

The Problem and Impossibility of Vodou Religion in the Writings of Dantès Bellegarde

by

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Abstract

This essay is a close reading of the religious sensibility of Dantès Bellegarde. Particular attention is given to his idea of and attitude toward the Vodou faith—an African-derived religion and spirituality practiced in the diaspora, especially in the Caribbean nation of Haiti. While Bellegarde has indefatigably advocated French-Western culture and values, and Christianity in Haiti, he had denigrated Africa and generally all things African, especially the Afro-Haitian religion. For Bellegarde, because Africa is an “uncivilized zone,” therefore could not serve as a model for Haiti’s development and cultural nationalism and identity; in the same vein, he believes that the Vodou religion and African cultural traditions and practices in Haiti had hindered Haiti’s progress and passage to (Western) modernity. This analysis articulates a two-fold argument. First, it contends that Bellegarde has constructed an anti-Vodou mentality, which may be termed Vodouphobic discourse. Bellegarde’s Vodouphobia is especially expressed in his support of the doctrine of Christian triumphalism and his demonizing rhetoric of the Vodou religion. Second, the essay argues that Bellegarde’s anti-Vodou thesis was driven by three fundamental issues: (1) an ethics of representation—his projection of a “positive” or “good” image of his native land—, (2) a Christian-inspired vision of morality and social order—this idea affirms that Haiti was not a Vodou nation but a Christian nation—, and (3) an ethics of assimilation—his urgency to assist Haitians assimilate to the Christian civilization, Western culture, and Eurocentric worldview. Yet, Bellegarde’s Vodouphobia has been informed by his Afrophobia. This presentation is divided in three parts, first a general overview on Bellegarde, second, some general observations made between Bellegarde and Vodou, and last, an analysis of Bellegarde’s Vodouphobia and Vodouphobic discourse.

Dantès Bellegarde: A General Overview

Louis Dantès Bellegarde is regarded by many as one of Haiti's most brilliant thinkers and leading cultural critics and public intellectuals in the twentieth-century. He is also known as a passionate promoter of French-Western culture and values in Haiti. In 1931, the French newspaper *Le Monde nouveau* charmed Bellegarde with this title: "The most eloquent French orator after Briand."¹ Among African American intellectuals in the United States, he was known as the champion of Black freedom and rights in the world. In the world of the Diplomats, Bellegarde was admired for his cosmopolitan vision and idea of international cooperation among the nations and peoples of the world.

Born in Port-au-Prince in May 18, 1877 to a middle class and petit bourgeois mulatto Haitian family, Bellegarde studied law in Haiti and was well versed in the disciplines of literature, philosophy, world history, and international politics. As a cross-disciplinary thinker, Bellegarde had contributed vastly to the advancement of Haitian life and thought in various domains and meaningful ways. He was a man of many careers and functions: a diplomat, writer, historian, scholar, educator, social philosopher, public intellectual, and statesman. Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, his biographer, dubs Dantes Bellegarde "Haiti's outstanding ideologue at the beginning of this century and the country's ablest synthesizer of Nineteenth Century social thought."² The celebrated Haitian writer and poet Leon Laleau wrote these memorable words at the death of Bellegarde in 1966: "The first amongst us, he placed audaciously at international gatherings, Race before Nationality, Man before Citizen."³

In 1944, Bellegarde collaborated with Mercer Cook to produce the first Haitian-American Anthology, in which the writings of prominent writers and thinkers such as W.E. B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson, etc., are registered.⁴ Bellegarde served as a Visiting Professor at Howard University and Atlanta University, where Du Bois taught for many years. He acquainted Black Students in these HBCU institutions with Haitian literature and history, and more importantly how African slaves at Saint-Domingue broke down the shackles of slavery to acquire their freedom and independence from France in 1804. Du Bois, who also wrote about the Haitian freedom narrative in his 1895 Harvard doctoral dissertation,⁵ in an article in *The Crisis* (1926), felicitously named Bellegarde "The international spokesman of the Negroes of the World."⁶

Bellegarde's pan-Africanist sensibility and black solidarity is notably noticed in his speeches, diplomatic activities in international public sphere, and his cooperative works with Black leaders and activists to build a just and democratic America for all. He upheld that "the destiny of the twelve million Negroes in the U.S.A. was part and parcel of that of all peoples in their fight for freedom and justice."⁷ As a proponent of anti-Black racism, Bellegarde condemned Western racism and colonial rule in Africa, and defended the rights of African nations to be independent from Western powers and hegemony.

Yet, what is troubling about Bellegarde is his ambivalent attitude toward African cultural traditions and religious practices in his own country of Haiti. He could not conceive the value in preserving Black Diasporic Africanisms or in maintaining African-derived diasporic cultural traditions and customs, and religious practices in the Black Diaspora, particularly in his native country. For him, the Afro-Haitian Vodou religion and spirituality was a hindrance to Haiti's development and its place among the nations of the modern world. Vodou was also problematic because it considerably delays Haiti's appropriation of Western lifestyle and worldview. Bellegarde's anti-African-Haitianism and Vodouphobic discourse can be traced to postcolonial Haiti's first generation of mulatto intellectuals and writers and the country's minority elite, subsequently.

Dantes Bellegarde affirms unreservedly the superiority of the Western-Christian paradigms of faith and civilization. Subsequently, his underlying goal was to erase the African difference in his native land by reducing it to the uniformity of a paradigmatic Catholicism and European.⁸ This Christian framework would have a tremendous impact on Bellegarde's (mis-) understanding of the Vodou religion, and its connection to Haitian cultural nationalism and identity.

Bellegarde and the Vodou Religion

Vodou has always been a contested faith and an old phobia in Haitian history. Vodouphobia is a central theme in Haitian literature. Most Haitian writers do not write positively and critically about the Vodou religion. The Afro-Haitian faith has been demonized, exorcised, and jettisoned in Haitian thought. Haitians had developed their own idea of the Vodou religion and articulated their own version of Afrophobia. Afrophobia is defined as the fear and denigration of Africa, and the dissociation of things African and peoples of African ancestry. In the same vein, Vodouphobia is defined as the fear and condemnation of the religious experience and spirituality associated with West Africa or African-derived religious systems and practices in the diaspora. In this piece, we will demonstrate how these complementary ideas in Bellegarde's writings had shaped his own vision of the Vodou religion, and his construction of Haitian identity and cultural nationalism.

