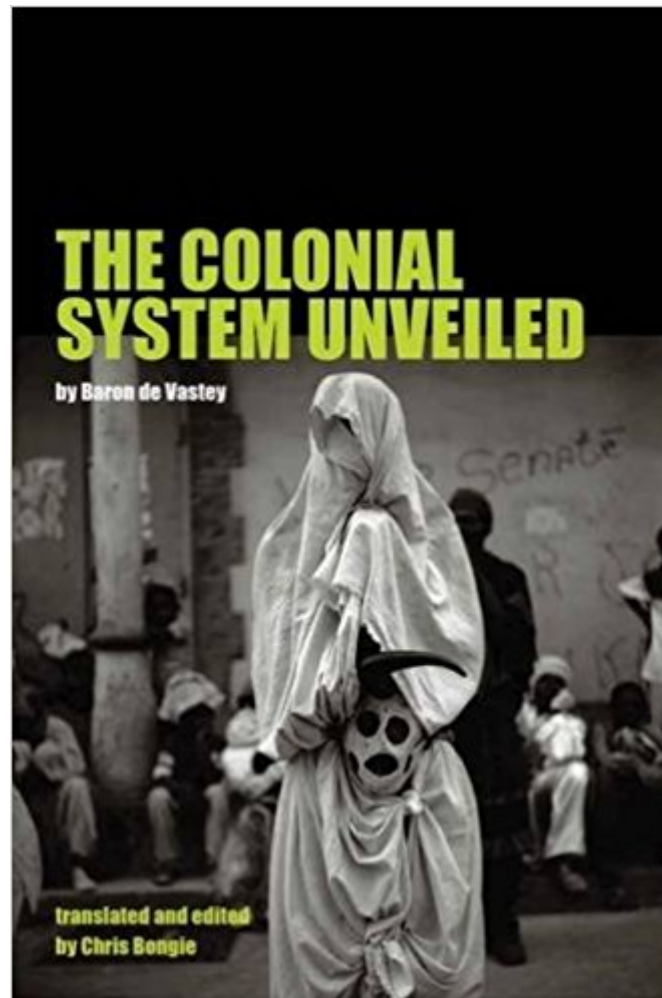




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The Colonial System Unveiled



Synopsis

Long neglected in mainstream history books, the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) is now being claimed across a range of academic disciplines as an event of world-historical importance. The former slaves' victory over their French masters and the creation of the independent nation of Haiti in 1804 is being newly heralded not only as a seminal moment in the transnational formation of the 'black Atlantic' but as the most far-reaching manifestation of 'Radical Enlightenment'. The best known Haitian writer to emerge in the years after the revolution is Baron de Vastey (1781-1820), who authored over ten books and pamphlets between 1814 and his murder in 1820. His first and most incendiary work, *Le syst me colonial d voil * (1814), provides a moving invocation of the horrors of slavery in pre-revolutionary Saint-Domingue. Its trailblazing critique of colonialism anticipates by over a hundred years the anticolonial politics (and poetics) of C saire, Fanon, and Sartre. Translated here for the first time, Vastey's forceful unveiling of the colonial system will be compulsory reading for scholars across the humanities.

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Customer Reviews

"In this first-rate critical edition, Bongie illuminates the significance of Baron de Vastey's *Le syst me colonial d voil * well beyond the field of Haitian Studies. Indeed, he argues that *The Colonial System Unveiled* "can legitimately be considered the first systemic critique of colonialism ever written, certainly from the perspective of a colonized subject". With the book now available in English for the first time, many new readers will be amply persuaded." --Professor Ada Ferrer, New York University

"This is a fiercely scholarly edition of an important book. It features excellent work by

a distinguished group of scholars. And Vastey's devastating indictment of colonialism is a cry from the past that can no longer be ignored." --Professor Christopher L. Miller, Yale University

Baron de Vastey was a man of letters in post-revolutionary Haiti. He wrote four major books between 1814 and 1819, along with a series of pamphlets, before being murdered in 1820. Chris Bongie is Professor and Queen's National Scholar at Queen's University, Canada. Previous publications include *Friends and Enemies: The Scribal Politics of Post/Colonial Literature* (LUP, 2008), *Islands and Exiles: The Creole Identities of Post/Colonial Literature* (Stanford UP, 1998) and *Exotic Memories: Literature, Colonialism, and the Fin de siècle* (Stanford UP, 1991).

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