

The Inevitable Spectacle of the Aristide Myth

Historical Amnesia in the International Media about Haiti

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News from Haiti in the past two months has focused dominantly on the return of two mythical figures: former “President for Life” Jean-Claude Duvalier and former democratically-elected president Jean-Bertand Aristide. Duvalier’s mythification remains irrefutably decoded since his departure to France aboard a US plane in 1986—namely, his implementation of US-funded, trained, and supported state terrorism by the dictatorial regime’s Tonton Macoutes, to highlight just one aspect of the “Duvalier” symbol. Bébé Doc’s legacy is now uttered on both sides of the political spectrum, though more politely and quietly by his entourage (i.e., the US, Haitian elite, former Army members, and ruling families). Though some dispute over detail remains, the mass media finally portrays the Duvalier dictatorship as a brutal and corrupt regime whose personal army knew no enemy except the Haitian people, as is evidenced by the widespread coverage of his both foreign and domestic prosecutions upon his return to Haiti from Paris in late January of this year.

The mass media has also reached consensus on the myth of Aristide, though one in which a large degree of spectacle remains. Indeed, the mention of Aristide conjures vivid images of this purportedly small and calm “little priest” with bookish glasses. Beyond the US media’s caricatures of this “leftist, Marxist, radical slum priest,” Haitians from all classes similarly portray the first-ever democratically elected president in equally reverent terms. “Psychopath,” “fomentor of class struggle,” “promoter of mob violence,” or “lunatic” occasionally enter the lexicon among the elite- and business-class Haitians. Political opponents do not hesitate to equate Aristide to a “dictator” reminiscent of Duvalier himself. In tandem, some Aristide supporters refer symbolically to him as “a savior,” “a hero,” or even mistik in

Kréyol, a superhuman title with which he was endowed after surviving several assassination attempts during his first presidential campaign. Most recently, the New York Times correspondent Amy Wilentz even coined Aristide “the Haitian Lazarus” in her report on his current visa and passport debacles in South Africa.[1]

Regardless of political convictions, one cannot help but notice the intense rhetoric surrounding this polarizing figure. The spectacle of such a myth permeates most foreign and domestic media outlets. The inevitable spectacularization of the Aristide figure—as a symbol for democracy and for the Haitian poor (or conversely, for radical Marxism and for kleptocracy)—comes at no surprise to any student of Haiti familiar with his “shocking” election in 1990 (that is, surprising for the international community, unaware that their World Bank presidential candidate-*liege* Marc Bazin could be defeated by democracy). What remains mystifying is not the inevitability of polemical spectacle, but rather the endurance of such unresolved myths nearly two decades after this political strongman entered the scene two decades ago (whereas the Bébé Doc myth of a “great statesman,” a “civilized Haitian,” a “respectable politician” was shattered after only a decade of his military rule). The ensuing confusion when seeking context in the US mass media on the Aristide question results in only a feeling of historical amnesia. Deconstructing the Aristide myth, thus, relies not on argumentation over factuality or political preference; instead, the survival of this mythical persona in the mass media becomes immediately comprehensible when one investigates the functionality of myth itself in relation to its historical (hence, malleable) basis.

Historical Amnesia

First, what emerges to the foreground as the Aristide myth in the US mass media? According to statistics from the Audit Bureau of Circulations, the top five most-circulated newspapers in the US, in ranking order, are: 1) The Wall Street Journal, owned by the News Corporation (Rupert Murdoch); 2) USA Today of the Gannett Company; 3) The New York Times of the NYT Company (Sulzberger dynasty); 4) Los Angeles Times owned by the Tribune Company; and 5) The Washington Post of the Washington Post Company. In general, reports on Haiti from these five corporate media mega-agglomerations have been anything but historical. As an aside, despite standard sociological assumptions on the press that journalists themselves portray their (purportedly leftist, for some arbitrary reason) leanings, substantial analysis of the US corporatist media has shown that corporate

leadership (e.g., the board of directors and, by extension, the editors-in-chief as gatekeepers of daily publications) highly controls what is allowed to be published. How the newspaper wishes to be portrayed, thus, is indubitably a function of leadership and not of journalists' political leanings. Moreover, when speaking of myths, in order to qualify the dissociation between citations from interviews and authorial opinion in journalism, one is concerned not necessarily with what is said, but rather with what is not said; that is, the "right to narrate" (who is allowed to speak and why?) reveals more to the audience than does the narration itself. Though obviously not a perfect methodology, with its inherent flaws and exceptions, it suffices as an investigatory tool while reading into the American Aristide myth. Subsequent debate emerges not around facts, minutiae, and ad hominem discrediting, but rather around language, tone, perception, and representations thereof in the mass media. Hence, we are not interested in the myths themselves, but rather in the language with which one speaks of them.

