Occasional Paper N° 3

Bryant C. Freeman

Selected Critical Bibliography of English-Language Books on Haiti

Institute of Haitian Studies
University of Kansas
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N° 2 - Toussaint's Constitution (1801), with Introduction. 1994. Pp. ix-20. In French. Introduction (in English) by Series editor places Constitution in its historic context and analyzes salient features. $5.00

N° 3 - Bryant C. Freeman, Selected Critical Bibliography of English-Language Books on Haiti. 1999 (Updated). Pp. 24. Contains 177 entries, with brief description of each; special list of "Top Ten." Introduction and text in English. Updated periodically. $5.00


N° 8 - Official Spelling System for the Haitian Language. 1995. Pp. 27. Text of official Haitian government edict of 28 September 1979, in Haitian. Remarks by Series editor in English on subsequent contemporary usage and brief pronunciation guide. Eleven pages chosen to illustrate good usage of official system, plus brief examples of the three major preceding orthographies. Introduction traces development of the four major systems. $5.00

N° 9 - Organization Charts of the Haitian Judiciary and Military. 1995. Pp. 10. Two charts of Haitian judicial system - one in French and English, other in French only. Three charts in French of Armed Forces of Haiti (1993) and one of Port-au-Prince police; officer and enlisted ranks with insignia (in French and English). Introduction in English. $4.00


N° 11 - Sara Lechtenberg, An Overview of the Haitian Justice System. 1996. Pp. iv-25. Based upon written sources, as well as 18 personal interviews with Haitian judges and lawyers, and foreign observers highly knowledgeable concerning the Haitian justice system. $5.50


N° 17 - Frédéric Doret, *Les Premiers Pas dans la Grammaire*. 1998. Pp. vii-75. A grammar in Haitian (etymological orthography) and in French contrasting the two languages, with pioneering insights concerning the former (1925). Introduction in English. $6.50


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SELECTED CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE
BOOKS ON HAITI

The present bibliography is included in the series of Occasional Papers of the University of Kansas Institute of Haitian Studies principally at the request of a number of persons preparing to work in Haiti and in need of a general guide to the main English-language studies on that country. It is intended as a selective as well as varied list of useful books on Haiti, with a brief description of the main thrust of each. It will be updated from time to time as new works appear and earlier ones are superseded.

This bibliography was originally compiled for an interdisciplinary area studies course given every Fall semester at the University of Kansas entitled "Portrait of a Third-World Nation: Haiti." Topics include "the Columbian exchange, piracy, slavery and plantocracy, Revolution and the burden of freedom, U.S. Occupation, Papa Doc and Baby Doc, the Tontons Macoute, liberation theology, peasant life, government and corruption, poverty and hunger, morality of foreign aid, Voodoo, folk medicine." The diversity of the subject matter corresponds to the diverse make-up of the some 100 students usually enrolled, who range from university freshmen to relatively senior U.S. Army officers preparing a Master's degree in Latin American Studies. Each student is responsible for a certain number of book reviews, with no knowledge of a foreign language assumed—though alternate bibliographies in Haitian and in French are also available for those fluent in one of Haiti's two official languages. Consequently, to match the extremely varied interests of the class, the list of books approved for the reviews is comprised of some twenty categories. Excluded are very brief works, those which are overly technical (e.g., on geological samples from a limited area of Haiti), ones which touch only peripherally on Haiti (e.g., Beebe's Beneath Tropic Seas), as well as ones whose highly allegorical nature would render them meaningless to all but those already thoroughly versed in things Haitian (e.g., Depestre's The Festival of the Greasy Pole). Since the course is centered on Haiti itself, Diaspora studies are generally not included. Lastly, excluded are works where invention reaches an unconscionable level (e.g., Vinogradov's The Black Consul, where Toussaint appears in Paris alongside Ogé and Chavannes, and where Dessalines is also in Paris after having been graduated from the Sorbonne!).

This is not to say, however, that all works included are necessarily ideal at every point for learning for example about Haitian history. Works by early writers such as Harvey (1827) or Bird (1869) have been far surpassed for much historical fact, but contain eye-witness material found no place else, and for this reason can be fascinating. Others (e.g., Craige's Cannibal Cousins) contain gross factual errors such as misdating by almost a century an event as important as the Treaty of Ryswick which officially created French Saint-Domingue (p. 112), but which are invaluable as a mirror of the implicitly and often explicitly racist attitudes which resulted in the failure of the first U.S. Occupation of Haiti. There are other works included where one may well question at times the author's veracity (e.g., Loederer), but which nevertheless have proven extremely popular with a number of students and which do peak their curiosity. If the student's interest is awakened, then all is possible—and each year a certain percentage of this class ends up going to Haiti, and some have even found careers in this way.
Since a list containing 177 titles (October 1999) might appear somewhat formidable to anyone relatively new to Haitian Studies, it would perhaps be helpful to identify what we consider to be the "Top Ten." In alphabetical order:

Herskovits, Melville J. *Life in a Haitian Valley.*
James, C. L. R. *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution.*
Leyburn, James G. *The Haitian People.*
Metraux, Alfred. *Voodoo in Haiti.*

Others which can well be considered in a class apart:
Dunham, Katherine. *Island Possessed.*
Farmer, Paul E. *The Uses of Haiti.*
Wilentz, Amy. *The Rainy Season: Haiti since Duvalier.*

