Senghor's Universal Civilization and Cosmopolitanism: A Framework for African Development

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Abstract This paper explored Léopold Sédar Senghor's concepts of the universal civilization and cosmopolitanism as frameworks for African development. Senghor advocated for cultural miscegenation which he believed would lead to African development which is, however, a multifaceted concept that encompasses various aspects of human endeavours to include economic, social, political, and cultural dimensions. Significantly, Senghor's concept of development goes beyond mere economic growth to encompass sustainable and inclusive progress that benefits all individuals and communities. In African context, development is particularly complex due to the continent's diverse challenges which include (1) colonial experience which distorted African identity; (2) African cultural conceptions which are not conducive for development; (3) high ethnic and linguistic fragmentation; (4) lack of sufficient finance to kick-start the development process; (5) international economic policies which are not always conducive for the development of African countries; (6) socio-political instability, insecurities; (7) ill-advised development policies, bad leadership and corruption. However, through a critical analysis of Senghor's philosophies, this paper examined the key elements of his vision for a united and developed Africa. The paper also employed expository and critical methods to illustrate the applications of Senghor's ideas in various sectors of development. The paper found out that Senghor's ideas of universal civilization and cosmopolitanism are potent enough to inform developmental paradigms in Africa. The paper concluded that Senghor's universal civilization and cosmopolitanism offer a valuable framework for African sustainable development, promoting unity and global cooperation.

Keywords: Senghor, Civilization, Cosmopolitanism, African Development, Global Cooperation, Sustainable Development.

INTRODUCTION

In the midst of complex and evolving landscape of global development, African continent continues to grapple with the challenges of poverty, inequality and political instability. Amidst these realities, the visionary ideas of Léopold Sédar Senghor, a renowned Senegalese philosopher, poet, and statesmen, offer a profound and timely wisdom. Senghor's concept of universal civilization and his cosmopolitan vision, rooted in his conciliatory Negritude, provide a compelling framework for rethinking African development trajectory. Negritude, a philosophical and cultural movement co-founded by Senghor, Césaire, etc. celebrates the values and essence of Africanity, promoting a proud and inclusive identity that transcends colonial and imperial narratives. By extension, Senghor's universal civilization and cosmopolitanism which form conciliatory Negritude

is advocating for cultural miscegenation or cross-breeding which Senghor describes as symbiosis of all the different civilizations. For Senghor, as presented by Udom, it is the search for equilibrium, a shared idea and a common reason for living (Udom, 2022). For Senghor, as captured by Anyanwu and Ruch (1984), the aim of this conciliatory Negritude is to fertilize and put more life into its own values, which shall embrace all mankind. This conciliatory Negritude offers a transformative perspective on development, one that prioritize African unity, global cooperation, and sustainable development.

This paper aims at exploring and elucidating the essence of Senghor's civilization of the universal, cosmopolitanism, and Negritude, examining their relevance and potential applications in addressing African developmental challenges. By delving into the philosophical foundations and historical context of Senghor's idea of civilization, this paper seeks to uncover the transformative potency of his vision for the united, developed, and proud Africa.

However, the importance of this paper lies in its contribution to the ongoing quest for innovative and inclusive developmental solutions that prioritize African unity, global cooperation, and sustainable development. By engaging Senghor's civilization idea, this paper also aims at (1) rekindling the debate on the role of philosophy in development discourse, (2) highlighting the significance of African thought and perspectives in shaping development policies and (3) offering a fresh perspective on the intersection of development, globalization, and cosmopolitanism which many scholars, however, have participated in (Ugwu and Abah, 2020; Ngwoke and Ugwu, 2022).

This paper intends to inspire a new generation of scholars, policy makers, and development practitioners to rethink Africa's development trajectory and embrace the transformative power of Senghor's Negritude, civilization of the universal, and cosmopolitanism.

Background to the Idea of Development

Development has been conceived generally as a value word used to describe the process of economic, social and political transformation (Lawal, 2006). That is why in the past, Commentaries and discussions on development were often being developed by economists who saw it primarily from the perspective of economic growth. In that context, so long as the monetary value of goods and services (Gross Domestic Product) increased yearly, there is development. This point of view is false as there could be an economic growth, but not development, that is, if the majority of the people do not benefit from it. Thus, the concept of development goes beyond economic and material advancement. It is an all-encompassing which implies that development is a multidimensional process involving the totality of man in his political, economic, psychological, social relations, among others (Kanu. 2004). Development therefore entails social, economic, political and human development. But human development constitutes the foundation on which the first three concepts are based. Hence, according to Burkey (1993, p. 38), "economic and political development must translate into social development." Social development entails the improvement of the well-being of every individual to reach their full potential.

