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## One Book—Two Authors—Whose Ideas?

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This short essay attempts to answer some questions that came to my mind regarding the authorship and the origin of ideas developed in *De la Sénégambie française*<sup>1</sup> (Paris: Librairie de Firmin Didot Frères, Fils et Cie., 1855) by Frédéric Carrère and Paul Holle, two notables of mid-nineteenth century Saint-Louis, Senegal. I had been commissioned to prepare an analysis of the attitudes towards Islam of the authors for *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History 1500-1900*, a multi-volume series of bibliographical studies under preparation by the Department of Theology and Religion of the University of Birmingham in England being published, volume by volume, by Brill Press of the Netherlands. My specific assignment was to develop an essay according to a set format in which I discussed the opinions of the authors in regard to Christian-Muslim relations in the Senegal River valley in the 1850s.

During this period, the French colonial authorities based in Saint-Louis and Gorée were attempting to impose French military and commercial dominance along the navigable course of the Senegal River through the elaboration of a system of domination and pacification with only limited conquest. The nagging questions, the answering of which went beyond the scope of the assignment for *Christian-Muslim Relations*, were the following: Whose book is *De la Sénégambie française*? Who was the lead author, Carrère or Holle? Who of the two authors contributed the basic ideas? This essay attempts to answer these questions.

Confining itself to the Senegal River Valley (despite its title) and excluding Gorée and its Dependencies, administered separately between November 1854 and February 1859, *De la Sénégambie française* offers a description that is both geographical and historical, sociological and anthropological of the various societies and state systems lining both sides of the Senegal River as far inland as the limits of seasonal navigation (about 1000 kilometers). It dwells on Saint-Louis, the colonial capital, and its diverse population. It recommends steps which the French government and French business interests might take to develop Senegal, many of these having been recommended by Edouard Bouët-Willaumez, a French naval officer who had served as Governor of Senegal from 1842 to 1844 and the recommendations of an Inter-ministerial Commission on French possessions in Africa that had met intermittently in Paris from August 1850 to June 1851.

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<sup>1</sup> Translated as “On French Senegambia.” All the translations from French to English appearing in this essay are my own.

The authors express praise for the pacification efforts that newly appointed Governor Louis Faidherbe (1818-1889) was making; however, two chapters express strong anti-Muslim views, one regarding the perceived threat to the French position in Senegal of the jihad that the Toucouleur religious reformer, Al Hajj Umar Tal (1797-1864), had declared in the upper river a little more than a year earlier, and the other, which denounces what the authors refer to as the “unrestricted” Islamization of Saint-Louis and its environs. Both chapters could be interpreted as strong criticisms of Governor Faidherbe’s efforts to support the pro-French elements within the Muslim community.

The book is quite typical of the kinds of writings that, appearing in the mid-nineteenth century, reflected a growing European interest in the “Dark Continent.” Other writings of this sort on Senegal include Stéphan Aucousteaux, *Le Sénégal est une colonie française* (Paris: Imprimerie Administrative de Paul Dupont, 1851, reprinted by Hachette, 2018); Hyacinthe Hecquard, *Voyage sur la côte et dans l’intérieur de l’Afrique occidentale* (Paris: de Bénard, 1855); and Anne Raffenel, *Nouveau voyage dans le pays des nègres suivi d’études sur la colonie du Sénégal et de documents historiques, géographiques et scientifiques*, 2 vols. (Paris: Chaix, 1856). Typically, such books describe the various indigenous societies with regard to their histories, their political and social systems, their religious practices, and the geographical features of their homelands. They estimate the commercial potential of the given societies and regions, the receptiveness of the populations to “civilization,” i.e., European ways, and to Europeans themselves.

What particularly struck me is that *De la Senegambie française* is cited and described by the American historian, Robert July, in his seminal study, *The Origins of Modern African Thought: Its Development in West Africa during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*<sup>2</sup> along with *Esquisses sénégalaises* by Pierre-David Boilat (Paris: P. Bertrand, 1853) as the two earliest examples of francophone West African thought. But how representative of West African thought are these two books? Two of the authors, Boilat and Holle, are Eur-Africans (known as *métis(se)*) — mixed — the French term that I shall use to designate such persons throughout this essay). Their fathers were metropolitan Frenchmen. Boilat’s mother was herself a *métisse*, a *signare*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Originally published by Praeger in 1967; republished by Africa World Press in 2004. Dr. Richard Sklar, UCLA Emeritus Professor of Political Science who wrote the Introduction to the 2004 edition, stated that, “...no standard history of African thought comparable to [it] in its combination of historical depth and transcolonial breadth within a multi-state region of Africa...” existed, never mind that the scope of the book is limited to West Africa. Sklar added that July’s attempt to view “the intrusion of the West as completely as [he] could through the eyes of those on whom it fell” (p. 17) is genuinely Afrocentric and largely accounts for the enduring influence of this pioneering work.”