In different stage of the Haitian narrative, Vodou embodies different shapes, forms, and expressions. Haitian Vodouphobia is also expressed in a comparative analysis: Vodou (African) and Roman Catholicism (Western). Haitian writers are careful to remind their Western readers that Haiti is not a Vodou-practicing nation. For example, Frederic Marcelin his novel, *Marilisse* (1903) depicts a Haitian population, including the country peasant majority—where Vodou is the dominant religion—is overwhelming Catholic, distancing the Haitian nation from its Vodou affiliation and African heritage. As Gouraige interprets:

Marcelin a observé judicieusement notre catholicisme de parade, notre religiosité de spectacle. L'acte de foi en Haïti est d'abord un témoignage d'ostentation. C'est la dévotion de la dame vêtue de blanc, coiffée d'un mouchoir blanc au bout duquel pend un immense chapelet et qui, ayant gravi à genoux les marches de l'église, arrive au faite, ouvre ses bras en croix et commence des oraisons. Ce sont aussi nos cathédrales peintes en rose bonbon, nos calvaires fichés au sommet de collines élevées et éclairées au néon. Il y a en Haïti conge pour la Fête-Dieu, la fête des Morts, la fête de tous les saints, qui servent à marquer les jours de célébration publique, les occasions de ferveurs généraux au cours desquelles les fidèles s'assemblent pour réciter des prières en tenant leurs doigts des bougies allumées.⁹

Interestingly, what is hidden behind the country's Catholic practices and traditions and what's clearly omitted by Marcelin and others is arguably the Vodou motif, the driven force of Haitians' Catholic devotion. The Vodou religion has played an ambivalent role in Haitian thought and legal history as Kate Ramsey has carefully documented in her groundbreaking work, *The Spirits and the Law* (2011).

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth-century, many Haitian thinkers and writers have questioned the validity of Vodou as a religion. The Afro-Haitian faith has been marginalized and dismissed by foreigners and Haitian natives as primitive and barbarous. Gerarde Magloire remarks that Vodou constitutes a pillar of Haitian society and freedom narrative; she also contends that it was "the slaves' drumbeat sending signals to each other across plantations that allowed them to organize themselves and constitute a real force against the French colonists."¹⁰ Claudine Michel has noted that "Haiti's history of persecuting Vodou practitioners, marked by a number of antisuperstitious campaigns spearheaded by the clergy and the state, is concomitant with forced assimilation and acculturation."¹¹ The contribution of the Vodou religion to Haitian freedom has been defended in important studies both by Haitianist scholars and historians.

Bellegarde categorically dismisses the impossibility of Vodou as an authentic faith. In a remark to Haitian nationalists who were promoting the Vodou religion as a national faith, Bellegarde asserts that, "For them, the Haitian people have no need of religion, or they can safely continue practicing magic and Vodou"¹² (*Pour eux, le peuple haïtien n'a pas besoin de religion, ou il peut sans danger continuer à pratiquer la magie et la Vaudou*). Vodou is on par with magic. No intellectual distinction is made or articulated. As he observes elsewhere, Vodou is a superstitious and fetishist cult.¹³ We will return to this important conversation in the subsequent section of this exercise.

Bellegarde believes that “The Catholic religion, infinitely superior to the various primitive cults imported from Africa, was also a powerful unifying principle for the Haitian nation”¹⁴ (“*La religion catholique, infiniment supérieure aux divers cultes primitifs importés d’Afrique, a été aussi un puissant principe d’unité pour la nation haïtienne*”). In what sense was Catholic Christianity superior to the various manifestations of African religion—which Bellegarde has termed “primitive cults”—in colonial Saint-Domingue-Haiti? Bellegarde did not justify his claim by any historical evidence. However, in the statement, he seems to give the impression that religious diversity or plurality is not good for any nation since he avers that Christianity has been the only unified force in colonial Haiti. He would articulate a comparative argument in the postcolonial Haitian religious life. Elsewhere, he claims that the nation of Haiti is “Christian and Catholic in majority.”¹⁵ In other words, since Haiti is overwhelmingly a Christian nation, therefore, there is no need or value to acknowledge its Vodou heritage.

Elsewhere, Bellegarde would agree with the French Minister of Finance (1914) Octave Homberg, a non-religious scholar, that the Blacks of Niger and Congo—Haitian ancestors—are animists by nature, and that they continue to practice Vodou, the backward and primitive faith predominantly practiced among Haitian peasants. Bellegarde himself remarks that “survived among the Haitian people is African animism”¹⁶ (“*survivre parmi le peuple haïtien de l’animisme africain*”). Both Bellegarde and Homberg infer that among the West Africans, there is essentially no difference between the diviner, soothsayer, and the griot.¹⁷ Bellegarde would draw an analogous conclusion that there is fundamentally no difference between a Hougan (Vodou priest) and a magician, a Hougan and a sorcerer, or Vodou and magic. It is an intellectual disaster and dishonesty that a leading intellectual and promising historian of Haitian thought like Dantes Bellegarde who knew well the life, mentality, and religion of Haitian peasant majority and arguably understood Haiti’s civil, social, and political life has failed to admit the profound influence and authority, important social function, and spiritual role of the Vodou hougan in the Haitian experience as “the confessor, doctor, magician, confidential advisor to individuals to families, to politicians, and even financial advisor to people of highest as well as those of lowest estate.”¹⁸ As Milo Rigaud remarks in his classic text, *Secrets of Voodoo* (1953), the Vodou Hougan is also a “prophet, of such a sort that scarcely anything is done without his advice in the community where he is the central figure. In the oum’phor he presides over everything that is done. Here his authority is absolutely.”¹⁹ And furthermore, Bellegarde presumes that the Vodou religion and African civilization lack moral capacity to help elevate social ills in the Haitian society. They do not meet modernity’s core requirements and what’s deemed acceptable before the Western eye. Bellegarde judges that Vodou and Afro-Haitian cultural traditions and practices do not have the necessary (1) cultural and moral integrity, (2) aesthetic imagination and creativity, and (3) the religious culture and refinement to help ameliorate life in Haiti. He also reasons that they are inadequate to help maintaining the essential principles of national organization, and modifying and continuously altering family and social life toward both spiritual and social progress to the perfection of the Haitian mind²⁰ (“*de se perpétuer en s’améliorant, de se perpétuer, en maintenant les principes essentiels de l’organisation nationale; de s’améliorer, en modifiant sans cesse la vie familiale et social dans le sens du mieux spirituel... de la nation*”)

Bellegarde upholds that in the context of Western modernity the Christian civilization has fulfilled all three previously-stated goals: social advancement, social improvement, and social organization. The goal of a Christian-inspired universe—as conceived by the Haitian intellectual—is to perfect the mind and foster social transformation. Bellegarde’s intention was to prove otherwise that Haiti was both a Christian and civilized nation, debunking the nation’s detractors that the Caribbean island was superstitious, barbaric, and non-civilized.²¹ Would it be then unreasonable to conjecture that the legitimacy of Vodou would be in the front line of the battle to save the Haitian soul and the preservation of African civilization in Haiti?