However, development is a process or activity of actualization of potentials and it is an indisputable and indispensible fact of life. Thus, etymologically, the word 'development' is derived from the French word veloper – meaning to 'wrap'. Therefore, to develop means to "de-wrap", that is, to unfold gradually, to cause to grow gradually stronger and better (Ndubuisi, 2013). According to Iroegbu:

> Generally development is the progressive unfolding of the inner potentialities of a given reality. It is to develop, that is, to bring out to light existential function epistemic, what was enveloped, folded or hidden. As it implies to people's development is the integration of the various givens, natural, physical, acquired and human, of a people towards the full working out permanently and cumulatively of their being as persons of their community and of their real productivity (1994, p. 84)

Development is essentially a conscious act of every man by which he naturally and historically projects himself toward the essential realisation of his potentialities within his concrete existential conditions of living in a society. This concept of development is contingent upon man's ability to rationally control and harness nature for social efficacy. Development then is the fulfilment and actualization of the potentials of both natural endowments and human person. The eclectic nature of development predisposes it to be multi-dimensional as earlier observed. Walter Rodney confirms the multi-dimensional nature of development thus:

> Development of human society is a many-sided process. At that of individual, implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being… However what is disputable is that the achievement of any of those aspects of personal development is very much tied with the state of the society as a whole (Rodney, 1990, pp. 3, 9).

Rodney, a Guyanese historian and political activist, viewed the development of human society as a many-sided process because he believed that the understanding of human society required a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating history, economics, politics, culture, and social structures. Development as a multi-dimensional process connotes change from a less to a more desirable state, since it is a process or an activity of actualization of potentials. However, development is not just all about releasing human potential as we earlier noted, but also about increasing human potentials as well as increasing institutional capacity to control resources. For Rodney,

the ultimate purpose of development must be development of the human person, that is, the realization of human potentials as well as the liberation of such from poverty. He contends that "true development of the individual level must seek to realize the creative potentials of man, enabling him to improve his material condition of living through the use of resources available to him" (Rodney, 1993, p. 4). Areji has also argued in the same line with Rodney. For him, "development is a process by which man's personality is enhanced and it is this enhanced personality, creativity, organised and disciplined pattern that is the driving force behind the socio-economic transformation of the society" (Areji, 2011, p. 300). Rodney's stance just like that of Areji makes the idea of development to be seen as human-centred – since it deals with human orientations, beliefs, values, attitudes, behaviours, organisation, confidence and self discipline (Areji, 2011). Aligning to both Rodney's and Areji's positions, Ugwu and Ozoemena argue that while development as a concept is dualistic in nature: material and human dimension, human dimension indeed remains prior. They go further to significantly point out that in the human dimension of development, education stands as a hallmark for it is through education and enlightening minds that the true meaning and implication of development comes to limelight. They posit that "education is the only basic tool to transform the world and its people and in this transformational process, knowledge must definitely impact on the people's ways of lives, characters, choices and exercises of emotions" (Ugwu and Ozoemena, 2019, p.14)

However, the South Commission report supports the centrality of people in development, that is, human beings are at the centre and also indispensable agents in the development of their society. Part of the commission reports reads:

> A nation is its people. Development has to be an effort of, by and for the people. True development has to be people-oriented. It has to be directed at the fulfillment of human potentials and the improving of the social and economic well being of the people. And it has to be designed to secure what people themselves perceive to be their social and economic interests. Its first objective must be to end poverty, provide productive employment and satisfy the basic needs of the people (Report of South Commission, 1993, p. 110)

The report shows that for any nation to be regarded as developed people's essential necessities must be met, otherwise that nation is not yet developed.

It is indubitable that development as a process or activity is not a birthright or prerogative of any people, race or nation. This is because everywhere and in every nation, human beings are faced with the task of survival to meet up with the fundamental material and spiritual needs, all in a bid to provide greater satisfaction to their needs and desires. Human needs, according to Rahman, are not only about material wealth, but also about people's psychological and emotional fulfilment, which involves the sense of purpose for one's existence, respect and affection in the society, co-existence with others, and a sense of belonging to a social collective for common objectives (Raham, 1993).

