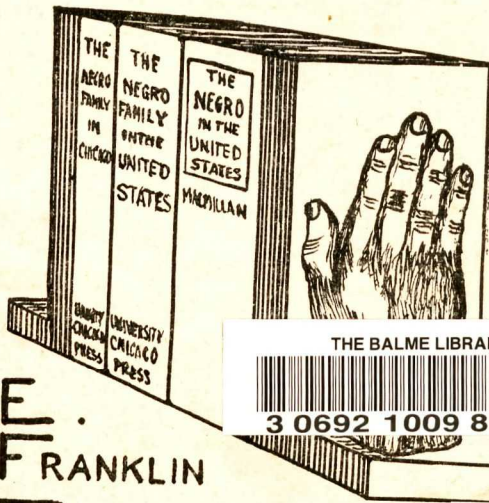


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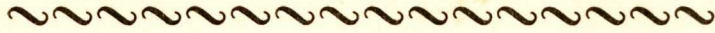
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E. FRANKLIN FRAZIER

B E Q U E S T

627

THE WORLD AND AFRICA



BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE SUPPRESSION OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE TO THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA

(Harvard Historical Studies, No. 1, 1896)

ATLANTA UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF THE NEGRO PROBLEM

(eighteen numbers, 1896-1914)

THE PHILADELPHIA NEGRO

*(Publication of the University of Pennsylvania series on Political Economy
and Public Law, No. 14, 1899)*

SOULS OF BLACK FOLK

Essays and Sketches, 1903

JOHN BROWN

(American Crisis Biographies, 1909)

QUEST OF THE SILVER FLEECE

a novel, 1911

THE NEGRO

1915

DARKWATER: VOICES FROM WITHIN THE VEIL

1920

THE GIFT OF BLACK FOLK: THE NEGRO IN THE MAKING OF AMERICA

1924

DARK PRINCESS

a novel, 1928

BLACK RECONSTRUCTION IN AMERICA, 1860-1880

1935

BLACK FOLK: THEN AND NOW

1939

DUSK OF DAWN: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A RACE CONCEPT

1940

COLOR AND DEMOCRACY: COLONIES AND PEACE

1945



W. Franklin Lewis

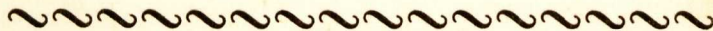
THE WORLD
AND
AFRICA

*An inquiry into the part which Africa
has played in world history, by*
W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS



PUBLISHED BY THE VIKING PRESS

New York · 1947



TO
NINA
FOR
OUR GOLDEN WEDDING

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Africana Cases
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FOREWORD

SINCE the rise of the sugar empire and the resultant cotton kingdom, there has been consistent effort to rationalize Negro slavery by omitting Africa from world history, so that today it is almost universally assumed that history can be truly written without reference to Negroid peoples. I believe this to be scientifically unsound and also dangerous for logical social conclusions. Therefore I am seeking in this book to remind readers in this crisis of civilization, of how critical a part Africa has played in human history, past and present, and how impossible it is to forget this and rightly explain the present plight of mankind.

Twice before I have essayed to write on the history of Africa: once in 1915 when the editors of the Home University Library asked me to attempt such a work. The result was the little volume called *The Negro*, which gave evidence of a certain naïve astonishment on my own part at the wealth of fact and material concerning the Negro peoples, the very existence of which I had myself known little despite a varied university career. The result was a condensed and not altogether logical narrative. Nevertheless, it has been widely read and is still in print.

Naturally I wished to enlarge upon this earlier work after World War I and at the beginning of what I thought was a new era. So I wrote *Black Folk: Then and Now*, with some new ma-

terial and a more logical arrangement. But it happened that I was writing at the end of an age which marked the final catastrophe of the old era of European world dominance rather than at the threshold of a change of which I had not dreamed in 1935. I deemed it, therefore, not only fitting but necessary in 1946 to essay again not so much a history of the Negroid peoples as a statement of their integral role in human history from prehistoric to modern times.

I still labor under the difficulty of the persistent lack of interest in Africa so long characteristic of modern history and sociology. The careful, detailed researches into the history of Negroid peoples have only begun, and the need for them is not yet clear to the thinking world. I feel compelled nevertheless to go ahead with my interpretation, even though that interpretation has here and there but slender historical proof. I believe that in the main my story is true, despite the fact that so often between the American Civil War and World War I the weight of history and science supports me only in part and in some cases appears violently to contradict me. At any rate, here is a history of the world written from the African point of view; or better, a history of the Negro as part of the world which now lies about us in ruins.

I am indebted to my assistant, Dr. Irene Diggs, for efficient help in arranging the material and reading the manuscript.

I feel now as though I were approaching a crowd of friends and enemies, who ask a bit breathlessly, whose and whence is the testimony on which I rely for something that even resembles Authority? To which I return two answers: I am challenging Authority—even Maspero, Sayce, Reisner, Breasted, and hundreds of other men of highest respectability, who did not attack but studiously ignored the Negro on the Nile and in the world and talked as though black folk were nonexistent and unimportant. They are part of the herd of writers of modern history who never heard of Africa or declare with Guernier "*Seule de tous les continents l'Afrique n'a pas d'histoire!*"

For chapters one and two I have relied upon my own travel and observation over a fairly long life. For confirmation I have resurrected William Howitt's *Colonization and Christianity*, a popular history of how Europeans treated the natives in their colonies. The book was published in London in 1838, and since then imperial Europe had tried to forget it. I have also made bold to repeat the testimony of Karl Marx, whom I regard as the greatest of modern philosophers, and I have not been deterred by the witch-hunting which always follows mention of his name. I like Robert Briffault's *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire* (1938) and George Padmore's *How Britain Rules Africa* (1936). I have mentioned the work of Anna Graves, who is usually ignored because she does not follow the conventions of historical writing and because no publisher has thought that he could make money out of her work. ✓

In chapter three, on the slave trade, I have especially relied on Eric Williams' new and excellent work, *Capitalism and Slavery*; also on Wilson Williams' work published in the first number of the Howard University *Studies in the Social Sciences*. My own *Suppression of the Slave Trade* has continued to be of service. Rayford Logan's work on the United States and Haiti and Chapman Cohen's *Christianity, Slavery, and Labor* (1931) have also been used. Reginald Coupland's *East Africa and Its Invaders* (1938) has been valuable. But my greatest help in this chapter after Eric Williams, has been E. D. Moore's *Ivory: The Scourge of Africa* (1931); it is an invaluable book and I am deeply indebted to its author for facts.

In chapter four I have relied on Edwin W. Smith, now Editor of *Africa* and Julian Huxley; also on C. G. Seligmann, whose *Races of Africa* (1930), is priceless and marred only by his obsession with the "Hamites."

In chapter five on Egypt there is naturally the greatest diversity of opinion. My attention to the subject was first aroused by the little pamphlet published by Alexander F. Chamberlain in 1911, "The Contribution of the Negro to Human Civilization."

Naturally one must read Maspero, Breasted, Rawlinson, and the other earlier and indefatigable students; but I have mainly depended upon W. M. Flinders Petrie's *History of Egypt* and on the sixth volume of the work on Egypt in the Middle Ages by E. Stanley Lane-Poole edited by Petrie. The travels of Ibn Batuta and Duarte Barbosa form a firm background to the modern research of Arthur Thomson, David Randall-MacIver, and Grace Caton-Thompson. Especially *Egyptian Civilization* by Alexandre Moret, published in French in 1927 and shortly thereafter in English has been illuminating. I have looked through the splendid reproductions of Karl R. Lepsius' *Denkmäler*. I have read Eduard Meyer's *Geschichte des Altertums* (1910-13); but of greatest help to me has been Leo Hansberry. Mr. Hansberry, a professor at Howard University, is the one modern scholar who has tried to study the Negro in Egypt and Ethiopia. I regret that he has not published more of his work. The overwhelming weight of conventional scientific opinion on Africa has overawed him, but his work in manuscript is outstanding. Arthur E. P. B. Weigall's *Short History of Egypt* has also been of use.

In chapter six I have depended upon Hansberry. One always turns back to Winwood Reade's *Martyrdom of Man* for renewal of faith. The works of Sir Ernest Budge, George A. Reisner, A. H. Sayce, and F. L. Griffith have naturally been of use when they were not indulging their opinions about Negroes.

I should like to have used the researches on the Negro in classic Europe of Dr. Frank Snowden of Howard University. But classical journals in America have hitherto declined to publish his paper because it favored the Negro too much, leaving the public still to rely on Beardsley's stupid combination of scholarship and race prejudice which Johns Hopkins University published. I tried to get Dr. Snowden to let me see his manuscript, but he refused.

In chapter seven I have relied upon Leo Frobenius. Frobenius is not popular among conventional historians or anthropol-

ogists. He indulged his imagination. He had strong beliefs; but he was a great man and a great thinker. He looked upon Africa with unprejudiced eyes and has been more valuable for his interpretation of the Negro than any other man I know. The many works of Robert S. Rattray and Meek, Westermann and Schapera, cannot be ignored. African students like Soga and Caseley-Hayford have helped me, and younger men like Orizu. Mbadiwe, and Ojiki. Basic is the fine unprejudiced work of Maurice Delafosse. I have used Flora Lugard, although she is not a scientist; and also a new young Negro writer, Armattoo.

In the eighth chapter I have naturally depended upon Sir Harry H. Johnston and his study of the Bantu languages; the splendid work of Miss Caton-Thompson. I have learned much from James A. Rogers. Rogers is an untrained American Negro writer who has done his work under great difficulty without funds and at much personal sacrifice. But no man living has revealed so many important facts about the Negro race as has Rogers. His mistakes are many and his background narrow, but he is a true historical student.

In chapter nine there is reliance on Lane-Poole and Cooper, whom I have mentioned before, and on the new points of view brought by Jawaharlal Nehru in his *Autobiography* (1940) and his *Glimpses of World History* (1942). The study of Egypt and the East by Alfred T. Butler and Palon have shed much needed light; and general anthropology is gradually revealing the trend of the Negro in Africa as we emerge from the blight of the writers of current history.

Chapter ten is built on the work of Maurice Delafosse and of William D. Cooley (1841), with help from H. R. Palmer, Flora Lugard, and many others.

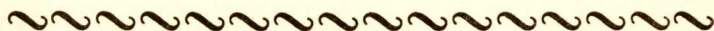
Chapter eleven depends on current thought and documents; and books like Leonard Barnes' *Soviet Light on the Colonies* (1944) and Harold Laski's *Rise of Liberalism* (1936).

In fine, I have done in this book the sort of thing at which every scholar shudders. With meager preparation and all too

general background of learning, I have essayed a task, which, to be adequate and complete, should be based upon the research of a lifetime! But I am faced with the dilemma, that either I do this now or leave it for others who have not had the tragedy of life which I have, forcing me to face a task for which they may have small stomach and little encouragement from the world round about. If, out of my almost inevitable mistakes and inaccuracies and false conclusions, I shall have at least clearly stated my main issue—that black Africans are men in the same sense as white European and yellow Asiatics, and that history can easily prove this—then I shall rest satisfied even under the stigma of an incomplete and, to many, inconclusive work.

W. E. B. DuBois

New York
May 1946



CHAPTER I

THE COLLAPSE OF EUROPE

This is a consideration of the nature of the calamity which has overtaken human civilization.

WE ARE face to face with the greatest tragedy that has ever overtaken the world. The collapse of Europe is to us the more astounding because of the boundless faith which we have had in European civilization. We have long believed without argument or reflection that the cultural status of the people of Europe and of North America represented not only the best civilization which the world had ever known, but also a goal of human effort destined to go on from triumph to triumph until the perfect accomplishment was reached. Our present nervous breakdown, nameless fear, and often despair, comes from the sudden facing of this faith with calamity.

In such a case, what we need above all is calm appraisal of the situation, the application of cold common sense. What in reality is the nature of the catastrophe? To what pattern of human culture does it apply? And, finally, why did it happen? In this search for reasons we must seek not simply current facts or facts within the memory of living men, but we must also, and especially in this case, seek lessons from history. It is perhaps the greatest indictment that can be brought against history as a science and against its teachers that we are usually indisposed

to refer to history for the settlement of pressing problems. We realize that history is too often what we want it to be and what we are determined men shall believe rather than a grim record of what has taken place in the past.

Manifestly the present plight of the world is a direct outgrowth of the past, and I have made bold to add to the many books on the subject of our present problems because I believe that certain suppressions in the historical record current in our day will lead to a tragic failure in assessing causes. More particularly, I believe that the habit, long fostered, of forgetting and detracting from the thought and acts of the people of Africa, is not only a direct cause of our present plight, but will continue to cause trouble until we face the facts. I shall try not to exaggerate this thread of African history in the world development, but I shall insist equally that it be not ignored.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, when I was but ten years out of college, I visited the Paris Exposition of 1900. It was one of the finest, perhaps the very finest, of world expositions, and it typified what the European world wanted to think of itself and its future. Wealth and Science were the outstanding matters of emphasis: there was the new and splendid Pont Alexandre crossing the Seine, named for the Czar of Russia; there was an amazing exhibit of Russian industry at Jaroslav; and I had brought with me, as excuse for coming, a little display showing the development of Negroes in the United States, which gained a gold medal. All about me was an extraordinary display of wealth, luxury, and industrial technique, striking evidence of a Europe triumphant over the world and the center of science and art, power and human freedom.

It was easy to see what the great countries of Europe thought of themselves: France stood pre-eminently for art, for taste in building, technique, and pure expression; Germany stood for science and government; England for wealth and power with a high level of comfort; and America for freedom of human initiative.

There was even in this French exposition a certain dominance of the British Empire idea. The British paper promise-to-pay was actually worth more to the traveler than gold. British industry was unrivaled in efficient technique. British investments were the safest; and Great Britain was the widest and most successful administrator of colonies. Every kind of tribute was paid to her; she was the acknowledged leader in such various things as men's cloth and clothing, public manners, the rate of public expenditure—and all this showed in the deference a British subject could demand everywhere throughout the world.

Then came five crashing events in quick succession. First, in 1905, at Saint Petersburg, the shooting down in cold blood of Russian workingmen in the first organized attempt of the twentieth century to achieve relief; and by that murderous volley the Czar killed the faith of working Russia in the Little White Father. He revealed that Russian industry was paying 50 per cent and more in profits to Germans and other investors, while the workers starved. The Czar himself thus sowed the seeds of revolution.

Second, in 1911 a German warship sailed into Agadir, North Africa, and demanded in the name of the Emperor that the German Reich be consulted concerning the future of Morocco. I remember how the incident startled London. I was there at the time, attending the First Races Congress. It is a meeting now forgotten, but it might have been of world significance. Its advice might have changed the course of history had not World War I followed so fast. Meeting at the University of London was probably the largest representation of the groups of the world known as races and subraces; they were consulting together under the leadership of science and ethics for a future world which would be peaceful, without race prejudice; and which would be cooperative, especially in the social sciences. Among the speakers were world leaders—Giuseppe Sergi, Franz Boas, John A. Hobson, Felix Adler, Sir Sidney Olivier, and Wu Ting-fang. A hymn to the peoples was read:

So sit we all as one
 So, gloomed in tall and stone-swathed groves,
 The Buddha walks with Christ!
 And Al-Koran and Bible both be holy!

Almighty Word!
 In this Thine awful sanctuary,
 First and flame-haunted City of the Widened World,
 Assoil us, Lord of Lands and Seas!

We are but weak and wayward men,
 Distraught alike with hatred and vainglory;
 Prone to despise the Soul that breathes within—
 High-visioned hordes that lie and steal and kill,
 Sinning the sin each separate heart disclaims,
 Clambering upon our riven, writhing selves,
 Besieging Heaven by trampling men to Hell!

We be blood-guilty! Lo, our hands be red!
 Let no man blame the other in this sin!
 But here—here in the white Silence of the Dawn,
 Before the Womb of Time,
 With bowed hearts all flame and shame,
 We face the birth-pangs of a world:
 We hear the stifled cry of Nations all but born—
 The wail of women ravished of their stunted brood!
 We see the nakedness of Toil, the poverty of Wealth,
 We know the Anarchy of Empire, and doleful Death of Life!
 And hearing, seeing, knowing all, we cry:

Save us, World-Spirit, from our lesser selves!
 Grant us that war and hatred cease,
 Reveal our souls in every race and hue!
 Help us, O Human God, in this Thy Truce,
 To make Humanity divine!¹

¹ W. E. B. DuBois, *Darkwater* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Howe, 1920), pp. 275-76.

There were a few startling incidents. I remember with what puzzled attention we heard Felix von Luschan, the great anthropologist of the University of Berlin, annihilate the thesis of race inferiority and then in the same breath end his paper with these words: "Nations will come and go, but racial and national antagonism will remain; and this is well, for mankind would become like a herd of sheep if we were to lose our national ambition and cease to look with pride and delight, not only on our industries and science, but also on our splendid soldiers and our glorious ironclads. Let small-minded people whine about the horrid cost of dreadnoughts; as long as every nation in Europe spends, year after year, much more money on wine, beer, and brandy than on her army and navy, there is no reason to dread our impoverishment by militarism. *Si vis pacem, para bellum*; and in reality there is no doubt that we shall be the better able to avoid war, the better we care for our armor. A nation is free only in so far as her own internal affairs are concerned. She has to respect the right of other nations as well as to defend her own, and her vital interests she will, if necessary, defend with blood and iron." ²

We were aghast. Did German science defend war? We were hardly reassured when in printing this speech the editor appended the following note: "To prevent the last few paragraphs from being misinterpreted, Professor von Luschan authorizes us to state that he regards the desire for a war between Germany and England as 'insane or dastardly.'" ³

But it was in vain. In 1914 came World War I; in 1929 came the depression; in 1939 came World War II. The cost of these wars and crises in property and human life is almost beyond belief; the cost in the destruction of youth and of faith in the world and mankind is incalculable. Why did these things happen?

² Gustav Spiller, ed., *Papers on Inter-Racial Problems, Universal Races Congress*, I (London: P. S. King & Son, 1911), pp. 23-24.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

We may begin with the fact that in 1888 there came to the throne of Germany a young, vigorous German emperor of British descent. Wilhelm II had utter faith in the future of Germany. As a student I used to see him often on the Unter den Linden. Time and again we students swung to the curb, and through the central arch of the Brandenburg Gate came the tossing of plumes and the prancing of horses, and splendid with shining armor and blare of trumpet there rode Wilhelm, by the Grace of God, King of Prussia and German Emperor.

Back of Wilhelm's faith in Germany lay deep envy of the power of Britain. In his soul strove unceasingly the ambition of Bismarck of Prussia and the aristocratic imperialism of his mother, a daughter of Queen Victoria. The French-British *Entente Cordiale* of the new century was faced by a German demand for "a place in the sun," a right to extract from colonial and semicolonial areas a share of the wealth which was going to Britain. When Germany invaded Belgium, and with that invasion brought war with England, it must be remembered that by that same token Germany was invading the Belgian Congo and laying claim to the ownership of Central Africa.

World War I then was a war over spheres of influence in Asia and colonies in Africa, and in that war, curiously enough, both Asia and Africa were called upon to support Europe. Senegalese troops, for example, saved France and Europe from the first armed German onslaught. They were the shock troops brought to be slaughtered in thousands by the climate and cannon of Europe. The man who brought the African troops to the succor of France was Blaise Diagne. He was a tall, thin Negro, nervous with energy, more patriotic in his devotion to France than many of the French. He was deputy from Senegal in the French Parliament and had been selected as the man to whom the chiefs of French West Africa would render implicit obedience. Raised to cabinet rank, he was made the official representative of the French in West Africa. The white governor who found himself

subordinated to this Negro resigned in disgust, but Diagne went down the West Coast in triumph and sent a hundred thousand black soldiers to France at this critical time.

One must not forget that incident on the fields of Flanders which has been so quickly forgotten. Against the banked artillery of the magnificent German Army were sent untrained and poorly armed Senegalese. They marched at command in unwavering ranks, raising the war cry in a dozen different Sudanese tongues. When the artillery belched they shivered, but never faltered. They marched straight into death; the war cries became fainter and fainter and dropped into silence as not a single black man was left living on that field.

I was in Paris just after the armistice in 1918, and it was to Diagne that I went to ask for the privilege of calling a Pan-African Congress in Paris during the Versailles Peace Conference.

The idea of one Africa to unite the thought and ideals of all native peoples of the dark continent belongs to the twentieth century and stems naturally from the West Indies and the United States. Here various groups of Africans, quite separate in origin, became so united in experience and so exposed to the impact of new cultures that they began to think of Africa as one idea and one land. Thus late in the eighteenth century when a separate Negro Church was formed in Philadelphia it called itself "African"; and there were various "African" societies in many parts of the United States.

It was not, however, until 1900 that a black West Indian barrister, practicing in London, called together a Pan-African Conference. This meeting attracted attention, put the word "Pan-African" in the dictionaries for the first time, and had some thirty delegates, mainly from England and the West Indies, with a few colored North Americans. The conference was welcomed by the Lord Bishop of London and a promise was obtained from Queen Victoria, through Joseph Chamberlain, not to "overlook the interests and welfare of the native races."

This meeting had no deep roots in Africa itself, and the movement and the idea died for a generation. Then came World War I, and among North American Negroes at its close there was determined agitation for the rights of Negroes throughout the world, and particularly in Africa. Meetings were held and a petition was sent to President Wilson. By indirection I secured passage on the Creel press boat, the *Orizaba*, and landed in France in December 1918. I went with the idea of calling a Pan-African Congress, and to try to impress upon the members of the Peace Conference sitting at Versailles the importance of Africa in the future world. I was without credentials or influence. I tried to get a conference with President Wilson but got only as far as Colonel House, who was sympathetic but noncommittal. The *Chicago Tribune* of January 19, 1919, in a dispatch from Paris dated December 30, 1918, said:

An Ethiopian Utopia, to be fashioned out of the German colonies, is the latest dream of leaders of the Negro race who are here at the invitation of the United States government as part of the extensive entourage of the American peace delegation. Robert R. Moton, successor of the late Booker Washington as head of Tuskegee Institute, and Dr. William E. B. DuBois, editor of the *Crisis*, are promoting a Pan-African Conference to be held here during the winter while the Peace Conference is in full blast. It is to embrace Negro leaders from America, Abyssinia, Liberia, Haiti, the French and British colonies, and other parts of the black world. Its object is to get out of the Peace Conference an effort to modernize the dark continent and in the world reconstruction to provide international machinery looking toward the civilization of the African natives.

The Negro leaders are not agreed upon any definite plan, but Dr. DuBois has mapped out a scheme which he has presented in the form of a memorandum to President Wilson. It is quite Utopian, and it has less than a Chinaman's chance of getting anywhere in the Peace Conference, but it is nevertheless interesting. As "self-determination" is one of the words to conjure with in Paris nowadays, the Negro leaders are seeking to have it applied, if possible, in a measure to their race in Africa.

Dr. DuBois sets forth that while the principle of self-determination cannot be applied to uncivilized peoples, yet the educated blacks should have some voice in the disposition of the German colonies. He maintains that in settling what is to be done with the German colonies the Peace Conference might consider the wishes of the intelligent Negroes in the colonies themselves, the Negroes of the United States, and South Africa, and the West Indies, the Negro governments of Abyssinia, Liberia, and Haiti, the educated Negroes in French West Africa and Equatorial Africa and in British Uganda, Nigeria, Basutoland, Swaziland, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Gambia, and Bechuanaland, and in the Union of South Africa.

Dr. DuBois' dream is that the Peace Conference could form an internationalized Africa, to have as its basis the former German colonies, with their 1,000,000 square miles and 12,500,000 population.

"To this," his plan reads, "could be added by negotiation the 800,000 square miles and 9,000,000 inhabitants of Portuguese Africa. It is not impossible that Belgium could be persuaded to add to such a state the 900,000 square miles and 9,000,000 natives of the Congo, making an international Africa with over 2,500,000 square miles of land and over 20,000,000 people.

"This Africa for the Africans could be under the guidance of international organization. The governing international commission should represent not simply governments, but modern culture, science, commerce, social reform, and religious philanthropy. It must represent not simply the white world, but the civilized Negro world.

"We can, if we will, inaugurate on the dark continent a last great crusade for humanity. With Africa redeemed, Asia would be safe and Europe indeed triumphant."

Members of the American delegation and associated experts assured me that no congress on this matter could be held in Paris because France was still under martial law; but the ace that I had up my sleeve was Blaise Diagne, the black deputy from Senegal and Commissaire-Général in charge of recruiting native African troops. I went to Diagne and sold him the idea of a Pan-African Congress. He consulted Clemenceau, and the matter was held up two wet, discouraging months. Finally we received permission

to hold the Congress in Paris. "Don't advertise it," said Clemenceau, "but go ahead." Walter Lippmann wrote me in his crabbed hand, February 20, 1919: "I am very much interested in your organization of the Pan-African conference, and glad that Clemenceau has made it possible. Will you send me whatever reports you may have on the work?"

American newspaper correspondents wrote home: "Officials here are puzzled by the news from Paris that plans are going forward there for a Pan-African conference. Acting Secretary Polk said today the State Department had been officially advised by the French government that no such conference would be held. It was announced recently that no passports would be issued for American delegates desiring to attend the meeting."⁴ But at the very time that Polk was assuring American Negroes that no Congress would be held, the Congress actually assembled in Paris.

This Congress represented Africa partially. Of the fifty-seven delegates from fifteen countries, nine were African countries with twelve delegates. Of the remaining delegates, sixteen were from the United States, and twenty-one from the West Indies. Most of these delegates did not come to France for this meeting but happened to be residing there, mainly for reasons connected with the war. America and the colonial powers had refused to issue special visas.

The Congress influenced the Peace Conference. *The New York Evening Globe* of February 22, 1919, described it as "the first assembly of the kind in history, and has for its object the drafting of an appeal to the Peace Conference to give the Negro race of Africa a chance to develop unhindered by other races. Seated at long green tables in the council room today, were Negroes in the trim uniform of American Army officers, other American colored men in frock coats or business suits, polished French Negroes who hold public office, Senegalese who sit in the French Chamber of Deputies. . . ."

⁴ *Pittsburgh [Pa.] Dispatch*, February 16, 1919.

The Congress specifically asked that the German colonies be turned over to an international organization instead of being handled by the various colonial powers. Out of this idea came the Mandates Commission.

The resolutions of the Congress asked in part:

- A. That the Allied and Associated Powers establish a code of law for the international protection of the natives of Africa, similar to the proposed international code for labor.
- B. That the League of Nations establish a permanent Bureau charged with the special duty of overseeing the application of these laws to the political, social, and economic welfare of the natives.
- C. The Negroes of the world demand that hereafter the natives of Africa and the peoples of African descent be governed according to the following principles:
 1. *The land*: the land and its natural resources shall be held in trust for the natives and at all times they shall have effective ownership of as much land as they can profitably develop.
 2. *Capital*: the investment of capital and granting of concessions shall be so regulated as to prevent the exploitation of the natives and the exhaustion of the natural wealth of the country. Concessions shall always be limited in time and subject to State control. The growing social needs of the natives must be regarded and the profits taxed for social and material benefit of the natives.
 3. *Labor*: slavery and corporal punishment shall be abolished and forced labor except in punishment for crime; and the general conditions of labor shall be prescribed and regulated by the State.
 4. *Education*: it shall be the right of every native child to learn to read and write his own language, and the language of the trustee nation, at public expense, and to be given technical instruction in some branch of industry. The State shall also educate as large a number of natives as possible in higher technical and cultural training and maintain a corps of native teachers.
 5. *The State*: the natives of Africa must have the right to partici-

pate in the government as fast as their development permits, in conformity with the principle that the government exists for the natives, and not the natives for the government. They shall at once be allowed to participate in local and tribal government, according to ancient usage, and this participation shall gradually extend, as education and experience proceed, to the higher offices of State; to the end that, in time, Africa be ruled by consent of the Africans. . . . Whenever it is proven that African natives are not receiving just treatment at the hands of any State or that any State deliberately excludes its civilized citizens or subjects of Negro descent from its body politic and cultural, it shall be the duty of the League of Nations to bring the matter to the notice of the civilized World.⁵

The *New York Herald* of February 24, 1919, said: "There is nothing unreasonable in the program drafted at the Pan-African Congress which was held in Paris last week. It calls upon the Allied and Associated Powers to draw up an international code of law for the protection of the nations of Africa, and to create, as a section of the League of Nations, a permanent bureau to insure observance of such laws and thus further the racial, political, and economic interests of the natives."

We were, of course, but weak and ineffective amateurs chipping at a hard conglomeration of problems about to explode in chaos. At least we were groping for light.

Not only Africa but Asia took active part in World War I on the side of the Allies. India saw for the first time a prospect of autonomy within the British Empire. Japan wanted to be recognized as the equal of white European nations, and the Chinese Republic started on its new path to modern civilization. Peace dawned, and the war came to be known as "the War to End War." But in vain, for this war had not ended the idea of European world domination. Rather it had loosened the seams of imperialism.

⁵ Broadside published by the Pan-African Congress, Paris, 1919.

In Africa, Negro troops had conquered German colonies, and now British West Africa demanded a share in government. In the very midst of war came labor revolt in Russia, which Europe and North America tried to repress, but they did not succeed. There came from the colonies in Africa and Asia insistent demand for freedom and democracy. It was in 1915 that the Congress of West Africa appealed to Great Britain in these words:

In the demand for the franchise by the people of British West Africa, it is not to be supposed that they are asking to be allowed to copy a foreign institution. On the contrary, it is important to notice that the principle of electing representatives to local councils and bodies is inherent in all the systems of British West Africa.⁶

In the interval between World War I and World War II, India's determined opposition to British rule increased under the leadership of Gandhi, who sought to substitute peaceful non-co-operation for war. The answer was the massacre of Amritsar. In America organized industry rose in its might to realize fantastic profits through domination of world industry. It fought labor unions and tried to nullify democracy by the power of wealth and capital. In the very midst of this, the magnificent structure of capitalistic industry collapsed in every part of the world. Make no mistake, war did not cause the Great Depression; it was the reasons behind the depression that caused war and will cause it again.

The world tried to meet depression and unemployment and to compose differences between capital and labor. Faced by the threat of Russian Communism, Italy, which with Spain was the most poverty-stricken country in Western Europe, seized control of the nation and of industry with the object of ruling it through an oligarchy, eliminating all democratic control. This was the answer of capitalists to the growing and threatening political

⁶ Memorandum of the case of the National Congress of British West Africa . . . , March 1920, p. 2.

power of the workers. Hitler followed, opposing the Socialist state of Weimar, with its unemployment and political chaos, with a new state and a new nationalism. The industrial leaders surrendered their power into his hands; the army followed suit; unemployment disappeared, and Hitler diverted the nation with visions of vengeance to be achieved through a new state ruled by German supermen. Simultaneously, Japan, having been rebuffed by England and America in her plea for racial equality before the League of Nations, saw an opportunity in this new order to displace Europe in the control of Asia.

Then came rumblings of World War II. The Axis wooed first England and France and then Russia. Britain made every offer of appeasement. Ethiopia was thrown to the dogs of a new Italian imperialism in Africa. Everything was offered to Hitler but the balance of power in Europe and the surrender of colonies. America, hesitating, was ready to fight for private industry against Nazism and to defend Anglo-American investment in colonies and quasi-colonial areas.

Hitler would not be appeased. So war began. Hell broke loose. Six million Jews were murdered in Germany through a propaganda which tied the small shopkeepers back of Hitler and placed unreasoning race prejudice back of war. France feared to trust colonial Africa. De Gaulle and the black Governor Eboué, with co-operation from England and France, could have established a new black France in Africa and shortened the war; but France yielded to Germany. England resisted doggedly. Russia yielded and joined hands with Germany, but not for long.

The real battle then began; the battle of the Nazi-Fascist oligarchy against the dictatorship of the proletariat. Germany determined first to crush Russia and then with Russian resources to destroy the British Empire. Japan aroused Asia, and by attacking America thus furnished the one reason, based on race prejudice, which brought America immediately into the war. India protested, China starved and struggled, the horrible world war with uncounted cost in property, life, and youth came to

an end, and with it came the discovery of the use of atomic energy.

It was significant that the man who invented the phrase "White Man's Burden" and who was its most persistent propagandist, also wrote its epitaph:

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And, guarding, calls not Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word—
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord! 7

7 Rudyard Kipling, "Recessional."



CHAPTER II

THE WHITE MASTERS OF THE WORLD

This is an attempt to show briefly what the domination of Europe over the world has meant to mankind and especially to Africans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

WHAT are the real causes back of the collapse of Europe in the twentieth century? What was the real European imperialism pictured in the Paris Exposition of 1900? France did not stand purely for art. There was much imitation, convention, suppression, and sale of genius; and France wanted wealth and power at any price. Germany did not stand solely for science. I remember when the German professor at whose home I was staying in 1890 expressed his contempt for the rising businessmen. He had heard them conversing as he drank in a *Bierstube* at Eisenach beneath the shade of Luther's Wartburg. Their conversation, he sneered, was *lauter Geschäft!* He did not realize that a new Germany was rising which wanted German science for one main purpose—wealth and power. America wanted freedom, but freedom to get rich by any method short of anarchy; and freedom to get rid of the democracy which allowed laborers to dictate to managers and investors.

All these centers of civilization envied England the wealth and power built upon her imperial colonial system. One looking at European imperialism in 1900 therefore should have looked

first at the depressed peoples. One would have found them also among the laboring classes in Europe and America, living in slums behind a façade of democracy, nourished on a false education which lauded the triumphs of the industrial undertaker, made the millionaire the hero of modern life, and taught youth that success was wealth. The slums of England emphasized class differences; slum dwellers and British aristocracy spoke different tongues, had different manners and ideals. The goal of human life was illustrated in the nineteenth-century English novel: the aristocrat of independent income surrounded by a herd of obsequious and carefully trained servants. Even today the British butler is a personage in the literary world.

Out of this emerged the doctrine of the Superior Race: the theory that a minority of the people of Europe are by birth and natural gift the rulers of mankind; rulers of their own suppressed labor classes and, without doubt, heaven-sent rulers of yellow, brown, and black people.

This way of thinking gave rise to many paradoxes, and it was characteristic of the era that men did not face paradoxes with any plan to solve them. There was the religious paradox: the contradiction between the Golden Rule and the use of force to keep human beings in their appointed places; the doctrine of the White Man's Burden and the conversion of the heathen, faced by the actuality of famine, pestilence, and caste. There was the assumption of the absolute necessity of poverty for the majority of men in order to save civilization for the minority, for that aristocracy of mankind which was at the same time the chief beneficiary of culture.

There was the frustration of democracy: lip service was paid to the idea of the rule of the people; but at the same time the mass of people were kept so poor, and through their poverty so diseased and ignorant, that they could not carry on successfully a modern state or modern industry. There was the paradox of peace: I remember before World War I stopping in at the Hotel Astor to hear Andrew Carnegie talk to his peace society. War

had begun between Italy and Turkey but, said Mr. Carnegie blandly, we are not talking about peace among unimportant people; we are talking about peace among the great states of the world. I walked out. Here I knew lay tragedy, and the events proved it; for the great states went to war in jealousy over the ownership of the little people.

The paradox of the peace movement of the nineteenth century is a baffling comment on European civilization. There was not a single year during the nineteenth century when the world was not at war. Chiefly, but not entirely, these wars were waged to subjugate colonial peoples. They were carried on by Europeans, and at least one hundred and fifty separate wars can be counted during the heyday of the peace movement. What the peace movement really meant was peace in Europe and between Europeans, while for the conquest of the world and because of the suspicion which they held toward each other, every nation maintained a standing army which steadily grew in cost and menace.

One of the chief causes which thus distorted the development of Europe was the African slave trade, and we have tried to rewrite its history and meaning and to make it occupy a much less important place in the world's history than it deserves.

The result of the African slave trade and slavery on the European mind and culture was to degrade the position of labor and the respect for humanity as such. Not, God knows, that the ancient world honored labor. With exceptions here and there, it despised, enslaved, and crucified human toil. But there were counter currents, and with the Renaissance in Europe—that new light with which Asia and Africa illumined the Dark Ages of Europe—came new hope for mankind. A new religion of personal sacrifice had been building on five hundred years of the self-effacement of Buddha before the birth of Christ, and the equalitarianism of Mohammed which followed six hundred years after Christ's birth. A new world, seeking birth in Europe, was also being discovered beyond the sunset.

With this new world came fatally the African slave trade and

Negro slavery in the Americas. There were new cruelties, new hatreds of human beings, and new degradations of human labor. The temptation to degrade human labor was made vaster and deeper by the incredible accumulation of wealth based on slave labor, by the boundless growth of greed, and by world-wide organization for new agricultural crops, new techniques in industry, and world-wide trade.

Just as Europe lurched forward to a new realization of beauty, a new freedom of thought and religious belief, a new demand by laborers to choose their work and enjoy its fruit, uncurbed greed rose to seize and monopolize the uncounted treasure of the fruit of labor. Labor was degraded, humanity was despised, the theory of "race" arose. There came a new doctrine of universal labor: mankind were of two sorts—the superior and the inferior; the inferior toiled for the superior; and the superior were the real men, the inferior half men or less. Among the white lords of creation there were "lower classes" resembling the inferior darker folk. Where possible they were to be raised to equality with the master class. But no equality was possible or desirable for "darkies." In line with this conviction, the Christian Church, Catholic and Protestant, at first damned the heathen blacks with the "curse of Canaan," then held out hope of freedom through "conversion," and finally acquiesced in a permanent status of human slavery.

Despite the fact that the nineteenth century saw an upsurge in the power of laboring classes and a fight toward economic equality and political democracy, this movement and battle was made fiercer and less successful and lagged far behind the accumulation of wealth, because in popular opinion labor was fundamentally degrading and the just burden of inferior peoples. Luxury and plenty for the few and poverty for the many was looked upon as inevitable in the course of nature. In addition to this, it went without saying that the white people of Europe had a right to live upon the labor and property of the colored peoples of the world.

In order to establish the righteousness of this point of view, science and religion, government and industry, were wheeled into line. The word "Negro" was used for the first time in the world's history to tie color to race and blackness to slavery and degradation. The white race was pictured as "pure" and superior; the black race as dirty, stupid, and inevitably inferior; the yellow race as sharing, in deception and cowardice, much of this color inferiority; while mixture of races was considered the prime cause of degradation and failure in civilization. Everything great, everything fine, everything really successful in human culture, was white.

In order to prove this, even black people in India and Africa were labeled as "white" if they showed any trace of progress; and, on the other hand, any progress by colored people was attributed to some intermixture, ancient or modern, of white blood or some influence of white civilization.

This logical contradiction influenced and misled science. The same person declared that mulattoes were inferior and warned against miscegenation, and yet attributed the pre-eminence of a Dumas, a Frederick Douglass, a Booker Washington, to their white blood.

