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**Hegel's Philosophy of History-A Challenge to the African Thinker:
The Thought of Leopold Sedar Senghor**

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Abstract

Philosophy of History, as an academic discipline, challenges the choices that we make, motivated by our respective historical circumstances. Hegel considers Africa as an unhistorical continent, whose inhabitants can only be equated to animals or worthless article, bound to remain in slavery and in subhuman conditions. On the other hand, Léopold Sedar Senghor, in his Négritude ideology, portrays the values embedded in the African cultural and traditional practices. The intellectual aptness of the Africans, in this work is manifested in the very ideas of Senghor which we are using to contest those of Hegel. Some call Hegel a racist, others say he was driven by ignorance. Amidst such a debate, we call on our readers not to be insensitive to the socio-political and infrastructural deficiencies in Africa, in terms of economic and political instability, corruption, poverty illiteracy and disease. Can the extremes of such deficiencies justify the Hegelian claims concerning Africa? Who may be blamed for the predicaments of Africa; God, as Hegel seems to insinuate or the western world or the Africans themselves? As we endeavor to answer these questions, we are also positing our own solutions that can enable Africa to emerge.

Introduction

This work is basically constructed on Hegel's philosophy of history in which he presents a very horrid portrait of the African continent (Morton 2002). He insinuates that the idea of European claim to superiority over other races, especially Africa is rooted in the racist assumptions of the late 18th century Enlightenment philosophers including David Hume, Kant, and Hegel, who seem to have validated a civilization theory based on racism. (p. 1). Philosophy of history, as will later be explained in this work, is concerned with the value or meaning in human history.

In Hegel's consideration, to understand why a person appears or behaves in a certain way, one must situate that person within a particular society and seek to understand the history of that society and the forces that shaped it. This idea, Beiser (2005) explains, defines Philosophy of History and it is equally the position of the historicist and the foundation of historicism (p. 29-30). In the like of Hegel, Little (2012) describes Philosophy of History in the following words:

It raises the possibility of "learning from history." And it suggests the possibility of better understanding ourselves in the present, by understanding the...circumstances that brought us to our current situation.

We also have to consider that Philosophy of History should not be confused with Historiography, which is the study of history as an academic discipline, neither should it be mistaken for History of Philosophy, which is the study of the development of philosophical ideas through time. Basically, Philosophy of History is concerned with the significance, if any, of human history; it

asks if there is a design, purpose, directive principle, or finality in the processes of human history.

Any African intellectual will seldom read Hegel's presentation of the African continent in his philosophy of history without giving it a second thought. This is because in classifying World history, as we shall soon see, Hegel places Africa on a very insignificant and sun-human pedestal. It is for this reason that we consider his philosophy of history as an acidic challenge to every African intellectual.

Léopold Senghor is rated as one of the most prominent intellectuals that Africa has produced. He is well renowned for his Négritude ideology. While using his ideas as antithesis to Hegel's, we are, at the same time highlighting the values of the African culture, bearing in mind the words of Ki-Zerbo (1972) that 'l'Afrique, et son nom méritent d'être retenus par l'histoire universelle' (p. 360). (Africa, and her name deserve to be retained in universal history). We shall start with the ideas of Hegel, then proceed to those of Senghor, after which we shall attempt an evaluation of Africa as it is today and end up by proposing what we think can make Africa better.

1. An overview of Hegel's Philosophy of History

Hegel is often considered as one of those philosophers who took history seriously. He considers history as a dialectic, or process in which the abstract becomes concrete; in which potentiality becomes actual. Kimpel (1963) explains that such a Hegelian dialectical process implies a thesis, an antithesis and a synthesis; a becoming which is a passing of being into what was not before the process (p. 105). In contrast to Kant, for example, who thought he could say on purely philosophical grounds what human nature is and always must be, Hegel insinuates that the very foundation of the human condition could change from one historical epoch to another. This progressive conception of history is principally the point of departure for Hegel. The fact is that Hegel distinguishes himself from his contemporaries by focusing on this same position but with greater accentuation. Consequently, his philosophy of history has a deeper influence than the other philosophers of The Enlightenment, as Singer (1983) observes as follows:

What distinguished Hegel's mode of thinking from that of all other philosophers was the exceptional historical sense underlying it. However abstract and idealist the form employed; the development of the ideas runs always parallel to the development of world history and the latter is indeed supposed to be only the proof of the former (p. 9).

