



Winthrop-King Institute for
CONTEMPORARY FRENCH AND FRANCOPHONE STUDIES
Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics
Florida State University, Tallahassee

Haiti 2011

International Symposium

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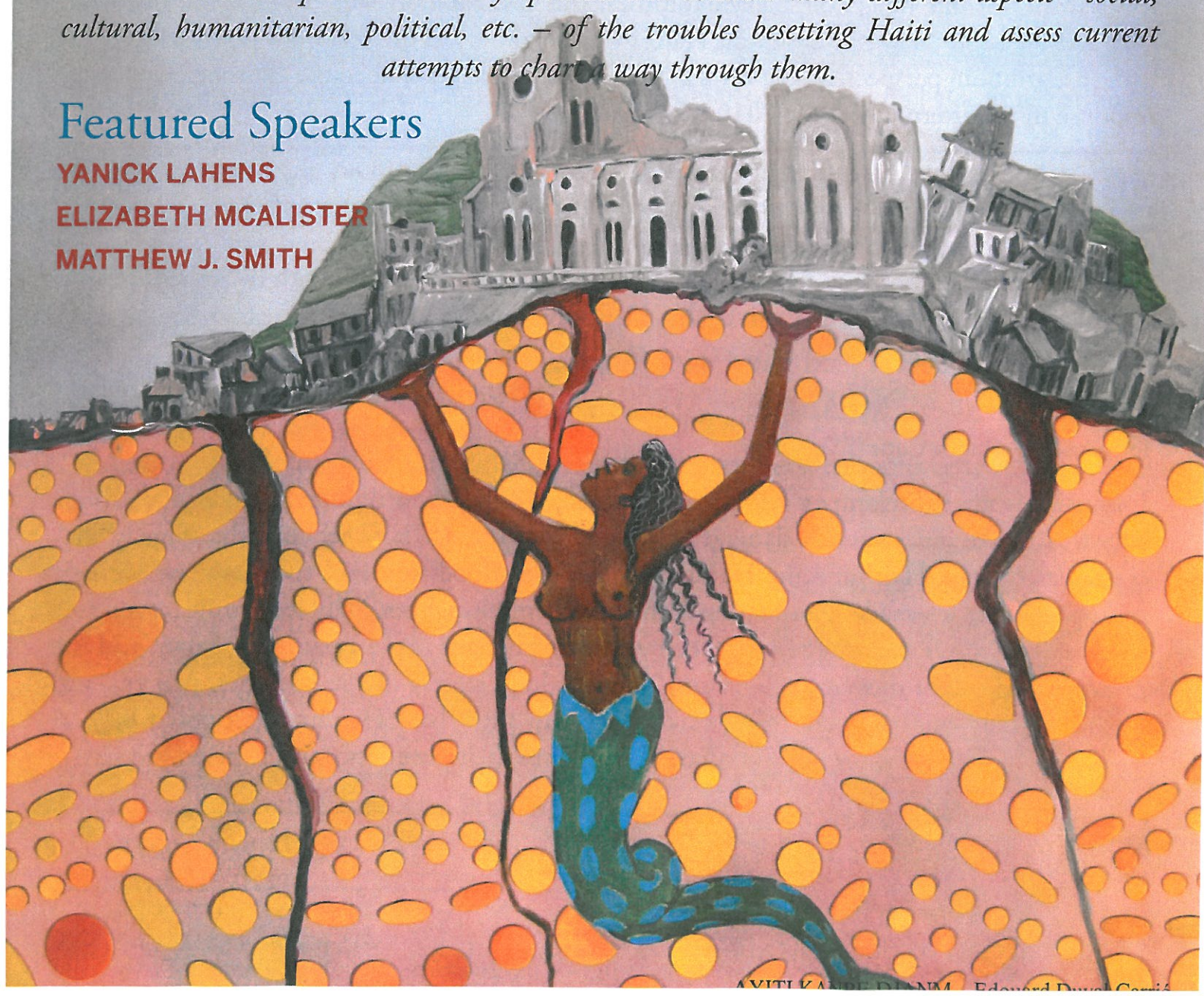
A year after the earthquake in Haiti, how has the nation coped with the destruction of January 12, 2010? How do present challenges compare with earlier periods of adversity? What can the international community do to help? What way lies ahead amid the political uncertainty arising from the disputed presidential election and the return to Haiti of former dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier? Speakers at this symposium will consider many different aspects - social, cultural, humanitarian, political, etc. - of the troubles besetting Haiti and assess current attempts to chart a way through them.

