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ON "SENGHORIAN PHILOSOPHY" OR PHILOSOPHICAL
CHARLATANISM FOR THE CONSUMPTION
OF AFRICANS*

By

Nicole Megjigbodo

*Marxism needs to be, not so much
revised as rethought, by Black
minds and according to the values
of Negritude.*

L. S. Senghor, Dakar, 1971

Introduction

There is no end these days--and Engels was already noting the trend just after Marx died--to the number of latter-day imitators and condescending philosophers engaged in "adapting" Marxism, "transcending" Marxism, "completing" or "refuting" Marxism in the name of "humanism," "liberty," and, since the birth of Negritude, "our traditional values." Marxism has managed to survive all of this treatment, and indeed, such "adaptations" and "refutations" would be of little real significance if they were restricted to a few bourgeois or petit-bourgeois intellectual coteries. But what we have is much more than that. We are witnessing the activities of a large-scale enterprise, concentrated especially in Africa, engaged in the systematic "interpretation" of Marx, Lenin, and why not for that matter, Mao, and geared to ridding their works of all revolutionary content. As an antidote to Marxism they offer us the philosophical-religious spiritualism of the likes of Teilhard de Chardin, whose long-winded pronouncements have been classified by J. F. Revel as a "mad metaphorical jig."¹ Whom we might ask, are they trying to mystify?

The method is as follows: Negro-African civilization, as they call it, is first of all embalmed and this body, now immune to all infection, becomes the foundation-stone of anti-Marxism. As Mr Senghor puts it:

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin has shown us the way-out of the impasse, by reconciling, on the one hand, the fact that we must live in our own time with on the other, our duty to remain faithful to the spiritual demands of Negro-African civilization. Thanks to Father Teilhard de Chardin, we can now transcend the antimony which sets materialism and spiritualism against each

* Translated from the French by Firine Adelugba and Ruth Schubert.

other. . . . If Marx had seen the movement of history through to its conclusion, he would no doubt have met our needs. But the fact is that he did not meet them When we consider scientific socialism, we cannot but reject its atheism and its violence, so basically alien to the African genius.²

So Marx failed to "meet the needs" of Mr Senghor! The subject of attack here is obviously dialectical and historical materialism, together with the political concept according to which, in the capitalist period, the dictatorship of the proletariat is the natural outcome of the class struggle. Such ideas are no doubt incomprehensible to Mr Senghor, since, needless to say, they imply the need for revolutionary violence, the weapon of the exploited in his struggle against the exploiter. We are a long way here from the refined language of the Negritude praise singers and it is hardly surprising that Mr Senghor should express his disillusionment, his disappointment with regard to Marxism. If only Marxism had been an easy-going armchair ideology--"a convenient theory to explain the civilization of Western Europe,"³ as he would have had us believe in 1949--a peaceful relationship between Mr Senghor and Marx might have been possible, along the lines Senghor tried to establish while still a member of the SFIO⁴!

But Marxism, as we know, is revolutionary, not just in theory but in practice. Worse still, when Marxism focuses on the root of the colonial phenomenon, which is the logical outcome of capitalism, it concludes that all continuing forms of this phenomenon, i.e., neo-colonialism, must be condemned and rejected. Marxism encourages the proletariat, the poor peasantry, and the most exploited sectors of society in colonised countries to become aware of their own power and to organise themselves in the struggle against imperialism and its local allies.

And this is where the shoe pinches: right from the time that the French press was busy hailing "our charming Black deputy,"⁵ the latter has not spared his efforts in piling statement upon statement, confession of faith on confession of faith, all adding up to a veritable "manifesto of neo-colonialist ideology." Whether he is referring to "the complementary nature of the two continents" (Africa and Europe),⁶ or appealing to all to "work together to foster and expand the use of the French language,"⁷ or yet again--through candour or simple-mindedness?--invoking "the harmony of Franco-Senegalese relations, never yet disturbed by dispute"⁸; whether he sets himself up as the apostle of the overworked Hitler-style doctrine of Eurafrica, or more recently, as the defender of Francophonie--which he hastily assures us, is in no way "the war engine of French imperialism"--in each and every instance a single attitude

emerges--that of active support for French imperialism.

Many of those who have written on--or rather against--Negritude have condemned this complicity between Mr Senghor and the French bourgeoisie. They have shown how Negritude has been exploited for political ends and how a concept originally vague and ill-defined has ended up being systematised into an ideology in the Marxist sense.⁹

But this "Negritude" is in fact no more than the external trappings of a much more deep-seated phenomenon, of a construct tenaciously clung to by Mr Senghor and his allies and clearly reflecting their class allegiance: the creation of a philosophy that could oust Marxism from its place.¹⁰ And this was where, as we hope to show, Teilhardism, a somewhat rough and ready rehash of Bergsonism, was to come in handy.

How did, or does, all of this tie in with the interests of French imperialism and of Mr Senghor himself? They would have us subscribe, in the first instance, to a rehashing of the old agnostic stand on the sciences, and secondly, to a mysticism rooted not in individual tendencies but in an entire race. What else is this but the height of philosophical mystification? The aim of such mystification is, of course, in the first instance, to sow confusion among intellectuals; but more important, its purpose is to maintain the myth, among Africans in general, and in the name of "discursive" and "technical" reason, that the former colonies still cannot manage, economically, politically, and culturally, without the help of France.

*An Inoffensive Icon*¹¹

During an interview published in *Le Monde*, 14 October 1976, Mr Senghor purports Mobutu to have said the following: "Europe has her Marx, Asia her Mao, Africa can be proud to have her own Senghor." This apparently innocuous remark might be seen by many as a good example of the type of fundamental mandarin-like complacency typical of all Senghor's pronouncements on Marxism. If we take a closer look at certain of his works, especially those in the collection *Nation et Voie Africaine du Socialisme* (1961), *Négritude et Marxisme* (1961), and *Pourquoi une idéologie negro-africaine* (delivered in Abidjan in December 1971), we can see that, just as Marx and Engels in their time took traditional German philosophy to task, so Mr Senghor is now determined to take issue with Marx himself, and then with Mao. From a presumably superficial reading of Mao he has however managed to master one idea--that of "embracing the enemy the better to suffocate him."

(a) *The "Negro-African Reading of Marx and Engels"*

Mr Senghor's stand with regard to Marxism is summarized in a ten-page statement delivered at Vézelay to "The Friends of Father Teilhard de Chardin in 1961 under the heading "Négritude et Marxisme." "We saw Marxism as our earliest instrument of liberation," he says. And later he adds, "From the moment of arrival in Europe, we fell under the influence of Marxist propaganda."

It is common knowledge that all intellectual movements in France between 1919 and 1939 were essentially petit-bourgeois in character. The various intellectual groups, while claiming to dissociate themselves from the politics of the French bourgeoisie, nevertheless remained captive within the bourgeois value system, characterised by the exaltation of individual freedom, a basic distrust of society, and an emphasis on the importance of intuition and imagination. Those intellectual movements were fated, therefore, to remain purely speculative and theoretical. It is no longer necessary to go into the details of Mr Senghor's profound personal relationship with those groups. It is enough to note that their notion of Marxism, vague at best, had been sugar-coated by anti-communist propaganda.

How, then, did Mr Senghor come to "read" Marx? From the start he emphasizes Marx's ethnic background: "Marx was a German Jew. . . . His was a Rhenan-Jewish brain." This is the famous theory which holds that the mental is determined by the biological, and closely tied up with the Negritude notion that it is the environment, the climate, the race which in the final analysis determine the thoughts and behavior of men. In addition to the racist overtones which, since Hitlerian times, the epithet "Jewish" coupled with the nationality still retains, we cannot help but note the systematic deformation of Marxism that is the logical conclusion of such thinking. For how can Marxism claim to be a general method of analysis and a scientific approach to the study of human relations when the mere fact that its founder belongs to an ethnic group, to a "race," limits from the outset the applicability of its conclusions? Whereupon, Mr Senghor sounds a triumphant note: I told you so, Marx himself recognised that his system was only valid for Western Europe. A somewhat strange amputation, we might suggest, of the thought of Marx and Engels! For, while the founders of Marxism have always emphasized the fact that they could not provide a blueprint of the historical evolution of every country, that their writings should not be looked upon as a series of prophecies, they did at the same time stress what was most original and most powerful in their doctrine: its materialism, which made it scientific, and hence universal. Lenin, moreover, was later to remark that what was of primary importance about Marx and Engels was not what they represented as individuals but the fact that they always acted, first and foremost, in a partisan spirit, because they acknowledged that philosophy, like economics or any other ideological

form, in the final analysis must reflect one's class allegiance: "Taken as a whole, the professors of economics are nothing but learned salesmen of the capitalist class, while the professors of philosophy are learned salesmen of the theologians."¹² It is not difficult to see that this is a quite different approach to the question from that of Mr Senghor.

Naturally, as Senghor sees it, classes do not exist any more, or have never existed at all (his opinions tend to vary with his mood!), at least not in that microcosm of "African society" which is Senegal:

In actual fact, there are no social classes any more; scarcely even castes. To put it more precisely, 99% of Negro-Africans, if not all of them, belong to the class of the exploited.

And again:

*In Senegal, there is no such thing as a "bourgeois" class which controls the country's economy and its principal means of production, and also aspires to seize political power.*¹³

Here, Mr Senghor reveals the fact that he has not even reached the stage of those 19th century European bourgeois economists and thinkers who were at least aware of the existence of antagonistic classes, and consequently of the class struggle, even though they may have continued to reject the Marxist analysis of the state as "a product and manifestation of the fact that class contradictions are irreconcilable."¹⁴ As Stéphane Kachama-Nkoy, a Congolese Jesuit, remarked at the Louvain Colloquium on *Voies Africaines du Socialisme*:

Senghor and Mamadou Dia among other things, deny the pertinence of the class struggle. For, as Senghor writes, "seen in the context of the general movement of socialisation, it is out-moded." According to him, what must be encouraged is material welfare, hand in hand with spiritual welfare (the maximum development of all intellectual and emotional potentials). One should not forget, he adds, that classes are generally being replaced by technico-professional groups. And the growing importance of scientific researchers and technicians cannot be overemphasized.