Any such list is necessarily subjective, but nevertheless we believe these works represent a consensus of what many consider the most important studies on Haiti in English. These are the ones most frequently quoted and which tend to reappear in bibliographies. Some are quite controversial, such as Wade Davis' *The Serpent and the Rainbow,* perhaps in part because of the horror movie of the same name, which has almost nothing to do with the book. Greene's *The Comedians* earned him the distinction of being barred from Papa Doc's Haiti, and Diederich and Burt's *Papa Doc* encountered almost the same reception. The Heinl book is blamed for being too negative, while many others see it as the most complete book on Haitian history in any language. Wilentz' *The Rainy Season* was faulted when it first appeared for devoting too much attention to "a little-known priest named Aristide." James, with *The Black Jacobins,* is accused of being a rabid Communist. Métraux' *Voodoo in Haiti* is criticized as being overly meticulous. And the list could go on. Perhaps the least generally known is Bentivegna's *The Neglected and Abused,* but it is one of only two texts (along with Leyburn's *The Haitian People*) which are required reading for all students in the course described above. Year after year students say they cannot stop reading it, and then immediately phone home to their parents to say they are sending it to them. Perhaps more than any other book on this list, it "tells it like it is."
BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Among the relatively large number of general bibliographies on Haiti, we recommend especially:


Laguerre, Michel S. *The Complete Haitiana: A Bibliographic Guide to the Scholarly Literature, 1900-1980*. Millwood, N.Y.: Kraus International Pub., 1982. Pp. lxxiii-xix-1,562 in two vol. A massive compilation containing more than 10,000 references to books, articles etc. in a number of languages, divided into 65 subject chapters. There are no descriptions for the references.

GENERAL GUIDE

ANTHROPOLOGY
Courlander, Freeman, Herskovits, Laguerre, Smucker

ARTS
Averill, Christensen, Hoffman, Leon, Pataki, Rodman, Rodman, Rodman, Stebich, Williams

CHRISTOPHE
Christophe, Cole, Vandercook

DIASPORA
Cadet, Dougé, Lemoine, Miller

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Lemoine, Logan, Plant

DUVALIERS
Abbott, Diederich, Ferguson, Prince, Trouillot

ECONOMY/POLITICS
Brinkerhoff, DeWind, De Young, Dupuy, Fass, Hippolyte-Manigat, Holly, Laguerre, Lundahl, Lundahl, Maguire, Moore, O'Neill, Paquin, Preeg, Rotberg, Tata

GENERAL
Bellegarde-Smith, Farmer, Foster, Franciscus, Lawless, Leyburn, Rodman, Rubin, Valdman, Weil

HEALTH
Bentivegna, Bordes, Brodwin, Farmer, Freeman, Mellon

HISTORY - GENERAL
Davis, Greene, Heini, Heinl, Léger, Leyburn, Nicholls, Nicholls, Redpath, Rodman, Weinstein, Weinstein

HISTORY - EARLY
Barskett, Bird, Brown, Candler, Dayan, Franklin, Harvey, MacKenzie, Moreau de Saint-Méry, St. John, Vastey

HISTORY - DIPLOMATIC
Douglass, Logan, Montague, Plummer

HISTORY - INTELLECTUAL
Antoine, Dash, Dean, Fowler, Price-Mars

NOVELS and POETRY
Bell, Carpentier, Carse, Chauvet, Dash, Dash, Endore, Garrett, Gilliam, Greene, Moore, Roberts, Roumain, Thoby-Marcelin, Thoby-Marcelin, Thoby-Marcelin, Thoby-Marcelin

OCCUPATION 1915-34
Balch, Craig, Craig, Healy, Kuser, McCrocklin, Millspaugh, Niles, Plummer, Schmidt, Seabrook, Spector, Steedman, Wirkus

PERSONAL
Cadet, Cave, Gold, Loederer, Prichard, Riou, Seabrook, Taft, Thomson

POST-DUVALIER
Abbott, Aristide, Aristide, Aristide, Dupuy, Gibbons, Kretchik, NACLA, Perusse, Ridgeway, Rotberg, Shacochis, Stotzky, Wilentz

REVOLUTION
Bell, Buckley, Dayan, Fick, Fouchard, Geggus, Hassal, Hunt, James, Ott, Pachonski, Parham, Perkins, Stein, Steward, Stoddard

TOUSSAINT LOUVERTURE
Alexis, Beard, Bell, James, Korngold, Parkinson, Ros, Tyson, Waxman
VOODOO

Bach, Courlander, Courlander, Davis, Davis, Deren, Desmangles, Dunham, Hurston, Huxley, Laguerre, Métraux, Métraux, Rigaud, Rodman, Williams
SELECTED CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HAITI
(English language books only)

All items listed are owned by the University of Kansas Libraries.


Bach, Marcus (Louis). (1906- ) **Strange Altars.** Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1952. Pp. 254. Excellent introduction to Voodoo, as interpreted by the unforgettable "Doc" Reser, a Mormon from Utah converted to Voodoo.


Craige, John Houston. (1886- ) **Cannibal Cousins.** New York: Minton and Balch, 1934. Pp. 304. A frank, down-to-earth account of the Occupation as seen from the U.S. point of view by a U.S. Marine Corps captain. Far more revealing than his earlier **Black Bagdad.**


Parham, Althée de Puech, ed. **My Odyssey: Experiences of a Young Refugee from Two Revolutions, by a Creole of Saint-Domingue.** (Trans. from French) Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1959. Pp. xxvi-204. Quaint, first-hand account of a young French Creole caught up first in the confusion of the French Revolution, then of the Haitian. Also relates his brief stay in the U.S.


St. John, Sir Spencer Buckingham. (1825-1910) Hayti, or The Black Republic. 1884. New York: Scribner and Welford, 1889. Pp. xxiv-389. For better or for worse, one of the most notorious - and sensationalistic - books on Haiti, by the British Consul-General there for 20 years.