Development is therefore, less concerned about human wealth than well-being as its ultimate end, the basic of which are livelihood, security, and sustainability. This is also dependent on what people are capable of doing and being. The emphasis is that wealth is not the same as well-being. When it is said that development is less concerned about human wealth than well-being, it means that the primary focus of development should not be solely on accumulating wealth, material possessions, or economic growth, but rather on improving the overall quality of life and well-being of individuals and communities. Well-being encompasses various aspects, including: physical health and access to healthcare, education and personal growth, social connections and community relationships, mental health and happiness, environmental sustainability and access to natural resources, cultural and preservation and diversity, etc. The above perspective prioritizes the development of human capabilities, social relationships, and environmental sustainability over mere economic prosperity. It recognizes that wealth alone does not guarantee a fulfilling life, and that well-being is a more comprehensive and nuanced concept. This also means that development is a process through which people become aware of their capabilities, acquire knowledge and work collectively to meet their needs and also become collective in a social, economic and political interaction for positive change in their society.

According to Olusegun, development is a social concept standing for the process through which human beings strive to improve the conditions of their lives. To this end, he identifies two broad dimensions of development as the tangible or technical and the intangible or moral aspect. The tangible aspect is concerned with material progress and it involves the control and exploitation of the physical environment through the application of the results of science and technology. The primary goal of this process according to Olusegun, is human well-being, which involves among other things: the eradication of certain human-demeaning social phenomena such as poverty, illiteracy and low life expectancy and the creation and maintenance of what can be called 'livelihood opportunities' (Olusegun, 2009). The intangible or moral aspect of development, according to him, has to do with improvement of the qualities of human relations between people. It involves the promotion of positive social values, such as freedom, justice, tolerance, compassion and cooperation, as well as the reduction of social inequity, which globally is a major source of conflicts. Olusegun analyzed further that the tangible aspect appears most visible but the intangible aspect is crucial. This is because it is that which enhances the capacity of the individual to actually shape his or her own life without being insensitive to the common good (Olusegun, 2009).

This aligns with Ebunoluwa Oduwole's contention that "any development goals and initiatives that do not take into consideration the capacity to shape the individual and the concerns of the common good is not an all-encompassing form of development" (Oduwole, 2012, p. 98).

As the discussion on development continues, we discover that development is a natural process; it has been constant in varying degrees within human societies since the origin of man. Therefore, it is quite certain that pre-colonial Africa was not static or dead because African civilization at that time aided development which was people oriented through its communalistic nature. Hence, development must be people oriented.

Senghor's Idea of Universal Civilization

The concept of universal civilization was upheld with optimism by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a French Jesuit priest and paleontologist. Senghor had been influenced by Teilhard de Chardin's philosophy of the movement of convergence, where races, peoples, and nations consolidate and complete one another by mutual fertilization (Chardin, 1999). For Chardin, this represents only a phase in the inexorable planetary march to what he calls the 'Omega point' where the civilization of the universal will find its efflorescence. In Chardin's understanding of human existence, the very "spherical geometry of the earth" reflects "the psychic curvature of mind" (Chardin, 1999, p. 172), hence the potential for eventual universal human convergence. Chardin argues:

> *Just as it happens on a sphere, where the meridians spring apart as they separate from one pole only to join again at the opposite, this divergence gives way and becomes subordinate to a movement of convergence, where races, peoples, and nations consolidate and complete one another by mutual fertilization (Chardin, 1999, 172)*

The above statement is a metaphorical description of the process of human convergence and unity. Chardin compares it to the behaviour of meridians on a sphere. He suggests that just as the meridians initially diverge but ultimately converge, human societies and nations will follow a similar path. While they may initially develop and emphasize their unique characteristics, leading to divergence and separation, they will eventually recognize their interconnectedness and shared humanity, leading to a movement of convergence. In this convergent process, Teilhard de Chardin envisions a future where; race, people, and nation consolidate and complete one another, diversity is celebrated and valued, unity and cooperation become the dominant theme and humanity recognizes it shared destiny and works together to achieve common goals. Udom argues that Kwasi Wiredu in Companion to African Philosophy noted that the Chardin's thought formed the basis of Senghor's insistence on the creation of a civilization of the universe (Udom, 2022). Senghor writes:

> *The struggle for Negritude must not be negation but affirmation. It must be the contribution from us, the people of sub-Saharan Africa, to the growth of Africanity, and beyond that, to the building of the Civilization of the Universal. Negritude is part of Africanity, and as such is part of human civilization. To see that there are parts is not to set them against each other. Or rather, it is to set these against each other so as to be able to unite them more firmly in a dynamic symbiosis of complimentary part: for it is in this that culture consists (Senghor, 1996, p. 49)*

Senghor's statement suggests that he is advocating for an approach that: recognizes and acknowledges the differences and unique qualities of various civilizations to sets them apart or distinguishes them from one another, not to create division or opposition, but to ultimately unite them in a harmonious and dynamic relationship, where each civilization complements and enriches the others. In other words, Senghor is proposing a dialectical approach, where: thesis (one civilization) and antithesis (another civilization) are set against each other, not to create conflict, but to synthesize a higher level of understanding and unity, where the strengths and weaknesses of each civilization are balanced and reconciled. This dynamic symbiosis aims to create a more robust and resilient whole, where diversity is celebrated and harnessed to achieve a common goal. Senghor's vision is one of harmonious coexistence, where differences are embraced and used to foster a richer, more inclusive, and more vibrant collective identity. Senghor's idea of 'civilization of the universal' according to Udom expresses the common work of all continents, all races (Udom, 2022). Again, Senghor argues:

> *We must cultivate our Negritude then to take part in the necessary dialogue with white Africa, and then, united with the Arabo-Berbers of Africa, to enter into dialogue with other continents. This triple dialogue, between ourselves and the others, can have only one aim, to assure peace and build the civilization of the universal (Senghor, 1996, p. 50)*

In essence, Senghor sees this triple dialogue as a means to achieve a higher level of human consciousness and global unity, where individuals and groups recognize their interconnectedness and shared responsibility to create a more peaceful and harmonious world. It must be mentioned here that the civilization of the universal is for Senghor not a melting-pot where race and cultural differences are dissolved and get disappeared; it is rather for him, the meeting place of giving and receiving, where empathy and mutual respect, not simply tolerance, determine and govern the terms of interaction (Udom, 2022). All races according to Senghor, contribute to the construction of the civilization of the universal. Each must keep its specificity as it comes to the

rendezvous, otherwise there will be domination rather than mutual fertilization (Senghor, 1969). Senghor is of the view that his philosophy will spice up the whole idea of the civilization of the universal, hence the essence of it will not be achieved, unless it is seasoned with the salt of Negritude (Senghor, 1996). For Senghor, the whole idea of civilization of the universal will be brought about by the fusions of 'differing civilization'. But according to him, all races must first re-discover the profundity of life; they must not only know it but be reborn with it(Senghor, 1996).

Senghor's definition of Negritude as "the communal warmth, the image-symbol and the cosmic rhythm which instead of dividing and sterilizing, unified and made fertile" (Senghor, 1976, p. 99), shows the fundamental aspect of Senghor's conciliatory Negritude which advocates living in harmony with nature and the cosmos. The reason for living in harmony is recognition of unity, of oneness. Chardin, as quoted by King, describes the value of increasing the recognition of unity on earth, thus:

> The great educational value of geology consists in the fact that by disclosing to us an earth, which is truly one, an earth, which is in fact, but a single body since it has a face, it recalls to us the possibilities of establishing higher and higher degrees of organic unity...to see people drawn closer and closer together by an ever-increasing knowledge and sympathy until finally, in obedience to some divine attraction, there remains but one heart and one soul on the face of the earth (King, 2006, p. 82)

King's point here is that geology teaches us about the unity and interconnectedness of the natural world, which in turn encourages us to strive for greater unity and cooperation among human societies. By studying the Earth's oneness, we are reminded of the possibility of creating a more harmonious and integrated global community. For Senghor, by being open to the 'other' and accepting the 'other' based on love, mankind can achieve the civilization of the universal. It is through this acceptance that development can be actualized, which according to Senghor entails, recognizing the unity of the world and working toward its actualization. Senghor further explains that the African is ultimately aware of this interconnection and actively becomes that which he or she is relating to. On an energetic and spiritual level, Senghor writes:

> The Negro African sympathizes, abandons his personality to become identified with the Other, dies to be reborn in the Other. He does not assimilate; he is assimilated…it is a long caress in the night, an embrace of joined bodies, the act of love (Senghor, 1964, pp. 92-93)

This kind of understanding according to Senghor, expresses a relationship with an 'other', be it person or object, that is inherently equal and loving, for the act of relating entails becoming or at the very least, of sharing being. As Senghor states, "he (the Negro African) lives a symbiosis" (Senghor, 1964).

