

*Haitian Creole: Structure, variation, status, origin.* By Albert Valdman. Sheffield UK: Equinox Publishing, 2015. Pp. 477. [Ordering and pricing information at [www.equinoxpub.com](http://www.equinoxpub.com)]

Fruit of Albert Valdman's decades-long engagement with *kreyòl ayisyen* (henceforth HC), *Haitian Creole: Structure, Variation, Status, Origin* stands out among single-author monographs devoted to a single language because of its 360 degree approach. It is some indication of the importance of HC in the roster of creoles world-wide that there has been sufficient work to provide this kind of sweeping survey from a personal point of view, one ranging from descriptive and formal linguistics to sociolinguistics, from language planning and to the pedagogy of creoles in the classroom. Although Valdman makes his own positions clear, the fact that he has chosen to treat HC as a total phenomenon implicated in and amenable to different methodologies reflects his ecumenical (one might say) view of language studies.

Not unrelated to this orientation is Valdman's choice of dedicatees, all of whom were activists for the promotion and standardization of HC: Charles-Fernand Pressoir, Pradel Pompilius, Carrié Paultre, and Joris Ceuppen. There was a personal debt to be discharged, since all four assisted and counseled the young Valdman in the 1960s when he began his investigations into this creole and its potential role in public life. In turn, I (and many others) owe a debt to Valdman, first for his 1971 *Basic Course in Haitian Creole* and its 2001 revised edition, *Ann Pale Kreyòl: An Introductory Course in Haitian Creole* 1988, 2d ed. published in 2001), and for the dictionaries published by Indiana University Creole Institute, which culminated in the 2007 *Haitian Creole-English Bilingual Dictionary*. The esteem in which Valdman is held even by those with whom he may have disagreed is expressed succinctly in a tribute *cum* biographical note in *The Haitian Creole Language: History, Structure, Use and Education* (edited by Arthur K. Spears and Carole M. Berotte Joseph; reviewed in these pages by Lauren Christian Gibson, Vol. 30.1 [2015], 177–179). It is worth linking here to another implicit homage to Valdman's legacy which takes the form of the page under his name in the HC *Wikipedya* ([https://ht.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert\\_Valdman](https://ht.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Valdman)), surely a benign case of *l'arroseur arrosé*.

Papiamentu, Sranantongo and Tok Pisin also have Wikipedia language code names, but HC is by far and away the creole with the strongest presence on

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