Take, for example, the Wall Street Journal's coverage of Aristide's return from South Africa over the past two months. When asked about the implications of the priest's return to Haiti, an interviewee responds, "The sad truth for the millions of Haitians who had placed their destiny in the hands of Father Aristide in 1990 and again in 1994 is that he left a legacy of lies, intolerance, corruption, nepotism and conspiracy to eliminate his rivals and detractors." [2] Unsurprisingly, the journalist offers no contestation or historical reference. Such presentation can be contextualized with another article in the previous month which bewailed the "reality" that the former president is "rattling Haitian democrats, and understandably so," foreshadowing the concluding message that the lawful return of a democratically-elected president is "the last thing Haiti needs." [3] Furthermore, such editorial commentary is easily explained when one uncovers the one-paragraph "blip" tagged onto the "Haiti articles" for historical contextualization in the Wall Street Journal, which reads:

"Mr. Aristide, the country's first democratically elected president, was overthrown in 1991 by a bloody military coup after just a few months in power. But he was returned to Port-au-Prince's now destroyed presidential palace in 1994 thanks to a U.S. military intervention. Elected president in 2000, Mr. Aristide was again overthrown in 2004, this time by a rebellion of former police officers and military men, some with alleged drug-trafficking ties. He has been living in exile in South Africa ever since." [4]

In offering no further analysis of the two US-backed coup d'états, the WST injects their own history: "democracy" in Haiti was tried twice with the

turbulent elections of Aristide, who was only returned to power thanks to the benevolence of the United States military. By extension, the history of US-Haitian relations may read: Haiti has failed miserably in trying to self-govern; the US has only “saved” Haiti in the recent past and can do so again. This message is echoed in another recent article entitled “The US Defends Democracy in Haiti,” in which US ambassador to the UN Susan Rice backs the Organization of American States’ (OAS) conclusion on the fraudulent elections run by the Haitian government, and, thus, orders Haiti to follow the US’s demands to replace Jude Célestin. In addition to canceling a dozen visas of members of Célestin’s party and campaign officials, the US “strongly suggested Haiti might lose billions of dollars in aid if it didn’t go along with the recommendation to drop Mr. Célestin.”[5]

Such strategies, blatantly labeled blackmail or coercion in other settings, are paraded here as US “defense” of Haitian democracy, as the article logically implies. Following an association of Aristide with such a spectacular language of violence and political instability, an undercurrent of a quite different narrative slips by without notice. Without mention of the “Haitian democrats;” calls for a US invasion to oust Aristide in 2000, of the CIA’s role in the creation of the FRAPH during the first coup in 1991, or of the US involvement in kidnapping Aristide in 2004, the Wall Street Journal simply excludes all historical connection between the US and Haiti, a myth that tautologically continues to justify, for example, the exile of a “mob-rule, Marxist” priest who has only contributed turbulence to Haiti’s otherwise “democratic” political system. Moreover, such spectacle of Aristide’s populist rule undoubtedly caters to WST subscribers who, according to an internal study, are 66% male and 84% college graduates with an average household income of \$257,100.[6]

Next, USA Today normalizes the Aristide myth using equally amnesiac phrasing. As such, while “reporting” on Aristide’s return, a journalist comments, “It is not clear whether charges could be brought against Aristide, whose party was accused of killing opponents and getting rich off drug money in the final year of his government.”[7] Though it remains entirely clear to the majority of Haitians who understand these libelous claims were intentionally forwarded, for example, by the illusory Convergence Démocratique movement founded in 2000 under the auspices of the American International Republican Institute (currently chaired by Senator John McCain, a Reagan “non-profit” think-tank responsible for his infamous “democratization programs” throughout Latin America during the Cold War) whose sole *raison d’être* was to oppose Aristide through supporting a US ousting of the democratically-elected president and through the dissemination of false accusations. Within this silent context, “it is not clear”—according to the journalist—whether charges are legitimate, even

though no accusation proceeded to criminal hearings in Haiti. The reporter nonchalantly continues in the subsequent paragraph, "It would be the second return from exile for Aristide, who is both loved and reviled." Indeed, Duvalier was both "loved and reviled," the question remaining in both cases, by whom? But no comment is warranted in either case. In similar fashion to the Wall Street Journal, USA Today contextualizes the news blip with its historical paragraph:

"Aristide first was ousted by a military coup in 1991. US President Bill Clinton returned him to power in 1994 following a US military intervention that forced out the military regime. Then, tens of thousands of his supporters gathered around the National Palace to watch the US Marines fly him in on a helicopter."