A system at first conscious and then unconscious of lying about history and distorting it to the disadvantage of the Negroids became so widespread that the history of Africa ceased to be taught, the color of Memnon was forgotten, and every effort was made in archaeology, history, and biography, in biology, psychology, and sociology, to prove the all but universal assumption that the color line had a scientific basis.

Without the winking of an eye, printing, gunpowder, the smelting of iron, the beginnings of social organization, not to mention political life and democracy, were attributed exclusively to the white race and to Nordic Europe. Religion sighed with relief when it could base its denial of the ethics of Christ and the brotherhood of men upon the science of Darwin, Gobineau, and Reisner.

It was bad enough in all conscience to have the consequences of this thought, these scientific conclusions and ethical sanctions, fall upon colored people the world over; but in the end it was even worse when one considers what this attitude did to the European worker. His aim and ideal was distorted. He did not wish to become efficient but rich. He began to want not comfort for all men, but power over other men for himself. He did not love humanity and he hated "niggers." When our High Commissioner after the Spanish War appealed to America on behalf of "our little brown brother," the white workers replied,

"He may be a brother of William H. Taft,
But he ain't no brother of mine."

Following the early Christian communism and sense of human brotherhood which began to grow in the Dark Ages and to blossom in the Renaissance there came to white workers in England, France, and Germany the iron law of wages, the population doctrines of Malthus, and the bitter fight against the early trade unions. The first efforts at education, and particularly the trend toward political democracy, aroused an antagonism of which the French Revolution did not dream. It was this bitter fight that exacerbated the class struggle and resulted in the first furious expression of Communism and the attempt at revolution. The unity of apprentice and master, the Christian sympathy between rich and poor, the communism of medieval charity, all were thrust into the new strait jacket of thought: poverty was the result of sloth and crime; wealth was the reward of virtue and work. The degraded yellow and black peoples were in the places which the world of necessity assigned to the inferior; and toward these lower ranks the working classes of all countries tended to sink save as they were raised and supported by the rich, the investors, the captains of industry.

In some parts of the world, notably in the Southern states of America, the argument went further than this: frank slavery of

black folk was a better economic system than factory exploitation of whites. It was the natural arrangement of industry. It ought to be extended, certainly where colored people were in the majority. For half a century before 1861 the bolder minds of the South dreamed of a slave empire embracing the American tropics and extending eventually around the world. While their thought did not go to a final appraisal of white laboring classes, they certainly had in mind that these classes must rise or fall; must be forced into the class of employers with political power, or, like the poor whites of the South, be pushed down beside or even below the working slaves.

This philosophy had sympathizers in Europe. Without doubt, a large majority of influential public opinion in England, and possibly in both France and Germany, favored the South at the outbreak of the Civil War and sternly set its face against allowing any maudlin sympathy with "darkies," half monkeys and half men, in the stern fight for the extension of European domination of the world. Widespread insensibility to cruelty and suffering spread in the white world, and to guard against too much emotional sympathy with the distressed, every effort was made to keep women and children and the more sensitive men deceived as to what was going on, not only in the slums of white countries, but also all over Asia, Africa, and the islands of the sea. Elaborate writing, disguised as interpretation, and the testimony of so-called "experts," made it impossible for charming people in Europe to realize what their comforts and luxuries cost in sweat, blood, death, and despair, not only in the remoter parts of the world, but even on their own doorsteps.

A gracious culture was built up; a delicately poised literature treated the little intellectual problems of the rich and well-born, discussed small matters of manners and convention, and omitted the weightier ones of law, mercy, justice, and truth. Even the evidence of the eyes and senses was denied by the mere weight of reiteration. The race that produced the ugly features of a Darwin or a Winston Churchill was always "beautiful," while

a Toussaint and a Menelik were ugly because they were black.

The concept of the European "gentleman" was evolved: a man well bred and of meticulous grooming, of knightly sportsmanship and invincible courage even in the face of death; but one who did not hesitate to use machine guns against assagais and to cheat "niggers"; an ideal of sportsmanship which reflected the Golden Rule and yet contradicted it—not only in business and in industry within white countries, but all over Asia and Africa—by indulging in lying, murder, theft, rape, deception, and degradation, of the same sort and kind which has left the world aghast at the accounts of what the Nazis did in Poland and Russia.

There was no Nazi atrocity—concentration camps, wholesale maiming and murder, defilement of women or ghastly blasphemy of childhood—which the Christian civilization of Europe had not long been practicing against colored folk in all parts of the world in the name of and for the defense of a Superior Race born to rule the world.

Together with the idea of a Superior Race there grew up in Europe and America an astonishing ideal of wealth and luxury: the man of "independent" income who did not have to "work for a living," who could indulge his whims and fantasies, who was free from all compulsion either of ethics or hunger, became the hero of novels, of drama and of fairy tale. This wealth was built, in Africa especially, upon diamonds and gold, copper and tin, ivory and mahogany, palm oil and cocoa, seeds extracted and grown, beaten out of the blood-stained bodies of the natives, transported to Europe, processed by wage slaves who were not receiving, and as Ricardo assured them they could never receive, enough to become educated and healthy human beings, and then distributed among prostitutes and gamblers as well as among well-bred followers of art, literature, and drama.

Cities were built, ugly and horrible, with regions for the culture of crime, disease, and suffering, but characterized in popular myth and blindness by wide and beautiful avenues where

the rich and fortunate lived, laughed, and drank tea. National heroes were created by lopping off their sins and canonizing their virtues, so that Gladstone had no connection with slavery, Chinese Gordon did not get drunk, William Pitt was a great patriot and not an international thief. Education was so arranged that the young learned not necessarily the truth, but that aspect and interpretation of the truth which the rulers of the world wished them to know and follow.

In other words, we had progress by poverty in the face of accumulating wealth, and that poverty was not simply the poverty of the slaves of Africa and the peons of Asia, but the poverty of the mass of workers in England, France, Germany, and the United States. Art, in building, painting, and literature, became cynical and decadent. Literature became realistic and therefore pessimistic. Religion became organized in social clubs where well-bred people met in luxurious churches and gave alms to the poor. On Sunday they listened to sermons—"Blessed are the meek"; "Do unto others even as you would that others do unto you"; "If thine enemy smite thee, turn the other cheek"; "It is more blessed to give than to receive"—listened and acted as though they had read, as in very truth they ought to have read—"Might is right"; "Do others before they do you"; "Kill your enemies or be killed"; "Make profits by any methods and at any cost so long as you can escape the lenient law." This is a fair picture of the decadence of that Europe which led human civilization during the nineteenth century and looked unmoved on the writhing of Asia and of Africa.

Nothing has been more puzzling than the European attitude toward sex. With professed reverence for female chastity, white folk have brought paid prostitution to its highest development; their lauding of motherhood has accompanied a lessening of births through late marriage and contraception, and this has stopped the growth of population in France and threatened it in all Europe. Indeed, along with the present rate of divorce, the future of the whole white race is problematical. Finally, the

treatment of colored women by white men has been a worldwide disgrace. American planters, including some of the highest personages in the nation, left broods of colored children who were sometimes sold into slavery.

William Howitt (1792-1879), an English Quaker, visited Australia and the East early in the nineteenth century and has left us a record of what he saw. Of the treatment of women in India he wrote: "The treatment of the females could not be described. Dragged from the inmost recesses of their houses, which the religion of the country had made so many sanctuaries, they were exposed naked to public view. The virgins were carried to the Court of Justice, where they might naturally have looked for protection, but they now looked for it in vain; for in the face of the ministers of justice, in the face of the spectators, in the face of the sun, those tender and modest virgins were brutally violated. The only difference between their treatment and that of their mothers was that the former were dishonoured in the face of day, the latter in the gloomy recesses of their dungeon. Other females had the nipples of their breasts put in a cleft bamboo and torn off. What follows is too shocking and indecent to transcribe! It is almost impossible, in reading of these frightful and savage enormities, to believe that we are reading of a country under the British government, and that these unmanly deeds were perpetrated by British agents, and for the purpose of extorting the British revenue."¹

It would be unfair to paint the total modern picture of Europe as decadent. There have been souls that revolted and voices that cried aloud. Men arraigned poverty, ignorance, and disease as unnecessary. The public school and the ballot fought for uplift and freedom. Suffrage for women and laborers and freedom for the Negro were extended. But this forward-looking vision had but partial and limited success. Race tyranny, aristocratic pretense, monopolized wealth, still continued to prevail and

¹ William Howitt, *Colonization and Christianity* (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green & Longmans, 1838), pp. 280-81.

triumphed widely. The Church fled uptown to escape the poor and black. Jesus laughed—and wept.

The dawn of the twentieth century found white Europe master of the world and the white peoples almost universally recognized as the rulers for whose benefit the rest of the world existed. Never before in the history of civilization had self-worship of a people's accomplishment attained the heights that the worship of white Europe by Europeans reached.

Our poets in the "Foremost Ranks of Time," became dithyrambic: "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay!" In home and school the legend grew of this strong, masterful giant with mighty intellect, clear brain, and unrivaled moral stamina, who was conducting the world to the last heights of human culture. Yet within less than half a century this magnificent self-worshipping structure had crashed to the earth.

Why was this? It was from no lack of power. The power of white Europe and North America was unquestionable. Their science dominated the scientific thought of the world. The only writing called literature was that of English and French writers, of Germans and Italians, with some recognition of writers in Spain and the United States. The Christian religion, as represented by the Catholic Church and the leading Protestant denominations, was the only system of belief recognized as real religion. Mohammedans, Buddhists, Shintoists, and others were all considered heathen.

The most tremendous expression of power was economic; the powerful industrial organization and integration of modern industry in management and work, in trade and manufacture, was concentrated in England, France, Germany, and the United States. All Asia and Eastern Europe was an appendage; all Africa, China, India, and the islands of the sea, Central and South America and the Caribbean area were dominated by Europe, while Scandinavia, Holland, and Belgium were silent copartners in this domination.

The domination showed itself in its final form in political

power either through direct rulership, as in the case of colonies, or indirect economic power backed by military pressure exercised over the backward nations. It was rather definitely assumed in the latter part of the nineteenth century that this economic domination was but a passing phase which in time would lead to colonial absorption.

Particularly was this true with regard to Asia. India was already a part of the British Empire, and Burma. Indonesia was Dutch and Indo-China, French. The future of China depended upon how Europe would divide the land among the British Empire and the Germans, American trade, Italy, France, and Russia. It was a matter simply of time and agreement. General consent had long since decided that China should no longer rule itself.

With regard to the South American countries there was the determination that they must obey the economic rule of the European and North American system. The world looked forward to political and economic domination by Europe and North America and to a more or less complete approach to colonial status for the rest of the earth. Africa of course must remain in absolute thrall, save its white immigrants, who would rule the blacks.

The reason for this world mastery by Europe was rationalized as the natural and inborn superiority of white peoples, showing itself not only in the loftiest of religions, but in a technical mastery of the forces of nature—all this in contrast to the low mentality and natural immorality of the darker races living in lovely lands, "Where every prospect pleases, and only Man is vile!"—as the high-minded Christians sang piously. But they forgot or never were told just how white superiority wielded its power or accomplished this dominion. There were exceptions, of course, but for the most part they went unheard. Howitt, for instance, wrote from personal knowledge as well as research on the colonial question and described some phases of the pressure of Europe on the rest of the world in the centuries preceding the

nineteenth. Speaking of the Indians of America, Howitt said: "All the murders and desolation of the most pitiless tyrants that ever diverted themselves with the pangs and convulsions of their fellow creatures, fall infinitely short of the bloody enormities committed by the Spanish nation in the conquest of the New World, a conquest on a low estimate, effected by the murder of ten millions of the species! After reading these accounts, who can help forming an indignant wish that the hand of Heaven, by some miraculous interposition, had swept these European tyrants from the face of the earth, who like so many beasts of prey, roamed round the world only to desolate and destroy; and more remorseless than the fiercest savage, thirsted for human blood without having the impulse of natural appetite to plead in their defence!"²

Howitt turned to the Portuguese in India: "The celebrated Alphonso Albuquerque made the most rapid strides, and extended the conquests of the Portuguese there beyond any other commander. He narrowly escaped with his life in endeavouring to sack and plunder Calicut. He seized on Goa, which thenceforward became the metropolis of all the Portuguese settlements in India. He conquered Molucca, and gave it up to the plunder of his soldiers. The fifth part of the wealth thus thievishly acquired was reserved for the king, and was purchased on the spot by the merchants for two hundred thousand pieces of gold. Having established a garrison in the conquered city, he made a traitor Indian, who had deserted from the king of Molucca and had been an instrument in the winning of a place, supreme magistrate; but again finding Utimut, the renegade, as faithless to himself, he had him and his son put to death, even though a hundred thousand pieces of gold, a bait that was not easily resisted by these Christian marauders, was offered for their lives. He then proceeded to Ormuz in the Persian Gulph, which was a great harbour for the Arabian merchants; reduced it, placed a garrison in it, seized on fifteen princes of the blood, and carried

² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

them off to Goa. Such were some of the deeds of this celebrated general, whom the historians in the same breath in which they record these unwarrantable acts of violence, robbery, and treachery, term an excellent and truly glorious commander! He made a descent on the isle of Ceylon, and detached a fleet to the Moluccas, which established a settlement in those delightful regions of the cacao, the sago-tree, the nutmeg, and the clove. The kings of Persia, of Siam, Pegu, and others, alarmed at his triumphant progress, sought his friendship; and he completed the conquest of the Malabar coast. With less than forty thousand troops, the Portuguese struck terror into the empire of Morocco, the barbarous nations of Africa, the Mamelucs, the Arabians, and all the eastern countries from the island of Ormuz to China.”³

Turning to the Dutch, Howitt continued:

“To secure the dominion of these, they compelled the princes of Ternate and Tidore to consent to the rooting up of all the clove and nutmeg trees in the islands not entirely under the jealous safeguard of Dutch keeping. For this they utterly exterminated the inhabitants of Banda, because they would not submit passively to their yoke. Their lands were divided amongst the white people, who got slaves from other islands to cultivate them. For this Malacca was besieged, its territory ravaged, and its navigation interrupted by pirates; Negapatan was twice attacked; Cochin was engaged in resisting the kings of Calicut and Travancore, and Ceylon and Java were made scenes of perpetual disturbances. These notorious dissensions have been followed by as odious oppressions, which have been practiced at Japan, China, Cambodia, Arracan on the banks of the Ganges, at Achen, Coromandel, Surat, in Persia, at Bassora, Mocha, and other places. For this they encouraged and established in Celebes a system of kidnapping the inhabitants for slaves which converted that island into a perfect hell.”⁴

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 176-77.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

Howitt then turned to England in India: "Unfortunately, we all know what human nature is. Unfortunately, the power, the wealth, and the patronage brought home to them by the very violation of their own wishes and maxims were of such an overwhelming and seducing nature that it was in vain to resist them. Nay, in such colours does the modern philosophy of conquest and diplomacy disguise the worst transactions between one state and another, that it is not for plain men very readily to penetrate to the naked enormity beneath."⁵

"But if there ever was one system more Machiavelian—more appropriative of the shew of justice where the basest injustice was attempted—more cold, cruel, haughty, and unrelenting than another—it is the system by which the government of the different states of India has been wrested from the hands of their respective princes and collected into the grasp of the British power."⁶

"The first step in the English friendship with the native princes, has generally been to assist them against their neighbours with troops, or to locate troops with them to protect them from aggression. For these services such enormous recompense was stipulated for, that the unwary princes, entrapped by their fears of their native foes rather than of their pretended friends, soon found that they were utterly unable to discharge them. Dreadful exactions were made on their subjects, but in vain. Whole provinces, or the revenues of them, were soon obliged to be made over to their grasping *friends*; but they did not suffice for their demands. In order to pay them their debts or their interest, the princes were obliged to borrow large sums at an extravagant rate. These sums were eagerly advanced by the English in their private and individual capacities, and securities again taken on lands or revenues. At every step the unhappy princes became more and more embarrassed, and as the em-

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

barrassment increased, the claims of the Company became proportionably pressing. In the technical phraseology of money-lenders, 'the screw was then turned,' till there was no longer any enduring it." ⁷

We may turn now to the conquest of Africa. The Portuguese, Dutch, and British decimated the West Coast with the slave trade. The Arabs depopulated the East Coast. For centuries the native Bantu, unable to penetrate the close-knit city-states of the Gulf of Guinea, had slowly been moving south, seeking pasture for their herds and protecting their culture from the encroachment of the empire-building in the black Sudan.

In the nineteenth century black folk and white—Hottentot, Bushman and Bantu, French, Dutch, and British—met at the Cape miscalled "Good Hope." There ensued a devil's dance seldom paralleled in human history. The Dutch murdered, raped, and enslaved the Hottentots and Bushmen; the French were driven away or died out; the British stole the land of the Dutch and their slaves and the Dutch fled inland. The incoming Bantu, led by Chaka, the great Zulu chieftain, fell on both Dutch and English with a military genius unique in history.

The black Bantu had almost won the wars when a mulatto native discovered diamonds. Then English and Dutch laid bare that cache of gold, the largest in the world, which the ocean thrust above the dark waters of the south five million years ago. Enough; the greed of white Europe, backed by the British Navy, fought with frenzied determination, world-wide organization, and every trick of trade, until the blacks were either dead or reduced to the most degrading wage bondage in the modern world; and the Dutch became vassals of England, to be repaid by the land and labor of eight million blacks.

Frankel, the complacent servant of capitalists and their defender, has written: "The wealth accruing from the production of diamonds in South Africa has probably been greater

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 213-14.

than that which has ever been obtained from any other commodity in the same time anywhere in the world.”⁸

This was but a side enterprise of Britain. By means of its long leadership in the African slave trade to America, Great Britain in the nineteenth century began to seize control of land and labor all over Africa. Slowly the British pushed into the West and East coasts. They overthrew Benin and Ashanti. A British governor of Ashanti later admitted: “The earliest beginnings, which had their inception in the dark days of the slave trade, cannot but hold many things that modern Englishmen must recall with mingled shame and horror. The reader will find much to deplore in the public and private acts of many of the white men who, in their time, made history on the Coast; and some deeds were done which must forever remain among the most bitter and humiliating memories of every Britisher who loves his country and is jealous of its fair name.”⁹

The French conquered Dahomey and the remains of the Mandingo, Haussa, and other kingdoms. The British pitted Christianity against Islam in East Africa and let them fight it out until at last Uganda became a British protectorate.

In Abyssinia the natives drove back British, Egyptians, and Italians, and the Mahdi with his black Mohammedan hordes came in from the west and drove England and Egypt out of the Sudan. The threat of the French and their possible alliance with Abyssinia brought the British back with machine guns.

It is said that Kitchener's warfare against the followers of the Mahdi was so brutal that even the British Tories were revolted. His own brother-in-law said of him: “Well, if you do not bring down a curse on the British Empire for what you have been doing there is no truth in Christianity.” His dese-

⁸ S. Herbert Frankel, *Capital Investment in Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 52.

⁹ W. Walton Claridge, *A History of the Gold Coast and Ashanti* (London: John Murray, 1915), Vol. I, p. ix.

cratation of the Mahdi's tomb even Winston Churchill called a "foul deed." And when Kitchener found that even the promoters of the inexcusable war could not swallow this last, he tried to put the blame of the desecration onto Gordon's nephew by making absolutely false accusations.¹⁰ Everywhere is this sordid tale of deception, force, murder, and final subjection. We need hardly recall the Opium War in China, which the British, followed by the Americans and French, made excuse for further aggression.

The singular thing about this European movement of aggression and dominance was the rationalization for it. Missionary effort during the nineteenth and early twentieth century was widespread. Millions of pounds and dollars went into the "conversion of the heathen" to Christianity and the education of the natives. Some few efforts, as in Liberia and Sierra Leone, were made early in the nineteenth century to establish independent Negro countries, but this was before it was realized that political domination was necessary to full exploitation.

Slowly the Sudan from the Atlantic to the Nile was conquered. Slowly Egypt itself and the Egyptian Sudan passed under the control of Europe. The resistance of Nubia and Ethiopia was almost in vain down into the twentieth century. West Africa fought brilliantly and continuously. But in all this development the idea persisted in European minds that no matter what the cost in cruelty, lying, and blood, the triumph of Europe was to the glory of God and the untrammelled power of the only people on earth who deserved to rule; that the right and justice of their rule was proved by their own success and particularly by their great cities, their enormous technical mastery over the power of nature, their gigantic manufacture of goods and systems of transportation over the world. Production for production's sake, without in-

¹⁰ Cf. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, *My Diaries* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1921), Vol. I, pp. 311, 313, 317, 319, 322, 323-24. The brother-in-law was Sir William Butler.

quiry as to how the wealth and services were distributed, was the watchword of the day.

For years the British imperial government avoided direct responsibility for colonial exploitation. It was all at first "free enterprise" and "individual initiative." When the scandal of murder and loot could no longer be ignored, exploitation became socialized with imperialism. Thus, for a century or more the West India Company, the Niger Company, the South and East Africa Companies, robbed and murdered as they pleased with no public accounting. At length, when these companies had stolen, killed, and cheated to such an extent that the facts could not be suppressed, governments themselves came into control, curbing the more outrageous excesses and rationalizing the whole system.

Science was called to help. Students of Africa, especially since the ivory-sugar-cotton-Negro complex of the nineteenth century, became hag-ridden by the obsession that nothing civilized is Negroid and every evidence of high culture in Africa must be white or at least yellow. The very vocabulary of civilization expressed this idea; the Spanish word "Negro," from being a descriptive adjective, was raised to the substantive name of a race and then deprived of its capital letter.

Then came efforts to bring harmony and co-operation and unity—among the exploiters. A newspaper correspondent who had received world-wide publicity because of his travels in Africa was hired by the shrewd and unscrupulous Leopold II of Belgium to establish an international country in central Africa "to peacefully conquer and subdue it, to remold it in harmony with modern ideas into National States, within whose limits the European merchant shall go hand in hand with the dark African trader, and justice and law and order shall prevail, and murder and lawlessness and the cruel barter of slaves shall be overcome."¹¹

¹¹ J. Scott Keltie, *The Partition of Africa* (London: Edward Stanford, 1895), p. 132.

Thus arose the Congo Free State, and by balancing the secret designs of German, French, and British against each other, this state became the worst center of African exploitation and started the partition of Africa among European powers. It was designed to form a pattern for similar partition of Asia and the South Sea islands. The Berlin Congress and Conference followed. The products of Africa began to be shared and distributed around the world. The dependence of civilized life upon products from the ends of the world tied the everyday citizen more and more firmly to the exploitation of each colonial area: tea and coffee, diamonds and gold, ivory and copper, vegetable oils, nuts and dates, pepper and spices, olives and cocoa, rubber, hemp, silk, fibers of all sorts, rare metals, valuable lumber, fruit, sugar. All these things and a hundred others became necessary to modern life, and modern life thus was built around colonial ownership and exploitation.

The cost of this exploitation was enormous. The colonial system caused ten times more deaths than actual war. In the first twenty-five years of the nineteenth century famines in India starved a million men, and famine was bound up with exploitation. Widespread monopoly of land to deprive all men of primary sources of support was carried out either through direct ownership or indirect mortgage and exorbitant interest. Disease could not be checked: tuberculosis in the mines of South Africa, syphilis in all colonial regions, cholera, leprosy, malaria.

One of the worst things that happened was the complete and deliberate breaking-down of cultural patterns among the suppressed peoples. "Europe was staggered at the Leopoldian atrocities, and they were terrible indeed; but what we, who were behind the scenes, felt most keenly was the fact that the real catastrophe in the Congo was desolation and murder in the larger sense. The invasion of family life, the ruthless destruction of every social barrier, the shattering of every tribal law, the introduction of criminal practices which struck the

chiefs of the people dumb with horror—in a word, a veritable avalanche of filth and immorality overwhelmed the Congo tribes.”¹²

The moral humiliation forced on proud black people was illustrated in the British conquest of Ashanti. The reigning Asantahene had never been conquered. His armies had repeatedly driven back the British, but the British finally triumphed after five wars by breaking their word and overwhelming him by numbers and superior weapons. They promised him peace and honor, but they demanded a public act of submission.

“This, of course, was a terrible blow to Prempi’s pride. It was a thing that no Ashanti king had ever done before, except when Mensa voluntarily made his submission by deputy in 1881; and was the one thing above all others that he would have avoided if he could. For a few moments he sat irresolute, nervously toying with his ornaments and looking almost ready to cry with shame and annoyance; but Albert Ansa came up and held a whispered conversation with him, and he then slipped off his sandals and, laying aside the golden circlet he wore on his head, stood up with his mother and walked reluctantly across the square to where the Governor was sitting. Then, halting before him, they prostrated themselves and embraced his feet and those of Sir Francis Scott and Colonel Kempster.

“The scene was a most striking one. The heavy masses of foliage, that solid square of red coats and glistening bayonets, the artillery drawn up ready for any emergency, the black bodies of the Native Levies, resting on their long guns in the background, while inside the square the Ashantis sat as if turned to stone, as Mother and Son, whose word was a matter of life and death, and whose slightest move constituted a command which all obeyed, were thus forced to humble themselves in sight of the assembled thousands.”¹³

¹² Harris, *Dawn in Africa*, p. 66.

¹³ Claridge, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 413.

Perhaps the worst thing about the colonial system was the contradiction which arose and had to arise in Europe with regard to the whole situation. Extreme poverty in colonies was a main cause of wealth and luxury in Europe. The results of this poverty were disease, ignorance, and crime. Yet these had to be represented as natural characteristics of backward peoples. Education for colonial people must inevitably mean unrest and revolt; education, therefore, had to be limited and used to inculcate obedience and servility lest the whole colonial system be overthrown.

Ability, self-assertion, resentment, among colonial peoples must be represented as irrational efforts of "agitators"—folk trying to attain that for which they were not by nature fitted. To prove the unfitness of most human beings for self-rule and self-expression, every device of science was used: evolution was made to prove that Negroes and Asiatics were less developed human beings than whites; history was so written as to make all civilization the development of white people; economics was so taught as to make all wealth due mainly to the technical accomplishment of white folks supplemented only by the brute toil of colored peoples; brain weights and intelligence tests were used and distorted to prove the superiority of white folk. The result was complete domination of the world by Europe and North America and a culmination and tempo of civilization singularly satisfactory to the majority of writers and thinkers at the beginning of the twentieth century. But it was a result that was hollow, contradictory, and fatal, as the next few years quickly showed.

The proof of this came first from the colonial peoples themselves. Almost unnoticed, certainly unlistened to, there came from the colonial world reiterated protest, prayers, and appeals against the suppression of human beings, against the exclusion of the majority of mankind from the vaunted progress of the world. The world knows of such protests from the National Congress of India, but little has been written of the protests

of Africa. For instance, on the Gold Coast, British West Africa, in 1871, some of the kings and chiefs and a number of educated natives met at Mankesim and drew up a constitution for self-government. These members of the Fanti tribe were in alliance with England and had supported the British against the Ashanti in the five long wars. They now proposed an alliance with Britain to establish self-government. This constitution, the Mfantasi Amanbuhu Fekuw or Fanti Confederation, agitated in 1865, organized in 1867, and adopted in 1871, consisted of forty-seven articles, many of which were subdivided into several sections. Some of the principal articles were as follows:

Article 8. That it be the object of the Confederation

- § 1. To promote friendly intercourse between all the Kings and Chiefs of Fanti, and to unite them for offensive and defensive purposes against their common enemy.
- § 2. To direct the labours of the Confederation towards the improvement of the country at large.
- § 3. To make good and substantial roads through-out all the interior districts included in the Confederation.
- § 4. To erect school-houses and establish schools for the education of all children within the Confederation and to obtain the service of efficient schoolmasters.
- § 5. To promote agricultural and industrial pursuits, and to endeavour to introduce such new plants as may hereafter become sources of profitable commerce to the country.
- § 6. To develop and facilitate the working of the mineral and other resources of the country.

Article 12. That this Representative Assembly shall have the power of preparing laws, ordinances, bills, etc., of using proper means for effectually carrying out the resolutions, etc., of the Government, of examining any questions laid before it by the ministry, and by any of the Kings and Chiefs, and, in fact, of exercising all the functions of a legislative body.

Articles 21 to 25 deal with education.

- Article 26. That main roads be made connecting various provinces or districts with one another and with the sea coast. . . .
- Article 37. That in each province or district provincial courts be established, to be presided over by the provincial assessors.
- Article 43. That the officers of the Confederation shall render assistance as directed by the executive in carrying out the wishes of the British Government.
- Article 44. That it be competent to the Representative Assembly, for the purpose of carrying on the administration of the Government, to pass laws, etc., for the levying of such taxes as it may seem necessary.¹⁴

This was the so-called Fanti Federation, and in punishment for daring to propose such a movement for the government of an African British colony, the participants were promptly thrown in jail and charged with treason.

This attitude toward native rights and initiative has continued right down to our day. In 1945 the colored people of South Africa, speaking for eight million Negroes, Indians, and mixed groups, sent out this declaration to the proposed United Nations:

The non-European is debarred from education. He is denied access to the professions and skilled trades; he is denied the right to buy land and property; he is denied the right to trade or to serve in the army—except as a stretcher-bearer or servant; he is prohibited from entering places of entertainment and culture. But still more, he is not allowed to live in the towns. And if it was a crime in Nazi Germany for an “Aryan” to mix with or marry a non-Aryan, it is equally a criminal offence in South Africa for a member of the *Herrenvolk* to mix with or marry with the slave race. . . . In the majority of instances there is a separate law for Europeans and a separate law for non-Europeans; in those rare cases where one Act legislates for both, there are separate clauses discriminating against the non-Europeans. While it is true that there are no Buchenwald concentration camps in South Africa, it is equally true that the prisons of South Africa are full to overflowing with non-Europeans whose criminality lies solely in the fact that they

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 617-18.

are unable to pay the poll-tax, a special, racial tax imposed upon them. But this law does not apply to the Aryan; for him there is a different law which makes the nonpayment of taxes not a criminal, but a civil, offence for which he cannot be imprisoned.

But if there is no Buchenwald in South Africa, the sadistic fury with which the Herrenvolk policemen belabour the non-European victim, guilty or not guilty, is comparable only to the brutality of the S.S. Guards. Moreover, the treatment meted out to the non-European in the Law Courts is comparable only to the fate of the non-Aryan in the Nazi Law Courts. But the fundamental difference in law and morality is not only expressed in different paragraphs of the Legal Statutes, it lies in the fundamentally different concept of the value of the life of a non-European as compared with the value placed upon the life of a European. The life of a non-European is very cheap in South Africa, as cheap as the life of a Jew in Nazi Germany.

From the foregoing it is clear that the non-Europeans of South Africa live and suffer under a tyranny very little different from Nazism. And if we accept the premise—as we hope the Nations of the World do—that peace is indivisible, if we accept that there can be no peace as long as the scourge of Nazism exists in any corner of the globe, then it follows that the defeat of German Nazism is not the final chapter of the struggle against tyranny. There must be many more chapters before the peoples of the world will be able to make a new beginning. To us in South Africa it is indisputable that there can be no peace as long as this system of tyranny remains. To us it is ludicrous that this same South African Herrenvolk should speak abroad of a new beginning, of shaping a new world order, whereas in actuality all they wish is the retention of the present tyranny in South Africa, and its extension to new territories. Already they speak of new mandates and new trusteeships, which can only mean the extension of their Nazi-like domination over still wider terrain. It is impossible to make a new start as long as the representatives of this Herrenvolk take any part in the shaping of it. For of what value can it be when the very same people who speak so grandiosely abroad of the inviolability of human rights, at home trample ruthlessly underfoot those same inalienable rights? It is the grossest of insults not only to the eight million non-Europeans of South Africa, but to all those who are honestly striving to shape a world on new foundations, when the highest repre-

sentative of the Herrenvolk of South Africa, Field-Marshal Smuts, who has devoted his whole life to the entrenchment of this Nazi-like domination, brazenly speaks to the Nations of the World of the "sanctity and ultimate value of human personality" and "the equal rights of men and women."¹⁵

This does not say that all European civilization is oppression, theft, and hypocrisy; there has been evidence of selfless religious faith; of philanthropic effort for social uplift; of individual honesty and sacrifice. But this, far from answering the indictment I have made, shows even more clearly the moral plight of present European culture and what capitalistic investment and imperialism have done to it.

Because of the stretch in time and space between the deed and the result, between the work and the product, it is not only usually impossible for the worker to know the consumer; or the investor, the source of his profit, but also it is often made impossible by law to inquire into the facts. Moral judgment of the industrial process is therefore difficult, and the crime is more often a matter of ignorance rather than of deliberate murder and theft; but ignorance is a colossal crime in itself. When a culture consents to any economic result, no matter how monstrous its cause, rather than demand the facts concerning work, wages, and the conditions of life whose results make the life of the consumer comfortable, pleasant, and even luxurious, it is an indication of a collapsing civilization.

Here for instance is a lovely British home, with green lawns, appropriate furnishings and a retinue of well-trained servants. Within is a young woman, well trained and well dressed, intelligent and high-minded. She is fingering the ivory keys of a grand piano and pondering the problem of her summer vacation, whether in Switzerland or among the Italian lakes; her family is not wealthy, but it has a sufficient "independent" income from investments to enjoy life without hard work.

¹⁵ A Declaration to the Nations of the World issued by the Non-European United Committee, Cape Town, South Africa, 1945.

How far is such a person responsible for the crimes of colonialism?

It will in all probability not occur to her that she has any responsibility whatsoever, and that may well be true. Equally, it may be true that her income is the result of starvation, theft, and murder; that it involves ignorance, disease, and crime on the part of thousands; that the system which sustains the security, leisure, and comfort she enjoys is based on the suppression, exploitation, and slavery of the majority of mankind. Yet just because she does not know this, just because she could get the facts only after research and investigation—made difficult by laws that forbid the revealing of ownership of property, source of income, and methods of business—she is content to remain in ignorance of the source of her wealth and its cost in human toil and suffering.

The frightful paradox that is the indictment of modern civilization and the cause of its moral collapse is that a blameless, cultured, beautiful young woman in a London suburb may be the foundation on which is built the poverty and degradation of the world. For this someone is guilty as hell. Who?

This is the modern paradox of Sin before which the Puritan stands open-mouthed and mute. A group, a nation, or a race commits murder and rape, steals and destroys, yet no individual is guilty, no one is to blame, no one can be punished!

The black world squirms beneath the feet of the white in impotent fury or sullen hate:

I hate them, O I hate them well!
 I hate them, Christ, as I hate hell!
 If I were God, I'd sound their knell,
 This day!

The whole world emerges into the Syllogism of the Satisfied: "This cannot be true. This is not true. If it were true I would not believe it. If it is true I do not believe it. Therefore it is false!" Only an Emerson could see the paradox:

O all you virtues, methods, might;
Means, appliances, delights;
Reputed wrongs, and braggart rights;
Smug routine, and things allowed;
Minorities, things under cloud,
Hither take me, use me, fill me,
Vein and artery, though ye kill me.

In 1945 Jan Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa, who had once declared that every white man in South Africa believes in the suppression of the Negro except those who are "mad, quite mad," stood before the assembled peoples of the world and pleaded for an article on "human rights" in the United Nations Charter. Nothing so vividly illustrates the twisted contradiction of thought in the minds of white men. What brought it about? What caused this paradox? I believe that the trade in human beings between Africa and America, which flourished between the Renaissance and the American Civil War, is the prime and effective cause of the contradictions in European civilization and the illogic in modern thought and the collapse of human culture. For this reason I am turning to a history of the African slave trade in support of this thesis.



CHAPTER III

THE RAPE OF AFRICA

Nothing which has happened to man in modern times has been more significant than the buying and selling of human beings out of Africa into America from 1441 to 1870. Of its world-wide meaning and effect, this chapter seeks to tell.

THE rebirth of civilization in Europe began in the fifteenth century. At this time African and Asiatic civilizations far outstripped that of Europe. In the black Sudan nations, civilizations had risen and fallen even earlier. Melle, which flourished in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, fell before the empire of the Songhay, which in the fifteenth century became a vast, organized government two-thirds the size of the United States, with trade and commerce and cultural connections, through its University of Sankoré, with Spain, Italy, and the Eastern Roman Empire. The city-states and Atlantic culture of the West Coast of Africa had fought back triple pressure from the Sudan, the Arabs in the Nile valley, and the emigrating Bantu sweeping down on the kingdoms of the Congo.

It was here that the rape of Africa began and transformed the world. There can be little doubt but that in the fourteenth century the level of culture in black Africa south of the Sudan

was equal to that of Europe and was so recognized. There is even less doubt but that Negroid influence in the valley of the Nile was a main influence in Egypt's development from 2100 to 1600 B.C.; while in East, South, and West Africa human culture had from 1600 B.C. to A.D. 1500 its monuments of a vigorous past and a growing future. What changed all this? What killed the Sudanese empires, brought anarchy into the valley of the Nile, decimated the thick populations of East and Central Africa, and pressed the culture of West Africa beneath the ruthless heel of the rising European culture?

In Europe during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there began to appear national integration of culture patterns, with no little inspiration from the East and from Africa. There followed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries increased freedom of thought and impatience with dogma; and in the seventeenth, came scientific inquiry and the beginning of a demand for democratic control of government.

But from 1400 to 1800 also came discovery, trade, and the beginnings of a new enslavement of labor. In the eighteenth century these developments leaped into opposition. The slavery of labor expanded enormously in the New World, concurrent with a new development of trade, industry, and wealth in the Old. These trends met head on with a revolutionary demand for democracy and social freedom in Europe. The clash of ideals was revealed in the nineteenth century by freedom for exploitation of slaves in America and a consequent reaction against the demands of European labor led by Napoleon and British capital. Let us follow the details of this story.

The importance of the discovery of America was not the treasure of precious metals it provided, but the new and widening market and source of supply it offered European manufacturers by the exchange of tobacco, sugar, and cotton for manufactured goods. Its first effect was to raise the mercantile system to glory and splendor. World trade increased enormously. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the

centuries of trade, and eventually, by the rise of capitalism, the nineteenth century became the century of production.

During the Middle Ages there had been little direct commerce between Europe and West Africa. Arabs, Berbers, and eventually Negroids like the Mandingos became intermediaries for the trade between Europe and the Sudan. Rumors filtered through the Moroccan ports regarding the Kingdom of Ghana, the Niger, "the western Nile," and the black peoples round about. The Arabs bought gold from the Negroes and sold it to the Jewish merchants in Majorca.

The demand of Europe in the fifteenth century was for new and shorter paths to the East, to the spices, silks, and other luxurious articles of the East. In this quest Spain found silver in the New World, and Portugal triumphed when she found gold in Africa. The Portuguese trade monopoly with Africa and thence to India extended over half a century. She developed an empire of tremendous wealth.

The object of Prince Henry (1394-1460) of Portugal was mainly trade to India. At the same time he hoped by union with Prester John of Ethiopia to evangelize the Negroes of all Africa and make common cause against the Mohammedans. Henry heard of the gold for which the Carthaginians had bartered at Timbuktu. Having seized Ceuta, he began to explore, and after nineteen years his seamen rounded Cape Bojador.

