THE HAITIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

The Haitian Studies Association (HSA) is a tax-exempt educational organization. HSA promotes research on Haiti and Haitians, identifies and disseminates information on Haiti, and has an international network of competent experts to address Haitian issues, both from disciplinary and interdisciplin ary perspectives. HSA serves as a resource for various institutions and policymakers in and out of Haiti, encourages discussion and debate on all aspects of Haitian society in Haiti and in the diaspora. HSA seeks to foster linkages and working relationships with educational, research, and civic institutions in Haiti.

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

Steering Committee:
Leslie G. Desmangles, President
Marc Prou, Treasurer
Carole Berotte Joseph, Secretary
Anthony V. Cantane  
Carol F. Coates
Gerdes Fleurant
Frantz Leconte
Jocelyn McCalla
Karen Richman
Alix Cantave, Executive Secretary

EDUCATION PROJECT IN HAITI

HSA received a grant from FOKAL to support an education project in Haiti. The project will focus on: 1) developing a needs assessment for teacher training based on preliminary evaluation of certain education projects; 2) developing a teacher training curriculum to reflect the needs assessment and preliminary evaluations; and 3) conducting teacher training workshops. This demonstration project will take place in the Central Plateau area. The lessons learned will be replicated in other areas of the country.

The first component of the project will entail a preliminary evaluation and examination of the Sisters of St. Therese school in Papaye, the school in Gange Socio-medical complex, the FOKAL educational projects, and the National Education Plan. This exercise will facilitate the development of need assessment identifying the kind of additional skills and formation that teachers in the Plateau Central area may need.

The second component of the project includes the development of a teacher training curriculum continued on page 11
Volume I (one issue) of the Journal of Haitian Studies appeared in the fall of 1995. In fall 1996, the two issues of Volume II appeared simultaneously. With Volume III (1997), two issues are scheduled to appear sequentially in late spring or summer and the fall. The policy of the Journal is to encourage ongoing submission of substantial articles on a diversity of topics, although papers given at the annual meeting of the Haitian Studies Association may also be submitted for consideration. All papers are now sent to two or three specialists for critical evaluation, making of the Journal a "refereed journal" in the accepted sense of the term.

A more detailed "Guide for Contributors" is published in each issue of the Journal (copies of the "Guide..." are available upon request). Briefly, authors should limit articles submitted to approximately 6200 words or 25 double-spaced manuscript pages. They should be submitted in three print copies with an electronic version on a 3.5" diskette, formatted in any version of WordPerfect (DOS or Windows) or in ASCII (Apple/Macintosh formatting is not acceptable). Reviews of new book-length or monographic studies on some aspect of Haiti are encouraged. They should be 1000-1500 words in length (up to six double-spaced pages) and should be submitted to the Editor of the Journal. Reviews (but NOT articles) may be submitted as an attached document to an email message addressed to the Editor (see below). Potential reviewers should check with the Editor before writing a review. Books for review should be submitted by the publisher or author to the Editor (who will, in turn, refer the book to the Book Review Editor or to a qualified reviewer).

The Editor may be contacted most efficiently by email or fax: Carrol F. Coates, Department of Romance Languages & Literatures, Binghamton University, SUNY, Binghamton, NY 13902-6000, email: ccoates@binghamton.edu, fax: (607) 777-2644, telephone: (607) 777-4632.
Guide for Contributors

Journal of Haitian Studies accepts articles in English, Kreyol, French, and Spanish. Abstracts of 150 words will be published in English, Kreyol, and the original language (if different). The author should submit the abstract in the original and, when possible, in English or Kreyol (where relevant) along with the full manuscript.

Contributors should prepare manuscripts in accordance with the directions in either the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, fourth edition (1995) or The Chicago Manual of Style..., 14 Edition (1993). Please observe the following principles:

1. All articles should be submitted to the Editor. The normal maximum length is 6200 words (approximately 25 pages of double-spaced text, U.S. format), including endnotes and List of Works Cited. Include an abstract of 150 words.

2. Parenthetical references with full publication information furnished in a "List of Works Consulted," should be used as much as possible. Endnotes should be used sparingly for explanatory material. In preparing the manuscript, use default style for endnotes (that is, do NOT insert any special formatting codes in the individual notes--these are extremely tedious to remove or override for purposes of consistency with the style of the Journal...).