The journalist, once again, failed to imply the term "watch" indeed meant vehemently protest, burn tires, chant anti-imperialist slogans, and reject the US involvement in the coup. But again, the pristine myth reads as if tens of thousands of Aristide's former supporters gathered around the National Palace to watch in confusion of betrayal the president's kidnapping—"charges Washington later denied," the article added, as if these words were actually meaningful. Regardless, such a myth forwarded on the eleventh of March remains "objective" given the journalistic precedent established nearly a month prior. An editorialist comments:

"What seems a better bet is that Duvalier's return, and the anticipated arrival of Aristide, will push Haiti closer to turmoil. Aristide is a leftist who became Haiti's first democratically elected president. He was toppled by a coup in 1991 and restored to office three years later with the help of American troops. Aristide was toppled again in 2004 by rebel soldiers, who this time had a lot more support among the Haitian people and—some believe—the backing of the George W. Bush administration."[8]

Without mention of the journalist's disingenuous equating of Duvalier with Aristide, one notices the claims buttressing the Aristide myth of his "leftist" leanings which brought political instability—only abated thanks to Clinton's benevolent military intervention—remain principally operative. Within such an ahistorical context, the author is free to conclude logically that the only result of Aristide's return would be "a return to the bloody factionalism that punctuated [his] time at the helm of Haiti's government." No need to comment that violence, especially state-sponsored, reached an all-time low during Aristide's first term. The journalist, understanding an article on Haiti

is illegitimate without interviewing an exoticized Haitian, continues without pause in citing the words of a Haitian-American lawyer: "It really shows the level desperation of the Haitian people that these despots [Aristide and Duvalier] would be allowed to return." And "worse than that," the author concludes with the Obama administration's failure to keep these "old troublemakers from returning at a time when Haiti's democracy is most vulnerable to the havoc they almost certainly will produce." The USA Today myth is easily manifested: Aristide is a leftist who has only caused political turmoil in a far-away land otherwise stable thanks to the gracious efforts of the US military in restoring order to Haiti, usurped by two equitable despots who wreaked havoc and "bloody factionalism" on their country. A disingenuous causality between Aristide's elections as the catalyst of the coups is forwarded as a critical reading of Haitian history. Subscribers to such myth are 63% male and 74% college graduates with a median household income of \$77, 799.[9]

The Washington Post refers to Aristide in equally reverent terms. In an interview with current presidential candidate Michel Martelly—a well-known Duvalier sympathizer who openly opposed Aristide[10]—the correspondent notes that Aristide "is welcome to come back like Jean-Claude Duvalier did." [11] Though the human right to return of a citizen is explicitly outlined in the Haitian Constitution (a right that should be upheld in both cases), such asinine commentary that Aristide's and Duvalier's return are circumstantially equivalent makes complete sense when contextualized in the newspaper's historical blip: "Aristide is a divisive figure in a country that is still struggling to rebuild after the January 2010 earthquake and that had to contend with a cholera epidemic and a political crisis, sparked by the flawed first round of the election in November." Aristide, the article continues, "is accused of running a corrupt government that fostered violent attacks on opponents." With absolutely no irony, the reporter closes with a recent quote from Aristide's lawyer, Ira Kurzban: "Why is it the business of the US government to interfere [in Aristide's return]?"

According to the Washington Post's analysis, because the poorest country in the world, Haiti, is incapable of self-governing with two dictators seeking to opportunistically reinsert themselves into the savage political structure of a system that was only restored thanks to US military intervention in 1994. Indeed, the Washington Post's modus operandi vis-à-vis the Aristide return myth implies, "When in legal doubt, decontextualize Aristide's lawyer's comment and never refer to the Haitian Constitution itself nor to the President of the Republic's statement. Vehement political opponents' statements suffice." Daily audience demographics show 44% of WP readers—with an average income of \$109,260—work in professional services, management, business and financial operations.[12]

The Los Angeles Times spins the Aristide myth slightly differently than do the above papers, though using similar immodest claims of causality. The historical paragraph in an article entitled "Aristide keeps Haiti Waiting" mentions Aristide "built a following among the country's poverty-stricken population in the 1980s as a priest-turned-politician against the despotic rule of Baby Doc." [13] The journalist continues, "He became Haiti's first democratically elected leader in 1990, but was toppled a few months later by a military junta. Reinstated with the help of the United States, he was ousted a second time in a 2004 rebellion and flown into exile in South Africa, by the US." Indeed, we hear mention that Aristide began his career as a priest, that his followers were largely the Haitian poor, that he was toppled by a military junta and not simply the "democratic forces of nature" as the other news organizations claim, and that he was flown into exile on a US plane. The reporter also mentions, "The Aristide periods were probably the periods of least violence in Haiti's history."