Religion and Morality

Bellegarde entertains the idea of the success and influence of Christian morality in Haiti, mediated through the Church and its resilient missionary project of Christianization and Westernization.²² To substantiate his claim, Bellegarde references Price-Mars’s opinion on the moral question, and more particularly, his position on religious-based morality. He misreads Price-Mars by asserting that Price-Mars ascertains that Christianity morality surpasses all religious morality²³ (“*Notre christianisme se place tout au sommet de cette échelle des valeurs parce que, comme let di M. Price-Mars, il s’est ‘élève d’emblée à une hauteur morale qu’il serait pour le moins difficile de dépasser*”). Bellegarde is persuaded that “It is to this moral height that we must strive to bring our people as a whole”²⁴ (“*C’est à cette hauteur morale que nous devons nous efforcer d’amener notre peuple tout entier*”). Vodou morality is unable to fulfill this high moral life, as conceived by Bellegarde. As he reminds us, the Afro-Haitian religion “consists mostly of entertainment and drunken orgies for its adherents.”²⁵ It is no exaggeration he would argue that it is the responsibility and duty of Haitian intellectuals and the elite minority to lead the nation toward this moral standard.

Bellegarde gives priority to certain religious practices while discriminating against others. For example, he exhorts the Haitian people that it is a moral duty and to their greatest advantage to remain faithful to the Christian religion and Western culture; for they are fundamental elements of Haiti’s moral heritage (“*sont les fondamentaux de son patrimoine moral*”).²⁶ In other words, fidelity to one religion: Christianity; fidelity to one culture: Western. With Christianity, the Haitian will redeem his wretched soul; with the French civilization, he will be rescued from his African barbarism. His African-derived faith and systems of beliefs and morality all arise from sorcery and the belief in magic, which do not correspond to the divine plan of restoration mediated through the framework of Christian and Western civilization.²⁷

Moreover, Bellegarde would extract two important ideas from the classic text of George Galloway, *Religion and Modern Thought* (1917). The first notion pertains to the subject of ethics, which he reasons is the fundamental element that determines the religious quality and experience.²⁸ The second idea is a triumphalist celebration of Christian-based morality and ethics and Christian-based worldview:

The form of life that the Christian religion recommends would be for the good of all people; if they could attain it, then the indisputable intellectual, moral, and social would follow including monogamy that gives dignity to the woman, the family becoming the true social unit, respect for life and property of others are valuable conquests that many groups do not yet have.²⁹

I would like to suggest that Bellegarde appeals to Galloway's text for five basic reasons: (1) to compare morality derived from religious principles and ethics (he is merely concerned here with those of Christianity and Vodou), (2) to demonstrate that Vodou morality is less robust and less inferior to that of the Christian religion, (3) to argue that Vodou morality and ethics cannot be used as a model to order society, to organize the social and family life in Haiti, and (5) to illustrate that morality and ethics grounded on the Afro-Haitian faith cannot be served as an ideal for moral leadership and intellectual life in the Caribbean nation.

Bellegarde goes on to let his readers know ingenuously that the Haitian people made the strenuous efforts to acquire not only those "*conquête précieuses*" ("valuable conquests") but also to live by the principles of the Christian faith. We should point out that Bellegarde is interested in the ethical character and moral dimension of religion to debunk Vodou; he does that precisely by overemphasizing the seemingly-superiority of the Christian religion and Western culture in lieu of the Vodou religion and African culture. Bellegarde would reference Price-Mars's work for supporting and justifying his unwarranted attack on the Vodou religion. For example, before appealing to Galloway, without delineating the proper context of Price-Mars's declaration, he gravely misreads him by uttering that "In a work of great scientific rigor and remarkable psychological penetration, Dr. Price-Mars has established that Vodou has, in its substance, elements of a primitive religion"³⁰ ("*Dans un oeuvre d'une grande rigueur scientifique et d'une remarquable pénétration psychologique, le docteur Price-Mars a établi que le Vaudou comporte, dans sa substance, les éléments d'une religion primitive*"). Price-Mars has never asserted simply that Vodou contains *elements of a primitive religion*. Instead, he maintains, by way of a comparative analysis of the major World Religions—Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, etc.—that Vodou constitutes all the fundamental elements and quality of a religion.

For Price-Mars, all religions have evolved from what ethnologists and historians of religions have called "primitive elements" to more elevated and classified codes of ethics, theological dogmas, and improved liturgical systems.³¹ In other words, while Price-Mars indisputably embraces a Darwinian-evolutionary interpretation of the religious phenomenon, Bellegarde does not presuppose an evolutionary state in the religious experience. Religious comparativist Mircea Eliade claims that the religious experience does progress from the simple to the complex, and that all religions experienced and transitioned from the "lower" and "higher" religious forms simultaneously.³² Eliade convincingly defends this basic principle of all religion:

It could be said that the history of religions—from the most primitive to the most highly developed—is constituted by a great number of hierophanies, by manifestations of sacred realities. From the most elementary hierophany—e.g., a manifestation of the sacred in some ordinary object, a stone or a tree—to the supreme hierophany (which, for a Christian, is the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ) there is no solution of continuity.³³

In addition, Bellegarde refuses to acknowledge as Price-Mars does that the Vodou religion like any established faiths does constitute evolutionary stages.”³⁴ Price-Mars, following the Durkheim methodology of sociology and ethnology of religion, proclaims that every religion goes through different phases of development including the Abrahamic faiths (i.e. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), non-Western and atheistic religions (i.e. Hinduism, Confucianism, etc.); the Price-Marsian position validates the interminable nature and changing environment of religion. Bellegarde holds that there is relatively a system of religious expressions, what he has phrased “a hierarchy of religious forms;”³⁵ he posits that some are far more superior to others. He underscores that the religious forms found in Vodou occupy the lowest level in the hierarchy. He presupposes that Vodou’s religious patterns, symbols, and modalities still remain in the nascent stage of religion.

In another instance, Bellegarde fails to read Price-Mars in context and inappropriately attributes to Price-Mars that Vodou morality was essentially less inferior to that of Christianity. To vindicate his Christian-triumphalist approach to morality, he cites Price-Mars wrongly: “On the painful road which humanity follows, but a step less-advanced than Christianity...that [Christianity] has a moral height that it is often difficult to surpass”³⁶ (“*sur la voie douloureuse suivi par l’humanité, mais une étape moins avancée que le Christianisme, qui s’est élevé d’emblée... à une hauteur morale qu’il serait pour le moins difficile de dépasser*”). Price-Mars was a cultural relativist and religious modernist who embraced all faiths and rejected the idea of absolute morality. Price-Mars contends that morality is subjective; it evolves as society changes and human nature progresses for better. By contrast, Bellegarde’s Eurocentric view of religion and religion-based morality leads him to the unwarranted deduction that “Comparative study of religion has allowed us to classify the Vodou religion in its rank in the hierarchy of religious forms”³⁷ (“*L’étude comparative des religions permet de classer le culte vaudouique à son rang dans la hierarchie des formes religieuses*”).