3. Please submit two (2) hard copies on standard format paper with one (1) electronic version on a 3.5" diskette (DOS). Any version of WordPerfect is preferable, but other DOS word processing programs may be acceptable. If submitting in another language, use English-language keyboard (accents can be keyed in for Kreyol, French, and Spanish). The use of a French-keyboard configuration may render the text unreadable and, in any case, will increase tremendously the difficulty of formatting for publication. Use a minimum of formatting codes with U.S. punctuation style--2 spaces following all END PUNCTUATION (periods, exclamation points, interrogation points, and colons); 1 space following commas and semi-colons.

4. The standard for English spelling is Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language. For articles, quotations or references in Kreyol, use standardized Kreyol orthography as in the dictionaries published by Fequiere Vilsaint: Fekeye Vilsen ak Mod Etelou, Diksyone Kreyol Vilsen (1994); Kidsyone Kreyol Angle (1991); Diksyone Angle Kreyol/English Kreyol Dictionary (1991); all available from EDUCA VISION, 7130 Cove Place, Temple Terrace, FL 33617.

5. Each submission will be evaluated as a blind submission by at least two evaluators. The test of the article should omit the author's name and any references that would permit identification. The author's name, address (home and institutional affiliation), telephone number and, if possible, email and fax addresses should be furnished on a separate cover page.


Reviews should be sent to the Book Review Editor:
Dean Alex Dupuy
Wesleyan College
Middletown, CT 06459
email: adupuy@mail.wesleyan.edu
MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT
Leslie G. Desmangles

Dear Haitian Studies Association Members:
One tout manm Asosyasyon Etid Ayisyen:
Chers Membres d’Association des Études Haitiennes:

It’s been a whole year since I wrote to each of you last about HSA. I am delighted to report that the association has made great strides in this past year, as I reported at the information session at the closing of the annual conference at Montrouis in Haiti last November 3. With this letter, I wish to summarize for your information some to the activities that HSA undertook this past year.

1) On June 20-22, 1996, HSA organized a special conference on the political and economic recovery of Haiti after the thirty-one year rule of the Duvalier oligarchy. Held in Montrouis, a town about an hour and half’s drive or so north of Port-au-Prince, this conference was one of two consecutive meetings that focused on the Haiti’s economic and political recovery. The first meeting was held in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, in September 1995. Entitled, “Dialogue for Development: Political and Economic Reconstruction of Haiti.”

2) The June conference was important for HSA. It helped isolate many issues that will form the bases for undertaking several worthy projects that could be developed by the various HSA Task Forces in the future. One of such projects is the area of public education developed with the cooperation of

Drumming demonstration during conference

Photo Credit: Legrace Benson and Gerdes Fleurant
the HSA Task Force on Education. HSA submitted a proposal to the Open Society Institute in Haiti (FOKAL) for a program in education that will begin as early as August 1997. This foundation granted HSA $24,000 to support the first phase of a three-part project that includes the development and implementation of a pilot project in the town of Thomonde, in the Plateau Central area. The program has several goals: curriculum development and teacher training. It will involve the assistance of both the state and private universities in Haiti, as well as various forms of educational, student and faculty exchanges between the State and Quisqueya universities in Haiti and the University of Massachusetts-Boston. More specifically, this program will help improve the quality of education in the Plateau Central area, as well as develop a curriculum that includes various forms occupational training, especially topics related to agriculture and the environment. Alix Cantave will go to Thomonde in Haiti toward the end of May to make the preliminary arrangements for the creation of this project. If it proves successful, we will approach both the Ford Foundation and FOKAL (or possibly other philanthropic organizations) for additional funds to broaden the scope of this project to include other communities in Haiti. We would also hope to expand the exchange programs to include institutions other than the University of Massachusetts in the United States and Canada.

3) The prospect of sponsoring many new projects in Haiti necessitated the board to recognize the need to open an HSA office in Haiti, and to appoint a coordinator on site to serve, not only as the coordinator for this and future projects, but as an HSA representative in Haiti. At its meeting on February 23, the HSA board voted to appoint Edwidge Baluntansky as the person responsible for the HSA office in Haiti. HSA will also use the Info-Services facilities in Port-au-Prince as its headquarters.

