

TOWARDS A LITERARY APPROACH TO AFRICAN CULTURAL REGENERATION

•Babatunde Ayeleru

Abstract

Humanistic studies in its broad sense have to do with knowledge which concerns human nature and existence. The French and Francophone universities, for convenience and pragmatism, group the Arts, Social Sciences and Law together under the 'Faculté des Arts, Lettres et Sciences Humaines' (Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences). The Anglo-Saxon system and especially the Nigerian arrangement make a clear distinction between the Arts and Social Sciences. In respect of this division, Humanities comprise the Arts, Social Sciences and Law, even the pure/natural sciences can be classified as Humanistic Studies. I know this inclusion of pure sciences will stun my audience, but it should be noted that science can only be made useful if it has relevance to human development. In his inaugural lecture, Etuk, a renowned Professor of Philosophy, cited by Obinaju (2008:9), claims that:

It is not the building of roads and bridges and skyscrapers, nor the flying in supersonic jets, and all these technical skills which essentially define the spirit of man. Other animals do those things and they are a great deal smarter at them than man.

The above position is that science has to serve humanity if it must be useful and appreciated. Etuk, again, cited by Obinaju (2008:9), describes Humanities as:

...the group of disciplines that ideally aims to impart liberal education to equip men and women, not with any specific technical skills, but with the kind of education that would make them well informed; well-rounded and cultured individuals, and versatile and contributing members of the human society.

Literature is a big branch of humanities. I use the adjective 'big' because, literature cuts across all spheres of knowledge in the humanities and also medicine. Literature has its root in disciplines like philosophy, history, politics, economics, sociology, religion and medicine. Literature, especially French literature, is based on philosophy and history. I doubt if a critic of French literature can excel without a fairly good knowledge of philosophers like Descartes, Emmanuel Kant, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Jean Paul Sartre, and Karl Marx. These humanist philosophers have contributed immensely to the growth of literature. This clarification is necessary to enable us go into our discussion of literature as an advocate of African culture.

• Department of European Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

Literature and Culture

I will not attempt a definition of literature in this paper, because it may end up a futile exercise. However, I will want to agree with the school of thought that literature, which may be written or oral, mirrors the society. Using language, literature performs numerous functions, chief among which are didactic and entertaining functions. While describing literature and its roles, Obinaju (2008:9-10) posits that:

Literature which itself proceeds from language, is closely linked to human activities on earth. It is therefore reflects and refracts the goings on in the societies, using whichever languages are obtainable and adequate for such human groupings. For this reason, in every human community across the ages, literature has been elevated to a very high pedestal and assigned the noble and major role of educating man right from his infancy thus helping him to appreciate and perpetuate the norms and values of his race or social group as well as fulfil himself.

Culture, on the other hand, is an attribute of man, and culture is numerous and diverse. This explains why it is often said that no culture is superior to the other. In Africa, since colonisation, literary practitioners have been in the forefront of the defence of African culture. Writers like Léopold Sédar Senghor, Birago Diop, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Cyprian Ekwensi and a host of others have written extensively on the revaluation of African culture.

The Francophone Africa has a long experience of nationalist and cultural struggle. The French colonial policy of assimilation completely supplanted the African culture. France claimed to have gone to her colonies on *mission civilisatrice* (civilizing mission). The main objective of the policy is to assimilate the Black Africans into French culture. Africans are expected to reason, speak, dress, eat and live *à la française*. The colonial French administration did not allow Africans to participate in the management of their countries, and the teaching of national languages was prohibited in their schools. Western education was provided at the primary and secondary levels. A few Africans were however lucky to be sent to France for higher education. Prominent among these were Sédar Senghor, Birago Diop, Aloiune Diop, Mongo Béti and some Caribbeans including Aimé Césaire, Léon Damas, and

Etienne Lero. As part of the struggle against colonisation and emasculation of African culture, black students in France under different names ranging from *L'étudiant noir* to *La negritude*, started publishing papers where they discussed the despicable activities of the colonial masters in Africa. Etienne Lero started a paper called *Légitime Défense*. This paper was published once and the "only number contained a violent attack on French colonial policy and its demoralising effects on the black personality". (See Abiola Irele, 1977:8). The journal *L'étudiant noir* was founded by Senghor, Césaire, Damas and Birago Diop. Alioune Diop also established *Présence Africaine*, which later transformed into a publishing house, to compliment the efforts of other journal outlets. The publication of Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* introduced for the first time the word *négritude* which later became a household name in Francophone literature. Negritude started as a literary movement and later metamorphosed into a socio-political and cultural movement. According to Césaire, "la négritude, c'est la simple reconnaissance du fait d'être noir, et l'acceptation de ce fait, de notre destin de noir, de notre histoire et de notre culture" (Irele, 1977:9), (negritude is the simple recognition of the fact of being black and the acceptance of this fact of our black destiny, history and culture).