Despite this attempt, however, to historically ground the Aristide myth, the reader still does not know about the four years of political instability and coup d'états of military rule under le Conseil National de Gouvernement between Duvalier and Aristide, years which included massive US military aid supporting this system of Duvalierism without Duvalier (one of the US's first gifts to the Conseil was \$384,000 worth of riot control equipment). Furthermore, no historical connection is made between the first coup d'état and the United States, and the author misses the well-documented fact that the State Department claimed Aristide chose exile in "a country of his choice," which purportedly (and laughably so) was the Central African Republic before he finally landed in South Africa after the second coup. Elsewhere, other correspondents fill their lines with such empty absurdities as, "Many [Aristide] supporters still carry photos of him in their wallets and his portrait is sold along with those of Che Guevara in downtown Port-au-Prince." [14] This meaningless spectacle seeks to provoke an upper-middle class elite audience with household incomes of \$150,000 or more. [15] Again, the Aristide myth remains clear inasmuch as there is never an historical link between the United States and Haiti. That is, except when the former rich neighbor to the North helped the latter poor country to the South in 1994.

The historical amnesia demonstrated above does not suggest that readers of the latest news "analyses" on Haiti should become academic specialists on Haiti; rather, the lack of historicity suggests mass media journalism has failed in filling this void for the public via concise and accurate claims of causality, as complex as they may be. Understanding the election and subsequent overthrows of Aristide in exile requires a minimal understanding of poverty in Haiti. Aristide indeed is a populist priest politician whose

election symbolized the will of the majority of Haitians—80% of whom lived on less than two dollars per day before the 2010 earthquake, Hurricane Thomas, and cholera epidemic. But his initial democratic ambitions were not suggestive of “bloody factionalism” or “mob-rule” or “neo-Che Guevara revolutionary sentiment,” as is hinted to millions of Americans quotidian readers. Aristide is a destabilizing force, but more so for US multinational corporations, the US State Department, and USAID contractors in deep historical relations with the traditional Haitian elite and former military. In fact, his first election in 1990 promised stability for the majority of the Haitian poor, as was suggested by the massive decrease in Haitian refugees seeking political asylum. And yet not a modicum of historiography—even as presented incompletely here—is accessible to readers of mass media newspapers.

Having seen above how silence and the right to narrate construct the spectacle and myth of Aristide in exile, the critical reader finds a quite different *modus operandi* in the US’s “paper of record,” The New York Times. Upon reading the latest news on Aristide’s passport troubles in South Africa, readers are invited to click on the “Haiti Overview” section to learn the “history” of the country in the article. One finds, for example, a riveting analysis of the origins of Haiti’s poverty:

“The country is, by a significant margin, the poorest in the Western Hemisphere, with four out of five people living in poverty and more than half in abject poverty. Deforestation and over-farming have left much of Haiti eroded and barren, undermining subsistence farming efforts, driving up food prices and leaving the country even more vulnerable to natural disasters. Its long history of political instability and corruption has added to the turmoil.”[16]

Magically, Haiti’s poverty was never exacerbated by centuries of colonial rule—Saint Domingue being one of the cruelest colonies according to historians—or by isolation from the international economy justified by racist discourse outlining the dangers of recognizing “a savage republic founded by slaves,” or by France’s imposition of the vicious historic reparations payment which the newly-“independent” nation could not repay until 1947, or by the US’s military occupation from 1915-1934 during which time oppressive American military rule reinstated the *corvée* system of labor, or by Duvalier’s totalizing appropriation of the state treasury under the wink of the US’s Cold War propaganda. No, Haiti’s poverty was caused by Haitians themselves, by “deforestation and over-farming” which left the agriculturally-based nation “eroded and barren,” driving up food prices in the process and leaving the country vulnerable to natural disasters. Indeed, Haiti is poor because of

Haiti, and the anthropogenic catastrophe following the earthquake was a result of Haitians making themselves vulnerable. When assessing Aristide's overthrow in the NY Times' rewritten, "blame-the-victim" history, the reader can conclude more easily that his destabilizing return from exile perhaps is the "last thing Haiti needs."

