BLACK AFRICAN HISTORY IN THE NEGRITUDE DESIGN: THE CASE OF CHEIKH ANTA DIOP

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"until now black african history has been written with dates as dry as a grocer's accounts, without any attempts to discover the key that opens the door to the intelligence and the understanding of african society." (cheik Anta Diop)[1]

African historiography has come of age since the negritude movement, and its emergence appears to emphasize not only the triumph of black african awareness over historical neglect and racialist prejudice, but also the culmination and success of a quarter century of laborious, innovative, pioneering research by a new generation of Africans determined to write a decolonized and unbiased history of their own continent. African historiography is perhaps only one aspect of the African's long and resolute battle since the negritude to trace his cultural roots and win a place for himself in the ordering of universal civilization.

Many years after the European had landed in Africa, the continent continued to be treated as historically non-existent, and there were many among european historians who dubbed it a "continent without history",[2] just in the same vein as Hegel, in his lectures on the philosophy of history, declared it no historical part of the world. The old view on African history is well known, consequently, this article deems it unnecessary to dwell on the ethno-centric attitudes too common to European and American historians when they tried very consciously to write the history of colonized peoples. Suffice it to say that in spite of the efforts of such pan-african precursors as Edward Wilmot Blyden, Carl Christian Reindorf, Samuel Johnson, or the works of Maurice Delafosse, Charles Monteil, Sir Richmond Palmer and some muslim scholars of old, most of those likely to write african history manipulated it to reflect "official" racialist view suitable to colonial political ambitions. African history remained one of those "immortalized lies"[3] which South had talked about. However, the historical question was only but a tip of the ice-berg of a whole socio-political and cultural crisis of identity which the African was passing through and of which the Negritude movement was both an expression, a reaction and a response.

Definitions of Negritude are multiple but in general, it was an enterprise which aimed at disalienating the African psychologically, politically and culturally. The colonizer had taken african political and economic dependence as a matter of course, and legitimatized it by the theory of "tabula rasa" which presented the African as a simple "spectator", indeed a "parasite" in the world of culture and civilization.[4] Vilified and excluded from History, indeed from the march of civilization, the African had the sorry plight of an insolvent debtor beside his white counterpart who was idealized as the genius of humanity, and maker of history. The

crisis resulting from this socio-cultural alienation[5] gave rise to a desire to seek african cultural identity. Right from its inception Negritude had set for itself clear goals to lead Africans back to their history and traditions, to help them extricate themselves from the grips of alien western culture and assimilation, so as to discover the values that were original to the negro-african world. Seen in this perspective, negritude turned out to be a quest for cultural identity and the genius of negro-african civilization. This quest aspired to make the African fully conscious of his africanness, recognize his destiny as a black man and eager to assume complete responsibility of his culture and history. Most "avant-garde" negritude militants saw it as the most urgent task and the only revolution needed by the African to reconstitute his personality and cultural identity. It was indeed the case of "seek and you shall find" and the object of the search was an authentic african identity. Some negro-african writers began by applying themselves to the definition of the unique characteristics that distinguished the African from his white counterpart in attitudes and world vision. Others with the patience, intelligence, courage and know-how, and above all, the tenacity of purpose compatible with the quest for the secrets of origin, delved into such disciplines as linguistics, history, ethnology, and archeology etc., in an effort to build up comprehensive documentation on African historical and cultural image. Diop was one of them and perhaps the most perspicacious and revolutionary in his approach.

Determined to deepen, prolong and complement the efforts deployed in this direction by negritude poets and novelists, and dismayed by the piteous and bizarre interpretations which African history had been subjected to by imperialists, Diop settled to rationalize black african past, rectify errors in its proper documentation, debunk falsifications and explain them. His was the work of an artist eager to defend and illustrate African culture through the reconstruction of the mosaic of African history covering nearly 2000 years. For him the "open sesame" to the wealth of african cultural heritage, and consequently, to the understanding of African society and history lay in discovering African past. If Africa had no history as it was alleged by detractors, had it been foundering on an alien cultural sea without a life-line to cling to? Was it true that the African was a "late-comer" to the works of civilization and as such had contributed nothing or very little to it? Persuaded that the truth had not been told (is it not true that many histories and biographies are written to serve a cause?), Diop determined to find it in the archives of History. Although he may not have been the first to challenge the thesis that Africa had no history, his scientific and revolutionary approach to the issue, based on the number of his works,[6] the archaeological and linguistic data that he accumulated, made him almost a pioneer in the field. No historiographer before him had brought such epistemological ardour or such ingenious methodology into the cause. One among the growing number of young African intellectuals inspired by african traditions and a desire to set in motion a decolonization process of the continent, Diop placed history at the service of the militant negritude of his time.