So classes and the class struggle, if indeed such phenomena ever existed, are things of the past and purely European in addition. This is the basis for a most original theory of "our own" State "different in conception from that of both West and

East. . . . In the East, the State can be defined as the instrument by which one class controls another. Our own State is quite different."¹⁵ Here follows a lengthy description of the role and functions of the State, but nothing at all about its nature. The State is not even the "juridicial personification of the nation," a bourgeois definition which Senghor acknowledges quite uncritically as that of the West, and which, according to him and in total disregard of the entire history of France, for example, implies that "as long as there is no nation, there can be no state."¹⁶

But how can such systems as the government, the assemblies, and the law courts be said to exist apart from the men who run them? What is their position in African societies, in Senegalese society? Can those party men (of the UPS, now the PSS) really serve the interests of the peasants and the workers? Yes indeed, there are no classes in Senegal, only 99 percent of exploited people. Here, Mr Senghor has not even caught up with the petit-bourgeois theory which sees the State as a conciliatory organ above the classes. Mr Senghor, having substituted one undefined term for another, tries to wriggle out with platitudes, like the following: "One of the essential tasks of the State is the building of the Nation and the definition and execution of a policy of social and economic development, backed by the majority of the people." But what do we mean by the Nation? Having decided to reject, or rather to despise, all historical analysis, Mr Senghor has no other option but to join forces with Renan, who defines the nation in idealist terms as "a soul, a spiritual principle."

So far, then, the new revised edition of Marxism would seem to have the following features: it is strictly European, exclusively German, in fact; it never heard of the class struggle, nor saw any need to define the nature of the State. One might wonder how this sort of Marxism, reduced to its most simple form, could survive any further adaptation. But Mr Senghor is not to be deterred:

For what was "Marxism-Leninism" but Marxism adapted to the Russian situation? And what was Marxism itself--scientific socialism--but Greco-Roman rationalism rethought by a German Jew and adapted to the Western European situation of the mid-nineteenth century?

Thus Marxism, emptied of all its content, fits neatly into such innocuous categories for instance as "Greco-Roman rationalism" ("Hellenic reason!"). And we can all relax, now that the demon has been exorcised!

(b) From "Sinitude" to "Sinised" Marxism

From the early seventies, the role of the People's Republic of China in international affairs, and the appeal for Africans, especially young Africans, of the achievements of socialism in China, led Mr Senghor to favour the works of Mao Tse-tung with his attention. Naturally, no mention would be made at any stage of the existence of the Chinese Communist Party, this vanguard organisation without which it would have been impossible to get rid of the imperialists. As always, all Mr Senghor is interested in finding in the writings of Mao Tse-tung is a confirmation of his own theory of the extremely relative nature of Marxism. At the very most, Marxism or Marxism-Leninism might be conceded the status of a life-style, something on the lines of "the American way of life," or just another of those "ideological bugs" which "tend to afflict students," like "Maoism, Guevarism, or even Arabism or Zionism."¹⁷ One might be forgiven for being a little surprised: in 1966, at the University of Laval, Mr Senghor declared proudly: "If I learned one thing from France, it was method." If by that it may be understood "Latin, French, Cartesian values," as he had previously declared in 1958, and even more precisely since in 1964 he was advocating a return to Descartes, "to rigour in method, lucidity in analysis, clarity in discourse and efficacy in action," then one is obliged to invite Mr Senghor to take another look at the *Discourse on Method*. For what is lacking in his own discourse is precisely the qualities Descartes advocates: clarity and the ability to make distinctions. How can one lump together or even compare two things belonging to completely different categories of thought? How can completely different realities be assembled under the same ideological umbrella, unless, of course, one extends the word "ideology" until it is wide enough and vague enough to include almost anything: "Ideology," writes Mr Senghor, "is a coherent body of ideas, of intellectual principles and spiritual values, that is, which can serve as a basis for action."¹⁸

To come back to Mao Tse-tung, Senghor informs us that the latter's "*rapid and profound conversion to Marxism-Leninism*" is hardly surprising.¹⁹ Marxism-Leninism, says Mr Senghor, is in tune with "the Chinese mind," with "the ancient ideas and practices of Sinitude dating back to 4,000 years ago." But what are we to understand by "Sinitude"? If we apply Mr Senghor's own "assimilationist" method we arrive at the following: "the totality of the values of the sino-asiatic world" --or rather, "the yellow-asiatic world."²⁰ According to Mr Senghor, who cites Marcel Granet, the Yin, the Yang, and the Tao are the basic categories of Chinese thought. Mao Tse-tung, of course, discovered similar categories in Marxism, and that is why he adopted Marxism, with an emphasis on the dialectic

evolution of matter, and especially on the idea of contradiction. In short, there is nothing in Marxism which cannot already be found in the millennial thought of China, or, in other words, Chinese civilization is based on ideas, or "notions" as Mr Senghor would put it. At that rate, "Sinised" Marxism is transformed into another idealism, in the philosophical sense of the word. Mr Senghor's sophisms are based on a little learning and his own erroneous interpretation of the history of Chinese philosophy. It is true that traces of materialism can be found in China as early as between the 9th and 7th centuries B.C., particularly in the idea that all things are in a state of perpetual mutation, for which two principles are responsible, the Yin and the Yang. Everything in existence is born of the interaction and the conflict between these two principles. The Tao, for its part, represents nature and its objective laws, operating without divine intervention. Nothing remains motionless in the world, everything is transformed into its opposite, the contradiction being produced by the action of the Tao-- "the action inherent in the nature of all things," to quote Lao-tzu. In ancient Chinese philosophy, then, we can see evidence of a somewhat naive materialism. The same could be said, of course, of ancient Greek philosophy: Democritus and Heraclitus also emphasized movement as the very way of existence of matter. What Mao Tse-tung revived of the Chinese philosophical tradition then, was its materialism and what more or less amounted to a dialectical view of nature, just as Marx had taken into consideration the contribution of Greek materialism. But one wonders what all this has to do with a so-called "Chinese mind," "Greek mind," "Western mind," primordial and transcendent.

But all of this is merely an introduction. The cornerstone of Mr Senghor's proof is Mao Tse-tung's stand on the national question, especially on national culture. In 1961 Mr Senghor had accused Marx of "grossly underemphasizing the national element." And he added: "The youthful nationalism of the coloured peoples gives Marx the lie."²¹ On the contrary, he claims, Mao Tse-tung, in expressing his attachment to the history of Chinese society, shows "his pride in belonging to the Chinese people" and exalts Chinese civilization: "Mao therefore understood that, as far as militant communists, like the militants of other ideologies, were concerned, *national pride* was not only legitimate, but as necessary to the progress of revolution as it was to cultural achievement."²²

The Marxist stand on the national question has been precisely and unambiguously defined, especially by Lenin. The emergence of the European nations goes hand in hand with the rise of the various bourgeoisies, hence with capitalism, which resulted in the disappearance of the previous feudal land divisions. Whence the often bitter struggle over territorial

demarcation and the oppression of certain nations by others. In the Marxist view the national struggle, seen in the context of rising capitalism, is the struggle of the ruling classes; in other words, the bourgeoisies. To be sure, the bourgeoisie might succeed in rallying the people to their cause, especially the proletariat who suffer from the illusion that they are fighting for the good of the entire nation. On the basis of this analysis, Marxists have always denounced bourgeois nationalism, the cause of so many wars, in favour of proletarian internationalism. Thus Marx, far from "grossly underestimating" the national question, as Mr Senghor declares so categorically, considered the formation of nations as a historical reality, linked to the class struggle, hence in no way fixed or eternal. To consider the formation of nations, especially in the former colonies, as an end in itself, is to have an anachronistic view of history. The total inability to see their own "reign" as transitory is characteristic of the bourgeoisie: they try to project onto their institutions and their culture an illusion of eternity. That is also why the bourgeoisie has always seen dialectics, the very basis of Marxist thought, in a hostile light, as Marx pointed out in the Preface to the Second Edition of *Capital*:

In its rational form, it (dialectics) is a scandal and abomination to bourgeoisdom and its doctrinaire professors, because it includes in its comprehension an affirmative recognition of the existing state of things, at the same time also, the recognition of the negation of that state, of its inevitable breaking up; because it regards every historically developed social form as in fluid movement, and therefore takes into account its transient nature not less than its momentary existence; because it lets nothing impose upon it, and is in its essence critical and revolutionary.

And for what one might call "national" culture at a period and in a society where the bourgeoisie is the ruling class, it is obvious that such culture can only be that of the bourgeois class, of the landowners and the clergy. Obviously, too, when Mao Tse-tung emphasizes the need for a national culture, in the context of *The New Democracy*, he means something quite different from a culture of the bourgeoisie, the landowners and the clergy. Mao's cultural stand is the result of a political and economic analysis of Chinese society and the existing classes. *The New Democracy* texts were written in 1940, at a time when the Chinese people were engaged in a twofold struggle, against imperialism, Japanese in particular, on the one hand, and on the other, against the reactionary elements, feudal and bourgeois, in league with imperialism. Mao Tse-tung, estimating that China had become "step by step a colonised, semi-colonised

and semi-feudal country," put forward the idea of a two-phase revolution that would enable the Chinese people in the first instance to free themselves of the feudal and imperialist grip, and in the second to lay the foundations of a proletarian-socialist state. The two phases are as follows: the democratic phase and the socialist phase. The democratic phase, the one that concerns us here, corresponds to the new type of bourgeois-democratic revolution where we see in action "the joint dictatorship of all the revolutionary classes of China, headed by the Chinese proletariat." These revolutionary elements consist principally of the proletariat, the peasantry, and large segments of the petit-bourgeoisie. The culture of this period consequently reflects the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle: "New-democratic culture is the proletarian-led, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal culture of the broad masses." For Mao Tse-tung the New Democracy culture "can be led only by the culture and ideology of the proletariat, by the ideology of communism and not by the culture and ideology of any other class."²³

These are the kind of "omissions" that render the entire Senghorian "proof" so patently dishonest. All Mr Senghor does is to lean heavily on a few second-hand quotations of Mao Tse-tung, often incomplete²⁴ and misinterpreted, in the hope of "proving" two things: that, on the one hand, Mao Tse-tung stands in opposition to Marx; that, contrary to what Marx could have said, national culture is of primary importance. In actual fact, there is no disagreement here between Marx, Lenin, and Mao Tse-tung: they all emphasize the class content of what is called "national culture," in any given society at any given period. It is therefore hardly surprising that the Chinese people, who had fought for decades against imperialism, continually subjected to the insults and the contempt of the foreign occupant, should be proud of their tradition of struggle and should exalt this struggle in their poems and in their songs. These poems and songs then form part of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal culture of the Chinese people at the period of the New Democracy, as we have seen. But this has no connection whatever with Mr Senghor's use of the word "pride," with its connotation of the definite and absolute superiority of one "culture" over another, one people over another. This kind of pride is nothing but chauvinism in its most extreme form.