Firmly ingrained in Hegel's philosophical manual is the pronouncement that Reason is the Sovereign in the World. It is reason that makes all things meaningful. Reason is Hegel's strongest tool; he uses it metaphysically as the teleological laws governing the universe, and epistemologically as that faculty that grasps something entirely or in context. Hegel (2007) insists that reason is *Substance* as well as *Infinite Power* (p. 9). Hegel (1975) is fully convinced that with the force of history, no individual can prevent the preordained from happening (p. 52). In his theology, God is omnipresent. He is present in everyone and appears in everyone's consciousness; and this is World Spirit. Accordingly, Hegel (1985) calls Christian religion the religion of truth and freedom (p. 171). Reflecting on Hegel's conception of God, Hook (1950) infers that for him, 'the idea is the nature of God's will and since this idea becomes truly itself only in and through history, History is the autobiography of God' (p. 36).

Hegel goes on to apply a certain geographical standard in the development of world history. According to Hegel, as James (2007) rightly observes, ‘the world’s history began from the East and ends in the West; ending with the Germanic Christian empires’ (p. 71) and it is unfolding in a narrative of stages of human freedom. Lowith (1957) explains that according to Hegel, in the Orient, only one – the ruler – was free in the sense of ultimate caprice. The Orientals, therefore, were the childhood of the world, the Greeks and Romans its youth and manhood, the Christian peoples are its maturity (p. 56). America and Australia for him are the new worlds, still to be exploited.

Hegel (2007) does not accord any substantial value to Africa in his historical scheme because it has no development to manifest since it has always remained a stagnant continent (p. 93). His conception of Africa is our next concern.

2. A Focus on Africa in Hegel’s philosophical thought

Primarily, Hegel (2007) believes that Africa must be divided into three parts:

One is that which lies south of the desert of Sahara - Africa proper, the Upland almost entirely unknown to us, with narrow coast-tracts along the sea; the second is that to the north of the desert - European Africa (if we may so call it), a coastland; the third is the river region of the Nile, the only valley-land of Africa, and which is in connection with Asia (p. 91).

Hegel (2007) is fully convinced that Egypt, like the entire northern part of Africa which may be specially called that of the coast territory which lies on the Mediterranean and the Atlantic; a magnificent territory, on which Carthage once lay - the site of the modern Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli was to be, and must be attached to Europe (pp 92-93). North Africa, he insinuates, should be understood as an extension of Spain, for both are parts of one and the same basin. To bolster such an interpretation, Hegel (1975) cites the prolific French writer and politician, *de Pradt’s* contention that Spain is essentially a part of North Africa (or that North Africa is a part of Spain) (p. 173-174). He also excludes some parts of South Africa before expressing his mind on what he termed ‘Africa Proper.’

What Hegel (2007) considers Africa proper has no movement or development to exhibit. It is ‘the Unhistorical, Undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature, and which had to be presented here only as on the threshold of the World’s History’ (p. 99).

Africa proper, Hegel (1975) goes on to say, is a place that has no historical interest of its own; we may find its inhabitants living in barbarism and savagery, having no ingredient of culture. They exist in a land of childhood, removed from the light of self-conscious history and wrapped in the dark mantle of night. It is cut off from all contacts with the rest of the world (p. 174-175).

Having noticed cases of tribal wars in Africa, especially amongst the Fula and Mandingo peoples who inhabit the mountain terraces of Senegal and Gambia, Hegel (1975) proceeds to conclude that

In this main portion of Africa, history is in fact out of the question. Life there consists of a succession of contingent happenings and surprises. No aim or state exists whose development could be followed; and there is no subjectivity, but merely a series of

subjects who destroy one another (p. 176).