Bellegarde's Vodouphobia

As noted in our preceding conversation, Bellegarde's Vodouphobia is precisely and directly articulated through the notion of religious difference and through a critical methodology of comparison, chiefly of two worldviews and religious paradigms: Africa and the West, Christianity and Vodou. His unyielding championing of Christian morality and Western cultural values and civilization and his castigation and jettisoning of the Afro-Haitian faith is revealing and indicative of his Vodouphobic discourse. In what follows in subsequent paragraphs below is our extended commentary on Bellegarde's apparent xenophobic rhetoric about the Vodou religion.

Bellegarde's anti-Vodou thesis directly contradicts Price-Mars's intelligent defense of and justification for the importance of African heritage in the construction of Haitian cultural identity and nationalism, religious worldview, and Haitian reality. Both Bellegarde and Price-Mars represent two competing intellectual voices and forces in Haitian intellectual history: the former Pro-French and Pro-Western, the latter Pro-African-Haitianism and Post-Western. For Bellegarde, Haiti was undoubtedly Roman Catholic and French; he sustained that the French culture and values were intrinsic to Haitian national identity and mentality. By contrary, Price-Mars had brilliantly argued and thus demonstrated with scientific rigor that the cultural traditions, values, and practices of the majority of Haitian peasant population are African in origin; Haitian worldview, he said, has been remarkably influenced by ancestral African cosmology—yet with some modification. According to Price-Mars, the local beliefs and practices of the peasant majority constitute the core elements of the Haitian soul, culture, and identity.

Bellegarde's Afrophobia and Vodouphobic discourse were filtered through a Western contextual view of religion, complemented by a rigid Eurocentric understanding of peoples, culture, and traditions.³⁸ He never challenged Western reason, the logic of a triumphalist Western civilization and narrative nor has he confronted directly the racist ideology and brutality of French-Western "*mission civilatrice et chrétienne*" accompanied the project of imperial colonialism and the system of slavery. He would argue that the French who enslaved and oppressed the Africans in Saint-Domingue never despised them ("*Les blancs ne montrèrent pas au début de repulsion pour les noirs.*"³⁹). He denies that there was any real racial prejudice and white hatred toward African blacks in the colonial system ("*Il faut faire tout de suite cette contestation qu'il n'a jamais véritablement existé de préjugé racial entre Français et Africains importés dans la colonie.*")⁴⁰ He could ask:

What was then, from a relational perspective, the attitude of the white population toward the Blacks? We must immediately contend the fact that racial prejudice never truly existed between French and Africans imported into the colony.⁴¹

Hence, the French-Western attitude toward colonial subjects and slaves was genuine, amicable, and human—a thesis that has been refuted by many reputable scholars and historians.⁴² Bellegarde himself reproduces the same racist stereotypes—as colonial historians Pierre Cabon and Moreaux de Saint Rémy—that the African “Aradas” were greedy and eaters of dogs (“*avares et grand mangeurs de chiens*”)⁴³ He also adds that the African Mondongues were “reputable cannibals”⁴⁴ (“*reputes canniabes*”). Bellegarde did not have any high regard for his African heritage and ancestors. He affirms Father Carbon’s racist report that the slaves lived an ignorant and superstitious life⁴⁵ (“*Les colons laissaient intentionnellement leurs esclaves vivre dans l’ignorance et la superstition*”—a dangerous ideology that has been used consistently by white racists to justify the morality of slavery and the forced evangelization of the Africans—informed by a Vodouist mentality. By the former word, Bellegarde seeks to communicate that the Africans were uncivilized—that is lacking culture and civilization, and, by consequence, they were in desperate need of Christianization and Westernization. As will be observed later, he would argue that France has given Haiti a double gift: the French culture and the Christian religion. Bellegarde had agreed with Saint-Rémy that in “The countryside, the masses of slaves remained attached to African superstitions and the practice of magic” The African religion is presented as ‘superstition,’ ‘black magic,’ and ‘sorcery’⁴⁶ (“*Dans la campagne, la masse des esclaves resta attaché aux superstitions d’Afrique et aux pratiques de magie*”).

Bellegarde was neither a cultural relativist nor a religious pluralist like Price-Mars, Firmin, Du Bois, Senghor or Césaire. He promoted French-Western cultural supremacy and Christian civilization in Haiti, while undermining the enormous cultural and intellectual contributions and achievements of Africa and people of African ancestry to universal civilizations. Bellegarde passionately encouraged Christian civilization and morality, and Western education in Haiti, while denigrating the Vodou religion—which is practiced by the country’s peasant majority—and renouncing the country’s African heritage. He saw no compatibility between Vodou morality and Christian morality, African civilization and Western civilization. Bellegarde’s persistent Vodouphobic and problematic Afrophobic had shaped his self-understanding as a mulatto Haitian and his idea of Haiti’s collective identity and Haitian cultural nationalism. In the same vein, his Afrophobia and Vodouphobia had significantly influenced his understanding of Haiti’s destiny and place on the world map.

Bellegarde adheres firmly to the view that Vodou is “a pagan, primitive form of black magic rather than as a legitimate religion.”⁴⁷ He depicts Vodou in conflict with the true religion: Christianity. He questions the logic of Vodou adepts and fervent Haitian nationalists who had labored vigorously to place Vodou on the same level with Christianity.⁴⁸ He reckons that these Vodou fanatics have recklessly underestimated the internal (both moral and economic) and external consequences of Vodou practice. Bellegarde suggests that Vodou has contributed increasingly to peasant poverty and economic decline on a national level. He does not seem to differentiate the moral and economic aspects of religion. On the moral level, he is concerned about the stereotypical projections of the Haitian people, as coming from the Western (American) Media and Press, as cannibals and Vodou worshippers, particularly during the era of the American Occupation of Haiti (1915-1934).

The negative depiction of Haiti as an exotic place, because of the strong influence of the Afro-Haitian faith in every aspect of the Haitian life or experience, is a threat to the country's moral status. Bellegarde was afraid that foreigners and visitors of Haiti would form more negative pictures of the country and conclude that Haiti belongs to a non-civilized zone and a deterrent region to progress, reason, and Westernization. Consequently, he could propose that the goal of the Haitian intellectual and minority elite is to serve as benevolent guides, to reorient Vodou peasant practitioners to a higher moral life, and to help improve the conditions of their spiritual and material life.⁴⁹ Bellegarde's paternalism to Haitian peasants is prevalent in his own writings.