<sup>3</sup> From the Portuguese *senhora*, the short- and sometimes long-term African or *métisse* concubines of French residents of Saint-Louis and Gorée, who sometimes amassed great wealth through their successive liaisons. They were among the principal founders of the *métis* community in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Holle's mother was fully African, a Toucouleur from the mid-Senegal River Fouta Toro Confederation. In both cases, the French fathers arranged to have their sons legally recognized as French and baptized. The third author, Frédéric Carrère (1814-1888), the lead author of *De la Sénégambie française*, was a metropolitan Frenchman born in Toulon.

Although Boilat (1814-1901) was the single author of his book, and it does reflect an intimate knowledge of Senegalese cultures, it is hard to tell how much he identified with the native people in Senegal given his profound commitment to the Roman Catholic priesthood and to French Christian civilization. He does, however, identify himself on the dedication page of *Esquisses sénégalaises* as a “child of Senegal.” His mother came from the Christian *métis* community that had existed in Saint-Louis and Gorée for more than a century; however, the members of this community maintained numerous ties, both family and commercial, to the African hinterland. They were fluent in French and in the nearby African languages, particularly Poular, Wolof, and Serrer. Boilat was taken to France in 1826 as an adolescent by Mother Anne-Marie Javouhey, (founder, in 1807, of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny), along with several other *métis* youths for education with the idea that they would be trained to be Catholic priests and then return to Senegal to form the nucleus of a native priesthood. After his ordination in 1840, Boilat did return to Senegal as a missionary priest, and for a while he directed a school in Saint-Louis. He returned permanently to France in 1853, where for the rest of his life he served as a parish priest.

Paul Holle (1807-1862), on the other hand, spent his whole life in Senegal — much of the time employed in the hinterland first as an agricultural technician at the Richard Toll experimental farm and then as a government agent, also at Richard Toll (1823-1833). For the next seven years, he worked as a gum trader and then returned to government service. From 1840 to 1846 and again from 1847 to 1849, he served as commandant of the upriver post of Bakel. From 1852 to 1855, he commanded the post of Sénoudébou that he had helped to establish in 1845. In 1855, Governor Louis Faidherbe appointed him to command the newly constructed post at Médine. Given Holle's Toucouleur Muslim mother and his long periods of activity in the hinterland, it seems reasonable to believe that he remained closer to his African roots than Boilat, even if as an adult he identified as a Catholic. His mother tongue was most likely Poular, given his mother's Toucouleur origins. His command of French was perfect.

Carrère, was a French jurist who spent twenty-six years in Saint-Louis in the colonial judicial service where he held positions of increasing importance. Through his wife, Thérèse Caminade, whom he married in 1840, he became indirectly linked to the *métis* community of Sénégal. Given the position in the evolution of West African thought that Robert July attributed to *De la Sénégambie française*, a first question that comes to mind is how representative of early West African thought could its two authors really have been?

July, who more or less ignores Carrère, attributes the book and its arguments in favor of French civilization and against Islam to Holle probably because of Holle's long career in the French colonial bureaucracy and his role in leading the defense of Medine in 1857 against the onslaught of Al Hajj Umar's forces. But July also acknowledges that "Holle is not normally associated with the development of ideas in West Africa."<sup>4</sup> Given Holle's family background, his Muslim Toucouleur mother, on one hand, and his marriage in 1838 to Marianne Pellegrin which linked him to a notable Catholic *métis* family of Saint-Louis, on the other, he was probably pulled in two directions.

Carrère had accumulated fifteen years of work experience in Senegal at the time of publication of *De la Sénégambie française*. Unlike Holle, who spent most of his career in the hinterland, Carrère, who was named President of the Saint-Louis Court and Head of the Judicial Service of Senegal in 1848, spent almost all of his time while in Senegal in Saint-Louis, the colonial capital, which had many of the aspects of a small French town. He was frequently in France on sick leave or for other reasons. He was awarded membership of the French Legion of Honor in 1847 for his efforts to assemble and to codify various laws and royal and imperial decrees, some of them dating back to 1781, on the guardianship of vacant properties in the French enclaves in Senegal. His further codification of the local administrative and police regulations in Senegal and its Dependencies earned him promotion in 1860 to the rank of Officer of the Legion of Honor.

Carrère's experience of the hinterland was clearly second hand; however, he became an increasingly convinced partisan of the efforts, spearheaded by the Bordeaux-linked Saint-Louis business community and the French government after 1850, to impose military domination over the native societies on both sides of the navigable Senegal River, to guarantee French control of the terms of the gum trade, and to encourage the expansion of peanut cultivation increasingly viewed as the key to the economic future of Senegal. His initial hesitations in regard to these changes stemmed from his realization that they would end the privileged position in the gum trade of the *métis* and African intermediaries based in Saint-Louis.

So, the second question that arises from any attempt to answer the first one is which of the two authors did what, both in elaborating the conception of *De la Sénégambie française* and then of writing it. The only indication of who did what that appears in the book itself comes from the title page that places Carrère's name first.

It seems clear that although *De la Sénégambie française* reproduces information obtained from Holle, the book as a whole cannot be construed as Paul Holle's voice.

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<sup>4</sup> July, 1967, p. 167.