4) For the first time this past year, HSA held its eighth annual meeting at Montrous between October 30 and November 3, 1996. The theme of the conference was, Beyond 1804: Consensus and Nation Building for the Twenty-First Century. It was judged to be HSA’s most successful conference, with nearly 250 persons attending over the span of three days. A total of 114 HSA members traveled to Haiti from the United States alone to attend the meeting. The overwhelming response to the “Call for Papers” issued on the Internet about nine months before the meeting necessitated that we schedule (for the first time in our history) two panels simultaneously. Perhaps the most important accomplishment of the meeting was the fostering of dialogues between scholars residing in Haiti and those living abroad. Moreover, a tour of Cap-Haitien, Milot, and the Citadelle Henri Christophe preceded the annual

Cultural dance performance
Message from the President (continued)

5) An important accomplishment of the 1996 meeting was the organization of an HSA student caucus whose members attend various colleges and universities. I met with them in Haiti last October, and I look forward to their contributions to HSA in the future.

6) Our ninth annual meeting's theme for 1997 is "Haitian Identity: Affirmation and Challenges," and will be held on October 24-25, in Detroit, Michigan. This theme encompasses issues of identity, history, politics, and culture, as well as the economic, political, and historical changes affecting the Haitian community in the United States and throughout the world. The dates of the conference will coincide with the large exhibit of Haitian art entitled The Art of Haitian Vodou, which opened at the Detroit Institute of Arts last year. The exhibit has been touring the United States and will be at the Detroit Institute of Arts during the 1997 conference. The exhibit is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, and all proceeds from the sale of the exhibit have been donated to the University of Michigan's Institute for Haitian Studies.

7) The journal Haitian Studies: A Journal of Haitian Research, Volume 1, Number 1, published by the University of Michigan, has been well received. The journal was established in 1995 to provide a forum for research and discussion of Haitian culture, history, and politics. The journal is published biannually, and issues are available for purchase from the publisher.

8) The first issue of the journal was published in the fall of 1995. The journal's editorial board includes scholars from the United States, the Caribbean, and Europe. The journal is indexed in several major academic databases, and articles submitted for publication are reviewed by a blind panel of experts. The journal is a valuable resource for researchers and educators interested in Haitian studies.

9) Student from PAP, who attended the conference

Site Committee: Her address is: Mangrove College, Detroit, MI 48221.

I would like to thank the Site Committee Chair for the extraordinary work that she has done to make the conference a success that it was. At its annual meeting this past November, the HSA decided to hold its annual meeting in Haiti every two years. We will meet in Cap-Haitien in October 1998. I have followed as planned, this two-year cycle should place us in Haiti in year 2000 for the bicentennial celebration of Haiti's independence.

This past year, two more issues were published: Volume 2, number one of Volume 2, number two.

After consulting with the editors of the journal, we narrowed the special tasks of forming an editorial board, appointing a book review editor. I named Carol C. Reville as editor in chief of the journal.
and abroad, and have played a significant role in bringing these communities in closer contact with each other. Thanks to Alix Cantave and Carrol Coates, the journal received its copyright status last spring, was assigned an ISSN number, and is currently included in the list of academic journals published by scholarly associations in the United States. For the moment, two issues are published annually, but there are plans to publish the journal quarterly. I encourage all HSA members to request that the libraries of their respective institutions subscribe to the journal for the minimal cost of $35.00 for two issues annually.

9) I want to report that HSA is currently listed in the directory of scholarly societies in the United States and Canada. I would like to suggest the creation of a home page for the association on the World Wide Web and hence, would like to create a Home Page Committee. I would encourage members with such creative ability to volunteer to serve on this committee that will help to construct this page. Please write to Alix or myself for this project.

10) For the first time this year, the board membership will begin its rotation in accordance with the association’s by-laws (Article VII, section 2). The by-laws mandate that there be a minimum number of 11 members on the board and a maximum of 13 (Article IV, Section 1). At their meeting on February 22, 1997, the board voted to limit its number to 11. There are now 9 members serving on the board. One person currently serving will retire at the end of this year. The HSA membership will therefore need to elect 3 persons to the board this year. Each will serve a three year term.

11) On December 31, 1997, I will have completed two terms of two years as president of the association, and I will retire from the post and pass the chancel (oil lamp) to someone else. Abiding by the association’s by-laws which you approved last year, I appointed a nominating committee at our annual meeting last October 1996, with Gerdes Fleurant as its chair, to elect nominate members to the HSA board (Article VII Section 3). They in turn will elect the president and vice-president of the association. Article VII, Section 4 of the by-laws states that a list of candidates for the board be put on a slate sent to the HSA members along with ballots for casting their votes. The results of the election are to announced during our annual meeting in Detroit on October 22-25, 1997. The HSA by-laws also dictate the following:

a. that the ballots and the slate of candidates be distributed to the members at least one month prior to the date of the election, and should contain a curriculum vitae for each candidate (Article VII, Section 4),

b. that both the new president and vice-president be elected by the board and that they take office on the first of the year, that is, January 1, 1998 (Article VII, Section 1).

