

## Response Page

The following response was posted on the H-France discussion list in response to John Savage and Sean Anderson's review of Baron de Vastey, *The Colonial System Unveiled*, trans. and ed. Chris Bongie (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2014).

*H-France Review* Vol. 17 (July 2017), No. 110

The original review may be found on the H-France Review web site at:  
<http://www.h-france.net/vol17reviews/vol17no110savage.pdf>.

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3 August 2017

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I very much enjoyed John Savage and Sean Anderson's review of Chris Bongie's volume on the Baron de Vastey's *The Colonial System* unveiled.

For the benefit of our historian colleagues, there is one sentence on which I felt compelled to comment. The authors write, "this volume is one piece of evidence that in general literary scholars are taking the lead in exploring Haiti's post-independence period." As a historian of Haiti, I have found the work by our literary colleagues who work on post-independence Haiti, such as Bongie, Doris Garraway, Deborah Jensen, Daniel Desormeaux, Christopher Miller, Charles Forsdick, Marlene Daut, Sybille Fischer, and Nick Nesbitt, to be incredibly suggestive. But I want to make sure that our French history colleagues are aware of the important work by historians on post-independence Haiti; this is especially important since SFHS tends to be the home only of work on colonial Saint-Domingue, whereas work on post-independence Haiti has often been presented at the Haitian Studies Association or other conferences.

Our colleagues in Haiti (or Haitians working in the US) have long taken the lead in studying the post-independence period. An excellent synthesis of historical scholarship on post-independence Haiti, by Haitian as well as foreign scholars, can be found in Michel Hector and Laënnec Hurbon, *Génèse de l'État haïtien (1804 – 1859)*. Some excellent works in English by Haitians on this period include Michel-Rolph Trouillot's *State Against Nation* (1990), Patrick Bellegarde-Smith's *Haiti: The Breached Citadel* (1990; rev. ed. 2004), and Alex Dupuy's *Haiti in the world economy: class, race, and underdevelopment since 1700* (1989). In English, the seminal book on nineteenth-century Haiti is David Nicholls' *From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour and National Independence in Haiti* (1979; rev. ed. 1996); Laurent Dubois, Kate Ramsey and I have also written about the nineteenth century. I give a fuller survey and bibliography of work in this

field in Part II (“Independent Haiti in a Hostile World”) of my book *Haitian History: New Perspectives*.

Our literary colleagues have always been generous in citing work on the period by historians and other social scientists, and I wanted to make sure that work by our Haitian colleagues in particular was not overlooked. While there is already excellent work by historians, there is plenty of room for others to join us in deepening our understanding of this fascinating period. It has been especially wonderful to see new work by historians such as Julia Gaffield, Anne Eller, Kate Hodgson and Nathalie Pierre.

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