Within this totalizing, naturalized history of immodest claims of causality, the Aristide myth takes form. Following our "paper of records" historic overview of Haiti, "Aristide took power in 1991" and was subsequently overthrown by a violent coup that ended "only after the intervention of a United Nations force led by the United States." Likewise, the coup d'état in February 2004 resulted in Aristide's "resignation" and his "fleeing to South Africa." Despite attempts to provide (a)historical context to news blips on Aristide, the NY Times nonetheless advances a principle lesson we have witnessed repeatedly in the American press: democracy and political stability in Haiti is impossible without the blessing of US intervention.

Myth as Ideology, Spectacle as Objectivity

The German poet Novalis wrote near the end of the 18th century, "Writings are the thoughts of the state; archives are its memory." The above writings on Aristide circulated through the United States' mass media to "educate" Americans on the facts and natural history of Haiti provide henceforth the fundamental units of analysis for the public. A crisis in democracy is evident in our corporatist system of media when blatant misinformation and mythological tautology transformed into "natural facts" dictate the permissible and impermissible points for public debate. Alas, spectacle remains the sole trace of critical thought on the Aristide question in the mass media. Within this context, we move beyond a case study of the effects of myth, as an object of language, to an analysis of metalanguage with which one speaks of myth.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a myth as "a widespread but untrue or erroneous story or belief; a widely held misconception; a misrepresentation of the truth." As one clearly sees above, the extensive misrepresentation of history regarding the Aristide question can be irrefutably labeled—in the technical sense—a myth. Though this definition primarily concerns the what of myth, the why of myth has been defined elsewhere as "an unproved or false collective belief that is used to justify a social institution [my emphasis]." It is from this perspective—attempting to explain the origins of the mechanism by which myth is disseminated—that students of Haiti can

discuss critically the question of Aristide, not as a man, a priest, a politician, a president, but rather as a symbol.

The French philosopher and semiologist Roland Barthes, in his 1957 book *Mythologies*, sought a linguistic explanation for both myth as a language-object and the sociopolitical implications thereof. In his semiological reading of myth as “a type of speech,”[17] Barthes notices both ancient and contemporary myth can only have an historical foundation, for myth as a type of speech is chosen by history: “it cannot possibly evolve from the ‘nature’ of things.”[18] Moving from a technical structuralist critique of the linguistic system of myth, Barthes notes the effect of myth is experienced as innocent speech, not because its intentions are hidden—“if they were hidden, they could not be efficacious”—but rather because they are naturalized. Indeed, the primary function of myth is to transform History into Nature, because myth is “ideology itself, the process through which the reality of the world transforms into an image of the world,”[19] an image subsequently communicated using the illusion of depoliticized speech. The genius of such a system—purportedly natural while overtly political—remains its inherent ability to attract little attention, for the origins of such normalized forms of politics are easily lost during the process of mythologizing.

Passing from the abstract to political, one notices similarly phenomena manifest in the mass media’s reporting on the Aristide myth. In creating such a spectacle of the “slum priest” as “a Marxist, a leftist, a neo-Che Guevara, a fomenter of mob rule,” the media can easily trigger ancient ideological buttons in American sons and daughters of the Cold War taught in Pavlovian fashion to bite and nip at the first utterance of communism. Such an outlandish myth is not only obviously ideological, but also technically incorrect. Aristide during his pre-presidential sermons preached vehemently on the sacredness of private property and of economic growth—that is, private property for the majority (note: 80%) of the Haitian poor, and economic growth serving that constituency. As such, in his short-lived presidency of seven months beginning in 1991, Aristide’s major reforms included: 1) retiring the high command of the army; 2) ending narco-trafficking rampant in that army and ex-Tonton Macoutes; 3) refusing his \$10,000 salary in a country in which “most go to bed hungry”; 4) requesting fellow congress members to accept \$2000 instead of \$7000 per month for the same reasons; 5) increasing the minimum wage (to a level still less than one-tenth the minimum wage in the US at the time); 6) freezing prices of subsistence products; and 7) pouring massive investments into a free public education system and into public health infrastructure—radically communist ideas indeed that should be considered a threat to democracy. As for land reform, Aristide wanted the Haitian poor to be

landowners as well; likewise, he did want to “nationalize” some land, if by nationalize we mean not selling beaches to billionaire-foreign investors for tourism such that the vast majority of inward-flowing investment flows immediately back out into the pockets of those “developers.” Through “natural” explanations in one-paragraph blips, the mass media depoliticizes the Aristide myth in a way that self-justifies its existence, one that negates the real crux of the Aristide symbol for the most successful moment of participatory democracy for the Haitian poor (i.e., the majority of the country).

