to what ends these tenets have been applied in Edwidge Danticat's *Farming of Bones; Breath, Eyes, Memory;* and *The Dew Breaker*.

Narration in *The Dew Breaker*

As earlier pointed outanalyzing narration in texts can be done through three perspectives: narrative person/voice, narrative tense, and narrative levels (Herman, Jahn & Ryan, 2010:46667). In *The Dew Breaker*, the narrating person is categorized into homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narrative voices, following the Genettean (1980) model. In *The Dew Breaker*, short stories like "The Book of the Dead" and "Water Child" exemplify this homo/autodiegetic narration, where the narrators are the protagonists of their own stories. However, other stories such as "Seven", "The Book of Miracles", "Night Talkers", "Bridal Seamstress", and the title cycle "The Dew Breaker" in *The Dew Breaker* employ heterodiegetic narration, where the narrator is absent from the story (Genette, 1980:225).

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The novel's narrative structure fluctuates between these voices, allowing it to effectively present the complexity of its characters and themes. As a result, the reader meets an assortment of people whose lives have been touched by the torturer. In this manner, using both the homo/autodiegetic and heterodiegetic narrative voices in *The Dew Breaker* proves most suitable to represent the complexity of the life of a pitiless member of the Tonton Macoutes who, after the collapse of the Duvalier regimes, re-invents his identity in Brooklyn. Thus, the multiplicity of the narrative persons/voices, achieved through the use of homo/autodiegetic and heterodiegetic narrators, is what gives *The Dew Breaker* the artistic flexibility to convey multiple stories from a "variety of points of view, linked together into a composite whole, suggestive of perspectives and voices in a community's discursive response to historical violence, displacement, and dislocation" (Chen, 2014:222).

The first story in *The Dew Breaker*, titled "The Book of the Dead," is narrated by Ka Bienaimé, an American-born daughter of a former Dew Breaker. Although she identifies as Haitian, Ka has never been to Haiti, reflecting her complex diasporic identity: "I was born and raised in East Flatbush, Brooklyn, and have never even been to my parents' birthplace. Still, I answer 'Haiti' because it is one more thing I've always longed to have in common with my parents" (Danticat, 2004:7). This narration highlights the family's struggle with the immigrant experience, where language barriers persist between Ka and her parents, who switch between English and Creole (Falquina, 2014:182).

In this story cycle, Ka initially believes her father's (the Dew Breaker's) role in Haiti's politics was noble, but later learns otherwise. Her efforts to understand her father's complex, spiritually tormented world initiate a narrative journey through a community largely illegible to outsiders (Chen, 2014:224). She realizes that dislocation, rather than being distressing, was comforting to her parents, especially after learning her father was not the prisoner but the torturer (Falquina, 2014:183). The homo/autodiegetic narrative voice reveals the complexities of diaspora life and the family's perception of the Dew Breaker as the central figure. "Seven" in *The Dew Breaker*'s second cycle is a heterodiegetic narrative, with an impersonal narrator hovering above the story and using third-person action sentences (Jahn, 2017: N3.1.5). An instance of this can be seen in "Seven" when the heterodiegetic narrator begins thus: Next month would make it seven years since he'd last seen his wife. Seven—a number he despised but had discovered was a useful marker. There were seven days between paychecks, seven hours, not counting lunch, spent each day at his day job, and seven at his night job. Seven was the last number in his age—thirtyseven. And now there were seven hours left before his wife was due to arrive. (p. 29)

The short story is told through a heterodiegetic narrative voice, narrated by an impersonal narrator outside the story's world. The protagonist, an anonymous Haitian, lives with his neighbours Michel and Dany in a Dew Breaker's house. The narrator is familiar with the character's inner thoughts and feelings (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:98). It is this being absent from the story and still having higher narratorial authority that confers on the heterodiegetic narrator the quality of being termed an "omniscient" narrator in another parlance. The thematic preoccupation of this heterodiegetic cycle story is centred on "the problems of communication confronted by a married couple who were separated for seven years and are now reunited in New York, in a context of strong racism towards Haitians" (Falquina, 2014:183). It is worth noting that the eponymous dew breaker, who, in the first cycle story, is a father, is here presented as a landlord. Thus, the swing from the homo/autodiegetic to heterodiegetic narrative person proves viable for the presentation of different and multiple narrations and perspectives. Of the nine-story chapters in *The Dew Breaker*, four are homodiegetic narrations (i.e.

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"The Book of the Dead", "Water Child", "Monkey Tails", and "The Funeral Singer"), while five are heterodiegetic narrations (i.e. "Seven", "The Book of Miracles", "Night Talkers", "Bridal Seamstress", and "The Dew Breaker").

In *The Dew Breaker*, as earlier hinted, Danticat interlaces the narrative persons, shifting from the homo/autodiegetic to heterodiegetic narration to suit the nature of the short story cycle genre which is "multi-faceted narration" in which either several characters do the storytelling in turn or a third person narrator (heterodiegetic narrator) shifts character alliances with every new character it introduces. Either way, upon turning to the next story in the sequence, readers are to deal with not just a shift in time or place but a new narrative consciousness (and voice). It is for that reason, a story cycle tends to reflect many individual consciousnesses at once (Lirca, 2017: 149-152).

