Richard Wright: A selectively annotated bibliography, 2004-2012 (in-progress)

Compiled by Marilyn Lee
Serials Librarian
Xavier University of Louisiana

Updates (2011-) by Jerry W. Ward, Jr.
Project on the History of Black Writing Board Member

2004


Mentions *Native Son*, *Black Boy*, and *The Outsider* once on page 45.


2005


Chura considers sophisticated treatments of vital contact in Wright’s fiction of the 1930s.


Iadonisi discusses the dramatic shift that Wright made from being a writer of realistic and naturalistic fiction to creating haiku.


Brief mention of de Beauvoir's meeting Richard and Ellen Wright in 1947 and her dedicating *America Day by Day* (1948) to them.

2006


Brief remark on use of brand names in the work of Joyce, Dos Passos, and Wright.


Contains a chapter on Richard Wright. JWW


Madhubuti mentions that *Black Boy* gave him “context for [his] own content “(53).


2007


Cherry dedicates his novel “to Richard Wright, Chester B. Himes and John A. Williams whose literary harvests continue to reap.”


DeCoste questions the common reading of *Native Son* as a realistic text and, as such, a work that is socially and politically conservative, contending instead that it is "a novel about realism."

Fraile, Ana Maria, ed. *Richard Wright’s Native Son.* Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007. JWW

Gibson maintains that the "final meaning" of *Native Son* depends on a recognition by the reader of Bigger's individuality, as opposed to his role as a symbolic social figure.


Joyce interprets *Native Son* as a work of tragedy and Bigger as a "tragic hero." She examines those aspects of Bigger's characterization--especially his hubris--that ensure his fate and contribute to his ultimate destruction.


Kearns disputes assertions that Book III of *Native Son* is overly abstract, ideological, and, thus, aesthetically unrelated to Bigger's narrative in Books I and II; instead, he posits that the "process of abstraction" in the "Fate" section is essential to Bigger's achievement of self-awareness at the end of the novel.


This article was an introduction of critical reception plot and major theme writings on the work further readings about the work and poems in this volume were written in 1960 and appeared in manuscript form as this other world: Projections in the Haiki Manner.


Ramadanovic argues that *Native Son* is a tragedy in the classical sense of the term, demonstrating the central role of fate in Wright’s novel and the manner in which Bigger rises to the level of a tragic protagonist.

Provides insights regarding Wright’s friendship and correspondence with and influences on Ellison.


In the following essay, Redden counters three prevailing assumptions about Wright’s *Native Son*: one, that "vengefulness" on the part of the author is a key element of the text; two, that Book III is strictly didactic and a platform for Wright’s Communist beliefs; and three, that the book "allocates blame to and threatens punishment of white society."


Zheng discusses Wright’s composition of some four thousand haiku in the last and half years of his life in Paris. In his haiku, Wright used his pen as a brush to paint his tender feelings of nature and human nature.

Bauer examines the association between playwright Paul Green and author Richard Wright, noting several recollections of Green as being more patronizing towards Wright. Green is cited as expressing deep concern that he could have been more understanding towards Wright or developed a closer friendship with him. The article explores the significance of Wright's interview with Green and his appreciation of the playwright's thoughtful treatment of African American issues. It also relates insights regarding aspects of Wright's collaboration with Green including the need to pack a scene with action and making the dialogue and imagery more urban and African-American.


The article explores Wright’s possible misconceptions concerning Spain and considers the reasons for Spanish aversion to the book *Pagan Spain*.

Dubek, Laura. “‘Til Death Do Us Part: White Male Rage in Richard Wright’s *Savage Holiday*.” *Mississippi Quarterly* 61.4 (Fall 2008): 593-614.


This article talks about the life of Wright born in 1908 less than a half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment's ratification ended U.S. slavery, in some way stands as testament to the United States' ability to reinvent itself. In less than fifty years, the United States, former prison house to black human chattel, counted among its citizens one of the most prominent writers of the twentieth century.


