

***RE-IMAGINING THE PRIMITIVE: TOURISM AND THE GOLDEN
AGE***

IN HAITI FROM 1946-1956

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Abstract

- ▶ The history of Haiti's tourism industry in the 20th century encompasses the transnational interactions between Americans, Haitians, and other Caribbean people. These interactions fostered indispensable economic, social, and political exchanges, relationships, and possibilities for the small Caribbean island following the second revolution of 1946. Albeit a "nascent" industry, tourism in Haiti thrived from 1946 into the mid fifties during the administrations of Léon Dumarsais Estimé and Paul Eugene Magloire resulting in the era being labeled as Haiti's "golden ages." The expansion of Pan-Americanism in the 20th century across the Caribbean and Latin America helped stimulate the tourism industry in Haiti.

Research

- ▶ Some scholars that have briefly highlighted and written about the tourism industry in Haiti during the golden ages such as Smith, Paquin, Dubois, and Polyne have mainly problematized the notion that this era was truly the “golden ages” due to the systemic corruption in the government, military rule, and socio-economic issues faced by the majority of Haitians. Subsequently, by default, they relegated the impact of the tourism industry in Haiti to its economic achievement or lack thereof as opposed to its implicit but more prolific societal effect.
- ▶ Research on this topic in the words and concept expressed by Michel Rolph Trouillot will “unsilence the past” that impacts the present. The re-conceptualization of the importance and impact of the tourism industry in Haiti during the 1940s and 50s challenge methodologically how scholars should deconstruct and view phenomena in more nuanced ways that do not seem multi-faceted. In deconstructing historical topics that are tied to “evident” impacts, researchers are able to not only provide a voice to the “silenced past” but contribute to providing a more “complete” account of history.

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