Thus, the multiplicity in the narration of *The Dew Breaker* is but the function of the switch between the homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narrations in the text which is deliberately meant to artistically represent how the eponymous Dew Breaker is perceived by different individuals within the narrative space of the text. For instance, the homodiegetic narrator of the first story, Ka, the daughter of the Dew Breaker, after her father's private confession to her of his part in the Duvalier regimes, as one of the wicked torturers and fiercest Tonton Macoutes, surmises that:

The only thing I can grasp now, as I drive way beyond the speed limit down yet another highway, is why the unfamiliar might have been so comforting, rather than distressing, to my father. And why he has never wanted the person he was, is, permanently documented in any way. (p. 28).

Ka is, in the above passage, saying that she now understands why her father tries to hide his identity and finds America, a foreign land, so comforting to him. The homodiegetic narration, here, has been duly employed to appreciate the personal epiphany and feeling of disappointment that someone close and intimate with the Dew Breaker can feel after discovering his buried past.

In "The Book of Miracles", the heterodiegetic is reflected by the religious Anne, the Dew Breaker's wife who is a beauty salon owner. The cycle story captures the Dew Breaker as a humane barbing salon owner, too. Using stream of consciousness, the heterodiegetic narrator grants the reader entrance into Anne's secret thoughts about the transformation of her husband, the Dew Breaker who:

A long time ago, more than thirty years ago, in Haiti… worked in a prison, where he hurt many people. Now look at him. Look how calm he is. Look how patient he is… That was the miracle Anne wanted to share with her daughter on this Christmas Eve night, the simple miracle of her husband's transformation, but of course she couldn't, at least not yet, so instead she told of another kind of miracle. (p. 54)

The excerpt above is indicative of the fact that heterodiegetic narration can be manipulated to bare the mental state of characters, thereby revealing their doubts, fears and hidden traumas. Giving the reader access into the thoughts of Anne shows that she, at times, has her misgivings about the secret of her husband's buried identity that "no one asked about him anymore, thinking he was just a peasant who'd made good in New York. He hadn't been a famous "dew breaker," or torturer, anyway, just one of hundreds who had done their jobs so well that their victims were never able to speak of them again" (Danticat, 2004:56). Building on Anne's fear and doubts concerning her husband's hidden identity, in another heterodiegetic cycle story chapter "Night Talkers", the reflector character, Dany reveals to the reader that the Dew Breaker is:

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The man who had killed his parents [and is] now a barber in New York. He had a wife and a grown daughter, who visited often. Some guys from work had told him that a barber was renting a room in the basement of his house. When he went to the barbershop to ask about the room, he recognized the barber as the man who had waved the gun at him outside his parents' house. (p. 76)

Dany's account above shows that the identity of the Dew Breaker, confirming Anne's fears, is known by his victims. Thus, the multiplicity of perspectives through the interlacing of homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narrations helps to further reveal the true but concealed identity of the Dew Breaker. In "The Bridal Seamstress" which is also heterodiegetically narrated through the consciousness of Aline and Beatrice, the eponymous Bridal Seamstress; the Dew Breaker is remembered and identified by Beatrice in New York as one of the Haitian Tonton Macoutes who would "…break into your house. Mostly it was at night. But often they'd also come before dawn, as the dew was settling on the leaves, and they'd take you away" (p. 95). In capturing one of the atrocities of the Dew Breaker, Beatrice recalls that:

"He asked me to go dancing with him one night," Beatrice said, putting her feet back in her sandals. "I had a boyfriend, so I said no. That's why he arrested me. He tied me to some type of rack in the prison and whipped the bottom of my feet until they bled. Then he made me walk home, barefoot. On tar roads. In the hot sun. At high noon. This man, wherever I rent or buy a house in this city, I find him, living on my street." (p. 95)

The passage above is another revelation of the Dew Breaker's hidden identity. In the cycle story, "The Dew Breaker" the heterodiegetic narrator presents the full history of the character of the dew breaker from the perspectives of many characters. "[…] this story both offers intimate details about the boy who becomes the brutal dew breaker and the man who becomes the loving father we meet in the text's first story and speaks of the silences and spaces surrounding the individual stories that comprise the text to that point" (Bellany, 2014:209). It is in this regard that the heterodiegetic narrator makes the reader see how the Dew Breaker perceives himself as a Tonton Macoute during the Duvalier regime. For instance, when he is about to kill the anti-government preacher, he sees himself as:

[…] freeing an entire section of Bel-Air, men, women, and children who had been brainwashed with rites of incessant prayers and milky clothes. He'd be liberating them, he reasoned, from a Bible that had maligned them, pegged them as slaves, and told them to obey their masters, holy writings that he had completely vacated from his mind soon after the raucous party his parents had thrown to celebrate his first communion. With their preacher gone, the masses of Bel-Air would be more likely to turn back to their ancestral beliefs, he told himself, creeds carried over the ocean by forebears who had squirmed, wailed, and nearly suffocated in the hulls of Middle Passage kanntès, nègriers, slave ships. (p. 133)

Here the heterodiegetic narrator who, in principle, is familiar "with the characters' innermost thoughts and feelings; knowledge of the past, present and future" reveals the moral motivation of the Dew Breaker as he perceives it himself (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:98). In other instances, the narrator tells us the other mundane motivations of the Dew Breaker as a Tonton Macoute, as can be gleaned from the excerpt below:

A doctor, his landlord, gave him two rooms on the lower floor of a two-story house for free. Bourgeois married women slept with him on the cash-filled mattress on his bedroom floor. Virgins of all castes came and went as well. And the people who had looked down on him and his family in the past, well, now they came all the way from Léogâne to ask him for favors. (p. 138)

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In the above excerpt, the Dew Breaker is portrayed at the peak of his atrocious activities. At other times, still in the same story, the heterodiegetic narrator shifts the narratorial alliance from the Dew Breaker to a woman character in the story to acquaint the reader with other characters' perceptions of the Dew Breaker. Thus, the heterodiegetic narrator, from the perspective of the woman character, recounts that:

When one of the women who had been his prisoner at Casernes was interviewed three decades later for a documentary film in her tiny restaurant in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood, the gaunt, stoop-shouldered octogenarian, it was said, would stammer for an hour before finally managing to speak, pausing for a breath between each word. She couldn't remember his name, nor could she even imagine what he might look like these days, yet she swore she could never get him out of her head (p. 139).

The woman is later said to have recalled that the Dew Breaker would "… wound you, then try to soothe you with words, then he'd wound you again. He thought he was God" (Danticat, 2004:140). In aligning with this woman as the character reflector, at this point of the story, the heterodiegetic narrator is implicitly revealing the inhuman atrocious acts of the Dew Breaker and their traumatic effects on his victims. It is also in shifting his narratorial alliance to Anne in the same story that the narrator connects this story chapter with the first cycle story, "The Book of the Dead". As earlier read, in the first cycle story, "The Book of the Dead" Ka, the homodiegetic narrator, after her father confesses to her in Lakeland, telephones her mother in Brooklyn and asks:

"Manman, how do you love him?" I whisper into the phone. My mother is clicking her tongue and tapping her fingers against the mouthpiece again. Her soft tone makes me think I have awakened her from her sleep. "He tell you?" she asks. (p. 22)

The above passage is narrated from the homodiegetic perspective of Ka. However, in this last cycle story, "The Dew Breaker", the reader is taken to the other end and perspective where her mother, in a heterodiegetic narrative voice, in Brooklyn (New York), responds to the question, thus:

When her daughter called her from Lakeland after her husband's confession to ask, "Manman, how do you love him?" she was sitting at the kitchen table, eating a piece of pie. It was not what she thought she'd be doing when that question finally came. Like her husband, she'd thought she might be on a trip, some kind of journey with her daughter. She had imagined the two of them, just the girls, on the ocean, on a cruise liner or some other place from which her daughter couldn't escape. But here they are, thousands of miles apart and not even looking into each other's eyes as she attempts an explanation. (p. 167-168)

The implication of this is that shifting from the homodiegetic to heterodiegetic narration and shifting narratorial alliances with characters within a heterodiegetic narration allows the text to represent different individual consciousnesses as they recreate their experiences of the Haitian Tonton Macoute, the Dew Breaker. This is what lends *The Dew Breaker* its narratorial complexity, beauty and aesthetic dexterity.

Narration in *The Farming of Bones*

Unlike *The Dew Breaker* which oscillates between homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narrations, *The Farming of Bones* is fundamentally a homo/autodiegetic narrative, where the narrator heroine (Amabelle) never yields the privilege of the narrative function to anyone (Genette, 1980:247). It is based on the brutal story of the 1937 massacre of Haitians by the Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo. The novel, recounted by Amabelle, the homo/autodiegetic narrator, tells [her] story of how she is orphaned and left behind in the Dominican Republic when her parents drowned in the Massacre River. Amabelle works as a servant in a wealthy Dominican household. She is in love with Sebastien, one of the cane cutters who works as a labourer in the sugarcane fields. At some

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point in the story, Sebastien is captured by the Dominican army, and Amabelle decides to run away from her adopted city in the hope of being reunited with Sebastien in a safer place. She gets to the border town Dajabón at the moment that Trujillo is giving his infamous speech. The speech incites the crowd and they start attacking Amabelle and the other Haitian refugees, after which Amabelle is severely mutilated. Luckily for Amabelle, she returns to Haiti with Sebastien's best friend Yves and decides to wait for her lover in their hometown, Cap in Haiti. Some of the other survivors that have come back claim that they have witnessed Sebastien's death. Nevertheless, Amabelle refuses to accept that he is gone and keeps waiting in vain for him to return. Genette calls this kind of narrative personal voice a "disguised autobiography" (p. 247). Thus, this makes *The Farming of Bones* autobiographical in form by the fact that it is also written in "the first person."

The use of Amabelle as the homo/autodiegetic narrative voice in *The Farming of Bones* may not be unconnected to Thompson's (2014:26) assertion that the Caribbean women writing is a re-appropriation of narrative voice "from the third person male omniscient narrator to the first person feminine". Thus, Amabelle tells the reader [her] story as a servant in a wealthy Dominican (Papi's) household; her love story with Sebastien, the story of the lives of the labourers in the sugarcane fields; the arrests and massacre of Haitians in the Dominican Republic in 1937; and her escape from her adopted city with the hope of being reunited with Sebastien in a safer place. As a homodiegetic narrative, *The Farming of Bones* has story-related action sentences that contain the first-person pronouns (I did this; I saw this; this was what happened to me) to indicate that the narrator was at least a witness to the action (Jahn, 2017:N3.1.5). An instance of this can be found in chapter six where Amabelle is involved in helping her mistress during her child labour in the excerpt below:

I walked over to look at the babies. Dwarfed by her brother, Rosalinda lay completely still. I reached in and picked her up. Señora Valencia turned over on her side and saw me holding her daughter. (p. 22)

The "I walked over to look at the babies" and "I reached in and picked her up" are storyrelated action sentences that not only refer to Amabelle (the homo/autodiegetic narrator) as a character present in the text but also signify her level of involvement in the story-related actions. *The Farming of Bones* is, as earlier explained, totally homo/autodiegetic, in the sense that the narrator is not only a character in the story but is also the protagonist of the story she tells (Genette, 1980:251).