Since the inception of the Negritude movement, Francophone African writers have committed a greater part of their literary activities to the emancipation of African people and their culture. Irele (1977:10) succinctly describes this struggle thus:

These themes range from the revolt against colonial domination in its political, cultural and moral aspects, to a defence and revaluation of Africa and its people and culture, and the cultivation of a *mystique* of the black race. The central motivation of this literature can be seen as the quest of a Westernised and alienated black élite for an identity and in consequence their effort to affirm their racial belonging.

The negritude movement comprises two groups: the one with aggressive tendency is made up of writers like Aimé Césaire, Léon Damas, and David Diop. They are more aggressive and revolutionary than the second group, made of Sédar Senghor, Birago Diop and Camara Laye, which believes in subtle approach to the struggle against colonisation and its negative roles in Africa. Unlike the Césaire's group

which believes in single identity for the black race, the Senghorian bloc believes in what is called *symbiose culturelle* (cultural symbiosis). Each writer's approach is determined by his experience as we shall illustrate in the following analyses of some poems.

David Diop, born of a Senegalese father and Cameroonian mother, grew and schooled in France among Whitemen. He experienced racial oppression and segregation. All these experiences made him to be more daring and violent in the condemnation of the Europeans and their colonisation. In his collection of poems entitled *Coups de pilon*, Diop violently criticises Europe for destroying the rich cultural heritage of Africa. He, therefore, challenges the oppressed people of Africa to rise up in defence of their culture, personality and identity. In the poem titled "Celui qui a tout perdu" (The one that lost everything), he shows how peaceful Africa was before her invasion by the White:

Le soleil brillait dans ma case
Et mes femmes étaient belles et souples
Comme les palmiers sous la brise des soirs,
Mes enfants glissaient sur le grand fleuve
Aux profondeurs de mort

.....
Et mes pirogues luttèrent avec les crocodiles,
La lune, maternelle, accompagnait mes danses
Le rythme frénétique et lourd du tam-tam,
Tam-tam de la joie, tam-tam de l'insouciance
Aux milieux des feux de liberté.

Puis un jour, le silence...
Les rayons du soleil semblèrent s'éteindre
Dans ma case vide de sens.
Mes femmes écrasèrent leurs bouches rougies
Sur les lèvres minces et dures des conquérants aux yeux d'acier
Et mes enfants quittèrent leur nudité paisible
Pour l'uniforme de fer et de sang.
Votre voix s'est éteinte aussi.
Les fers de l'esclavage ont déchiré mon cœur
Tam-tam de mes nuits, tam-tam de mes pères.

The sun was shining in the hut
And my wives were beautiful and supple
Like palm trees under the evening breeze
My children were gliding on the big river,
At the depth of death
And my boat were struggling with crocodiles
The moon, motherly, was following our dances
The frenetic rhythm and heavy drum
Drum of joy, drum of peace
Amidst the light of freedom.

Then, one day, silence...
The sun rays seemed quenched
In my meaningless hut
My wives rubbing their red painted mouths
On the lean and hard lips of the iron-eyed conquerors
And my children left their peaceful nudity
For the iron and blood uniform
Your voice also quenched
The iron of slavery had torn my heart,
My nights' drum, my fathers' drum.

The above poem gives a nostalgic description of the original and unadulterated Africa where peace and harmony reigned supreme. The second stanza of the poem describes the sudden arrival of the European colonisers and its attendant negative effects on Africans and their culture. According to the poem, the Whiteman's invasion destroyed the peaceful existence and cultural values of Africa. The Whiteman also succeeded in introducing immorality in the hitherto morally upright Africa. African women are now seen indulging in illicit affairs with the Whiteman. We shall all agree that this immorality exported to our continent is unabatedly growing among us.

