HSA to Establish Task Forces on Haiti

The Haitian Studies Association (HSA) is in the process of establishing three task forces to further its goals of promoting scientific research on Haiti and Haitians, serving as a resource for institutions and policy-makers in and out of Haiti, and disseminating information about Haiti and Haitians. The task forces are on (a) development and the environment in Haiti, (b) the development of Creole, and (c) governance.

Task Force on Development and the Environment

The Task Force on Development and the Environment in Haiti will focus on assuring the availability and quality of pertinent data on the relationship between economic activities, development, and the environment for academic, analytical and policy formulation purposes.

Researchers wishing to study development and environmental problems and solutions in Haiti cannot find quality data to facilitate their studies. They do not know where to inquire and university libraries do not know where to direct them. As a result, researchers, particularly students avoid serious analyses of Haiti’s development that requires national or regional data. This lack of quality data has resulted in ineffective development and environmental projects in Haiti, and has contributed to the absence of real national policies to address these issues.

The primary function of this task force will be to catalogue the availability of data about the Haiti’s development and environment. The cataloguing will not provide the actual data but will supply information for researchers, institutions, policy makers, and other interested parties about where to find such data. In addition, the catalogue will evaluate the reliability and the quality of the data.

The development and environmental task force will travel to Haiti and visit institutions that systematically and regularly collect development and environmental data. It will also establish contact with relevant academic, research and development institutions in Haiti and abroad.

This project will become the basis for assembling and collecting reliable data about Haiti’s development and environment. It will further identify the areas where reliable data are lacking and develop an agenda for collecting such data. It is foreseeable that the Task Force may undertake specific projects of its own. These projects would be limited to problem identification, data collection and analysis, and recommendations for actions. The Task Force will not engage in policy formulation. However, appropriate policies cannot be formulated unless policy makers have access to reliable regional and national information about the status and condition of Haiti’s development and environment. Currently, such data is unavailable because of political problems. But, even before the most recent political turmoil, such information was not readily available, and the information that was available was of questionable value. Without this information, development and environmental projects in Haiti will continue to be ineffective as the problems worsen.

Task Force on Creole Development

HSA will also institute a task force on Creole development to identify and link the different institutions that are studying lexically-related creole communities in the Caribbean (Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia, Dominica, and Haiti). This task force will constitute a network of scholars representing some of the key institutions involved in the Creole movement. It will explore the possibility of producing more materials in Creole and encourage the exchange and sharing of information between the countries where Creole is spoken and between the institutions that are interested in the development of Creole.

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Creole (similar to the Haitian Creole) is widely spoken in five Caribbean countries. It is spoken by nearly every Haitian, Martiniquan, Guadeloupean, Dominican and St. Lucian. In recent years, there have been numerous efforts to standardize Creole, but there are no formal and continuous contacts between the different movements, and they are still country specific. For instance, there is not a Creole dictionary that can be used in all the countries where the language is spoken. This lack of formal contact and coordination contributes to the stagnation of the Creole movement and cause information in Creole to be more scarce.

The task force on Creole will concentrate on identifying the institutions in the Caribbean which focus on the development of Creole, and cataloguing the information which is available in the different countries. The task force will organize a meeting of the institutions in the Caribbean which are interested in the development of Creole as a language. The purpose of the meeting is foster greater regional cooperation in the development of Creole. The task force will address, in a general way, the question of availability of quality information in Creole.

As an on-going project, the Task Force will identify the areas in which Creole materials are needed and encourage the translation of such materials. Valuable materials in Creole are needed for literacy and educational projects in Haiti as well as for Haitian bilingual education programs in the U.S.

Task Force on Governance

Additionally, HSA will institute a third task force to study question governance in Haiti. It will look primarily at the causal relationship between and within Haitian political institutions and formulate alternative models for building democratic institutions in Haiti. The mission of this task force will be fully developed after the 1993 HSA conference which will be on "Governance: and Conflict Resolution in Haiti". The governance task force will focus on identifying the historical role of Haiti’s major institutions and determine why they have failed to evolved into stable democratic institutions.

