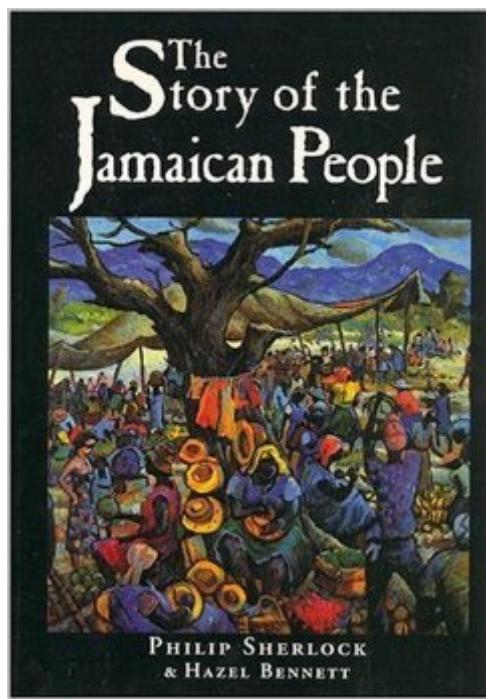


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The Story Of The Jamaican People



Synopsis

A history of the Jamaican people from an Afro-Caribbean rather than a European perspective. Africa is at the centre of the story; for by claiming Africa as homeland, Jamaicans gain a sense of historical continuity, of identity, and of roots.

Book Information

Hardcover: 434 pages

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Shipping Weight: 2.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (13 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,426,235 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #59 in Books > History >

Americas > Caribbean & West Indies > Jamaica #53732 in Books > History > World

Customer Reviews

In any history the selection of the important points which make up that history will make or break the work. Philip Sherlock and Hazel Bennett have written a work which selects people, places and events from the African-Jamaican point of view rather than from a European point of view. The normal list of government officials and events is either not contained in this work or is played down. At the same time the African-Jamaican is showcased. For example, Columbus gets about five pages in this book while George Washington has his own chapter and many additional pages. As the authors point out, this work differs significantly from other histories, most of which have been written from the perspective of the coloniser. The book presents a new perspective on Jamaican history which needs to be read and understood but done so with the other works. Only then will the failues of each type balance out to give the reader a total picture of Jamaican history.

This book's Jamaican-African perspective seems to run out of steam about the time of Independence (1962). Coverage of the 20th century revolves around Marcus Garvey, Alexander Bustamente, and Norman Manley. The six post-Independence Prime Ministers appear in photos, but only Bustamente is discussed. There is no mention of the 1970s social unrest, nor of the rivalry between Michael Manley and Edward Seaga. Considerable attention is given to athletics and the

creative arts, but very little to political economy. "Development," we learn, "is a state of mind" (410), and Jamaica's biggest development problem is not the lack of gainful employment (a view attributed to the Rastas and a group of women writers), but the Eurocentric, colonial system of education (402). This deliberate evasion of any possible controversy and of contemporary history suggests this book was written as a secondary school textbook.

Sherlock does a lengthy look at Jamaican history from a Jamaican point of view, with a special emphasis and sympathy to the enslaved majority of Jamaica. Although most of the material in the book is not new, the interpretation is fresh, and from a perspective that has not been heard from often in works dealing with Caribbean history.

I am a Jamaican and bought this book in the Kingston airport while flying back to the States. I love books about Jamaica and its history and this book was an interesting read. My family was a part of the Chinese indentured servants and it was interesting to know what life was like back then for them. It also went into detail about earlier history with the Tainos, pirates and the Spaniards. I am married to a Spaniard and we were able to discuss how we both viewed the impact the Spaniards left on the island. Great book and it is now on my coffee table!

Worth every penny and more. I wish all my fellow Jamaican could get a copy, as well as well wishers of the islands.

Very informative!!

Very informative.

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