The characteristic feature of the Negro, Hegel (1975) emphasizes, is that their consciousness has not yet reached an awareness of any substantial objectivity, for example, of God or the law. The Negro is an example of an 'animal man' in all his savagery and lawlessness and if he must be understood, all European attitudes must be put aside (p. 177). While humans are capable of abstractly representing things such as a God or reason outside of themselves in order to bring order and necessity into a chaotic world, Africans are incapable. Hegel (1975), believes that the African possesses no faculty to genuinely recognise another person as other, or as an-other-like-me; for them, the other is always *tout autre*, or someone who is entirely other. As such, Africans, in their natural stagnation have no problem even with the ideas of *slavery* or *cannibalism*. An African has no respect for himself or for others; for such a respect would touch on a higher or absolute value peculiar to man (p. 182). Certainly, such ideas are distasteful to the African mind and this is where we introduce Négritude.

3. Understanding the Négritude ideas of Léopold Sédar Senghor as a possible Antithesis to the Hegelian

The Négritude movement was developed against the background of French and general western marginalization of the Africans. Like other intellectuals in his days such as Aimé Césaire and Léon Gontran Damas, Senghor (1962) disdainfully observed that blacks had been taught for centuries that they had thought nothing, built nothing, painted nothing, sung nothing, and that they and their culture were nothing, but the 'tabula rasa' of French mythology (p. 17) These were all 'Hegelian' utterances that necessitated the conception of Négritude.

Senghor (1964) presents Négritude as the sum of the cultural values of the black world as expressed in the life, the institutions, and the works of black men; the sum of the values of the civilization of the black world. It is the totality of African values expressed in life itself, permeating into the entire existence of the black man in his relation to the universe (p. 9). With reference to Senghor's vision, Kluback (1997), in a condensed manner, presents Négritude as follows:

It is a culture...Négritude was intuitive reason, the embracing reason; it was not the eye of reason. To be precise, it was the communal warmth, the image symbol and the cosmic rhythm which did not sterilize by dividing but nourished by uniting (p. 10-11).

Looking deeply into the dilapidating socio-economic and political situation of Africa today, alongside the Hegelian conception of Africa proper, Chinweizu (1975) infers that the hunger of the Africans 'is to restore their lost dignity; the dignity of the black' (p. 402). This is the focus of Négritude. Considering Négritude as an epitome of African thinking, we dare to use its various tenets to confront the ideas of Hegel.

Our primordial consideration is that while Hegel perceives life from a purely rational and idealistic perspective, Senghor, from a typical African viewpoint, prefers us to dwell in the actual reality. Senghor (1964b) makes a general comparison between the Africans and the Europeans, exemplifying that faced with an object, the European keeps the object at a distance, he immobilizes and fixes it; the African, on his part does not draw a line between himself and an object. He touches it, feels it, smells it, and abandons his personality to become identified with it. He does not assimilate; he is assimilated. He lives a common life with the other; he lives in a

symbiosis (p. 72-73).

It is proven that Hegel, with his stereotype mentality, rebels against historical pragmatism, a theory stating that the historical experiences be taken seriously to learn from their strong points and evade their weaknesses. This is demonstrated in his rationalistic metaphysics which conditions him to consider Africa as a stagnant continent, doomed to remain in slavery. As a historical pragmatist, Senghor, without any intension of justifying slavery, considers it as a movement to freedom, in which nations contributed, though in a rash and inhuman manner to the development of other nations. Senghor (1964b), in this regard insists that

The treatment of the Negroes was the heavy tribute of the deportation, but above all the deaths of tens of millions which Africa had to pay to hurry along the movement (of the Civilization of the Universe). Doubtless, the immense holocaust of black victims was uselessness, but such is the hard law of history. Every truth of a new civilization is made in pain and blood (p. 8-9).