Secondly, Mao Tse-tung "agrees" with Mr Senghor (i.e., disagrees with Marx): their respective stands on all important issues are similar: "Although I had not yet read Mao Tse-tung in 1937, in my lecture on 'The Cultural Problem in French West Africa' that year, I was, without knowing it, echoing his words."²⁵ Can there be any grounds for such a claim? The lecture Senghor refers to is remembered to this day, for two

main reasons: first, Mr Senghor used the occasion to support the view that Africans (in other words, Blacks) had no hope of competing with Europeans, especially in the sciences. Secondly, the lecture was a celebration of "colonial humanism--the work of men like Faidherbe, the mind of a Van Vollenhoven," whose praises were sung by Mr Senghor on behalf of the "Afro-French."²⁶ In order to crush any doubts one might have as to the identity of the orator, having listened to this splendid rhetoric, Mr Senghor assured his audience that he spoke as "a peasant from Sine." Mr Senghor likes to remind us of his "peasant roots." In actual fact, everyone is perfectly aware that he comes from a family of chiefs and administrators and that his peasant experience goes no further than a couple of idyllic visions of work in the fields, the inspirational source of Senghorian exoticism. But this "popular" note is not enough to "cleanse" Mr Senghor, as he fondly hopes, of the sin of collaboration with French colonialism. Can we really see Mr Senghor as the mouthpiece of the peasants? To be sure, he can fool himself that he speaks for them, but only if the peasants happen to be dumb ones. You can attribute anything you like to a mute, even the defense of the oppressor's cause. We should not, however, forget that these peasants for whom Mr Senghor speaks are the same ones Sembene Ousmane depicts in *Emitai* rising up against colonial rule, against Vichy-like requisitions that for them mean famine and death!

To get back to the original question, surely it is particularly misleading of Mr Senghor to claim that his own thought and practice can be considered in the same light as those of Mao Tse-tung. Fortunately, historical facts cannot be manipulated in the same way as written texts, which can so easily be amputated and forced to say what one wants to hear. In terms of historical fact, 1937 is the year of the victorious Long March, a period when the Chinese revolutionaries were struggling against foreign imperialism, against Japanese occupation and aggression, and the latter's internal allies, and for the survival of the communist forces which were in danger of being wiped out. The strategic withdrawal of the Long March was a veritable epic and brought the revolutionaries to Yen-an. Is there any need to remind ourselves that for Mr Senghor, on the other hand, 1937 was a year when, teaching in Tours, nothing could have been further from his mind than a comparable struggle against French colonialism, in either word or deed. Contrary to what his apologists claim, Senghor's stand at the time cannot be explained away on the grounds of political immaturity. It was a stand he himself was to "justify" later, in 1956, on the theoretical level, basing his defense, as always, on the same assumptions or postulates that made Negritude famous. Imagine a race whose psycho-physiological make-up, mainly "emotional" and "sensual" in nature, is the sole source of its metaphysics, its social structure, even down to individual

behavior. How could such a race be expected to get involved in struggles? Later, Mr Senghor refers to "[the Black race's] dislike of progress, its stagnation in a timeless universe."²⁷ And he rounds it all off with a song in praise of a "decolonisation" achieved through "the removal of all prejudices, all traces of superiority complex on the part of the coloniser, and of all inferiority complex in the case of the colonised."²⁸

By now, it should be more than obvious that far from being on the same wavelength, Mr Senghor and Mao Tse-tung are, in fact, poles apart. Mao Tse-tung's references to "national culture" were all made in the context of class analysis and with reference to a *people*, the Chinese people. When Mr Senghor speaks of "national realities," a much vaguer term and one which, despite all his claims to the contrary, does not date from 1937 but rather makes its first appearance in 1960, the latter is seeing nation as synonymous with race. He makes a fervent appeal for "the building of the Negro-African nation," the foundation no doubt being "the spirit of communion," "the spirit of love," "the sense of dialogue," or rather all those innate, immutable biological characteristics with which he has endorsed the Black race, quite arbitrarily, and with a total disregard for science. German national-socialism, one needs hardly be reminded, also saw as synonymous the "German nation" and the "German"--or better still, the "Aryan race." For Mr Senghor, the notion falls little short of the obsessive. We see it again in his address to the young members of the PFA in May 1960, where he tells them:

The Russians and even the Chinese are no less Russian and Chinese for being Communist. . . . We need no further proof than the fact that they have dug up and now revere their great historic men, and along with them the permanent values of their national civilization, nay, of their race.

Here again the sophism is the result of an unjustifiable linking of terms and the rejection of all historical or class analysis. Mr Senghor obstinately closes his eyes to the concrete situation of the African countries and African peoples whose cause he claims to champion. Since modesty is not the most obvious of his virtues, he even manages to see himself in the role of a "historic leader." As he puts it: "I was a historic figure--not, alas, through any merit of my own, but simply because of certain facts: I was the first agrégé, and for that they made me President!"²⁹ Seen in another light, the Senghorian portrait might look a little different: "a narrow-minded myopic bourgeois, in other words, a Philistine," to quote Lenin's ironic words.

In a nutshell, the operation which consisted of "interpreting" Marx and rubbing shoulders with Mao Tse-tung would seem to have misfired. To "prove" that Marxism as a "method of thought and action" should, depending on the historical circumstances and the geographical situation, take into account the concrete conditions of each country, was to force a door which was already open. There is not a Marxist theoretician alive who has not subscribed to this view, and not only in words but in action.³⁰ Such a truism can only work where one is convinced that one's relationship with one's audience is that of the catechist, and that they have already swallowed a schematic, expurgated, and biased version of Marxism. Otherwise, one is pitching one's hat against windmills. And this is exactly the effect, we suggest, of Mr Senghor's many attempts to convince us that there was disagreement over several issues between Marx, Lenin, and Mao Tse-tung. The German, the Russian, and the man from China: after all, didn't each one set up his own Marxism, and if each one was practising his own, how could the original Marxism be expected to survive? And here Mr Senghor himself steps in, the natural African equivalent, the heir so long awaited by the African people, or rather, the "Black race": just one more illustration of the messianic role of the "elite," a concept Mr Senghor has always held dear.

There is only one problem: neither Marx nor Lenin nor Mao Tse-tung has ever described himself as belonging to any particular "race," nor still less attributed any of their ideas to their membership of that race, not to speak of subordinating their political activity to cultural values, determined by, of all things, biology.³¹ Finally, they have never seen politics as dependent on culture.

What is at stake here is no less than the analysis of the historical role and significance of ideologies, especially the materialist theory of "reflection." What we hope to show is that Mr Senghor is opposed to Marxism, not merely on certain points, but in his entire philosophy, from which Negritude emanates, even if some superficial observers manage, through the abuse of language, to see "Negritude" as the "Senghorian philosophy."³²

From the Marxist "Deadends" to the Teilhardian "Rectifications"

It so happens that Mr Senghor at one point had quite a serious affair with Marxism, leading to a supposedly philosophic and exhaustive exposition delivered to the Congrès Constitutif du Parti de la Fédération Africaine in July 1959. The event in itself is not without significance: the Federation of Mali had been formed on January 17, 1959 (including initially the Sudan, Senegal, Upper Volta, and Dahomey, though the latter two were soon forced to withdraw under French pressure). The willingness

of Sudan and Senegal to become members of a Franco-African Community delayed the process by which real political independence might be acquired--an independence which Mr Senghor, just a little earlier, had referred to as "illusory."³³ Most of the parties, organisations, and unions which had campaigned for "NON" in De Gaulle's 1958 Referendum in the name of immediate and sovereign independence were, in varying degrees, advocates of scientific socialism and therefore of Marxism.

It must have seemed like a good idea, even a vital one, to Mr Senghor--"that politician who always manages to make out," as Stanislas Adotevi has called him--to climb on the bandwagon, as it were, and to consort with Marxism. What is more, had not the anti-federalists already accused Mr Senghor and his friends of being "atheists" and "Marxists"? Marx must be taken seriously then, the Marxist philosophy dissected, and its various components pronounced upon, and, through rejecting them or finding them inadequate, producing new arguments the better to combat scientific socialism. Mr Senghor was probably already aware at that stage of the extra philosophical card to justify the Franco-African Community on political grounds, in other words, the maintenance of French protection.³⁴

Between 1948, when he wrote *Marxism and Humanism*, and 1959, Mr Senghor read Teilhard de Chardin. His adhesion to "Teilhardian philosophy," which Mr Senghor presents as inseparable from "Negritude," was not only to have political consequences, then, it was actually the product of the political situation in which Mr Senghor found himself. In philosophical terms, Teilhardianism constitutes the definitive form of Mr Senghor's idealism.