In 1441 Goncalves brought to Lisbon the first cargo of slaves and gold. Very shortly a flourishing trade in gold, slaves, ostrich feathers, amber, and gum opened up between Portugal and black Africa. The Portuguese tried to conceal this trade from the rest of Europe. They did not actually find the black kingdom of Ghana, but they called the coast which they did discover "Guinea," after mysterious Ghana. They heard of the empire of Melle at Timbuktu but did not actually reach it. They had commerce with the kingdom of the Jolofs and with other coast tribes. Eventually they reached the Gold

Coast, or as they called it, "the Mine," where gold could be had in large quantities. They found that these Negroes were great traders who brought the gold from the interior when they could persuade the coast tribes who lived by fishing to let the gold bearers through. Eventually they came in contact with the kingdom of Benin and a mighty interior empire whose sovereign was the Ogani.

For fifty years, from 1480 to 1530, the Portuguese had a monopoly of the Guinea trade and reaped huge profits, seldom less than 50 per cent and sometimes as high as 800 per cent. Between 1450 and 1458 ten or twelve ships a year were sent to Guinea, and the amount of gold dust reached a value of over two million dollars a year, and after 1471 rapidly exceeded this.

Next to the trade in gold came the highly important importation of labor into Portugal. By the middle of the fifteenth century nearly a thousand blacks had been imported. A century later a vast majority of the inhabitants of the southernmost province were Negroids, and even up as far as Lisbon, Negroes outnumbered the whites. The two races intermingled, resulting in the Negroid characteristics of the Portuguese nation even today.¹

The royal family became more Negro than white. John IV was Negroid; and the wife of the French ambassador described John VI as having Negro hair, nose, lips, and color.

Negro blood in the fifteenth century extended from Spain and Portugal to Italy. The Medici had colored descendants like Alessandro, first reigning duke of Florence, whose father was reported to be the Pope. This new strain of Negro blood reached Albania and Austria. Angelo Solliman, a Congo Negro, was a favorite of Joseph II and of Prince Lichtenstein in

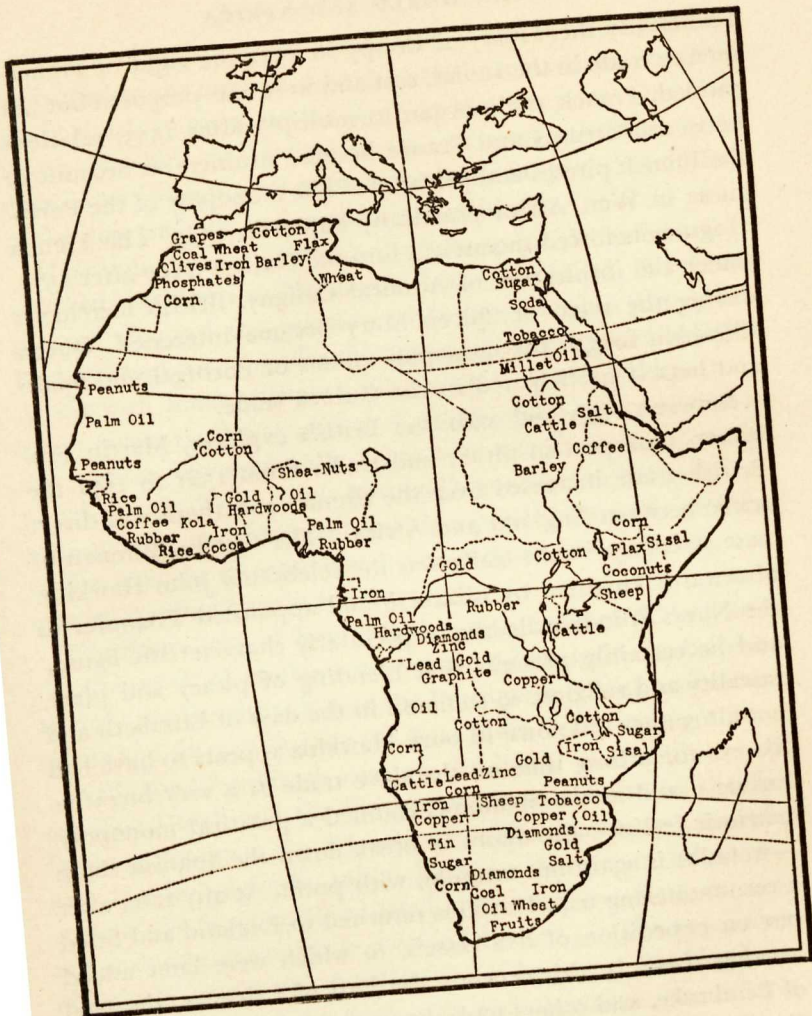
¹ Mary Wilhelmine Williams, writing on Slavery in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1934) Vol. 14, p. 80.

For other facts and allusions in this chapter, consult John W. Blake, *European Beginnings in West Africa* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1937).

the eighteenth century. He married into the Austrian nobility, and his daughter married Baron Eduard von Feuchtersleben. Their son inherited the title. Recently in Rome a monument was dedicated to the colored consort of Garibaldi, Anita, a Brazilian.

The Guinea trade was at first mainly in gold, pepper, and other commodities, with some trading in slaves which went to Europe. In the sixteenth century, however, it began to change, and slaves began to be sent to South America. This was not at first a large trade and did not compete with legitimate commerce; but it grew, and by 1540 reached ten thousand slaves a year. The reason for this was not far to seek. Between 1480 and 1578 the peoples of Guinea enjoyed a vigorous life with economic independence based on foreign trade. Gold, ivory, and pepper were valuable as exports before the discovery of America and continued long afterward. But by the middle of the sixteenth century there was trouble in West Africa. A vast migration of black people, the Limbas, moved slowly westward from Central Africa. They were a part of the migration of the Bantu moving down from the Mohammedan invasion of the Nile Valley and the empire-building of the black kingdoms of the Sudan. They destroyed villages, massacred the inhabitants, and were soon in fierce competition with the Souzas, who possessed the most formidable native army in West Africa at that time. Migration and native wars lasted for a generation. This meant that the cheap labor of captives became available on the West Coast and opened the way for the beginning of the American slave trade. With this slave trade came trouble, not simply among native tribes but also between the Portuguese and the natives.

After 1530 the Portuguese empire in Guinea was a vast commercial enterprise, but the overhead charges, caused by difficulties with the natives and the beginning of European competition, equaled and began to exceed production. The first threat to Portuguese dominance in Guinea came from the



THE PRODUCTS OF AFRICA

French. By the Treaty of Crespy in 1544 the right of Frenchmen to trade in the Indies, east and west, was proposed but not ratified. French trade began to multiply after 1553; relations between Portugal and France became strained on account of the French pirates and privateers. The monopoly of the Portuguese in West Africa practically ended in 1553. The French Huguenots forced themselves into the Guinea trade after 1571, under the inspiration of Admiral Coligny. British merchants during the reign of Queen Mary became interested. Queen Elizabeth fought the monopoly claims of Portugal and Spain and herself participated in the Guinea trade.

Between 1559 and 1561 the British explorer, Martin Frobisher, took part in piracy and trade. From 1561 to 1571 the British trade increased over the French and there was direct traffic between England and Africa. "The first Englishman of note to engage in the traffic was the celebrated John Hawkins, afterwards knighted by Elizabeth and appointed Treasurer to the Navy. Froude calls him 'a peculiarly characteristic figure,' and he certainly presents that blending of piracy and piety, rascality and religion, so common in the days of Elizabeth and not altogether unknown in ours. Hawkins appears to have had his eye for a long time on the slave trade as a very lucrative business, and as the Spaniards claimed a practical monopoly, patriotic feeling—the desire to break down the Spanish claim—went, as is again not unusual, with profit. At any rate, after a reconnoitering trip, Hawkins returned to England and fitted out an expedition of five vessels, to which were later added another three. In this venture, the Earl of Leicester, the Earl of Pembroke, and others took shares. So did Queen Elizabeth. She lent the ship *Jesus*, and Hawkins drew up rules for his men, the two first of which ran: 'Serve God daily,' and 'Love one another.' The piety of the expedition was beyond reproach. So was its practice, as we read that finding the natives of Cape Verde to be of 'a nature very gentle and loving,' and 'more civil than any others,' Hawkins prepared to kidnap a number

of them. After sailing for some time, 'burning and spoiling,' he landed in the Spanish American settlements and compelled the colonists to purchase the slaves at his own price. Quite fittingly, Hawkins was granted a coat of arms consisting of 'a demi-Moor in his proper colours, bound and captive,' as a token of the new trade he had opened to Englishmen."²

Meantime disaster overtook the Portuguese. King Sebastian attacked the Moors in North Africa and was killed. His death in 1578 changed the position of Guinea. Within two years Portugal had passed under the domination of Spain, and West Africa with some resistance submitted to Spain. Philip II of Spain (1527-1598) was able to defend to some extent his African empire, but eventually Spain was cut off from Africa by papal decree. Then came Portugal's annexation to Spain in 1581 and the loss of Spanish maritime power by the destruction of the Armada in 1588, which was a death blow to the commercial empire of Spain and Portugal.

The Protestants of England, the Huguenots of France, and the Calvinists of Holland started mortal struggle for Guinea. Eagerly the Dutch took over the Portuguese islands and settlements and formed in 1602 the East India Company.

With the seventeenth century the battle of commerce was on. The Dutch and the British fought to a finish in the Atlantic to dominate the Atlantic trade. The Portuguese, British, and Dutch fought in India. Between them they killed the trade of the German Hanseatic League and overthrew the economic dominance of Spain. Cromwell seized Jamaica as a center of British slavery and the slave trade. In Africa the kingdoms of the black Sudan moved east and displaced the Nilotic Negroes. From among these, peoples like those of the Fang and the Bambara kingdoms between the Nile and the West Coast pressed farther down upon the withdrawing Bantu.

In the seventeenth century the African slave trade to America

² Chapman Cohen, *Christianity, Slavery and Labour* (London: Pioneer Press, 1931, issued for The Secular Society, Limited), pp. 46-47.

expanded. It was not yet however a trade which made the word synonymous with Negro or black: during these years the Mohammedan rulers of Egypt were buying white slaves by 'the tens of thousands in Europe and Asia and bringing them to Syria, Palestine, and the Valley of the Nile. In the west, however, the character of world trade began subtly to change. While the theory of mercantilism still prevailed in academic circles and commerce continued to pour African gold into Europe, and while the Negroes and Arabs sent gold to India to bedeck the gorgeous moguls, in practical commerce the importation of gold from Africa and silver from Peru was losing its dominant attraction. What was needed was human labor; labor to raise food in Spain and Portugal; labor to raise sugar and tobacco in the West Indies and North America.

The labor situation in Europe at the time made slave labor in America peculiarly profitable. The working population of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was limited. The devastation of the Thirty Years' War and the demand for labor and services on the feudal estates made any large-scale exportation of labor to America unthinkable. On the other hand, sugar, cotton, and tobacco were suitable to mass production on the plantations with conventional standards of work, simple tools, and comparatively small outlay for clothing and food. The organized slave gang was more profitable on the land than the peasant proprietor. The new capitalism as a method of production and trade began to supplant the farmer and merchant at home in Europe.

In 1660 the upheaval of Civil War in England was at an end, and England was ready to embark on the slave trade for the benefit of her sugar and tobacco colonies. The British increased the import of slaves to America, raised sugar, indigo, and cotton, and began to bring these goods to England for processing. They then exported some of these processed foods to Africa to buy more slaves. Trade began to change from a gambler's search for treasure to investment for

permanent income; and this income consisted of goods for sale which were in practice found more valuable than treasure for hoarding. To perfect this arrangement slaves and more slaves must be had.

At the same time, the conscience of the world began to writhe. "Modern slavery was created by Christians, it was continued by Christians, it was in some respects more barbarous than anything the world had yet seen, and its worst features were to be witnessed in countries that were most ostentatious in their parade of Christianity. It is this that provides the final and unanswerable indictment of the Christian Church."³ There had been the splendor of the Catholic Church under Alexander VI and Leo X, and then the revolt led by Luther, the Reformation. Thus was the growing consciousness of the dignity of the human soul brought face to face with slavery and a new slave trade. Gradually it was rationalized widely as a method of rescuing the heathen from perdition and saving his soul. However, this rationalization meant nothing when it conflicted with the profits of trade; and planters particularly, stoutly refused to release converts, and innumerable Christians often would not allow conversion. The profits of this new aspect of trade meant investment and the capitalist system.

Investment called for labor, and cheap labor, if the profit was to be high; but labor was beginning to be conscious and to revolt. This was the meaning of the Peasant War in Germany in the sixteenth century. But there was revolt and revolutionary thought not only in Europe; indeed it may be insisted that the revolt of labor against its modern degradation began in America rather than in Europe. This was the meaning of five slave revolts among the blacks in America and the beginning of the fateful dynasty of Maroons, or free Negroes, hiding in organized rebellion in the mountains of Cuba, Jamaica, and Haiti, in Mexico and Brazil. In the seventeenth century, with the increased importation of slaves, there were nine revolts,

³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

leading to pitched war in Jamaica and Barbados and Haiti and to the independent state of Palmares in Brazil.

Nevertheless, England had the bit in her teeth. "Royal adventurers trading to Africa" in 1667 had among them members of the royal family, three dukes, eight earls, seven lords, and twenty-seven knights. With the end of the civil war in England, British merchants crowded upon the landholding aristocracy for an increased share in the profits of industry. While the British were fighting ostensibly for dynastic disputes in Europe, they were really, in the War of Spanish Succession and in the Seven Years' War, fighting for profit through world trade and especially the slave trade. In 1713 they gained, by the coveted Treaty of Asiento, the right to monopolize the slave trade from Africa to the Spanish colonies. In that century they beat Holland to her knees and started her economic decline. They overthrew the Portuguese in India, and finally, by the middle of the century, overcame their last rival in India, the French. In the eighteenth century they raised the slave trade to the greatest single body of trade on earth.

The Royal African Company transported an average of five thousand slaves a year between 1680 and 1686; but the newly rich middle-class merchants were clamoring for free trade in human flesh. Eventually the Royal African Company was powerless against the competition of free merchant traders, and a new organization was established in 1750 called the "Company of Merchants trading to Africa."

In the first nine years of this "free trade," Bristol alone shipped 160,950 Negroes to the sugar plantations. In 1760, 146 ships sailed from British ports to Africa with a capacity of 36,000 slaves. In 1771 there were 190 ships and 47,000 slaves. The British colonies between 1680 and 1786 imported over two million slaves. By the middle of the eighteenth century Bristol owned 237 slave trade vessels, London, 147, and Liverpool, 89.

Liverpool's first slave vessel sailed for Africa in 1709. In 1730 it had 15 ships in the trade and in 1771, 105. The slave

trade brought Liverpool in the late eighteenth century a clear profit of £300,000 a year. A fortunate slave trade voyage made a profit of £8,000, and even a poor cargo would make £5,000. It was not uncommon in Liverpool and Bristol for the slave traders to make 100 per cent profit. The proportion of slave ships to the total shipping of England was one in one hundred in 1709 and one-third in 1771. The slave traders were strong in both the House of Lords and the House of Commons, and a British coin, the guinea, originated in the African trade of the eighteenth century.

In the midst of this, a tremendous treasure from India poured into England. The Battle of Plassey gave India to the British Empire for plunder on a scale seldom seen before or since. The enormous extent of robbery of the Indians by British civil servants has been abundantly proved. Howitt referred to "the scenes and transactions in our great Indian empire—that splendid empire which has poured out such floods of wealth into this country; in which such princely presents of diamonds and gold have been heaped on our adventurers; from the gleanings of which so many happy families in England 'live at home at ease' and in the enjoyment of every earthly luxury and refinement. For every palace built by returned Indian nabobs in England; for every investment by fortunate adventurers in India stock; for every cup of wine and delicious viand tasted by the families of Indian growth amongst us, how many of these Indians themselves are now picking berries in the wild jungles, sweltering at the thankless plough only to suffer fresh extortions, or snatching with the bony fingers of famine, the bloated grains from the manure of the high-ways of their native country!"⁴

The directors of the East India Company themselves admitted: "We have the strongest sense of the deplorable state to which our affairs were on the point of being reduced, from the corruption and rapacity of our servants, and *the universal*

⁴ Howitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 309-310.

depravity of manners throughout the settlement. The general relaxation of all discipline and obedience, both military and civil, was hastily tending to a dissolution of all government. Our letter to the Select Committee expresses our sentiments of what has been obtained by way of donations; and to that we must add, that we think the vast fortunes acquired in the inland trade *have been obtained by a scene of the most tyrannic and oppressive conduct that was ever known in any age or country!*"⁵

However this wealth was obtained and however pious the regret at the methods of its rape, there can be no doubt as to what became of it. Its owners in the main were not royal spendthrifts, nor aristocratic dilettantes; and even if some were, their financial advisers put their funds largely into the safe investment of West Indian slavery and the African slave trade. Thus an enormous amount of free capital seeking safe investment and permanent income poured into the banks, companies, and new corporations. The powerful British institution of the stock exchange was born.

It was Karl Marx who made the great unanswerable charge of the sources of capitalism in African slavery: "The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement, and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalized the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief momenta of primitive accumulation. On their heels treads the commercial war of the European nations, with the globe for a theatre. It begins with the revolt of the Netherlands from Spain, assumes giant dimensions in England's anti-Jacobin war, and is still going on in the opium wars against China. . . ."⁶

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

⁶ Karl Marx, *Capital*, tr. by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (Chicago: C. H. Kerr & Co., 1909), Vol. I, p. 823.

“With the development of capitalist production during the manufacturing period, the public opinion of Europe had lost the last remnant of shame and conscience. The nations bragged cynically of every infamy that served them as a means of capitalistic accumulation. Read, e.g., the naïve *Annals of Commerce* of the worthy A. Anderson. Here it is trumpeted forth as a triumph of English statecraft that at the peace of Utrecht, England extorted from the Spaniards by the Asiento Treaty the privilege of being allowed to ply the Negro trade, until then only carried on between Africa and the English West Indies, between Africa and Spanish America as well. England thereby acquired the right of supplying Spanish America until 1743 with four thousand eight hundred Negroes yearly. This threw, at the same time, an official cloak over British smuggling. Liverpool waxed fat on the slave trade. This was its method of primitive accumulation. And, even to the present day, Liverpool ‘respectability’ is the Pindar of the slave trade which . . . ‘has coincided with that spirit of bold adventure which has characterised the trade of Liverpool and rapidly carried it to its present state of prosperity; has occasioned vast employment for shipping and sailors, and greatly augmented the demand for the manufactures of the country.’ Liverpool employed in the slave trade, in 1730, 15 ships; in 1751, 53; in 1760, 74; in 1770, 96; and in 1792, 132.”⁷

“*Tantae molis erat*, to establish the ‘eternal laws of Nature’ of the capitalist mode of production, to complete the process of separation between labourers and conditions of labour, to transform at one pole the social means of production and subsistence into capital, at the opposite pole, the mass of the population into wage-labourers, into ‘free labouring poor,’ that artificial product of modern society. If money, according to Augier, ‘comes into the world with a congenital blood-stain on one cheek,’ capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt.”⁸

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 832–33. Marx quotes the work of Aiken (1795), p. 339.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 833–34.

The method by which slavery and capital investment were developed by Great Britain can be clearly followed: the "triangular trade" flourished. It depended first mainly upon sugar and tobacco and later on cotton. The processing of these materials turned England into a manufacturing country, and the focusing of the attention of technicians upon methods of manufacture brought an astonishing series of inventions in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The Negroes were purchased with British manufactures and transported to the plantations. There they produced sugar, cotton, indigo, tobacco, and other products. The processing of these created new industries in England; while the needs of the Negroes and their owners provided a wider market for British industry, New England agriculture, and the Newfoundland fisheries.

By 1750 there was hardly a manufacturing town in England which was not connected with the colonial trade. The profits provided one of the main streams of that capital which financed the Industrial Revolution. The West Indian islands became the center of the British Empire and of immense importance to the grandeur of England. It was the Negro slaves who made these sugar colonies the most precious colonies ever recorded in the annals of imperialism. Experts called them "the fundamental prop and support" of the Empire. The British Empire was regarded as a "magnificent superstructure of American commerce and naval power on an African foundation."⁹

William Wood said that the slave trade was the "spring and parent whence the others flow." Postlethwayt described the slave trade as "the first principle and foundation of all the rest, the mainspring of the machine which sets every wheel in motion."¹⁰

The triangular trade made an enormous contribution to Britain's industrial development. The profits fertilized the productive system of the country. The slate industry in Wales

⁹ Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 52.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

was revolutionized by a plantation owner. The British West Indies interest was back of the vast railway development. Cotton responded to new inventions. Between 1709 and 1787 the tonnage of British shipping in foreign trade increased four-fold. The British nobility benefited largely from the West Indian trade. The Lascelles were from Barbados, and one of their descendants is now brother-in-law of the King of England. The Earl of Chatham considered the sugar colonies as "the landed interest of this kingdom." West Indian investors bought seats in Parliament. The poetry of both Browning and Barrett with all its depth and beauty grew straight out of West Indian slavery.

While a profit of seven shillings per head per annum was sufficient to enrich a country, it was declared that each white man in the colonies brought a profit of over seven pounds. Sir Dalby Thomas declared that every person employed on the sugar plantation was a hundred and thirty times more valuable to England than one at home. Professor Pitman has estimated that in 1775 British West Indies plantations represented a valuation of fifty million pounds sterling, and the sugar planters themselves put the figure at seventy millions in 1788. In 1798 Pitt assessed the annual income from West Indian plantations at four million pounds as compared with one million from the rest of the world. As Adam Smith wrote in *Wealth of Nations*: "The profits of a sugar plantation in any of our West Indian colonies are generally much greater than those of any other cultivation that is known either in Europe or America." According to Davenant,¹¹ "Britain's total trade at the end of the seventeenth century brought a profit of £2,000,000. The plantation trade accounted for £600,000; re-export of plantation goods, £120,000; European, African, and Levant trade, £600,000; East India trade £500,000; re-export of East India goods, £180,000."¹²

¹¹ Davenant was the author of *Discourses on the Publick Revenues*, published in London in 1698.

¹² Eric Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

The Napoleonic wars widened the trade empire of Great Britain and extended the market for her manufactures. After twenty-two years of fighting, British merchants surpassed in wealth the landed aristocracy, and the Reform Bill of 1832 reflected this economic fact.

We may pause here to enumerate a series of events which have been too often looked upon as separate and unconnected. They are as follows:

- 1500-1600: The revolt of slaves in the West Indies
- 1655-1738: War between the British and the Maroons
- 1750: British free trade in human flesh
- 1757: The loot of India begins
- 1774: American association against the slave trade
- 1775: The American Revolution
- 1789: The French Revolution
- 1791-1798: Revolt of Toussaint L'Ouverture
- 1792-1815: Reaction in France and the rise and fall of Napoleon
- 1800-1900: Capitalism and the factory system in England
- 1807: Abolition of the British slave trade
- 1830: The Cotton Kingdom
- 1833-1838: British abolition of slavery
- 1846: Repeal of the British Corn Laws; free trade
- 1863: Emancipation in America
- 1884: Imperial colonialism.

The slave revolts were the beginnings of the revolutionary struggle for the uplift of the laboring masses in the modern world. They have been minimized in extent because of the propaganda in favor of slavery and the feeling that the knowledge of slave revolt would hurt the system. In the eighteenth century there were fifteen such revolts: in Portuguese and Dutch South Africa, in the French colonies, in the British possessions, in Cuba and little islands like St. Lucia. There were pitched

battles and treaties between the British and the black Maroons and finally there was a rebellion in Haiti which changed the face of the world and drove England out of the slave trade. A list of these revolts follows:

- 1522: Revolt in San Domingo
- 1530: Revolt in Mexico
- 1550: Revolt in Peru
- 1550: Appearance of the Maroons
- 1560: Byano Revolt in Central America
- 1600: Revolt of Maroons
- 1655: Revolt of 1500 Maroons in Jamaica
- 1663: Land given Jamaican Maroons
- 1664-1738: Maroons fight British in Jamaica
- 1674: Revolt in Barbados
- 1679: Revolt in Haiti
- 1679-1782: Maroons in Haiti organized
- 1691: Revolt in Haiti
- 1692: Revolt in Barbados
- 1695: Palmares; revolt in Brazil
- 1702: Revolt in Barbados
- 1711: Negroes fight French in Brazil
- 1715-1763: Revolts in Surinam
- 1718: Revolt in Haiti
- 1719: Revolt in Brazil
- 1738: Treaty with Maroons
- 1763: Black Caribs revolt
- 1779: Haitians help the United States Revolution
- 1780: French Treaty with Maroons
- 1791: Dominican revolt
- 1791-1803: Haitian Revolution
- 1794: Cuban revolt
- 1794: Dominican revolt
- 1795: Maroons rebel
- 1796: St. Lucia revolt
- 1816: Barbados revolt

- 1828-1837: Revolts in Brazil
- 1840-1845: Haiti helps Bolivar
- 1844: Cuban revolt
- 1844-1893: Dominican revolt
- 1861: Revolt in Jamaica
- 1895: War in Cuba

These revolts show that the docility of Negro slaves in America is a myth. They fall into two groups: those before the French Revolution and those after. The revolt of Maroons in Jamaica and Cuba and the Bush Negroes in South America and the repeated attempts in Haiti frightened the slaveholders and threatened the stability of the whole system. In Jamaica the Maroons "continued to distress the island for upwards of forty years, during which time forty-four acts of assembly were passed, and at least £240,000 expended for their suppression."¹³ The governor of Barbados wrote: "The public mind is ever tremblingly aware to the dangers of insurrection," and the statute books all over the slave territory testified to this fact.

The next event that opposed the slave trade and slavery was the American Revolution. Not only did the colonists achieve their independence through the help of slaves and the promise of their freedom, and with the co-operation in money and men from Haiti, but they represented actual working classes rather than exploiters of labor. Finally, the French Revolution burst forth as a war against privilege based on birth and demanded freedom, especially economic freedom to trade and to enter industry without coercion.

The result was that the slave trade met distinct opposition based on humanitarian grounds; but this opposition would have been powerless to stop the trade if it had not been evident that the trade itself as a source of profit was threatened. The revolt of America confirmed the superiority of the French

¹³ Bryan Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (Philadelphia: James Humphreys, 1805), Vol. I, p. 340.

sugar colonies. Between 1783 and 1789 the progress of San Domingo had been amazing. At the end of the eighteenth century the British sugar planters lost their supremacy to the French colonies. French colonial exports amounted to eight millions pounds while British colonial exports amounted to five million pounds.

When the American colonies won their independence, the Caribbean ceased to be a British sea and investments began to be transferred from the West to the East Indies. In 1783 Prime Minister William Pitt showed increased interest in India and encouraged Wilberforce to propose the abolition of the slave trade.

Then came the French Revolution and eventually the revolt of Haiti. The British made every effort to seize control of this famous French sugar colony. They tried both force of arms and bribery, but at last were compelled to recognize the independence of Toussaint L'Ouverture, whom they tried to divorce from allegiance to the French.

Nevertheless, with Haiti out of the world market, the British could have retained their hold upon the sugar industry had it not been for the continued cultivation of sugar in Spanish and Portuguese colonies. So long as these colonies could obtain cheap slaves, they threatened and even destroyed the investment in slave labor already made by British capital. Looked upon as machines or "real estate," as slaves legally were, the investment in Negro labor was being undermined so long as cheaper Negro labor could be had from Africa.

To keep the prices of slaves from falling, the slave trade had to be limited or stopped. Otherwise the whole slavery investment would totter, and that is what England faced after the revolution of Toussaint. Early in the nineteenth century, therefore, she began to change, and back of philanthropists like Sharpe and Wilberforce came the unexpected support of opportunist politicians like Pitt.

Moreover, capitalism was far enough developed to produce

sufficient free finance capital to effect a transfer of investment from one field to another without such losses as would cripple the system. Losses there had to be, but they were part of the anarchy of business methods, which by large-scale gambling and periodic crises rushed blindly to newer and larger fields of profit. Eventually Negro slavery and the slave trade were abandoned in favor of colonial imperialism, and the England which in the eighteenth century established modern slavery in America on a vast scale, appeared in the nineteenth century as the official emancipator of slaves and founder of a method of control of human labor and material which proved more profitable than slavery.

For a long time the fiction of the slave trade as a method of conversion to Christianity had ceased to salve the conscience of honest-thinking men. Slavery and the slave trade were pouring such treasure into England, building her cities, railways, and manufactures, and making her so powerful a country that the defense of the system was fierce. England became mistress of the seas. The empire sang "Hail Britannia, Britannia Rules the Waves."

Before the American Revolution, English public opinion accepted the view of the slavetrader: "Tho' to traffic in human creatures, may at first sight appear barbarous, inhuman, and unnatural; yet the traders herein have as much to plead in their own excuse, as can be said for some other branches of trade. . . . In a word, from this trade proceed benefits, far outweighing all, either real or pretended mischiefs and inconveniences."¹⁴

The cruelty and inhumanity of the slave trade was a horrible fact. A committee of the House of Commons described the "Middle Passage": "The Negroes were chained to each other hand and foot, and stowed so close that they were not allowed above a foot and a half for each in breadth. Thus rammed together like herrings in a barrel, they contracted putrid and

¹⁴ Eric Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

fatal disorders; so that they who came to inspect them in a morning had occasionally to pick dead slaves out of their rows, and to unchain their carcasses from the bodies of their wretched fellow-sufferers to whom they had been fastened.”¹⁵ “During the hearing of a case for insurance, the following facts were brought out. A slave-ship, with four hundred and forty-two slaves, was bound from Guinea to Jamaica. Sixty of the slaves died from overcrowding. The captain, being short of water, threw ninety-six more overboard. Afterwards, twenty-six more were drowned. Ten drowned themselves in despair. Yet the ship reached port before the water was exhausted.”¹⁶

The revolt against the Protestants began to appear among the Methodists, Baptists, and Quakers. Methodism condoned slavery but was sensitive to and alarmed over the slave trade. The Baptists, beginning in England in 1600, developed into an extremely democratic organization which appealed to workers and even to slaves; and the general philosophical and economic enlightenment of the eighteenth century brought men of learning and artists into a distinct anti-slavery movement.

The slave trade was abolished by England in 1807, and England undertook to make the rest of the world outlaw it too. The United States, Portugal, and Spain gave only lip service to this program, and the slave trade continued up to the middle of the nineteenth century although to a lessening extent.

With the stopping of the slave trade it was evident that investment in labor was different from investment in land, material, and machines; that labor, no matter how much it was degraded, had initiative and made demands. Revolt of the working classes, following the incentive of Haiti, spread. The spectacular and astonishing triumph of revolution in Haiti threatened the whole slave system of the West Indies and even of continental America. It was this revolt more than any other single thing that spelled doom not only of the African slave

¹⁵ Ingram, *History of Slavery and Serfdom* (London, 1895), p. 152.

¹⁶ Goldwin Smith, *The United Kingdom: A Political History*, Vol. II, p. 247.

trade but of slavery in America as a basis of an industrial system. The revolt encouraged the abolition movement in the United States and in Brazil; it flamed in practically every island of the West Indies. Unless the slave worker could be pacified, income based on slave labor would be destroyed. The result was that in 1833 England abolished slavery. Similar abolition followed in the United States after civil war.

The Napoleonic wars did not ruin England; together with the African slave trade, Negro slavery, and the loot of India, they made the British government the most powerful in the world; they ruined England's industrial rivals; they left her in control of the chief sources of raw materials by colonial ownership and with the ready cash to outbid rivals; her vast store of finance capital enabled her to manufacture machinery and wait a generation for repayment; British knowledge of science and technique enabled the country to make the best machines and tools and render the whole world creditor for their purchase; Britain ruled the seas and thus monopolized transport. Even when in the earlier mad rush for profit on the new capitalism, she reduced her own labor to slavery in the factory system and faced revolution, she proved the only land able to raise wages and yet maintain high profit by shifting the burden of pauperized toil to the colonies and dominated peoples; and at the same time, although author and chief supporter of modern slavery, Great Britain could hold up her head and, by suppressing a slavery now becoming unprofitable, lead world philanthropy as the great emancipator of the slave.

But even as this role rejoiced her greater souls, the British Empire became the victim of the worst legacy of Negro slavery: the doctrine of race superiority and the color line, which in a later century made civilized man commit suicide in a mad attempt to hold the vast majority of the earth's peoples in thrall to the white race—a goal to which they still cling today, hidden away behind nationalism and power politics.

This was not a rake's progress of malevolence; it was a bitter

struggle between Good and Evil—between fine and noble souls and conscienceless desire for luxury, power, and indulgence. The forces of Evil were continually reinforced by the vast power which slavery and the exploitation of men put into the hands of the betrayers of labor, making them the envied of the earth, until nations became willing to destroy the earth in order to gain it. Suppose that at any point in this Descent to Hell, Right had received help and reinforcement? Suppose that a free America had welcomed a free Haiti into a world that insisted on freedom for Africa and Asia? But no; slavery dominated the “free” republic of the west for half a century, with the slave cotton kingdom as foundation stone for British manufactures, while Great Britain seized land and labor in all the dark world. Suppose that England had freed and educated Africa, emancipated India, and joined hands with Japan to uplift China, instead of making ignorance compulsory for the majority of men even in England, in order to build up the most “comfortable” and envied aristocracy on earth? Suppose the technique and science of the nineteenth century had been used to raise the many instead of to enrich the few?

A dream? Perhaps, but even an unrealized dream would be better than the present nightmare.

The new era of capitalism dawned, springing from Calvinism: thrift, industry, honesty as the best policy, along with interest and profit. Capitalism passed into high capitalism at different periods in different nations: In England in 1846, when English capitalism needed no protective tariff, it smashed the agriculturists in Parliament and forced the adoption of free trade; in the United States invested capital passed the value of the land about 1850. The Revolution of 1848 in France revealed the power of organized labor as well as the power of capitalism, which later triumphed. In Germany capitalism began its full sway after World War I.

In the British Parliament, after the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832, capitalism was paramount. The plantation trade

had formerly meant everything; but in the new capitalist system, plantation slavery had little place. Britain's mechanized might was still, however, making the whole world her footstool. She was clothing the world, exporting men and machines, and had become the world's banker. British capital, like British production, was thinking in world terms. "Between 1815 and 1830 at least fifty million pounds had been invested more or less permanently in the securities of the most stable European governments, more than twenty million had been invested in one form or another in Latin America, and five or six millions had very quietly found their way to the United States."¹⁷ But no new capital went to the West Indies.

This then was the history of the slave trade, of that extraordinary movement which made investment in human flesh the first experiment in organized modern capitalism; which indeed made capitalism possible. It accompanied the beginnings of democracy in the modern world, but that beginning was hindered and almost stopped by the result which black slavery had on Africa itself.

In Africa a new and supplementary means of control, developed by means of the Arab trade in ivory, led to exploration and eventual annexation under the pretense of attacking slavery. In this whole story of the so-called "Arab slave trade" the truth has been strangely twisted. Arab slave raiding was in the beginning, and largely to the end, a secondary result of the British and American slavery and slave trade and specifically was based on American demand for ivory. The Arabs had by the nineteenth century driven back the Portuguese opposite Zanzibar and had developed two profitable products of trade: ivory and slaves.

Ivory has a long history. Homer repeatedly mentions it. Ivory has been found in the ruins of Nineveh and in the days of Tuthmosis III; cargoes of ivory and ebony in addition to

¹⁷ Leland Jenks, *Migrations of British Capital to 1875* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927), p. 64.

gold came down the Nile. In Kings and Chronicles we learn of the great throne of ivory which Solomon built and hear that once every three years ships came to Israel with gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks. Ezekiel laments the ruin of Tyre with its boxwood benches inlaid with ivory. In Greece the statue by Phidias of Jupiter Olympus, one of the seven wonders of the world, was made of ivory, marble, and gold. The seats of the Roman senators were made of ivory, and large quantities of ivory poured into Rome from Africa.

By the beginning of the Christian era the trade in ivory had decreased. The herds of elephants had disappeared, and there was no organized method of gathering the ivory or of bringing it to market. Moreover, it was not until the Renaissance, in the fifteenth century, that renewed demand made search for it profitable. The Portuguese, both on the West Coast of Africa and in Mozambique, began to export it. They were so prodigal that the considerable store which the natives had collected was almost exhausted by the middle of the seventeenth century.

The Dutch began to collect ivory in South Africa, and there and in Central Africa a steady supply kept pace with the demand. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, there came a new demand from the west. The ivory had long been carried by the slaves to the coast or down the Nile, and then instead of the bearers being returned, they were sold. Most of the ivory in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries went to Arabia, Persia, and India, and the slaves to the same parts of the world as soldiers and servants. The trade was small, and while the slave trade was a disrupting influence it did not transfer any large number of persons.

Ivory from about 1840 became increasingly valuable. Its gathering called for fire-arms and transport. Europe and America furnished the arms in vast quantity. Negro porters bore the white gold over vast distances on their heads, and the traders doubled their profit by selling these Negroes into slavery in the

Middle East and America. The result was an industry with huge profits, which called to service the most vicious elements of the Nile Valley with its social disintegration of centuries, aided by the efforts of Mohammed Ali, the ally of white colonial aggression.

It also called white soldiers of fortune like Selous and Lugard, who slaughtered the herds of half-human elephants in cold blood. It called the explorers who followed the hunters and slave traders. After the explorers came the missionaries. Both pointed out that the ivory-slave business was killing the goose that might lay even more golden eggs, if instead of killing valuable labor, this labor and materials were subject to political control of Europe and the abundant capital seeking investment. The missionaries like Livingstone saw in this not only a means of saving bodies and souls of human beings, but also thrift and good business, which in the folklore of early capitalism were the inevitable elements divinely conjoined for modern civilization.

The rising demand in England and America for the suppression of the slave trade in East Africa was not pure philanthropy. It was that "philanthropy and 5 per cent" which was the transition from the century of human slavery in America to the century of the transfer of capital from sugar plantations to colonial imperialism in Africa and Asia. The main end of both enterprises was profit to the owner and exploiter, mainly at the expense of poverty, ignorance, and pain for the slave and native subject.

