

## [“Religions for Peace, Democracy, and Mutual Understanding: Vodou and Christianity in Interreligious Dialogue”](#)

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Call for Papers

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Scholars, researchers, and faith practitioners have characterized the history of Haiti’s two dominant religious traditions: Christianity—both Protestant and Catholic— and Vodou as antagonistic, conflicting, and unproductive, and a lack of mutual understanding. Historically and practically, the problem between these two faith traditions lies in the resistance of the two groups to build bridges and constructive channels toward mutual understanding and peace, and to engage in interfaith dialogue and participate in interreligious collaboration and partnership. These pivotal concerns not only had had a tremendous impact on nation-building in Haiti; they have weakened Haitian democracy, challenged the importance of religious freedom and expression, and delayed human development and flourishing in society. This book project on religions for peace, democracy, and mutual understanding in Haiti is premised on a two-fold interrelated question: how can faith leaders and practitioners of both traditions unite to speak and act together and to build strong communities in Haiti and improve the human condition for all Haitian citizens? How can these faith leaders and practitioners of both traditions mobilize and join hands to fight violence, injustice, and corruption in Haiti, and to hold together public events, including press conferences, networking events, award ceremonies, charity events, fundraising events, conventions, public dialogues, and interfaith trainings—leading to the advancement of a truly democratic life and the safeguarding of religious rights and freedom? There are three philosophical and practical ideas underlying this book project: (1) it is grounded on the belief that religion has value, and it could bring social goods to different communities and enhance human dignity and justice; (2) it is premised on the idea that dialogue and cooperation are necessary for nation-building and human development (as democratic ideals), and that one of the leading functions of the world’s religious traditions is to promote both cooperation and dialogue through mutual understanding and for the common good; and (3) that the power and public role of religion (i.e. Vodou, Christianity) in society can be used as a major force of unification and peace-building among divergent factions and schools of thought, and to promote reconciliation, mutual respect, and friendship in the world.

The aims and objectives of this book on interreligious dialogue between Vodou and Christianity in Haiti could be summarized into a five-fold objective or purpose:

(1) promote dialogue, understanding, and a sense of belonging and to work collaboratively to foster cultural, social, educational, and economic progress and justice through Haiti’s faith traditions in

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collaboration with other organizations and institutions.

(2) use the wisdom, principles, and teachings of both religions to strengthen democracy, eradicate poverty and violence in Haiti, and to improve the country's civil and political societies toward a more just community.

(3) work together through the ethics of coalition-building and interrelationality to produce constructive religious literature and curriculum about both Vodou and Christianity and engage in sustaining interreligious advocacy and intervention.

(4) use the channel of interreligious dialogue and mutual understanding to prevent interreligious tensions, reduce death threats and violence, and counteract rhetorical discourses about Vodouphobia and Christianophobia in Haitian society and literary productions.

(5) use religion in conjunction with the knowledge from other disciplines of study in Social Sciences and the Humanities to address and cure Haiti's ecological crisis and to foster sustainable and positive dynamics between Haitian citizens and nature/the environment toward the overall safety of the Haitian people and the protection of the earth.

We are looking for papers from religious leaders and scholars, faith practitioners, social scientists, educators, curriculum designers, theologians, activists, environmentalists, public intellectuals, cultural critics, psychologists, philosophers, politicians, and others that will take into consideration the five objectives of the book and will interact with the pertaining issues addressed above. In addition, we also looking for papers that will offer guidelines for interfaith conversations and dialogues between Vodou and Christianity, and those that will maximize our democracy and citizenship/social responsibility. We are looking for curriculum designers who could produce interreligious literature to foster a better understanding between the two corresponding faiths. Similarly, we are seeking for papers that will address how these two religions in conjunction with other resources and fields of knowledge could be deployed to address responsibly and ethically the "problem areas" in the country at the service of humanity and democracy in the Haitian society.

The deadline to submit the 300-word-proposal along with a brief biography to Dr. Celucien Joseph, [celucienjoseph@gmail.com](mailto:celucienjoseph@gmail.com), is September 3, 2021. Paper acceptance notifications will go out to contributors on October 1, 2021.

About the editor:

Celucien L. Joseph (Ph.D.) is the lead editor of the book project. Currently, he serves as an associate professor of English at Indian River State College. Dr. Joseph is a leading scholar and researcher in Haitian, Black, Caribbean, and Africana Studies. He received his first PhD from the University of Texas at Dallas, where he studied Literary Studies with an emphasis in African American Literature, African American Intellectual History, and Caribbean Culture and Literature. His second PhD in Systematic Theology and Christian Ethics is from the University of Pretoria (Pretoria, South Africa). He has done additional academic studies in Religious Studies and the Humanities at the University of Louisville. He is a prolific writer in the areas of religion and education, religion and race, Liberation Theology, Theological Ethics and Anthropology, Theological Interpretation and Hermeneutics,

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Literary Theory, Postcolonial Studies, Africana Studies, and Haitian literature and intellectual history. His most recent publications include "Theologizing in Black: On Africana Theological Ethics and Anthropology," "Revolutionary Change and Democratic Religion: Christianity, Vodou," and "Secularism, and Reconstructing the Social Sciences and Humanities: Anténor Firmin, Western Intellectual Tradition, and Black Atlantic Tradition."

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