Narrative Tense in *The Dew Breaker* and *The Farming of Bones*

Regarding the narrative tense, that is, the act of narration in relation to the time of narration, Genette (1980:215-218) identifies four narrating times: the subsequent, prior, simultaneous, and interpolated. Of this four-narrating time, both *The Dew Breaker* and *The Farming of Bones* exemplify only the simultaneous and subsequent narrations. In a simultaneous narration the narrator verbalizes/reports actions while performing, or as they happen; whereas in a subsequent narrating time the narrator recounts events after they happen (Genette, 1980:15 & 18; Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:94-95). Both narratives alternate between the simultaneous and subsequent narrations. For instance, in *The Farming of Bones,* the narration switches from simultaneous (concurrent/present tense) to subsequent (retrospective/past tense) narration. In chapter one (1), for example, the story begins in Amabelle's room, she is heard relating her romantic moment with Sebastien in simultaneous (concurrent/present tense) narration, thus: I lurch at him and stumble, trying to rise. He levels my balance with the tips of his long but curled fingers, each of them alive on its own as they crawl towards me. I grab his body, my head barely reaching the center of his chest. He is lavishly handsome by the dim light of my castor oil lamp, even though the cane stalks have ripped apart most of the skin on his shiny black face, leaving him with crisscrossed trails of furrowed scars.

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His arms are as wide as one of my bare thighs. They are steel, hardened by four years of sugarcane harvests. (p. 8)

Amabelle, in the excerpt above, reports the events as they happen. In other words, the act of narration is at the same time as the events that are taking place. This kind of narration is also captured in the first cycle story chapter of *The Dew Breaker*, "The Book of the Dead" where Ka, the homo/autodiegetic narrator, in a simultaneous narration, tells the story of how her father leaves her in a hotel room without her knowledge of his where about, thus: My father is gone. I'm slouched in a cast-aluminum chair across from two men, one the manager of the hotel where we're staying and the other a policeman. They're both waiting for me to explain what's become of him, my father. The hotel manager—MR. FLAVIO SALINAS, the plaque on his office door reads— has the most striking pair of chartreuse eyes I've ever seen on a man with an island Spanish lilt to his voice. The police officer, Officer Bo, is a baby-faced, short, white Floridian with a potbelly. (p. 7)

In the above excerpt, Ka, the homo/autodiegetic narrator in the cycle story, "The Book of the Dead" in *The Dew Breaker*, as Amabelle in *The Farming of Bones*, is heard verbalizing her actions while performing them (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:95), this kind of narration implies that the mark of the temporal interval between the story and narrating disappears in total transparency of the narrative (Genette, 1980:218). In this way, the time of the story and the narrating is therefore the same.

At other times, as mentioned earlier, the story in *The The Farming of Bones* switches from the simultaneous to subsequent (retrospective/past) narration, as is evident in the scenario, in chapter two of the text, where Amabelle depicts the confusion in the house when Señora Valencia is about to put to birth:

As I lifted her legs to remove the sheets, Don Ignacio, Señora Valencia's father—we called him Papi—charged into the room. Standing over her, he tugged at his butterfly-shaped mustache with one age-mottled hand and patted her damp forehead with the other. (p. 10)

In the above subsequent (retrospective/past) narration, the homo/autodiegetic narrator reports later on events which took place earlier. In this context, the narration takes place after the happening of the events. This kind of narration is also reflected in "The Book of Miracles", the fourth chapter in *The Dew Breaker* where the heterodiegetic narrator, through the consciousness of Anne, reports on earlier events at a later time, thus:

Anne was talking about miracles right before they reached the cemetery. She was telling her husband and daughter about a case she'd recently heard reported on a religious cable access program, about a twelve-year-old Lebanese girl who cried crystal tears. (p. 51).

The above excerpt is a subsequent (retrospective) narration of events in the past tense. Most narratives are in this form. This kind of narrative instance is the most common in fictional works, and the general reader of fiction, as earlier stated in chapter two of this research, considers it to be the only way, and he or she cannot imagine any other possibility (Gholami, 2013:49). *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker* are examples of these possibilities because they knit the subsequent/retrospective with the simultaneous/concurrent narration to achieve certain aesthetic effect that defamiliarizes the reader's usual sense of narrating time. It is also worth noting that most chapters written in simultaneous narration in *The Farming of Bones* are those that tell stories that are intimate to the narrator.

Narrative Levels in *The Farming of Bones*

In discussing the narrative levels, it is important to note that *The Farming of Bones* and *The Dew Breaker* are not in any way similar. Narrative levels show the hierarchies and subordination in narrative relationships between

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different stories within the same narrative text (Jahn, 2017: N2.4.1). This means that, at times, in a given story there may be yet another character who narrates another story, and so on. "Such narratives within narratives create a stratification of levels whereby each inner narrative is subordinate to the narrative within which it is embedded" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:98). *The Farming of Bones*, unlike *The Dew Breaker*, has other stories embedded within it.