About the middle third of the nineteenth century the situation changed abruptly. The demand for ivory increased. In America, ivory working was an early industry, especially in New England on the banks of the Connecticut, where ivory has been cut since 1820. It was processed for carving, for cutlery, billiard balls, and miniatures, and for piano keys. At Deep River and Ivoryton and Buffalo the keyboards for all the pianos in America, Canada, and Australia were made. Because of

increased demand, European and American traders set up establishments for buying ivory in Zanzibar; in the thirties and forties prices increased. Arabs began to ask for arms in order to shoot elephants and coerce the natives. Increased exports of ivory to Europe and America and of slaves to Arabia and the Persian Gulf, called for increased imports of weapons and ammunition. The Germans sent thirteen thousand muskets in one year. The British and Portuguese sent thousands of the old Sepoy guns from India. The French supplied a single-barrel light weapon. American blasting powder came in ten- and twenty-five-pound kegs. German cavalry sabers came and cases of percussion caps. Arabs borrowed from Indian usurers at 60 to 80 per cent, and set out for the haunts of elephants.¹⁸

Curiously enough it was this ivory trade that stimulated and guided travel and discovery in Central Africa. Explorers followed the ivory traders, who were the true discoverers. Burton, Speke, Livingstone, Stanley, and Cameron started from the Arab capital of Zanzibar. They followed the lines of traffic set by the Arab ivory traders. Petherick, the British ivory trader, preceded Schweinfurth, and the countries he explored were opened up by the ivory trade. Livingstone found the ivory traders on the Upper Congo. Cameron left Zanzibar in 1873 and was the first European to cross Africa from east to west along the ivory traders' routes. Stanley made his second expedition, 1874-1877, and was helped by Tippoo-Tib, the great Negro slave trader who had also helped Livingstone. The last of the great expeditions was Stanley's, in 1887-1889, when he rescued Emin Pasha and his Negro wife.

It was in this way that knowledge of the technique of the slave trade and its meaning came to Europe at a time when the slave trade from Africa to America had been largely suppressed. We had a series of first-hand descriptions of this trade.

Ivory became in the last half of the nineteenth century the

¹⁸ E. D. Moore, *Ivory: Scourge of Africa* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), p. 54.

scourge of Central Africa. The complete story of bloodshed and cruelty will never be known. Thousands of miles of fertile country were turned into wilderness and ruin. Hundreds of thousands of elephants were slain and thousands of human beings. It has been estimated that not more than one in five of the captives bearing the ivory ever reached the ocean. Starved and weakened by disease and the strain of marching, they lined the long paths with their dead.

"Picture, if you can, a territory nearly as large as the whole of our United States east of the Mississippi River and Illinois, terrorized and overrun in all directions with hundreds of roving bands of plundering murderers armed with invincible weapons of oppression, a land of blood and might, the nights filled with flame and destruction, the days weary with the marching of the coffles and the blood of the despairing, hopeless slaves. And this for years, *for decades*." ¹⁹

Henry M. Stanley wrote: "Every tusk, piece, and scrap in the possession of an Arab trader has been steeped and dyed in blood. Every pound weight has cost the life of a man, woman, or child, for every five pounds a hut has been burned, for every two tusks a whole village has been destroyed, every twenty tusks have been obtained at the price of a district with all its people, villages, and plantations. It is simply incredible that, because ivory is required . . . populations, tribes, and nations should be utterly destroyed." ²⁰

Hamed bin Muhammed, a Negro, better known as Tippoo-Tib, was one of the greatest of slave traders. He eventually became sultan and overlord of the country of Kassongo in the very middle of Central Africa, which he made a center of ivory collecting and slave hunting. He had a thousand muzzle-loading guns. And it was not until 1905 that he died.

The credit for suppressing the slave-ivory trade must go to Livingstone who inspired it, to Kirk of East Africa who helped

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

²⁰ Henry M. Stanley, *In Darkest Africa* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), Vol. I, p. 240.

carry it through, and to Bargarsh, the Negroid Arab, who actually suppressed the Zanzibar trade. But these three men represent the curious interests involved: Livingstone was a humanitarian who thought that trade and commerce was the best and natural way to improve the condition of man. He would be horrified to see South Africa and Rhodesia today and realize the plight into which the natives have been forced by European trade and industrialism. Kirk was a British imperialist who foresaw the colonial era. He was no philanthropist desirous of the development and rise of the blacks. What he wanted was to expand the power of England, and he believed that could be done best by suppressing the slave trade and slave labor under the Arabs and increasing colonial ownership and serf labor under Great Britain. The Arab sultan Bargarsh was persuaded that colonial alliance with Great Britain would protect his future power and income.

The effect upon Europe was curious. European and American commerce was stimulated. The missionaries, still believing in the expanding trade of the eighteenth century, coupled commerce with missionary effort and did not see the inherent contradiction between them. The result was that the missionary and the merchant worked side by side and hand in hand. It was Livingstone who declared that he was bringing commerce and missionary effort to the natives.

Commercial companies, like the African Lakes Company, exploited and administered territories and equipped the elephant hunters. They supplied the rifles and sent the hunters, reserving the right to buy the ivory at a set price. It was thus that Sir Alfred Sharp and Lord Lugard began life as professional ivory hunters. The coming of American, British, French, German and Portuguese traders in the middle of the nineteenth century furnished the artillery for the worst period in this ivory-slave trade under the Arabs. At its height thirty thousand slaves were exported annually through Zanzibar, leaving more than a hundred thousand who had died on the way to the sea.

Then that extraordinary transformation took place in British public policy. The stopping of the expansion of the Arab slave trade in East and Central Africa became a means of building up the British Empire. All that Britain had done in establishing the new modern slavery in America was forgotten in her effort to suppress the ivory-slave trade in Africa, and that effort was only the other side of her building up of a great African colonial territory which she proposed to exploit by the use of cheap native labor, the sale of African raw materials, and the opening of markets for her merchandise. Slavery and the slave trade became transformed into anti-slavery and colonialism, and all with the same determination and demand to increase the profit of investment.

It all became a characteristic drama of capitalistic exploitation, where the right hand knew nothing of what the left hand did, yet rhymed its grip with uncanny timeliness; where the investor neither knew, nor inquired, nor greatly cared about the sources of his profits; where the enslaved or dead or half-paid worker never saw nor dreamed of the value of his work (now owned by others); where neither the society darling nor the great artist saw blood on the piano keys; where the clubman, boasting of great game hunting, heard above the click of his smooth, lovely, resilient billiard balls no echo of the wild shrieks of pain from kindly, half-human beasts as fifty to seventy-five thousand each year were slaughtered in cold, cruel, lingering horror of living death; sending their teeth to adorn civilization on the bowed heads and chained feet of thirty thousand black slaves, leaving behind more than a hundred thousand corpses in broken, flaming homes.

Quite naturally all this ivory trade centered in London. In Mincing Lane the ivory of the world was bought and sold from the time of the eighteen twenties, when the slave cotton kingdom began to pour profit from American plantations into New York and Manchester. The annual imports of ivory into London rose as follows:

1788-1798:	100 tons a year
1827:	60 tons
1845-1849:	294 tons
1870-1874:	627 tons
1880-1884:	514 tons

This meant the death of seventy-five thousand elephants a year in the heyday of the trade. An enthusiastic elephant hunter described the death of one elephant. They had killed her child. "She turned with a shriek of rage and made a furious charge. She charged three or four times. She often stood still and covered with blood faced the men as she received fresh wounds. At last with a short struggle she staggered around and sank down kneeling and dead." Far away over miles and years, on lovely keys chipped from her curving tusks, men played the *Moonlight Sonata*. Neither for the keys nor the music was the death of the elephant actually necessary.

It was this London market that supplied raw material to be made into billiard balls and piano keys and lovely little ornaments to Ivoryton, Connecticut, and also contrived through the veiled, devious ways of high finance banking to supply Arab and Negro slave raiders with powder and guns and to buy their ivory at prices which were fabulous to them. Behind the slave raiders came the explorers, who pointed out the vast resources of Africa and the possibilities of African labor; behind the explorers came the missionaries, who cried out bitterly against slavery but said nothing and knew less of the white sources of their power in London and Buffalo.

Gradually the picture changed: the captains of industry saw new opportunity for capital. They could wrench the profits of ivory from the Arabs and Negroes; they could wheel England and world religion back of imperial seizure of Africa from the Cape of Good Hope to Cairo, with not only petty profit from ivory, but vaster profits from spices, gold, diamonds, and copper; they could replace wasteful slavery with local black labor paid at wages from one-half to nine-tenths cheaper than white

labor in Europe and America and make white labor like it because all this could be done to the glory of God and the superiority of the white race. And it was done.

So colonial imperialism was born. And so some of its leaders illustrated in their own individual lives its development; there was Frederick C. Selous, who began as an elephant hunter and then annexed the peoples and minerals of Mashonaland to the British Empire; there was Frederick D. Lugard, who first fought in India, Burma, and the Sudan; then as a big game hunter in East Africa, where, armed by the African Lakes Company, he murdered elephants in great numbers and became a part of the ivory-slave trade complex. Next he appeared in East Africa as a free-lance fighter against Arabs and Mohammedans and in defense of Christian missions; he reappeared as agent of the British East Africa Company and annexed Uganda to Britain. Thereupon he was recognized as a great champion of imperial England and went to West Africa to help subdue the falling remnants of Sudanese culture. Here he shrewdly realized that conquest of these peoples could most easily be accomplished if their tribal government were left undisturbed, while Britain controlled trade and foreign relations. Having thus invented "indirect rule," he became a British governor in West Africa. Eventually he retired, lived in England on a pension paid by black West Africa, was regarded as the greatest authority on Africa, and died in honor as a noble British lord.

What effect did all this have upon the dark natives of Africa? In the past we have dwelt upon physical suffering, the loss of life, and the devastation of the land, but we have not thought of the larger and deeper social disintegration. First of all, not only was the way opened from the Sahara to the Cape of Good Hope for marauding masses of Bantu warriors, but this great and long-continued movement became organized for aggression and conquest. We hear of the fierce onslaughts of wild tribes like the Yaggas, but we must also remember that there came a new sort of organization. Negro life could not settle down for

political organization and empire building. It could not wait for the development of herdsmen and agriculture. It must hurry on to safer places and sheltered land and loot. "It was sorrowfully recognized that the degradation of the Negro peoples of the nearer African interior was the direct result of European slave-dealing. The savagery of Dahomey and Benin was the survival of the ferocity by which native chiefs, a century earlier, had supplied the demands of English and Dutch traders for victims for the plantations."²¹

This movement culminated in the magnificent and utterly ruthless army of a Chaka in the nineteenth century, which almost successfully battled machine guns with assagais. Then too on the West Coast came transformation: the city-states with their intricate social organization and carefully planned industry and beautiful art were pushed back and overwhelmed by newer, stronger military states, like that of Dahomey in the seventeenth century; and the Ashanti earlier had never gained in the line of peaceful industry and art as much as the new gains which they made as intermediaries of the slave traders.

The East African slave trade under Negroes like Tippoo-Tib became organized. The commercial ends and profits sought by Europe were subtly introduced into and shared by an Africa that had been foreign to this kind of life. The mild domestic slavery of the African tribes and of the Arabs and Persians, which did not preclude the son of a slave becoming a king, a statesman, or a poet, was changed into chattel slavery with hard labor and cruel tasks. The continued development of African civilization, forecast in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries by that in the Sudan, was prevented and turned backward into chaos, flight, and death.

Decadence could be seen on the West Coast, in the shadow of fabled Atlantis, where there emerged in curious juxtaposition the blood sacrifice of the Benin juju together with the

²¹ William H. Woodward, *A Short History of the British Empire* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1924), p. 307.

beautiful bronzes of the Benin sculptors. The great kingdoms and empires of the Sudan which fell at the battle of Tenkadibou not only suffered the incubus of a horde of Berber invaders as they moved east and became the Sudanese kingdoms of Kanem and Bornu and the realm of the Fung; they approached the valley of the Nile and came into fierce combat with some of the worst manifestations of Mohammedanism.

Pushing farther south, the Bantu herdsmen threw themselves upon the Congo and Zimbabwe. There came to Africa an end of industry, especially industry guided by taste and art. Cheap European goods pushed in and threw the native products out of competition. Rum and gin displaced the milder native drinks. The beautiful patterned cloth, brocades, and velvets disappeared before their cheap imitations in Manchester calicos. Methods of work were lost and forgotten.

With all this went the fall and disruption of the family, the deliberate attack upon the ancient African clan by missionaries. The invading investors who wanted cheap labor at the gold mines, the diamond mines, the copper and tin mines, the oil forests and cocoa fields, followed the missionaries. The authority of the family was broken up; the authority and tradition of the clan disappeared; the power of the chief was transmuted into the rule of the white district commissioner. The old religion was held up to ridicule, the old culture and ethical standards were degraded or disappeared, and gradually all over Africa spread the inferiority complex, the fear of color, the worship of white skin, the imitation of white ways of doing and thinking, whether good, bad, or indifferent. By the end of the nineteenth century the degradation of Africa was as complete as organized human means could make it. Chieftains, representing a thousand years of striving human culture, were decked out in second-hand London top-hats, while Europe snickered.

Frobenius says in his *Civilisation Africaine*: "When they [the first European navigators of the end of the Middle Ages]

arrived in the Gulf of Guinea and landed at Vaida, the captains were astonished to find streets well cared for, bordered for several leagues in length by two rows of trees; for many days they passed through a country of magnificent fields, a country inhabited by men clad in brilliant costumes, the stuff of which they had woven themselves! More to the South in the kingdom of Congo, a swarming crowd dressed in silk and velvet; great states well ordered, and even to the smallest details, powerful sovereigns, rich industries—civilized to the marrow of their bones. And the condition of the countries on the eastern coast—Mozambique, for example—was quite the same.

“What was revealed by the navigators of the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries furnishes an absolute proof that Negro Africa, which extended south of the desert zone of the Sahara, was in full efflorescence, in all the splendour of harmonious and well-formed civilizations, an efflorescence which the European conquistadors annihilated as far as they progressed. For the new country of America needed slaves, and Africa had them to offer, hundreds, thousands, whole cargoes of slaves. However, the slave trade was never an affair which meant a perfectly easy conscience, and it exacted a justification; hence one made of the Negro a half-animal, an article of merchandise. And in the same way the notion of fetish (Portuguese *feticheiro*) was invented as a symbol of African religion. As for me, I have seen in no part of Africa the Negroes worship a fetish. The idea of the ‘barbarous Negro’ is a European invention which has consequently prevailed in Europe until the beginning of this century.”²²

Who now were these Negroes on whom the world preyed for five hundred years? In defense of slavery and the slave

²² Leo Frobenius, *Histoire de la Civilisation Africaine*, tr. from the German by Back and Ermont (Paris: Gallimard, 1936), 6th ed., p. 56. This work has never been translated into English and is therefore quoted at length, since this greatest student of Africa is now dead and German publications have ceased for the present.

trade, and for the upbuilding of capitalistic industry and imperialistic colonialism, Africa and the Negro have been read almost out of the bounds of humanity. They lost in modern thought their history and cultures. All that was human in Africa was deemed European or Asiatic. Africa was no integral part of the world because the world which raped it had to pretend that it had not harmed a man but a thing.

In view of the present world catastrophe, I want to recall the history of Africa. I want to retell its story so far as distorted science has not concealed and lost it. I want to appeal to the past in order to explain the present. I know how unpopular this method is. What have we moderns, we wisest of the wise, to do with the dead past? Yet, "All that tread the globe, are but a handful to the tribes that slumber in its bosom," and who are we, stupid blunderers at the tasks these brothers sought to do—who are we to forget them?

I remember once offering to an editor an article which began with a reference to the experience of last century. "Oh," he said, "leave out the history and come to the present." I felt like going to him over a thousand miles and taking him by the lapels and saying, "Dear, dear jackass! Don't you understand that the past *is* the present; that without what *was*, nothing *is*? That, of the infinite dead, the living are but unimportant bits?"

So now I ask you to turn with me back five thousand years and more and ask, what is Africa and who are Negroes?



CHAPTER IV

THE PEOPLING OF AFRICA

This is the story based on science and scientific deductions from the facts as we know them concerning the physical development of African peoples.

SEERS say that for full two thousand million years this world out of fiery mist has whirled about the sun in molten metal and viscous crusted ball. That crust, congealing and separating the solids from the liquids, rose and fell in bulging ridges above the boiling sea. Five times the mass of land called Africa emerged and disappeared beneath the oceans. At last, at least a thousand million years ago, a mass of rigid rock lifted its crystal back above the waters and remained. Primeval Africa stretched from the ramparts of Ethiopia to where the copper, diamonds, and gold of South Africa eventually were found. More land arose, and perhaps three hundred million years ago Africa was connected with South America, India, and Australia. As the ocean basins dropped, the eastern half of Africa was slowly raised into a broad, flat arch.

The eastern side of this arch gave way, forming the Indian Ocean, and when the roof of the arch fell in there appeared the great Rift valley. This enormous crack, extending six thousand miles from the Zambesi to Ethiopia and Syria, is

said to be the only thing that Martians can descry as they look earthward of a starry night. All the great East African lakes lie in the main rift, and doubtless the Red Sea and the Sea of Galilee are also part of this vast phenomenon. Later, about ten million years ago, a second rift occurred, and rifting and tilting kept on until perhaps a hundred thousand years before our era.

Recurrent change came in geography and climate. Europe and Africa were united by land and separated. Lower Egypt was submerged, and the Mediterranean extended to Persia. Finally, what the geologists call the modern world emerged. In Egypt great rivers poured down the hills between the Red Sea, and the Nile found old and new valleys. The Sahara was crossed by a network of rivers, pouring into a vaster Lake Chad and uniting the Niger, the Congo, and the Nile.

Gondwanaland, the ancient united continent of Africa, South America, and Asia, was divided into three parts by the new changes which caused the rift valleys. The radioactivity of the inner earth made the crust break apart. We can see by the map how Africa broke from South America and Europe from North America. Changes in climate were caused by the sun, the earth's inner heat, and by two main glacial periods in Africa. The rainfall varied, bringing periods of flood between the glaciers.

The continent of Africa in its final modern form has been described as a question mark, as an inverted saucer, as the center of the world's continents. Including Madagascar, it is three times the size of Europe, four times the size of the United States; and the whole of Europe, India, China, and the United States could be held within its borders. In actual measurement it is nearly square: five thousand miles long by four thousand six hundred miles wide. But its northern half is by far the larger, with the southern half tapering off. In the middle the equator cuts across Africa, and the whole continent lies mainly within the tropics.

Of the physical aspects of Africa, its relatively unbroken coastline has had the greatest effect upon its history. Although Africa is about three times larger than Europe in area, the coastline of Europe is four thousand miles longer than that of Africa. In other words, Africa has almost no peninsulas, deep bays, or natural harbors. Its low and narrow coast, almost level, rises rapidly to a central plateau with a depression in the center. Thus the great rivers fall suddenly to the ocean, and their navigation is impeded by rapids and falls.

Its five areas include the original Great Plateau with an average elevation of over thirty-five hundred feet, where mountains crowned with snow rise from thirteen to twenty thousand feet. Over these open spaces have always roamed herds of wild animals—elephants, rhinoceroses, and buffaloes.

The second area is the Great Depression, the basin of the Congo River draining nearly a million and a half square miles. Its average altitude is a thousand feet and it is the bed of a former inland sea. As Stanley described it: "Imagine the whole of France and the Iberian peninsula closely packed with trees varying from twenty to a hundred and eighty feet in height, whose crowns of foliage interlace and prevent any view of sky and sun, and each tree from a few inches to four feet in diameter."¹ In this area lies the Belgian Congo and French Equatorial Africa, Liberia and the British West African colonies.

The fourth area is the Sahara, extending from the Atlantic to the Red Sea. It covers three and a half million square miles and is divided into desert and fertile islands. In the past the Sahara was fertile and had a large population. Its surface today is often a hundred feet below sea level. In the east is Egypt and the Egyptian Sudan. North Africa lies on the Mediterranean with Algeria and Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. There are senses in which it is true that "Africa begins at the Pyrenees," and also that "Europe ends at the borders of the Sahara."

We may distinguish in Africa equatorial and tropical cli-

¹ Stanley, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 76.

mates, and then over smaller areas climates peculiar to specific areas. The equatorial climate is divided into the climate of Central Africa and that of Guinea and East Africa. The first with constant heat, much rainfall, and humidity; the second with constant heat and smaller rainfall. In both these regions there is luxurious growth of plant life and dense forests. The East African climate is hot. There are savannahs and varied vegetation. Of the tropical climate, there is the Sudanese, with heat but less rain, and the desert type, with great heat but wide daily variation and little rain. Besides these, there is the climate peculiar to the Mediterranean, with hot summers and rain in winter; and to the Cape district, with more moderate summers and winters and less rainfall.

This is the climate of Africa today, but it has varied, and probably greatly, in the vast stretches of past time. The changes came with the distribution of land and water, the elevation and subsidence of land, the severance of the continent from Asia and South America, and the rise of the mountains in India and Europe that affect the air and sea currents. The rim of the great inland plateau which forms most of Africa falls to sea level near the coast and falls so steeply that the valleys of the rivers draining it do not spread into broad alluvial plains inviting settled populations. The history of tropical Africa would have been far different if it had possessed a Saint Lawrence, an Amazon, a Euphrates, a Ganges, a Yangtze, or a Nile south of the Sahara. The difference of land level within the continent brings strange contrasts.

Sixty million years ago vast reptiles and dinosaurs wandered over this continent. It became, as the years passed, a zoological garden with wild animals of all sorts. Finally there came domesticated cattle, sheep, and goats and a tremendous development of insects. As Sir Harry Johnston well remarks, "Africa is the chief stronghold of the real Devil—the reactionary forces of Nature hostile to the uprising of Humanity. Here Beelzebub, King of the Flies, marshals his vermiform and arthropod hosts

—insects, ticks, and nematode worms—which more than in other continents (excepting Negroid Asia) convey to the skin, veins, intestines, and spinal marrow of men and other vertebrates the microorganisms which cause deadly, disfiguring, or debilitating diseases, or themselves create the morbid condition of the persecuted human being, beasts, bird, reptile, frog, or fish.”²

Africa is a beautiful land; not merely comely and pleasant, but haunted with swamp and jungle; sternly beautiful in its loveliness of terror, its depth of gloom, and fullness of color; its heaven-tearing peaks, its silver of endless sand, the might, width, and breadth of its rivers, depth of its lakes and height of its hot, blue heaven. There are myriads of living things, the voice of storm, the kiss of pestilence and pain, old and ever new, new and incredibly ancient.

The anthropoid ape with the great brain who walked erect and used his hands as tools developed upon earth not less than half a million years ago. Traces of him have been found in Africa, Asia, and Europe and in the islands of the sea. Many types which developed have doubtless been lost, but one species has survived, driven hither and yon by cold and hunger, segregated from time by earthquake and glacier and united for defense against hunger and wild beasts.

Groups of this species must have inbred and developed subtypes over periods of tens of thousands of years. Of the subspecies thus developed, scientists have usually distinguished at least three, all of which were fertile in their cross-breeding with one another. In course of time they have given rise to many transitional groups and intermediary types, so that less than two-thirds of the living peoples of today can be decisively allotted to one or the other of the definite subspecies. These subspecies include the long-headed dark people with more or less crinkled hair whom we know as Negroids; the broad-

² Harry H. Johnston, *The Negro in the New World* (London: Methuen & Co., 1910), pp. 14, 15.

headed yellow people with straight and wiry hair whom we call Mongoloids; and a type between these, possibly formed by their union, with bleached skins and intermediate hair, known as the Caucasoids.

No sooner had these variant types appeared in Central Africa, on the steppes of Asia, and in Europe than they merged again. The importance of these types was not so much their physical differences and likenesses as their cultural development. As Frobenius says: "With vast and growing weight there begins to emerge today out of the microscopic spectacles of blind eyes, a new conception among living men of the unity of human culture." Inquiring search has made clear "here Greek, there old Mexican spirituality; here European economic development, there pictures of the glacial age; here Negro sculpture, there shamanism; here philosophy, there machines; here fairy tale, there politics."³

Was Africa the cradle of the human race? Did it witness man's first evolution from the anthropoid ape to *Homo sapiens*? We do not know. Charles Darwin thought that "it is somewhat more probable that our early progenitors lived on the African continent than elsewhere." Sir G. E. Smith agrees with this and says that Africa "may have been the area of characterization, or, to use a more homely phrase, the cradle, both of the anthropoid apes and the human family." From Africa, Negroids may have entered Asia and Europe. On the other hand, the human race originating in Asia or even in Europe may have invaded Africa and become Negroid by long segregation in a tropical climate. But all this is conjecture. Of the origin of the Negro race or of other human races, we know nothing. But we do know that human beings inhabited Africa during the Pleistocene period, which may have been half a million years ago.

A memoir presented by a well-known Belgian scientist, Alfred Rutot, just before World War I, to the scientific section

³ Frobenius, *op. cit.*

of the Académie de Belgique caused some stir. It was accompanied by a series of busts, ten in number, executed under careful supervision, by M. Louis Mascré. The busts were striking. The attempt to reproduce various prehistoric types, beginning with *Pithecanthropus erectus*, was characterized as "audacious," and, of course, much confirmation is necessary of the facts and theories adduced.

The chief interest of the paper was the reconstruction of the Negroids of Grimaldi, so-called from the finds at Mentone, France, helped out by similar remains found in the Landes and at Wellendorff in Lower Austria. How did specimens of Negroes so intelligent in appearance find themselves in the immediate presence of Caucasians, introducing amongst them the art of sculpture which presupposes an advanced stage of civilization? Science explains this phenomenon by the successive cataclysmic changes on our planet. For the quaternary period, Sicily formed part of the Italian mainland, the Strait of Gibraltar was non-existent, and one passed from Africa to Europe on dry land. Thus it was that a race of more or less Ethiopic type filtered in amongst the people inhabiting our latitudes, to withdraw later toward their primitive habitat.

From the position of certain Negroid skeletons exhumed in France, some have concluded that this race carried and made use of the bow. This is uncertain; but it is well authenticated that these visitors brought to the white race the secret of sculpture, for their bones are almost invariably found in company with objects sculptured on steatite or stone, in high or low relief. Some of their sculptures are quite finished, like the Wellendorff Venus, cut in a limestone block. Of this Venus, Rutot's Negroid type of man is a replica out of mammoth ivory. The shell net of four rows adorning the head of this artistic ancestor is a faithful reproduction of the ornament encircling the cranium of the skeleton found in the Grotte des Enfants at Mentone. For the ancient Negroid woman, Mascré has gone to a figure in relief found in the excavations at Lausses (Dor-

dogne). The marked horn held in the right hand is that of a bison, the bracelets and armlets are exact copies of the ornaments exhumed at Mentone.

These Negroid busts are most attractive and intelligent looking and have no exaggerated Negro features. The Cro-Magnon man of Dordogne is a Magdalenian, contemporary with the Negroid intrusion. The fine proportions of the skull indicate unmistakable intellectuality. The remains left by this race in the caves of Périgord reveal great skill in the art of sculpting and painting animals, whereas the Negroids of that time specialized in the representation of their own species. The daggers of that epoch, described in *Reliquiae Aquitaniae*, are engraved on reindeer horn, and the weapons underwent perhaps many practical improvements due to the effort, eventually successful, of the Magdalenians to drive out the Negroids, their artistic rivals.⁴

"There was once an 'uninterrupted belt' of Negro culture from Central Europe to South Africa. 'These people,' says Griffith Taylor, 'must have been quite abundant in Europe toward the close of the Paleolithic Age. Boule quotes their skeletons from Brittany, Switzerland, Liguria, Lombardy, Illyria, and Bulgaria. They are universal through Africa and through Melanesia, while the Botocudos and the Lagoa Santa skulls of East Brazil show where similar folk penetrated to the New World.' Massey says: 'The one sole race that can be traced among the aborigines all over the earth or below it is the dark race of a dwarf, Negrito type.'"⁵

It seems reasonable to suppose that Negroids originating in Africa or Asia appeared first as Negrillos. The Sahara at that time was probably covered with rivers and verdure and North

⁴ Francis Hoggan, "Prehistoric Negroids and their Contribution to Civilization," *The Crisis*, February 1920, p. 174.

⁵ J. A. Rogers, *Sex and Race* (New York: published by the author, 1942-44), Vol. I, p. 32.

Africa was in close touch with Mediterranean Europe. There came upon the Negrillos a wave of Negroids who were hunters and fishermen and used stone implements. The remains of an African stone age are scattered over a wide area with amazing abundance, and there is such a resemblance between implements found in Africa and those in Europe that we can apply, with few differences, the same names. The sequence in culture in Europe resembles the sequence in Africa although they may not have been contemporary.

The most primitive type of stone implement was found in Uganda and is known as the pebble tool. The same pebble industry extended to Tanganyika and the Transvaal. This gave way to the hand-ax culture, which extended over North Africa, the Sahara, Equatorial Africa, West and South Africa. Superb hand axes and other tools are the evidence. Then the middle Paleolithic flake-tool culture spread over wide areas of Africa and is shown by perfect implements in South Africa and other places. The remains indicate a cave-dwelling people with a great variety of tools as well as beads and pottery.

During the Pleistocene period came a new Stone Age, with agriculture, domestic animals, pottery, and the grinding and polishing of stone tools. Evidence of this culture is found in Egypt and North Africa, the Sahara in West Africa, East and South Africa.

The Neolithic culture is of great significance. In Egypt it is found five thousand years before Christ. A thousand years later it changed from flint to copper. The Predynastic Egyptians who represented this culture were settled folk; they hunted and fished, and cultivated grain; made clothes and baskets, used copper, and were distinctly Negroid in physique. Probably they came from the south, from what is now Nubia. Later there came to Egypt other people of the type corresponding to the modern Beja, who lived in settled communities and used copper and gold. This brown Negroid people, like the modern

Beja, Galla, and Somali, mixed increasingly with Asiatic blood, but their culture was African and extended by unbroken thread up the Nile and beyond the Somali peninsula.

The first wave of Negroes were hunters and fishermen and used stone implements. They gradually became sedentary and cultivated the soil and must have developed early artistic aptitudes and strong religious feeling. They built the stone monuments discovered in Negro Africa and the raised stones and carved rocks of Gambia. They did not mix with the Negrillos nor did they dispossess them, but recognized their ancestral land rights and seized unoccupied land. Thousands of years after this first wave of Negro immigrants there came another migration. The newcomers pushed north and west, dispossessed the Negrillos, and drove them toward the central forests and the deserts. They mixed more with the Negrillos, developed agriculture, the use of cattle and domestic fowl. They invented the working of iron and the making of pottery. Also, those who advanced farthest toward the north mixed with the Mediterranean race in varying degrees, so that sometimes the resulting population seemed white mixed with Negro blood and in other cases blacks mixed with white blood. The languages were mixed in various ways. Thus we had the various Libyan and Egyptian populations. All this migration and mixture took place long before the epoch of the first Egyptian dynasty.

There exists today a fairly complete sequence of closely interrelated types of human beings in Africa, leading from *Australopithecus* to such known primitive African types as Rhodesian Man and Florisbad Man. If these types are affiliated with, if not actually ancestral to, Boskop Man, the common presence of all three in the southern half of Africa is presumptive evidence that they all emerged on this continent from some common ancestral stock.

The name "Negro" originally embraced a clear conception of ethnology—the African with dark skin, so-called "woolly" hair, thick lips and nose; but it is one of the achievements of

modern science to confine this type to a small district even in Africa. Gallas, Nubians, Hottentots, the Congo races, and the Bantus are not "genuine" Negroes from this view, and thus we find that the continent of Africa is peopled by races other than the "genuine" Negro.

Nothing then remains for the Negro in the "pure" sense of the word save, as Waitz says, "a tract of country extending over not more than ten or twelve degrees of latitude, which may be traced from the mouth of the Senegal River to Timbuku." If we ask what justifies so narrow a limitation, "we find that the hideous Negro-type, which the fancy of observers once saw all over Africa, but which, as Livingstone says, is really to be seen only as a sign in front of tobacco-shops, has on closer inspection evaporated from almost all parts of Africa, to settle no one knows how in just this region. If we understand that an extreme case may have been taken for the genuine and pure form, even so we do not comprehend the ground of its geographical limitation and location. We are here in presence of a refinement of science which to an unprejudiced eye will hardly hold water."⁶

Palgrave says: "As to faces, the peculiarities of the Negro countenance are well known in caricature; but a truer pattern may be seen by those who wish to study it any day among the statues of the Egyptian rooms in the British Museum: the large gentle eye, the full but not overprotruding lips, the rounded contour, and the good-natured, easy, sensuous expression. This is the genuine African model; one not often to be met with in European or American thoroughfares, where the plastic African too readily acquires the careful look and even the irregularity of the features that surrounded him; but which is common enough in the villages and fields where he dwells after his own fashion among his own people; most common of all in the tranquil seclusion and congenial climate of Surinam planta-

⁶ Friedrich Ratzel, *The History of Mankind*, tr. from the German by A. J. Butler (London: Macmillan & Co., 1904), 2nd ed., Vol. II, p. 313.

tion. There you may find, also, a type neither Asiatic nor European, but distinctly African; with much of independence and vigour in the male physiognomy and something that approaches, if it does not quite reach, beauty in the female. Rameses and his queen were cast in no other mould.”⁷

What are the peoples who from vague prehistory emerged as the Africans of today? The answer has been bedeviled by the assumption that there was in Africa a “true” Negro and that this pure aboriginal race was mixed with a mythical “Hamitic race” which came apparently from neither Europe, Asia, nor Africa, but constituted itself as a “white element” in Negro Africa. We may dismiss this “Hamitic” race as a quite unnecessary assumption and describe the present African somewhat as follows:

At a period as early as three thousand years before Christ the people of the North African coastal plains were practically identical with the early Egyptians and present two types: long-headed Negroid people and broad-headed Asiatics. Among the Berber types today are tall and medium long-headed people with broad faces, swarthy skin, and dark eyes. They have many Negroid characteristics, especially toward the south. Beside these there are short, broad-headed people.

These Berbers are the ones who correspond to the ancient Egyptians and who have close relationship to the Neolithic inhabitants of France. Among them today the Negro element is widely represented. It is in every part of Mauritania, where the reigning family itself is clearly of Negro descent. A large strain of Negro blood may also be found in Algeria.

In East Africa we have the Massai, Nandi, Suk, and others, tall, slender, and long-headed. In the case of the Massai the nose is thinner and the color tinged with reddish-brown. The Bari people are tall and the Lutoko very tall. Then there are the Nilotics in the Nile valley, extending south of Khartoum

⁷ W. G. Palgrave, *Dutch Guiana* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1876), pp. 192-93.

to Lake Kioga. Physically, as in the case of the Shilluk and Dinka, they are tall, very black, long-headed people, often with well-shaped features, thin lips, and high-bridged noses. The Nuba, tall, long-headed men, live in the hills of Kordofan. East of Kordofan are the Fung, with many tribes and with much Asiatic blood; and also broad-headed tribes like the Bongo and the Asande, a mixed people of reddish color with long heads.

On the other side of Africa, the lower and middle portion of the Senegal River forms a dividing line between West African types of Negroes and the Negroes of the Sudan. South of the river are the Jolofs and the Serers. With these are the Senegalese, including the Tukolor and Mandingo tribes. They are dolichocephalic with both broad and narrow noses. They are rather tall, some of them very tall, and their skin is very dark. The Mandingo, or Mandi, are among the most important groups of French Senegal and live between the Atlantic and Upper Niger. They are tall and slender with fine features, beards, and rather lighter skin than that of neighboring Negroes.

Among the most interesting of the West African people south of the Sudan are the Fulani, stretching from the Upper Niger to the Senegal River. They are Negroids, perhaps with Asiatic blood. They are straight-haired, straight-nosed, thin-lipped and long-headed, with slender physiques and reddish-brown color. The Songhay are tall and long-headed with well-formed noses and coppery-brown color. The people of Kanem and the Bagirmi cluster around Lake Chad. They are broad-nosed and dolichocephalic and resemble the Negroes on the Nile. In the east and South Africa are the Wachagga and the Fang and especially the Swahili, mixed people whose language dominates East Africa. They have all possible degrees of physical characteristics from Arabic to Negro. In South Africa there are the Bushmen, short, yellow, with closely-curved hair. Beside them live the Hottentots, probably Bushmen with Bantu ad-

mixture and later with white Dutch admixture which gave rise to the so-called "coloured" people.

The Negroes in the neighborhood of the Gulf of Guinea can be differentiated at present chiefly by their languages, which have been called Sudanic. Three great stocks prevail: the Twi, Ga, and Ewe. Belonging to these are the Ashanti, moderately tall men, long-headed with some broad heads; the Dahomey, tall, long-headed, and black; the Yoruba, including the peoples of Benin and Ibo, dark brown or black, closely curled hair, moderate dolichocephaly, and broad-nosed. Their lips are thick and sometimes everted, and there is a considerable amount of prognathism. The Kru, hereditary sailors, are typically Negroid with fine physiques. The Hausa of the central Sudan are very black and long-headed but not prognathic and with thin noses.

Finally there are the Bantu, who are a congeries of peoples, belonging predominantly to Central and South Africa and occupying the southern two-thirds of black Africa. The Bantu are defined on purely linguistic criteria. The term "Bantu" primarily implies that the tribes included speak languages characterized by a division of nouns into classes distinguished by their prefixes (usually twelve to fifteen), absence of sex-gender in the grammar, and the existence of alliterative concord, the prefix of each class (noun-class) being repeated in some form or another in all words agreeing with any noun of that class in the sentence. It is the reappearance of the prefix in every word in agreement with the noun that gives the alliterative effect.

The southern Bantu outnumber all other groups of South Africa and are about four times as numerous as the Whites. They are divided into a large number of tribal units, each with its own distinctive name. In social organization and religious system they show broad resemblances to one another, but in details of history there are a number of important



differences which permit of their being classified into four groups:

1. The Shona peoples of Southern Rhodesia and of Portuguese East Africa.
2. The Zulu-Xosa, chiefly in the coastal region south and east of the Drakensberg Mountains.
3. The Suto-Chwana occupy the greater portion of the high plateau north of the Orange River.
4. The Herero-Ovambo, in the northern half of Southwest Africa and in southern Angola.

In skin color the range is from the black of the Amaswazi to the yellowish-brown of some of the Bechuana. The prevalent color is a dark chocolate, with a reddish ground tint. The hair is uniformly short and woolly. The head is generally low and broad with a well-formed bridge and narrow nostrils. The face is moderately prognathous, the forehead prominent, cheekbones high, lips fleshy. The Negro facial type predominates in all groups, but side by side with it in the Zulu and the Thonga sections are relatively long, narrow faces, thin lips, and high noses.

The inhabitants of Natal and Zululand, divided originally into more than a hundred small separate tribes, are all now collectively known as "Zulus," a name derived from one of the tribes which, under the domination of Chaka, absorbed and conquered most of the others and so formed the Zulu nation which played so important a part in the political history of South Africa during the nineteenth century.

Tribes vary in size, some having from a few hundred to a couple of thousand members. Others are much larger, for example, the Bakwena, 11,000; the Batawana, 17,500; the Bamagwato, 60,000; the Ovandonga, 65,000; the Ovakwanyama, 55,000; the Amaswazi, again, number 110,000; while the Basuto, by far the largest of all and might be called a nation, number nearly half a million.