That notwithstanding, his concept of development does not rest principally on the materialistic or rationalistic schema as Hegel propounds. Kluback (1977) cites Senghor as he insists that development must start with a heart-to-heart contact between peoples which alone can make the future of mankind a fascinating possibility (p. 10-11).

The concept of teleology also gives us a good platform to compare both thinkers. Though expressed with diverse emphasis, both Hegel and Senghor firmly affirm the teleological facet of history. History, for them has an aim that must be accomplished in a final teleology. Development or Progress in world history, they both perceive, is a process of this finality which is animated by various factors and persons. Hegel (1975), however, adopts a more idealistic approach. He considers that

Every state is an end in itself, an external self-preservation; its internal development and evolution follow a necessary progression whereby the rational, i.e. justice and the consolidation of freedom, gradually emerges (p. 19).

Hegel (2007) considers heroes like Napoleon and Caesar as world personalities whose vocation it was to be agents of the World Spirit. They attained no calm enjoyment; their whole life was labour and trouble; their whole nature was naught else but their master passion (p. 31). Therefore, as opposed to Senghor who believes in the conscious and responsible personalities of historical figures, Hegel perceives them as mere 'passive' instruments, only designed as passages of the spirit that is manifesting itself. For him, they were "managers of the world spirit." This implies that natural human consciousness has little or nothing to do with history. This seems to be contrary to human nature as Lowith (1962) explains:

Peoples, like individuals do not know what they are really driving at; they are tools in the hands of God, in obeying, as well as in resisting his will and his purpose...the ultimate design surpasses and even perverts the planning of man (p. 56).

This Hegelian conviction seems to be the source of the greatest difficulty one may find in his philosophy of history. Firstly, it may be implausible to assume that people act from ideals or

principles. Secondly, it does not give any place to freedom, for if everything happens necessarily, then what choice do we have? Hegel conceives that the end of history; that is, the complete finality is the limit that the Spirit sets for itself which is freedom. Yet he goes on to indicate that history conforms to laws, so that the realization of this end is necessary. This is fallacious, considering, as Beisier (1993) intimates that a freedom that is realized out of necessity cannot really be considered as freedom (p. 267). His claim that the leader of people and the world is the Idea, or Reason or Providence, or God, is a real manifestation of pantheism and panlogicism which may logically lead to nihilism. According to Appignanesi (1997), panlogicism can plausibly be considered as atheism (p. 145).

Nevertheless, to consider Hegel a pantheist or an atheist may not really be appropriate considering his emphasis on the point that human knowledge opens itself always to the life of the Absolute as expressed in his dialectic. In this regard, Messinese (2001), intimates that one could say that Hegel, more than the fulfillment of the Cartesian itinerary of modern philosophy, returns to the classical themes about Being and about the Absolute and that in the Hegelian metaphysics, the idea of the transcendence and the immanence in his conception of God still remains distinct (p. 21).

Our inference, so far, is that whereas Senghor has a practical phenomenological outlook on reality, Hegel is idealistic and panlogicistic. According to Odhiambo (2009), on this distinction lies the pedestal upon which a major difference between the Black African and the European is anchored (p. 69).

Because of Hegel's thoughts concerning Africa, many critics classify him as a great racist. Popper (1950), for example, considers him as the philosopher who provided the stage for modern racism and conceited eurocentrism (p. 252) Yet we still need to reflect further, as to whether Hegel's impression of Africa proficiently qualifies him as a racist. This takes us into the discipline of philosophical hermeneutics.

4. A Hermeneutic Approach to Hegel's Conception of Africa

Hermeneutics, in all its etymological nuances, suggests a process of making intelligible what was once foreign and impenetrable. According to Hans-Georg Gadamer, any understanding whatsoever, is conditioned by the affections, concepts and practices of the cultural heritage of the persons or participants in conversation. Gadamer (1975), refers to this as 'Philosophical hermeneutics,' which is concerned not so much with what we do or what we ought to do, but with what happens over and above our wanting and doing (p. xvi).