Restrained to the precincts of poetry and fiction, Negritude needed wider resources, greater diversification and research to put across its message and convince skeptics. It needed to transcend lyricism and ethnocentric assertions to seek stronger and scientific arguments in other disciplines. African historiographers sought to prove that Africa had a tradition of history to be proud of, and that most of the things written or said about a historyless continent was but mere prejudice and colonial propaganda. And so historian "engage", with a promethean ardour, Diop not only enlarged the scope of negritude to the point of penetrating such disciplines as archeology, and linguistics but also lifted it beyond the narrow limits of literature and demagogy. In this way, he transformed historiography into an instrument of political combat and psychological rehabilitation. Seen against the back-drop of negritude objectives, Diop's efforts amounted to a "return to the source," indeed, an attempt at human restoration. Armed with modern scientific methods, Diop's brand of historiography became not only a process of initiation into the secrets of origin, a quest by the African for the essence of his race lost in time and space, but also a promethean act of demythification of History largely from Diop's moral courage, discoveries and revelations, thus renewing contact with ancient African roots. A new national historical consciousness penetrated african aspirations and sought to exalt whatever constituted african originality across the ages and the continents.[7] Diop's genius is less in what he did than in how he did it. Transforming historiography from being a simple chronicle of the ages "rich with the spoils of time" to a social service, an awakening of a collective consciousness, he invested it with the ideals and objectives of negritude. Thus, he refined it to the point of making it the prognostics of a visionary and the weapon of a crusader rather than the haunt of a dilettante or of the complacent intellectual. Diop was this crusader. His sword was his pen, and his courage his shield. Inspired and vilified at the same time by the colonial situation and the racialist polemics of the '40's, Diop went into research on african historical past. Of course, he had all the qualifications necessary to be an authority in his chosen venture.

Born in the sahel region of Senegal (1923), of millenary traditions, oral history and culture, Diop's first qualification was his customs, his heritage. Besides, Diop is, more than most of his kind, a product of solid education richly diversified, and related particularly to the pursuit of deeper knowledge on negro-african past. Any serious historical research on Africa that is not multidisciplinary in approach cannot but yield slim results. Diop's rare encyclopedic knowledge and ardent curiosity predisposed him most advantageously for the goals of his research. First of all, as a student in Paris in those difficult years of cultural crisis and racist polemics, he had his own share of the bitter feelings of the '40's which convinced him to seek historical weight and support for the negritude struggles. For him, hard facts of history are a more eloquent language and a more radical approach to the issues at stake, than whatever fiction or literature could offer. It was not a mere coincidence that his very first

article[8] in *Voix de l'Afrique Noire*, treated, for the first time in francophone Africa, the problems of Independence, culture and the federation of future states of Africa. Already as the secretary of the Democratic African Alliance (R.D.A.) (1950-1953), he was fully aware of the problems posed by colonization and cultural domination. His anti-colonialist stand reflected not only the profound crisis of identity which Blacks in Europe were passing through at the time, but also a determination to rehabilitate African cultural image. Three aspects of the task were therefore identified: the psychic factor, the historical factor and the linguistic factor. The first one which yielded to literary discourse was the domain for negritude writers, while the last two factors requiring scientific handling and concrete facts called for Diop's expertise. Like Orpheus in search of Eurydice, Diop's retreat into historical archives and consequently into the collective memory was a quest for a "fatherland". The psychological importance of this vivifying venture encouraged him to work not only for the total liberation of Africa but also for a cultural and historical "renaissance". And so as the only African of his generation to be trained as an Egyptologist, he made use of his privileged direct contact with Egyptian, pharaonic age to evolve his original views on the history of the black continent. Diop's education and professional formation reflect the diverse geniuses that converged in making him a historian and therefore a suitable spokesman for the African cause. Ex-Pupil of Andre Aymard, renowned specialist in graeco-latin Antiquity, he penetrated into the graeco-roman world. His doctoral thesis: "A comparative study of European and African political and social systems from Antiquity to the formation of modern states, on the one hand, and on the other, the patrilineal and matrilineal domains in classical Antiquity", is an evidence of an intellectual curiosity eager to prove a point. The fruits of his research crystallized into the cheikantian theory[9] of the two contrasting indo-european northern and negro-egyptian southern cradles of human civilization (*L'Unite Culturelle*, pp. 185 - 187). Postulating on this, Diop asserts that historical comportment, social structure and political culture of a society are factors of the economic and material conditions is sway in that society (*Nations Negres* ... chap. v pp. 349-357). In other words, the formative processes of european societies are fundamentally dissimilar to those of the negro-african world south of the mediterranea. This basic difference invests the respective societies with their intrinsically opposing characteristics.[10] Diop's originality was clearly vindicated when Maurice Caveing,[11] in a similar line of thought, depicts the cosmic visions of the two cradles and went as far as describing the indo-aryan society as a "civilisation of culpability", (Dodds) while the Negro-egyptian counterpart is characterized by its mythico-agrarian world vision, relative stability of social system, and communal moral ... etc. Besides the influence of Professor Aymard, Professor Frederic Joliot-Curie and the archeologist, Leroi-Gourhan, taught Diop the importance of archeology as a tool in historical research. Today the radio carbonic laboratory at IFAN, of which he is presently the director is a testimony of his ardour and determination to chart new