The area of the western Bantu includes the Cameroons (French), Rio Muni (Spanish), the Gaboon (French), French Equatoria, the Congo (Belgian), Angola (Portuguese), and Rhodesia, with the fraction of Portuguese East Africa north of Zambesi. This vast area is the true "Heart of Africa," the tropical rain forest of the Congo. Johnston enumerated over one hundred and fifty tribes in this area who speak Bantu or semi-Bantu tongues. The southern limit of the western Bantu is vague; the formation of the Lunda empire, the Yagga raids, and the subsequent encroachments of the Bajokwe (Kioko) have played havoc with tribal organization. The Bateke occupy a vast region on the right bank of the Congo which is now largely peopled by the Fang, who in their various expeditions and conquests have left their mark on most tribes north of the Ogowe River. Finally, in the midst of Africa are the Negrillos or pygmies, small men with reddish-brown or dark skin and brachicephalic heads.⁸

These are but a few examples of the infinitely varied inhabitants of Africa. There is thus no one African race and no one Negro type. Africa has as great a physical and cultural variety as Europe or Asia.

This is the Africa of which Langston Hughes sings:

I've known rivers:
I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of
human blood in human veins.
My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.
I looked upon the Nile and raised the Pyramids above it.⁹

⁸ In this description of African peoples, I have relied principally on C. G. Seligmann's well-known studies.

⁹ Langston Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," *The Crisis*, June 1921, p. 71.



CHAPTER V

EGYPT

This is the story of three thousand years, from 5000 B.C. to 2000 B.C., and it tells of the development of human culture in the valley of the Nile below the First Cataract.

CIVILIZATION has flowed down to man along the valley of great rivers where the soil was fertile and man need not fear hunger, and where the waters carried him to other peoples who were thinking of problems of human life and solving them in varied ways. Some say that human culture started in the valley of the Yangtze and of the Hoang Ho. Some say it came up from Black Africa; some that it came west from the Euphrates; but it had begun more than four thousand years before Christ.

The development in Mesopotamia in the valley of the Tigris-Euphrates, which flows into the Persian Gulf and thence to the Indian Ocean, is striking. Before the year four thousand B.C. there is evidence that Negroid Dravidians and Mongoloid Sumerians ruled in southern Asia, in Asia Minor, and in the valley of the Tigris-Euphrates. Negroids followed them under Sargon, and Sargon boasted that "he commanded the black heads and ruled them."

But it was in the valley of the Nile that the most significant continuous human culture arose, significant not necessarily be-

cause it was absolutely the oldest or the best, but because it led to that European civilization of which the world boasts today and regards in many ways as the greatest and last word in human culture.

Despite this, it is one of the astonishing results of the written history of Africa, that almost unanimously in the nineteenth century Egypt was not regarded as part of Africa. Its history and culture were separated from that of the other inhabitants of Africa; it was even asserted that Egypt was in reality Asiatic, and indeed Arnold Toynbee's *Study of History* definitely regarded Egyptian civilization as "white," or European! The Egyptians, however, regarded themselves as African. The Greeks looked upon Egypt as part of Africa not only geographically but culturally, and every fact of history and anthropology proves that the Egyptians were an African people varying no more from other African peoples than groups like the Scandinavians vary from other Europeans, or groups like the Japanese from other Asiatics. There can be but one adequate explanation of this vagary of nineteenth-century science: it was due to the slave trade and Negro slavery. It was due to the fact that the rise and support of capitalism called for rationalization based upon degrading and discrediting the Negroid peoples. It is especially significant that the science of Egyptology arose and flourished at the very time that the cotton kingdom reached its greatest power on the foundation of American Negro slavery. We may then without further ado ignore this verdict of history, widespread as it is, and treat Egyptian history as an integral part of African history.

"The land of Egypt is six hundred miles long and is bounded by two ranges of naked limestone hills which sometimes approach and sometimes retire from each other, leaving between them an average breadth of seven miles. On the north they widen and disappear, giving place to a marshy meadow plain which extends to the Mediterranean Coast. On the south they are no longer of limestone but of granite; they narrow to a

point; they close in till they almost touch; and through the mountain gate thus formed, the river Nile leaps with a roar into the valley, and runs due north towards the sea."¹

It was a marvelous and unusual valley where a great river flowed out of the highlands of Central Africa and the mountains of the Horn, cut its way down through cliffs on either side crowned by deserts. The valley thus made was "burning and fertile, warm and smiling." Winds from the north tempered the heat of the sun so that the land was "green with meadows, golden with harvest, red with the blood of vines, a paradise of water, fruit, and flowers between two torrid deserts." The waters of the rivers rose and fell with the cumulative effect of springtime floods and summer heat. The spectacle of the inundation; the mystery of the source of the waters which was not solved until the nineteenth century, had vast effect upon mankind, Egyptians, and all who came after them.

The Negroids came as hunters and fishermen. Probably they came up from Nubia. They began to settle down and till the soil. They were the Tasians, five thousand and more years ago; the people of the Fayum and the Marimde, the Badarians, settled folk, who hunted and fished but also cultivated crops. They made cloth from flax and skins, wove baskets, fashioned pottery, and ground ax heads and vessels. They had copper and varied tools of flint capable of working timber. Ivory was used for tools.

Amratians wandered in. They were of the type of the Beja. They used copper and gold. Thus we see in the Nile valley before the reign of Menes, 3200 B.C., many groups and types of Negroids filtering in slow hesitant waves and gradually settling down in the first great experiment in human civilization.

The Nile valley may be said to have invented agriculture. It was so obvious a way to make an easy living under pleasant conditions. Fresh rich soil rolled in each year, and the waters

¹ Winwood Reade, *The Martyrdom of Man* (London: John Lane Company, 1912), 20th ed., p. 1.

that brought it kept it moist and fertile. Irrigation became a prime necessity, and flood control. The use of near-by building materials—wood, brick, and stone—became natural; fibers were woven into cloth; architecture followed in the attempt to honor the dead with buildings which the dry climate preserved.

Tools were invented. The first tools were stone, the eolith and the stone ax. Then came metals; copper, especially from Nubia, and then iron. Boats and ships sailed the river and the seas. The list of things which Egypt learned and handed down to us from that far day is enormous: the art of shaving, the use of wigs, the wearing of kilts and sandals, the invention of musical instruments, chairs, beds, cushions, and jewelry. The burial customs discovered in Europe came without reasonable doubt from Africa, brought by African invaders. Later the improvements made by the Egyptians were imitated in Sicily and Italy. Egyptian culture was in this way the forerunner of Greece.

In the meantime, other people, Mongoloids, filtered in from Asia. As the years passed a fixed type of Egyptian began to develop. In Egypt were all the requirements for the first long experiment in civilization in ancient times: a well-watered valley, deserts and mountains on the outskirts to keep back the enemy and the beast; a favorable warm climate and a chance for contact with foreigners which could be regulated so as to keep out the invader and trade with him in goods and ideas. The civilization of Egypt began with their invention of fixing a calendar, 4241 B.C.

There has been a great deal of contradiction and uncertainty concerning the peoples of Northwest Africa, variously called Libyans, Berbers, "Hamites," and Arabs. The Libyans or Berbers were akin to the Egyptians. They arose in prehistoric times in all probability, out of the mixture of Negroid and Mongoloid peoples, Negroids coming up from Central Africa and Mongoloids crossing from Asia. The two types of long-headed and broad-headed peoples can be distinguished even today. Toward

the east and the Nile delta were the Egyptians, forefathers of the peoples today called Beja, Galla, Somali, and Danakil.

The Egyptian of predynastic times belonged then to the short, dark-haired, dark-eyed group of peoples, such as are found on both shores of the Mediterranean. The same stock extended beyond Upper Egypt into Nubia. Their physical characteristics exhibited a remarkable degree of homogeneity. Their hair was dark brown or black, and either curled or wavy. In the men there was scant growth of facial hair except on the chin, where a tuft was found. They had long, narrow foreheads and prominent occiputs. The faces were long and narrow ellipses; the noses were broader and especially flatter than those of the Europeans.

The predynastic Egyptian was short, scarcely over sixty-four inches, dolichocephalic, with a nasal index of about 50, all characteristics of a group of people known as Beja, a black people who inhabit the eastern desert of Egypt, the Red Sea province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and extend through the Italian colony of Eritrea to Abyssinia. The Beja are divisible into four groups, one of which is the "Fuzzy-Wuzzy" of the British soldier. They are the least modified of the Beja tribes and are the modern representatives of the old predynastic Egyptian stock.

In Egypt there is evidence of a gradual modification in the population from the beginning of dynastic times, so that by the Pyramid period Egyptians were of heavier build, with broader skulls and faces and heavier jaws. These are the people portrayed in such magnificent works of art of the Pyramid period as the sphinxes of Gizeh and the Louvre, and they are no doubt representative of a considerable part of the population of the Ancient Kingdom. They were the creators of the finest statuary, wall paintings, and sculptures in low relief to which Egypt attained, and the consciously archaistic Egyptians of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty endeavored to imitate their work as representing the highest development of national art. This

applies only to Upper Egypt. We have no knowledge of what was happening in the delta through dynastic and predynastic times; the remains are hidden under great masses of alluvial deposits.

The type described persisted and probably increased in number through dynastic times, and it is that of the fellahin of the present day. The modern Egyptian, with a stature of about sixty-six inches, shows no great variation between Upper and Lower Egypt. He is long-headed. Moreover, in passing southward, it has been pointed out that the eye and skin color darken, that the proportion of unusually broad noses increases, and spiral and crisp hair become more frequent.

The history of civilization which began in Egypt was not so much a matter of dynasties and dates. It was an attempt to settle certain problems of living together—of government, defense, religion, family, property, science, and art. What we must remember is that in these seven lines of human endeavor, it was African Egypt that made the beginning and set the pace.

In some respects what they did has not been greatly improved upon even down to the twentieth century. In a primitive tribe, government was the family. But the valley of the Nile had to expand, rebuild, and implement this. It devised a ruler, a ruling family, and a ruling caste. It put them permanently upon a throne which became so old and stable that no man remembered when there was not an Egypt, and when there had been another world worth knowing. This government had to be built up from the family and clan, and this was accomplished through religion.

The Egyptian religion came naturally from the primitive animism of the African forest and progressed to the worship of Ra, the sun god, giver of life and beauty to the Nile valley which was the world. Opposite Ra was Osiris, god of waters and fertility, and his sister and wife Isis, the black woman. Thus from earliest times women in Egypt had singular prominence and power. The gods reflected the physical facts of the valley.

The Greeks called the Egyptians "the most religious of men." There developed an oligarchy of gods and a priesthood which became a center of scientific knowledge; the laws of nature were studied and mathematical formulas devised.

The work of the nation had to be organized, the toil of planting and reaping, irrigation, burden-bearing. Work was organized so that the great mass of the laborers toiled under the whip but toiled according to plan. From their toil arose the concept of property, of wealth to be used by king and priest and noble. Power became concentrated in the hands of the Pharaoh, who headed the clans and nomes. There was a long prehistoric period when many kings fought for supremacy in the valley, but at last there came concentration and unity which existed for an extraordinary length of time.

Egypt did not remain a tyranny; an oligarchy of priests and nobles eventually took power from the Pharaoh. Then in time a popular revolution emancipated the masses. The people of Egypt were not enslaved. They have been described as a "submissive lighthearted race content with little, singing at their toil, working with taste and patience." This was the result of an unusually favorable economic organization. There was no need of starvation, exposure, or want. There was plenty in the valley if the river flow was controlled.

The first duty of government was this control of the river, which led to the power of the king, to the science of the priest, to the independence of the laborer. Egypt under the Eighteenth Dynasty, 1500 B.C., has been called the first human example of state socialism, which was developed to an astonishing degree. Nor was the Egyptian formal and conventionalized. From a stiff traditional art in the earliest days, he developed individuality in expression. His spirit inquired into fresh knowledge in this land where knowledge was "old as the world." The art of hieroglyphic writing was complete at the dawn of history, 3500 B.C., and it lasted three millenniums, until in the fourth century B.C. it was replaced by Coptic and Greek.

Beyond this was the gift of an unusual climate: the dry atmosphere with its baking sun; the chance to preserve what man delineated and carved and built, so that the art and literature of Egypt became first in the world and handed down inestimable treasure to succeeding peoples. The Egyptians studied and knew human beings; they separated their fellows into black people and brown, yellow people and white. They themselves were brown and black and so depicted themselves on their monuments. Many of the yellow peoples from the East filtered in and gradually there evolved a type which we know and would call a mulatto type, although that word brings the notion of a mixture of primary races, which was not true in Egypt. Here then, from the time that the Egyptians began history down to the birth of Christ, for five thousand years mankind evolved a pattern of human culture which became the goal of the rest of the world and was imitated everywhere. When persons wished to study science, art, government, or religion, they went to Egypt. The Greeks, inspired by Asia, turned toward Africa for learning, and the Romans in turn learned of Greece and Egypt.

It would be interesting to know what the Egyptians, earliest of civilized men, thought of the matter of race and color. Of race in the modern sense they seemed to have had no conception. On their monuments they depicted peoples by the color of their skin and their hair. The hair was treated in many ways: sometimes it was straight and Mongoloid; perhaps more often it was curled and Negroid. Now and then it was curly and hidden by wigs. The Egyptians painted themselves usually as brown, sometimes dark brown, sometimes reddish-brown. Other folk, both Egyptians and non-Egyptians, were painted as yellow. Often brown Egyptians were coupled with yellow women, either signifying less exposure to the sun or intermarriage with Mongoloids and whites. A few were painted as white, referring to some parts of North Africa and Europe.

The separation of human beings by color seemed to have had less importance among the Egyptians than the separation by cultural status: black Pharaohs and black women; brown and yellow Pharaohs and yellow women. Their attitude toward people, white or black, was based on cultural contact. Black people and yellow people were often depicted as conquered and yielding obeisance to their brown conquerors. Sometimes they appeared as equals, exchanged gifts and courtesies. Sometimes the Mongoloids and Negroids and whites were bound slaves; but in Egyptian monuments slavery was never attributed solely to black folk.

We conclude, therefore, that the Egyptians were Negroids, and not only that, but by tradition they believed themselves descended not from the whites or the yellows, but from the black peoples of the south. Thence they traced their origin, and toward the south in earlier days they turned the faces of their buried corpses.

Gradually, of course, the Egyptians became a separate inbred people with characteristics quite different from their neighbors. They were brown in color and painted themselves as such, but they recognized other colors and sorts of men. They were in continuous contact with the blacks to the south. Now and then they enslaved the blacks as they did the whites to the west and the yellow people to the east. But in the main their intercourse with the blacks consisted of trading and fighting with a people against whom they must defend themselves fiercely, but upon whom they depended for trade and for immigrants. Continually, black faces appear as Egyptian citizens. Herodotus in the fifth century B.C. described the Egyptians as black with curly hair. "The more we learn of Nubia and the Sudan," wrote Dr. D. Randall-MacIver, "the more evident does it appear that what was most characteristic in the predynastic culture of Egypt is due to intercourse with the interior of Africa and the immediate influence of that permanent Negro element which

has been present in the population of southern Egypt from remotest times to our own day." ²

Sir Flinders Petrie, in the same vein, wrote that it was remarkable how renewed vitality came to Egypt from the south.³ Seligmann said: "On one of the great proto-dynastic slate palettes dating from circa 3200 B.C. are represented captives and dead with woolly or frizzy hair and showing the same form of circumcision as is now practiced by the Masai and other Negroid tribes of Kenya Colony. Thus, though there is not, and cannot be, any records of skin color, there is every reason to believe that these men were as much 'Negroes' as many of the East African tribes of the present day to whom this name is commonly applied. Moreover, the Archaeological Survey of Nubia has brought to light a burial—with typical Negro hair—dating to the Middle Kingdom (about 2000 B.C.), while four Negresses were found in a single cemetery, dating as far back as the late predynastic period—say about 3000 B.C." ⁴

Randall-MacIver of the Department of Egyptology and Arthur Thomson, professor of Anatomy, at Oxford, in a report on what is one of the most extensive and complete surveys of Ancient Egyptian skeletal material ever made, stated that of the Egyptians studied belonging to the periods from the Early Predynastic to the Fifth Dynasty, 24 per cent of the males and 19½ per cent of the females were to be classified as Negroes. "In every character of which we have a measure they conform accurately to the Negro type."

For the period extending from the Sixth to the Eighteenth Dynasty, of the specimens studied about 20 per cent of the males and 15 per cent of the females are grouped with the

² Arthur Thomson and David Randall-MacIver, *Ancient Races in the Thebaid* (London: 1905).

³ W. M. Flinders Petrie, *A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times to the XVI Dynasty* (London: Methuen & Company, 1903), 5th ed., Vol. I.

⁴ C. G. Seligmann, *Races of Africa* (New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1930), Ch. III. P. 52.

Negroes. For both periods there was a goodly per cent of specimens, the "intermediates," that show some Negroid traits, but in the "intermediates" the Negro features were not sufficiently numerous or distinct enough to warrant such skeletons being classed with the Negroes.⁵ In the United States all these would be legally Negroes.

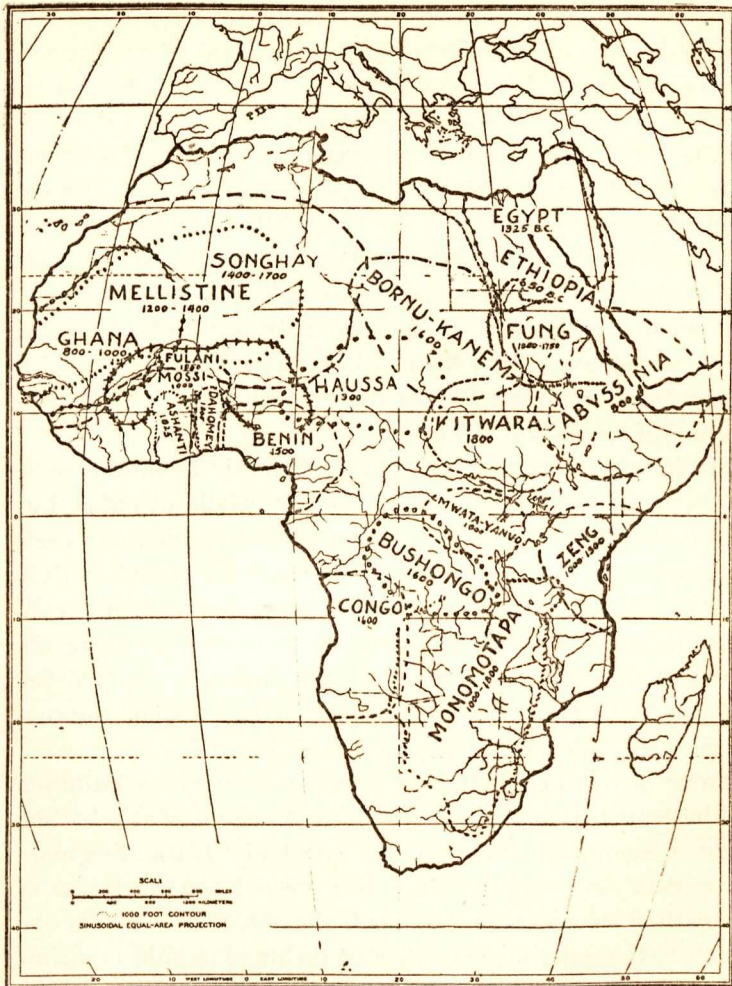
According to Dr. F. L. Griffith of Oxford, writing of the Negroes of the Old Kingdom, "more than one Nubian (nh'si), dark-colored or Negroid, can be traced as holding a high position in Egypt or even in the royal court at Memphis during the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties."

There are in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts two excellent limestone portraits of an Egyptian prince and his wife dating, according to their discoverer, Dr. Reisner, from the Old Kingdom. The prince shows practically none of the features that are traditionally regarded as being distinctive of the Negro, but the princess presents every earmark of the extreme Negro type.

The famous *Stele of Una* discovered by Mariette at Abydos is "the longest narrative inscription and the most important historical document from the Old Kingdom." Dr. Breasted's interpretation of the text records among other things how Uni, an officer of King Pepi I of the Sixth Dynasty, annihilated a group of Asiatics to the north of Sinai and invaded Palestine with an army "of many tens of thousands," made up of soldiers recruited among "the Irthet Negroes, the Mazoi Negroes, the Yam Negroes, the Wawat Negroes, the Kau Negroes, and Negroes from the land of Temeh." Each of the districts here named has been identified with districts in Ethiopia. The inhabitants of Egypt were thenceforth a Negroid people in which Semitic, Nilotic, and Sudanese-Negro elements were fused.

Before the First Dynasty there must have been a long series of rulers who came out of the south, conquered the people, and consolidated their powers. Upper Egypt historically always had precedence over Lower Egypt, and the First Dynasty came

⁵ Thomson and Randall-MacIver, *op. cit.*



THE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA
1325 B.C.—A.D. 1850

(The dates indicate roughly the widest development of the different states; the lines show approximately the boundaries of the states at the date of widest expansion.)

from the direction of the heart of Africa. Eight kings are known in this dynasty, during which there was gradual advance in use of writing. Memphis was established as capital, and the eastern borders of the valley firmly conquered.

The First Dynasty appears to have moved up from Punt. The Third Dynasty, which led to the Fourth, shows a strongly Ethiopian face in Sa Nekht; the Twelfth Dynasty we can trace to a Galla origin; the Eighteenth Dynasty was Ethiopian paired by marriage; the Twenty-fifth Dynasty was from distant Meroe.

Among the Pharaohs of the earlier dynasties whose statues or recovered bones show them to have been deeply tinged with Negro blood are King Den of the First Dynasty, King Khasekhemui of the Second Dynasty.

Sir Harry Johnston wrote: "The Dynastic Egyptians were not far distant in physical type from the Galla of today, but they had perhaps some element of the proto-Semite; and their language is still rather a puzzle to classifiers, though mainly Kushite in its features. The Dynastic Egyptians evidently concentrated themselves in the narrow strip of fertility along the banks of the Nile, not colonizing very markedly the Red Sea coastlands. By about 8000 years ago they had become the conquerors and rulers of Lower and Upper Egypt."

Stone in the Third Dynasty began to be used for building. In the Fourth Dynasty came the great Pyramid of Gizeh, "the greatest monument that any man ever had." It contains more stone than any other building ever erected and yet is one of the earliest structures of the world. Herodotus tells us that one hundred thousand men were levied for three months at a time during the season of inundation when ordinary labor was at a standstill; and yet at this rate the building occupied twenty years. There was probably no hardship in the employment of a small percentage of the people at this work when all were idle, and the training and skill were of great advantage to the nation.

In the Fourth Dynasty was erected the well-known statue of

the Sphinx with the lion's body and Negro head entirely carved in native rock. It must have been carved out of the rocky knoll of a hill. In this dynasty too there was the artistic attempt of man to rival nature. Vast buildings were placed before a background of hills or on a natural height. An artificial hill was built on which some great work of man was placed. Vast masses were used in construction. The sculptor sought to rival and even surpass nature. The painter used coloring and tints.

In the Fifth Dynasty the power of the priests was evidently growing, and religious foundations appear and with it a decline in the boldness of assertion of the earlier architecture. In the Sixth Dynasty came some of the great raids upon the Libyans to the east of Egypt. Tens of thousands of soldiers, Negroes particularly from the Sudan, beat this part of the land into subjection. Then the Pharaoh's army turned south and west and went through Nubia to force into subjection Negroes who were pressing northward upon the Egyptian state. Trading expeditions were sent to Punt. This was a time of active foreign conquest and exploration. One of the kings brought back to Egypt a dwarf from the Sudan.

The Seventh and Eighth Dynasties form an early intermediate period. The power of the kings at Memphis seems to have fallen into decay, perhaps through foreign invasion in the delta. During the Ninth and Tenth dynasties the invading race spread their rule over Upper Egypt. The Middle Kingdom began with the Eleventh Dynasty, when the Princes of Thebes became independent again. The ruler, Usertesen I, is pictured as triumphing over Asiatic and Negro. Evidently the defense of the kingdom from invaders became a serious problem when Egypt grew great and rich. A new vigor came into the administration with Amenemhat, who fought the Nubians and the Asiatics. The history of Sanehat (Sinuhi) is illustrative of the time. Because of the death of his father, he fled to Syria, where he became a ruler. "It gives a very curious view of the relation of Egypt to Syria at the beginning of the Twelfth

Dynasty. A fugitive Egyptian was superior to the Syrians, and by his education and ability might rise to high power, much like some English adventurer in Central Africa at the present time." ⁶

Ameny has left us a record of what a powerful noble of his day did for the workers. "I was in favour and much beloved, a ruler who loved his city. Moreover, I passed years as ruler in the Oryx nome. All the works of the king's house came into my hands. Behold he set me over the gangers of the lands of the herdsmen in the Oryx nome, and 3000 bulls of their draught stock. . . . Not a daughter of a poor man did I wrong, not a widow did I oppress, not a farmer did I oppose, not a herdsman did I hinder. There was not a foreman of five from whom I took his men for the works. There was not a pauper around me, there was not a hungry man in my time. When there came years of famine, I arose. I ploughed all the fields of the Oryx nome, to its southern and its northern boundaries. I made its inhabitants live, making provision for them; there was not a hungry man in it, and I gave to the widow as to her that had a husband: nor did I favour the elder above the younger in all that I gave. Afterward the great rises of the Nile came, producing wheat and barley, and producing all things, and I did not exact the arrears of the farm." ⁷

In this dynasty the Pharaohs began to associate their successors with them so as to make less danger of change at the time of their death. The lakes of Moeris were dammed, and the overflow of the Nile was thus regulated by a vast embankment twenty miles in length.

One king of the Twelfth Dynasty, Usertesen III, was especially triumphant over the Negroes who were threatening Egypt from the south, and this Pharaoh set up a boundary across which the Nubians must not come. To celebrate this clash between the Negroid Egyptian and the Central African, we have the first specimen of Egyptian poetry extant:

⁶ Petrie, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 156.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 160-61.

He has come to us, he has taken the land of the well,
the double crown is placed on his head.
He has come, he has united the two lands,
he has joined the kingdom of the upper land with the lower.
He has come, he has ruled Egypt,
he has placed the desert in his power.
He has come, he has protected the two lands,
he has given peace in the two regions.
He has come, he has made Egypt to live,
he has destroyed its afflictions.
He has come, he has made the aged to live,
he has opened the breath of the people.
He has come, he has trampled on the nations,
he has smitten the Anu, who knew not his terror.
He has come, he has protected his frontier,
he has rescued the robbed.
He has come . . .
of what his mighty arm brings to us.
He has come, we bring up our children,
we bury our aged by his good favour.⁸

One can see from this poem what national fervor of delight arose in Egypt when the further aggression of Central African tribes was stopped.

The Twelfth Dynasty marks the firm organization of the country and brilliancy of development under able leaders followed by internal prosperity. Then there was a tide of foreign conquest under Useratesen III, a splendid reign under Amenemhat III, followed by a time of decay. The art work of the dynasty was fine, with great technical perfection.

From the Thirteenth to the Seventeenth Dynasties there comes a period which is obscure. During this time Egypt was conquered by the Hyksos kings, who were probably from the Arabian desert; but whether at the beginning or at the end of this period we are not certain. At the end of the kings of the

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 183.

Thirteenth Dynasty comes Ra-Nehesi, the king's eldest son, who is clearly called a Negro. This shows, of course, the development that had taken place in Egypt during two thousand years. There had grown up an Egyptian mulatto race differentiated in color and other physical characteristics from the Central Africans. So much so that the great triumph of Egypt was the conquest over these Africans.

But this did not mean that there were no black folk in Egypt. Despite the general development of the mulatto race, the Negro type emerges here and there and especially in the case of Ra-Nehesi. Perhaps this black Pharaoh was the last defender of Egypt against the Hyksos who came in from Syria and began the conquest of Egypt, which the historian Manetho thus described: "We had formerly a king whose name was Timaios. In his time it came to pass, I know not how, that God was displeased with us; and there came up from the East in a strange manner men of an ignoble race, who had the confidence to invade our country, and easily subdued it by their power without a battle. And when they had our rule in their hands, they burnt our cities, and demolished the temples of the gods, and inflicted every kind of barbarity upon the inhabitants, slaying some, and reducing the wives and children of others to a state of slavery."⁹

The redemption of Egypt from the Hyksos came in the Eighteenth Dynasty through an Ethiopian power. The Hyksos held Egypt perhaps five hundred years; then came Aahmes of the Thebaid. With Aahmes was associated the black Queen Nofritari, or Nefertari.

The stream of Egyptian history in the day of its proudest triumphs now merges into that of Ethiopia, the Land of the Blacks; in such wise that Ethiopian history is seen to be the main current of Negro culture, from the Mountains of the Moon to the Mediterranean, blossoming on the lower Nile, but never severed from the Great Lakes of Inner Africa.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 233-34.



CHAPTER VI

THE LAND OF THE BURNT FACES

This is the story of fifteen hundred years in the valley of the Nile from 2000 B.C. to A.D. 500.

IN GREEK legend, Ethiopia, "land of the burnt faces," lay either side of the Red Sea in Africa and Asia and was inhabited by black folk. Eventually the blacks mixed with yellow Asiatics. After the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. the term Ethiopia was used usually to designate regions in Africa corresponding to what we now know as Nubia or the Egyptian Sudan. The Sudan was known to the Egyptians and Hebrews as Kash or Cush. In Hebrew folklore the descendants of Ham "were Cush and Egypt."

If efforts have been made to separate the history of Egypt from Africa and the Negro race, a similar determination with regard to Ethiopia is even more contradictory. Science for years tried to separate men into great groups called races; at first the object was to explain human history by human differences. The scientific basis of race difference, however, appeared increasingly difficult as observation and measurement became more accurate. Three, five, twenty races were differentiated, until at last it was evident that mankind would not fit accurately into any scientific delimitation of racial categories; no matter what criteria were used, most men fell into intermediate classes or

had individual peculiarities. The theory of absolutely definite racial groups was therefore abandoned, and "pure" racial types came to be regarded as merely theoretical abstractions which never or very rarely existed.

On the other hand, individual variations among men were extraordinary and intriguing; and group differences in physique and cultural habits were equally interesting. It would therefore be helpful to science if the broad hypothetical division of men into three or five great groups in accord with physique and culture were provisionally maintained to facilitate, but certainly not to obstruct, further study. This was the scientific status of the race theory early in the twentieth century, and in accord with this we spoke of three "races"—Caucasoid, Negroid, and Mongoloid—as comprising mankind, knowing well that no scientifically accurate definition of these races could be made which would not leave most of mankind outside the limits.

There was, however, persistent exception to this general agreement; under Caucasoid were included men of widely different physique inhabiting Europe; the term Mongoloid was even more vague and indefinite and nearly fell into disuse. But the term "Negro," as a definite and scientific race designation, persisted, and its use was defended with bitter determination by men who otherwise ranked as leading scientists. Despite the fact that the number of human beings corresponding to the current definition of the word "Negro" was narrowed again and again in space and number to a small remnant even in Africa, nevertheless in the usage of many distinguished writers there really emerged from their thinking two groups of men: Human Beings and Negroes. And the thesis of this book is that this extraordinary result came from the African slave trade to America in the eighteenth century and the capitalistic industry built on it in the nineteenth. The facts referred to are illustrated by the treatment of Ethiopia in archaeology, anthropology, and history. The contradictions concerning this

land and people would be ludicrous if the results were not so tragic.

If we follow inherent probability, ancient testimony, and legend, this would seem to have been the history of northeast Africa:

In Ethiopia the sunrise of human culture took place, spreading down into the Nile valley.

Ethiopia, land of the blacks, was thus the cradle of Egyptian civilization.

Beyond Ethiopia, in Central and South Africa, lay the gold of Ophir and the rich trade of Punt on which the prosperity of Egypt largely depended.

Egypt brought slaves from black Africa as she did from Europe and Asia. But she also brought citizens and leaders from black Africa.

When Egypt conquered Asia, she used black soldiers to a wide extent.

When Asia overwhelmed Egypt, Egypt sought refuge in Ethiopia as a child returns to its mother, and Ethiopia then for centuries dominated Egypt and successfully invaded Asia.

Neither Greece, Rome, nor Islam succeeded in conquering Ethiopia, although they pushed her back and shut her up in East and Central Africa, and hindered all contact between her peoples and the world until the day of colonial imperialism.

But this interpretation of Negro history contradicts the theory of the natural and eternal inferiority of black folk, which rendered them natural slaves and a cheap labor force for nineteenth-century industry. Those who depended on slavery and colonialism for living and luxury naturally, and often without conscious intent, sought eagerly for a science and history which would deny this interpretation of African history. They came gradually to declare vehemently that Egypt began her culture in the delta region, and Ethiopia was a far-off frontier and slave mart; that Punt and Ophir were in extreme

East Africa or Asia; that the Asiatic conquest of Egypt marked her decline and the feeble efforts of Ethiopia showed an era of decadence; that even if Ethiopia showed some imitative culture, this was not due to black folk, since the Ethiopians were not Negroes!

The attitude of scientists toward these questions has thus been colored almost entirely by their attitude toward modern Negro slavery. The Frenchman Volney called the civilization of the Nile valley Negro after his visit. But such a barrage of denial from later men met him that he withdrew his earlier conclusions, not because of further investigation, but because of scientific public opinion in the nineteenth century. Reisner unearthed a civilization of black folk in Ethiopia, but hastened to declare that they were not Negroes! Reisner was born in sight of Negro slavery in America and never forgot it. Flora Shaw wrote of the blackest men of the Sudan and their brilliant civilization, but warned her readers that they were not Negroes!

So here in Ethiopia, "Land of the Blacks," country of the "Burnt Faces," we are continually faced with the silly paradox that these black folk were not Negroes. What then are Negroes? Who are Africans? Why has the whole history of Ethiopia been neglected or ascribed to white "Hamites"? And why does every historian and encyclopedist, whenever he writes of the civilization of the upper Nile, feel compelled to reiterate that these black people were "not Negroes"?

Again, the mixture of blood among the three races is always referred to as an explanation of the advance among Negroes and the retrogression among whites. Is this scientific? A "white" or Asiatic aristocracy is repeatedly adduced as accounting for the rise of the Sudan, the government of Uganda, the industry of the Bushongo, and even the art of the Ashanti. Nothing is ever said of the influence of Negro blood in Europe and Asia, yet distinct Negroid features can be seen today all over Europe. When a black Jew boasts to his fellow religionists "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem," he is supposed to

be tanned; when Syria and Arabia show in hair and color their Negro blood, this is completely ignored and their culture called "white." When Buddha appears all over Asia portrayed as black and curly-haired, science makes little effort to investigate or explain.

There was and is wide mingling of the blood of all races in Africa, but this is consistent with the general thesis that Africa is predominantly the land of Negroes and Negroid peoples, just as Europe is a land of Caucasoids and Asia of Mongoloids. We may give up entirely, if we wish, the whole attempt to delimit races, but we cannot, if we are sane, divide the world into whites, yellows, and blacks, and then call blacks white.

As in the case of Egypt, I shall hereafter assume that the Ethiopians were Negroids and shall try to let the facts prove their contribution to civilization.

In the eyes of the Greeks a thousand years B.C. and even in the age of Pericles, black Africans were considered equal to though different from Greeks, and superior to European and Asiatic barbarians. Significant indeed was the attitude of the early Greeks toward Africa. It was to them a land of ideals. Here in legend their gods retired to rest and recuperate. In the dawn of Greek literature, in the *Iliad*, we hear of the gods feasting among the "blameless Ethiopians."

According to mythology, the Greek people themselves came into being as the result of miscegenation. Zeus, the Father of the Gods, mates with the fair Greek maiden Io, and has a mulatto son, Epaphus, who is born in Egypt. Aeschylus says of this union, "And thou shall bring forth black Epaphus, thus named from the manner of Zeus' engendering. . . . Fifth in descent from him fifty maidens shall return to Argos [Greece], not of their choice but fleeing marriage with their cousin kin." Also, "Call this the work of Zeus, and that his race sprang from Epaphus, and thou shalt hit the truth."¹

¹ Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, line 850; *The Suppliant Maidens*, line 859.

Two of the most illustrious writers of Greece were called Negroes—Aesop and Sappho. Planudes asserts this; Zundel, Champfleury, and others think that the “woolly-haired Negro” on the coins of Delphos was Aesop. Ovid makes it clear that the ancients did not consider Sappho white. She is compared with Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus, black King of Ethiopia. Ovid says: “*Andromede patriae fusca colore suae.*” In Epistle XV of the *Heroides* of Ovid (translated by Ridley), Sappho says to Phaon, “I am small of stature but I have a name that fills all lands. I myself have produced this extended renown for my name. If I am not fair, Andromeda, the daughter of Cepheus, was swarthy though the complexion of her country was pleasing to Perseus. White pigeons, too, are often mated with spotted ones and the black turtledove is often beloved by a bird that is green.”²

Paul Lacroix says of Sappho: “Although Plato graces her with the epithet of beautiful and although Athenaeus is persuaded of her beauty on the authority of Plato, it is more probable that Maximus of Tyre who paints her for us as little and black is in conformity with more authentic tradition.”³

Pope’s translation of Ovid reads: “Brown as I am, an Ethiopian dame.”

Another Negro is mentioned in the Homeric legends, Eurybiates. Homer speaks of his “woolly hair” and “sable skin” and compares him with Ulysses, greatest of the heroes.

Eurybiates in whose large soul alone
Ulysses viewed an image of his own.

The Ethiopian Tithonus of Greek legend has been identified with Dedun, the Negro god of the Second Cataract.

“Of all the classical countries Ethiopia was the most romantic and the most remote. It was situated, according to the Greeks,

² Rogers, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 84.

³ Paul Lacroix, *History of Prostitution* (New York: Covici, Friede, 1931), p. 150.

on the extreme limits of the world; its inhabitants were the most just of men, and Jupiter dined with them twice a year. They bathed in the waters of a violet-scented spring, which endowed them with long life, noble bodies, and glossy skins. They chained their prisoners with golden fetters; they had bows which none but themselves could bend. It is certain that Ethiopia took its place among the powers of the ancient world. It is mentioned in the Jewish records and in the Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions." ⁴

In Africa were great and powerful kingdoms. When Greek poets enumerated the kingdoms of the earth, it was not only natural but inevitable to mention Memnon, King of Ethiopia, as leader of one of the great armies that besieged Troy. When a writer like Herodotus, father of history, wanted to visit the world, he went as naturally to Egypt as Americans go to London and Paris. Nor was he surprised to find the Egyptians, as he described them, "black and curly-haired."

Herodotus says that the names of nearly all the Greek gods are derived from Egypt, and certainly the Greeks continually turned toward Egypt for cultural inspiration and scientific information. Homer openly borrowed from Egypt his story of Ulysses, and the islands of forgetfulness were based on Egyptian stories.