It is the creation and the voice of Frédéric Carrère, who conceived of it as a way to ingratiate himself with various ranking officials in the Ministry of the Navy and Colonies in Paris by demonstrating his knowledge of current affairs in Senegal and by presenting the information that he conveyed so as to reflect what he thought his readers might want to read.<sup>5</sup> He made numerous requests to these officials, particularly to Henri-Joseph Mestro (1804-1858), the official who served as the Director of the Colonial Office in the French Ministry of the Navy and Colonies from 1848 to 1858, for promotion, for a transfer to an appropriate position in the judicial service of another French colony or in France, for sick leave, and for permission to remain in Senegal when he changed his mind, having received an offer of transfer.<sup>6</sup>

Some of Carrère's letters addressed to Mestro are particularly obsequious and self-serving. In one of these, by which he requested Mestro's permission to dedicate *De la Sénégambie française* to him, he suggests that the useful information about Senegal that it marshals is essential learning for any "new man" who might be placed in charge of Senegal once the pacification war ends.<sup>7</sup> The hint is subtle but perceptible given Carrère's implicit claim that he as the author of the book has this requisite knowledge. Six years later, Carrère went beyond hinting by reporting directly to an official in Paris that rumors were circulating in Saint-Louis that he might be chosen to replace Governor Faidherbe.<sup>8</sup>

As for Paul Holle, his Ministry of the Navy and Colonies Personnel File (CAOM: EE 1112/26), yields no information at all about his participation in the writing of *De la Sénégambie française*.

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<sup>5</sup> One can trace the origins of *De la Sénégambie française* and the course and consequences of its writing and publication in a series of letters and reports that have been conserved at the Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer of the National Archives of France (abbreviated CAOM) located in Aix-en-Provence. Of particular interest are File Sénégal II, Mémoires, publications, explorations, particularly Sub-files Sénégal II 4 and II 7, Carrère 1854-1869, that contain correspondence about the book including preliminary studies, and Carrère's Ministry of the Navy Personnel File, EE 399/2. References to the book can also be found in the massive General Correspondence file, Sénégal I Governor to the Minister; Minister to the Governor, and related materials for the years concerned.

<sup>6</sup> Good examples of such correspondence, all of it in CAOM: EE 399/2, are Carrère to the Director of the Colonial Office: 4 February 1849, 7 February 1853, 24 January 1854, 15 April 1854, 5 October 1854, 4 May 1856, 11 March 1864, and 30 April 1864; the Director of the Colonial Office to Carrère 12 June 1858; and Carrère to Governor Faidherbe 12 June 1858,.

<sup>7</sup>CAOM: Senegal II 7, Carrère to Mestro, 15 May 1855. Three years later a disgruntled government employee in Saint-Louis reported, via an unsigned letter (CAOM: EE 399/2, addressed to Monsieur le Baron [Roujoux] Saint-Louis 18 August 1858) that the rumor being circulated by Carrère's friends and family members that Carrère was slated to replace Faidherbe as governor was "causing the business community to tremble..."

<sup>8</sup>CAOM: EE 399/2, "Carrère to Mon cher Monsieur d'Aubigny," 27 November 1861.

What it does reveal is Holle's efforts to claim a military rather than a civilian retirement pension including the supplement owed to members (*chevaliers*) of the Legion of Honor. Governor Faidherbe had recommended Holle for this award because of his service in a military capacity as the heroic Commandant of the Médine post during the attack by Al Hajj Umar's forces and the ensuing siege (April-July 1857) that was lifted at the last moment by the arrival of troops led by Governor Faidherbe himself. But as a civilian employee of the colonial bureaucracy, Holle could not normally claim a military pension or a Legion of Honor supplement even though he had served as a *de facto* military commandant at Médine and in the other posts that he had commanded. There is much back-and-forth correspondence in the file on this matter and much support by Governor Faidherbe for Holle's claim; however, Holle died in March 1862 before the problem could be resolved.

Carrère's origins were modest. Son of a naval commandant (*jour côme*) of penal galleys operating in the port of Toulon, he managed to complete a doctorate in law in Paris in September 1840 shortly after his marriage to Thérèse Caminade. He then departed for Saint-Louis to serve initially as an assistant prosecutor. It seems clear that his motivation for going to Senegal, in addition to the presence there of his wife's relatives, was that his initial colonial salary at 4,000 francs per year would be twice what it would be in France.<sup>9</sup> In 1848 he was named President of the Saint-Louis court and Head of the Judicial Service. His title was redefined in 1852 after the proclamation of the French Second Empire. He was now the President of what was called the Imperial Court of Saint-Louis, and he held a permanent seat in the Executive Council of the colony. He was a very hard worker and apparently a tough prosecutor. He tried hard to cultivate important people who might help him advance in his career but had mixed results in doing so.

At some point, Carrère became close to Henri-Joseph Mestro (1804-1858), the Director of the Colonial Office in the Ministry of the Navy and Colonies from 1848 to 1858. A protégé of Admiral de Mackau, a sometime Minister of the Navy and Colonies, Mestro had risen through the ranks of the civilian bureaucracy entering as a clerk in 1830, following a year in Saint-Louis (1828-1829) where he had served as secretary-archivist of the colonial government. In 1852, he was appointed to the French Council of State. Through his long period of service in the Ministry of the Navy and Colonies, Mestro brought some stability to French colonial policy in a Ministry that was usually headed by senior naval officers who were more interested in battleships than in colonies.