There are no real analyses of Haiti’s institutions and how they function within the perimeters of the state. Like development and environment, there is lack of quality data on governance in Haiti. This lack of quality data hampered any serious studies of Haiti’s political institutions. Policy makers, both in and outside of Haiti, have relied primarily on inadequate and anecdotal information to formulate policy on Haiti.

The Task Force of Governance will, in addition, catalogue and evaluate available data about governance in Haiti. It will identify areas for data collection, develop a model for collecting such data, and will ultimately develop a data bank for policy formulation. The information provided by the Task Force will facilitate the formulation of effective policy to address Haiti’s governance problem.

Task Forces Membership

Membership in the task forces is opened to HSA members and other Haitians who have developed competence and credibility in the selected subject areas. HSA invites scholars and other qualified individuals in and out of Haiti to participate in the task forces. Members of the task forces will be approved by the HSA Steering Committee.

HSA members and other individuals interested in one of the task forces should send a letter of interest and a CV to HSA by September 1, 1993.

HSA Opens Office at UMass Boston

The Haitian Studies Association opened its office at the University of Massachusetts at Boston with an open-house on April 23, 1993. This office will serve as the headquarters and secretariat of HSA.

HSA intends to collaborate with the University in many of its activities. The first joint project between the two institutions is a demographic profile of the Haitian Community in the greater Boston area.

HSA Sponsors Haitian Authors Series

The Haitian Studies Association received a grant from the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities to organize an Haitian authors series in the Fall of 1993 at the Cambridge Public Library, 449 Broadway, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The series will include the following books:


The series is designed with the intention of presenting an aspect of the literary achievement of a nation known in the U.S. primarily for its poverty and political turmoil. HSA intends to emphasize the contribution of women in Haitian literature and highlights how Haiti’s social, political, and economic conditions are represented in novels. The object here is not to focus on the
styles of the writers through analytical frameworks, but to examine the message and the values which the writers attempt to convey.

All of the selected authors, except Desmangles, address the oppressive social and political conditions which plagued Haitian society. The women writers extend this criticism to include commentaries on the social milieu in which these oppression occurred. The selected writers seem to agree with the general notion that the socio-political predicament affecting Haitian society will end only by gender, race, class, and cultural solidarity and awareness. This concept is developed in Le Creuset, Martin Toma, and in Les Chemins de Loco-Miroir. The unifying theme, however, is the acknowledgment by all the writers that the situation in Haiti must change.

HSA will purchase 20 copies of the books listed above and will distribute them to a group of readers. The books will remain property of HSA, and will be distributed through the Cambridge Public Library. The readers will read the books and participate in book discussions facilitated by humanities scholars. The facilitator will make a 10 to 15 minute presentation on the book followed by the general discussion.

If you would like to be a reader for these series, please contact the Haitian Studies Association at P.O. Box 1451, West Somerville, MA 02144, (617) 287-7138.

Bilingual Education Symposium

On Saturday, April 3, 1993 HSA and the Haitian Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Center (HABETAC) at City College co-sponsored a symposium on Haitian bilingual education at the City College of New York. The symposium drew educators, students, and administrators from the New York metropolitan area, Boston, and Miami. It included plenary and concurrent sessions on quality bilingual education, parental involvement, material development, teacher development, language development, and Haitian vs. Haitian Creole.

The many presentations featured at the symposium emphasized the fact that during the past ten years there has been a significant increase in the number of Haitian migrants in the United States. The new Haitian immigrants have settled primarily in Miami, the New York metropolitan area, and the greater Boston area. Confronted with a new wave of Haitian immigrants, school districts in these areas have been required to meet effectively the needs of Haitian students. Consequently, there has been a rise in Haitian bilingual programs throughout the northeast and Florida.

The concerns that were raised at the symposium coincide with similar issues voiced by a group of bilingual program directors in position paper prepared for an HSA bilingual symposium held in Somerville, Massachusetts on April 11, 1992. The concerns fall into six general areas.

- The need for qualified and certified bilingual Haitian teachers.

- A shortage of curriculum materials available in Creole.

- The lack of sufficient assessment instruments available that are written in Creole and specifically designed to assess students’ academic proficiency in either the Creole language or academic subject areas.