The Ethiopians are closely linked with the rising and setting of the sun. Memnon, the son of Eos, says Hesiod, is their king. Aeschylus describes the Ethiopians as dark and living near the springs of the sun. Arctinus of Melitus writes of Memnon celebrating his participation on the side of the Trojans and his victory over Antilochus, the son of Nestor, and his eventual death at the hands of Achilles. In a myth of the fifth century B.C., Andromeda was pictured as the black daughter of Cepheus and Cassiopeia, rulers of Ethiopia. She was bound to a rock and saved by Perseus on his return from his battle with the Medusa. Both Sophocles and Euripides wrote plays

⁴ Reade, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

about Andromeda, and Perseus, Memnon, and Andromeda were worshiped as heroes in Africa and Ethiopia.

The culture of Egypt went out across the Mediterranean, lighting fires in Crete, inspiring Asia from southern Arabia to Syria and western Asia Minor. In Cretan art Negro heads appeared, and in the late Minoan Age, at the time of the expansion overseas, a black Minoan captain led Negro troops. Doubtless Minoans made use of black regiments in their final conquest of Greece, and from vases dated the latter part of the sixth century B.C. it seems clear that Ethiopians entered Greece even before the time of Xerxes. Herodotus tells that in the army of Xerxes there were Ethiopians clothed in leopard and lion skins and armed with bows and arrows. He distinguishes between oriental Ethiopians and western Ethiopians; both were black, but the hair of the former was straighter than the close curled-hair of the latter and they spoke different languages.

Herodotus reduced the races of Ethiopia to four: two native and two foreign; the native were the Ethiopians and the Libyans, and the foreign, the Phoenicians and the Greeks. Among the Libyans, Herodotus and the Egyptians distinguished between Negroids and the Mongoloids: the Negroids came from the south and the Mongoloids from the east. They had mingled in various ways so that one reads of black Getuli and white Ethiopians. The *Periplus of Scilex* records four Libyan populations, and Diodorus Siculus speaks of three Libyan tribes of which one is Negroid. Thus the Negroid peoples of Africa were represented in neighboring Asia and in North Africa, as well as in the valley of the Nile and Central and West Africa.

Greek culture affected Africa at an early period, and Africa in turn affected Europe. According to Frazer: "It is no longer possible to regard the rule of succession to the priesthood of Diana at Aricia as exceptional; it clearly exemplifies a widespread institution, of which the most numerous and the most similar cases have thus far been found in Africa. How far the

facts point to an early influence of Africa on Italy, or even to the existence of an African population in southern Europe, I do not presume to say.”⁵

It is admitted today that pre-Greek peoples assembled a considerable body of notable scientific knowledge. Individuals approached their problems with logical powers of deduction and methods of systematization. Two thousand years before Christ an Egyptian physician had made the heart the center of the human system, measured the pulse, and had written down his observations and advice.

In art no race was so interesting to the artists of Greece and Rome as the black man. Other races in the classical world were pictured far less often in Hellenistic and Roman times; the Negro was rendered with fidelity during the most idealistic period of Greek art and with full appreciation of his type of beauty. Appearing at the earliest time, the Negro type continued to be popular throughout the whole period of Greek classical art. The myths of Hercules and of Busirus are painted on a vase dating from the sixth century B.C. Hercules is represented as black and curly haired; the Egyptians of Busirus are represented as both black and yellow, and a bodyguard of five Ethiopians are marching to the defense of Busirus.

There was close and fairly frequent connection between Europe and Africa. In prehistoric times the continents were connected by land. They were separated by no obstacles which hinder migration. The large number of islands scattered through the Mediterranean served as bridges, and peninsulas stretched out from Europe toward Africa. African colonists passed over to Greece by way of the islands beginning with Crete. From Numidia they crossed into Sicily, Italy, and southern France; by Gibraltar into Spain. There is evidence of Negro blood in Asia Minor as far as the Black Sea and the Caucasus Mountains.

⁵ James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1940), Vol. I, pp. vi, vii.

The history of Ethiopia consists of a prehistoric period running down to 3500 B.C., a protohistoric period from 3500 to 1723 B.C., and a historic period from 723 B.C. to A.D. 355. In prehistoric times the Ethiopians looked upon themselves as the source of Egypt and declared, according to Diodorus Siculus, that Egyptian laws and customs were of Ethiopian origin. The Egyptians themselves in later days affirmed that their civilization came out of the south, and modern research confirms this in many ways.

If, as is possible, the historic beginnings of Egyptian culture were in the delta, it was doubtless preceded by a long series of cultures streaming up from the south until they met the barriers of the sea and the desert and the invitation of the rich delta soil. Here in the Ethiopia of the Greeks culture became stationary, tied to the soil, expressing itself in agriculture and irrigation; but at the same time it was renewed and challenged by the Negroes who continued to come up from the south.

The incense needed for Egyptian worship was brought to the African coast; the logs of Sudanese ebony, so greatly prized by the Egyptians, grew along the upper course of the Blue Nile. Two trade routes can be traced from the coast of the Red Sea to the valley of the Nile. One followed the course of the Blue Nile and crossed the level plain and the Nile port of Wady Ban-Naga. The other struck across the land to the Atbara, and from there to the fertile valley which ends at Meroe. The Fourth and Fifth Cataracts were avoided by leaving the Nile and striking across the desert to Napata. To what distant date these trade routes go back may be concluded from the predynastic slates which represent the Egyptians invading the country of a woolly-haired race where giraffes browse upon the palms and the guinea-fowl abounds. The home of the giraffe and guinea-fowl since the beginning of the Neolithic period has been the neighborhood of the Blue Nile.

The history of early Egypt was that of a duel between Ethiopia

and Egypt, that is, between the ancient African cultures of the Upper Nile and the settled Egyptian culture entrenched in the Nile valley. Over this long stretch of Egyptian history, biological as well as cultural differences appeared. The Egyptians became a settled race-type, brown and yellow in color, with a splendidly developed civilization.

The Ethiopians, on the other hand, were more purely Negroid, brown and black of skin and curly-haired. They were divided into various kingdoms and tribes and were continually raiding Egypt or defending themselves from Egypt, chiefly for the advantages of trade. They eventually became traders and middlemen between Egypt and Central and South-central Africa, and indirectly between Egypt and India. Their own development was in a way changed and directed by the fact that their leaders of ambition and ability were continually drawn off into the Egyptian civilization and rose in many cases to be leaders in Egypt. As Egypt expanded the Ethiopians were pushed back from the First to the Second, Third, and Fourth Cataracts.

During the middle kingdom of Egypt an independent Ethiopian culture developed, centered at Napata and Meroe, which carried on widespread trade in gold, ivory, precious stones, wood, and handicrafts. When at the end of this time the Asiatic Hyksos overthrew Egypt, Ethiopia became a refuge for the conquered Egyptians both physically and culturally. Noble Egyptian families migrated to Ethiopia and intermarried, and one such family formed the great Eighteenth Dynasty which rescued Egypt. From then on larger parts became incorporated into Egypt, and the son of a Pharaoh took the title of Royal Son of Kush. When, however, the Libyans in the Twenty-first Dynasty overthrew Egypt, the Ethiopians organized independently, and from 750 B.C. to A.D. 355 there are records of seventy-six rulers of Ethiopia.

Let us turn back to early Egypt and see the relation between its development to the fall and rise of Ethiopia. From 3115 B.C.

to 2360 B.C., for a thousand years, the old kingdom of Egypt was under the stern rule of despotic kings; but with the Sixth Dynasty the power of the pyramid builders began to collapse, and during the years 2360 to 2150 the mass of Egyptian people obtained religious and political rights. During the Middle Kingdom the people began to be admitted to religious rites which were no longer the sole secret of the priesthood.

The monarchy centering at Thebes endured a thousand years, from 2160 B.C. to 1100 B.C. The courts became centers of social law, and by the time of the Eighteenth Dynasty a state socialism had been established. Egypt in these days was not a large country according to modern ideas. It had during the Theban monarchy some eight million people. In the end it was the Saiti kings from the delta who opened Egypt to a flood of foreigners. The Greeks came, and Egypt was turned into a teacher of the world; its culture spread. Alexander and the Caesars sat at its feet.

With the Eighteenth Dynasty came the New Empire, and we are on firm historical grounds as to dates. It came to power in 1580 B.C. and lasted until 1345. Its center of power was Thebes, three hundred miles from Memphis and four hundred miles south of the Mediterranean. It was less than one hundred miles from the First Cataract, the legendary southern boundary of Egypt. The power of Aahmes was probably reinforced by his marriage with an Ethiopian princess, Nefertari, or Nofritari, who was invariably painted black in Egyptian art and yet who was, as Petrie says, "the most venerated figure of Egyptian history."

Her statue in the Turin Museum represents her as having black skin. She is also painted black standing before Amenotes in the Deir el Medineh tomb, now in the Berlin Museum. This queen with a black skin has therefore been regarded as a Negress, the daughter of an Ethiopian Pharaoh, or at any rate the daughter of a chief of some Nubian tribe; ⁶ it was thought

⁶ Edward Meyer, *Geschichte des Alten Aegypten* (1887), p. 224, note 1.

that Aahmes must have married her to secure the help of the Negro tribes in his wars, and that it was owing to this alliance that he succeeded in expelling the Hyksos.⁷

Naturally the legend of this black queen has caused heart-searching among white Egyptologists; they have called her "Libyan"; and Libya was certainly partly Negroid in race; but since the Libyans have usually been counted "white," why was the Libyan Nofritari black?

Nofritari reigned for a time conjointly with Amenotnes, and we know that her rule was a prosperous one and that she was revered by her subjects. The remembrance of Nofritari always remained distinct in their minds, and her cult spread until it became a kind of popular religion.⁸

In the Eighteenth Dynasty all workers were organized in guilds under the state. There were scribes to guide them and voice the law. There were local assemblies to stop oppression "of the free man." Legally the Pharaoh owned all the land, but it was assigned to individuals and descended through the eldest son. The Pharaoh always kept the right of eminent domain. Soldiers were established upon freeholds and the priests had large holdings; then came lands assigned to the peasants and to tenants.

Except for the religious land for temples and burial places, the Pharaoh represented the state, held eminent domain over all land, all workers, and all renters. All sources of revenue belonged to the state, and the exploiters of the land and of trade must account to the state, usually through the head of the family. There could be no change of ownership without consent of the Pharaoh or his representative. Usually the state collected one-fifth of the crop as tax. The artisans worked in state studios. The slavery of aliens was limited by treaties with their chiefs. The state controlled all commerce.

⁷ G. C. G. Maspero, *Struggle of the Nations*, ed. by A. H. Sayce, tr. by M. L. McClure (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1897), pp. 98-99.

⁸ Maspero, *op. cit.*

Thebes was at the time a city of one hundred thousand and a state capital a thousand years before Rome. It was a planned city, as all Egyptian communities were planned, centering around the square with four walls, and six streets lined with workers' houses on each side. Each house had four rooms and a second story.

Aahmes reigned from 1580 B.C. to 1577 B.C., and his son, Amenophis I, from 1577 B.C. to 1536 B.C. Amenophis I finally conquered an Ethiopian Kingdom named Kerma, which had been threatening Egypt since the Twelfth Dynasty, or about 1785 B.C. Then came by marriage Tuthmosis I, the conqueror of Syria and the valley of the Euphrates, where the Egyptians probably for the first time in their history saw mountains covered with snow. Tuthmosis I pushed Egyptian domination beyond the Third Cataract. After Tuthmosis I came his son Tuthmosis II, who reigned conjointly with his half-sister Hatshepsut for two or three years, then associated upon the throne a son by a concubine, Tuthmosis III. After the death of Tuthmosis II, Hatshepsut assumed full power and was the acknowledged ruler of Egypt. The temple of Deir el Bahri, "Sublime of the Sublime," designed by Tuthmosis II was completed by her in 1500 B.C., and it represented her expedition to Punt. The king and queen of Punt are represented as of the modern Hottentot type, and the queen with the characteristic steatopygia. After Hatshepsut's death Tuthmosis III came into full power.

His granite head in the British Museum has distinct Negro features. He extended Egyptian power east and south. He conquered Syria in seventeen campaigns and crossed the Euphrates. He fought in Libya and in Ethiopia. His reign was without doubt, as Petrie said, "one of the grandest and most eventful in Egyptian history." He repressed robbery and injustice, did much building and adorning of temples with the labor of his captives; and by taking the children of subdued

kings in Asia as hostages to Egypt, established his empire on a sound basis perhaps for the first time in history. His empire extended from Napata to the Euphrates. The Assyrians and Babylonians sent their daughters to him in marriage, and the descendants of Syrian rulers, conquered by his father and educated in Egypt, ruled as slaves of the Pharaoh. Tribute poured into Egypt. He reigned thirty-six years until the Hittites from the north and the Khabiri from the east began to press down upon Syria. His son Amenophis II, whom he had associated on his throne, reigned twenty-six years, leaving his throne to Tuthmosis IV.

This monarch married a black woman, Mutemua. Their son, Amenophis III, succeeded about 1400 B.C. He built the temple of Luxor at Karnak. He inherited his mother's Negroid features and married the brilliant Taia. It is possible that the Greeks derived the name of "Memnon, king of the Ethiopians," from this Pharaoh. J. G. Wilkinson says of Amenophis III: "The features of this monarch cannot fail to strike everyone who examines the portraits of Egyptian kings as having more in common with the Negro than those of any other Pharaoh."⁹ Anna Graves says: "Amenophis, or Amenhotep, III (1411-1375 B.C.) was evidently what, south of Mason and Dixon would be called a 'colored man,' and his chief queen Taia must have had much more Negro blood than her husband. Indeed, judging from her portrait bust in the Berlin Gallery . . . she may have been very nearly pure Nubian. Their son, Amenophis, or Amenhotep, IV (1375-1358 B.C.), who later took the name Akhnaton, or Akhenaton, though less Negroid than his mother was more of the mulatto type than his father, and the portrait bust of his daughters show them all to be beautiful quadroons, though perhaps octoroons. And this mulatto Pharaoh, Akhenaton, was not only the most interesting

⁹ J. G. Wilkinson, *The Ancient Egyptians* (London: 1878), quoted in Rogers, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 42, 54.

Pharaoh in all the long lines of the many dynasties; but he was in many ways one of the most remarkable human beings who ever lived."¹⁰

It was this ruler who brought profound revolution in the religion of Egypt, changed it to an imperial monotheism, and introduced a philosophical worship of the powers of nature. The great hymn to the sun came from this reign:

In the hills from Syria to Kush, and the plain of Egypt,
Thou givest to every one his place, thou framest their lives;
To every one his belongings, reckoning his length of days;
Their tongues are diverse in their speech,
Their natures in the colour of their skin.
As a divider, thou dividest the strange peoples.¹¹

Along with this religious change went a change in ethics, and the glorifying of war almost disappeared. "Living in truth" was made characteristic of the Pharaoh and domestic affection the ideal of life. In art there was a direct study of nature and drawing away from convention.

Universal humanitarianism arose under the reforms of Amenophis IV:

Thou didst create the earth in thy heart, the earth with people, herds, and floods . . . the foreign lands: Syria, Nubia, Egypt. Thou settst every man in his place. . . . They speak in diverse tongues, they are varied in form and color of skin.¹²

During the reign of his successor Tutankhaton, or Tutankhamen, whose tomb was found by Lord Carnarvon and Howard Carter, there was a reaction toward the older forms of religion, until in a succeeding reign Akhenaton was reviled as a criminal.

The founder of the Nineteenth Dynasty, Rameses I, and his

¹⁰ Anna M. Graves, *Benvenuto Cellini Had No Prejudice against Bronze* (Baltimore: Waverly Press, 1943), p. xix.

¹¹ Petrie, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 216.

¹² Cf. translations by James H. Breasted, *History of the Ancient Egyptians* (New York, 1908), p. 275; Arthur Weigall, *Life and Times of Akhnaton* (London, 1922), p. 132.

son, Sêti I, became great builders of temples at Karnak and elsewhere. Then came the long reign of sixty-seven years of Rameses II, the Conqueror, who built monuments all over Egypt and Nubia and fought against the Libyans, Syrians, and Hittites. His conquests eventually exhausted the nation, which became prey to the Libyans and the peoples pressing down from the delta.

It was around 2500 B.C. that the Hebrew nation had begun to arise. It became enslaved in Egypt, perhaps in the time of Rameses I. Its history touched Ethiopia at many points, and Jews showed the blacks the highest respect.

In personal relations there were repeated bonds between Jews and Ethiopians. A black minister of state, Ebedmelech, rescued the prophet Jeremiah from prison:

Now when Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin; Ebedmelech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for there is no more bread in the city. Then the king commanded Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. So Ebedmelech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. And Ebedmelech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.¹³

Moses married a black woman:

And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethio-

¹³ Jeremiah 38:7-13.

pian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.¹⁴

Jehovah is said to have punished these protests by making Miriam a leper. Aaron admitted:

We have done foolishly.

The writer of the Song of Solomon defended the color of the Ethiopians:

I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem!

Jewish writers pictured Ethiopia as one of the most powerful countries of their day, equal in strength to Egypt, Persia, Assyria, and Babylon:

Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite; Put and Lubim were thy helpers.¹⁵

With twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people were without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians.¹⁶

The prophet Isaiah wrote the well-known appeal to Ethiopia:

Ah! Land of the buzzing wings,
Which lies beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,
That sends ambassadors by sea,
In papyrus vessels on the face of the waters:
To a nation tall and sleek,
To a nation dreaded near and far,
To a nation strong and triumphant.¹⁷

Jews hoped that Ethiopia might turn to the Jewish faith:

Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.¹⁸

¹⁴ Numbers 12:1.

¹⁵ Nahum 3:9.

¹⁶ II Chronicles 12:3.

¹⁷ Smith and Goodspeed, *The Complete Bible* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944).

¹⁸ Psalms 68:31.

Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir? ¹⁹

For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.²⁰

The sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.²¹

And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan.²²

Shabaka of Ethiopia or "So, King of Egypt," as the Jews called him,²³ was the cause of the overthrow of Hoshea, last king of Israel. Isaiah summoned the Ethiopians in the struggle against Sennacherib. Repeatedly the Jews made alliance with the Ethiopians.

And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He is come forth to make war with thee. And when he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah. . . .²⁴

He was assured that with this mighty ally the God of Israel would overthrow the Assyrians.

Taharqa joined battle against Sennacherib in accordance with the treaty made with Hezekiah. Sennacherib's army was destroyed miraculously, as the Jews believed, and Taharqa recovered the cities of Palestine which had formerly belonged to Egypt.

The Jews envied the resources of Ethiopia:

Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth; the Ethiopians and the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Libyans, that handle and bend the bow.²⁵

But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.²⁶

¹⁹ Amos 9:7.

²⁰ Isaiah 43:3.

²¹ I Chronicles 1:8.

²² Genesis 10:6.

²³ II Kings, 17:4.

²⁴ Isaiah 37:9.

²⁵ Jeremiah 46:9.

²⁶ Daniel 11:43.

They threatened that great as Ethiopia was, the Lord of Israel would eventually overcome them and other enemies:

Thus saith the Lord, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God.²⁷

And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down. Ethiopia, and Libya and Lydia, and all the mingled people, and Chub, and the men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.

Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet. . . .²⁸

Rameses III represented the decadence of Egypt and concentration of land ownership in the hands of the priests. The end of this dynasty came in 1100 B.C., and from then on Egypt declined. First there were the Libyan dynasties in the delta from 1100 to 945. The Twenty-second and Twenty-third Dynasties had rival princes fighting among themselves and seeking to re-establish their control over Egypt. But in the meantime Ethiopia arose, and the Ethiopian, Piankhi, became head of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, 712 B.C.

When the New Empire began to decline, a governor-general rebelled and the kingdom of Ethiopia was established. It was a dominion composed of brown men and black men, shepherds and savages, Egyptians and Negroes, ruled over by a king and a college of priests. It was enriched by annual excursions into the black country, and by the caravan trade in ivory, gold dust, and gum. It also received East Indian goods and Arabian produce through its ports on the Red Sea. Meroe, its capital, attained the reputation of a great city; it possessed temples and

²⁷ Isaiah 45:14.

²⁸ Ezekiel 30:4, 5; 38:5.

pyramids like those of Egypt, only on a smaller scale. The Ethiopian empire, in its best days, comprised the modern Egyptian provinces of Kordofan and Senaar, with the mountain kingdom of Abyssinia as it existed under Theodore.

The first capital of the Sudan was Napata. Here Amenophis II of the Eighteenth Dynasty brought one of the rebellious princes of northern Syria, and, after putting him to death, hung his body on the walls of the city as a warning to the Sudanese tribes. How much older than the Eighteenth Dynasty Napata may have been is uncertain.

As long as the Sudan continued as part of the Egyptian empire, it was ruled by Egyptian viceroys. The name and worship of Ammon, the god of Thebes, were carried southward, and it is possible that Napata, of which Ammon became the supreme divinity, was under Theban priests. When the Libyan Shishak usurped the throne of the Pharaohs in the tenth century B.C., the descendants of the Theban priest-kings of the Twenty-first Dynasty are believed to have retreated to Napata and there established a theocratic monarchy. The decline of the Bubastite dynasty enabled one of these, Piankhi, to assert once more the claim of his family to the throne of Egypt, and to overrun the valley of the Nile almost as far as the Mediterranean. He led the Ethiopians against the Libyans and overthrew them; and he made Egypt a dependency of Ethiopia. The heir to the throne was called "Prince of Egypt." At his death in 710 B.C., Shabaka became king of the two lands. Herodotus said that he abolished capital punishment in Egypt. Kashto, Sahbatok, Taharqa, and Tanut-Amon, succeeded Piankhi and founded the Ethiopian dynasty which governed Egypt from 715 B.C. onward, until they were driven back to Ethiopia by the Assyrians.

Their names show that the ruling caste in the Sudan was Ethiopian, and they were hailed in Upper Egypt as the rightful lords of the country and as the successors of the ancient Pharaohs. On a stela of the Assyrian king Esar-haddon, Taharqa

is depicted as a Negro with a ring through his lip; but Taharqa was never a prisoner in Assyrian hands. We see now that out of the remote regions of the Upper Nile the Ethiopians emerged and attempted in the world an imperial role, but they faced in the years from 750 B.C. to 500 B.C. the empire building in western Asia.

The history of western Asia and Asia Minor during this period is difficult to summarize, but in earliest times we find Sumerians in the Tigris-Euphrates area, evidently Mongoloids. They attempted development there similar to the development in the Nile valley. Then out of Arabia began to stream a series of peoples. The Babylonians appeared more than three thousand years B.C. In the eighth century before Christ the Hittites moved eastward from Asia and threatened Egyptian power until Rameses II defeated them at Kadesh. Then from the mountain lands northeast of the Euphrates the Assyrians came down, "like a wolf on the fold." They overthrew Nineveh in 612 B.C. and themselves bowed before the Scythians and the Medes. A new Babylonian imperialism followed, and then came Cyrus, the Persian. In the sixth century B.C. Sardis fell, and soon the cry "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," went throughout the East.

Asia precipitated itself upon Africa. Egyptian civilization fell before the Mongoloid intruder. The Nile valley was swept by vast forces just as the renewed Ethiopian kingdom came to power. It was the heyday of Negro imperialism. Black Africa was still pressing up from the center of the continent, as it had for thousands of years. Yellow Asia was bearing down on Egypt in flood after flood of differing oncoming peoples. Phoenicia was inspiring Carthage and beginning North African development, which pressed on western Egypt. In the center of these forces the Egyptian empire, incredibly ancient, had fallen, first before the Hyksos, and then later before other eastern Asiatic tribes. Ethiopia had restored her, but the situation in the closed valley of the Nile did not invite or encourage ex-

pansion in face of the increased might of armed enemies. Ethiopian imperialism, therefore, while striking and effective, lasted but two centuries.

The Assyrians defeated the forces of Egypt and drove back the Ethiopians until at last, from 688 B.C. to 663 B.C., came the greatest of the Ethiopian kings, Taharqa.

His reign was an era of prosperity and cultural advancement. Weigall called his reign "that astonishing epoch of nigger domination"; and Randall-MacIver said: "It seems amazing that an African Negro should have been able with any sort of justification to style himself Emperor of the World." Taharqa ascended the throne in 688 B.C. at the age of about forty-two. For fifteen years he fostered the economic, cultural, and religious life of Ethiopia and Egypt. The trade of the country increased, and there was money to repair the ancient temples and build new ones. Taharqa established friendly alliances with western Asia and with Assyria. The Hebrew Bible chronicles this in the downfall of Sennacherib, and notes Ethiopia's trade.²⁹

Taharqa's building at Karnak was planned as one of the most striking in the ancient world. The temple built at Thebes had a relief representing the four courts of the four quarters of the Nilotic world: Dedun, the great God of Ethiopia, represents the south; Sopd, the eastern desert; Sedek, the western desert; and Horus, the north. According to Petrie: "This shows how southern was the center of thought when the whole of Egypt is reckoned as the north. Some writers say that Taharqa led expeditions as far as the Strait of Gibraltar."³⁰

Eventually the Assyrians were too strong for Taharqa and he had to give up Egypt and retire into Ethiopia and the "night of death." Tanutamén, his successor, held back the Assyrian storm for awhile,³¹ but Ethiopian and Egyptian strength were

²⁹ Isaiah 18:2, 37:9.

³⁰ Petrie, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

³¹ Nahum, 3:1-19.

eventually dashed to pieces. Egyptian temples were wrecked, and the conqueror, Ashurbanipal, declared: "I captured Thebes like a flood. . . ."

Aspeluta, a full-blooded Negro, ruled probably from 593 B.C. to 567 B.C. In 524 B.C. Cambyses, the Persian, having conquered Egypt, tried to invade Nubia, but was defeated and his fleet destroyed. Horsiatef (c. 372-361 B.C.) made nine expeditions against the warlike tribes south of Meroe, which was attacked unsuccessfully by the Rehrehsa under their chief Arua. One successor was Nastasen (c. 328-308 B.C.), who removed the capital from Napata to Meroe, although Napata continued to be the religious capital and the Ethiopian kings were still crowned on its golden throne. Nastasen was saluted king by the priests of Ammon from both Meroe and Napata. He called himself king of To-Kenset (or Nubia, including Dongola), and of the city of Alut. Alut was an alternative name of Meroe.

Meroe, between the Atbara River and the Blue Nile, was founded later than Napata, probably around the eighth century B.C. The site of the town was well chosen. It stood on the bank of the Nile, between the Fifth and Sixth Cataracts, and at the end of a valley which extended for many miles into the interior. During the rainy season the valley afforded an easy road for caravans coming across the Atbara from the Red Sea. The city of Meroe was the natural outlet on the Nile of the more northern prehistoric trade route from the East. Immediately to the north of it were hills containing the extensive quarries where stones used in the construction of its buildings were worked. Northward there was navigation down the Nile to Berber, where the desert road to Napata left the river.

The mission sent by Nero to discover the sources of the Nile reported that Meroe was three hundred and sixty Roman miles from Napata, and seventy miles south of the Atbara. Opposite the city was the island of Tadu, which sheltered the harbor from the northwest wind. At the time of the visit of the Romans the town seems to have fallen into decay in consequence of its

capture and partial destruction by some enemy, but it was said to have once supported two hundred thousand soldiers and four thousand artisans. It was then ruled, according to Pliny, by a queen named Candace, who had had forty-four predecessors on the throne.

During the period from 308 B.C. to 225 B.C., there were ten rulers, five reigning at Napata and five at Meroe. The Ptolemies did not invade Nubia but tried to obtain trade by peaceful inroads. Ergamenes (225-200 B.C.) who was brought up at the court of Ptolemy II, united the "nine nations" of Ethiopia. Six kings reigned over the whole of Ethiopia; then came nine kings, of whom four reigned at Meroe, and five at Napata. These were succeeded by three kings ruling over a united Ethiopia. A great builder, Netekamane, appeared, who with his queen Amanetari is depicted on temples at many points up the Nile.

This history of Ethiopia³² means that out of the south for many thousands of years migrations streamed northward for settlement and for trade, to furnish soldiers for the armies of the Pharaohs and to reach a better climate and opportunities for defense. Down toward the hot center of Africa human culture had to fight the insects and disease and found no natural barriers to protect them against oncomers. There were probably movements south and west from the Great Lakes, but the lure of Egypt attracted the larger streams, and, as Chamberlain has said, this migration was at once advantageous and detrimental to Central Africa. It continually siphoned off the able and the adventurous into the great opportunities of Egypt. Egypt profited and grew on these new resources of inspiration. Individual Negroes became Egyptians and occupied high places, but left their own southern brethren the poorer from this continuous loss of ability and strength.

Books were written about Ethiopia by Dalion, Aristocreon,

³² For the history of Ethiopia I have leaned heavily on ms. material furnished me by Professor Leo Hansberry of Howard University.

Basilis, Bion, and Simonides the Younger, the last of whom resided for five years in Meroe.³³ As early as 431 B.C. the trade of Egypt was well known in Athens. Sails and papyrus rolls came from Egypt and ivory from Libya. The slaves were usually not from Africa but from Asia.

It was natural that Alexander, seeking to conquer the world, should bring his conquest to a triumphant end by overthrowing Egypt and establishing there his capital, Alexandria. Alexander had Negroes in his armies. One of the most illustrious was Clitus, his best beloved, whom he made King of Bactria and commander of his cavalry. Clitus' mother, Dropsica, was Alexander's nurse, and Clitus is mentioned by Plutarch and others as Clitus Niger, that is, "Clitus the Negro."³⁴

There are legends of the visit of Alexander the Great to Candace, Queen of Meroe. Fabulous perhaps, but they show her fame. It is said that Candace would not let Alexander enter Ethiopia and warned him not to scorn her people because they were black, for they were whiter in soul than his white folk. "She sent him gold, maidens, parrots, sphinxes, and a crown of emeralds and pearls. She ruled eighty tribes, who were ready to punish those who attacked her."³⁵ The Ptolemies were in contact with the Abyssinians. The earliest Ptolemies were white; but as time went on they changed more and more toward the Negroid. "The Negro strain in Alexander II is apparent, and still more so in Ptolemy XIII, the flute-playing father of the most celebrated of the Cleopatras. Ptolemy's mother was a slave. Cleopatra herself is known through tradition as having been of a tawny, or mulatto color."³⁶

From 332 B.C., when Alexander the Great conquered Egypt, down to the conquest of Egypt by Rome after the birth of

³³ J. Garstand, A. H. Sayce, and F. L. Griffith, *Meroe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), pp. 4-5.

³⁴ Plutarch, *Alexander the Great*; Diodorus Siculus, Book XVII, Ch. 2.

³⁵ W. E. B. DuBois, *Black Folk: Then and Now* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1939), pp. 32, 33.

³⁶ Rogers, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 57.

Christ, Egyptian civilization was subject to increasing Grecian influences and Grecian migration. During the time of Augustus Caesar a club for women existed in the Egyptian capital, Alexandria. About 240 B.C. there was said to have been four hundred and ninety thousand rolls of manuscript in the Alexandria library. The directors of this library were distinguished literary and scientific figures.

When Greece fell under the domination of expanding Rome, the greatest prize of the new empire was Egypt, not simply the valley of the Nile, but the whole of North Africa from the Strait of Gibraltar east and across the Red Sea. The Romans called the district about Carthage, Africa. It held not only Caucasoids from Europe and Mongoloids from Asia, but brown Moors and black Numidians. Roman expeditions went south toward the center of Africa where other black folk and great beasts like the rhinoceros were discovered. There was an expedition under the Romans led by Julius Maternus under the Emperor Domitian in A.D. 80, which searched for gold mines in the Sudan.

The duel between Europe and Africa came with the Punic Wars: the first from 264 to 241 B.C.; the second from 218 to 201 B.C.; and the final one from 149 to 146 B.C. These wars started as efforts to defend Italy against migration and conquest from Africa, where Mongoloids and Negroids with some infiltrating of Europeans had built the city of Carthage. Within this city all races were represented, and Carthage secured a stronghold in Sicily which the first Punic War was fought to break.

The second Punic War began with the invasion of Spain by Carthage and the eruption of the Carthaginian army into Italy. The leader, Hannibal, was finally driven back into Africa. Hannibal and his African troops must have brought a strong Negro strain into the Roman population. For thirteen years they dominated the peninsula from Naples to the Alps. Hannibal himself, if we believe his coins, may well have been

a Negro with woolly hair. His wife was Spanish.³⁷ In Rome the spread of the plantation system after the second Punic War led to the wide use of slaves, but these slaves were from Greece and from Spain.

It was during the next fifty years that the cry raised by Cato the Elder, "Carthage must be destroyed," spread through Rome, making common cause with the black rebel, Massinissa. The Romans attacked again and Carthage fell. Fifty thousand Carthaginians were sold into slavery. Massinissa died in 143 B.C. and was succeeded by his son Micipsa, and his grandson Jugurtha. It was Jugurtha who called Rome "a city for sale and doomed to perish as soon as it finds a purchaser." The war was renewed in Africa, but finally Jugurtha fell into an ambush and was carried as a prisoner to Rome. He and his two sons figured in the triumphs of Marius. He was murdered in prison beneath the capitol.

In Numidia, Rome found itself opposed by the Negroid king Cyphax. Under Diocletian, Numidia was separated from Africa and became one of the seven provinces of the continent. It reached under Constantine a high degree of civilization, but was overthrown by the Vandals in A.D. 428 and again by the Arabs in the eighth century.

On the death of Cleopatra, Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire and Augustus sent a prefect there. The power of Ethiopia had already declined before black invaders from the west. The prefect Gallus summoned these chiefs and granted them their independence under the power of Rome in A.D. 29. After his death the blacks revolted and advanced northward. The Romans sent a great army of ten thousand infantry and eight hundred cavalry to suppress thirty thousand rebels. The Romans were victorious and advanced on the Ethiopians at Napata, where a Candace, "a masculine woman

³⁷ P. R. Garrucci, *La Monete dell' Italia Antica* (Rome: 1885), Part II, p. 58; Plate No. LXXV, Coin Nos. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

with one eye," was reigning. She is probably the "Candace" mentioned in Acts 8: 27:

And he arose and went; and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasure, and had to come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning and sitting in his chariot. . . .

Petronius captured Napata, and a thousand prisoners were sent to Caesar as slaves and many were sold at auction. Nevertheless, as soon as Petronius left, Candace attacked the Roman garrison. The Ethiopians demanded the right to lay their case before Caesar, which was granted, and Caesar remitted the tribute.

In this era there was born in the Egypto-Syrian area, with its Mongoloid and Negroid elements, a social reformer called Jesus Christ. Nordics who have never accepted his doctrine of submission to evil, repudiation of riches, and love for mankind, have usually limned him as Caucasoid. He was probably a swarthy Syrian Jew, with hooked nose and curled hair; perhaps he even inherited Ethiopian blood. He probably looked like that Jew at whom Hitler stared in Vienna: "One day when I was walking through the inner city, I suddenly came upon a being clad in a long caftan, with black curls."³⁸ From that day dates his active anti-Semitism. Jesus tried to make men better, simpler, truer; he did not succeed. He was charged with blasphemy and treason, and hanged on nails until he was dead. Around legends of his person and ideals have been built creeds, churches, inquisitions, and dreams. Finally there arose the organized and institutionalized Christian Church.

The Roman Emperor Nero, A.D. 54-68, planned to invade Ethiopia and sent some scouts to report. They penetrated as far as the region of the Saad. For the next two hundred years the Nubians and other desert tribes did as they pleased; the

³⁸ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 73.

power of Ethiopia continued to decline. From the beginning of the third century tribes from the eastern desert, probably the modern Beja, invaded Egypt and plundered; they became masters of southern Egypt during the reign of Aurelian. The Romans continued to have so much trouble with their Ethiopian frontier that finally, when the Abyssinians appeared in the east, the Emperor Diocletian invited the Nubians from the west to repel them. These Nubians finally embraced Christianity, and northern Ethiopia came to be known as Nubia. The Roman garrisons were withdrawn and the Romans depended upon the Nubians from Darfur and Kordofan to protect their interests. Diocletian gave these Nubians land and a yearly subsidy and also subsidized the Beja. During the reigns of Theodosius and Justinian these tribes again and again broke into uneasy revolt.

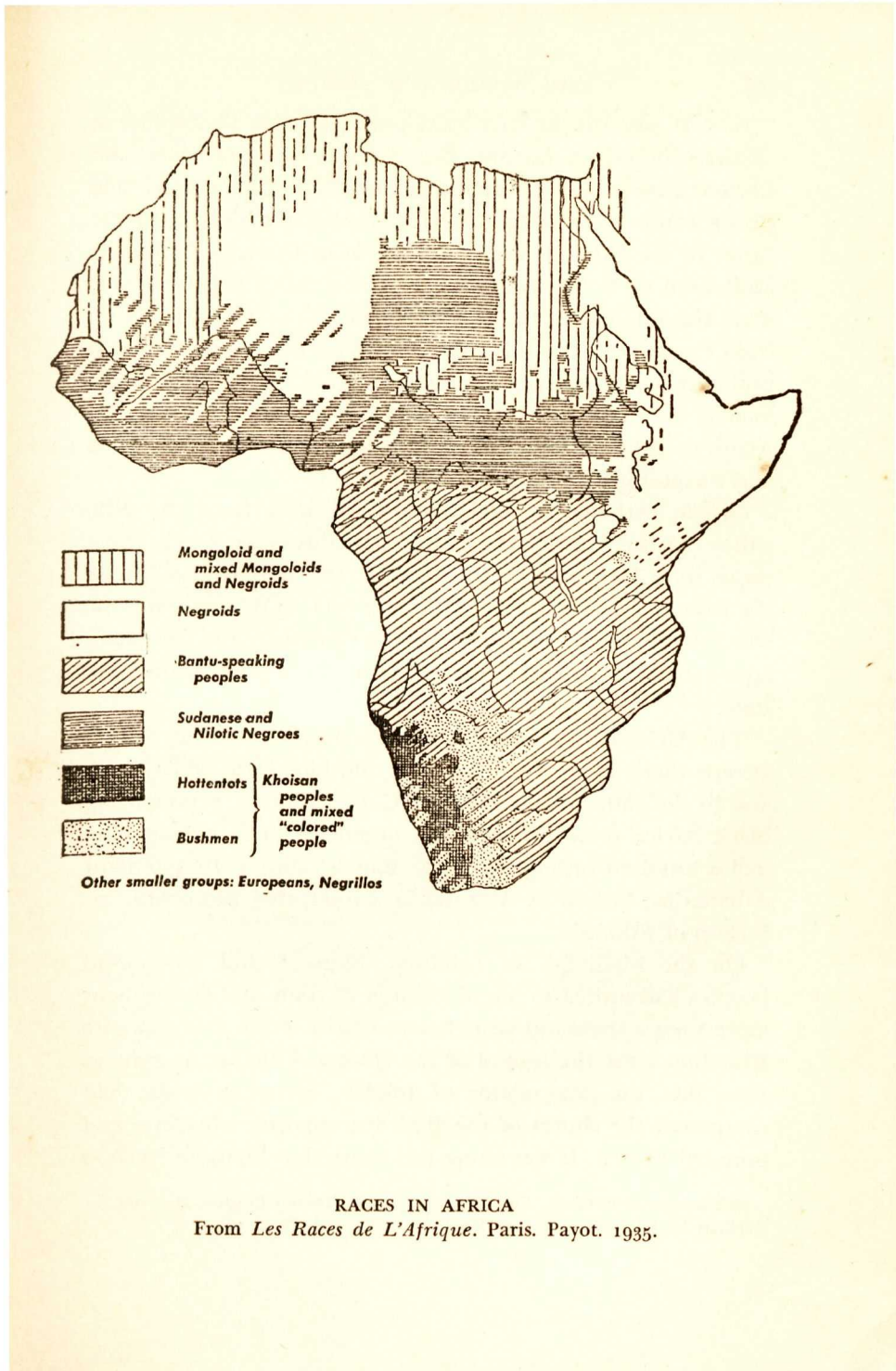
Black Africa widely influenced Rome. Many of her great men were called "African" because of their birth, and some of these had Negro blood. Terentius Afer (Terence the African) was an ex-slave whose complexion was described by Suetonius, as *fuscus*, or dusky. Terence was the greatest of the Latin stylists, the author of six plays. He is famous mostly, however, for his "*Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto*"—"I am a man and nothing human is alien to me."