I am requesting that you nominate yourself or persons whom you think would want to serve on the board, and send their names to Gerdes Fleurant at Wellesley College, or to Alix Cantave at the HSA headquarters at the University of Massachusetts-Boston. You will be receiving both the slate of candidates and the ballots within the next few months, and I encourage you to attend to this election process straight away and to vote for three candidates for the board.

As already noted, my term as president ends on December 31, 1997. It was a privilege to have served as HSA’s first president. I have worked hard to maintain the vision of a community of scholars with diverse fields of interest. I have also tried to maintain this diversity and to provide the opportunity for the free exchange of ideas in an atmosphere of mutual respect, tolerance, and camaraderie. I believe that has been our strength as an association in the past, and I sincerely hope that the vision will continue to prevail in the future.

continued on page 9
NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The ninth annual conference of HSA will take place on October 22-25, 1997, at the Museum of African American History, Detroit, MI. The theme of the conference “Haitians in the Pan-African Community: Culture, Identity, Affirmation” encompasses issues of culture, identity, socialization, assimilation, acculturation, adaptation as well as the economic, political, and social relations and attitudes of Haitians toward the larger community and vice-versa. The theme also includes how Haitians view, and viewed by, other communities and societies.

Art of haitian vodou Exhibition
The UCLA-Fowler exhibition of “The Art of Haitian Vodou” will be showing at the Museum of African American History during the Conference.

For more information please contact the Haitian Studies Project, The University of Massachusetts-Boston, McCormack 2-211, 100 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA 02125-3393; phone: (617) 287-7138, fax: (617) 287-6511, e-mail: hsa@umbsky.cc.umb.edu; or Karen F. Davis, HSA Conference Chair, Marygrove College, Detroit, MI 48221, phone: (313)862-8000 ext. 374, fax: (313) 864-6670, e-mail: kf@davis@aol.com.

HAITIAN SUMMER SEMINAR
AUGUST 8 -- 20, 1997

HAITI: PEOPLE, CULTURE, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Haitian Studies Association invites you to participate in a special Summer seminar which will take place in Haiti on August 8 -- 20, 1997. This seminar is designed to facilitate better understanding of Haiti through total immersion into its culture, environment, language as well as its economic, political and social realities. Participants will visit significant historical, cultural, educational, and ecological sites in the capital city of Port-au-Prince, the coastal town of Gonaives, the Northern city of Cap Haitien, and the Southern coastal town of Jacmel. Additional activities in Haiti will include presentations by local experts, participation in local cultural and educational activities, meeting with civic and political leaders, and visits to various communities, markets, economic, and cultural centers in different parts of the country.

Prices per Person, USD, for Hotel Accomodations and In-country Transportation
PRICES DO NOT INCLUDE AIRFARE
Single............$1,000.00
Double............$840.00

Prices include the following:
2 nights at Hotel Mont Joli in Cap Haitien (taxes,
breakfast and dinner), 2 nights at Hotel La Jacmelienne in Jacmel--taxes, breakfast and dinner), 5 nights at Parc Hotel in Port-au-Prince (taxes and breakfast), airport/hotel/airport transportation, tour of Port-au-Prince, tour of Kenscoff, lunch at Chez Frantz Restaurant in Gonaïves, lunch at Plantation Tosia in Cap Haitien, excursion to Citadelle Laferriere and Sans Soucis, tour of the town of Jacmel.

For travel arrangements, please contact Nick Ezenwa of Prime Ventures Travel at (800) 761-9176.

University Credits
Students may take this travel seminar for three college credits by registering for independent studies in the Africana Studies Department at Umass Boston.

For more information & complete itinerary contact:
The Haitian Studies Project ~ UMass Boston ~
McCormark 2-211 ~ Boston, MA 02125-3393,
(617) 287-7138 ~ fax: (617) 287-6511 ~ email: hsa@umbsky.cc.umb.edu

Marc Prou, Treasurer of HSA

Message from the President
(continued from page 7 )