The article explores the relationship of Richard Wright to the blues culture of African Americans.

Green, Tara T. “Meeting Richard Wright in the Mountains: Reflections on Teaching at Northern Arizona University.” *Papers on Language & Literature* 44.4 (Fall 2008): 382-387.


This article describes the author's experiences while teaching a course on the 20th-century African American author Richard Wright at Tougaloo College in Mississippi. The reactions of 21st-century students at the historically black college to the perspectives on race and other social issues in Wright's fiction are discussed.


Includes comments on Wright as a Hurston antagonist and Wright’s review of Their Eyes were Watching God.


The article discusses the queer perspective that connects the characters in Richard Wright's and Frantz Fanon's novels. Tuhkanen contends that Wright's references to queerness and straightness in his books are not coincidences, and suggests that the etymologically queer and straight words are strategies for understanding postcolonial situations in Native Son and "Bright and Morning Star." Wright's fictional characters are examined against Fanon's theory of de-colonization in "Algeria Unveiled."


The article discusses the Richard Wright Centennial Conference that was held at the American University of Paris (AUP), France from June 17-20, 2008.


Bracher argues in endnotes 6 (384) that Wright’s presentation of Bigger in Native Son prompts” recognition that we are ultimately responsible for the Biggers (white and black) and their horrific and brutal actions.”


Dekoven claims that “in the opening scene of Richard Wright’s Native Son, the repulsive description of the rat Bigger must kill makes it clear that the rat is Bigger’s double...”(363)


Dolinar’s introduction is followed by Richard Wright’s nine ethnographic essays (1935-c.1937) and his undated “Bibliography on The Negro in Chicago.”


Douglas includes comments on Richard Wright in relation to the literature of sociology.


Uses a brief passage from Native Son as an epigraph for Chapter Four, “Choreographing Chaos.”

In the essay on “Long Black Song,” Grandt proposes we should have “a shift of focus from literary text to musical performance, in order to elucidate the full potential of Afro-modernism’s historical conscience”(74).


In Chapter Two, “Richard Wright’s Fathers and Sons,” Green argues that Black Boy is a guide to Wright’s fiction and that fiction “was a way for him to begin to access and to reconcile his unmet desires regarding his father”(94). JWW


Keith examines how existentialism is used in *The Outsider* and how it looks at race in the U.S. after World War II.


The article discusses teaching and translating the haikus of African American author Richard Wright, who published them in "Haiku: This Other World." The author provides details about her classroom teaching methods, which begins with explaining the basic rules of the haiku form and showing the students examples of Wright's poems. Students are asked to explicate the poems and even translate them from English into Japanese and the author's method for translating the poems is explained. The influence of that the Japanese poet Matsuo Basho and the poet R. H. Blyth had on Wright's haiku is discussed.


Lowe explores the text of *Pagan Spain* and examines the relationship that Wright drew between Spain and Europe as well as between Spain and the southern United States.


A literary criticism is presented of the book "Native Son," by African American author Richard Wright, particularly the character Bigger Thomas and how fascism in Nazi Germany points out the shortcomings of American democracy for African Americans in the 20th century. The autobiography of Hans Jürgen Massaquoi called "Destined to Witness: Growing up Black in Nazi Germany" is used. A lecture that Wright delivered in March 1940 at Columbia University explains the origins of the Thomas character.


Chapter Five, “Richard Wright’s Scottsboro of the Imagination, provides an in-depth discussion of Wright’s “obsession with the peculiar convergence of race, sexuality, and racism that was at the root of the Scottsboro case” (166).


Stringer discusses Wright's travel narrative of the Gold Coast/Ghana, and particularly the politicized psychology it develops as an analytic tool.


Taylor discusses the friendship and mutual admiration between Richard Wright and Nelson Algren.


Includes commentary on Wright’s work with the WPA in Chicago and New York in relation to his emergence as a noted American author.


