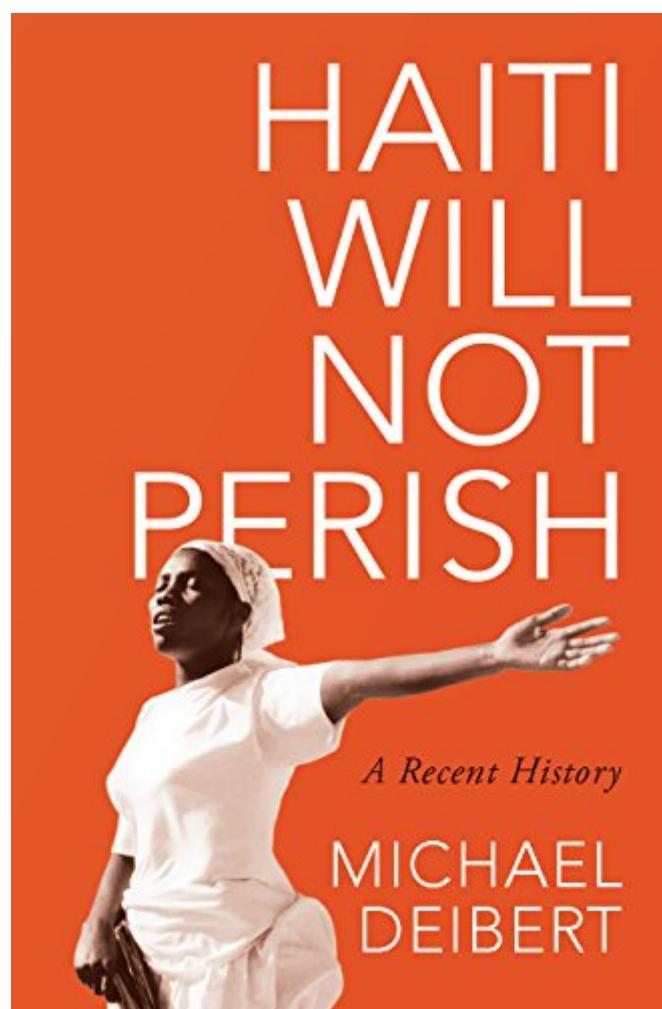


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Haiti Will Not Perish: A Recent History



Synopsis

The world's first independent black republic, Haiti was forged in the fire of history's only successful slave revolution. Yet more than two hundred years later, the full promise of that revolution — a free country and a free people — remains unfulfilled. Home for more than a decade to one of the world's largest UN peacekeeping forces, Haiti's tumultuous political culture — buffeted by coups and armed political partisans — combined with economic inequality and environmental degradation to create immense difficulties even before the devastating 2010 earthquake killed tens of thousands of people. This grim tale, however, is not the whole story. In this moving and detailed history, Michael Deibert, who has spent two decades reporting on Haiti, chronicles the heroic struggles of Haitians to build their longed-for country in the face of overwhelming odds. Based on hundreds of interviews with Haitian political leaders, international diplomats, peasant advocates and gang leaders, as well as ordinary Haitians, Deibert's book provides a vivid, complex and challenging analysis of Haiti's recent history.

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Customer Reviews

The first thing I noticed about this book when it arrived is how thick it is. But when I looked inside, I notice that literally a quarter of the book (over 100 pages) is nothing but references. That, alone, should give an indication of how thoroughly the author documented and referenced what he talks about in the book. As any book dealing with Haiti must do, it starts off with a brief history of the nation leading up to the point where the author's earlier book, Notes From the Last Testament, left off (around the departure of Aristide in 2004). I've read all of Michael Deibert's books and he consistently maintains a simple measure to how well he's doing his job: If people from all sides are upset, he must be doing something right. In the process, he maintains an objective, observational viewpoint of events, unafraid to make room for nuance. One gets the feeling that he doesn't judge characters or situations, he simply relays the stories as he observes or is told from witnesses. Sadly, there are too many in the foreign media (outside of Haiti) who insist on applying their political template to events within Haiti. This is tragic, as there simply is no cookie-cutter political storyline to apply to a nation as diverse and complex as Haiti. As a result, most outside of Haiti end up viewing Haiti through their own paradigm of left vs. right, Socialist vs. Capitalist, etc. They remove the human element by doing this, by turning a blind eye to corruption by characters they perceive to align with their political viewpoint while amplifying corruption by those opposed. The world needs more journalists and writers like Michael Deibert, who resist this temptation and simply tell it like it is. I strongly recommend this book for anybody with an interest in Haiti. By so thoroughly documenting recent events in the country, this book provides a clear picture to who is who and what is what in a country where criminals become elected officials while the foreign press has no idea of their track record - which in turn leads to a poor understanding by those who rely on the press to keep them informed (Here's looking at you, Vice News).

Deibert is a true expert on Haiti whose books are one of the few to give in-depth analysis backed up by solid facts on the oft-misunderstood country. He has clearly done his research and, while he clearly has a strong connection and deep interest in the country, he never lets bias get in the way of a clear presentation of the history and influences of the country. Combined with his previous book, Notes from the Last Testament, *Haiti Will Not Perish* is a must for anyone looking to understand Haiti and its history.

Congratulations! Michael Deibert. You have done a very systematic work on Haiti. Like a Historian, you have analyzed with a critical eye the evolution of the history of Haiti. We can feel all your love and passion for the poor people of Haiti. Besides, there is hope for this country: Haiti will not perish.

If only our political leaders and Haitian elites could read this book, that could have a tremendous effect on their consciousness. This book is a great contribution to the process of creating awareness around Haiti and to identify strategies that fit the reality of this country so we could finally move this country forward. It is a stepping stone towards social justice and inclusion.

Deibert is one of the rare non-Haitian writers with a firm grip on recent Haitian political history rooted in an extraordinary ability to understand Haiti on its own terms. The book picks up where "Notes from the Last Testament" leaves off and brings order to the complex, often confusing period since 2004 through a rigorous cataloging of events and context building sprinkled with intriguing personal tales, Haitian cultural references, and interviews with a broad cross-sector of primary actors, Haitian and foreign. Highly recommended reading for those in diplomacy, academia, diaspora or the curious looking to make sense of Haiti's socio-political landscape in recent decades.

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