(a) *The Caricature of Dialectical Materialism*

Matter, Mr Senghor informs us, is a concept badly defined by Marx, though Lenin was a bit more precise: "*The sole property of matter, the recognition of which defines philosophic materialism, is its existence as an objective reality, independent of our consciousness.*"³⁵ But Marx and Engels were every bit as insistent as Lenin that matter existed as a reality independent of consciousness. As early as 1844, in *The Holy Family*, Marx was making fun of Hegelian idealism:

When, acting upon certain concrete objects (apples, pears, strawberries, almonds), I form a general idea of the word "fruit"; when afterwards I imagine that this abstract concept--that is, Fruit--, taken from real fruits, is an essence which exists outside me and which constitutes the reality of the apple or the pear, I then speculate that the Fruit is the "substance" of the pear, the

apple, etc. . . . In that case, real and specific fruits then become the appearances merely of fruit, whose true essence and substance are to be found in the abstract Fruit.

The essential feature of idealism is that it sees material reality as dependent on abstract concepts. It inverts the real relationship between matter and idea and claims that the concrete is a product of the abstract. To the fundamental gnostic question, the answer to which makes it possible, in philosophical terms, to separate the idealists from the materialists--in other words, which comes first, matter or mind--the Marxist response has always been unambiguous. On the other hand, one point on which Marx and Engles, and later Lenin, were categorical concerning the structure of matter and its properties, was that these must be seen as approximate and relative to the level of scientific knowledge of any given period. These "properties" of matter (it is not for nothing that Lenin put the word in quotation marks, which Mr Senghor, however, manages to omit) can be made known to us, not by philosophy, but by science.

Mr Senghor's inability to distinguish between matter as a philosophic notion and physical matter lies at the base of his myopic interpretation of materialism. He writes:

*What made us uncomfortable with Marxism was, apart from its atheism, a certain disrespect for spiritual values: discursive reasoning, pushed to the extreme, turned into a cold-blooded materialism, a blind determinism.*³⁶

This statement contains a basic assumption: Marxism = disrespect for spiritual values. But what does this amount to in fact? That materialism (note that Mr Senghor "omits" dialectic and historic) neglects, if indeed it does not actually reject, all things pertaining, in Mr Senghor's words, to "the spiritual life": needless to say, such things are in reality beyond the grasp of materialism. Materialism lacks "warmth," that is, "spirit," in the sense in which Bergson speaks of a "spiritual bonus."

There is nothing original in all of this. Such ideas have constituted the idealists' constant grounds for objection against materialism, especially from the 18th century on. But what the 18th century saw as an epistemological problem, given the mechanical nature of the concept of matter resulting from the limited knowledge of physical matter at the time, was later resolved by dialectical materialism, whose findings were confirmed by contemporary physics.

So in fact, what Mr Senghor labours to explain to us, not realising that for most of us the problem has already been solved, is the spiritualist concept of materialism based on a mechanical and extremely limited view of matter. As they understand it, materialism holds that all matter is controlled by rigid and unchanging laws, by a determinism which indeed merits the epithet "blind" (like Fate: "it was written," says Diderot's Jacques the Fatalist), and psychic activity is only an epiphenomenon. The idealist therefore feels he is on firm ground when he derides those "materialist" proofs which try to extend the laws of the physical world to the realm of the psyche, by a process of "bringing down the higher to the level of the lower."

Basing his argument on this outmoded concept, Mr Senghor plunges into an attack on materialism, deliberately ignoring the decisive role played by dialectics. "Our criticism is less concerned with Marx dialectics than with his materialism, *albeit dialectic in nature*."³⁷ It could be pointed out to Mr Senghor that Marx, far from underestimating the importance of ideas, of consciousness, or, in a general sense, of what Mr Senghor calls "spiritual values," did, in fact, analyse those phenomena in the most precise fashion, bringing out the fact that thought emanates from the material world and is a very advanced and highly complex form of the evolution of matter, which in turn influences matter according to its own specific laws which come under the heading of psychic activity. But Mr Senghor seems capable of reading in Marx only that which might be useful to prove his point: he holds that Marx went back to the old idea of mechanical materialism, and "seems to deny the active role of the subject in the perception of knowledge." In support of his claim, he refers us to Marx's own words quoted by Sartre: "The materialist view of the world means simply the concept of nature as it is, without the addition of any extraneous elements."³⁸ So Sartre is now the buttress holding up the Senghorian edifice of misinterpretation! The words, in reality, echo those of Lenin mentioned earlier. Marx eliminates from nature, from the physical world, all the "foreign" elements which men, and the idealists above all, saw as the "first cause" of physical phenomena: Gods, God the Creator, spirit, inspiration, life principle, life-force, etc. The most fundamental feature of idealism is the addition to the natural explanation of phenomena of supernatural "explanations" totally unsupported by science.³⁹ Marx was to show that those various versions, ideas, religious or otherwise, came under the heading of "ideological forms," which are always relative to the objective material conditions in which men live. The famous passage comes to mind:

The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual

*life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.*⁴⁰

And, in answer to Mr Senghor's reproach that Marx neglects the active role of man, showing it to be solely dependent on economic factors, which would explain why the economic and political works of the latter read like "prophecies," "veritable poems of Fatality,"⁴¹ we should perhaps remember the following extract from one of Engel's letters:

*According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. . . . We make our history ourselves, but, in the first place, under very definite assumptions, and conditions. Among these the economic ones are ultimately decisive. But the political ones, etc., and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds also play a part, although not the decisive one.*⁴²

Mr Senghor would seem to have forgotten this concise and to-the-point statement of the facts. His entire argument is therefore based on the following type of reasoning: the materialist theory of knowledge is too poor, too narrow to explain spiritual phenomena satisfactorily. What marks those phenomena off from all others is precisely the fact that they are "beyond" matter. It is therefore necessary to challenge the materialist theory of knowledge in the name of another more complete form of knowledge enabling us above all to avoid the "agonising questions," and the "blind alleys" which Mr Senghor has had to deal with since he got involved with Marxism. The "blind alleys" were the result, he tells us, of Marx's "sleight of hand" in dealing with "certain vital problems--I repeat, *vital*--like God and Freedom."⁴³ And this, despite the fact that Marx does provide an analysis of religion, where he shows it to be a social phenomenon, a distorted reflection of the real world in the consciousness of men, brought about by the contradictions of society. Religion, says Marx, is "the sigh of the oppressed creature, the soul of a heartless world, the spirit of social conditions from which all that is spiritual has already been eliminated. Religion is the *opium* of the people."⁴⁴

In practical terms, what this analysis implies is that the battle against religion will concentrate on conquering the social problems which give birth to it, hence the fate of religion is subordinate to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. But rather than tabulating the various elements of this concept and then criticising what he cannot agree with, Mr Senghor prefers to declare that Marx has "dodged the question." This type of intellectual bad faith, we would suggest, is the natural product of the "devout soul" type of mentality which, according to J. F. Revel, is interested only in whether the conclusions reached are desirable or undesirable, rather than in examining the proofs which led to the said conclusions.

Naturally, the intellectual tools of Marx also fall short when it comes to grasping a reality which is too rich for them:

I must confess that Marx did not succeed in overcoming our wariness, as members of the Black elite, with regard to human intelligence. Intelligence, as Marx presented it, too often appeared as merely discursive, static and abstract.⁴⁵

Mr Senghor presents this attack on intelligence not in terms of his own personal doubts, but as a fact pertaining to all "Black" intellectuals, in an attempt, no doubt, to lend added weight to a statement which defines all scientific reason. Indeed, if this statement is taken at its face value, it would seem to imply that Marx's idea of intelligence is a merely personal notion, as limited as his concept of matter. And this despite the fact that the type of intellectual reasoning, the analysis and understanding of physical and social phenomena, on which the works of Marx are founded, are none other than those of science itself. We have no option but to conclude that it is not just intelligence but science itself which falls short in the eyes of Mr Senghor!

Here again, Mr Senghor makes certain assumptions: science and the intellectual tools employed by scientists are unsatisfactory, inadequate; there must therefore exist other tools of a superior order. All that is needed now is to reveal what these tools are, and if at all possible, to "discover" the Black race more highly endowed in this respect than average. The theory of knowledge and the philosophy which will incorporate these particular tools, which will emphasize these "higher" approaches to "material and spiritual" reality, will of course be the very philosophy "Negro-Africans" have been waiting for. The man called upon to "correct Marxist theory by rounding it off and filling up certain holes"⁴⁶ will be Teilhard de Chardin. The fact that not only Mr Senghor but Negro-Africans in general adhere to this *vision du monde* would seem to be an example of what Marcien Towa calls, "la théorie des pierres d'attente."⁴⁷ Just

as Tempels would have us believe that Christianity was the message all the Bantu peoples were eagerly awaiting, since "certain pre-Christian elements" could already be detected in their ontology and religion, in the same way Teilhardism would come to satisfy the deeply felt but as yet unformulated needs of Negro-Africans.