In another short poem, "Le temps du martyr" (The time of the martyr), David Diop, openly exposes the sadistic, exploitative and hypocritical natures of the colonial masters. The poem reads thus:

Le Blanc a tué mon père

Mon père était fier
 Le Blanc a violé ma mère
 Ma mère était belle
 Le Blanc a courbé mon frère sous le soleil des routes
 Mon frère était fort
 Le Blanc a tourné vers moi
 Ses mains rouges de sang

Noir

Et de sa voix de Maître ;
 « Hé boy, un berger, une serviette, de l'eau ! »
 (David Diop, in Senghor, 1977 : 174-175)

The Whiteman killed my father
 My father was proud
 The Whiteman raped my mother
 My mother was beautiful
 The Whiteman bent my brother under the sun of forced labour
 My brother was strong
 The Whiteman turned to me
 His hands covered with Blackman's blood
 And said in his authoritative voice
 «Hé boy, a shepherd, a serviette, and water! »

David Diop is exceptionally bold and remarkably blunt in this poem. He exposes how Europe bastardises and destroys African culture. He concisely summarises the death, murder, forced labour and sadism that characterised colonisation. The poem concludes by showing how Europe acts as mastermind of crises and cautiously washes off its hands.

The third poem taken from *Coups de pilon* is provocative. It is meant to awaken the consciousness of Africans and incite them into revolutionary actions. The title of the poem, "Défi à la force" (Challenge of force), its theme and language are suggestive of its confrontational inclination:

Toi qui plies toi qui pleures
 Toi qui meurs un jour comme ça sans savoir pourquoi
 Toi qui luttas qui veilles pour le repos de l'Autre
 Toi qui ne regardes plus avec le rire aux yeux

Toi mon frère au visage de peur et d'angoisse
 Relève-toi et crie : NON !
 (David Diop, in Senghor, 1977 :176).

You who plead you who weep
 You who die one day like that without knowing the reason
 You who struggle, who keep vigil for Another to sleep
 You who no longer look with smile in your face
 You my brother with look of fear and agony
 Rise up and cry: NO!

This is probably the shortest and most pungent poem of David Diop where he clearly and loudly calls out the oppressed people of Africa to rise up in defence of their culture and identity. The poem is written in seven verses of simple and touching language. The first six verses are written in a conversational form where the poet is addressing an imaginary African. The use of personal/subject pronoun "toi" is suggestive of a dialogue between the addresser (locuteur) and the addressee (interlocuteur). The poet reminds this subjugated Blackman of his oppressive condition and his tortuous life as a colonised person. He describes how miserable he has become as a result of colonisation and its attendant depressing effects. The last verse is in the imperative mood, and it is a challenge thrown to the oppressed people of Africa to rise up in defence of their culture. The three poems may be said to be representative of the group with aggressive and revolutionary penchant.

Let us look at the second divide, which is the negritude group with subtle approach and the precursor of cultural symbiosis. In this group, Camara Laye is preferred. It is true that Laye is more of a novelist than a poet, but I am struck by his poem entitled "A ma mère" which also appears as prologue of his first novel and chef d'œuvre, *L'enfant noir*:

Femme noire, femme africaine
 O toi, ma mère, je pense à toi...

O Daman, o ma mère, toi qui me portas sur le dos, toi qui
 m'allaitas, toi qui gouvernas mes premiers pas, toi qui la
 première m'ouvris les yeux aux prodiges de la terre, je pense à toi...

O Daman, Daman de la grande famille des forgerons, ma pensée
Toujours se tourne vers toi, la tienne à chaque pas m'accompagne,
O Daman, ma mère, j'aimerais encore être dans ta chaleur,
être enfant près de toi...

..... (Camara Laye, 1973:119)
Black woman, African woman

O you, my mother, I think of you...

O Daman, o my mother, you who put me on your back, you that
breastfed me, you who guided my first steps, you who first
opened my eyes to the wonders of the earth, I think of you...

.....
O Daman, Daman of the great family of blacksmith, my thought
Always turns towards you, yours follows each of my steps,
O Daman, my mother, I would like to be again in your tenderness,
to be a child near you...

.....

Just like the novel itself, the poem, "A ma mère", chants the praises of Africa, its people and culture. To some, Laye's approach to the debunking of wrong assertions of European literature is subtle and revealing. He cleverly introduces African culture as humane, rich and all encompassing. It is evident that the poem expresses nostalgia on the part of the author who is far away in France. It is also pertinent to mention that the poet wishes a return to the original Africa and advocates the cultural rebirth of Africa as he says: 'O Daman, ma mère, j'aimerais encore être dans ta chaleur, être enfant près de toi'. (O Daman, my mother, I would like to be again in your tenderness, to be a child near you).