techniques, and methods[12] that deepen knowledge on the historical facts of Africa. His efforts reflect a loyal, determined struggle to destroy cultural aggression and alienation. It is for this that Aime Cesaire[13] like Immanuel Wallerstein, considers Diop's works as the most audacious reconstruction ever attempted of African history.

Addressing the First International Congress of Black writers and Artists, Diop declared:We have come to discover that ancient pharaonic Egyptian civilization was undoubtedly a negro civilization...[14]

The question of Ancient Egypt was primordial to his research and he considered it indispensable first of all to ransome the general history of the Negro-world and its rapport with Ancient Egypt before starting to assess African contributions to the progress of humanity and civilization. Embarking upon this notion, research led him to the discovery, beyond all doubt, that ancient Egyptian, pharaonic civilization was a Negro civilization. Diop's *Nations negres et culture* then proceeded to unfold a dimension of history that had often been glossed over or camouflaged by detractors of the continent. Armed with anthropological, linguistic, ethnological, historical and cultural arguments,[15] Diop came to the conclusion that not only did black peoples inhabit ancient Egypt, but also that it was to the black race that humanity owes its most ancient civilization. If Egyptian genius was essentially negro, the Africans should draw the same moral and psychological advantage or inspiration from it as the Westerners draw from graeco-latin civilization. What Diop did to African historiography was to emboss it with a genuinely patriotic hue, so that with the yearnings of negritude, it transcended the realm of "art for arts' sake", and became a manifesto of african presence across the ages, indeed a political revolution. By this fact, the historian became not just a chronicler but also a militant, a clairvoyant guide preoccupied with the destiny of the collectivity of which he is a part. And so by resurrecting historically the non-colonized, non subjugated Africa of great kingdoms and renowned cultural centres[16], by reattaching it culturally to ancient Egypt, Diop shared in the ideals of his negritude counterparts, as well as in the regeneration of a better hope for the renascent african identity.

Diop's contribution to African historiography is invaluable. From a history beclouded with sad social, political, and colonial undertones, a history of a people who went from slavery into political and cultural domination, Diop unveiled a "free", and authentic history, unfettered with prevarications and despotism. And so insisting on the origins of the African peoples, he reveals the source of the genius of their civilisation. As a result, instead of presenting itself or allowing itself to be presented to history as an "insolvent debtor", or a cultural parasite, Black Africa learned to count the fruits of ancient Egyptian civilisation among its assets, and assume a historical consciousness which has already brought it recognition in the new historical dispensation. This awareness and orientation are attributable to Diop's conviction that Black African history will remain camouflaged, distorted,