Mr Senghor's approach to Marxist philosophy is obviously that of an idealist; or, more precisely, of a "shamefaced idealist," to use Engels' famous term: his procedure is idealist, antiscientific, mystical. Not that he would ever admit as much. On the contrary, what he aims at is to present Teilhard de Chardin as the way out of the materialism-idealism impasse. He thus sets out, in the footsteps of Teilhard de Chardin, in search of a philosophical "third way," which Marxists, for their part, have never hesitated in labelling agnosticism, with all the possible nuances this latter term implies. The procedure is hardly original: in the history of European philosophy its original exponent was Kant. It was later taken up by Auguste Comte, and, after a working-over by Bergson, reappeared finally in the hands of Teilhard de Chardin in the guise of a "reconciliation" of Science and Religion.⁴⁸

(b) *From Bergson to Teilhard de Chardin*

The "1889 Revolution." When Senghor denigrates intelligence, what he is really attacking is scientific reasoning. Texts abound where he wages war on "discursive intelligence," as we have just seen, or yet again, on "discursive reason." His illustrious precursor in this field is undoubtedly Bergson:

*It was Bergson who in 1889 in his Essai sur les Données Immédiates de la Conscience proposed in place of discursive reason, the alternative of intuition. Intuition alone can enable us to form an in-depth vision of reality. Where discursive reason can describe only the surface, intuition penetrates beneath the outer skin.*⁴⁹

For more than forty years, the battle against science and scientific thought was the trademark of Bergsonian philosophy. Science, on the one hand, and philosophy and spirituality on the other, were placed squarely in opposite camps: "Science has the power to penetrate matter by the force of intelligence alone," while philosophy "reserves the spirit for itself." Basing his argument on the already out-of-date assumption that "matter is inert," and claiming that philosophy, on the contrary, represents "the live, the spiritual," Bergson goes on to "deduce" that the use of intuition, the truly philosophical method, alone enables us to "penetrate to the heart of things." This "attention that spirit brings to the contemplation of

itself" is the peculiar property of the spirit, intelligence being no more than "the attention which the spirit bestows on matter," or simply "an act of understanding always dependent on analysis and discursive procedures."⁵⁰ According to Bergson, life is consciousness, and manifests itself as the "élan vital," which he defines as follows: "A compulsion to create giving rise to living forms, each one more complex than that which has preceded it, and each appearing as an original solution to a problem arising from the ineluctable laws of existence." Matter or "material extension," on the other hand, represents "the relapse of the *élan vital*. . . . It is a lifeless product of the *élan vital*, it is spirit in which the life has been extinguished"; in other words, matter is spirit, but is to be distinguished from consciousness by a difference in "tension." Whence the celebrated distinction between the static and the dynamic, referred to by Mr Senghor as giving rise to what the latter calls "the 1889 Revolution."

Mr Senghor, in accordance with his conception of matter and determinism, in turn takes up Bergson's critique of socialism, and deduces from it that the latter somehow managed to foreshadow in his thinking the "profound upheavals" which shook the sciences at the beginning of the 20th century, and which, according to Senghor, were the result of what was called "the crisis of determinism": "Bergson, with a thoroughly dialectic subtlety, was finally to answer the needs of a public weary of scientism and naturalism."⁵¹

Bergson, too, it would seem, was unaware of the meaning of dialectics in the Marxist sense.⁵² The discoveries made in physics at the beginning of the century were for him so much clearcut evidence of the failure of science. Later on, of course, he was to claim that he was not attacking science *per se*, but simply pointing out that the domain of science is space rather than duration, and that science therefore could not be expected to reveal "absolute truth." This is none other than the positivist approach, a form of agnosticism which allows the irrational to rush in and fill up the gaps in the scientific knowledge of any given period, gaps the positivist would of course have us consider not as temporary but for all time.⁵³ It is a fact that the discoveries in physics at the beginning of the century implied the need for a reexamination of the whole idea of truth, and Bergson pounced on this as evidence that science had failed to penetrate reality and that metaphysics must therefore come back into sway. As Lucien Sève has pointed out, the main purpose of Bergsonism was to uphold metaphysics at the expense of scientific reason, and the warhorse used to carry out the campaign was none other than intuition:

*Bergsonian intuition, far from being discovered
by the use of creative intuition, was manufactured*

*like any tool in the service of a cause. The appearance of intuition (on the philosophical scene) is no indication of any real progress in thought, to be compared, for example, with the discovery of the notion of the concept in Greek philosophy, or of the dialectic contradiction in German philosophy: it should rather be seen as the final desperate stratagem of a metaphysics up against the wall.*⁵⁴

This, then, is the retrogressive procedure which Senghor terms "revolutionary"! In fact, as Georges Politzer will point out, the battle cry against the "narrowness of scientism" will now be followed up by an alternative--"the irrational idealism of Bergson, and, indeed, idealism in general." Thus Bergson offers us the choice between "static rationalism" or "the irrationalism of instinct and mysticism."⁵⁵ Of course, it would not be too difficult to show that, even in Bergson's time, this rationalism which was bound up with mechanism, was as outdated as mechanism itself(!), a somewhat strange way for a philosophy to prove its up-to-dateness, claiming to offer something new, when the offer is in fact a set of false alternatives:

*Mr Bergson's alternatives reveal themselves for what they are: a contrivance. In Bergson, we have a philosopher who would have us believe that science does not deal with the concept of change and this at the very moment when this evolutionary dimension is being discovered everywhere in science; that science does not acknowledge the importance of time, when in fact science recognizes time as an integral part of matter; that science is mechanistic, when this is no longer the case; that concepts arrived at by reason are set and rigid, when in fact reason is forever revising its concepts; that "rationalism" is "static," when the time of static rationalism is already long passed.*⁵⁶

And yet, as we have seen, these are the very alternatives used by Mr Senghor to "critique" and "go beyond" Marx. In fact, Mr Senghor borrows from Bergson not only the latter's vocabulary, this "veritable scholasticism," as Politzer called it, "complete with codified formulae and ready made metaphors," but also his taste for the pseudo-profound, and above all his *vision du monde*. It is from Bergson that he gets his blinkered, anachronistic approach to problems; from Bergson, too, his constant anxiety "to be seen rubbing shoulders with scientists when in fact it is more than obvious that he abhors everything to do with science." Finally, he inherits from Bergson "the idea of rethinking the old faded banner of an abstract ossified

What must be demonstrated at all costs is that the Black man is a metaphysicist, or, in Marxist terms, an idealist; not just that some Black men are idealists, as others might be materialists, but rather that idealism is of the very essence of the Black race. Thus all argument is eliminated, and it can be pointed out to all those engaged in spreading Marxism and propagating scientific socialism, that these are "foreign imported ideologies" in direct opposition to "the true philosophy of the Negro-African." In this respect, Senghor goes even further than Bergson. It would have been difficult for Bergson, given the recognition within the European philosophical tradition of the age-old opposition of materialism and idealism, to claim, for example, that his idealism or spiritualism was "the philosophy of the White race" (even if Nazi ideologists were to have no such scruples!). But Mr Senghor can permit himself the illusion of dealing with virgin territory. There are no clearly formulated written African philosophies, no historical traditions of philosophical debate, no established systems. What does exist is of a quite different nature: accounts by ethnologists who make a great deal of something they call "innate philosophies" which, oddly enough, are all cast in the idealist mould (cf. "Bantu Philosophy"). To sum it up, the Black man was, is, and ever shall be an idealist.

The well-known argument goes as follows: the Black man is a man of nature who does not analyse by means of "discursive reason," but rather grasps reality directly by means of "intuitive reason." Life, as in Bergson, is creation, evolution, and duration, while matter is the opposite of life. Creation signifies, above all, emotion--that emotion which, in the Black man, "can be defined as a projection into the world of the mystico-magical," and which, for the Bergson of *L'Energie Spirituelle*, culminates in the "proof" of the existence of such metapsychic phenomena as telepathy, presentiments, etc., not to mention "table-turning"! All these phenomena are so many proofs of the presence of spirit within matter and of the preeminence of spirit over matter. Life is the privileged expression of this spirit, since it is, according to Mr Senghor, "the expression of the life force."

One cannot help feeling that one is being drawn into the dark cave Descartes warned us about, where the soporific effects of opium are "explained" by saying that it must be soporific because it sends you to sleep. This life force is no more helpful in terms of explanation than is the *élan vital*, and to the biologist, for one, all it means is the reintroduction of animism into the sciences:

To explain the life process by means of a

vis vitalis, or whatever name one chooses to give it, is a typically metaphysical approach. It has in common with all metaphysical concepts three basic flaws or weaknesses which render it sterile from the start: first, it has no concrete foundation, secondly, it is self sufficient, and thirdly, it opens up no new avenues for further research.⁵⁸

Needless to say, Mr Senghor shows no more interest than Bergson in the scientific explanation of life. And this is where one begins to realize the extent to which his entire "proof" is dependent on mere wordplay. Life is not to be confused with the mere phenomena of life. "Life" must therefore exist above and beyond the phenomena of life. By this time we are only a step or two away from theology and its assumptions!

All of Bergson's work points ultimately towards mystical experience: "God," he writes in 1932, "is the centre of my entire work." The universe "converges" on God. "God is love and the object of love: that is why the universe exists in the first place. Matter exists for life, life for spirit, and spirit for God."⁵⁹

Writing in 1963, Gabriel d'Arboussier claimed that Senghor was "inspired by the Gospel" and that his doctrine "is a mystic force animating all genuine human development."⁶⁰ Here again, Mr Senghor feels he sees confirmation of the "mystical impulse" in the Black race. After all, is not "religious mysticism" one of the items listed among the "qualities of the Black man"⁶¹? Then what exactly is the nature of this mysticism? It is "essentially, the impulse connecting us to the invisible by means of the visible," an impulse uniting us with "the cosmic forces, and beyond them, with the force of forces, that is, God."⁶²

Mr Senghor informs us that he was influenced by Tempels, whom, moreover, he recommends us to read. But what is Tempels except a staunch Bergsonian, and a theologian into the bargain? Which means that, in the final analysis, his celebrated *Bantu Philosophy*, which purports to be an authentic presentation of Bantu thought, is in fact Bantu thought perceived through Bergsonian lenses, with a dash of Christian apologetics thrown in for good measure. Tempels' approach, in other words, is exactly the same as we have seen Senghor to use, at a higher level, if you like. Bergson--and the same could probably be said for Tempels--had not read Marx, he had sidestepped Marxism and remained in total ignorance of Marxist thought. Not that that prevented him, as we shall see, from adopting a firmly anti-communist political stand. Such ignorance of Marx, however, would not be pardonable in a "statesman" and "politician" like Senghor. Now, it so happens that there was, among Bergson's

descendants, a certain man, a theologian, but also a learned paleontologist, who set out to annex Marxism to his own system. He replaced Bergson's limited and self-absorbing view of the world with what he called "planetary vision," which happened to be right up Mr Senghor's political street. This "planetary vision" offered demagogic proof that Blacks, by virtue of their intrinsic qualities, are part of the evolution of the modern world, while, at the same time, through the theories of convergence and crossbreeding, it justified, without saying so in so many words (therein lies the art of camouflage), Mr Senghor's neo-colonial politics. Thus Senghor could present himself at one and the same time as the Africans' man, the man of all Blacks, since he was their rehabilitator, carving out a place for them in the "civilization of the Universal," but also as the man of "Dialogue," the man open to all intellectual currents.