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<sup>9</sup> CAOM: EE 399/2, Direction des Colonies, Bureau du Personnel, to Carrère, 20 September 1840.

Several of Carrère's professional evaluations issued by three successive governors of Senegal in 1851, 1862, and 1863<sup>10</sup> indicate that he knew no languages other than French and had no scientific or literary achievements to his credit other than, as per the 1863 report signed by Governor Faidherbe, his authoring of *De la Sénégambie française* and two legal compendia. Nevertheless, it is clear that Carrère began to write reports about aspects of the economic and political situation of Senegal as early as 1850<sup>11</sup>. The final chapter of *De la Sénégambie française* quotes a few lines from a note dated 9 December 1852 in which Théodore Ducos, the Minister of the Navy at the time, had thanked Carrère for suggestions that he had made in a recent meeting of the Executive Council of Senegal as to the need to suppress the trading fairs (*escales*) that had been controlled by the Mauritians and to bring about the 'commercial and agricultural emancipation of Fouta and Walo' (the Wolof kingdom bordering on Saint-Louis).<sup>12</sup> Carrère sent a similar but more developed report to Mestro dated 9 January 1854<sup>13</sup> that clearly paralleled what would be sections of *De la Sénégambie française*. Marginalia scribbled on the cover letter dated 21 March indicate Mestro's approval of Carrère's proposals that parallel the requests for political and economic change that were being penned at the same time by the Maurel and Prom Company of Bordeaux and Saint-Louis.

Having observed that these writings solicited by Mestro and other officials in Paris were appreciated, Carrère began to pen what seem to have been unsolicited reports about Senegalese affairs, particularly when the start of Al Hajj Umar's jihad in the upper river in the closing months of 1854 began to alarm members of the Christian community of Saint-Louis, who were already expressing strong anti-Muslim opinions and criticizing the colonial government for having facilitated the construction in 1847 of a mosque in Saint-Louis.

First came a letter dated 8 March 1855 addressed to "Monsieur" in which he described the attacks that Umar's forces had made on certain French traders, *habitants*,<sup>14</sup> in the upper river region in November and December 1854 and the apparent support given to Umar by certain other such traders. He sent a copy of what would be Chapter 30 of *De la Sénégambie française*, the one on Al Hajj Umar, to Mestro dating it 28 April 1855.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> All of them in CAOM: EE 399/2.

<sup>11</sup> CAOM: EE 399/2, Mestro to Carrère, 23 August 1850.

<sup>12</sup> Carrère and Holle, 1855, p. 393.

<sup>13</sup> CAOM: Senegal II 4, Carrère to the Director, 9 January 1854.

<sup>14</sup> CAOM: Senegal II 7, Carrère to "Monsieur," 8 March 1855. In mid-nineteenth century Senegal, the terms, *habitant* (inhabitant), *Sénégalais* (Senegalese), and sometimes even *indigène* (native) referred to *métis* and Africans who lived and worked within the French orbit and might in some cases, particularly after 1848, be recognized as French citizens. The French authorities viewed them as being distinct from the hinterland peoples whom they typically identified in terms of their ethnic and linguistic affiliations.

<sup>15</sup> CAOM: Senegal II 7, Carrère to Mestro, 28 April 1855.



Here he cites his co-author, Paul Holle. Finally, on the fifteenth of May 1855, in a particularly obsequious letter to Mestro in which he again cites the book that he is writing about Senegal, but without mentioning his co-author, he asks permission to dedicate the book to him. Several lines in this letter are worth quoting:

I perceive, with joy, that I have not lost any of that exalted good will on your part that honors me so greatly. I shall strive with all the force that my soul can muster to always be worthy of it. In my efforts to remain in your good graces, I am not directed by any kind of vulgar calculations, I beg you to believe [me]; this is my wish because if you were less imbued with good will, you would not have such a good opinion of me, and for me to be deprived of your good opinion would be a source of unbearable shame.... I have heard it said that when somebody who has given birth to a book wishes to express sentiments of profound friendship and...gratitude he should place the name of that person on the first page: thus, when I search my heart, my soul, in myself and in others, I ask, who is the person to whom I would most like to offer a public acknowledgement of my feelings, an acknowledgement which cannot be delayed; I always come to the following conclusion...if Mr. Mestro will permit it. [What follows is the usual flowery closing formula for a French letter of that era.]<sup>16</sup>

One can detect the words, “I accept with pleasure,” that appear faintly, penciled in, on the margins of this letter. In this same letter, Carrère speculates as to the course that will be taken by the French authorities in Senegal once the struggle for domination in the Senegal River valley, launched by Governor Faidherbe in early 1855, has ended:

After the war, [re]organization will be needed; undertaking that task, which might be assigned to a new man, will call for patience and energy; perfect understanding of the customs, the interests, the ideas, the prejudices, and the needs of the peoples with whom the French authorities will necessarily be in contact, will require an opening towards new combinations and solutions which might be neglected or compromised by an insufficient understanding of the region. I have attempted to offer a warning in regard to this danger; if I have not succeeded, either in terms of the basic message or of its presentation, I can say that at least I have tried to be useful, at least in theory.