There is no doubt that Laye receives a lot of condemnations from his fellow African writers for the seemingly uncared attitude of his literary creation towards the struggle against colonisation. Those of the radical school believe that Laye treats the colonial activities with a glove in hand thereby supporting colonisation. His main reason for writing *L'enfant noir* is to eradicate boredom:

When I was living in Paris, far away from Guinea where
I was born, far away from my parents, leading for the
most part a very solitary life that had already lasted for

several years, my thought would often go back to my own country and family. Then, one day, it occurred to me that although my recollections were still very fresh in my mind, they would be bound to fade in time... So I started writing them down. (Laye, 1978:157).

Through these 'memoirs', Laye is able to showcase the rich African culture even to the admiration of the colonialists who earlier referred to Africans as animals that need domestication. Achebe could not hide his disdain for Laye's childhood narration in *L'enfant noir*. He maintains that:

In spite of my great admiration for Camara Laye as a writer I must still say that I find *The Dark Child* a little too sweet. I admit that recollections of one's childhood tend naturally to be spread over with an aura of innocence and beauty; and I realize that Camara Laye wrote his book when he was feeling particularly lonely and home-sick in France. But I maintain that any serious African writer who wants to plead the cause of the past must not be God's advocate, he must also do duty for the devil. (1978:9)

I believe that Achebe has a right to his opinion about Laye's literary work, it should also be understood that Laye too has a right to produce any literary work of his choice as his works protect and valorise African culture. While defending the African culture, Camara Laye looks at the Africa of the past and compares it with the so called modern Africa:

Yesterday, in Africa, we were nearer to beings and things, and that for reasons which are not at all mysterious. Perhaps it was only because our life was less busy and we ourselves less distracted. We were shielded by having fewer artificial elements in our lives, fewer facilities. Our town cut us off less from the country. (1978:159).

The traditional Africa was natural as it took care of beings and things. Birago Diop also recognizes this fact and treats it in his poem "Souffles". Camara Laye believes strongly in the African culture and does not fail to celebrate it in his literary works. He agrees that the *mission civilisatrice* brings some positive changes to Africa, but also underscores the fact that it also hinders the growth of African autochthonous culture. He says that "through colonisation, French

civilisation has taught us a language that we shall carefully preserve. However, there is also much it has taken away from our own civilisation". (Laye, 1978:164). It should be quickly mentioned that we have been preserving European languages at the expense of our national languages as many parents no longer speak their mother tongues to their children at home. This situation is widespread today in Nigeria even in the families where parents themselves are mere incipient first bilingual in their mother tongue and the English language.

African Religion and Modernisation

Religion is an integral part of every culture. That applies to the African traditional religion. The contact between Europe and Africa has adversely affected the existence and growth of African traditional religions. Christianity and Islam came to supplant the worship of Sango, Ifa, Osun, Ogun, and Obatala. John Henrik Clarke, an Africa-American historian (1976:155) claims that "Christianity was born and developed, largely on the soil of Africa and, from its inception, was a religion of the oppressed". The colonialist imported Christianity to soften the heart of the colonised black man to make him amenable to exploitation and oppression. The doctrines of these imported religions encourage their followers to believe in their tenets without questioning. This belief, indeed, fatalism is condemned in literary works like Ferdinand Oyono's *Le vieux nègre et la médaille* (*The Old Man and the Medal*), *Une vie de boy* (*Houseboy*), and Mongo Béti's *Le pauvre Christ de Bomba* (*The poor Christ of Bomba*). Oyono does not spare the Catholic Mission in his aforementioned novels. Mongo Béti, too, is more daring in his *The Poor Christ of Bomba*, where he does not only expose the hypocrisy of the White and Catholic Missionary, but also demonstrates the outright failure of Christianity.

The colonialists made use of Islamic and Christian religions as weapons of oppression, socio-economic and political exploitation. This fact is evident in the African literary creation in the colonial era, especially those of the francophone Africa.