For Senghor, this fact is to give Africa an avenue to give and to take those positive values from the Western world for the development of African continent. This consciousness is an ideological harmony within the ranks and solidarity with those races and cultures with similar ideological inclinations. The result then becomes a new form of consciousness, that of a trans-racial ideological culture. Thus, Oruka, argues that unity, even with one's kith and kin, is fake unless it is unity of the ideologically consistent forces (Oruka, 2003).

In this new consciousness, Oruka also went on to argue that "racial conflicts are seen as underdeveloped or misguided ideological conflicts" (Oruka, 2003). For him:

> Cultural and racial liberations are expected as corollaries of the ideological and economic liberation. Economic exploitation and its attendant political oppression or the recent Western imperialism are not seen as the crimes of the nature of European culture, but only as mistakes of a given class and philosophy in the Western civilization (Oruka, 2003, p. 74).

Suffice to say that for Oruka, it means that this class and philosophy be up-rooted for the benefits of Africans in particular and mankind as a whole. The point that is worth noting here is that Negritude represents an elaboration of the Africans contribution to the civilization of the universal. Thus, this is the whole essence of Senghor's civilization of the universal. Therefore, trans-racial ideological consciousness as seen in Senghor's idea of civilization of the universal is the last stage of modern development of black cultural consciousness. This stage understands and transcends all the previous phases of consciousness. It is, however, as yet suppressed from taking firm roots due to the current world's economic and technological imbalance, plus numerous racial and ideological conflicts in the globe (Oruka, 2003). Finally, the accommodation and complimentarity of all values and cultures, forms Senghor's 'inventive Negritude' which, according to him, is tending towards a new humanism. Senghor felt that his inventive Negritude could open up harmonious basis for integration of African and European values with a view to bringing into being a new humanism which necessarily will contribute to the development of Africa in particular and the world in general.

Cosmopolitanism in Senghor's Thought

The word 'cosmopolitan' comes from a Greek word Kosmopolites: Kosmo meaning 'cosmos' or 'world', and polites meaning 'citizen'. In essence, the word means 'citizen of the world'. This idea is often traced back to Diogenes of Sinope, an extraordinary philosopher born around 404 BCE. When someone asked him where he was from, he replied that 'he was a citizen of the world'. Brown and Held explain what Diogenes meant by this assertion. To them, "Diogenes held that all human beings

are owned certain Positive duties of hospitality and brotherly love as if they were common citizen" (Brown and Held, 2010).

There are innumerable versions of cosmopolitanism. It is not in the scope of this paper to adequately discuss all the debates and scholarship surrounding cosmopolitanism, but in this paper, we are going to concern our findings toward cultural cosmopolitanism because Senghor placed much emphasis on culture, as he sees it as a precursor to ideal cosmopolitanism, which consists of dialogue between equal cultures. In truth, any lasting change will require a paradigm shift culturally. Vertovec and Cohen argue that cosmopolitanism can be viewed as:

> (a) a socio-cultural condition; (b) a kind of philosophy or world-view; (c) a political project towards building transnational institutions; (d) a political project for recognizing multiple identities; (e) an attitudinal or dispositional orientation; and/or (f) a mode of practice or competence (Vertovec and Cohen, 2002, p. 9)

Vertovic and Cohen's views on cosmopolitanism are based on culture; even their idea of "political project towards building transnational institutions" requires cultural consideration to be successful. Senghor's vision of cosmopolitanism is based in a world where culture is of utmost importance, as it is the basis for economic, political and social development.