As the Haitian proverb notes, “Yon sey swet pa kapab manje gombo (one cannot eat okra with one finger).” Likewise, no part of my tasks could have been accomplished without the cooperation of many persons to whom I owe a special debt of gratitude. I wish to thank the HSA board members with whom I’ve collaborated closely in the past four years. A very special thanks to Carrol Coates for his indefatigable work in editing the journal, to Carol Berotte Joseph for her work both as secretary to the board and chair of the Education Task Force, and to Marc Prou for his work on the Summer Creole Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Boston. But most of all, I also want to recognize Alix Cantave, the executive director of the association, for his continued commitment to HSA. Alix is well known to all of us for his boundless energy, his unwavering sense of determination, and his earnest commitment to the association. I thank him for doing the impossible: to coordinate the work of the association with that of the various foundations that have awarded us grants in the past. Most of all, I shall miss my “furtive” meetings with him at “our usual place on route 84,” the little, quaint coffee shop (and sometimes the adjoining large, pitched parking lot) at the Old Sturbridge Village Inn, midway between Boston and Hartford, where we drank many cups of hot coffee and conducted so much of our HSA business meetings in the past.

I am delighted for the opportunity to send you this response. I hope to see you all in Detroit this October. If not, then in Cap-Haitien in 1998. In the meantime, I wish you the best in all your endeavors.

Kenbe fem.

Leslie G. Desmangles
President
The Haitian Studies Association (HSA)
ECOLumn

A place where the sun takes no vacation

by Florence E. Sergile

I would like to open this ECOLumn by sharing with you my research experience in the field this past summer. The map on my lap indicated East-North-East. There, I discovered one of the most beautiful corners of Haiti. On the Atlantic Ocean, a coastal subtropical dry forest shelters a nature rich in xerophytic plants, cacti, marine birds and reptiles. I am often asked whether or not we have such plants or animals in Haiti. I must acknowledge that my heart missed some beats. I had many of the answers, live, just in front of me. Yes, we have laughing gulls, yes, we have brown pelicans, yes, we have tricolored herons and we have a very special bird, the Mangrove Canary. All of these inhabit the Lagonaux-boeufs and the Fort-Liberté Bay.

The Lagonaux-boeufs is a brackish water estuarine lagoon. Its 450 hectares are bordered by a mixed hardwood dry forest and mangrove swamp with 3 different species: the red mangrove, the white mangrove and the black mangrove, which are visited by marvelous butterflies. In the lagoon and on its shores, flamingoes, green back herons, sand pipers, and killdeer find native species of fish, mollusks and aquatic plants.

The Fort-Liberté Bay is an inland bay, open to the Atlantic Ocean by a gorge. Many of its creeks are protected by more mangroves. During the colonial period, the French built a series of forts and batteries along the coral reef coasts, between the sea the mesquites, gumbo limbos and cactus trees. In the middle of the bay lies a little island, Ile Bayau, which was a buccaneer site.

As I admire the splendors of the bay, I am overwhelmed by how little of the wonderful parts of Haiti are well known and visited. Nature of this area have been admired, fished, farmed and exploited for more than 6,000 years, by the Tainos, Spanish and French settlers, those who worked in the sisal company, cattle raisers, charcoal makers, the fisherman, sailors, farmers and others. More recently however, this area had been overexploited.

I am reading my notes and I have legitimate fear for the people there. The farmers in the Fort-Liberté area complain that the sun never takes a vacation and is hotter every year. Younger mesquites and the mangroves are cut every day to make charcoal, bits of charcoal
ECOLumn (continued)
produced today are smaller than the one produced last week. The grass is gone and the cows are eating the red soil. The lagoon and the bay are fished every day and the fish are less than 50 cm long. The ruins of the French forts are disintegrating. Plastic is everywhere. Disposable plastic cups, bottles and containers litter almost every corner of the country at a time when "environment," "sustainable" development and "ecotourism" are significant concepts to many of us.

I am an agronomist and conservationist concerned about sustainable development, and above all a human being who is perplexed about the future of the natural resources in Haiti. New interests in Haiti are stressing economic growth as a means to provide employment and improve the lives of Haitian people. I raised a long list of questions concerning the status of the environment, the utilization of natural resources and their sustainability. In many economic plans scant attention is given to the fragility of natural resources. In the absence of a management plan, the renewable natural resources can change into non-renewable resources and lead to more devastation and poverty.

Only a development program that addresses the utilization of resources now but includes their conservation for future generations will provide sustainable development to Haiti. In this eastern corner, the potential for integrated and long term programs are obvious. Linking natural environment, production and its rich history for the benefit of the population can improve the quality of life, increase production and generate employment in many fields such as fisheries, ecotourism, agroforestry and cattle raising. Then, the sun would have no reason to go on vacation.

A place where the sun takes no vacation.