Teilhard de Chardin's "Dialectical Turning Round." J. F. Revel says that there is no fundamental idea in the work of Teilhard de Chardin that is not already in Bergson, in particular "the originally psychic nature of matter, and of course of Life, whose role it is to develop consciousness."⁶³

According to Jacques Chevalier, Bergson taught Teilhard de Chardin at Clermont-Ferrand in 1888. On the other hand, Madeleine Barthélemy-Madaule insists on the fact that they did not know each other, but that Teilhard wrote in a letter dated 3 April 1930: "I was deeply moved by what you told me about Bergson. He is a truly admirable man. I pray for him, and I venerate him as a kind of saint."⁶⁴ However it may be, Teilhard admits that he read "avidly" *L'Evolution Créatrice*, which appeared in 1907, that he had difficulty in understanding it, but that he was shaken by these "burning pages."

We know that in the 1950s Teilhard de Chardin became "fashionable," and that the Vatican's reservations concerning this Jesuit priest, who was scientist and theologian at the same time, contributed in no small measure to the general enthusiasm. Bergson, in his time, had also aroused public excitement. His lectures were attended by society people, and the bourgeoisie, anxious about the decline of French philosophy in these early years of the twentieth century, was in ecstasy over the verbal audacities of this "philosopher of change," as Julien Benda calls him.

The connection between the two men does not of course stop at the reception given to their works and their ideas. M. Barthélemy-Madaule, looking at things from the "inside," claims that the original experience of Teilhard is similar to Bergson's intuition:

There is no doubt that we have here two profoundly intuitive men of genius who had the gift of contact with the immediate, with the Absolute, and who knew that the latter is ineffable.

We shall not discuss here the use of the term "men of genius"; G. Politzer and J. F. Revel have already done that. We shall simply remark that their writings are based on the same spiritualist procedure. Instead of "élan vital," Teilhard speaks of "psychic and radial Energy." It is this "discovery" that Mr Senghor calls a "dialectical turning round" as important as the "dialectical materialism" of Marx. With the difference that here the theory is "solidly coherent and fertile."⁶⁵ It goes without saying, of course, and Mr Senghor had already led us to suspect as much, that the Marxist theory is incoherent and sterile! Thus, to "complement" Marx, Teilhard de Chardin brings "coherence and fecundity"!

Let us go back to Matter, which Teilhard, euphemistically (and revealingly) refers to as the "Universal Fabric": It is Energy. But he is careful to define Energy as follows: "We accept that all energy is essentially of a psychic nature."⁶⁶ Consequently, matter, which is energy, is psychic, or if one prefers, it is Spirit. It is this "conjuring trick," as Lucien Sève calls it, which pleases Mr Senghor so much: "So Teilhard de Chardin, basing his ideas on new scientific discoveries, goes beyond the old dualism of the philosophers and scientists, which Marx and Engels did not put an end to by claiming that matter precedes mind." In other words, Teilhard "transcends the classic dichotomies," "he rejects the distinction between matter and mind. There remains only Energy which is a network of forces."⁶⁷

This is in fact a typically spiritualist procedure, which consists of manipulating science by the reintroduction of theological postulates. Is God not at the beginning and at the end of Evolution? In his somewhat hermetic language, Teilhard calls this point of convergence the Omega point; in particular it represents the reconciliation of Science and Religion.

This leads us to the question of the meaning of the apparent mutation of Negritude which took place at the Dakar Symposium in 1971. Certain people, referring in particular to Senghor's affirmation that Black Africans have no aptitude for abstract speculation, showed astonishment on seeing Negritude and Science getting on well together. In fact, what we have here is a carbon copy of projection of Teilhard's procedure: science can be left in place, provided every word is given a suitable meaning. For example, it might have appeared that intuition, as defined by Senghor, was in opposition to

scientific methods. Not in the least; scientists themselves, says Mr Senghor, use intuition, which is henceforth "the twentieth century method." Of course, Mr Senghor is right, on condition one does not point out that the scientist's intuition is not incompatible with intelligence, that it is allied to intelligence and is in no way irrational! It is easy to see the weakness or even the gaps in reasoning which underlie all Mr Senghor's arguments: the Black man is from now on both scientific and intuitive (since it is the same thing!).

The spiritualist assumptions on which Negritude rests persist nevertheless, as they do with Teilhard. It is accepted that Negritude:

*Is developing and diversifying while keeping its unitary character. It can only do this if, in addition to its traditional values, it rapidly assimilates mathematics, science and technology in order to make a decisive contribution, due to its real creative power, to the building of a planetary civilization which is already in sight and which is inexorably growing up.*⁶⁸

This "planetary civilization" is of course Teilhard de Chardin's cherished idea of "pan-human convergence," towards which humanity is moving. We have already seen how this projection, which crowns the general evolution of matter, is of a spiritual and divine nature. The "dialectic" of the Human Phenomenon, as Claude Cuénot was to say, is matter, life, socialization, the cosmic Christ. Negritude has therefore lost nothing of its fundamentally idealist character; the modifications of detail or of presentation which have been made do not imply new contradictions in the doctrine itself. It is simply a matter of "touching it up" with modern scientific language: Negritude is still a negrified appendage of Bergson's idealist philosophy as rearranged by Teilhard de Chardin.

(c) *A Glance at Some Political Consequences of a "Philosophical Marriage"*

Neither Bergson nor Teilhard de Chardin hid their anti-communism. In 1932, according to Jacques Chevalier, Bergson declared he was worried by the "Bolshevik threat": "If it were removed, the world could start living again. Bolshevism is nothing but atheism in action. Moreover I do not believe it will succeed. No people can live without religion." In the same spirit, Teilhard denounces "Lenin's Gospel" and adds:

The spirit has been veiled by matter. Love has been killed by a pseudo-determinism. Absence of personalism, leading to a limitation or even a

*perversion of the future, and consequently undermining the possibility and the notion even of universalism; these, much more than any economic upheavals, are the dangers of Bolshevism.*⁶⁹

In any case, the class-struggle is a thing of the past; it reflected "tensions in the Biosphere." He writes in *L'Avenir de l'Homme* that "the old Marxist opposition between producers and profit-takers is out of date." The idea of convergence implies on the contrary the reconciliation of ideologies:

*Let the democrat, the communist, the fascist go all the way; let them fulfill the positive aspirations which are their driving force and then quite naturally, the roads will converge.*⁷⁰

It is hard not to be amazed by the blindness shown by these opinions in the face of historical and social facts. Teilhard de Chardin, apparently carried away by his mystical dream, never considers present-day concrete historical problems. If he did, how could he, in 1937, look to the convergence of communism and fascism? Yet Teilhard is not simply a visionary. He never condemned fascism: "Fascism," he says, "is open to the future"; in the organization of the future he leaves plenty of room for "the fascist ideal of the organized elites."⁷¹ There is something here like Bergson's exaltation of the hero and the saint, who rise above the mass, who are "initiators who break with the habits of the group and who invent new values in a state of 'creative emotion.'"⁷² On the other hand, and despite his idea of "convergence," in 1952 he again took up his violent condemnation of communism; it is the job of Christianity to wage this "holy war":

*The only way to defeat communism is to present Christ as He should be: not as an opium or a distraction, but as the essential driving force of a "hominisation" which cannot be energetically brought to completion except in an open world.*⁷³

The whole of Teilhard de Chardin's philosophy is opposed to Marxism, and Roger Garaudy was wrong when, in 1961, he saw Teilhard as being open to Marxism, and prepared for dialogue. Marxism cannot be dissociated from scientific socialism. Right up to his death, Teilhard's attitude to scientific socialism was the same sectarian, intolerant attitude of the pontifical encyclicals. It was Pius XI who wrote in his *Encyclical on Atheistic Communism* of March 19, 1937: "Communism is intrinsically bad and there is no way that collaboration with it can be tolerated, on the part of anyone who wants to save Christian

civilization."

Mr Senghor, the "mystical crusader," as Armand Guibert calls him, also considers Marxism from the point of view of a believer. Borrowing Teilhard's ideas, he has struggled to build an "African socialism," the content of which has varied little over the years, even if some new labels have been added to it: "reformed" socialism, "democratic" socialism, etc. Just as in philosophy a "third way" was to emerge, so in politics it was a question of finding a "middle way" which might on the whole reconcile socialism and capitalism: "We" (the modest "we!") "are not communist," says Mr Senghor, "but we are not anti-communist either"! Mr Senghor may well try to sit on the fence, but his commentators are more explicit:

African leaders want to build African socialism in a world context. They believe that Africa can and should make a decisive contribution to the solution of current world problems, while rejecting the colonial heritage of capitalist exploitation, and at the same time avoiding any ideology foreign to Africa, especially communism,

said the Jesuit René de Haes during the *Journées Africaines* at Louvain in 1963. Of course, "the colonial heritage of capitalist exploitation" is rejected, but not capitalism! We understand then that there must be several kinds of "capitalism"; indeed why not a capitalism "with a human face," as if "exploitation" was not in the very nature of capitalism, as if it was not born, to borrow Marx's image, with blood sweating from every pore! This is a historical law, and no amount of pious vows can change it. We find moreover in this declaration the technique of amalgamation: communism is "a foreign ideology," therefore it cannot be adopted by Africa; but to refuse to accept the "communist" ideology means also refusing to accept the socialist mode of production, as regards the economy, and in politics, the socialist State. No doubt for him capitalism is not an ideology, and a fortiori not foreign! A false equality has thus been established which in actual fact conceals a clearly ideological choice: the choice of capitalism, no matter what ethical terms may be found to describe it. One cannot avoid noticing once again the striking concordance between this position and that of the pontifical encyclicals on capitalism: there, capitalism is never condemned; "private property is a natural right," said Leo XIII. On this basis, it is normal that here should be rich and poor people in society. Christian charity demands only that the rich should succour the poor; capitalism needs not to be condemned in itself. It is not its constitution which is bad." Therefore, what must be denounced is the "abuse" of capitalism. This "moralization" of economics

and politics is the essential characteristic of "Mr Senghor's socialism," which is no more "African" than his "philosophy":