incorrect until African historians learned to connect it with the history of Egypt, especially in the areas of languages and institutions. For him the African historian who evades the problem of Egypt is "neither modest, nor objective, nor unruffled; he is ignorant, cowardly and neurotic ..."[17] In his *Antériorité*... (pp. 214-215), Diop insists that getting to the roots of african reality, demands, as a precondition, knowledge of an african language, and direct contact with African milieu. The traditional training given to Africanists has proved inadequate. Since then ancient Egyptian,18 african languages, Arab ... etc, have become an essential aspect of a new orientation in research on African history for Africanists who want to be considered serious. It is not for nothing that Diop gave full reflection to the necessity of developing national languages in the second part of his *Nations Nègres* ... The real basis of culture is indeed language. Dismissing the cliché that african languages are too many, and unsuitable for the study of modern and scientific thoughts, he emphasizes the material and psychological advantages that could accrue from elevating a few African languages to the level of modern requirements so as to make them capable of reflecting philosophic and scientific thoughts. Linguistic unity is desirable in Africa but not practicable. But adopting a few european languages as "lingua franca" does not augur well for the african cause and aspirations. It is in recognition of this fact that Diop weights his argument in favour of adopting a native form of expression rather than a purely foreign one. His pioneer work in this domain is very encouraging. His translations into wolof of scientific principles (mathematics, physics and chemistry...), a page of Einstein's theory of relativity, and extracts from Horace not only establish the adaptability of african languages but also prove that their grammatical aspects which experts have hitherto neglected can be developed well enough to integrate technical terms on the basis of conventions. Diop therefore recommends "vernacular schools" which will help to develop what he termed "native language" and revivify the "national soul" of the people. The practical advantages of this idea are obvious and imply that African education will not really be decolonized as long as we express in foreign tongue those feelings that come to us from "African soil".[19] Diop's invitation to the Bamako Colloquium (1964) on the transcription of African languages and the measures taken to promote them, is already a testimony to his contributions to the domain of African linguistics and languages which have since witnessed a revival.

The primacy Diop gives to the notion of culture has led him to invalidate all arguments on negro "contributions" to civilization and unveil a particular African history which he inserts correctly into the general History where it belongs. Starting from material conditions, he tried to identify and explain all the cultural traits common to Africans, from domestic life to that of the nation, including the ideological superstructures, the success or the failures and the technological declines (*L'Unite Culturelle*, p.7). And by the application of an investigative method which emphasizes oral evidence, archaeological, linguistics, ethnological and toponymic details, Diop practically rediscovered the origins of the

Yoruba, Peul, Lambe, Toucoulor, the Serere, the Agni, the Fang, Bamoun, Valof ... etc. Thus, he situates in the Nile valley, right from the Great lakes, the roots of all the black peoples, today living dispersed on different points of the continent (*L'Afrique Noire Pre-coloniale* p. 162).

Before Diop, these African peoples were thought to be a motley group, without any cultural links between them. But Diop's efforts have given rise to a new interpretation based on a deep interrogation of African milieu and of the millenary contacts of black African peoples. And so, from Benin to Zimbabwe, from Congo to Nubia, Diop demonstrated that the kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, Yoruba, Nossi, Benin ... etc. which seemed to be an archaic dispersion of unconnected, heterogeneous, cultural groups were but facies of the one and the same culture. With his notion of cultural unity, he gave a new turn to African historiography. In his *Nations Nègres* ... (p. 133) he asserts that the course of African history would still appear uninterrupted if one adopted a continental, geographical axis, such as Nubia-Golf from Benin, Nubia-Congo or Bubia Mozambique. The Edo culture, for example, is nothing but an expression, among many others, of the negro-african culture. In a way, Diop's *Unité Culturelle*... like his *Nations Nègres*, or his *L'Afrique Pre-coloniale*... is a comparative study of two-contrasting cultural, social and political spheres which highlight the deep cultural affinity between modern black Africa and historical ancient Egypt, especially in the social and linguistic domains (*Unité culturelle*... p. 173, p. 183). According to Theophile Obenga, this theory of cultural unity very dear to Diop is enough to make him the founder of negro-african history. Already many historians both African and foreign draw inspiration and guidance from his ideas and methods. Even those who, initially seemed skeptical or opposed him have found a cause to change their position. His historical revelations remain till date, a great turning point in African historiography.

It is perhaps in recognition of the African cultural unity and the historical and political consciousness which it is bound to regenerate in all those who rediscover and assume it, that Diop, in his political vision, imagines the industrial, technical and cultural foundations of a future federal state of Black Africa[20], an image of a modern Africa reconciled with the past and prepared for the future on the strength of its unity and enormous natural resources.