Slavery in the Francophone World: Literary, Cultural, and Historical Perspectives

Georgia Center
University of Georgia
October 15-16, 1997

Theatrical Event 7:00 p.m. October 15, 1997. English-language premier In the Time of the Revolution by Maryse Conde.-A play about the slave revolts in Haiti and Guadeloupe. Playwright, world-renowned Guadeloupian writer and professor of French at Columbia University will participate in the symposium and attend the production of the play.

Information: Doris Y. Kadish, Organizer,
Department of Romance Languages,
University of Georgia, Athens, 30602.
dkadish@uga.cc.uga.edu
http://www.uga.edu/~romlan/
seminar1.htm

Education Project in Haiti
(continued from page 1)
designed for practicing teachers and recent secondary school graduates who would like to enter the teaching profession. The curriculum will reflect the standard for the Certificat d'Etudes Pedagogique and the criteria for university credits.

The third and last component of the project is the actual implementation of the curriculum via the development of a teacher training program to take place in the Plateau Central area. The intent is to develop an institute which is affiliated with universities and which can provide training to practicing teachers and recent graduates who are planning to become teachers.
Haitian Creole
Summer Institute

The Haitian Creole Institute will take place on July 14-August 7, 1997 at the University of Massachusetts Boston. The Institute is hosted by the Department of Africana Studies. This year’s Institute includes two courses: Haitian Creole Language (Billst 480A) and Haiti: People, Culture, and the Environment (Billst 480B or Educ 597D).

The Institute offers three levels of intensive instruction in Haitian Creole for non-native speakers. These three-week courses are designed for beginners, intermediates, and those with advanced command of Haitian Creole. The goal of the program is twofold: to help students acquire oral, reading, and writing proficiency and to promote understanding of Haitian culture and customs.

You may register by phone, fax, mail, or in person. To register by phone call 617-287-7916. Fax or mail registration requires a registration form available in the 1997 Summer Bulletin: call 617-287-7900 to request a copy. To register in person, come to the Summer Registration Center, Wheatley Hall, second floor, room 211.

If you have any questions about registration, please call our information line at 617-287-7914. Course fees are $135 per credit (undergraduate) or $150 per credit (graduate). In addition, there are registration and service fees amounting to $84.00.

NEWSLETTER
All materials to be published in this newsletter may be sent to:

Leara Rhodes
College of Journalism and Mass Communications
The University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30602 USA
ldrhotades@uga.cc.uga.edu

Plans to Put Archival Material in St. Martial on the Web

The library at the College of Saint Martial, Port au Prince, has been visited by only a handful of North American scholars in the past seventy-five years. Because of distances, volatile politics, language differences and the residues of colonialism, the manuscripts in it have not been accessible to those people in the Caribbean, Africa or the United States who have been irrevocably affected by them. For the last twenty years the library has been stored in barns, under houses and in the buildings of various religious orders in Haiti. While the books were in hiding, the library’s guardians were in exile. The books and Fathers have now returned to Saint Martial. The books are in desperate need of conservation and repair.

The entire collection contains more than 7,000 books and manuscripts which date from the 16th Century, documenting the history of world slavery with a special emphasis on Caribbean history. There are about 1,000 books which relate specifically to Haitian slavery and at least as many manuscripts dealing with the English colonies. The latter are the result of the visits of abolitionists and Prince Saunders the Free Black New Englander who wanted to settle Haiti with freemen before Liberia was founded.

In May 1996, when Judith Thorn first visited the library as an independent scholar, it was primarily to verify its contents. The books were in a steel vault in the heart of the maze which makes up Port au Prince. Despite the usual setbacks experienced in countries that are not world powers, officials at UNESCO allowed her to scan many images and texts at their offices. She left these images at Saint Martial for other scholars. This year, the books were reinstalled at their renovated, air-temperature controlled home.

In June 1997, Judith Thorn will be returning to Haiti to scan many of the rarest books for UNESCO’s Slavery Route project. These images will be made available to everyone through the World Wide Web. Because she will already be working at the library at Saint Martial, this is an ideal opportunity to begin an effort to save this library collection.

The library at the College of Saint Martial is a national treasure and there are other libraries in Haiti which can profit from this work as well. The first step is to make the information available to everyone. The second step is to save the books themselves. We need you to help.

Judith has received several grants, but she will need additional funds to work on the project. Those of you who wish to contribute to Judith’s work can send their tax deductible donations to:

Bay Area Haitian Coalition
c/o Library Project
404 Bryant Street
San Francisco, CA 94107

Please write “Library Project” on your cheque.