Featured Speakers

YANICK LAHENS

ELIZABETH MCALISTER

MATTHEW J. SMITH



Program

2:15-3:15 pm

Diffenbaugh 009 – *in English*

On the Faultlines of History:

Haiti, the Caribbean, and the 2010 Earthquake

Speaker: **Matthew Smith** (University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica)

Introduced by Alec G. Hargreaves (FSU)

The incredible catastrophe of the earthquake in Haiti on 12 January 2010 has powerfully highlighted the physical and figurative interlinking of Haiti and the rest of the Caribbean. Caribbean seismic faultlines create subterranean bonds that cut across linguistic, colonial, and national legacies. In similar ways, the social and political histories travel across the sea along the faultlines, and shape the evolution of the region in profound yet often under-recognized ways. By drawing on this image of shared faultlines, this presentation will examine the historical connections with, and importance of, Haiti to its neighbors in the region. It will also address, using a Caribbean perspective, the ways in which these linkages shaped the Caribbean's disaster response in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake.

3:15-3:45 pm

Coffee break

3:45-4:45 pm

Diffenbaugh 009 – *in English*

The Myth of Haiti's Pact with the Devil:

Evangelical Revival and the Haiti Quake

Speaker: **Elizabeth McAlister** (Wesleyan University)

Introduced by Robyn Cope (FSU)

Immediately after the January 12, 2010 earthquake in Haiti, everybody had questions about why this quake did so much damage. Hilary Clinton said, "It is biblical, the tragedy that continues to stalk Haiti and the Haitian people." Pat Robertson said the quake was related to "a pact Haitians made with the devil" to free themselves from Napoleon's rule. Professor McAlister discusses the resurgence of the myth that Haitians made a pact with Satan, and the growing evangelical movement in Haiti. She will look closely at the speeches, prayers, and songs Haitians sang right after the quake. She will show how Haitians transposed biblical spatiality and a biblical understanding of history onto their experience of the destroyed city.

4:45-5:15 pm

Coffee break

5:15-6:15 pm

Diffenbaugh 009 – in French

Failles

Speaker: **Yanick Lahens**

Introduced by Martin Munro (FSU)

Failles est à la fois un livre de témoignage, un livre de réflexions et une ébauche de roman. C'est donc le témoin, la citoyenne et l'écrivain qui parlent dans ce texte. *Failles* au pluriel parce que la faille géologique qui a cédé le 12 janvier n'a fait que révéler de manière plus brutale les autres failles de la société haïtienne; failles sociales, failles économiques, failles politiques.

Le livre rend compte de ce que je découvre dans les rues de ma ville et ma première impression c'est que: "Livrée, deshabillée, nue, Port-au-Prince n'était point obscène. Ce qui le fut c'est sa mise a nu forcée. Ce qui le fut c'est le scandale de sa pauvreté". Et cette pauvreté a une histoire. Que j'essaie de remonter. En montrant qu'Haiti est une matrice des relations Nord Sud. Que ce séisme n'est pas un malheur de périphérie mais un malheur du monde. Et aujourd'hui le monde est en Haiti au travers de l'aide Internationale. L'idée qu'Haiti est une grande savane a-t-elle pour autant changé?



Le livre essaie de montrer aussi nos failles internes qui sont elles aussi énormes. Failles politiques que j'illustre par un portrait de l'"homo politicus" et failles économiques par un portrait de l'"homo economicus". Sans compter la grande faille sociale entre ceux qui ont et ceux qui n'ont pas.

C'est donc le système dans son ensemble qui a fait son temps car si l'exclusion par ceux qui ont, a donné les résultats que nous savons, les outils déployés par ceux qui n'ont pas pour survivre à l'exclusion, peuvent-ils aujourd'hui représenter une issue à la crise profonde de notre société?