According to this letter, if one can read between the lines, *De la Sénégambie française* will offer clear proof that its author (its one author?) has the necessary familiarity with local conditions that a ‘new man’ should have.

Finally, this same letter brings up the question of publication.

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<sup>16</sup> CAOM: Senegal II 7, Carrère to Mestro, 15 May 1855.

Carrère, it seems, had initially wanted to have the manuscript printed, at his expense, by the Senegalese government press that Governor Faidherbe was setting up in Saint-Louis, but this press was not yet in operation. Therefore, as Carrère adds "...my book, even though, if you will excuse the inference, is bound to be of permanent utility, it is also intended to serve an immediate purpose... There is, certainly, the press at Dakar belonging to the Spiritan Fathers, but using it would cost a fortune."<sup>17</sup>

What happened to the manuscript of *De la Sénégambie française* over the next six months is difficult to trace. Mestro did permit Carrère to dedicate the book to him but apparently delayed so-informing him, or the news was delayed. At that time, there was no telegraph service linking Saint-Louis with France, and transportation by sea was slow and not always reliable. But at some point, somebody in Paris, possibly Mestro himself, arranged to have the book published by the Librairie de Firmin Didot Frères, Fils et Cie, a very old and prestigious press that at that time was the designated official printing house of the Institut de France. That this press published *De la Sénégambie française* was very much an honor for the authors.

While waiting to learn whether or not he would be permitted to dedicate *De la Sénégambie française* to Mestro, Carrère learned that Mestro had provided for the separate publication of the chapter on Al Hajj Umar in the *Revue Coloniale*, the official information organ of the Ministry of the Navy and Colonies.<sup>18</sup> This news prompted Carrère to respond by letter dated 16 November 1855 with some flattery and a hint that Mestro had not yet let him know whether or not he was permitted to dedicate *De la Sénégambie française* to him.

This latest proof of your favorable opinion of me... is very precious because it persuades me to believe that my modest work meets with your approval: up until now I have hesitated to have my manuscript printed: the subject [I believed] was worth developing, but did I have what it took to produce something acceptable? Today I do think so, at least somewhat.

My wishes would be completely realized if I could be reassured in regard to a point that I hardly dare to evoke: I wanted to dedicate my book to you, and I had respectfully communicated this wish to you by my letter of 15 May; nothing up until now has permitted me to be aware of your wishes; possibly in expressing my heartfelt sentiments I committed an indiscretion; if so, I beg you to excuse it.<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps Carrère was concerned that his obsequiousness had been counterproductive.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Frédéric Carrère, "De'l'Alaguy Oumar," *Revue coloniale*, 2<sup>nd</sup> series 14 (1855), pp. 236-244.

<sup>19</sup> CAOM: Senegal II 7, Carrère to Mestro, 16 November 1855.

Nevertheless, he closed his letter by informing Mestro that while attending a banquet that the business leaders of Saint-Louis had organized on 11 November 1855 in support of Governor Faidherbe, he “had [had] the good fortune” to be able to offer a toast to the Director of the Colonial Office, one that was “enthusiastically endorsed” by the 150 guests present.

Within a few days Carrère received word that Mestro had granted the permission requested. He dated the dedication page of the book 25 November 1855. The same ship bound for France that carried Carrère’s authorization to print probably also carried his gushy letter of appreciation, dated 29 November 1855, addressed to Mestro. It too is worth quoting, not the least because in it he gives some credit to Paul Holle:

If I have ever experienced a moment of sheer joy it was when I received your authorization to dedicate my very modest work about this colony to you. I attempted to present some accurate and practical information about Senegal. My humble efforts were seconded by Mr. Paul Holle, a highly recommended man who has served the State for more than twenty years. I... hoped to associate myself with your views and with the efforts of the energetic, very distinguished, and very capable man who is currently heading the colony. When I witnessed the devotion with which our admirable soldiers and sailors and their worthy officers are confronting bullets, fatigue, and the sun, I told myself that I must absolutely play my part in the common task in the only way possible for me.

Have I at least achieved a minimal success? I do not know, and I have doubts. I am nevertheless aware of one thing: of your indulgence; a man with your temperament is necessarily kind and indulgent regarding good intentions... thus I am not worried because I know that you will always perceive me as I really am... with a sincere heart in which sentiments of gratitude and devotion to your person are very much [present].<sup>20</sup>

The book, printed in early 1856, seems, at least initially, to have been well received in Paris, particularly by the Colonial Office. However, when the first copies arrived in Senegal in mid-May 1856, the anti-Muslim passages in the book offended the influential leaders of the Muslim population of Saint-Louis and, according to Faidherbe, risked setting back his efforts not only to support and encourage pro-French Muslims to collaborate closely with the French effort to put an end to the Mauritanian control of the gum trade and the raids by Mauritanians directed at the south bank sedentary populations but also to retain the unqualified support of the Saint-Louis Muslim community as a counterweight to the influence of Al Hajj Umar.

