

VODOUN PANTHEON

Vodoun religion is a mixture of religions from Africa and Catholicism. The black slaves that were brought from Africa were forbidden to worship their native Yoruba gods and forced to accept Catholicism. Eventually, a blend of the two occurred. There is only one god in Vodoun, commonly called Bondye and sometimes Grand Maître or Damballa, but there are many spiritual beings that have contact with people on earth, called loa. There are both friendly and violent loas that are worshipped. The most important loa are:

AGW (OR AGWE) is the spirit that rules the seas and is especially honored by those who live near the sea.

AIDA WEDO is the spirit of the rainbow and plays a role in creation of the world.

DAMBALLA is the father figure, the serpent spirit and the source of peace and tranquility. He is sometimes associated with the saint St. Patrick in Catholicism. Sometimes he is also seen as the creator of the earth.

ERZILIE is the Earth mother loa. She is the spirit of love and the muse of beauty. There is a close connection to the Virgin Mary in Catholicism.

GUEDES are the spirits of the dead

KALFU is the spirit of the night and the origin of darkness. His symbol is the moon and he is dangerous.

LEGBA is the old man who is the gatekeeper between the world of earth and the invisibles. He is also the origin of life. He is a trickster who is intelligent and cunning and is also a close ally with destiny. Legba is always the first spirit to be invoked during Vodoun ceremonies.

MOMBU is a stammering loa who causes torrential rains

OGUN is the warrior loa and the spirit of war. He is very violent

PAPA GHEDE is the loa of death. He is very erotic and also comical.