Virgil mentions a beautiful black boy:

*quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses
o formose puer,
nimium ne crede colori:
alba ligustra cadunt, vaccinia nigra leguntur.*

Two Latin epigrams praised the Egyptian hunter Olympius:

*Nil tibi forma nocet nigro fuscata colora. . . .
Vivet fama tui post te longaeva decoris
Atque tuum nomen semper Karthago loquetur.*



RACES IN AFRICA
 From *Les Races de L'Afrique*. Paris. Payot. 1935.

In A.D. 330 the Eastern Roman Empire was established at Constantinople. It became Greek rather than Roman, and Christian even before Rome was Christian. This empire had strong connections with Africa: it traded not only with the valley of the Nile but even with the West Coast of Africa. As Mommsen said: "It was through Africa that Christianity became the religion of the world. Tertullian and Cyprian were from Carthage; Arnobius from Sicca Veneria; Lactantius, and probably in like manner Minucius Felix, in spite of their Latin names, were natives of Africa, and not less so, Augustine. In Africa the Church found its most zealous confessors of the faith and its most gifted defenders."³⁹

Origen, Athanasius, and Saint Cyril were from the Nile valley. At the head of the Catholic hierarchy at Rome, three popes were African by birth: Victor I (187-198), who defended the Roman date for Easter; Miltiades (311-314), who was pope when the Emperor entered Rome as a Christian; and Gelasius I (492-496), who defended the rights of the papacy against the state.

The Africa here referred to was the Africa above the Sahara Desert; there, as we have seen, Negroid blood was widespread, and in the valley of the Nile the Coptic Church, representing black Africa more directly, was organized. The patriarchate had a hundred bishoprics in the fourth century. In 330 Saint Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, consecrated Fromentius as Bishop of Ethiopia.

On the highlands of Ethiopia, Negroid and Mongoloid peoples had united to found a center of trade and government more than a thousand years before Christ. From this Axumite Kingdom came the legend of the Queen of Sheba. As early as 1800 B.C. the descendants of Jokdan, seafaring Arabs, had conquered the shores of the Red Sea opposite Abyssinia and founded Yemen. It was along this route that Pharaoh Necho's

³⁹ Theodor Mommsen, *The Provinces of the Roman Empire*, tr. from the German by Dickson (London: Bentley, 1886), Vol. II, p. 345.

expedition went around Africa from east to west. The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, dated from A.D. 60 to 80, shows the increasing commerce around this eastern horn to Africa.

Abyssinia for a time controlled both its own country and Yemen, and King Kaleb conquered Yemen in 525 and held it fifty years. Eventually the Abyssinians were expelled from Arabia and shut themselves up on their highlands where, as Gibbon said, "encompassed by the enemies of their religion, the Ethiopians slept for nearly a thousand years forgetful of the world by whom they were forgotten." Throughout the Middle Ages the legend of this Christian kingdom under Prester John persisted. At one time the Abyssinians established themselves at Meroe, but were driven back by the Nubians who had made league with Rome.

Finally in A.D. 450 the Nubians under Silko embraced Christianity and made old Dongola their capital. This city replaced Napata and Meroe, and by the twelfth century had churches and brick dwellings.

In A.D. 525 there was considerable trade between Abyssinia and Central Africa. Spices and gold were imported in return for cattle, salt, and iron.

Thus the flood of Mohammedanism as it pressed up the Nile valley was held back for two centuries by a solid Christian phalanx in Abyssinia and Nubia. For years the dream of the Europeans was to make contact and alliance with the forces of Prester John and the other African Christians. It was not until 1270 that Saladin crushed the Nubians and annexed Nubia. The Christian kingdom of the Nubians finally fell in the sixteenth century.



CHAPTER VII

ATLANTIS

This is the story of the West Coast of Africa and its relation to the development of the world from A.D. 500 to 1500.

IT HAS long been the belief of modern men that the history of Europe covers the essential history of civilization, with unimportant exceptions; that the progress of the white race has been along the one natural, normal path to the highest possible human culture. Even in its collapse today, the dominant opinion is that this is but an unfortunate halting on the way; the same march must and will be resumed after a breathing space for recovery.

On the other hand, we know that the history of modern Europe is very short; scarcely a moment of time as compared with that of eternal Egypt. The British Empire is not more than two hundred and fifty years old; France in her present stature dates back three hundred years; the United States was born only a hundred and seventy years ago; and Germany less than one hundred years. When, therefore, we compare modern Europe with the great empires which have died, it is not far different in length of days from the empires of Persia, Assyria, the Hittites, and Babylon. Ethiopia ruled the world longer than England has.

It is surely a wider world of infinitely more peoples that Europe has ruled; but does this reveal eternal length of rule and inherent superiority in European manhood, or merely the temporary possession of a miraculously greater brute force? Mechanical power, not deep human emotion nor creative genius nor ethical concepts of justice, has made Europe ruler of the world. Man for man, the modern world marks no advance over the ancient; but man for gun, hand for electricity, muscle for atomic fission, these show what our culture means and how the machine has conquered and holds modern mankind in thrall. What in our civilization is distinctly British or American? Nothing. Science was built on Africa and Religion on Asia.

Was there no other way for the advance of mankind? Were there no other cultural patterns, ways of action, goals of progress, which might and may lead man to something finer and higher? Africa saw the stars of God; Asia saw the soul of man; Europe saw and sees only man's body, which it feeds and polishes until it is fat, gross, and cruel.

Let us turn to West Africa, where man tried a different way for a thousand years. First we face the query: how do we know what man did in West Africa, since black Africa has no written history? This brings the curious assumption that lack of written record means lack of matter and deed worth recording. The deeds of men that have been clearly and accurately written down are as pinpoints to the oceans of human experience. To recall that experience we must rely on written record, varying from direct narrative to indirect allusion and confirmation; we must rely also on memory—the memory of contemporary on-lookers, of those who heard their word, of those who over a lapse of years interpreted it and handed it on; we must rely on the mute but powerful testimony of habits, customs, and ideals, which echo and reflect vast stretches of past time. Finally, we agree upon as true history and actual fact any interpretation of past action which we today believe and want

to believe is true. The relation of this last historical truth to real truth may vary from fact to falsehood.

Climate, with sun and ice, gave Europe opportunity to expand vastly the Asiatic and African invention of written records. Heat and rain made written record in West Africa almost impossible and forced that land to rely on the memories of men, developed over the centuries to a marvelous system of folklore and tradition. But back of both methods lay real human history recorded in cultural patterns, industry, religion, and art.

One of the extraordinary developments of civilization in Africa was on the West Coast around the great Gulf of Guinea. Frobenius has fancifully called this "Atlantis" and regards it as possibly a development of the culture of that fabled island in the Atlantic. Whatever its origin, there grew up on the West Coast of Africa a peculiarly African state. How far back its development extends, no man knows. We have a fairly authentic history from the seventeenth century on, creditable but discontinuous reports in the sixteenth and fifteenth, and before that only customs, tradition, and legend.

On a coast protected from inland by mountain, forest, and desert, and on the west by the ocean, there grew up an agricultural culture centering in the village. On this was developed in time, industry and art. Industry discovered division of labor between cities; each town had its own peculiar industry and then traded its surplus with the other towns. The towns were united in a loose confederacy with councils and chiefs.

Six hundred years before Christ, Phoenicians traded on the West Coast of Africa and a century later the Carthaginians. From prehistoric times this coast was peopled by the black West African type of Negro. The center of their culture lay above the Bight of Benin, along the slave coast, and reached east and north. It can be traced in stone monuments, architecture, works of art, and especially patterns of culture.

The fabrication of cloth and tools was widespread and leisurely, as befitted a tropical sun. For there was here the fierce fight with the mosquito, just as in the Congo, and east there was the duel with the tsetse fly; and this battle with malaria, sleeping-sickness, and a dozen enemies of man was as much a part of the struggle for life and happiness as any of man's activities. Despite this, not only the making of cloth, the fashioning of garments, and the welding of iron reached a high development but there grew up also an art, primitive but of exceptional power, which has influenced the modern world and deserves to be called one of the three or four original art forms of this earth. Agriculture and fishing, manufacturing and pottery, the welding and processing of metal, the development of painting and art, characterize this Negro culture.

In Ashanti weaving was done with simple tools, calling for great skill, and resulted in cloth artistically beautiful. There was wood-carving, divided into many separate branches; carvers made fetishes and drums and figures which were individual and original. "Regarded in the light of certain modern aesthetic tendencies, they possess an individuality and peculiar merit which astonish many people who see them for the first time. Love and appreciation of what is artistic and beautiful are attributes which cannot be said to be the prerogative of all of us. In Ashanti, however, such traits seem to be possessed by what we should call 'the uneducated masses.' There is hardly any object capable of artistic treatment which is not made the medium for some ornamental design which gives aesthetic delight to the African's mind and eye; such as stools, spoons, combs, wooden plates, calabashes, doors, sticks, staves of office, canoes, *wari* boards, knives, mortars, drums, ivory tusks, pots, pipes, weights and scales, metal work of every description, walls of temples and dwellings, and textiles of every kind. Even the tools and appliances used to obtain these effects, the

forge itself, the shuttle, the mesher used for making nets, are ornamental, being decorated with artistic effects, which, however crude, are never vulgar and inartistic.”¹

The true West African showed great skill in plastic art; he carved ivory and wood, and the bronzes of Benin are among the most noteworthy remains of artistic effort in the world. When the state was seized by the British in 1897, they found carved elephant tusks, bronzes cast by the *cire-perdue* process, including the well-known bronze head of a Negress, now in the British Museum, a masterpiece of art.

A bronze head was discovered by Frobenius in Nigeria in 1910–1912. In this remarkable figure we have what is perhaps the finest known example of African achievement in the realm of the plastic arts. In the words of its discoverer, “the setting of the lips, the shape of the ears, the contour of the face, all prove, if separately examined, the perfection of a work of true art which the whole of it obviously is. . . . It is cast in what we call the ‘cire perdue,’ or the hollow cast, and is very finely chased, indeed like the best Roman examples.”²

Considerations growing out of the study of this and terracotta specimens, supplemented by many other findings reported by previous investigators, led Frobenius to the daring conclusion that this art belongs to the old order of Central African civilization whose beginnings go back perhaps to the second millennium before Christ. He was also of the opinion that there is sufficient evidence to warrant the assumption that there were important links between this ancient culture and some of those famous and widely heralded civilizations which flourished along the banks of the Nile and in the Mediterranean Basin in the Classical and pre-Classical Ages.

The oldest art is that of pottery, of which there are endless remains in West Africa. Traces of pottery-making go back

¹ Robert S. Rattray, *Religion and Art in Ashanti* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), pp. 269–70.

² Frobenius, *op. cit.*

certainly five hundred years and possibly a thousand years on the West Coast. It is done chiefly by women and is a hereditary craft handed down from mother to daughter.

It may well be that the West Coast Negroes first gave to civilization the art of welding iron which spread over all Africa and then eventually into Europe and Asia. It is of course possible that iron welding was discovered on other continents independently of Africa, but no continent had so wide a use of iron in earliest times.

According to Boas: "It seems likely that at times when the European was still satisfied with rude stone tools, the African had invented or adopted the art of smelting iron. Consider for a moment what this invention has meant for the advance of the human race. As long as the hammer, knife, drill, the spade, and the hoe had to be chipped out of stone, or had to be made of shell or hard wood, effective industrial work was not impossible, but difficult. A great progress was made when copper found in large nuggets was hammered out into tools and later on shaped by melting; and when bronze was introduced; but the true advancement of industrial life did not begin until the hard iron was discovered. It seems not unlikely that the people who made the marvelous discovery of reducing iron ores by smelting were the African Negroes. Neither ancient Europe, not ancient western Asia, nor ancient China knew iron, and everything points to its introduction from Africa. At the time of the great African discoveries toward the end of the past century, blacksmiths were found all over Africa from north to south and from east to west. With his simple bellows and a charcoal fire he reduced the ore that is found in many parts of the continent and forged implements of great usefulness and beauty."³

Torday has argued: "I feel convinced by certain arguments that seem to prove to my satisfaction that we are indebted to the Negro for the very keystone of our modern civilization

³ Atlanta University Leaflet, No. 19.

and that we owe him the discovery of iron.”⁴ Togoland is perhaps the oldest and most famous iron-working area in Africa.

According to Reclus, “The smelting and working of iron, most useful of all metallurgic discoveries, has been attributed to the Negroes as well as to the Chalybes of Asia Minor; and the Bongos of the White Nile, as well as some other African tribes, have constructed furnaces of a very ingenious type. Their smelters and forgers are, for the most part, satisfied with rude and primitive implements, in the use of which they, however, display marvellous skill. The Fangs of the Ogowe basin produce excellent iron, whose quality is scarcely equalled by Europeans themselves. In most of the native tribes the smiths constitute a special caste, much respected and even dreaded for their reputed knowledge of the magic arts.”⁵

Concerning West African art in general, Sir Michael Sadler said: “West Africa has made its own characteristic contribution to the artistic treasures of the world.” Sir William Rothenstein added: “I know nothing of the culture which produced these noble pieces, nor what influences, native or alien, inspired them. I know only that they are superb works of art, worthy to be set beside the best examples of sculpture of any period.” According to J. J. Sweeney, the American critic: “As a sculptural tradition, African art has had no rival.”⁶

Professor Roger Fry, distinguished British art critic, said: “We have the habit of thinking that the power to create expressive plastic form is one of the greatest of human achievements, and the names of great sculptures are handed down from generation to generation, so that it seems unfair to be forced to admit that certain nameless savages have possessed this power

⁴ *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. XLIII, p. 14.

⁵ Elisée Reclus, *The Earth and Its Inhabitants, Africa* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1882-1895), p. 22.

⁶ J. J. Sweeney, *African Negro Art* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1935). Sir Michael Ernest Sadler, *Arts of West Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 2.

not only in a higher degree than we at this moment, but than we as a nation have ever possessed it. And yet that is where I find myself. I have to admit that some of these things are great sculpture, greater, I think, than anything we produced even in the Middle Ages. Certainly they have the special qualities of sculpture in a higher degree. They have indeed complete plastic freedom; that is to say, these African artists really conceive form in three dimensions. Now this is rare in sculpture." ⁷

In drum and strings African music reached a high degree of originality and perfection. The development of the drum language by intricate rhythms enabled the natives not only to lead in dance and ceremony, but to telegraph all over the continent with a swiftness and precision hardly rivaled by the electric telegraph. Von Hornbostel said of African music, particularly in Togo: "The African Negroes are uncommonly gifted for music, probably, on an average, more so than the white race. This is clear not only from the high development of African music, especially as regards polyphony and rhythm, but a very curious fact, unparalleled, perhaps, in history, makes it even more evident; namely, the fact that Negro slaves in America and their descendants, abandoning their original music style, have adapted themselves to that of their white masters and produced a new kind of folk music in that style. Presumably no other people would have accomplished this. In fact, the plantation songs and spirituals and also the blues and ragtimes which have launched or helped to launch our modern dance music, are the only remarkable kinds of music brought forth in America by immigrants." ⁸

Professor von Luschan considered the craftsmanship of Benin workers equal to the best that was ever produced by Cellini. Yet at the time they were creating, "in 1550, not a single

⁷ Roger Eliot Fry, *Vision and Design* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1920), pp. 65-66.

⁸ Memorandum IV, International African Institute, London, p. 33.

peasant's house in Scandinavia had a window; and as late as 1773 Dr. Johnson and Boswell entered during their tour of the Hebrides, a hovel which 'for a window had only a small hole, which was stopped with a piece of turf, that was taken out occasionally to let in light.' In Berlin at the time of the Great Elector (1681), many houses in the capital had pigsties immediately below the front windows."⁹

Frobenius wrote of West African cultures: "What these old captains recounted, these chiefs of expeditions—Delbes, Marchais, Pigafetta, and all the others, what they recounted is true. It can be verified. In the old Royal Kunstkammer of Dresden, in the Weydemann collection of Ulm, in many another 'cabinet of curiosities' of Europe, we still find West African collections dating from this epoch. Marvellous plush velvets of an extreme softness, made of the tenderest leaves of a certain kind of banana plant; stuffs soft and supple, brilliant and delicate, like silks, woven with the fibre of a raffia, well prepared; powerful javelins with points encrusted with copper in the most elegant fashion; bows so graceful in form and so beautifully ornamented that they would do honor to any museum of arms whatsoever; calabashes decorated with the greatest taste; sculpture in ivory and wood of which the work shows a very great deal of application and style.

"And all that came from the countries of the African periphery, delivered over after that to slave merchants. . . .

"But when the pioneers of the last century pierced this zone of 'European civilization' and the wall of protection which had, for the time being raised behind it—the wall of protection of the Negro still 'intact'—they found everywhere the same marvels which the captains had found on the coast.

"In 1906 when I penetrated into the territory of Kassai-Sankuru, I found still, villages of which the principal streets were bordered on each side, for leagues, with rows of palm trees,

⁹ R. E. G. Armattoe, *The Golden Age of Western African Civilization* (Londonderry: Lomeshie Research Center, 1946), p. 41.

and of which the houses, decorated each one in charming fashion, were works of art as well.

"No man who did not carry sumptuous arms of iron or of copper, with inlaid blades and handles covered with serpent skin. Everywhere velvets and silken stuffs. Each cup, each pipe, each spoon was an object of art perfectly worthy to be compared to the creations of the Roman European style. But all this was only the particularly tender and iridescent bloom which adorns a ripe and marvellous fruit; the gestures, the manners, the moral code of the entire people, from the little child to the old man, although they remained within absolutely natural limits, were imprinted with dignity and grace, in the families of the princes and the rich as in the vassals and slaves. I know of no northern people who can be compared with these primitives for unity of civilization. Alas these last 'Happy Isles'! They, also, were submerged by the tidal wave of European civilization. And the peaceful beauty was carried away by the floods.

"But many men had this experience: the explorers who left the savage and warrior plateau of the East and the South and the North to descend into the plains of the Congo, of Lake Victoria, of the Ubangi: men such as Speke and Grant, Livingstone, Cameron, Stanley, Schweinfurth, Junker, de Brazza—all of them—made the same statements: they came from countries dominated by the rigid laws of the African Ares, and from then on they penetrated into the countries where peace reigned, and joy in adornment and in beauty; countries of old civilizations, of ancient styles, of harmonious styles."¹⁰

All this industry in West Africa was developed around the Africans' ideas of religion: the worship of souls of trees and plants of animals; the use of the fetish; the belief in fairies and monsters. Along with this went training for medicine men and chiefs, and careful rules for birth, marriages, and funerals.

Of religion Frobenius said: "There is, among the deities

¹⁰ Frobenius, *op. cit.*

possessed by all the other dark-skinned African nations combined, not one who can equal Shango, the [West African] Yoruban God of Thunder, in significance. This country's first royal ruler sprang, as its people believe, from his loins. His posterity still have the right to give the country its kings.

"Myth relates that Shango was born of the All-Mother, Yemaya. Powerful, warlike, and mighty, he was as great a God as was ever created in the minds of a nation striving for self-expression. He was the Hurler of Thunderbolts, Lord of the Storm; a God who burns down cities and rends trees. He is cruel and savage, yet splendid and beneficent.

"The floods which he pours give life to the soil and gladden the fields. Mankind fears him, yet loves him. Terrified by his wrath, they pray for his presence. They picture him riding a ram. They represent him with his hands full of thunderbolts, surrounded by his wives, the Lakes and the Rivers. He lives in a palace of brass, which is dazzlingly bright, and whence lightning shoots forth. He has a mighty 'medicine,' which he takes through his mouth, and fire comes out when he opens it."¹¹

The architecture of the West Coast was strikingly integrated with climate, physiography, and culture. The lovely buildings of Benin and Ashanti have been described. A traveler in 1835 described the palace of a chief in Togoland: "Glele's palace was enormous—it had housed in its time more than two thousand people—but the greater part is falling into ruins. . . . This palace is by far the largest and most elaborate piece of Negro architecture I have seen; it was with that of Great Benin I imagine the most important in West Africa."¹²

In 1787 the Chevalier de Boufflers, writing to the Comtesse de Sabran, spoke of his enthusiastic admiration of the beauty and cleanness of the townships in the Senegal.

The climate and physical surroundings conditioned much of this human development. There was lacking here the stone

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Armattoe, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

and dry climate which made it easy to preserve records in the Nile valley. Material on the West Coast disappeared before the dampness and the hosts of insects. This made the art of memory recording, of tradition handed down, of unusual importance, and here it was developed to an astonishing extent. The population invented systems of writing of which at least two on the Guinea Coast and the Cameroons have come down to our day. There were probably others. Thus alphabets which were never invented in Europe came to the world through Asia and Africa.

Certain states on the West Coast were politically noteworthy. Among these were the Mossi states, two of which still exist. Each state consisted of several kingdoms of which one had the leadership. According to Delafosse: "This organization, which still functions in our day at Wagadugu and at Yatenga, strangely resembles that which, according to what has been told us by Arab authors and the writers of Timbuktu, existed at Ghana, at Diara, at Gao, and at Mandingo, as well as what could formerly be observed at Coomassie, at Bonney, in certain states of subequatorial Africa, and also what can be studied in some of the little kingdoms of the Senegal, principally the Jolof, and elsewhere."¹³

This seems to constitute the type, perhaps more perfected at Mossi than elsewhere, of all the states worthy of that name, great or small, that have been developed all across Negro Africa since the most remote antiquity. "If the Mandingo empire, founded and directed by Negroes of probably pure race, could nevertheless have benefited by some foreign influence through the canal of Islamism, if the kingdoms of Ashanti and Dahomey, as those of the Senegal and of the Congo, might have received some inspiration from the Europeans, it seems very certain that the Mossi empires have always been sheltered from all non-Negro interference as well as non-Negro influence, and

¹³ Maurice Delafosse, *The Negroes of Africa*, tr. from the French by F. Fligelman (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1931), p. xxxii.

consequently the political institutions which characterize them and which are found almost all over Negro Africa are of indigenous origin.”¹⁴

The Mossi state did not make territorial conquests and always constituted a rampart against the extension of Mohammedanism. In its integrity it represented a civilization uniquely and really Negro.

Secret societies have always played an important part in West Africa. They include a large variety of associations, of which the majority are mutual benefit clubs. Membership confers social distinction and are methods of bestowing charity. Some have six or seven grades and judicial functions, with execution for recalcitrants. One which was perhaps known to Ptolemy, the geographer of the second century, is associated with the leopard and has made difficulties for administrators in modern times. The secret societies used masks and ceremonies and are peculiarly West African.

The whole culture complex of the African West Coast is native and original. It is a picture of the development of human institutions unique in the history of mankind, and we can only lament that we know so little of it and have studied it so imperfectly. This body of culture grew up strong and self-contained upon the West Coast and met in time the sudden impact of two outer forces: Islam from the north and Christianity from the west.

“West Africans are still today in the period of integral collectivism, known to our ancestors before the Middle Ages, while we have arrived at individualism. The question which presents itself is to know whether indeed we have made definitive progress in this line, since many of our thinkers, of the so-called advance guard, demand, as a benefit, the return to collectivism, although of a somewhat different form. This proves that the peoples of Negro Africa have not marched at the same rate of speed as the peoples of Europe, but in nowise

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

proves that the former are inferior to the latter. Who knows, indeed, whether the latter have not gone too fast?"¹⁵

Among the groups which showed striking intellectual development were the Abron, whose state dates from the fifteenth century; the Akan people, including the Ashanti, whose known history goes back beyond 1600. In addition there were the Ewe, Yoruba, people of Benin, Dahomey, and Nubia. Benin was among the oldest of the states and has a legendary history going back to A.D. 880 or perhaps earlier. It was a carefully organized state with a remarkable native culture. It was with Benin that the Portuguese made contact in the fifteenth century and traded in slaves and other produce. The people of Yoruba, with a notable culture, moved westward as the kingdoms of the Sudan began to expand, and attacked Dahomey.

Dahomey has a known history that dates from before the sixteenth century; it had a well-organized state with farmers and artisans, but they became middlemen in the slave trade. In the nineteenth century they made a treaty with the French, but finally war broke out and the country became a French protectorate.

The Ashanti played a notable part in West Africa. They conquered the Fanti people and fought six wars with England between 1803 and 1874; they were finally subdued in 1894. Their king, Osai Tutu Quamina, was a man of intelligence and character who would have made advantageous contact between whites and Negroes if he had been treated fairly. But the English during these days were wavering between two ideas: between the suppression of the slave trade to America and emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies, and the newer idea of reducing West Africa to colonial status. For a time they hesitated, even setting up the Negro state of Sierra Leone to be ruled by free slaves, and co-operating with the similar American experiment in Liberia. Finally, however, when the clear meaning of colonial imperialism began to be

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xxxii.

understood, they turned to definite conquest. The Fanti people who had helped the English conquer the Ashanti attempted to organize their relation to England by a federation, but the constitution that they adopted was regarded as treasonable and those who drafted it were put in jail, although afterward released by the Home Secretary.

The whole European situation was changing in the late nineteenth century. The Franco-Prussian war had been fought, Germany was a great power, and England was consolidating a wide colonial empire. The native culture on the West Coast underwent various consecutive changes. The powerful states of earlier days had been pressed back by the developments in the Sudan and even in the Nile valley. They found prosperity and encouragement in the new trade to the West, which developed and degenerated into man-hunting; most of the black kingdoms on the coast became intermediaries. The slaves and prisoners captured during the internal wars became no longer incidents of these wars, but the wars became deliberate efforts to gather slaves for trade and export.

The character of culture on the slave coasts slowly changed; an element of cruelty crept into states like Benin and Dahomey, although other states, like that of the Yoruba, seem to have resisted to some extent. But the ancient culture of the Atlantic coast was ruined by the trade in slaves, by the importation of gin, and by the European trade; European goods drove out native art and artistic industry.

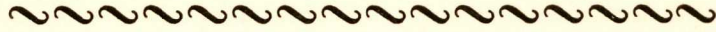
Of all this West African cultural development our knowledge is fragmentary and incomplete, jumbled up with the African slave trade. There has been no systematic, general study of the history of humanity on this coast. Nearly all has disappeared in the frantic effort to paint Negroes as apes fit only for slavery and then to forget the whole discreditable episode, wipe it out of history, and emphasize the glory and philanthropy of Europe. The invaluable art treasure which

Britain stole from Benin has never been properly classified or exhibited, but lies in the British Museum.

Yet on the West Coast was perhaps the greatest attempt in human history before the twentieth century to build a culture based on peace and beauty, to establish a communism of industry and of distribution of goods and services according to human need. It was crucified by greed, and its very memory blasphemed by the modern historical method.

There can be no doubt but that the level of culture among the masses of Negroes in West Africa in the fifteenth century was higher than that of northern Europe, by any standard of measurement—homes, clothes, artistic creation and appreciation, political organization and religious consistency. "Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, West Africa had a more solid politico-social organization, attained a greater degree of internal cohesion and was more conscious of the social function of science than Europe."¹⁶ What stopped and degraded this development? The slave trade; that modern change from regarding wealth as being for the benefit of human beings, to that of regarding human beings as wealth. This utter reversal of attitude which marked the day of a new barter in human flesh did not die with the slave, but persists and dominates the thought of Europe today and during the fatal era when Europe by force ruled mankind.

¹⁶ Armattoe, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 35.



CHAPTER VIII

CENTRAL AFRICA AND
THE MARCH OF THE BANTU

*The story of Central Africa, the Congo valley,
the region of the Great Lakes and the South-
central lands, together with their invaders.*

THE story of the Congo valley and the Great Lakes region has never been written save from the piecemeal points of view of special interests: the explorers, the travelers, the missionaries, the slave raiders, the hunters for ivory, game, gold, and territory. There is practically no coherent account of the millions of human beings who have lived here for thousands of years, nor any body of study to guide the sociologist or historian.

Yet this is the Africa whence all the other Africas have emerged; this is the hot heart of that mighty land which probably first gave birth and sustenance to human beings, and from which they crept, crawled, and marched to the conquest of the earth. Later, in the vast upheavals of the land and the vaster stirrings of nations, groups, and peoples, the folk of this area streamed back and forth, marched up and down and across, in refuge and pursuit, in quest and conquest, until in the last fateful and far-reaching march of the Bantu they settled in something like the present distribution of African peoples. Around this march and countermarch, this endless

battle and strife, circled the fate of the whole earth, its labor, its trade, its jewels and gold, its conquest, mastery, slavery, power, and fall. It should be worth a study which it never has received.

Journeying south from Egypt, one finds on the left the highlands of Abyssinia; on the right, the River Nile and what is now the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan leading south to the Great Lakes and the Congo valley. It was out of these lakes, forests, and valleys that the trade of Egypt came: the gold and ivory, the ostrich feathers, the gum and incense, and all the vast body of goods which made the connection so strong between Egypt and the south. It has been a matter of long dispute as to how far south this trade reached. Logically it seems that gold must have been brought from the same South African reefs which still furnish the largest supply in the world; but some might have come from mine- and placer-digging on the way, and even from West Africa.

The organization of human beings here varied from millennium to millennium and from century to century. Probably the first settlers or autochthonous inhabitants of the Lake region of Africa were the little Negrillos. Upon these in the long course of time descended the tall, black Africans, possibly from Asia, or from the land connecting Asia and Africa, possibly from neighboring parts of Africa. These Africans moved from the Great Lakes northward, pushing the pygmies before them. The Sahara at that time was not yet a desert, but abounded with rivers and forests, inviting invaders even to the shores of the Mediterranean. These users of stone implements gradually became agriculturalists and developed art and religion.

Thousands of years after this first wave of Negro immigrants there came another migration. The newcomers pushed north, west, and south, dispossessed the remaining Negrillos of the soil and greedily drove them toward the central forests and the deserts. They developed agriculture, the use of cattle and

domestic fowls. They invented the working of iron and the making of pottery. Also, those who advanced farthest toward the north mixed with the Europeans and Asiatics in varying degrees so that sometimes the resulting population seemed now white and yellow mixed with Negro blood, and in other cases blacks mixed with white and yellow blood. The languages were mixed in similar ways. Thus arose the various Libyan and Egyptian populations. All this migration and mixture took place long before the epoch of the First Egyptian Dynasty.

As Egypt developed, the peoples of Central Africa as well as those in North Africa set out toward the Nile valley. Over thousands of years a stream of Negroes passed down the Nile, as migrants, as traders, as soldiers, as slaves. They further developed that Ethiopia whence Egypt sprang and which later conquered the Nile valley and the world.

Later the peoples from West and North Africa as well as Asia began to press down upon Ethiopia, as Nubia and Dongola rose to power. Abyssinia, turning back from Asia, encroached on Ethiopia from the south. These developments must have turned the tide of migration from Central Africa south toward the Cape of Good Hope. Hottentots and Bushmen, people formed by mixture of the tall tribes and the Negrillos and by absorption of other strains, left the Great Lakes region and migrated to South Africa more than a thousand years before Christ. South Africa was already occupied by peoples who had come there from thirty thousand to fifty thousand years before, possibly from Asia, and who, living long in a temperate climate, were less Negroid than the invaders. The Bushmen exhibited a marvelous gift for drawing and engraving and left their pictures not only in South Africa but in North Africa and Europe, raising the baffling question of their origin and wanderings.

Meantime the so-called Bantu began to develop. Various black tribes began to be pushed west and south by the developments in the Nile valley and the western Sudan, as well as by

the strong defense and even aggression from the West Coast, which threw out arms of trade and cultural contact to Egypt, Greece, and Rome. With the coming of Islam into Africa in the seventh century their march became a steady but slow movement lasting several hundred years. In their path were a large number of different tribes and nations, in various stages of cultural development. Gradually these peoples, some conquering, some overcome by conquest and infiltration, came to be known as Bantu, from the languages they used, adopted, and rebuilt.

The migration and formation of the Bantu peoples was a long slow movement beginning a thousand years or more before Christ and extending to the nineteenth century of our era with periods of stoppage and acceleration.

The oldest of these languages were formed around the headwaters of the Nile in the Great Lake region of Equatorial Africa. Thence the Bantu apparently spread south across the mountains and plateaus of southern Congoland to the Atlantic, east and south to the Indian Ocean, and south across the Zambesi to South Africa.

In Africa before them had been inhabitants for many thousands of years: the pygmies and perhaps other forest and Sudanese Negroes. In South Africa, however, when the Bantu crossed the Zambesi, perhaps around 700 B.C., they found the land occupied by the Bushmen and the Hottentots.

This movement of the Bantu south led to the barrier of the wide sea, a new contact with the European slavery, and a new approach toward Asia over the ramparts through which the Zambesi had to force its way. The great rift opposed its mountains and valleys. There must have come in these thousand years all sorts of cultural events: the overthrow of well-developed kingdoms and cultures; the wild forays on established centers of life, like that of the Jaggas, of whom we continually hear, east and west; the more or less increased mingling of people of different origins and cultures, until at

last there emerged new languages and one dominant Bantu tongue.

Sir Harry Johnston wrote: "What are the Bantu languages? And why should they have been preferred as a special subject of interest in philological research to a degree far exceeding that of other language families of purely African location? They constitute a very distinct type of speech which, as contrasted with others amongst the groups of Negro tongues, is remarkable as a rule for the Italian melodiousness, simplicity and frequency of its vowel sounds, and the comparative ease with which its exemplars can be acquired and spoken by Europeans. The Bantu languages are attractive to the explorer, not only from the harmonious adjustment of vowels and consonants, but from the logic of their grammatical structure, which, in the majority of these tongues, provides for a wide range and a nice discrimination in the expression of ideas."¹

The result of this march of the Bantu was extraordinary, but it is difficult for the student today to distinguish between pre-Bantu and Bantu cultures. Or perhaps it would be clearer to say that we do not know when and how particular cultures became Bantu-ized, and just what they were before the Bantu influx and influence.

Possibly the first of the ancient Bantu tribes moved eastward toward the mountain Nile and the Great Lakes from the valley north of the Albert Nyanza. They remained in the southwestern part of what is now the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan until 300 or 400 B.C. when they started south. Probably at the beginning of the Christian era the Bantu were settled on the Indian Ocean, and there the Arab traders cultivated relations with them and mingled their blood. Eventually the Bantu invaded the Congo basin, already possibly inhabited by Negroes of the West African type and by pygmies. First the Bantus went round and not through the forests, but finally they broke

¹ Harry H. Johnston, *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919), Vol. I, p. 15.

through the forests and sent migrants across Congoland as far as the coast, where they met the West African Negro culture.

These Bantu peoples were of many types. Livingstone, Stanley, and others were struck with the Egyptian features of many of the tribes of Africa, and this is true of many of the peoples between Central Africa and Egypt, so that some students have tried to invent a "Hamitic" race to account for them—an entirely unnecessary hypothesis. The Bantu cultures included the herdsman craft, agriculture with the hoe, knowledge of iron and copper. It is quite possible that the Bantu invasion was facilitated by their iron weapons.²

It is difficult to rebuild today a picture of civilization in Central Africa in these times. We have notes by travelers of numbers of centers of culture: north of the kingdom of the Congo lay the kingdom of Ansika; the kingdoms of Luanda, including Katanga and other states, founded by the Luba-lunda people, extended into the valley of the Kasai and the Zambesi. Here also was the realm of the celebrated Muata Yanvo, the last of fourteen rulers, who was lord of three hundred chiefs two million inhabitants spread over a hundred thousand square miles.

The Portuguese came on their way to India and occupied the East African Coast as a stopping point on the way to India. They became excited by the tales of African kingdoms and especially by that of gold in Sofala. By 1506 the Portuguese were participating in the wealth of these gold mines. They mentioned the kingdom of Velanga and especially the empire of the Monomotapa. Vasco da Gama found prosperous and busy cities, some built of stone and mortar. The Portuguese established themselves on the coast but could not penetrate into the Bantu interior.

When the Portuguese arrived on the West Coast in the fifteenth century, a large state known as the kingdom of the

² See map of Bantu language migrations, Johnston, *ibid.*, Vol. II, frontispiece.

Congo had already been in existence for centuries and extended over modern Angola as far east as the Kasai and the upper Zambesi Rivers. Its emperor was converted to Christianity and his sons were educated in Portugal. Several Congolese became priests and one became a bishop.

In its capital, San Salvador, were numerous cathedrals. "Early in the sixteenth century it became a Christian land, whose wealth and pomp dazzled all Christendom. Its emperors and courtiers vied in their splendour with the grandees of Spain and Portugal and its native prelates were ordained by Rome. Never again will an African kingdom exhibit so much refinement and so much grace. We have it on the authority of the ancient chroniclers that in their deportment and attire, in their manners, and in their conversation, they had nothing to learn from the illuminati of Europe.

"Then came the seventeenth century when the power of the court began to wane and a mere parish priest from Europe could threaten to depose the Emperor. With the eighteenth century came the decline, and towards its end, the very memory of what it once was had been lost upon the new generation."³

Duarte Lopes, whom Philip II of Spain and Portugal sent to the Congo, related his experiences to Filippo Pigafetta, a papal official, who published his accounts in Rome in 1591. In 1574 Paulo Diaz, grandson of Bartolomeo, the explorer, visited Angola and was deeply impressed by the high culture of the inhabitants.

Upon these old centers of culture moved slowly the oncoming Bantu from the Nile valley and the Sudan and the Lake regions. They established new kingdoms, of which one was that of the Bushongo. This organized state instituted or adopted a new industrial political system; it was ruled by a national council containing representatives of the various arts and crafts as well as representatives from territorial divisions. The

³ Armattoe, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

Bushongo made remarkable damask embroidery and velvets and had skilled social leadership.