Sembène Ousmane, a son of an Islamic cleric in Senegal, grew up to condemn Islam, his religion of birth. Having experienced Islam from childhood to adulthood, Sembène, equipped with Marxist ideology, condemns all negative tendencies of Islamic doctrine. These include religious fatalism, oppression, polygamy, and ignorance. In his *Les bouts*

de bois de Dieu (God's Bits of Wood), the White masters in the rail industry are trying to dissuade the rail workers from continuing their strike but the attempt to break the strike is punctured by Bakayoko, the protagonist who remarks thus:

Le grand Sereigne N'Dakarou vous a parlé de Dieu. Ne sait-il donc pas que ceux qui ont faim et soif désertent le chemin qui mène à la mosquée.
(*Les bouts de bois de Dieu*, p.336).

The chief Imam of Dakar has talked to you about God. Doesn't he know that those who are hungry and thirsty desert the road that leads to the mosque?

Sembène Ousmane, as a Marxist, will no doubt question every negative tendency of religion on the human development as Karl Marx himself has warned that religion is the opium of the people. This position is not to throw away religion and all its roles. Our insistence is that religion must wear a human face, if it indeed seeks to serve humanity. Today, in Nigeria, there are more churches and mosques than number of schools; but, crime and immorality are still on the increase. Criminal acts coming out of religious institutions are even greater than those emanating from known shanty towns in our country. Surprisingly, those of us practising these foreign religions are always quick in passing judgments and uncomplimentary remarks on the adherents of the traditional African religions. The adherents of the foreign religions indulge in provocation under the guise of evangelism. One hardly sees or hears an Ifa oracular condemn Muslims and Islam nor would he disparage Christians and Christianity. No wonder there are incessant religious crises between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. Is this a war of self justification or self enhancement?

It is obvious that the doctrine of the faith we profess today, either as Christians or Muslims, are preaching peace, harmony, happiness and brotherhood; which our traditional religions also underscore. Although these religions may be different in name and practice, they all tilt towards spirituality. At this juncture, I would like to share the view of Cheik Anta Diop in his second book entitled *The Cultural Unity of Negro-Africa* as quoted by Clarke: "I have tried to bring out the profound cultural unity still alive beneath the deceptive appearance of cultural heterogeneity" (1976:148).

Since many decades ago, African writers have been privileging issues of African cultural rebirth and valorisation which contact with Europe has tremendously bastardised. Birago Diop, popularly referred to as a traditional African poet, shows the impact of sacrifice as a form of respect for and permission from the gods before embarking on any physical journey or project. This can be likened to the service of dedication in the modern religions. In his poem, "Viatique", he presents a young man who undergoes a ritual as a preparation for a long journey. Also, in "Souffles", Diop demonstrates the African belief in the existence of their ancestors. This means that, like Islam and Christianity, African traditional religions also believe in life after death. The poem below will explicate this further:

Ecoute plus souvent
les choses que les êtres.
La voix du feu s'entend,
entend la voix de l'eau,
écoute dans le vent
le buisson en sanglots.
C'est le souffle des ancestres...

Ceux qui sont morts ne sont jamais partis,
ils sont dans l'ombre qui s'éclair
et dans l'ombre qui s'épaissit,
les morts ne sont pas sous la terre:
ils sont dans l'arbre qui frémit,
ils sont dans le bois qui gémit.
ils sont dans l'eau qui coule,
ils sont dans l'eau qui dort,
ils sont dans la cave, ils sont dans la foule:
les morts ne sont pas morts.

Listen more often
to things than beings.
The voice of fire is heard,
hear the voice of water,
hear in the wind
the bush is sobbing.
It is the spirit of the ancestors...

Those who are dead never went away,
they are in the darkness which brightens
and in the darkness which thickens,
the dead are not under the earth:
they are in the tree that trembles
they are in the wood that groans
they are in the water that runs
they are in the water that sleeps
they are in the cave, they are in the crowd:
the dead are not dead.