This implies that in the narration of *The Farming of Bones*, there are also other narrations contained within the text. In consonance with Genette's model of narrative levels, Amabelle's narration (*The Farming of Bones*) is termed as an extradiegetic narration because it is the narrative at the first degree narrative level where the story is the original narrative that is not embedded in any other narrative (Genette, 1980:228; Jahn, 2017:N2.4.2). Here, *The Farming of Bones* recounted is at a diegetic level and the narrator, Amabelle is referred to as an extradiegetic narrator. Again, in the Genetteian narratological parlance, Amabelle is also christened as an extradiegetic-homodiegetic narrator because she is a narrator in the first degree who tells her own story (see Genette, 1980:248). The extradiegetic-homodiegetic narrative position of Amabelle in *The Farming of Bones* can be illustrated in the narrating acts of the text. As a housemaid in Don Ignacio's (Papi's) house, Amabelle tells us the story of how Señora Valencia gives birth to baby twins, Rafael and Rosalinda. She tells us almost everything about childbirth, from its beginning to the end because it takes place at home (in the house) where she is part of it. The reliability of the narration is not in doubt because she is at home where the event takes place. However, at some point in the story in chapter 4 (p. 20), she tells us that Papi, Valencia's father will go to the barracks to fetch Pico, Valencia's husband, and he (Papi) would come back before dark. Papi takes Luis, the only male house-help along with him. Now what happens on Papi's journey from the house to the barracks, and from the barracks back to the house is completely outside the knowledge of Amabelle, the extradiegetichomodiegetic narrator because she is not part of the journey. The events that happen in-between this journey must either be narrated by Luis or Papi himself or Pico who is part of the return journey. If Amabelle attempts to tell what transpires in that journey, her reliability as a narrator will be questioned because she does not have the "knowledge of what happens in several places at the same time" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:98). Here, the writer has to shift narratorial alliance to other characters who take part in the journey to lend narratorial credence and reliability. And the surest way to do it in homodiegetic narration is to create a story within the main story told by a character in the narration.

For example, on the return journey Pico, who takes over the driving, kills a man on the road near the ravines. Amabelle does not know about it. The first person to tell her the story of this killing is Luis. This level of narration is immediately subordinate to the first-degree narrative level because the story is a story embedded in the first-degree narrative, that is, Amabelle's original story (Genette, 1980:228; Jahn, 2017: N2.4.2). Thus, in the Genettean model, Luis' story is categorized as an intradiegetic narration because it is an embedded story in the primary narrative. The character (Luis) narrating the story is called an intradiegetic narrator. Genette's model of classical narratology also calls this kind of narrator an intradiegetic-homodiegetic narrator because he tells a story he is part of.

Seeing that Luis' intradiegetic-homodiegetic narration has a gap in its content because it does not provide the name of the victim of the accident, Sebastien's intradiegetichomodiegetic narration (in chapter 8) about the same accident is brought up to fill that gap by revealing the name of the victim of the accident as Joel, Old Kongo's son. Later, in the narrative acts of the text, Amabelle is told by Old Kongo the story of where and how Joel is buried. Old Kongo recounts, "No funeral for Joël…I wanted to bury him in our land where he was born, I did,

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but he was too heavy to carry so far. I buried him where he died in the ravine. I buried him in a field of lemongrass, my son." (Danticat, 2004:67). In essence, Luis', Sebastien's, and Old Kongo's stories are all intradiegetic narrations, i.e. they are stories embedded in Amabelle's extradiegetic narration.

Other instances of intradiegetic narration in *The Farming of Bones* are found in the stories of the arrests made in the wake of the Haitian massacre of 1937 as narrated in the text. Amabelle, the extradiegetic-homodiegetic narrator is not present when the arrests are made. So she has to rely on an intradiegetic narration of other characters or other more general sources such as gossip or rumours. It is from Doňa Eva, Dr Javier's mother that Amabelle overhears her telling Beatriz that:

Javier was arrested at the chapel, along with Father Romain and Father Vargas. Someone ran to tell me, but by the time I got there the soldiers had already taken them away. I want to tell Pico. Perhaps he'll remember all his friend Javier has done for him and help us. (p. 94)

Doňa Eva's story might be unreliable because she heard from "someone". It also excludes what happened to the Haitians present at the time of the arrest. Her narration centers only on her son, Dr. Javier with Father Romain and Father Vargas. And to fill in this lacuna another intradiegetic narration is needed. Thus, an old woman who escaped the arrest tells Amabelle, "The priests they took alone in a separate automobile. The priests begged the soldiers to let them stay with the people. The soldiers wouldn't let them. One of the priests was crying" (p. 99). In this version of the same story, "the people" (i.e. Haitians) are included. But the old woman's story does not tell Amabelle if Sebastien and Mimi, his sister are included. Old Kongo's story is brought in again to tell Amabelle that "Sebastien went with Mimi to the chapel…. They went there to meet you. Others tell me that army trucks came and took them away" (p. 97). Old Kongo's narration differs from the rest because it informs Amabelle of Sebastien and Mimi's whereabouts. However, it is still distant and unreliable because he got the story from "others". Old Kongo did not witness the arrest. Much later, towards the end of the novel, Yve's intradiegetic-homodiegetic narrative recounts what exactly happens during the arrest:

Yes, I saw them put Sebastien and Mimi and all the others on a truck. I saw it all from the road. They made them stand in groups of six and then forced them to climb. The priests asked to stay with the people, but they took the priests separately, and then they took the doctor and the people together. If he wanted to be a Haitian, they told Doctor Javier, they would treat him like a Haitian. I saw Mimi climb when her turn came. Sebastien was in line behind her. Her knees went weak when she was climbing, and she almost fell. The doctor offered his hand to her, and Sebastien supported her from the rear. I saw all this from the road where I was hiding. (p. 148)

All these versions of the same story are examples of intradiegetic narrations, i.e. the second-degree narrative level. Doňa Eva's and Old Kongo's stories, although true, are distant and unreliable because the two narrators are witnesses to the arrests. Doňa Eva and Old Kongo, in this case, are intradiegetic heterodiegetic narrators because they are (embedded) narrators in the second-degree narrative level who are absent in the story they tell. The old woman and Yve's stories are more reliable because the two are witnesses to the event of the arrests. Thus, the old woman and Yve are described as intradiegetic-homdiegetic narrators, i.e. (embedded) narrators in the second-degree narrative level who recount stories they are present in (see Genette, 1980:248).

Other instances of intradiegetic narrations are evident in Tibon's story of what happens to Unèl's group, (the brigade) in the army truck. Amabelle witnesses the confrontation between the group and the soldiers who come to arrest them but does not know what happens to them afterwards in the army truck. Tibon's intradiegetic-homodiegetic narration takes the reader right into the army truck when he narrates that:

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"I am coming back," he said, "from buying charcoal outside the mill where I work, when two soldiers take me and put me on a truck full of people. The people who fight before going on the truck, they whip them with bayonets until they consent. After we're all on the truck, some of us half dead, not knowing whose blood is whose, they take us out to a high cliff over the rough seas in La Romana. They make us stand in groups of six at the edge of the cliff, and then it's either jump or go against a wall of soldiers with bayonets pointed at you and some civilians waiting in a circle with machetes. They tell the civilians where best to strike with the machetes so our heads part more easily from our bodies." Tibon used his bony hand to make the motion of a machete striking his collarbone. "They make us stand in lines of six on the edge of the cliff," he said. "Then they come back to the truck to get more. They have six jump over the cliff, then another six, then another six, then another six." (p. 104-105)

This story, because it is framed within the main narration, also serves as an intradiegetic narration, while its narrator, Tibon is the intradiegetic-homodiegetic narrator who relates the story he is, overall, present in. The story is meant to acquaint the reader with the situation of the group in the army truck. *The Farming of Bones* has other intradiegetic narrators such as the unnamed man and woman, at the border Tent Clinic in Haiti, who tells Amabelle of how those Haitians arrested at the chapel alongside Dr Javier, Father Romain and Father Vargas in Alegria are killed. This is how they relate the story:

"I was there in Santiago," a voice shouted from the other side of the room, "when they shut seven hundred souls into a courtyard behind two government houses. They made them lie face down in the red dirt and shot them in the back of the head with rifles."

"I was there," echoed a young woman with three rings of rope burns carved into her neck, "when they forced more than two hundred off the pier in Monte

Cristi." (p. 126)

These intradiegetic-homodiegetic narration, which are meant to fill in narrative gaps, are later corroborated by Sebastien's mother, Man Denise's intradiegetic-heterodiegetic narration in which she says:

"A young man came here to see me some days past." She reached up and pressed down hard on my hand as it was resting on her forehead. "He came here to see me on his way to Port-au-Prince. He said he saw my children killed, in a courtyard, between two government edifices there, in a place he called Santiago. He said he saw them herd my children with a group, make them lie face down on the ground, and shoot them with rifles." (p. 143)

As earlier explained, this is an example of an intradiegetic heterodiegetic narration in which the narrator (Man Denise) is absent in the story she tells. Thus, as has been demonstrated, narrative levels, as exemplified in *The Farming of Bones* are conspicuously absent in *The Dew Breaker* because *The Dew Breaker* is narrated at the first-degree (extradiegetic) narrative level without any story embedded within it. The different narratorial voices in the text are not stories within the text but "related stories that 'stood alone' into a 'larger framework'" (Clarkson, 2015:5). As a short story genre, *The Dew Breaker,* contains individual, comprehensible, and independent stories written as a unified whole. This makes each story in the text a first-degree extradiegetic narrative level.

So far, the narration of *The Farming of Bones* has indicated its narrative levels, and the analysis of these levels, above, has shown that they add other perspectives and diversity to the narrative act of the text and increase the complexity and narrative aesthetics of a given narrative text. In the section below, this study further explores the ends to which the intradiegetic narrations are deployed in *The Farming of Bones*.

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The Functions of Intradiegetic Narrations in *The Farming of Bones*

As earlier explained in chapter two of this research, intradiegetic narrations have three basic functions which are the actional, explicative, and thematic functions (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:95), in *The Farming of* Bones, intradiegetic narrations perform only two functions: the explicative and thematic functions which is the basic focus of this section of the research.