The recognition of a common humanity is the basis for Senghor's cosmopolitan thought. Thus, Senghor's cosmopolitan vision is particularly useful for rethinking development in Africa because of his emphasis on culture, equality and openness to accept positive values from other civilizations for the development of Africa, so long as the aspects of foreign cultures that are deemed useful are shaped to suit African reality. Senghor's idea of cosmopolitanism can be understood to be Africa's contribution to the world's civilization. Senghor holds that it is humanistic, complementary and evolving, which must be understood as an indispensible precondition for dialogue. Senghor writes:

> Today, our Negritude no longer expresses itself as opposi¬tion to European values, but as a complement to them. Henceforth, its militants will be concerned, as I have often said, not to be as¬similated, but to assimilate. They will use European values to arouse the slumbering values of Negritude, which they will bring as their contributions to the Civilization of the Universal (Senghor, 1961, 8)

Senghor's cosmopolitanism, welcomes the complementary values of Europe, and indeed, of all other races and continents. But it welcomes them in order to fertilize and re-invigorate its own values, which it then offers for the construction of a civilization which shall embrace all mankind. According to Senghor, the Pan-Humanism stands at the point where the paths of all Nations, Races, and Continents cross. Nevertheless, the most serious criticism of Europe, according to Senghor,

is that they have no idea of the "preeminent dignity of the human person" (Senghor, 1961). In fact, for Senghor, the very distinction between civilised cultures and uncivilised cultures by the Europeans comes to appear anti-humanis¬tic given its use of force in colonial domination and control. In regards to this, Senghor posits:

> Actually, our criticism of the thesis advanced by the Society for Eu¬ropean Culture is that it is monstrously anti-humanist. For if Euro¬pean civilization were to be imposed, unmodified, on all Peoples and Continents, it could only be by force. That is its first disadvantage. A more serious one is that it would not be humanistic, for it would cut itself off from the complementary values of the greater part of hu¬manity. As I have said elsewhere, it would be a universal civilization; it would not be the Civilization of the Universal (Senghor, 1961, p. 10)

Universal civilization implies civilization that is global in scope, encompassing all humanity, and shared by everyone. In other words, Senghor is warning against the idea of a single, monolithic civilization that is imposed on everyone, erasing cultural diversity and individuality. Instead, he advocates for a universal civilization that values and celebrates diversity, allowing different cultures and perspectives to coexist and enrich each other. Senghor's phrase "it would not be the Civilization of the Universal" suggests that he is cautioning against the dangers of cultural imperialism, where a single culture is imposed on others, claiming to be the only universal truth. He is promoting a more inclusive and pluralistic approach to civilization, where diversity is seen as strength, not a weakness. The present colonial idea of cosmopolitanism is that it creates monoculture and thus threatens the very idea of civilisation of the universal. This is one of the reasons globalization needs reform because it often functions as a form of Western imperialism; rather than embracing other civilizations for mutual interbreeding of cultures, westernization is invoked. This Eurocentric culture is not desirable, for it is seen as in-egalitarian ((Udom, 2024).

On this note, Jeffers explains:

> The antidote to Eurocentrism in cosmopolitanism...is twofold. First, cosmopolitans must combat the problem of forgetting by cultivating an anticolonial memory, interpreting the meaning and history of globalization in a way that unequivocally condemns oppression and seeks unification only for the purpose of the flourishing of all humanity. Second, the goal of cosmopolitanism should be a polycentric world, as against the established tendency toward a Eurocentric world and against the idea of an acentric world, which has facilitated Eurocentrism (2019, pp. 376-377)

Jeffers is of the view that true cosmopolitanism does not implies a civilization that is imposed or dominated by a single, universalist perspectives, which may not necessarily be shared or accepted by all, but a

cosmopolitanism that cultivates an anti-colonial memory, interpreting the meaning and history of globalization in a way that unequivocally condemns oppression and seeks unification only for the purpose of the flourishing of all humanity.

The fact that today's idea of cosmopolitanism is simply Westernization in disguise is a concern to Senghor as he believes in various forms of reason and of a balance between intuition and rationality. Moreover, he believes that combinations of firmly rooted cultures can bring about the best civilization possible. He writes:

> I think all the great civilizations were civilizations that resulted from an interbreeding, objectively speaking...Indian civilization, Greek civilization, French civilization, etc. In my opinion, and objectively, this interbreeding is necessary. It is a result of the contact between civilizations. Indeed, either the external situation has changed and cultural borrowing enables us to adapt ourselves to the new situation, or the external situation has not changed, and cultural borrowing enables us to make a better adaptation to the situation (Senghor, 1976, p. 75)

The position maintained above goes in no demur with Udom's contention that African development should be based on a non-West/Eurocentric version of cosmopolitanism that specifically battles cultural imperialism (Udom, 2024). That is why Senghor is of the view that the goal of development for Africa could be based upon cosmopolitanism that is not Eurocentric but the one that maintains diversity of culture which will lead to the civilization of the universal. This position may have prompted Parekh to argue that "what we need instead is openness to the other, an appreciation of the immense range and variety of human existence, an imaginative grasp of what both distinguishes and unites human beings, and the willingness to enter into a non-hegemonic dialogue" (Parekh, 2003, p. 16). Cosmopolitanism must work towards this goal of entering not just a dialogue, but a "non-hegemonic dialogue" like Senghor puts it: contact between two civilizations can be of great benefit to Africa, but only if the contact is between equals will it be fruitful.