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<sup>20</sup> CAOM: Senegal II 7, Carrère to Mestro, 29 November 1855.

The anti-Islamic stance of passages in the book, of which a few lines are quoted below, certainly reflected the views of a number of the members of the white, Catholic, French population of Saint Louis:

So long as Mohammedanism is officially recognized, so long as marabouts are honored, so long as the [Saint-Louis] mosque continues to stand, it is only too evident that the progress of Christianity [which is equated with French civilization itself] will be nil (p. 356). Islam is encircling us! It is... choking us! ...foreign marabouts [those from outside the French orbit] are flocking into Saint-Louis; they settle here, and while getting hold of children whom they brainwash, they exploit the gullibility, the ignorance, and the superstitions of their parents.... (p. 359) ...Let nobody come to Senegal and speak of tolerance, of freedom of religion; these principles may have value in places where the powers of human reason, having reached a state of great development and self-discipline, will have led to the right, subject to the rule of law, to invoke freedom of conscience; but let us not forget that here [in Senegal] we are confronted with races imbued with vulgar instincts which are nourished by a stultifying religion (p. 360).

It is not clear that this attitude was widely shared by the *métis* community, including Holle, given his Muslim Toucouleur mother. His wife's family, like many of the *métis* families, had business links with the Muslim populations of the hinterland. As Hillary Jones suggests, "The history of cooperation between Muslims and Christians and the nature of commercial relations mitigated religious conflict."<sup>21</sup> The white, Catholic elite of Saint-Louis, on the other hand, despite cohabitation including intermarriage between white men and *métisse* women, realized that they formed a very small minority not only in Senegal as a whole but in the colonial capital. This reality, as Yves Saint-Martin indicates, made them very fearful.<sup>22</sup>

Governor Faidherbe's report to the Minister of the Navy about the reception of the book in Saint-Louis was fairly mild. In a review that he published in the recently founded *Moniteur du Sénégal*, he made clear that the book was not an official policy statement; it only represented the personal opinions of the authors. He added that "except for the question of Muslims, on the subject of which I do not completely share Mr. Carrère's point of view, the work as a whole reflects the ideas of progress which are those of all enlightened persons."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Hilary Jones, *The Métis of Senegal: Urban Life and Politics in French West Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), p. 81.

<sup>22</sup> Yves-Jean Saint-Martin, *Le Sénégal sous le second empire: Naissance d'un empire colonial, 1850-1871* (Paris: Editions Karthala, 1989), p. 57.

<sup>23</sup> CAOM: Senegal I 41b, Faidherbe to the Minister of the Navy and Colonies, 6 June 1856.

But in a report that Faidherbe prepared for the Minister of the Navy and Colonies over the summer of 1856 while on furlough in France, he expressed considerably less tolerance for the critics of his Muslim policy. He summed up his achievements in regard to Islam over his first year-and-a half as governor of Senegal:

By striking down the Moors, by halting Al Hajj's progression, I have taken strong measures against Islam and its prestige among the Blacks. Therefore, the persons responsible for the affairs of the country must be permitted to act, and those persons who have no such responsibilities must not be permitted to obstruct the actions of the authorities through unjust and clumsy provocations, thereby stimulating defiance and destroying the good effects of measures that have already been taken to combat the bad tendencies of the Muslim spirit. [These others] are motivated by zeal which is as reckless as it is insincere.<sup>24</sup>

Carrère, it is true, had had some policy disagreements with Faidherbe but the real problem between them had been one of rivalry. When Faidherbe arrived in Saint-Louis in 1852 as a captain in the Engineer Corps, Carrère, four years his senior, had been a head of administration for a number of years. He held a permanent seat on the Executive Council of the colony and as such had exercised a great deal of influence over several former governors. Also, as the Head of the Judicial Service, Carrère and other jurists attached to the Colonial Judicial Service benefitted from a certain degree of judicial independence. Thus, as Faidherbe explained to the Minister of the Navy and Colonies:

Any man in such a situation would have been frustrated at having to recognize me as governor, all the more in that a man like him who is conscious of his capabilities and whose personality pushes him to dominate and to crush all obstacles that he meets along his way was bound to experience a shock when encountering somebody like myself who will not give ground in regard to upholding the authority that you have delegated to me.<sup>25</sup>

Faidherbe nevertheless thought very highly of Carrère as a jurist, praising him for his knowledge, his very great intelligence, his energy, his capacity for very hard work, and his wise opinions and ideas about the affairs of Senegal. Faidherbe viewed him as highly qualified to hold a high-ranking position in the judiciary in France. But he added:

Here is why I believe that it would be best not to let him remain in Senegal: he has been in this little town of Saint-Louis for 17 years; it is a town filled with gossip, cliques, and intrigues, as in all small towns; thus, in 17 years, he has had a thousand occasions to become involved, to carry grudges, and to form liaisons.

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<sup>24</sup> CAOM: Sénégal I 43a: "Mémoire sur la colonie du Sénégal par le Gouverneur Faidherbe," 5 August 1856.