Bellegarde has constructed his own idea of the Vodou religion. He, however, has not formulated a scientific definition of the Afro-Haitian faith. He has relied heavily on reports from Vodouphobes such as George Sylvain, and the definitions provided by the Haitian psychiatrist Louis P. Mars and cultural critic-poet Leon Laleau. (As a close relative of Bellegarde observes, "Dantes Bellegarde seems never to have acquired a firsthand knowledge of the cult."⁵⁰) In an article entitled "*Syndrome maniaque et Croyances Vaudouiques*" published in 1938 in the *Bulletin du Service Hygiene*, Mars provides the following definition: "Vodou is a primitive religion practiced in temples commonly known as *houmforts*."⁵¹ To this rendering, Bellegarde goes on to warn the Haitian people that, "Consequently, it is one of those [religion] which sociologists attribute to the non-civilized..."⁵² and that "primitive religion" and "primitive man are applied to peoples declared by sociologists to be non-civilized. I remind my compatriots who may not know it, that *peoples with the reputation of being uncivilized or simply retarded are placed under mandate or trusteeship or more civilized nations*."⁵³

Further, Bellegarde not only approves Mars's definition indiscriminately but also affirms the possible meaning of the title of the article. It is noteworthy to mention here that the title of Mars' article implies that it is possible that the individual who is possessed by the Vodou *loas*/spirits may suffer bipolar disorder, which constitutes these symptoms: bipolar mania and hypomania. As one writer observes recently, "Louis Mars's psychiatric work on Vodou and mental health, particularly those dealing with trauma and possession, ultimately pathologized the Haitian mind thus assigning boundaries between the normal and perverse."⁵⁴ We will return to Mars's engagement with Vodou later in this composition.

For Bellegarde, to practice Vodou is to belong to the non-civilized world, and what is deemed deplorable or questionable in Western societies. Hence, he invites all Haitians to reason with him: "Would it therefore be the Haitian ideal to keep our people in this state of 'non-civilization' and to make our country 'the wild Haiti'"⁵⁵ ("*Serait-ce donc l'ideal haitien de garder notre peuple dans cet etat de 'non-civilisation' et de faire de notre pays la 'wild Haiti'*"). What follows after is Bellegarde's logical inference: "Should we not oppose this superstitious Haiti in our Christian Haiti"⁵⁶ ("*Et ne faut-il pas oppose a cette Haiti superstitieuse notre vraie Haiti chretienne*").

Bellegarde supposes that the “superstitious Haiti” is not the “real and Christian” Haiti; to put it another way, a Vodou nation is foreign to the Haitian experience and life. As previously stated, the correlation between religion and national identity is critical and central in Bellegarde’s idea of Haiti. Bellegarde is not comfortable with the first descriptive characteristic; as a diplomat, he tries to display a positive image of Haiti to the international community and foreigners.

I reckon that this particular ideology is what motivates him to make a clarion call to the Haitian masses and peasant majority to let go their superstitious life informed by the Vodouist mentality: “Our popular masses learn to get rid of this ‘mystical mentality,’ a tool of enslavement and evil domination used by Vodou priests, bocors, magicians, and sorcerers of all kinds”⁵⁷ (“*Nos masses populaires apprennent à se débarrasser de cette ‘mentalité mystique,’ qui les asservit à la domination maléfique des houngans, bocors, magiciens et sorciers de toutes sortes?*”). By inference, since he has defined Vodou as a pagan religion, superstition, sorcery, and magic, he nevertheless places the Vodou priest in the same category with the sorcerer and magician. Bellegarde is not too far from those he seeks to criticize—William Seabrook’s *The Black Magic* (1929)—and Western journalists and travelers to Haiti who had broadcasted discriminatory remarks and propagated racist stereotypes to describe Vodou and Haiti.⁵⁸

Moreover, Bellegarde would reference an important article written by the cultural critic George Sylvain to further his anti-Vodou agenda:

The alleged religion of Vodou is dreadful because of the obstacle it creates in the popular imagination, by the cultural habits and debauchery it maintains or entertains among our rural workers, by the darkness that blinds the mind of our compatriots, and by the superstitions that spread under its shadow.⁵⁹

The Afrophobic characterization and demonization of Vodou signifies “any practice related to or believed to be related to African-derived religions, in part because (American and) Europeans applied the term, with its negative signification, to virtually any African religious practice they observed or heard about.”⁶⁰ It is important to remind the reader here that the denigration of African and anything African was common among many twentieth-century Black writers and intellectuals. Black writers often pitted West-and-Central-African traditions and customs against those of (ostensibly Enlightened) Christian or Muslim. For example, many writers of the Harlem Renaissance movement as well as West Indian and Afro-Cuban writers gravitated toward this view—that is, a sort of Afro-Orientalism— as a means of distancing themselves from stereotypes of “Africans” as uncivilized, uncultured, vicious, and so forth. By contrast, many intellectuals of the Haitian Indigenism and the founders of the Negritude movement in Paris—Aime Césaire, Leopold Sedar Senghor, and Leon Damas—as well as many thinkers of the New Negro Movement—Du Bois, Langston Hughes, Marcus Garvey, Alain Locke, Zora Neale Hurston, etc.—articulated counter responses to the savage Black Continent.

Unfortunately, there are those who questioned the validity and usability of African retentions and Africanisms in the Black Diaspora, and Bellegarde belongs to this intellectual tradition.

Bellegarde's attempt to preserve the so-called Christian tradition in Haiti and to underline the religious difference ideology he incessantly advocates is revealing. First, he notes that if the Haitian masses still mingle with the Christian religion some primitive elements inherited from ancestral Africa ("*croyances primitives héritées des ancêtres africains*"), their faith in the divinity (that is, in the Christian God) will be less refined.⁶¹ Second, he warns the Haitian people that their syncretic customs and practices—that is, the blending of Vodou and Christian traditions and belief systems—will impact the possibility of living a better and quality life as a nation. Finally, he ascertains that with proper instruction in the Christian religion (excluding Vodou education) and an effective organized secular education, the country will inevitably experience national development and growth.⁶² (Bellegarde's ultimate objective is to get rid of any signs of Vodou traditions and practices in Haiti.) Jacques Roumain held a similar view, as expressed powerfully in the words below:

The essential is not to make the peasant renounce his belief in Ogun. It is rather a question of completely changing his conception of the word...If one really wishes to change the archaic religious mentality of our peasants, we must educate them. And they cannot be educated unless their material conditions are transformed. Until we have developed a system of rural clinics, the peasant will continue to consult his "bocor" (priest).⁶³

Where Bellegarde employs the phrase *croyances primitives héritées des ancêtres africains*, Roumain uses "the archaic religious mentality of our peasants." These two phrases are equivalent. Both Bellegarde and Roumain held that (Western) education will alter the peasants' Vodou worldview and mentality; nonetheless, Bellegarde is particularly afraid of the possible effects of Vodou on the so-called Christian tradition in the country. Roumain, being an agnostic Marxist, did not give much attention to the value of Christian education in the Haitian society. Elsewhere, Bellegarde urges the Haitian people to abandon their Vodou lifestyle: "The Haitians, who are willing, through education, will get rid of our popular and peasant traditions and superstitions that keep them in the state of ignorance and misery."⁶⁴ The practice of Vodou dance and the spectacle of divine trance are among the many sources of Haitian ignorance and poverty.