It can be concluded that Cheik Anta Diop created a new image for African history. In fact he revivified it and infused it with a militant ardour, armed it with tools of investigative research and autonomy. Tutored by Gaston Bachelard, the renowned epistemologist, Diop is himself a rationalist and a philosopher whose erudition makes one of the arbiters of history. His philosophy of history helped not only to explain the social, political, psychological, moral and economic comportment of the african as opposed to his Indo-European counterpart, but also created more solid arguments and proofs for the negritude movement. Although his ideas might have not been totally novel or even original, there is no doubt that he

conferred a truly genuine revolutionary vision to the movement. More interesting still were his methods of research which combined in its originality the scientific, the eclectic and the trado-customary. It was these techniques that led him to the heights that had not been reached by his predecessors, for which he won, together with the late W.E.B. Dubois, a special prize[21] at the First World Festival of Negro-African Arts, as the writer who, had exercised the greatest influence on negro-african thoughts and ideas in the 20th century. On the cultural level, Diop bolstered the call by the negritude movement for a cultural renaissance by giving it the additional impetus it needed in those militant days for survival. For him, there was a need for a national collective consciousness adapted to negro-african circumstances. He virtually preached this concept in all his works and thus created a fresh and stronger desire in most Africans familiar with his works to renovate national culture, and make it the starting point of all progressive actions in the continent. His goal was to rouse in every African the "colossus that was sleeping in him" (*Anteriorite* p. 283) so that the awareness would inspire an african revolution which would penetrate african economy, politics, social vision, etc, and make Africans themselves masters of their own destiny. The powerful movement of his historical thought brought about a cultural totalization whose ultimate effects dovetailed with political aspirations. Political decolonization benefited from this. Thereafter the African, newly liberated from centuries of cultural and political domination, reawakened to a new psychology, indeed to a better personality because of the facts now at his disposal, and boldly rejecting his borrowed garment of assimilation, reaffirmed his identity.

On the whole his works as well as his discoveries have been a great contribution and influence to african historiography. Many researchers are either inspired by him or adopt his methodology in their research on african history. Besides, his invaluable pioneer work on African languages[22] has opened up a new vista altogether which has not only popularized African studies in European and American universities but also made African linguistic studies a fertile ground for Africanists, who before him would have treated such a discipline with disdain. Critics are unanimous that Cheik Anta Diop has completely upset historical order, with his afrocentric approach to and interpretation of negro-african history. But beyond the disarray of pro-western critics, his real achievement lies in the demysthification of western "complex of superiority". Any wonder that he was accused either of anti-colonialism, pan-african nationalism or even passion. But if his theories seem alarming or unconvincing because he acted according to the exigencies of his inner realities, critics who accused him of all sorts of hidden motives have not operated differently in their relation to the African. However, whether he achieved credibility or not is beside the point. After such a historical event as he had enacted, African history can no longer be treated with levity and neglect. In fact, African historiography made a rebounce for the better and has gradually come to maturity with the UNESCO and the Cambridge multi-volume

and multi-authored reference works on the General History of Africa. Part of the glory and this positive trend should go to Cheik Anta Diop for his uncanny use of history in stimulating african national cause. Historian, physicist, philosopher Diop has henceforth, because of the scope of his works, not only earned a place of honour in Africa's historical hall of fame along side Ibn Khaldoun, Vico... etc., but also joined the privileged elite that defined human knowledge on international level.[23]

Notes

1. Cheik Anta Diop, *L'Afrique Noire Pré-coloniale*, 1960, Présence Africaine, Paris. No. 8, p. 5.
2. For some of these cliches see J.P. Fage, *African Discovers her Past*, 1970, Oxford University Press p. 2-6.
3. "What are most of the histories of the world but lies, immortalized lies..." asks South cf. "Book of Familiar Quotations", Webster Encyclopedia of Dict. by John Cage, Allee, New America eds, p. 881.
4. Cf. L.S. Senghor Report on the Doctrine and Propaganda of his Party: cited by Lilyan Kesteloot in *Les Ecrivains Noirs de Langue Francaise*, Eds Bruxelles, 1977, p. 110.
5. This crisis formed the central theme of the First International Congress of Black Writers and Artists, in Paris, 1956.
6. His major historical works are:
    - *Nations Nègres et culture*, 1954, Paris, Presence Africaine.
    - *L'Afrique Noire pre-coloniale* 1960 Paris Presence Africaine.
    - *L'Unité Culturelle de l'Afrique Noire*, 1960 Paris, Presence Africaine.
    - *Problemes culturels de l'Afrique Noire*, 1948, Paris, Assoc. Populaire des Amis des Musees.
    - *Antériorité des civilisations negres: Mythe ou verite historique?*, 1967, Paris Présence Africaine.
    - *L'Antiquité Africaine par L'image*, IFAN/DAKAR, Abidjan, NEA 1967.
7. Jean Price-Mars, addressing the International Congress of Black Artists and Writers, Rome, 1952, made the preservation of African cultural heritage as one of the major objectives of Negritude; cf. Presence Africaine No. 24-25, Paris p. 25.