Explores multiple problems and insights related to engaging Lacanian psychoanalysis with African American literature and Richard Wright.


Whitted focuses on the representations by several authors, including Richard Wright, of the spiritual crisis in twentieth century African American fiction and autobiography.


Xu proposes that a triple awareness exists among African Americans and speculates how such an awareness is represented in the fiction of Richard Wright.


The article focuses on Richard Wright's *Black Power* and *The Color Curtain*.


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2010


Mentions an ironic substitution of a photograph in the 1988 edition of *Twelve Million Black Voices*.


Elder discusses one of the most stunning aspects of Frederick Douglass's narrative of his experiences as a slave, his keen insight into the psychology of both the slave and the slave owner. Douglass vividly represents the diabolical psychological manipulation of the slaves by the white masters, but he also shows the figures in his work to be psychologically damaged by the unnatural and unholy master/slave relationship. Richard Wright’s representation of Jim Crow-era Chicago in *Native Son* depicts a society in logical progression from Douglass's slave era.


Focuses on “the relationship between theory and practice in the cultural work of Langston Hughes and Richard Wright during the 1930.” JWW


The acceptance speech of author Carolyn Haines at the awards presentation of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award by the Natchez Literary & Cinema Celebration, an arts festival held in Natchez, Mississippi.


Mentions Wright in a discussion of identity and existence. JWW


Lists Wright among those who protested the trial and execution of Willie McGee. JWW

Hoefer, Anthony Dyer. “‘They’re Trying to Wash Us Away’: Revisiting Faulkner’s If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem [The Wild Palms] and Wright’s ‘Down by the Riverside’ after the Flood.” Mississippi Quarterly 63.4 (2010):537-554. JWW


Provides a brief summary of Chinese scholarship from the 1940s to 2010 and sixty-four annotated entries. JWW


Brief mention of Wright’s influence on Frantz Fanon, *Native Son*, and the metaphor of “race rape.”


Contains brief mentions of *Black Boy* and a comment on Wright as “the bard of the Great Migration” (13). JWW


Brief summaries are presented of events related to the centennial in the U.S. and other countries. The extensive nature of the Centennial is linked to literary criticism on Wright published by critics in 2008-2009.


Particular focus is given to the expression of selflessness and loneliness in the haiku “I Am Nobody”.

2011


Reevaluates several of Wright’s works through the lens of Southern Studies.


Alludes to *Black Boy* in Part III: The Undertaking, p. 88.

Contains extensive discussion of the critical reception of Wright’s works

Zheng, Jianqing, ed. *The Other World of Richard Wright: Perspectives on His Haiku*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011. Ten essays which examine Wright’s haiku, the influence of Zen Buddhism on the poems, and how Wright’s modifications of Japanese forms reveal a conflict between nature and culture.

2012


A substantial revision of Blair’s 2006 essay on *Black Power*, this chapter argues that “Wright turns to photographic Modernism as a resource for negotiating his own psychic dislocation in the face of a radically uneven historicity” (132).


Brief mention of Wright and the Harlem Renaissance.


Seven essays on Wright’s literary and philosophical imagination.


Martin notes that existentialism as “a binary praxis of antagonistic reciprocity” finds “an echo in writers as disparate as Richard Wright and Norman Mailer.”


In Chapter 2: “Since the New Eden of the Thirties,” Miller asserts that “Wright’s explosive originality derives from a narrative blend of urban realism with surrealistic nightmare” (52).

Briefly mentions Wright and *New Challenge, Native Son*, and Cullen’s request that Dorothy West review *Uncle Tom’s Children* for *The African: Journal of African Affairs*.


Discusses Wright’s “Blueprint for Negro Writing” and his work with West in shaping *New Challenge* magazine.


Devotes a substantial portion of Chapter 9: “We Just Love to Dramatize” to justifying Wright’s claim that *Their Eyes Were Watching God* continues the minstrel tradition.