- The lack Haitian parental participation in the education of Haitian children in bilingual programs.

- The need to formulate a local, regional, and national language policy that will effectively serve the needs of all Haitian students (Creole vs. French).

- A large numbers of Haitian students arriving in the United States with limited prior schooling and are illiterate their native language.

The issues were debated at length and this debate will continue until parents, administrators, and educators arrive at workable strategies to effectively meet the needs of Haitian bilingual students. All the participants agreed, however, that Haitian Creole and English should be the language of instruction in Haitian bilingual programs in the United States.

HSA Fifth Annual Conference--"Governance: Conflict Resolution in Haitian Institutions"

HSA will hold its fifth annual conference will-- "Governance: Conflict Resolution in Haitian Institutions" on October 15 -16, 1993 at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, Boston Massachusetts. The conference will address the broader social, cultural, economic, political and institutional issues that have prevent-
ed the establishment of democratic institutions and economic stability in Haiti. The general intent of the conference is to deal with the problem of governance in Haiti from a comparative perspective, borrowing from similar experiences in Latin America and Africa. (Continued on page)

Publications


These numbers on Haiti received first prize for the best "special issue" of 1992 by the Council of Editors of Learned Journals. The issue includes Vévé A. Clark, "When Womb Waters Break: The Emergence of Haitian New Theater, 1953-1987," a paper read at the fourth annual meeting of the Haitian Studies Association, October 1992; Carrol F. Coates, "The Haitian Intellectual Scene: Creative Writers, Essayists, and Visual Artists" (notes on all Haitian contributors to the two issues); Maximilien Laroche, "Music, Dance, and Religion; and numerous other articles on Haitian literature, painting, architecture, and vodou, in addition to a wide selection of excerpts from Haitian writers.


Activities by HSA Members

Alix Cantave, Carrol F. Coates, and Leslie G. Desmangles participated in a symposium on "The World of Haitian Vodou" which was held on April 17, 1993 at the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University.

Gerdes Fleurant has been named Associate Professor of Music at Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts. He will teach ethnomusicology of the Caribbean and Latin America.

Frantz A. Leconte presided at a colloquium on "Haiti: Language, Education, Culture and Literature". The event was organized at Kingsborough Community College on May 20, 1993. Carrol F. Coates presented a talk and poetry reading in tribute to Haitian poet, Jean-Fernand Briere, who died in Haiti, at the age of 83, on December 24, 1992.

HSA STEERING COMMITTEE

Alix Cantave
Carrol F. Coates
Gerdès Fleurant
Peter Kinney
Jocelyn McCalla
Jill Netchinsky

Anthony V. Catanese
Leslie G. Desmangles
Carole Berotte Joseph
Frantz Leconte
Marc Prou
Karen Richman

HSA Newsletter June 1993 4
Friday October 15, 1993

8:30-- Registration
9:00--9:30
Introductions: HSA
Welcome: U Mass/Boston

10:00--11:45 Communication, Culture and the Media Within the Haitian State
Panelists: Leara Rhodes, University of South Carolina, "Nature and Function of Media Within the State"
          Alta Mae Stevens, Brown University, "Cries and Whispers: Thoughts on Some Informal Haitian Networks"
          Gage Averill, Wesleyan University, "Commercial Music and Cultural Policy in Haiti"
Discussant: Deborah Toler, New School for Social Research

12:00--1:15: Luncheon (on your own)

1:30--3:00 New Directions in the Haitian Political Discourse
Panelists: Jean-Claude Gerlus, SUNY at Binghamton, "We the Forefathers: Military Landlords, Politics and Economy in Post-Revolutionary Haiti"
          Claude Moïse, Canada, "Rethinking Haiti: Greatness and Miseries of a Democratic Movement" (French)
          Laënnec Hurbon, Université Quisqueya, Haiti, "Nationalism and Democracy"
Discussant: Carrol F. Coates, SUNY at Binghamton