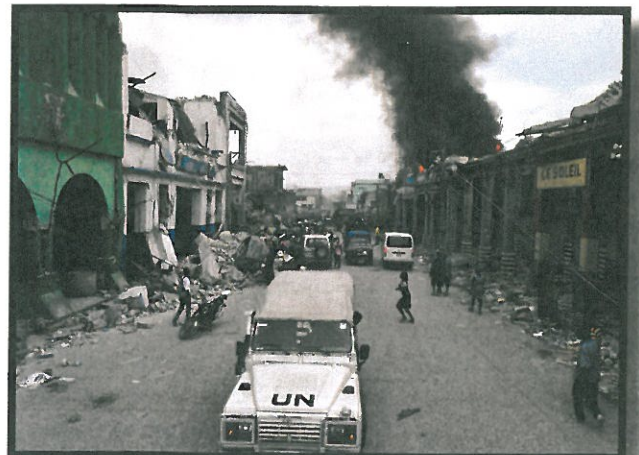
Je termine enfin par l'indication des pierres d'attente qui existent pour cette rupture et par une analyse sommaire de la période pré-électorale et des forces en présence.

6:30-7:30 pm

Reception: Supporting Haiti

During this reception, hosted by the Winthrop-King Institute, FSU students from Haiti will reflect on the impact of the 2010 earthquake and subsequent reconstruction work. There will be opportunities to support the relief effort through a book launch in aid of the Haitian Art Relief Fund or by donating through other agencies.

Beth Moor Lounge, Longmire



Featured Speakers



YANICK LAHENS lives in Haiti. She is the author of short stories, novels, and critical works on Haitian literature and society which have been published in Haitian and international journals. She has published three collections of short stories: *Tante Résia et les Dieux* (1994), *La petite corruption* (1999), and *La folie était venue avec la pluie* (2007). Her first novel, *Dans la maison du père* (2000), was awarded the LiBeraturpreis in Germany. Her second novel, *La couleur de l'aube*, was published in autumn 2008 and was awarded four prizes: the Prix Millepages Littérature française 2008, the Prix Richelieu de la Francophonie in March 2009, the RFO prize in November 2009 and the Prix des lecteurs de la ville de Vincennes in September 2010. A compilation of selected short stories was published in the United States in April 2010 under the title *Aunt Resia and the Spirits*. In October 2010, *Failles*, her essay on the earthquake of 12 January, 2010, was published in France. Yanick Lahens has taught at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, worked on radio programs, and engages in on-the-ground activities in Haiti. She has recently set up a foundation to encourage better targeted support activities for Haiti's young people.



ELIZABETH MCALISTER is Associate Professor in the Religion Department at Wesleyan University, where she also teaches in African American Studies and American Studies. Her research focuses on transnational Afro-Caribbean religions, Caribbean music, and race theory, with a focus on Haiti. McAlister is author of *Rara! Vodou, Power and Performance in Haiti and its Diaspora*, a book and CD published by University of California Press in 2002 which is an ethnography of a musical, religious, and political festival in Haiti. Her second book, *Race, Nation, and Religion in the Americas* (Oxford University Press, 2004), is a volume co-edited with Henry Goldschmidt, which theorizes race and religion as linked constructs. Her current research focuses on relationships and spatial imaginings shared by American and Haitian evangelicals.



MATTHEW J. SMITH is a Senior Lecturer in History at the University of West Indies, Mona. His main area of research is in Haitian politics and society after the U.S. occupation (1915-1934) and Haitian regional migration in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. His book, *Red and Black in Haiti: Radicalism, Conflict, and Political Change, 1934-1957* (UNC Press, 2009), was a winner of the Gordon K. and Sybil Lewis Award for Best Book on the Caribbean (2009-2010) at the Caribbean Studies Association. He has been the recipient of a Fulbright scholarship for graduate studies at the University of Florida; an Andrew Mellon Visiting Professorship at the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Duke University; and a Dubois-Mandela-Rodney Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Haitian Art Relief Fund

*The front cover image, "Ayiti Kanpe Djanm", was designed by Edouard Duval-Carrié.
For information on how to contribute to the Haitian Art Relief Fund go to
www.haitianartrelieffund.org.*