8. "Vers une ideologie politique en Afrique Noire", in *voix de l'Afrique Noire* Fev. 1952, Paris pp. 5-21. His book *Les Fondements Culturels Techniques et industriels...* Presence Africaine, Paris, 1960, repeated some of the ideas in this article.

9. By this theory, Indo European society is basically patrilineal, revolutionary

and nomadic in nature, and characterized by individualism, clannish rivalry, private property, city-states, subjugation of the woman, inferiorisation of girls, diverse malthusian practices, sentiments of culpability and original sin as corollary engendered by pessimist religions or metaphysic systems (see *L'Unite culturelle*... pp. 183-187). Whereas the negro-african society is marked by an ideal of justice, peace, good naturedness, optimism, (which excludes notion of culpability in the religions and metaphysic creations (cf ibid. p. 185). Private property hardly exists, and society is sedentary, matrilineal, where the woman plays an important economic and moral role Moral is communal and all children are brought up.

10. In *Nations Nègres et Culture* op cit pp. 94-95, Diop concludes: "The history of humanity will remain confused as long as efforts are not made to distinguish between the two primitive cradles of humanity where nature has fashioned the instincts, temperaments, attitudes and moral conceptions of two fractions of this humanity even before they had had a chance to meet, after a long separation, dating right into pre-History".

11. Cf. "Raison Présente," No. 9, 1969, pp. 111-114., see also Theophile Obenga, "Methodes et Conception historiques chez Cheik Anta Diop," Presence Africaine, 1970, Paris, p. 14.

12. Eg. Magnetic methods, C. 14 methods, dendrochronology, analysis of archaeological objects using techniques of chemical analysis, spectral, metallography, aerial photography ... etc. Cf. le laboratoire de Radiocarbone de L'IFAN, Dakar IFAN, No. XXI

13. Aimé Cesaire: *Discours sur le colonialisme*, 1955 Presence Africaine, No. 3, Paris, p. 40. Immanuel Wallerstein. *Africa: The Politics of Independence* N. York Vintage, Eds. 1961. pp. 129-130. Also Cheik Anta Diop. Unité Culturelle ... Presence Africaine Nos. 24/25, pp. 60-70.

14. FIRST Intern. Congress of Black Writers and Artists, Paris, 1956. Nos. Antenor Firmin: *De l'égalité des races, humaines*, Paris, 1885, p. 335.

15. Diop abundantly cites from Volney's *voyages, en Syria and in Egypt*: Paris 1787, vol.I, pp. 74-77. Accounts of Champollion cf. Letter 13 in *Nations Nègres*... op. cit., of the Egyptologists, Amelineau. He also cites Herodotus ("Egyptians had dark skin and curly hair,") and other scholars and writers of Antiquity: Diodorus, siculus, Strabo, Aeschylus ... etc. etc.

16. Such scientific philosophers and greek legislators as Thales, Pythagoras,

Plato, Archimedes, Herodotus Pelon ... etc. are known to have been pupils in such centres in Ancient Egypt.

17. Cf. *Antériorité des civilisation nègres*, op. cit, p. 180.

18. Diop studied Egyptian cf. *Egyptien Ancien et Langues Africaines*, Dakar. Institut Fondamental de l'Afrique Noire, Dakar/Abidjan, NEA, 1977.

19. Leon Laleau, (Haitian) in his *Musique Nègre*, Port au Prince 1931, p. 15. Laments the agony of putting in European languages, the feelings of his senegalese african soul.

20. Cf. Cheik Anta Diop: *Les Fondements culturels, techniques, et industriels d'un Futur Etat Federal d'Afrique Noire*, Paris, 1960, Presence Africaine. See also "Alerte sous les Topiques", Presence Africaine, No. 5, Dec. 1955-jan 1956, pp. 8-33.

21. First World Festival of Negro-African Arts, Paris, 1956. 22. Diop has translated scientific thoughts and principles into Wolof. 23. He was the only black Francophone invited to the colloquium on the Origin of Modern man by UNESCO in collaboration with the International Union for the Study of Inca, Paris, 1965,