



© Le Figaro

**Souleymane-Bachir Diagne**  
Senegal

# Philosophy, Religion and Tolerance

## The author

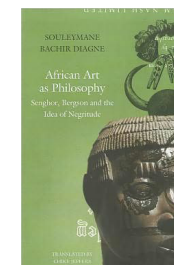
**Souleymane-Bachir Diagne** received his academic training in France. An alumnus of the École Normale Supérieure, he holds an agrégation in Philosophy (1978) and he took his Doctorat d'État in philosophy at the Sorbonne (1988) where he also took his BA (1977). His field of research includes history of logic, history of philosophy, Islamic philosophy, African philosophy and literature. He is the author of *Boole, l'oiseau de nuit en plein jour* (Paris: Belin, 1989), *Comment philosopher en Islam* (Paris: Panama, 2008), *Islam and the Open Society. Fidelity and Movement in the Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal*, Dakar, Codesria 2011 (an English translation of his *Islam et société ouverte, la fidélité et le mouvement dans la pensée de Muhammad Iqbal*, (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2001), *African Art as Philosophy, Senghor, Bergson, and the Idea of Negritude*, Seagull, 2011 (an English translation of his *Léopold Sédar Senghor: l'art africain comme philosophie*, Paris: Riveneuve Editions, 2007). His latest book, *Bergson postcolonial. L'élan vital dans la pensée de Léopold Sédar Senghor et de Mohamed Iqbal* (Paris, Editions du CNRS, 2011) was awarded the Dagnan-Bouveret prize by the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences for 2011. Souleymane Bachir Diagne's teaching interests include history of early modern philosophy, philosophy and Sufism in the Islamic world, African philosophy and literature, twentieth century French philosophy.

## Bibliography

***African Art as Philosophy : Senghor, Bergson and the Idea of Negritude*** (Seagull Books, 2012, 210p.)  
***Islam And Open Society Fidelity And Movement In The Philosophy Of Muhammad Iqbal*** (Codesria, 2011, 88p.)

## Zoom

***African Art as Philosophy : Senghor, Bergson and the Idea of Negritude*** (Seagull Books, 2012, 210p.)



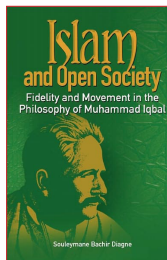
Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906–2001) was a Senegalese poet and philosopher who in 1960 also became the first president of the Republic of Senegal. In *African Art as Philosophy*, Souleymane Bachir Diagne takes a unique approach to reading Senghor's influential works, taking as the starting point for his analysis Henri Bergson's idea that in order to understand philosophers one must find the initial intuition from which every aspect of

their work develops. In the case of Senghor, Diagne argues that his primordial intuition is that African art is a philosophy.

To further this point, Diagne looks at what Senghor called the "1889 Revolution," and the influential writers and publications of that time—specifically, Nietzsche and Rimbaud, as well as Bergson's *Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*. The 1889 Revolution, Senghor claims, is what led him to the understanding of the "Vitalism" at the core of African religions and beliefs that found expression in the arts.

This book offers a distinct, incisive look at an important figure in African literature and politics that will be welcomed by scholars in African Studies and philosophy.

**Islam And Open Society, Fidelity And Movement In The Philosophy Of Muhammad Iqbal** (Codesria, 2011, 88p.)



In the atmosphere of suspicion and anger that characterizes our time, it is a joy to hear the voice of Iqbal, both passionate and serene. It is the voice of a soul that is deeply anchored in the Quranic Revelation, and precisely for that reason, open to all the other voices, seeking in them the path of

his own fidelity. It is the voice of a man who has left behind all identitarian rigidity, who has "broken all the idols of tribe and caste" to address himself to all human beings. But an unhappy accident has meant that this voice was buried, both in the general forgetting of Islamic modernism and in the very country that he named before its existence, Pakistan, whose multiple rigidities - political, religious, military - constitute a continual refutation of the very essence of his thought. But we all need to hear him again, citizens of the West, Muslims, and those from his native India, where a form of Hindu chauvinism rages in our times, in a way that exceeds his worst fears. Souleymane Bachir Diagne has done all of us an immense favor in making this voice heard once again, clear and convincing.

Charles Taylor, Professor, McGill University  
Quebec, Canada