Bellegarde moves forward with his conversation by concentrating on the aesthetic and nature of Vodou dance. We have already outlined above that Bellegarde remarked that in the Haitian culture, “dancing Vodou” is equivalent to “practicing Vodou.”⁶⁵ Vodou dance for Bellegarde is nothing but hedonist joy, uncontrollable amusement, and outright debauchery⁶⁶ (“*Or cette danse du vaudou n’est bien souvent qu’un divertissement...*”). In this way, Bellegarde has undermined the sacred character of the dance ritual, and the intimate link between Vodou dance and divine possession—the highest expression of spirituality in Vodou. In describing the sacred feasts that accompany the ritual, Bellegarde misjudges and misunderstands the mystical dimension as “inferior in quality,” “excessive,” “vain noise,” “savagery,” and “indecent pleasure.”⁶⁷ These sets of descriptors and characteristics of the Vodou sacred dance and feasts suggest that Vodou adepts live in a psychological terror. Here, Bellegarde is echoing Roumain’s lyrical but infelicitous account of a Vodou dance in his classic novel, *Masters of the Dew*:

Nevertheless, the *fête* (party) went on. The peasants forgot their troubles. Dancing and drinking anesthetized them—swept away their shipwrecked souls to drown in those regions of unreality and danger where the fierce forces of the African gods lay in wait. When dawn came over the sleepless plain, the drums were still beating like a heart that never tires.⁶⁸

Bellegarde expresses the impossibility of the Vodou dance experience; in his opinion, it invokes psychological malaise and mental discomfort in his Western thinking and perception. He perceives the human emotion and dynamics attending the Vodou dance and sacred ceremonies as something terrifically tragic and dangerous to the civilized mind. As he follows the psychiatric observations of Léon Audain, he discerns that their danger lies in the periodic and intense exhaustion...inciting the nerves to be tensed and capable of engendering hysteria, epilepsy, and other forms of psychological abnormality and physical discomfort.⁶⁹ David Nicholls writes precisely that, for Audin, the Vodou religion was primarily a form of amusement, with music and dancing combined with a communal feast. He quaintly admitted that the ceremony preceding the killing of the animal is not absolutely in proportion to the end proposed, the preparation of a meal, and he lamented the alcoholism and state of hysteria which frequently accompany the ceremonies. Yet he saw these features as peripheral to the real social function of Vodou and believed that it was possible to purify the practices by removing those elements which carry over the barbarous spirit of past times, transforming Vodou into a simple popular dance, joyful and decent.⁷⁰

Both Bellegarde and Audain greatly misconstrue the intimate closeness between Vodou dance and spirit possession. The supernatural manifests himself or himself in the pivotal moment of the trance mediated through the sacred dance and movements; Bellegarde makes the following comment, which reveals his further ignorance of the sense of unity, oneness, and the inexorable bond between the human and the divine occurred during the divine trance:

That these gastronomic entertainments are mingled with superstitious practices. Nobody denies it. But, how is it possible that these ignorant peasants have attributed to mysterious causes these happy or painful events that befall them, that which they may find and explain themselves? They enjoy, in this matter, no monopoly.⁷¹

Bellegarde expounds further,

Man is surrounded by a network of invisible forces, that it comes quickly, at any and all latitudes, to believe that the influences of occult are the craftsmen of his happiness or his misfortune. It is there, as it seems a universal tendency, to which the most scientific mind does not always escape.⁷²

The description above of the possession trance is unfounded and is described as a mental illness, a psychological abnormality. Bellegarde questions the credibility of the supernatural experience which the Vodou adept claims and becomes part of, and the special union which he enjoys with the divine, through the spirit possession. For him, it is all creative invention and fiction. It is puzzling that Bellegarde is not interested to explain the essentials of Vodou dance and spirit possession. It is good to mention here that Bellegarde, Audain, and many Haitian intellectual of that era were heavily influenced by French ethnological studies on the so-called primitive cultures and the primitive mind such as *La Mentalité primitive* (1922) (*The Primitive Mentality*) by Lucien-Lévy-Bruhl. This particular work not only had a great impact on the nascent discipline of Religious Studies but also on the disciplines of ethnography, anthropology, and sociology. In fact, the founder of the Haitian ethnology, Jean Price-Mars attempted to refute some of these arguments and theses in his epoch-making book, *Ainsi parla l'Oncle* (1928) (*Thus Spoke the Uncle*). Price-Mars interrogated the logic behind these ideas and the credibility of Western science and rationality, which Bellegarde subscribed.

We already saw above that he has quoted the Haitian psychiatrist Louis P. Mars's partially and uncritically. Elsewhere in an article entitled "The Story of Zombi in Haiti" (1945), the same Louis Mars reports what exactly transpires in the Vodou dance, which he conceives as a ritual performance, and spirit possession as the means that the divine incarnates in the human flesh and reveals his/her will to Vodou adepts in order to release and break them free from their social and spiritual ills.

Mars reports that through the phenomenon of possession, “a spirit manifests itself to the devotees during the ceremonies.”⁷³ Mars emphasizes the humanitarian function of Vodou: to meet people’s needs; as he notes, “The ceremonies are performed according to the (religious) need of each follower.”⁷⁴ Yet, he condemns the Haitian peasant who puts religion above his basic needs of life: “It is a very serious matter for the Haitian peasant, who sometimes spends more money in the worship of his gods than he does for the necessities of life.”⁷⁵ Mars highlights that Vodou spirits provide proper orientation to life and “spiritual assistance which we want in our every-day life.”⁷⁶ He underscores that one of the central roles of divine possession is the conferring of power upon the faithful in order to remedy both material and spiritual needs of individuals and the community in crisis. He is more explicitly about the phenomenon of spirit possession mediated through the Vodou dance as ritual performance:

In the vodu dances, the Haitian peasants become furious and are supposed to be possessed of spirits. When one falls into this state, the medicine-man is said to be able to predict the incidence of catastrophe, birth, or death; to tell how a person can win immense fortunes; to describe what happens in his home when a man is away from his family, and many other things which a person may always have been eager to know. The medicine-man is also supposed to have power over fate and to avert any ill fortune that the future holds in store for a victim.⁷⁷