1) It "integrates spiritual values": to put it plainly, this means that it takes its inspiration from idealist philosophy;

2) it rejects atheism, which shows clearly that "the spiritual values" referred to above can only be religious;

3) it banishes "violence"; this is the typical bourgeois, hypocritical attitude which consists of compassionate feelings and the denunciation of violence in general, "abstract violence," in short, the Idea of violence, while finding nothing wrong with "legitimate" acts of violence, like, for example, those of the neo-colonial state: the violence exerted by one class over another;

4) it will be all cooperation and love. A Guibert, who can hardly be called "anti-Senghorian," writes that Senghor made "a marriage of love with France, which he presents, out of precaution, as a marriage of reason," and he goes on: "It is not easy to disavow a third of a century of mental cohabitation"⁷⁴; these reflexions are significant. The love which is referred to here cannot disguise, as others have shown, the stages of a political life made up of compromises, of subservience to imperialism, in particular French imperialism.

Senghor has never, any more than Teilhard de Chardin, admitted the political possibility of a socialist state; his ignorance of any scientific analysis of economic life, coupled with contempt (is he not first and foremost a poet!), means that his considerations on socialism are simply pedantic and unrealistic. This "distant socialism," as Stanislas Adotevi calls it, is in fact a veritable imposture:

*I don't myself think very much of African socialism. It is the ideological expression of a social category which establishes in a backward country capitalism with a backward economy. It cannot do us any good.*⁷⁵

Conclusion

We have spoken throughout of "Senghorian philosophy." It is now time to ask whether it is not excessive to attribute to Mr Senghor a "philosophy" in the proper sense of the word.

One can still, it is true, credit Bergson with the successful attempt to clothe old ideas in a new language; and in any case, he did it "as a philosopher," that is, taking his place in the line of French philosophers of the nineteenth century. Teilhard de Chardin, for whom philosophy cannot be separated from theology (philosophy is the servant of theology) represents,

through his efforts to reconcile science and religion, the turntable of contemporary eclecticism, to borrow the expression of J. F. Revel. He continues the philosophy of Bergson, blending with it some scientific terminology, but essentially biological, and therefore limited. He, too, remains within the main lines of evolution of contemporary French philosophy, even if some of his views already seem anachronistic. Bergsonian philosophy, adapted by Teilhard, does not represent a contingent product of the history of ideas; its emergence corresponded to the attempts of the French bourgeoisie to "adapt itself" to a world in which, from the historical point of view and according to the Marxist analysis, it represents a force already condemned, but above all to find and to work out if necessary an alternative philosophy, in the face of Marxism. Teilhard de Chardin's philosophy represents an attempt to resolve the contradictions of the bourgeoisie itself: the bourgeoisie is obliged to answer for science, which gave rise to it in the beginning, and which gave the impulse to its own development; but, at the same time, the logic of scientific analysis of history and economic life should force it to recognize that it must disappear as a class. Hence the refusal to take to its ultimate conclusion the application of scientific reflexion to history, and, in the domain of philosophy, the necessity of reintroducing religion. Yet where history is concerned the bourgeoisie cannot ignore socialism; hence the adoption of a somewhat "socialistic" vocabulary.

What about Mr Senghor?

Mr Senghor has borrowed practically all his terminology from Bergson and Teilhard de Chardin. As for his knowledge of philosophy, we have seen that it is very fragmentary and generally faulty. However, as an African, has he tried to form an idea of the world which could validly be called a "Senghorian" philosophy, and which, in future, could have a place among African philosophies, in the sense, for example, that one speaks of "Sartrian philosophy" in the context of European philosophies?

We do not think so. Mr Senghor, philosophically speaking, is an *idealist*, that is all. But there is no "Senghorian idealism."

As for Negritude, however paradoxical it may seem, it is not African. It is not rigorously thought out, it is based on gross scientific errors, it exudes racism; at most, it is today "the black way of being white," as Stanislas Adotevi has put it. This appendage of the spiritualist philosophy of Bergson and Teilhard de Chardin for use in Africa is a splendid example of charlatanism, which the Larousse dictionary defines as "the exploitation of public credulity." It is the expression

of a philosophy that is historically condemned; it is plainly oversimplified and schematic, despite a certain amount of quarrelling over words, and this betrays the "aristocratism" of its defenders with regard to the peoples of Africa. Indeed, while the latter are working, suffering, and struggling, and while it is urgent that they should become aware of the real causes of their suffering, the "philosophers sit and chat," as Paul Nizan put it angrily in 1932. This contempt for the people is characteristic of the African bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which was raised by the colonial power, without really believing it at first, to the highest political posts, and which intends to stay there, come what may. In this sense, contrary to what has been said, Negritude is not dead. It continues to be paraded ostentatiously by the ruling class, particularly in Senegal, in the face of Marxism. It draws from the most conservative elements of French philosophy; in its idealist wrapping, it really does seem, as Lenin said, like "a story of departed spirits, coming back, in disguise."

¹J. F. Revel, *La cabale des dévôts*, ed. J. J. Pauvert, 1962.

²Italics mine; taken from Lucien Sève, *La philosophie française contemporaine et sa genèse de 1789 à nos jours*, éditions Sociales, 1962. Sève takes this quotation from an article by Senghor in *Le Monde*, 21 September 1961.

³Italics mine; taken from L. S. Senghor, "A propos de l'Union Française," *Liberté* 2 (1971).

⁴L. S. Senghor, "Marxisme et Humanisme," *Liberté* 2 (1971).

⁵Interview with L. S. Senghor in *Gavroche*, 8 August 1946. At this time, Mr Senghor considered colonization as a "contact between civilizations."

⁶L. S. Senghor, "L'Afrique et l'Europe, deux mondes complémentaires," *Marchés Coloniaux*, 14 May 1955.

⁷L. S. Senghor, "La Francophonie comme culture," *Négritude, Arabisme et Francité* (Beyrouth, 1967) (speech delivered at University of Laval on 22 September 1966).

⁸"Une diplomatie en mouvement," *Le Monde*, 8 June 1965.

⁹Marxists distinguish:

- 1) The sphere of ideology that is the intellectual reality which is secondary to material reality and which includes religions, philosophical systems, science, etc.

- 2) The great systems of thought which have followed one another historically.
- 3) A mystified and mystifying system of knowledge, where ideas are considered "as autonomous entities, developing independently and subject only to their own laws" (Engels).

¹⁰ It could be objected that we are interpreting an author's intentions in our own way, that he never said any such thing, etc. Let us just remind ourselves of this reflexion of Lenin's: "A man is judged, not by what he says or thinks about himself, but by his acts. Philosophers must be judged, not by the labels which they display . . . but by the way they resolve the fundamental theoretical questions, by the people they walk hand in hand with, by what they teach and what they have taught to their pupils and followers."

¹¹ V. I. Lenin, *The State and the Revolution* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1973), p. 5: "What is now happening to Marx's teaching has, in the course of history, happened repeatedly to the teachings of revolutionary thinkers and leaders of oppressed classes struggling for emancipation. During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes constantly hounded them, received their teachings with the most savage malice, the most furious hatred and the most unscrupulous campaign of lies and slander. After their death, attempts are made to convert them into harmless icons, to canonize them, so to say, and to surround their names with a certain halo for the "consolation" of the oppressed classes and with the object of duping the latter . . ."

¹² V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empiriocriticism* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970), p. 332.

¹³ Taken respectively from "Socialisme et Culture," 8th Congress of the BDS, May 1956, in *Liberté 2* (1971) and "Problèmes du développement dans les pays sous-développés," *Négritude, Arabisme et Francité* (Beyrouth, 1967). Cf. also Conférence des Jeunes du PFA, 1960: "In our Negro-Berber society--we have said it already and cannot repeat it often enough--there are no classes at war with each other, but social groups struggling for influence."

¹⁴ Lenin, *The State and the Revolution*, p. 40. After quoting a letter from Marx to Weydemeyer of 5 March 1852, Lenin points out that "the doctrine of the class struggle was created *not* by Marx, *but* by the bourgeoisie *before* Marx, and generally speaking it is *acceptable* to the bourgeoisie. . . . To confine Marxism to the doctrine of the class struggle means curtailing Marxism, distorting it, reducing it to something which is *acceptable* to the bourgeoisie. Only he is a Marxist who *extends*

the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

¹⁵ Senghor, "Problèmes du développement," p. 144.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 149. Mr Senghor, who tends to go in for contradictions, had said in 1959 that "the State is the expression of the Nation; above all it is the means of realizing the Nation," *Rapport sur la doctrine et le programme du Parti (PFA)*, ed. Présence Africaine (1961), p. 41. At the same Congress, he quoted Littré's definition: The State is the government, the supreme administration of a country." We must confess that this does not enlighten us any further about the nature of the State.

¹⁷ L. S. Senghor, "Pourquoi une idéologie négro-africaine," *Présence Africaine* 82, p. 14, presented at Université d'Abidjan, December 1971. We shall only note in passing the way in which Zionism and Marxism are put on the same level; why not Pan-Islamism, Pan-Turkism, etc.?