The present reality of Africans relationship to the rest of the world augments the need to firmly establish that all humans are equal; Senghor's cosmopolitanism is based on the ideal of human equality. Parekh on "Cosmopolitanism and global citizenship" argues that "it is both right and prudent to insist not only on the intrinsic but equal worth of all human beings" (Parekh, 2003, p. 5). However, the world has not reached to a state of global equality. Far from it! For Mumm, why it is hard for the world to reach to a state of global equality is because globalization does not listen to every individual, to every cultural voice. For Mumm, we still see instances of voices being forcefully stifled and crushed (Mumm, 2011). The goal of Senghor's idea of civilization of the universe is for African nations to avoid being dominated and assimilated by a superior culture as in the case of globalization, in which, everything is dominated by Western capitalist models. Senghor's vision of ccosmopolitan is to create a dialogue of equally represented and respected voices, a dialogue of giving and taking rather than one based on force and coercion.

This dialogue, between people from different civilizations is what Senghor envisions to be the ultimate goal of humankind: the civilization of the universal. He sums up the reality of this contact as he argues:

> From now on, our duty as Negro-Africans is plain. We remain free to travel with the current, or to row against it. I say 'our duty'. I should say 'our easily appreciable interests', which lie in the direction of the Civilization of the Universal, of a Socialism revised as Socialization, in which body and soul shall be fulfilled, and know the ineffable rap¬ture of Love-in-Union. That Civilization of the Universal, to which we shall contribute, when all is said and done, by pouring into it the burning lava of our Negritude, those values of our civilization which I have defined above(Senghor, 1961, p. 22)

Senghor felt that Negritude could open up a harmonious basis for integration of African and European values with a view of bringing into being a new African personality which necessarily contributes to the 'civilisation of values'. In this light, Negritude was seen as a cultural heritage of the Negros and an embodiment of cultural, economic, political and social values of the African people. Thus, one perceives in Senghor an advocacy for socio-cultural contact of races devoid of domination but one that aims at cross fertilization which shall lead to the development of Africa.

CONCLUSION

This paper has delved into the visionary ideas of Léopold Sédar Senghor, exploring the essence of his civilization of the universal and cosmopolitanism. Through a critical analysis of Senghor's philosophical works, this paper has uncovered the transformative potential of his vision for African development trajectory. Senghor believes that the dialogue of civilizations will occur and that all groups will have something to offer. His Negritude ideology is based on successfully battling cultural imperialism so that all cultures will have an equal voice in the dialogue. It is on this basis that we affirm that Senghor's idea of civilization of the universal and cosmopolitanism can provide a new basis upon which to rethink development in Africa as it deconstructs inequality and battles mental colonization by validating cultural identities, providing a version of cosmopolitanism that fends off Euro-American assimilation tendencies seen in globalization. African development policy should be grounded in Senghor's cultural cosmopolitan ideals in particular because his philosophy deconstructs negative colonial notions of inferiority and superiority, and project

cultural primacy and the equal dialogue of cultures towards a better way for human beings to relate with one another.

This paper has also demonstrated that Senghor's civilization of the universal offers a compelling framework for African development, prioritizing unity, global cooperation, and sustainable development. His cosmopolitan vision, promotes an inclusive and diverse African identity, fostering global citizenship and cooperation. Thus, Senghor's inventive Negritude is potent enough to cause a great magnitude of developmental strides and would empower the African in particular and the world in general since it is based on ultimate equality that recognizes and encourages cultural difference and openness to other civilizations. This makes Senghor's idea of cosmopolitanism to be seen as an essential tool in the deconstruction of Western superiority. This deconstruction would be useful and beneficial to Africa's development, because Africa would begin to make meaningfully progress without any fear of being dominated by an acclaimed superior race. Finally, we want to conclude that Senghor's version of inventive Negritude is a pan-humanistic ideology that can be instrumental to African development and the civilization of the universal**.**

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