It is good to point out that Louis Mars was no friend of the Vodou religion. He was not a Vodou sympathizer like his father, Jean Price-Mars—the champion of the religion and culture of Haitian peasants. In fact, in various occasions Mars (the son) describes the religious experience of Vodou adepts—which he also refers as “untutored Haitian peasants”—as “mass hysteria” because of the archaic superstitious beliefs deeply rooted in the traditional culture of the Haitian people.⁷⁸ The Vodou dance, as it is commonly practiced in the African-derived Obeah-Myal dance belief complex of Jamaica, is an “ecstatic ritual performance required to invoke manifestations of invisible, revelatory, and transformative powers, deities, and Ancestors.”⁷⁹ Nonetheless, Bellegarde sustains that Vodou worshippers cultivate a mystical mentality and superstitious psyche to the degree that they attribute relatively everything that occurs in their life to the intervention of Vodou spirits:

[A] mystical mentality—that is to say an intellectual disposition that in itself may lead to absurd causes or interventions of occult forces, the most simplest phenomena such as the weather, accidents, birth, illness and death, luck in work, etc., The ideas of the non-civilized are over all things.⁸⁰

Bellegarde elaborates that this mystical mentality, which has its root in the Vodou religion and ancestral African spirituality, gave birth to magic and unorthodox practices—such as the Vodou dance and Vodou trance—contrary to natural laws. Hence,

This mystical mentality gave birth to magic, and, in the most bizarre ways, produces certain effects contrary to natural laws. It is not surprising that the magic is particularly associated with the religious beliefs of Africans, and it is found distinctively among the imported Blacks in Sant-Domingue.⁸¹

Furthermore, Bellegarde describes the central consequence of holding the Vodouist mentality: it prevents Vodou adepts from believing and embracing the established truths of the true religion: Christianity (“*un développement mental qui ne lui permet plus de croire, comme à des vérités établies*”⁸²). To recapitulate, for Bellegarde, the Afro-Haitian Religion constitutes nothing but a series of jumble of legends, childish fables, absurd cosmological systems created by surreptitious practices and childish imaginations of primitive ancestors in Africa⁸³ (“*au fatras des légendes, aux fables enfantines, aux systèmes cosmogonique absurde créer par l’imagination puérile de ses ancêtres primitifs de l’Afrique*”).

Concluding Thoughts

The goal of this presentation was to engage the religious sensibility of Dantes Bellegarde and critically study his thought on the Vodou religion. We have observed that the eminent Haitian cultural critic and public intellectual Dantès Bellegarde associated the Vodou religion with superstitions, magic, and sorcery (“*Quant aux superstitions, actes de magie et de sorcellerie, qui sont l’accompagnement ordinaire du Vaudou*”⁸⁴). It is from this perspective, he suggested that Vodou could be an object of study for scholars, but should never be an object of faith for the Haitian people (“*Le Vaudou peut être un objet d’étude pour les savants: il ne peut être un objet de foi pour le peuple haïtien*”⁸⁵).

Bellegarde contended that the Vodou religion is indisputably the hurdle of the rapid Christianization and Westernization of Haiti.⁸⁶ He saw the Vodou priest as a principal threat to Christianity and Haitian modernity. However, he lamented hopelessly that, because of his manifold function as advisor, the medicine-man, community organizer, public servant in the Haitian society, the Vodou priest is King (“*le bocor est roi*”); he has exerted a paramount influence comparatively on Vodou adepts and Christians.⁸⁷ In the same line of thought, he portrayed the Vodou priest and practitioners of the Vodou religion as “wreckers” (“*démolisseurs*”) of morality and values. Therefore, he could call upon Christians and the Catholic Clergy to resist “the attack of the wreckers”⁸⁸ (“*répousser l’assaut des démolisseurs!*”). Bellegarde complained that these individuals challenge or tackle all the foundational principles of public and private morality, civilization, and all the spiritual values, which are the real strength of the nation.⁸⁹

Bellegarde interpreted this phenomenon as social, cultural, and spiritual decadence, and the gradual decline of Haiti. As he thunders: “The moral situation of the country is tragic. The soul of the nation is in danger”⁹⁰ (“*La situation morale du pays est tragique. L’âme de la nation est en danger*”⁹¹). Bellegarde’s strong anti-Vodou sentiment is clearly communicated in these forceful words: “We must not forget that the practice of Vodou and superstition constitutes a defect that must be disappeared and removed”⁹² (“*Nous ne devons pas oublier que la pratique du Vaudou et les superstitions qu’elle entraîne constituent une tare qu’il faut faire disparaître*”).

Bellegarde’s attitude towards the Vodou faith is not sympathetic, as it were for Jacques Stephen Alexis, J.C. Dorsainvil, Jacques Roumain, or Jean Price-Mars. It is rather Vodouphobic.

Notes

¹ Quoted in Mercer Cook, “Dantes Bellegarde,” *Phylon* 1:2 (1940): 126.

² Patrick Bellegarde, “Dantès Bellegarde and Pan-Africanism,” *Phylon* 42:3 (1960):233.

³ Quoted in Patrick Bellegarde Smith, “Dante Bellegarde and Pan-Africanism,” 233; Léon Laleau, “Dantès Bellegarde, une célébrité, amie de la pénombre,” *Conjonction* (July 1972): 89, 119.

⁴ Dantès Bellegarde and Mercer Cook, *The Haitian-American Anthology: Haitian Readings from American Authors* (Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie de l’état, 1944).

⁵ W. E.B. Du Bois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870* (Mineola: Dove Publications, Inc., 1970), 70-93.

⁶ Quoted in Mercer Cook, “Dantes Bellegarde,” 125.

⁷ Jones, "Phylon Profile, XX: Dantes Bellegarde," 19; for an important essay on Bellegarde's Pan-Africanism, see Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, "Dantes Bellegarde and Pan-Africanism," *Phylon* 42:3 (1960):233-244.

⁸ This is exactly what European missionaries attempted to do in Africa in the time of colonization and European evangelization in the Continent, V. Y. Mudimbe, *Tales of Faith: Religion as Political Performance in Central Africa* (Atlantic Highlands: The Athlone Press, 1997), 36-88.

⁹ Gouraige, *La Diaspora D'Haiti et l'Afrique*, 30.

¹⁰ Gerarde Magloire, "Haitian-ness, Frenchness and History," 42, 33.

¹¹ Claudine Michel, "Of Worlds Seen and Unseen: The Educational Character of Haitian Vodou," 281.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Bellegarde, *La Nation Haïtienne*, 308-9.

¹⁴ Bellegarde, *Dessalines a parlé*, 198.