<sup>25</sup> CAOM: EE 399/2, Faidherbe to the Minister of the Navy and Colonies, 20 September 1857.

He is linked to a family the members of which are not the best; thus occasions for bias have arisen because he has sentiments of family affection that are very pronounced.... Remove M. Carrère from the environment that I have described to you; he can be an excellent functionary.<sup>26</sup>

Eventually Carrère became a strong supporter of Faidherbe's actions in Senegal despite his family links. As a patriotic French colonial official, he could not avoid favoring policies and actions that would strengthen the French position in Senegal.

Probably the publication and distribution of *De la Sénégambie française* would have been passed over with no further negative comments if Carrère had not been implicated in a corruption scandal involving the person who in Saint-Louis served as the court clerk, registrar, and notary. This person, Bréghot-de-Polignac, in addition to being an employee of the Judicial Service was Carrère's brother-in-law. An investigation that resulted from a complaint that Bréghot de Polignac had charged the purchaser of a boat legal fees that were higher than what should have been charged led to an investigation that revealed that Bréghot's procedures, particularly the fees that he charged, were wrong. He was tried for corruption but acquitted because he was able to prove that his procedures were no different from those followed by his predecessors and that a set of instructions that he was supposed to have received from France was never delivered. Despite Bréghot de Polignac's acquittal, the Ministry of Justice in France relieved him of his position. But Bréghot was very popular in Saint-Louis, a bon vivant, known for the dinner parties and the receptions that he hosted. Faidherbe, who liked him, arranged to have a new position created for him, that of court assessor (*commissaire priseur*) so that he could remain in Saint-Louis with more or less his previous salary.<sup>27</sup>

Prompted by Faidherbe, the Minister of the Navy and Colonies preferred to issue a general criticism of the Judicial Service rather than to hold Carrère, its head, personally responsible for Bréghot de Polignac's actions.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> The anonymous letter writer, evoked in Note 7 above (CAOM: EE 399/2), to Monsieur le Baron [Roujoux] Saint-Louis 18 August 1858) who reported that rumors were circulating in Saint-Louis that Carrère might succeed Faidherbe as governor, also made harsh comments about Carrère's relatives, particularly Bréghot de Polignac. He suggested that Bréghot should not have been acquitted and that it was the "false tears" of Brégot's wife, a "former concubine," who persuaded Faidherbe to create a new position for him. The same writer claimed that another brother-in-law, a former naval surgeon, had been discharged from the navy for theft and that yet another brother-in-law was an alcoholic police commissioner. As Head of the Judicial Service, Carrère could and probably did offer some protection to these persons.

The Minister of Justice, on the other hand, outraged by Carrère's apparent negligence in failing to supervise Bréghot de Polignac's work, suggested that the Ministry of the Navy issue him a personal reprimand, above and beyond the scope of the "collective reprimand [addressed] to all the persons whose negligence had permitted the accumulation of disorder for so many years."<sup>28</sup>

While the Bréghot de Polignac scandal was unfolding, Carrère was trying, as he had tried many times before, to obtain a transfer to another posting in the colonies or preferably in France, but with a promotion. Again, he found himself retained in Senegal, this time because the problems caused by the publication of *De la Sénégambie française* and the Bréghot de Polignac scandal converged.

First, when the Minister of Justice enquired as to why the Minister of the Navy and Colonies wished to have Carrère transferred back to France as a judge or a chief prosecutor, the reply that came from the Minister of the Navy and Colonies cited "political problems" caused by the publication of *De la Sénégambie française* and gave the following explanation:

Almost two years ago, Mr. Carrère published a book on Senegal, a publication for which he received the approval of my department, but which should have been printed [by the Saint-Louis press] after having necessarily been examined by the governor. Rather than proceeding in this fashion, Mr. Carrère had the book printed in France and then distributed it in Senegal without having had it examined by anybody.<sup>29</sup>

The letter cites the opposition expressed in the book to the relatively tolerant attitude of the colonial government to Islam including criticism of the appointment to the Legion of Honor of Hamat N'Diaye Anne, the *tamsir* (head) of the Muslim community in Saint-Louis, for services rendered to the colonial government. Furthermore, the letter claims that Carrère habitually denigrated the actions of the governor.

It seems doubtful, given the tone of this letter, that Mestro was the person who drafted it for signature by the Minister. Whoever did so probably disapproved of or disliked both Carrère and Mestro, for it makes no mention of the receptiveness of the Ministry, particularly of Mestro, to the idea of publishing this book in the first place, and it exaggerates Faidherbe's reaction to the book as expressed in his letter to the Minister of the Navy and Colonies of 6 June 1856.

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<sup>28</sup> CAOM: EE399/2, extracted passage from a note by the Minister of Justice to the Minister of the Navy and Colonies, 9 September 1857.

<sup>29</sup> CAOM: EE399/2, Minister of the Navy and Colonies to the Minister of Justice, 21 August 1857.