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁹ *Italics mine.* It is not surprising that Senghor should think of the fact of becoming a Marxist as a "conversion" (a term usually reserved for religion): "There are communists," he declared at Abidjan in 1971, "who have stressed that any ideology, even communism, needs to be supported by an enthusiasm, a kind of religious faith, in order to stay alive," and elsewhere he offers this peremptory argument: "Teilhard de Chardin notes that the Marxist faith is not totally atheistic" (1962).

²⁰ This rather ugly choice of epithets could seem to be exaggerated and deliberately polemical; however, we have borrowed the expression from Mr Senghor himself. Answering the criticisms of Negritude which had been expressed at the Festival of Algiers in 1969, he writes: "Not to mention the reactions of the *yellow world* which even if they were more discreet, were no less attentive" (*Problématiques de la Négritude*, Dakar, 1971; *italics mine*).

²¹ L. S. Senghor, *P. Teilhard de Chardin et la Politique Africaine* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1962), p. 49.

²² Senghor, "Pourquoi une idéologie négro-africaine," pp. 20-21 (*italics mine*).

²³ Mao Tse-tung, *On New Democracy in Selected Works*, Vol. 2 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), p. 373.

²⁴ As shown by the following example ("Pourquoi une idéologie

négro-africaine," p. 22): Mr Senghor quotes this passage from Mao Tse-tung: "The culture of the new democracy [the text actually says "new-democratic culture"] is a national culture. It opposes imperialist oppression and upholds the dignity and independence of the Chinese nation. It belongs to our own nation and bears our own national characteristics" Mr Senghor leaves out what is, in our opinion, the most significant for his argument: "but as a revolutionary national culture it can never link up with *any reactionary imperialist culture of whatever nation*" (italics mine). Mr Senghor seems to us to be in a completely opposite position when he refers, for example, to the "values" of colonization: "Colonization is an historical event. There is more to it than errors and destruction. It is a *Revolution*. Like all revolutions, it brings new positive values, it destroys in order to rebuild. *It is up to us to integrate these complementary values with our own; to assimilate them, so as to create a new blood*" (italics mine), taken from *La Voie Africaine du Socialisme*, 1959.

25 Senghor, "Pourquoi une idéologie négro-africaine," p. 23.

26 For example this passage: "One should recognize one's gifts for what they are, and not force them, especially as regards the mind and the spirit. Do you believe we could ever beat the Europeans in mathematics, with the exception of a few talented men, who would confirm that we are not an abstract race? . . . It is my impression that the indigenes of French West Africa, with a few exceptions, are better at arts than at science." Pathé N'Diaye notes: "Senghor's arguments in 1936 aimed at turning the Black African cultures into subsidiary elements of French culture. They forced the Black man to accept the French worldview and to serve French interests. They succeeded in acclimatizing a sphere of French influence in Africa." ("*Vérités sur la 'Négritude'*," *Partisans* 65 (1972), p. 39.)

27 Senghor, "L'Afrique et l'Europe."

28 Senghor, "La décolonisation condition de la communauté franco-africaine," *Le Monde*, 4 September 1957.

29 *Jeune Afrique* 85 (23 December 1977), p. 37.

30 Mao Tse-tung, protesting against dogmatism, insisted again in 1937 on the fact that "Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action," *On Practice in Selected Works*, Vol. 1 (Peking, 1967). This is quite clearly not a question of favouring the empirical aspect to the detriment of theory. Mao himself denounces this. It seems to be exactly the exclusive

preference that is sometimes given to theory and sometimes to practice, which is seized on by contemporary detractors of Marxism, particularly in Africa.

³¹ Marcien Towa, in his analysis of Negritude, says: "We are dealing with a strictly racist theory; racism as a theory consists of considering culture as a consequence of the biological inheritance of a given race or people," *Négritude ou Servitude*, ed. CLE (1971), p. 104.

³² Mr Senghor himself encourages this idea: "Our philosophy is based on Negritude, which in turn is based on a unitary view of the world," interview in *Révolution Africaine*, 27 February 1966. Alioune Sène, in *Négritude et Politique*, quotes these words by Mr Senghor: "Negritude as an objective civilization is an idea, I mean a philosophy." Colloque sur la négritude, *Le Soleil* (Dakar), 8 May 1971.

³³ Declaration made at Strasbourg in 1950, reported by Dr Aujoulat in his book, *Aujourd'hui l'Afrique*, p. 304, quoted by Amady Aly Dieng, *L'Étudiant d'Afrique Noire* 30 (1960).

³⁴ We are not attacking Mr Senghor for the sake of it. We shall only point out that the agreements between France and Mali reached at this time were based on the inequality of the partners, the absence of sovereignty (it was purely nominal) and consequently on dependence.

³⁵ Italics mine. L. S. Senghor, *Nation et Voie Africaine du Socialisme*, p. 59.

³⁶ Senghor, P. Teilhard de Chardin, p. 22.

³⁷ Italics mine. Senghor, *Nation et Voie*, p. 63.

³⁸ This quotation is in fact from F. Engels, whom Mr Senghor has most of the time "neglected."

³⁹ Sève, in his analysis of this definition, adds: "All real progress in science, i.e. in the natural explanation of the world, is therefore a victory of materialism, a defeat of spiritualism." *La philosophie française contemporaine*, p. 273. Cf. also Lenin: "The essence of idealism is that the psychical is taken as the starting-point; from it external nature is deduced, and *only then* is the ordinary human consciousness deduced from nature. Hence, this primary "psychical" always turns out to be a *lifeless abstraction* concealing a diluted theology. For instance, everybody knows what a human *idea* is; but an idea independent of man and prior to man, an idea in the abstract, an Absolute idea, is a theological invention of the idealist Hegel." *Materialism and Empiriocriticism*, p. 214.

⁴⁰ Karl Marx, Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970).

⁴¹ Senghor, *Nation et Voie Africaine du Socialisme*, p. 64.

⁴² Engels to J. Bloch, 21 September 1890, in *Selected Correspondence* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), p. 417.

⁴³ Senghor, *P. Teilhard de Chardin*, p. 55.

⁴⁴ Karl Marx, *Introduction to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* (Moscow: Progress Publishers).

⁴⁵ Senghor, *P. Teilhard de Chardin*, p. 55.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁴⁷ Towa, *Négritude ou Servitude*, p. 70. We have already noted Tempels' influence on Senghor, the "devout Catholic," as Towa says; the fideist way of thinking which is common to both of them, taken up by the Jesuit S. Kachama-Nkoy, confirms Towa's analysis: "The reason why Senghor and Mamadou Dia were so impressed by Teilhard is basically, in our opinion, that Teilhard puts into twentieth century terms certain essential values that *Black Africa has been cultivating for thousands of years: solidarity, community, spirit, respect for man, a unitary vision of the whole of reality*" (italics mine). Kachama-Nkoy, *De Karl Marx à Teilhard de Chardin dans la pensée de L. S. Senghor* (Leopoldville: Journées Africaines de Louvain, 1963).

⁴⁸ Teilhard de Chardin wrote in 1918: "Science (i.e. all forms of human activity) and Religion have always been for me one and the same thing," quoted in C. Cuénot, *Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: éditions du Seuil, 1963).

⁴⁹ Senghor, "Qu'est-ce que la Négritude?" in *Négritude, Arabisme et Francité*, p. 16.

⁵⁰ Henri Bergson, *La Pensée et le Mouvant* (Paris: PUF, 1955).

⁵¹ L. S. Senghor, "La Négritude est un humanisme du XX^{ème} siècle," *Liberté* 3 (Paris: éditions du Seuil, 1977), p. 69.

⁵² Lenin, *Materialism and Empiriocriticism*, wrote that: "The new physics has deviated towards idealism chiefly because the physicists knew nothing of dialectics." He went on: "Only the materialist dialectic of Marx and Engels can resolve, with a right theory, the question of relativism, and anyone who knows nothing of dialectics is bound to pass from relativism to philosophical idealism."

53 Sève, *La philosophie Française contemporaine*: "This crisis in the sciences is in no way a crisis of Science: on the contrary, it is striking evidence of its vitality, since it demonstrates its ability to resolve problems that are new in a qualitative sense. . . . It is precisely this point which positive scientists did not know and which spiritualist philosophers did not want to see."

54 *Ibid.*, p. 231.

55 Georges Politzer, *La Philosophie et les Mythes* (Paris: éditions Sociales, 1973), pp. 147-149.

56 *Ibid.*, p. 153.

57 Sève, *La philosophie Française contemporaine*, p. 232 (summarizes Politzer).

58 E. Kahane, *La Vie n'existe pas!* (Paris: edition de l'Union Rationaliste, 1962), p. 47.

59 Quoted by Jacques Chevalier, *Entretiens avec Bergson* (Plon, 1959).

60 G. d'Arboussier, *Journées Africaines de Louvain*, p. 82.

61 L. S. Senghor, *Liberté 1* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1964), p. 45.

62 Senghor, "La Négritude est un humanisme," p. 80.

63 Revel, *La cabale des dévôts*, p. 87.

64 M. Barthélémy-Madaule, *Bergson et Teilhard de Chardin* (Paris: éditions du Seuil, 1963).

65 Senghor, *P. Teilhard de Chardin*, p. 39.

66 Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Phénomène Humain* (Paris: Le Seuil), p. 62.

67 Senghor, "Qu'est-ce que la Négritude?," p. 17 and "La Négritude est un humanisme," p. 29.

68 *Italics mine.* S. Niang, "Négritude et Mathématique," *Le Soleil* (Dakar, 1971).

69 Teilhard de Chardin, *Sauvons l'Humanité* (Paris: éditions du Seuil, 1962).

70 *Ibid.*, p. 89.

71 Ibid., p. 87.

72 Henri Bergson, *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion* (Paris: PUF).

73 Quoted in Roger Garaudy, *Perspectives de l'Homme* (Paris: PUF, 1961), p. 198.

74 A. Guibert, *L. S. Senghor* (Paris: editions Seghers, 1969).

75 Stanislas S. Adotevi, "Négritude et Mélanisme," Festival of Algiers, July 1969.