I know that our Muslim and Christian adherents may want to argue that the African traditional religion does not share the same thought and belief with their faith; I have therefore quoted extensively the above poem to demonstrate a point of convergence. Islam and Christianity also believe in life after death, and that their dead are not under the ground in their graves. They believe that they are with Allah or with the Lord Jesus as the case may be. In the African belief too, the dead are not in their graves; they are spirits, moving freely about as guidance of their children and people.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that African written literature, right from its inception, has been performing protective functions for the African people and culture. It started as *littérature de protestation* (literature of protest), then *littérature engagée* (literature of commitment), and finally becomes *autocritique*. This auto-criticism makes it to function as the watchdog of the nouveaux élites who took over the mantle of leadership from the colonial administrators. African literature is committed to the revaluation and protection of African personality. The position of some of the writers, considered in this paper, tallies with that of Achebe (1978:10) who argues that "the writer should be concerned with the question of human values". Therefore, writers, whether Francophone, Anglophone or Lusophone, should rededicate themselves to the regeneration of African culture. While inviting African writers, both old and young, to rise in defence of African cultural heritage, I will conclude this paper by quoting Camara Laye (1978:164) who shares his experience about African cultural rebirth:

Under the guidance of our President, His Excellency
Sekou Touré, the first thing we did, after independence,
was to take hold of ourselves again. Very quickly, we

Those who are dead never went away,
they are in the darkness which brightens
and in the darkness which thickens,
the dead are not under the earth:
they are in the tree that trembles
they are in the wood that groans
they are in the water that runs
they are in the water that sleeps
they are in the cave, they are in the crowd:
the dead are not dead.

I know that our Muslim and Christian adherents may want to argue that the African traditional religion does not share the same thought and belief with their faith; I have therefore quoted extensively the above poem to demonstrate a point of convergence. Islam and Christianity also believe in life after death, and that their dead are not under the ground in their graves. They believe that they are with Allah or with the Lord Jesus as the case may be. In the African belief too, the dead are not in their graves; they are spirits, moving freely about as guidance of their children and people.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that African written literature, right from its inception, has been performing protective functions for the African people and culture. It started as *littérature de protestation* (literature of protest), then *littérature engagée* (literature of commitment), and finally becomes *autocritique*. This auto-criticism makes it to function as the watchdog of the nouveaux élites who took over the mantle of leadership from the colonial administrators. African literature is committed to the revaluation and protection of African personality. The position of some of the writers, considered in this paper, tallies with that of Achebe (1978:10) who argues that "the writer should be concerned with the question of human values". Therefore, writers, whether Francophone, Anglophone or Lusophone, should rededicate themselves to the regeneration of African culture. While inviting African writers, both old and young, to rise in defence of African cultural heritage, I will conclude this paper by quoting Camara Laye (1978:164) who shares his experience about African cultural rebirth:

Under the guidance of our President, His Excellency Sekou Touré, the first thing we did, after independence, was to take hold of ourselves again. Very quickly, we

picked up again our own music, our own literature, our own sculpture; all, that is to say, that was most deeply implanted in us and that had been slumbering during sixty years of our colonisation. That is our new soul. (Emphasis mine).

Note: All translations are by the author.

References

- Achebe, Chinua. "The Role of the Writer in a New Nation" in G.D Killam (Ed.) *African Writers on African Writing*, London, Heinemann, 1978. pp. 7-13.
- Bestman, M.T. *Sembène Ousmane et l'esthétique de roman négro-africain*, Canada, Naaman, 1981.
- Laye, Camara. "The Soul of Africa in Guinea" in G.D Killam (Ed.) *African Writers on African Writing*, London, Heinemann, 1978. pp. 156-164.
- "A ma mère" in *Poésie du Monde noir*, Paris, Hatier, 1973. p. 119.
- Clarke, John Hendrik. "The Cultural Unity of Negro Africa: A Reappraisal: Cheikh Anta Diop opens Another Door to African History" *Présence Africaine*, No.97, 1976. pp.148-164.
- Diop, Birago. "Souffles" in Léopold Sédar Senghor (Ed.) *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1977. pp. 144-145.
- "Viatique" in Léopold Sédar Senghor (Ed.) *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1977. pp. 143-144.
- Diop, David. « Celui qui a tout perdu, Le temps du martyr, Défi à la force » in Léopold Sédar Senghor (Ed.) *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1978. pp. 173-176.
- Etuk, Udo. *The Philosophy of Relevance and the Relevance of Philosophy*, 16th Inaugural Lecture: University of Uyo, 2007.
- Irele, Abiola. *Selected Poems of Léopold Sédar Senghor*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1977.
- Obinaju, J. Nwabueze. *Literature: The Gateway to A fulfilled Human Experience*, 21st Inaugural Lecture: University of Uyo, 2008.
- Ousmane, Sembène. *Les bouts de bois de Dieu*, Paris, Presse Pocket, 1971.