Subjecting Hegel's Perception of Africa, to Philosophical Hermeneutics, one may argue that simply having a concept of race or the attempt to account for racial differences does not make one a racist. Neither does the rejection of the concept of race necessarily imply anti-racism. Moreover, negative value judgements concerning various cultures or cultural practices, however ill-informed and arrogant we might find them today, do not automatically amount to racism. As D'Souza (1995) defines,

Racism is always taken to mean an unreasonable or irrational hatred and/or fear of the 'other' qua 'other', coupled with the desire to dominate, discriminate against or exclude that 'other.' An example may be, favouring the establishment of laws or social

practices to this effect (p. 27)

This definition exonerates Hegel from being considered a racist because he never intended slavery to be a permanent institution, neither did he encourage rash treatments for the negroes. On the contrary, following his dialectic method, Hegel (1975) denounces slavery as an unjust practice, making it clear that chattel slavery is an element of historical dialectic and should be abandoned gradually. The enslavement of blacks, he insinuates, was a necessary moment in the transition towards a higher stage of development (p. 184). Hegel, therefore, distinguishes himself from a thinker like John Locke who endorses slavery as a normal system of life.

John Locke was an unofficial secretary to the Lord proprietors of Carolina and was part of the team that drafted the Federal Constitution of Carolina in which provision was made for every free man to have absolute power and authority over owned negro; to treat them as desired. Bernasconi and Mann (2005) remind us that out of fidelity to the above constitution, Locke was severely engaged in the slave trade, both through his investments and via his administrative supervision of England (p. 89–107).

Another reason we may exonerate Hegel from being considered a racist is to consider the remark of Amady Aly Dieng that Hegel never he never went to Africa. Dieng (2006) explains that Hegel never went to Africa and his ideas were greatly influenced or distorted by the works of businessmen like R. Norris, adventurers such as Mungo Park and James Bruce, military men like Cap. Turkey and G. Forster, missionaries like Cavazzi, historians like Herodote and Diodore de Sicile, philosophers like Montesquieu, Kant and Voltaire, and eminent geographers like Carl Ritter (p. 77-78).

Following our analysis, Aristotle could be posited as a real example of a racist. While Hegel simply expresses his ideas concerning various races, Peter (1970) explains that

Aristotle...believed slavery to be a natural institution, and equally that all barbarians (i.e., non-Greeks) were slaves by nature. It was therefore right and fitting for Greeks to rule over barbarians, but not for barbarians to rule over Greeks...In a celebrated fragment he counselled (the adolescent) Alexander ‘to be a hegemon leader to the Greeks and a despot to the barbarians, to look after the former as friends and relatives, and to deal with the latter as with beasts or plants’ (p. 40).

As we expose the beauty of Africa as expressed in Négritude, while sympathizing with Hegel, attributing his fallacies concerning Africa to ignorance, our work will not still appear as complete unless we examine the contemporary events in Africa within the framework of the Hegelian mindset. That which is obvious is that materially speaking, Africa is underdeveloped; plagued with poverty, corruption and infrastructural dilapidations as opposed to the western continents.

Our elementary presumption is that human nature is not perfect, and that human beings everywhere in the world have vices. Yet the intensity of these vices and the casual way they are handled in Africa are a cause for concern. This invites us to scrutinize contemporary Africa within the background of the Hegelian ideas.

5. Reflecting on the Realities in Contemporary Africa

In order to be more practical, we shall be examining the situation of a few African countries, emphasizing more on Cameroon, not because Cameroon is the most corrupt country in Africa today but simply because Cameroon is generally considered Africa in miniature.