3:15--4:45 The State and Educational Institutions
Panelists: Jacques-Edouard Alexis, Université Quisqueya, Haiti, "Propositions for a Management Structure for Higher Education in Haiti (Creole)
          Charles Tardieu, Université Quisqueya, Haiti, "Educational Privatization and the Role of the Haitian State"
          Marc Prou, University of Massachusetts/Boston, "Education and National Development: The Haitian Perspective"
Discussant: Gerdes Fleurannt, Wellesley College

5:00--6:00 Keynote Address
Speaker: Jean Metellus, Poet, Novelist, Playwright and Neurosurgeon, Paris, France
Topic: "Perspectives pour Haïti"

6:15 Reception

7:30 Tribute to Jean-Fernand Bierre, Roger Dorsinville and Jean Fourchard
Maximilien Laroche, Université Laval
Marie Jose N'Zengu-Tayo, University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica.

Saturday, October 16, 1993

9:00-- Registration

9:00--11:00 The Emergence of Grassroots Institutions in Haiti
Film: This Other Haiti
Panelists: Robert Maguire, Inter-American Foundation
Claudette Warleigh, Washington Office on Haiti
Speakers from Haiti
Discussant: TBA

11:00--12:45 Economic and Agricultural Reform within the State
Panelists: Uli Locher, McGill University, "Urban Bias in Haiti: the Problem Becomes the Solution"
Anthony V. Catanese, DePauw University, "Issues for Economic Stability in Haiti: An Economist’s List and
Suggestions"
Ariel Azaël, Université Quisqueya, Haiti, "Constraints on Agricultural Modernization in Haiti"
Discussant: Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee

12:45--2:00 Luncheon

2:15--3:45 Comparative Perspective on Democratization
Panelists: Alex Dupuy, Wesleyan University, "Managing Democracy in Haiti in the New World Order"
Guy Martin, Clark University, Atlanta, GA, "Democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa"
Discussant: Robert Fanton, University of Virginia

4:00--6:00 Roundtable Discussion on Governance in Haiti
Participants: Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee
Robert Fanton, University of Virginia
Alex Dupuy, Wesleyan University
Laëmec Hurbon, Université Quisqueya, Haiti
Others
Willard Johnson, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

6:00--8:00 Reception

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Name_________________________________________ Date____________________

Address__________________________________________

Organization_________________________________________ Phone____________

Conference Registration Fees

___ $20 general registration (includes Saturday lunch)
___ $15 students (WID) and senior citizens

___ Total Enclosed

Make check payable to the Haitian Studies Association
return to:
Haitian Studies Association
P.O. Box 1451
West Somerville, MA 02144

For information, call HSA at (617) 287-7138

For Hotel and accommodations, contact Susse Chalet Inn at (617) 287-9100 (located 5 minutes from UMass Boston).
Calendar of Events

The Haitian Creole Summer Institute will hold a three-week intensive Haitian Creole language program from July 5–23, 1993 at the Odwin Learning Center in Dorchester, Massachusetts. The session offers six hours of intensive language instruction five days a week. For application and additional information, contact Kè Kontre at 1063 Washington Street, Dorchester, MA 02124. Phone: (617) 296-7449.

The Haitian Studies Association (HSA) is an independent organization that is designed to promote scientific research on Haiti and Haitians. It seeks to identify and catalogue current publications on Haiti, and endeavors to establish a network of competent experts to address Haitian issues related to Haiti, both from disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Membership in the association is open to all persons interested in advancing its goals and objectives, regardless of ideological persuasion, ethnic origin, occupation, residency, or academic discipline. HSA is led by a Steering Committee which is responsible for setting the organization's policies and orientation.

The Association was formally established at Tufts University in 1989 by a group of scholars, educators, professionals, and community residents. It is incorporated as a non-profit charitable and educational organization pursuant to the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HAITIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name____________________
Address__________________
__________________________
Affiliation_______________
Telephone_______________
Field of Study___________
Interest in Haitian Studies___
________________________
________________________
I would like to serve on the following committee(s)
Editing____ Nominating____
Fund Raising____ Events____
Membership $35.00____
Student $20.00____

The membership fee includes the annual conference proceedings and the HSA newsletter.

Return to:

Haitian Studies Association
P.O. Box 1451
West Somerville, MA 02144