At any rate, the Minister of the Navy and Colonies reported that he had informed Carrère that in the future he should restrict his activities to his judicial functions and responsibilities.<sup>30</sup>

The outcome for Carrère is that he never obtained a transfer either to France or to another colony, and this despite efforts by Faidherbe to have him transferred.<sup>31</sup> As the Minister of the Navy explained the situation to Faidherbe:

Regardless of your expressed wish that Mr. Carrère not return to Senegal, I had to send him back. The warning that he received will have sufficed to make him more...vigilant particularly in the management of his service. To place him in France at this time would be tantamount to rewarding him, and I would have to recommend him. I could not do this just after he had been given a reprimand. In such a situation I would be contradicting myself.<sup>32</sup>

Before Carrère could have received any request from the Ministry of the Navy and Colonies that he restrict his activities to his judicial functions, he had penned a short account of the siege and deliverance of Médine that he had then arranged to have printed by the now functioning government printing press in Saint-Louis. Titled *Le Siège par Alaghi du fort de Médine au pays de Kasson*, the publication praises the role of the commandant of Médine, Paul Holle, in leading the defense of Médine, but its introductory paragraph suggests that Carrère had been the sole author of *De la Sénégambie française*. Knowing that he was slated to return to Senegal after a period of leave in France, Carrère offered a copy of the published account to the Minister of the Navy and Colonies suggesting that he take particular note of his flattering description of Faidherbe's role in breaking the siege of Médine.<sup>33</sup>

The Ministry officials clearly approved of this latest publication by Mestro because they took the necessary steps, probably spearheaded by Mestro, to have it reprinted in the *Revue coloniale*.<sup>34</sup> No doubt the Ministry wished to publicize the fact that a small French force had been victorious against a much larger Muslim army. Carrère probably hoped that his published praise for Governor Faidherbe might overcome the effects of their previous disagreements.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> CAOM: EE 399/2, Faidherbe to the Minister of the Navy and Colonies, 20 September 1857.

<sup>32</sup> CAOM: EE 399/2, Extract of a letter from the Minister of the Navy and Colonies to the Governor of Senegal, 19 February 1858.

<sup>33</sup> CAOM: Sénégal II 7, Carrère to the Minister of the Navy and Colonies, 11 December 1857.

<sup>34</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> series, vol. 19, January-June, 1858, pp. 40-60. It is worth noting that the editors of the *Revue Coloniale* recognized Paul Holle's role as co-author of *De la Sénégambie française* by identifying Carrère as only "one of [its] authors" and by listing the references to the book that had appeared in previous issues of the *Revue*.



And Faidherbe, a bit later, and probably realizing that because of the Bréghot de Polignac scandal Carrère would not be transferred elsewhere and that therefore he and Carrère would have to get along, praised him in a letter to the Minister and then invited him, if he were willing, to codify all the local *ordonnances* relating to the administration and the police, a task that when completed would earn Carrère promotion in the Legion of Honor to the rank of officer.<sup>35</sup>

From then on, the relations between Governor Faidherbe and Judge Carrère were very good. But in Paris, the resignation in June 1858 of Mestro from the Directorship of the Colonial Office followed by his death a few months later and the brief transfer of the Colonial Office itself to the short-lived Ministry of Algeria and the Colonies (June 1858-November 1860) seems to have caused Carrère to lose whatever particular Ministerial support he may have previously had. The occasional reports on the economic development of Senegal that he submitted from time to time to the Ministry were politely acknowledged but not followed up. In 1866, Carrère retired to Bordeaux having been awarded the title, Honorary President of the Imperial Court of Saint-Louis, Senegal. He died in 1888.

Clearly *De la Sénégambie française* is Carrère's book. He began to prepare it as early as 1850 in the hope that it would enhance his career. Paul Holle's role was that of an expert informant. Most of the references to the book both by Carrère himself and by the various government officials, particularly in France, who made comments about it considered it to be Carrère's work. Holle, who spent most of his government career working in the hinterland, certainly acquired a great deal of knowledge of the local peoples among whom he worked and lived, but Carrère probably listed him as the co-author of his book, not because of the information that he provided, but as a gesture in favor of the *métis* community to which he was linked through his wife's family. Carrère had initially opposed some of Faidherbe's initiatives because of the harm he perceived that they were doing to the economic livelihood of this community, many of whose members had been gum traders. Possibly he wished to present Holle as an example of a successful *métis* who, having given up gum trading, became a full-time civil servant and a link between the African majority in Senegal and the European minority. At the time of his death in 1862, Holle was listed as a Class I Civil Administrator.

While Professor July was probably correct in listing Boilat's *Esquisses sénégalaises* as a founding contribution to Francophone West African thought, he was mistaken in doing the same for *De la Sénégambie française*.

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<sup>35</sup> CAOM: EE 399/2, Carrère to "Monsieur," Saint-Louis 12 June 1858 and Comments by the Governor [Louis Faidherbe] 19 juin 1858. The work in question was titled *Codification des règlements d'administration et de police en vigueur au Sénégal et dépendances*. It was finally published by the government press in 1865.

Because he failed to do even a summary job of archival research in regard to Carrère and Holle, he offers to Anglophone readers the ideas and the prejudices of an ambitious and obsequious French judge in the guise of a significant contribution to the origins and the evolution of Francophone West African thought.