¹⁵ Bellegarde, *Dessalines a parlé*, 198.

¹⁶ Bellegarde, *La Nation Haïtienne*, 308.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Milo Rigaud, *Secrets of Voodoo* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1969), 34.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Bellegarde, *La Nation*, 306.

²¹ Ibid., 309.

²² Bellegarde, *Haïti, Centre de Culture Française, en Amérique*, 12.

²³ Bellegarde, *Haïti et ses problèmes*, 97.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Bellegarde, *La Nation Haïtienne*, 310; Bellegarde-Smith, *In the Shadow of Powers*, 142.

²⁶ Bellegarde, *Au Service d'Haïti: Appréciations sur un Haïtien et son œuvre* (Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie Theodore, 1962), 78.

²⁷ V. Y. Mudimbe, *The Idea of Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 142.

²⁸ Bellegarde, *La Nation Haïtienne*, 312.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Bellegarde, *La Nation Haïtienne*, 311.

³¹ The interested reader is recommended to consult these selected texts: Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: Sheed & Ward, Inc., 1958), and *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: A Harvest Book, 1987); Wilfred Cantrell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).

³² Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, xv.

³³ Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 11.

³⁴ Bellegarde, *La Nation Haïtienne*, 312.

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- ³⁵ Bellegarde, *Haiti et ses problèmes*, 97.
- ³⁶ Bellegarde, *La Nation Haïtienne*, 312.
- ³⁷ Bellegarde, *Haiti et ses problèmes*, 97.
- ³⁸ For important studies on this issue in the Haitian Context, see Gerarde Magloire, "Haitian-ness, Frenchness and History: Deconstructing the History of the French Component of Haitian National Identity" *Journal of Haitian Studies* 5:6 (1999-2000): 30-43; Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, "En pays conquis: la francophonie dans oeuvre et le carrier de Dantes Bellegarde (1877-1966)," *Journal of Haitian Studies* 10:1 (2004): 56-69, "Haitian Social Thought in the Nineteenth Century: Class, Formation and Westernization," *Caribbean Studies* 20:1 (1980), "International Relations/Social Theory in a Small State: An Analysis of the Thought of Dantes Bellegarde," *The Americas* 39:2 (1982): 167:184, and *Haiti: The Breached Citadel* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990); Trouillot, Michel-Rolph, *Haiti, State Against Nation: The Origins and Legacy of Duvalierism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1990); David Nicholls, *From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour and National Independence in Haiti* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996), and *Haiti in the Caribbean Context: Ethnicity, Economy and Revolt* (London: Macmillan, 1985); Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Haiti and the Great Power, 1902-1915* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988).
- ³⁹ Bellegarde, *Histoire*, 27.
- ⁴⁰ Bellegarde, *La Nation*, 31.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² For serious scholarship on this important theme, see William B. Cohen, *The French Encounter with Africans: White Response to Blacks, 1530-1880* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); Jan Nederven Pieterse, *White on Black: Images of Africa in Western Popular Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1977); Dana S. Hale, *Races on Display: French Representations of Colonized Peoples, 1886-1940* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008); Sue Peabody and Tyler Stoval, *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France* (Chapel Hil: Duke University Press, 2003); Christopher L. Miller, *Theories of Africans: Francophone Literature and Anthropology in Africa* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990);
- ⁴³ Bellegarde, *La Nation*, 30.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 59.
- ⁴⁶ Bellegarde, *La Nation*, 60.
- ⁴⁷ Bellegarde-Smith, *Haiti: The Breached Citadel*, 22.
- ⁴⁸ Bellegarde, *Dessalines a parlé*, 217.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ Bellegarde-Smith, *In the Shadow of Powers*, 142.
- ⁵¹ Bellegarde, *Haiti et ses problèmes*, 86.

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- ⁵² Ibid., 88.
- ⁵³ Cited in Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, *In the Shadow of Powers*, 121.
- ⁵⁴ Allen Kim, "Ethnology and Ethnopsychiatry in Haiti: The Formation of a National Discipline." Laboratoire Langages, Discours, Représentations (LADIREP) et du Master Anthropologie sociale. Université d'Etat D'Haïti. 27 Janvier, 2014.
http://lettre.uuh.edu.ht/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=396&Itemid=1
- ⁵⁵ Bellegarde, *Haïti et ses problèmes*, 88.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ⁵⁸ J. Michael Dash provides an important analysis of these important studies, *Haiti and the United States: National Stereotypes and Literary Imagination. Second Edition* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1997), 73-134, 141-152,
- ⁵⁹ Bellegarde, *Dessalines a parle*, 26-7.
- ⁶⁰ Diane M. Stewart, *Three Eyes for the Journey: African Dimensions of the Jamaican Religious Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 44.
- ⁶¹ Bellegarde, *Haïti et ses problèmes*, 57.
- ⁶² Ibid.
- ⁶³ Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew* (Berkshire: Heinemann, 1978), 9.
- ⁶⁴ Bellegarde, *Haïti et ses problèmes*, 83.
- ⁶⁵ Bellegarde, *Dessalines a parlé*, 174; *La Nation Haïtienne*, 310.
- ⁶⁶ Bellegarde, *La Nation Haïtienne*, 310.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ Roumain, *Masters of the Dew*, 71-2.
- ⁶⁹ Bellegarde, *Dessalines a parlé*, 174; *La Nation Haïtienne*, 310. Léon Audain was a Haitian medical doctor who in 1908 published this famous text, *Le mal d'Haïti, ses causes et son traitement* (Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie J. Verrollot, 1908)
- ⁷⁰ Nicholls, *From Dessalines to Duvalier*, 133.
- ⁷¹ Bellegarde, *Haïti et ses problèmes*, 93; *La Nation Haïtienne*, 310-311.
- ⁷² Bellegarde, *Dessalines a parlé*, 174; *La Nation Haïtienne*, 311.
- ⁷³ Louis P. Mars, "The Story of Zombi in Haiti," *Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 45:20 (March-April, 1945): 38.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid., 39.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid., 40.
- ⁷⁹ Stewart, *Three Eyes for the Journey*, 44.
- ⁸⁰ Bellegarde, *Haïti et ses problèmes*, 95.

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- ⁸¹ Ibid., 94.
⁸² Bellegarde, *Haïti et ses problèmes*, 95.
⁸³ Bellegarde, *Haïti et ses problèmes*, 95.
⁸⁴ Ibid.
⁸⁵ Ibid.
⁸⁶ Bellegarde, *Dessalines a parlé*, 299.
⁸⁷ Ibid.
⁸⁸ Bellegarde, *Dessalines a parlé*, 302.
⁸⁹ Ibid.
⁹⁰ Ibid., 300.
⁹¹ Ibid., 300.
⁹² Bellegarde, *Haïti et ses problèmes*, 88.

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