Explicative function means that the intradiegetic narrations explain the extradiegetic narrative level by answering such questions as "What were the events leading to the present situation?" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:95). One of the instances of this is when Amabelle and Yve, on their escape journey to Haiti, meet three women and two men on the mountains. Two of these women (Dolores and Doloritas) are Dominicanas (p. 102). One of the two men is described in the first narrative level as "the man with the uneven arms" who limps. Concerning the man, Amabelle says:

I moved towards the man with the uneven arms. I was drawn to him in part by curiosity but also because I pitied his condition. I wanted him to explain it to me. Was it tuberculosis or a flesh disease? Did it come from cutting the cane with one arm while neglecting the other? Was he born this way? (p. 104) The only way Amabelle's curiosity could be satisfied is by an intradiegetic narration. And that is what, Tibon himself, the man with the uneven arms provides when he, in an intradiegetic narrative, tells Amabelle his experience in the hands of the Dominican soldiers who force them to stand in groups of six at the edge of the cliff, and then it is either they jump or go against a wall of soldiers with bayonets pointed at them and some civilians waiting in a circle with machetes. Tibon then concludes his story that:

"I fall and fall, passing the rocks where many of the bodies land on the way down. And then me, I fall in the water. I know it too when I strike the water because it is so cold and sharp, the water, more like a big machete than water. I have many cuts on my body where the water sliced me, some tears on my ankles, which now cause me to limp." (p. 105).

This intradiegetic-homodiegetic narrative explains why Tibon is seen limping. Another instance of the explicative function of intradiegetic narration is in the story of the two Dominicanas (Dolores and Doloritas). Immediately Amabelle encounters them in the mountains escaping to the border with the other Haitians, the first question that naturally comes to mind is "Why are these Dominicanas also running away from their own country?" The answer to this question is found in their intradiegetic narrative:

"We are together six months, me and my man," Doloritas said. "I told him I would learn Kreyol for when we visit his family in Haiti." (p. 106) "I know nothing," Dolores said. "Doloritas was lost when they took him. She wanted to go to the border to look for him. I could not let her go alone in her state." (p. 107).

This intradiegetic narrative explains why these Dominican women are seen escaping to the border along with the escaping Haitians. Doloritas' husband is a Haitian whom the army has also taken away. His Dominican wife, Doloritas and her sister, Dolores are going to the border to see if they can find him.

Again an instance of the explicative function of intradiegetic narration is seen in Juan's case in the earlier parts of the novel in chapters 5 and 6. When Señora Valencia, Pica's wife, is delivered of twins, Juan, the oldest housemaid, instead of rejoicing with her mistress, we are told by Amabelle that "Juana burst into tears as soon as she saw the children: Rosalinda in her mother's arms and the little boy undergoing another close examination by Doctor Javier" (p. 20). No one knows whether the tears are that of joy or sorrow until in chapter 6, when in an intradiegetic narration, Juan explains that:

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"Now Señora Valencia has children of her own." She pondered the event out loud. "Look how quick the time has passed. It's not the time itself, but what it does to us…. You don't know how long I prayed for a child myself" she said. "I was close to becoming a mother once," Juana said. "My stomach grew for three months and nine days, then all at once it was gone. ¡Adiós bebé! This child was never born. It never had a sex. Never had a name. My Luis, he loves children. If they could grow out of the ground, he would have grown one for me long ago. At this moment in life, a woman asks herself: What good is all this flesh? Why did I have this body? … Look at me," she said, rotating her arms as though she were ironing. "I have no need to cry for myself. I must cry for Doña Rosalinda, who died in the attempt to bring a second child into the family. And
I must cry for Señora Valencia, who's without her mother on this day." (p. 25).

The above intradiegetic narrative explains the reasons why Juan cries immediately when she sets her eyes on Señora Valencia's children. This this demonstrates that intradiegetic narrations can function as explanations of the extradiegetic narrative level, i.e. the first-degree narrative level.

The thematic function of intradiegetic narratives is meant to point out the similarities and contrasts in the entire narration (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005:95). Thus, the intradiegetic narrative corroborates or contradicts the storyline of the extradiegetic narrative. These are replete in *The Farming of Bones.* One such instance is demonstrated in Amabelle's extradiegetic narrations in which she tells the story of how she and her parents "cross into Dajabón, the first Dominican town across the river to buy cooking pots made by a Haitian pot maker named Moy who lives there, the best pot maker in the area" (p. 36). It is on their way back to Haiti, after a heavy downpour that her parents drown in the river. Amabelle captures the last moments of her parents in chapter 9, thus:

My mother turns back to look for me, throwing my father off balance. A flow of mud fills the shallows. My father thrusts his hands in front of him, trying to keep on course. My mother tightens her grip around his neck; her body covers him and weighs him down at the same time. When he tries to push her up by her legs, a cluster of vines whisks past them; my mother reaches for the vines as though they were planks of a raft… As the rain falls, the river springs upwards like an ocean riptide. Moving as close as they can to the river's edge, the boys throw a thick sisal rope to my parents. The current swallows the rope. The boys reel it back in and wrap it around a boulder. The knot slides away from the boulder as soon as it leaves their hands…. The water rises above my father's head. My mother releases his neck, the current carrying her beyond his reach. Separated, they are less of an obstacle for the cresting river…. I scream until I can taste blood in my throat, until I can no longer hear my own voice. Yet I still hold Moy's gleaming pots in my hands. (p. 37).