The expression 'Cameroon, Africa in miniature' can easily be substantiated historically and pragmatically. It is authenticated by Tangwa (1999) as follows:

Cameroon is indeed like a summary or pocket edition of Africa. In Cameroon, all the macroscopic problems of Africa as well as its potentials are microscopically present. If we turn the map of Africa to look like a pistol, Cameroon would be the trigger. Cameroon is the meeting, if not the melting point of the colonial legacies of the leading imperial nations on earth: Germany, Britain and France. Cameroon's geographical, biological, historical and cultural diversity leaves out little of real significance that exists elsewhere on the African continent

Though Cameroon is experiencing conflicts today based on linguistic or territorial divisions in terms of southern Cameroon (Ambazonia) and the French Cameroon, La Republique, our firm conviction is that the major problem in Cameroon, like in many African countries, is corruption. In his Book, *Corruption in Cameroon*, Pierre Titi Nwel presents a savage portrait of Cameroon due to an acute corruption mentality. With facts and statistics, Nwel (1999) convinces us that in Cameroon, bribery and corruption have become 'what anthropologists call the basic trait, or personality of a society' (p. 31). His conclusion is that corruption has reached a level that can only be metaphorically referred to as a 'sea serpent, neither the head nor the tail of which we can see' (p. 52) Corruption often takes that forms of greed, discrimination, insensitivity and mutual suspicion. These are vices which, when taken to extremes, are a manifestation of inhumanity and may be used, to an extent, to justify the Hegelian claims concerning the Africans. Nwel (1999), as if to justify our assertion declares:

Cameroon, which is said to be a state of law, is certainly not a jungle. But if the corruption phenomenon has prospered there to the extent of 'eating deep into the fabric of the society' as certain persons put it, it is because certain jungle characteristics are found there: on the one hand, lack of vital resources has brought about competition in the society; on the other, lack of norms and social organisation has encouraged the multiplicity of 'wild' situations where lax controls have encouraged and somewhat recognised debauchery (p. 209).

In the light of the above citation, Chinweizu (1975), declares that 'It is widely recognized that African politics is unstable...with tribalism, graft, nepotism, and a general and pervasive kleptocracy' (p. 344).

Debating about foreign aid to Africa, Browne (2006), in his work *The Retreat of Reason*, doubts the genuineness of the African rational faculty. Having considered other factors, he finds it illogical, deplorable and inconceivable that within the past 30 years, aid as a percentage of Africa's gross domestic product has more than tripled, while in the same period, economic growth has

collapsed from two percent to zero. The only reason that could be given to this is that most of the aid is diverted by those ruling and not directed to the intended recipients (p. 113).

It is very distressing to ascertain that in spite of all his efforts to uphold African richness in his Négritude ideology, Senghor, at the dusk of his life could still regret the divergent nonchalance of his fellow countrymen. In his dissatisfaction, Senghor (1969) declares:

Unlike cadres and financial means, we lack a moral tension; our cruelest lack is genuine faith, a true commitment to the service of our country. It is this that I consider the most difficult task amongst all those I have undertaken; to instill in my people, in all my people, that taste for work well done, that minimum of honesty and civic consciousness, that sense of the public good, without which nothing can be accomplished (p. 5).

The dilapidating situation in Sierra Leone is really pitiable and has caused some citizens to regret the departure of the colonial masters. Traub (2000), after regretting the fact that the country has some of the world's highest-quality diamonds, and that the English left behind a good university and an educated elite as well as a network of roads and railway tracks that have all been mishandled calls on the citizens to forgive the colonial masters and call them back to take over the ruling of the country (p. 61). In the same regard, Alex Perry presents the opinion of Malu-Ebonga Charles, a native of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Perry (2008) inscribes:

On this river, all that you see - the buildings, the boats - only whites did that. After the whites left, the Congolese did not work... we've just declined. If they came back, this time we'd give them the country for free.

Think of what is going on presently in most of the African countries. Consider the millions of Africans looking for means to travel to the western countries for survival. Does it mean that Africans are subhuman as Hegel claims, to the extent that they cannot govern and control themselves? How can Africa come out of such predicaments?

6. Any Way Forward for Africa?

In an optimistic way, Senghor (1964b) declares that '...when I open the window, I see the sun rising over Goree, over the island of slavery, I say to myself, all the same, that since the end of the slave trade, we have made progress.'