Moreover, the mass media’s normalization of the 1991 and 2004 coup d’états effectively dismisses these moments of intense political instability as effects of Haitian internal politics. By “forgetting” well-documented history of US involvement in both—the extent to which is beyond the scope of this article, this “journalism” constructs a dangerous and illusory precedent for US military intervention and external command and control. The implications of such ideology reach far beyond any question of Aristide. Invade in 1994 to restore order to the “failing-state’s” democracy? No problem. Fund violent opposition groups in 2000 to execute the 2004 coup d’état? Nature dictates we must. Kidnap the democratically-elected president and banish him into exile on a US Air Force plane while claiming to have “saved” him from the political violence? The universe begs of us. Occupy the country with Marines after the earthquake? “History” tells us this works. Appoint Clinton as the chief architect for the future of Haiti’s reconstruction? Why not? Silence always is a more effective polemical tool of propaganda than is speech. And spectacle has entranced the public into believing it itself is objective historical analysis. Guy Debord outlines in his theses on *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967) some basic principles of spectacle in the mass media:

- 1) The spectacle is not a collection of images; it is a social relation between people that is mediated by images.
- 2) The spectacle cannot be understood as a mere visual excess produced by mass-media technologies. It is a worldview that has actually been materialized, a view of a world that has become objective.
- 3) The tautological character of the spectacle stems from the fact that its means and ends are identical. It is the sun that never sets over the empire of modern passivity. It covers the entire surface of the globe, endlessly basking in its own glory.

When one moves beyond the object of debate and focuses more on the language with which one debates the Aristide question, one can

unfortunately conclude the naturalized Aristide myth, as an illusory “history” of US-Haitian relations, provides a self-affirming, self-justifying, and self-begging rhetorical tool to only further validate US intervention in Haitian democracy—that is, obstruction and destruction thereof. Alas, we have uncovered the paradoxical fundament of the Aristide myth: Aristide has very little, if anything, to do with it.

To borrow phrasing from Barthes, we must seek a reconciliation between reality and US-Haitian relations, between description and explanation, between History and Nature, that is, between consciousness and ideology, if democracy in Haiti is to ever succeed. Deciphering the Aristide myth provides one of many useful tools for the American public—as a principle actor in Haiti’s future—to begin this reprise of sincere (dare we say it) “democracy building”: the rule of Haitian will, and not of ours.

[1] [“The Haitian Lazarus,”](#) New York Times

[2] [“Homecoming for Haitians,”](#) Wall Street Journal

[3] [“A Welcoming Committee for Aristide,”](#) Wall Street Journal

[4] [“Haiti Bows to Pressure to Pull Its Pick,”](#) Wall Street Journal

[5] Ibid.

[6] 2010 Wall Street Journal Subscriber and WSJDN User Study

[7] [“Aristide returning to Haiti in days,”](#) USA Today

[8] [“US meekly allows despots to return to Haiti,”](#) USA Today

[9] As for the more important figure of average household income of readers, we are left wanting. [Internal USA Today study](#)

[10] See Sprague, J. (2010). [“Stealth Duvalierism: Haiti, Michel Martelly and the Presidential Selection of 2010,”](#) Znet

[11] [“Haiti’s 2 presidential candidates say Aristide’s imminent return won’t influence election,”](#) Washington Post

[12] [Internal Washington Post Scarborough 2010 Study](#)

[13] [“Aristide keeps Haiti Waiting,”](#) Los Angeles Times

[14] ["Haiti a mix of excitement and dread as Aristide plans return ahead of presidential election,"](#) Los Angeles Times

[15] The LA Times internal study on "Affluent Readership" shows that 67% of local wealthy residents read the LA Times instead of other local papers. Internal Los Angeles Times 2006 [Scarborough Study](#) See also [Daily Audience Demographics](#)

[16] ["Haiti Overview,"](#) New York Times,

[17] p. 93, Barthes, R. (1957). *Mythologies*. Seuil: Paris.

[18] p. 94, Ibid.

[19] p. 130, Ibid.