This story is at the first-degree narrative level, narrated by Amabelle, the extradiegetichomodiegetic narrator. It is later corroborated by Señora Valencia's intradiegetic-homodiegetic narration of how Amabelle is found at the riverside and brought into their family. Thus, Señora Valencia, in chapter 16, recounts that:

Amabelle, today reminds me of the day Papi and I found you at the river." She wiped her paint-stained hands leaving red finger marks on the front of her housedress. "Do you remember that day? After my mother's death, the house was so filled with her presence: her voice, her clothes," she said. "Papi and I went to visit some of his friends near Dajabón. Papi was more adventuresome then. He took me hunting for birds and taught me to shoot a rifle, as if I were the son who took Mami's life in childbirth. I told Papi I wanted to see the Massacre River where the French buccaneers were killed by the Spaniards in my history lesson…. We went to the river and there you were, a bony little girl with bleeding knees. (p. 58)

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Señora Valencia's intradiegetic-homodiegetic narration performs a thematic function because it corroborates Amabelle's extradiegtic-homodiegetic narration of how her parents died in Dajabón River. An example of the thematic function of intradiegetic narratives is also presented in the arrests of the Dr. Javier, Father Romain, Father Vargas and the other Haitians at the chapel by the soldiers. Doña Eva, Dr. Javier's mother is the first person, in an intradiegetic narration, who narrates that:

Javier was arrested at the chapel, along with Father Romain and Father Vargas. Someone ran to tell me, but by the time I got there the soldiers had already taken them away. I want to tell Pico. Perhaps he'll remember all his friend Javier has done for him and help us. (p. 94)

Doña Eva's intradiegetic narrative is corroborated by that of an old woman who witnesses the arrest and later tells Amabelle that, "The priests they took alone in a separate automobile. The priests begged the soldiers to let them stay with the people. The soldiers wouldn't let them. One of the priests was crying" (p. 99). The only variation in this intradiegetic narrative is the inclusion of the Haitians in the story. Old Kongo's version of the same story corroborates the other two above when he tells Amabelle that "Sebastien went with Mimi to the chapel…. They went there to meet you. Others tell me that army trucks came and took them away" (p. 97). Later Kongo's story is also corroborated by that of Yve who recalls exactly what transpires during the arrest:

Yes, I saw them put Sebastien and Mimi and all the others on a truck. I saw it all from the road. They made them stand in groups of six and then forced them to climb. The priests asked to stay with the people, but they took the priests separately, and then they took the doctor and the people together. If he wanted to be a Haitian, they told Doctor Javier, they would treat him like a Haitian. I saw Mimi climb when her turn came. Sebastien was in line behind her. Her knees went weak when she was climbing, and she almost fell. The doctor offered his hand to her, and Sebastien supported her from the rear. I saw all this from the road where I was hiding. (p. 148)

All these intradiegetic narrations not only perform the thematic function of corroboration, they also fill the narrative gaps present in the first-degree narrative level. For instance, in the extradiegetic narration of *The Farming of Bones,* the reader sees the arrest of Unèl and his group and how they are bundled into the army truck, but it is in Tibon's intradiegetic narrative that one gets to know exactly what happens to them when he tells Amabelle that "The people who fight before going on the truck, they whip them with bayonets until they consent" (p. 104). Some of the gaps found in other intradiegetic narratives are also filled in by other intradiegetic narrations. For example, after being told, in an intradiegetic narration, by Doña Eva that, "Javier was arrested at the chapel, along with Father Romain and Father Vargas" (p. 94). No one knows what happens to them until Amabelle escapes to Haiti and is, in an intradiegetic narration, told by Father Emil, at Cap's cathedral, that:

"They suffered much in prison, but they are still alive. Some members of the church approached the Generalissimo on their behalf and they were both liberated. After he was released, Father Romain was asked to leave the other side, even though he wanted to stay and help those of our people who have remained there." (p. 152)

Father Emil's intradiegetic narration not only corroborates the other intradiegetic narratives of the arrest of the two priests but also fills in the gap by acquainting the reader with what exactly happened to them after the infamous arrest. On the whole, the research has shown and demonstrated that intradiegetic narrations have both explicative and thematic functions in *The Farming of Bones.*

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has examined the poetics of narration (voice) in *The Dew Breaker* and *The Farming of Bones* to evaluate their applicability in the texts and to assess the extent to which they have been implemented.

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The analysis reveals that in *The Dew Breaker*, the narratorial voice shifts between homodiegetic and heterodiegetic perspectives, and in the heterodiegetic voice, the narrator allies with different characters to represent various individual consciousnesses in relation to the Haitian Tonton Macoute, the Dew Breaker (eponymous central character in the text). Conversely, in *The Farming of Bones*, the narrative voice is consistently homodiegetic, relying on intradiegetic narrations, or second-degree narrative levels, to perform explicative and thematic functions. This diversifies the narrative act within the text. The absence of these narrative levels in *The Dew Breaker* is due to its status as a firstdegree (extradiegetic) narrative, without any embedded stories. Overall, the utilization of the poetics of narration in these selected texts demonstrates that the meanings and artistic complexities of Danticat's narratives arise from the degree of application of these narratological poetics and that the representation of Haitian/Caribbean realities is contingent upon the deployment of these poetics.

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