These words of Senghor seemingly tell us that all is not lost. Yet we must reason along with Moody Awori, the former Vice President of Kenya as he asks each of us to contribute for the revitalization of Africa. Stenger (2005) cites Awori thus:

It is important that we ask ourselves this question: How can Africa in the next decades reverse those years of social and economic marginalization in the now increasing dynamic and competitive world?...It is important to remember that each generation is only a custodian over the current heritage before the next generation. Let us play our role fairly and responsibly so that we leave a better and richer continent for the next

generation (p. 7).

Before giving our contribution as to how African can go forward, it is good to ask ourselves one basic question: How did Africa find herself in this situation, considering that authentic African history gives us a different picture of Africa which, though not perfect, was a place worthy of living a good life; void of excessive corruption and unnecessary tension. Nyerere (1968) reminds us that 'In our traditional African society we were individuals within the community. We took care of the community and the community took care of us. We neither needed nor wished to exploit our fellow men ...' (p. 6-7). Essentially speaking, Africans, are not a lazy set of people as they seem to present themselves today. Something must have gone wrong somewhere which can only be redressed if Africans review their essential nature and come back to their undistorted personalities and vision of reality. Some people attribute the demise of Africa to the slave trade and the manipulations from the colonial masters in the name of civilization. Eze (1998) shares Aimé Césaire's idea as we read in the following limerick:

A civilization that proves incapable of solving the problems it creates,
is a decadent civilization,
is a stricken civilization.
A civilization that uses its principle for trickery and deceit.
A civilization that chooses to close its eyes to its most crucial problems,
is a dying civilization (p. 222).

While we fully subscribe to the above ideas, we are equally convinced that above everything, Africa must take the final responsibility for her predicaments and the final decision to grow out of them again rests on the Africans themselves. Consequently, we absolutely agree with Stenger (2005) that

Nobody can save Africa from oblivion without the collaboration of the Africans themselves. Saint Augustine said that God created you without you but will not save you without you. If yesterday the history of Africa was shaped in one way or another by foreigners, what Africa will be tomorrow will largely depend on your efforts today (p. 23).

Our own contribution to the advancement of Africa is a four-fold recommendation, coined as: 1) The necessity for a spiritual revival. 2) The need to re-cultivate a culture of hard work. 3) The need for good governance and 4) The need to return to the authentic African identity. This is the most important recommendation. No socio-political and economic project can succeed in Africa if it is not done with the consideration of, and in adaptation to the very essence, identity or worldview of the African people. Fowler (1998) defines worldview as follows:

'A construct about the makeup of life as it struggles with the questions of reality, truth, ethics and history. It is a construct that provides a point of departure, a sense of direction, a locus of destination, and a strategy of unity for human thought, life and action.'

In relation to worldview as African identity, Nkafu (1999) uses the phrase African *Vitalogy*,

defined as follows:

A conceptual vision of the whole of reality, where there are no spaces for irreducible dichotomies between matter and spirit, religious commitment and daily life, soul and body, the world of the living and the world of the dead (world and ancestors) (p. 9).

Thus, communion-community which excludes exploitation and highlights love, respect, hard work and mutual concerns are natural values that are constituted in the African worldview but need to be revitalized.

Conclusion

Each nation in the world has some major challenges to deal with. Africa must listen to the voices of her own history. We appreciate the ideas of Leopold Senghor which serve as a possible antithesis to Hegel's dehumanized conception of Africa. While we consider the Hegelian myopic ideas as the product of his community at the time, time, which some may still have today, we also, with the strength of Négritude confirm that the Africans do not need any western barometer to determine their state of rationality. Pointing to the real future of mankind, we firmly endorse the ideas of Senghor (1962) that human persons must cultivate the forces of finality, the forces of Liberty which alone give us the possibility of "transhumanising" ourselves through "coalescence" and "combining aspirations" (p. 54).

Considering that human nature is never stagnant, we must, in our various capacities, go on thinking, acting and aspiring for greater achievements.

We agree with Melady (1962) that there is joy and glory in development, but it does not come so soon. 'It has taken the White races of Europe and America dozens of centuries and they have not still attained the final solution' (p. 176).

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