Of some Negro states we know only that they existed and had power, but little of their history. There was for instance the Kitwara empire, whose greatness is attested to by the fact that out of it grew Uganda, one of the best organized states of Africa in the Middle Ages. Of the origin of Kitwara we have only legend, which says that the common founder and first ruler, Kintu, came from the north, bringing with him a single cow, goat, chicken, banana root, and sweet potato; these, increasing miraculously, soon stocked the country, the potato being especially apportioned to Banyoro and the banana to Uganda. Presently Kintu became weary of his people's stupidities and blood-shedding and disappeared, but since it was known that he did not die, it became traditional for his successor to seek for him. At last he was found by a king, Ma'anda, as an aged man, seated on a throne in the forest, his beard white with age and his followers white-skinned and clothed in white robes. The story tells how Ma'anda committed some act of bloodshed, whereupon Kintu and his followers vanished and have been seen no more.

The kingdom of Kitwara, the vaster empire of the Monomotapa, the kingdom of the Congo, and the various organizations of the Lunda people in the Congo valley, probably predated and at the same time were the results and remains of the migration of the Bantu. For two reasons the history of this movement and clash of cultures have been lost: first, the climate, which records could not withstand; and second, because the movement of these people was toward a dead end in a slave-ridden South, differing from similar movements in Asia which led toward the Islamic culture of Bagdad and to Egypt; and movements in Europe which led toward Rome.

The Bantu nations thus formed, found, or transformed a multitude of kingdoms and cultures, and with our present knowledge we cannot say just how a given culture fits into the

picture, whether as a civilization existing prior to the coming of the Bantu or as a state which the invaders transformed.

Certain it is that the greatest kingdom of Central Africa was that of the Monomotapa, and the greatest cultural remains of the Monomotapa are the celebrated ruins of Zimbabwe. An early Negro migration, some thousand years before Christ, had come upon or founded the remarkable civilization which we know as that of Zimbabwe. By the tenth century a later Bantu migration had overthrown and reorganized it, establishing among the Maka-langa, Matabele, and Mashona, a line of rulers called the Monomotapa.

Zimbabwe was an extensive state. In the seventeenth century it stretched from the Zambesi River down to the Fish River, ran seven hundred and fifty miles inland, and was approximately the size of Mexico. Frobenius regarded it as undoubtedly a "very great kingdom"; the king was powerful and conducted courts of justice in spring and fall. After seven years the reigning king was killed by the people and a new king crowned. The name itself means "prince of the mine," and the area was a mineral center from which came gold, diamonds, and rubies long before modern times.

The ruins of Zimbabwe show today an extraordinary cultural past, presenting certain phenomenal remains not to be found anywhere else in Africa south of the Great Lakes. Among these are extensive gold mines sunk to a depth in rock; scores of colossal stone buildings; forms of ceremonial not common among present Bantu people; impressions of some Asiatic influence; and the presence of many nonindigenous plants and trees.

Unfortunately, any reconstruction of this ancient African culture and history must be pursued today mainly in the Negro-hating atmosphere and amid the color-caste system of South Africa. Despite some eminent and fair scholars, the main situation is like setting Nazis to study Jews.

The area of these prehistoric mines is strewn over large

tracts of territory, measuring over forty thousand square miles. Only a few of these tracts have yet been explored, but the partial exploration has already yielded relics of birds of stone, phalli, great soapstone bowls, and gold ornaments.

It is evident that the vast amount of gold extracted from prehistoric Rhodesia, as indicated in the Hebrew Scriptures and by ancient historians before the commencement of the Christian era, exceeded that obtained within historic times.

Gold mines discovered in the northern part of Rhodesia show that gold was mined and used in Africa in the Stone Age. Caton-Thompson has assured us that the belief that the natives of earlier days knew nothing about depth mining is quite untrue. The Africans, even in modern times, were so resentful of European exploitation that they prevented the whites as far as possible from learning the whereabouts of the mines. In the nineteenth century English explorers found natives gold mining at depth, with buckets, ropes, axes, and charcoal.

It is not difficult to account for the gold mined between the ninth and sixteenth centuries. Probably the bulk of it went to India. The wealth of the Hindu kings in the fourteenth century was astonishing. Firishtah, the Persian historian in A.D. 1311 recorded a hoarding of gold worth a hundred million pounds sterling. In the sixteenth century a Portuguese correspondent described the immense revenue, the gold-covered furniture, and trappings of the kings of Vijayanaga and of the religious institutions.⁴

"The interest in Zimbabwe and the allied ruins should to all educated people be enhanced a hundredfold; it enriches, not impoverishes, our wonderment at their remarkable achievement: it cannot detract from their inherent majesty: for the mystery of Zimbabwe is the mystery which lies in the still pulsating heart of native Africa."⁵

⁴ G. Caton-Thompson, *The Zimbabwe Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931), pp. 194, 195, 198.

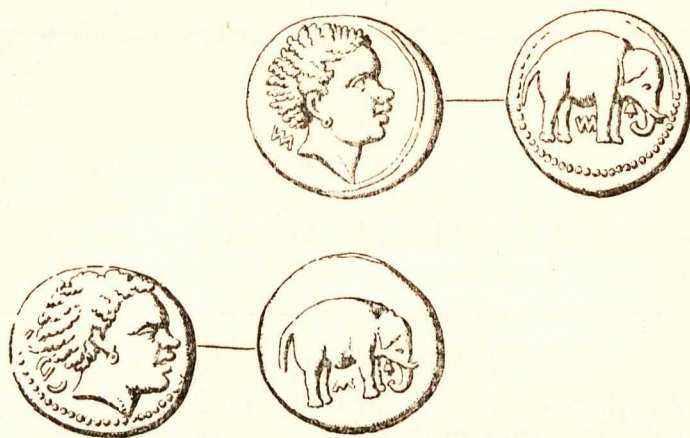
⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

What was it that overthrew this civilization? Undoubtedly the same sort of raids of barbarous warriors that we have known in our day. For instance, in 1570 there came upon the country of Mozambique, farther up the coast, "such an inundation of Pagans that they could not be numbered. They came from the part of Monomotapa where is the Great Lake from which spring these great rivers."⁶ In later days throng upon throng of herdsmen invaders overthrew Bantu settlers and were in turn overwhelmed.

That Asiatic and even Chinese influences were present at times in this remarkable cultural development, with its irrigation and fortresses, is not improbable. The trade between Asia and Africa by way of the East Coast dates back to pre-history and was especially rife when Mohammedans took refuge there in the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries. But just as neither Arabs, Persians, nor Portuguese ever dominated the blacks here in historic times, so the culture of Zimbabwe was without doubt always dominantly Negro, with that cultural inspiration that everywhere comes with foreign contacts.

There is continued difficulty in disentangling the threads of African culture in this region of the continent, but that, it is authentically and indubitably African there can be no doubt. Schweinfurth said: "Not a custom, not a superstition is found in one part which is not more or less accurately repeated in another; not one contrivance of design, not one weapon of war exists of which it can be declared that it is exclusive property of any one race. From north to south, and from sea to sea, in some form or other, every invention is sure to be repeated; it is 'the thing that has been.' If we could at once grasp and set before our minds facts that are known (whether as regards language, race, culture, history, or development) of that vast region of the world which is comprehended in the name of Africa, we should have before us the witness of an intermingling

⁶ DuBois, *Black Folk*, p. 75.



ANCIENT ITALIAN COINS OF THE THIRD OR SECOND CENTURY
BEFORE CHRIST

of races which is beyond all precedent. And yet, bewildering as the prospect would appear, it remains a fact not to be gainsaid, that it is impossible for any one to survey the country as a whole without perceiving that high above the multitude of individual differences there is throned a principle of unity which embraces well-nigh all the population.”⁷

To the final eruption of the Bantu into South Africa and their contact with the Dutch and British we have already alluded. It leaves there today perhaps the worst interracial situation in the world, with caste, ignorance, cruelty, and dogmatic religious hypocrisy. Together with the southern United States, it forms the most backward section of the world in race relations.

⁷ Georg A. Schweinfurth, *Heart of Africa*, tr. from the German by Ellen E. Frewer (London: Sampson, Low, Marston Low & Searle, 1873), Vol. I, p. 313.



CHAPTER IX

ASIA IN AFRICA

The story of the outpouring of Asia into Africa from A.D. 500 to 1500, and the effect which the interaction of these two continents had on the world.

THE connection between Asia and Africa has always been close. There was probably actual land connection in prehistoric times, and the black race appears in both continents in the earliest records, making it doubtful which continent is the point of origin. Certainly the Negroid people of Asia have played a leading part in her history. The blacks of Melanesia have scoured the seas, and Charles Taüber makes them inventors of one of the world's first written languages: thus "this greatest of all human inventions was made by aborigines whose descendants today rank among the lowest, the proto-Australians."¹

The ethnic history of India would seem to be first a prehistoric substratum of Negrillos or black dwarfs; then the pre-Dravidians, a taller, larger type of Negro; then the Dravidians, Negroes with some mixture of Mongoloid and later of Caucasoid stocks. The Dravidian Negroes laid the bases of Indian culture thousands of years before the Christian era. On

¹ Charles Taüber, *Seafarers and Hieroglyphs* (American Documentation Institute, Washington, D.C.).

these descended through Afghanistan an Asiatic or Eastern European element, usually called Aryan.

The *Rig Veda*, ancient sacred hymns of India, tells of the fierce struggles between these whites and blacks for the mastery of India. It sings of Aryan deities who rushed furiously into battle against the black foe. The hymns praise Indra, the white deity, for having killed fifty thousand blacks, "piercing the citadel of the enemy" and forcing the blacks to run out in distress, leaving all their food and belongings. The blacks under their renowned leader Krishna, that is, "The Black," fought back with valor. The whites long held the conquered blacks in caste servitude, but eventually the color line disappeared before commerce and industry, intermarriage, and defense against enemies from without.

In the Gangetic region caste disappeared. The whites enlisted in the service of the blacks and fought under Negro chiefs. In the famous battle of the Ten Kings, one of the leading Aryan chiefs was a Negro. Nesfield said: "The Aryan invader, whatever class he might belong to, was in the habit of taking the women of the country as wives, and hence no caste, not even that of the Brahman, can claim to have sprung from Aryan ancestors."² Today some of the Brahmans are as black and as flat-nosed as the early Negro chiefs. Max Müller said that some Brahmans are "as black as Pariahs."³

The culture of the black Dravidians underlies the whole culture of India, whose greatest religious leader is often limned as black and curly-haired. According to Massey: "It is certain that the Black Buddha of India was imaged in the Negroid type. In the black Negro God, whether called Buddha or Sut-Nahsi, we have a datum. They carry their color in the proof of their origin. The people who first fashioned and worshipped the divine image in the Negroid mould of humanity must, according to all knowledge of human nature, have been Ne-

² Rogers, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 62.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

groes themselves. For blackness is not merely mystical, the features and hair of Buddha belong to the black race and Nahsi is the Negro name. The genetrix represented as the Dea Multimammia, the Diana of Ephesus, is found as a black figure, nor is the hue mystical only, for the features are Negroid as were those of the black Isis in Egypt." ⁴

Of the thirty apostles who took Buddhism to China, ten are represented as yellow, ten brown, and ten black. The Indian blacks, mingling with the straight-haired yellow Mongoloids, tended to have straighter hair along with their dark color than Africans, although this was not true in the case of the island Negroes.

According to Balfour: "Ethnologists are of the opinion that Africa has had an important influence in the colonization of Southern Asia, of India, and of the Easter Islands in time prior to authentic history or tradition. The marked African features of some of the people in the extreme south of the Peninsula of India, the Negro and Negrito races of the Andamans and Great Nicobar, the Semang, Bila, and Jakun of the Malay Peninsula, and the Negrito and Negro, Papuan and Malagasi races of the islands of the Indian Archipelago, Australia, and Polynesia, indicate the extent which characterizes their colonization. . . . The spiral-haired Negro race seem to have preceded the lank-haired brown race. . . . When we consider the position of India between the two great Negro provinces, that on the west being still mainly Negro, even in most of its improved races, and that on the east preserving the ancient Negro basis in points so near India as the Andamans and Kedah, it becomes highly probable that the African element in the population of the Peninsula has been transmitted from an archaic period before the Semitic, Turanian, and Iranian races entered India and when the Indian Ocean had Negro tribes along its northern as well as its eastern and western shores. . . . Perhaps

⁴ G. Massey, *A Book of the Beginnings* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1881), Vol. I, pp. 18, 218.

all the original population of southern Arabia, and even of the Semitic lands, generally was once African." ⁵

Widney has said: "They [the Negroes] once occupied a much wider territory and wielded a vastly greater influence upon earth than they do now. They are found chiefly in Africa, yet traces of them are to be found through the Islands of Malaysia, remnants, no doubt, of that more numerous black population which seems to have occupied tropical Asia before the days of the Semites, the Mongols, and the Brahminic Aryan. Back in the centuries which are scarcely historic, where history gives only vague hintings, are traces of a widespread, primitive civilization, crude, imperfect, garish, barbaric, yet ruling the world from its seats of power in the valley of the Ganges, the Euphrates, and the Nile, and it was of the Black races. The first Babylon seems to have been of a Negroid race. The earliest Egyptian civilization seems to have been Negroid. It was in the days before the Semite was known in either land. The Black seems to have built up a great empire, such as it was, by the waters of the Ganges before Mongol or Aryan. Way down under the mud and slime of the beginnings . . . is the Negroid contribution to the fair superstructure of modern civilization." ⁶

H. Imbert, a French anthropologist, who lived in the Far East, has said in *Les Negritos de la Chine*: "The Negroid races peopled at some time all the south of India, Indo-China, and China. The south of Indo-China actually has now pure Negritos as the Semangs, and mixed as the Malays and the Sakais. . . . In the first epochs of Chinese history, the Negrito type peopled all the south of this country and even in the island of Hai-Nan, as we have attempted to prove in our study on the Negritos, or Black Men, of this island. Skulls of these Ne-

⁵ Edward G. Balfour, ed., "Negro Races," *Cyclopaedia of India* (London: Quaritch, 1885), 3rd ed. Vol. II, p. 1073.

⁶ Joseph P. Widney, *Race Life of the Aryan Peoples* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1907), Vol. II, pp. 238-39.

groes have been found in the island of Formosa and traces of this Negroid element in the islands of Liu-kiu to the south of Japan. In the earliest Chinese history several texts in classic books spoke of these diminutive blacks; thus the Tcheu-Li, composed under the dynasty of Tcheu (1122–249 B.C.), gives a description of the inhabitants with black and oily skin. . . . The Prince Liu-Nan, who died in 122 B.C., speaks of a kingdom of diminutive blacks in the southwest of China.”

Additional evidence of Negroes in China is given by Professor Chang Hsing-land in an article entitled, “The Importation of Negro slaves to China under the T’ang Dynasty, A.D. 618–907”: “The Lin-yi Kuo Chuan (Topography of the Land of Lin-yi) contained in Book 197 of the Chiu T’ang Shu (Old Dynastic History of T’ang) says: ‘The people living to the south of Lin-yi have woolly hair and black skin.’” Chinese folklore speaks often of these Negroes, he says, and mentions an empress of China, named Li (A.D. 373–397), consort of the Emperor Hsiao Wu Wen, who is spoken of as being a Negro. He adds that according to the writings of a later period—the seventh to the ninth century—Negro slaves were imported into China from Africa.⁷

According to Professor Munro, one of the foremost students of Japanese life and culture: “The Japanese are a mixture of several distinct stocks—Negrito, Mongolian. . . . Breadth of face, intraorbital width, flat nose, prognathism, and brachycephaly might be traced to the Negro stock.”⁸

The Asiatic and African blacks were strewn along a straight path between tropical Asia and tropical Africa, and there was much racial intermingling between Africa and western Asia. In Arabia particularly the Mongoloids and Negroids mingled from earliest times. The Mongoloids invaded North Africa in prehistoric times, and their union with the Negroids formed the Libyans. Later there was considerable commerce and con-

⁷ Quoted in Rogers, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 67.

⁸ Munro, *Prehistoric Japan* (Yokohama: 1911), pp. 676–78.

tact between the Phoenicians of North Africa, especially Carthage, and the black peoples of the Sudan.

Speaking of the mixture that went on in this area between Elamite black and Aryan white, Dieulafoy has said: "The Greeks themselves seemed to have known these two Susian races, the Negroes of the plains and the Scythian whites of the mountains. Have not their old poets given to the direct descendants of the Susian, Memnon, the legendary hero who perished under the walls of Troy, a Negro father, Tithon, and a white, mountain woman as mother—Kissia? Do they not also say that Memnon commanded an army of black and white regiments? 'Memnon went to the succor of Priam with ten thousand Susians and ten thousand Ethiopians.' . . . I shall attempt to show to what distant antiquity belongs the establishment of the Negritos upon the left bank of the Tigris and the elements constituting the Susian monarchy. . . . Towards 2300 B.C., the plains of the Tigris and Anzan-Susinka were ruled by a dynasty of Negro kings.

"The coming of this dynasty of Medes corresponded perhaps to the arrival in the south of an immense Scythian invasion. Pushed back by the black Susians after having taken possession of the mountains, the whites poured into the plains of the Tigris and remained master of the country until the time when Kudur Nakhunta subdued Chaldea and founded Anzan-Susinka. He added to the territory of the blacks—Nime, Kussi, Habardip—all the mountainous districts once inhabited by the whites of the Scythian race."⁹

Herodotus, who visited this region in the fifth century B.C., mentioned the dark skins of the people. He called them Ethiopians, but said their hair was straighter than those of the western Ethiopians, who had woolly hair. The Elamites, however, seemed rather to have belonged to the more Negroid stock of the west; their hair, as seen on the monuments, is short

⁹ Marcel A. Dieulafoy, *L'Acropole de Suse* (Paris: Hachette et Cie, 1893), pp. 27, 44, 46, 57-86, 102, 115.

and woolly. "The Elamites," said Sir Harry Johnston, "appear to have been a Negroid people with kinky hair and to have transmitted this racial type to the Jews and Syrians. There is curliness of the hair, together with a Negro eye and full lips in the portraiture of Assyria which conveys the idea of an evident Negro element in Babylonia. Quite probably the very ancient Negro invasion of Mediterranean Europe (of which the skeletons of the Alpes Maritimes are vestiges) came from Syria and Asia Minor on its way to Central and Western Europe."¹⁰

Professor Toynbee also says, "The primitive Arabs who were the ruling element of the Omayyad Caliphate called themselves 'the swarthy people' with a connotation of racial superiority, and their Persian and Turkish subjects, 'the ruddy people,' with a connotation of racial inferiority, that is to say, they drew the distinction that we draw between blonds and brunets but reversed the value."¹¹

Carthage especially traded with the Sudan for gold dust, ostrich feathers, and ivory in exchange for textiles, cloth, copper, and beads. Often the Carthaginians settled among the Negroes and the Negroes among them. As a result the horse became known in the Sudan, textiles were made from cotton, and gold was gathered and worked. The glass industry was born and spread. The Libyans, or Berbers, were descendants from the populations of North Africa which consisted of an Asiatic element that came in prehistoric times and mixed with the Negroids. From these mixed races came the Sudan stone houses and the cemented wells and the spread of cattle-raising and gardening.

The whole population becomes darker and darker toward the south, until it merges into the blacks of the Sudan. The divisions, especially the political units—Tripoli, Tunisia, Al-

¹⁰ Harry H. Johnston, *The Negro in the New World*, pp. 24-27.

¹¹ Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (London: 1934), Vol. I, p. 226.

geria, and Morocco—have no anthropological significance and do not correspond to any ethnic division. There are many striking groups: the Negroid Tuareg, or people of the Veil; the Tibu, or rock people, Negroids with mixed Mongoloid or Caucasoid blood; the dark Fulani, scattered all over North Africa from the Upper Niger to the Senegal and forming often the dominant political power in the lands toward the coast.

Mohammedanism arose in the Arabian deserts, starting from Mecca which was in that part of the world which the Greeks called Ethiopia and regarded as part of the African Ethiopia. It must from earliest time have had a large population of Negroids.

The two greatest colored figures in the history of Islam are Bilal-i-Habesh (Bilal of Ethiopia) and Tarik-bin-Ziad: "Bilal-i-Habesh was Mohammed's liberated slave and closest friend to whom he gave precedence over himself in Paradise. The Prophet liberated all his slaves, and they were all well-known figures in the early Islamic history. He adopted as his own son another Negro, Zayd bin Harith, his third convert, who rose to be one of his greatest generals. Later, to show his regard for Zayd, he took one of Zayd's wives, the beautiful Zainab, as his own. But Bilal stands out in greatest relief. Apart from his services in the cause of Islam, it was through him that the Moslems decided to use the human voice instead of bells to call the Moslems to prayer. He had evidently a marvelous voice and was the first who called for prayers in Islam.

"Tarik-bin-Ziad also was a slave and became a great general in Islam and was the conqueror of Spain as the commander of the Moorish Army which invaded Spain. Jebel-u-Tarik (the mount of Tarik), that is, Gibraltar, is named after him. One of the greatest Turkish classics is called 'Tarik-bin-Ziad' and has him as its hero. It was written by Abdul-Hak-Hamid, our greatest poet (alive though 84) and equals any tragedy of

Corneille. I do hope that some time the biographies of these great figures will be written in English."¹²

The Mohammedans organized for proselyting the world, overthrew Persia, and took Syria and eventually Egypt and North Africa from the Eastern Roman Empire. They went east as far as India and west to Spain, and eventually the Golden Horde, as the Russian Mongols had come to be called, became followers of Islam and thus religious brothers of the Mohammedan Arabs.

The Arabs brought the new religion of Mohammed into North Africa. During the seventh century they did not migrate in great numbers. Spain was conquered not by Arabs, but by armies of Berbers and Negroids led by Arabs. Later, in the eleventh century, another wave of Arabs came, but the number was never large and their prestige came from their religion and their language, which became a *lingua franca* for the peoples north and south of the Sahara. The total substitution of Arabian for Berber or Negro blood was small.

Anyone who has traveled in the Sudan knows that most of the "Arabs" he has met are dark-skinned, sometimes practically black, often have Negroid features, and hair that may be almost Negro in quality. It is then obvious that in Africa the term "Arab" is applied to any people professing Islam, however much race mixture has occurred, so that while the term has a cultural value it is of little ethnic significance and is often misleading.

The Arabs were too nearly akin to Negroes to draw an absolute color line. Antar, one of the great pre-Islamic poets of Arabia, was the son of a black woman; and one of the great poets at the court of Harun-al-Rashid was black. In the twelfth century a learned Negro poet resided at Seville.

The Mohammedans crossed the Pyrenees in A.D. 719 and met Charles Martel at Poitiers; repulsed, the invaders turned

¹² A letter to J. A. Rogers, December 15, 1933, quoted in Rogers, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 286.

back and settled in Spain. The conflict for the control of the Mohammedan world eventually left Spain in anarchy. A prince of the Omayyads arrived in 758. This Abdurahman, after thirty years of fighting, founded an independent government which became the Caliphate of Cordova. His power was based on his army of Negro and white Christian slaves. He established a magnificent court and restored order, and his son gave protection to writers and thinkers.

Eventually rule passed into the hands of a mulatto, Almanzor, who kept order with his army of Berbers and Negroes, making fifty invasions into Christian territory. He died in 1002, and in a few years the Caliphate declined and the Christians began to reconquer the country. The Mohammedans looked to Africa for refuge.

In the eleventh century there was quite a large Arab immigration. The Berbers and some Negroes by that time had adopted the Arab tongue and the Mohammedan religion, and Mohammedanism had spread slowly southward across the Sahara.¹³

The invasions of the eleventh century were launched in 1048 by the Vizier of Egypt under the colored Caliph Mustansir. Each man was provided with a camel and given a gold piece, the only condition being that he must settle in the west. In two years they pillaged Cyrenaica and Tripoli and captured Kairwan. The invaders for the most part settled in Tripoli and Tunis, while their companions pressed on westward into Morocco. This exemplifies the process of arabization in North Africa, and it was to a large extent a reflex from the invasion that had most to do with the arabization of the Nile valley. It is thus responsible for much of the present-day distribution of the "Arab" tribes of the Sudan.

The Arabs invaded African Egypt, taking it from the Eastern Roman Emperors and securing as allies the native Negroid

¹³ See DuBois, *Black Folk*, pp. 41-53.

Egyptians, now called Copts, and using Sudanese blacks, Persians, and Turks in their armies. They came in 639 under Amr-ibn-el-Asr, partly as friends of Egyptians against the tyranny of the Eastern Roman Empire, partly even as defenders of the heretical Coptic Church. It must be remembered that they were related by blood and history to the Negroid peoples. One of Mohammed's concubines was a dark curly-haired Coptic woman, May; and Nubians from the Sudan took frequent part in these wars. Alexandria surrendered in 642, and ten years later the Arabs invaded Nubia and attacked Dongola crying, "Ye people of Nubia, Ye shall dwell in safety!"¹⁴

For two centuries from 651 there were ninety-eight Mohammedan governors of Egypt under Caliphs of Medina, Damascus, and Bagdad. The Copts, representing the majority of the Egyptians, for the most part submitted to this rulership, but the black Nubians continued to be unruly and even came to the defense of the Copts. In 722 King Cyriacus of Nubia marched into Egypt with one hundred thousand soldiers and secured release of the imprisoned Coptic patriarch. There is an intriguing story of a black virgin whom the Mohammedans had seized and who promised them an unguent to make them invulnerable. To prove it she put it on her own neck, and when the Arab soldier swept his sword down upon her, her head fell off as she had intended.¹⁵

The change from the Omayyad to the Abasid Caliphs took place in Egypt peacefully in the middle of the eighth century. By 832 Egypt had become almost entirely Mohammedan, by conversion of the Copts through economic and social pressure. In 852 the last Arab governor ruled in Egypt, and in 856 the Turks began to replace the Arabs and to favor the Copts. There was much misrule, and from 868 to 884 Ahmad-ibn-Tulun,

¹⁴ E. Stanley Lane-Poole, *History of Egypt in Medieval Times*, edited by W. M. Flinders Petrie (London: Methuen & Co., 1914), Vol. VI, pp. 22, 28, 89.

¹⁵ Cf., *ibid.*, p. 28.

a Turkish slave, ruled. The Berga people of the Sudan refused further tribute of four hundred slaves annually and revolted in 854; the army of Ali Baba, "King of the Sudan," led the revolt, but spears and shields strove against mail armor and Arab ships, and failed.

We know that in 850 four hundred black East Africans had been enrolled in the army of Abu'l Abbas, ruler of Bagdad, and that they rose in revolt with a Negro, called "Lord of the Blacks," at their head. In 869 the Persian adventurer, Al Kabith, summoned the black slaves to revolt, and they flocked to his side in tens of thousands. In 871 they captured Basra and for fourteen years dominated the Euphrates delta. When Masudi visited this country fourteen years later, he was told that this conquest by famine and sword had killed at least a million people.

Syria was annexed to Egypt in 872, and from that time until the eleventh century Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia form one realm, more or less closely united. When Syria was first annexed, Egypt ruled from the Euphrates to Barka and Aswan, and the famous black cavalry of ten thousand or more took part in the conquest. In 883 the Zeng Negroes of East Africa revolted, and some settled in Mesopotamia. The Tulum dynasty finally ended in 905, and there were thirty years of unsettled rule in Egypt under the suzerainty of weak caliphs. From 935 to 946 Ikshid was governor of Egypt.

He was succeeded by a black Abyssinian eunuch, Abu-l-Misk Kafur, "Musky Camphor," for whom Ikshid named a celebrated garden in Cairo. Kafur was a clever man of deep black color with smooth shiny skin, who had been guardian of the sons of Ikshid. He read history and listened to music and was lavish with his vast wealth. Daily at his table there were served two hundred sheep and lamb, seven hundred and fifty fowls, and a thousand birds and one hundred jars of sweetmeats. He attracted men of learning and letters and

began an era of art and literature which placed Egypt as a cultural center next to Bagdad, Damascus, and Cordova.¹⁶ The poet Muttanabi praised him as "The Moon of Darkness."

Kafur ruled Egypt for twenty-two years, from 946 to 968; he was regent for nineteen years, but the two sons of Ikshid who were nominally on the throne were playboys without power. Kafur ruled three years alone, from 965 to 968. He conquered Damascus and Aleppo and incorporated Syria under Egyptian rule. Trouble arose from time to time in Syria, while in Egypt there were earthquakes, bad Nile seasons, and a Nubian revolt. Nevertheless, in general good order was maintained. He died in 968 and was succeeded by a child, then by the Caliph Hoseyn, and finally by Moizz.

The Shiites or Fatimids from Morocco, under the man who called himself the Mahdi, now began to war on Egypt and conquered it. They sent an embassy to George, King of Nubia; reconquered Syria and became rich with gold and jewelry, ivory and silk. By the middle of the twelfth century the Mohammedan empire included North Africa, Syria, Sicily, and Hejaz; Turkish slaves and Sudanese troops held the empire.

Moizz was helped by Killis, a Jew who had been Kafur's righthand man; and had a bodyguard of four thousand young men, white and black. By the help of Negro troops another Syrian revolt was quelled. Then came the reign of mad Hakim and finally Zahir.

Zahir ruled Egypt from 1021 to 1026. His wife was a black Sudanese woman, and after the death of her husband largely influenced the rule of her son, who came to the throne in 1036 and ruled until 1094, the longest reign in the dynasty. This son, M'add, took the name of Mustansir and is regarded as the best and ablest of the rulers of his time. He loved and encouraged learning and had a library of a hundred and twenty thousand volumes. The Black Dowager, who had great influence over him, sailed the Nile in her silver barge and imported

¹⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 89.

additional Negro troops from the south, until Mustansir had in his escort fifty thousand black soldiers and swordsmen, twenty thousand Berbers, ten thousand Turks, and thirty thousand white slaves. For years all Upper Egypt was held by black regiments.

Mustansir had enormous wealth, including his celebrated golden mattress. Makrizi described his jewels, gold plate, and ivory. Cairo consisted at this time of twenty thousand brick houses; there was art in pottery and glass work, and a beautiful "Lake of the Abyssinians." Mustansir had difficulties with Syria and nearly lost his power in 1068; his library was destroyed and the Black Dowager had to flee to Bagdad for sanctuary. Through the aid of Bedar, his prime minister, he regained power and restored Syria to Egyptian rule.

Then the Seljukian Turks appeared. They subdued Persia, captured Bagdad, and attacked Syria. Jerusalem was captured in 1071, and this became the excuse for the European Crusades which began in 1096, two years after Mustansir died. The Europeans took Jerusalem in 1099 and later seized most of Syria, but Egypt, with the aid of the black veterans of Mustansir's former army, eventually defeated Baldwin in 1102. From 1169 to 1193 Saladin, the Kurd, ruled Egypt and the East.

After Saladin's accession, black Nubian troops attacked Egypt, and the rebellion continued for many years. Gradually Saladin asserted his power in Nubia, and peace was made with the African Zeng in Mesopotamia. Mesopotamia had been ruined by the Mongols, and Cairo now became the greatest cultural center in the Orient, and indeed in the world, from 1196 to 1250. Saint Francis of Assisi preached there in 1219, and world trade centered in Alexandria.

Artists flocked to Egypt from Asia Minor. Men of culture lived at court, poets and writers. The Thousand and One Nights stories were collected. Indian stories and European romances were combined with Egyptian materials. A companion collection of poems made at this time were those of Antar-bin-

Shaddad. He was born about A.D. 498, the son of a black slave girl, Zebbeda, and of Shaddad, a nobleman of the tribe of Abs. Antar is famous. One of his works is found as the sixth poem of the Mo'allaqat—the "golden verses"—which are considered in Arabia the greatest poems ever written. The story is that they were hung on the Ka'bah at the Holy Temple at Mecca so that all the pilgrims who came there might know them and do obeisance to them. The Mo'allaqat belongs to the first school of Arabian poetry—to the "Gahilieh"—"time of ignorance." The Antar poem belongs to the time of the war of Dahis, and, like the five poems which preceded it in the epic, it lauds the victors of the battlefield, describes the beauties of nature, and praises the camel of the desert. The main theme, however, is love.

Rimski-Korsakov's Symphony *Antar*, with its wealth of barbaric color and oriental fire has been deservedly popular. The libretto is drawn from the voluminous work known as *The Romance of Antar*, which was published in Cairo in thirty-two volumes and has been translated in sections from the Arabic by various scholars. There are two editions of the work—one known as the *Syrian Antar*, the other as the *Arabian Antar*. The abridged work was first introduced to European readers in 1802; a translation was made and issued in four books by Terrick Hamilton in 1819. The *Romance* is a companion piece to the *Arabian Nights* and is a standard Arabian work. The seemingly numberless tales that are incorporated in *The Romance of Antar* are traditional tales of the desert that were retold and preserved by Asmai during the reign of Harun-al-Rashid.

As autocratic power grew among the Mohammedans, a number of religious and political malcontents migrated down the eastern coast of Africa. They filtered through for a number of centuries, not as conquerors, and they were permitted to live and trade in limited areas and mingled and intermarried with the black Bantu. An Arab settlement was made

about A.D. 684 under a son-in-law of Mohammed. Then came another migration in 908, and many of the Arabs wandered inland. Cities were established and soon were trading with the gold-mining peoples of Sofala. Masudi, an Arab geographer, visited this part of Africa in the tenth century and described the gold trade and the kingdom of the Waklimi. Marco Polo, writing in 1298, described the island of Madagascar and Zanzibar as peopled with blacks.

There are indications of trade between Nupe in West Africa and Sofala on the East Coast, and certainly trade between Asia and East Africa dates back earlier than the beginning of the Christian era. Asiatic traders settled on the East coast, and by means of mulatto and Negro merchants brought Central Africa into contact with Arabia, India, China, and Malaysia.

Zaide, great-grandson of Ali, nephew and son-in-law of Mohammed, was banished from Arabia. He passed over to Africa and formed settlements. His people mingled with the blacks, and the resulting mulatto traders, known as the Emoxaidi, seem to have wandered as far south as the equator. Other Arabian families came over on account of oppression and founded the towns of Magadosho and Brava, both not far north of the equator. The Emoxaidi, whom the later immigrants regarded as heretics, were driven inland and became the interpreting traders between the coast and the Bantu. Some wanderers from Magadosho came into the port of Sofala and there learned that gold could be obtained. This led to a small Arab settlement at that place.

Seventy years later, and about 150 years before the Norman conquest of England, certain Persians settled at Kilwa in East Africa, led by Hasan-ibn-Ali, who was the son of a black Abyssinian slave mother, and accompanied by his own six sons.

Ibn Batuta, who was acquainted with Arab life on the Mediterranean coast and at Mecca in the fourteenth century, was surprised by the wealth and civilization of East Africa. Kilwa he describes as "one of the most beautiful and best built towns."

Mombasa is a "large" and Magadosho an "exceedingly large city."

Duarte Barbosa, visiting the coast ten years later, described Kilwa as "a Moorish town with many fair houses of stone and mortar, with many windows after our fashion, very well laid out in streets, with many flat roofs. The doors are of wood, well carved, with excellent joinery. Around it are streams and orchards and fruit-gardens with many channels of sweet water. . . . And in this town was great plenty of gold, as no ships passed to or from Sofala without coming to this island." Of the Moors, he continued: "There are some fair and some black: they are finely clad in many rich garments of gold and silver in chains and bracelets . . . and many jewelled ear-rings in their ears." Mombasa, again, is "a very fair place, with lofty stone and mortar houses, well lined in streets. . . . Their women go very bravely attired."¹⁷

It is probable that Chinese ships traded directly with Africa from the eighth to the twelfth centuries. When the Portuguese came they found the Arabs intermarried and integrated with the Bantu and in control of the trade.

One of the most astonishing developments in Africa was the rule of the Mameluke slaves in Egypt for six centuries, from 1193 to 1805. There has been no exact parallel to this in history, and yet students have neglected this period with singular unanimity. The Mamelukes were white slaves bought by the thousands in the Balkans, Greece, Turkey, and the Near East. They were used mainly as soldiers and shared in the conquests of Islam and especially in the capture and holding of the Nile valley. At first they were auxiliary troops under strong and ambitious sultans, several of whom were of Negro descent. Then at the time of the Mongols and Christian Crusades, the Mamelukes, organized by groups of hundreds, began to choose their own chiefs and even raised them to the sultanate. Usually

¹⁷ *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, tr. from the Portuguese by M. L. Davis (London: Hakluyt Society, 1918), Vol. I, pp. 11-13, 18-20.

such sultans ruled but short periods, averaging five years. Strong men, like Saladin, held the Mamelukes in control and imposed their policies upon them. Other such powerful rulers were Bibars, who became sultan in 1260; and Kala'un, 1272, whose "Golden Age" was praised by Machiavelli. But gradually the level of culture declined, and instead of the literature and art of Saladin came the brawling, raping, and thieving of ignorant demagogues.

At first these white slaves served side by side with black Sudanese, and even under Negroid rulers. But as the Egyptian sultans tried in vain to conquer Nubia and the south, the Mamelukes found themselves in opposite camps, and white slave rule with few Negroids prevailed in the north, while in the south the Negroes stubbornly held their ground down to the nineteenth century.

The contrast between this white slavery and black American slavery was striking. It involved no inborn racial differences, and because of this Nordic historians have neglected white slavery and tied the idea of slavery to Negroes. The difference between the two groups of slaves was clear: the white slaves, under leadership like that of the colored Mustansir and Saladin the Kurd, opened the way to civilization among both white and black. Had it not been for the attack on this culture by the heathen East and Christian West, the flowering of civilization in Africa might have reached great heights and even led the world.

Napoleon Bonaparte explained the difference between slavery in the East and West:

"These countries were inhabited by men of different colors. Polygamy is the simple way of preventing them from persecuting one another. The legislators have thought that in order that the whites be not enemies of the blacks, the blacks of the whites, the copper-colored of the one and the other, it was necessary to make them all members of the same family and struggle thus against a penchant of man to hate all that

is not like him. Mohamet thought that four women were sufficient to attain this goal because each man could have one white, one black, one copper-colored, and one wife of another color. . . .

“When one wishes to give liberty to the blacks in the colonies of America and establish a perfect equality, the legislator will authorise polygamy and permit at the same time a white wife, a black one, and a mulatto one. Then the different colors making part of the same family will be mixed in the opinion of each. Without that one would never obtain satisfactory results. The blacks would be more numerous and cleverer and they would hold the whites in abasement and vice versa.

“Because of the general principle of equality that polygamy has established in the East there is no difference between the individuals composing the house of the Mamelukes. A black slave that a bey had bought from an African caravan became katchef and was the equal of a fine white Mameluk, native of Circassia; there was no thought even of having it otherwise.

“Slavery has never been in the Orient what it was in Europe. The customs in this respect have remained the same as in the Holy Scriptures; the servant marries with the master. In Europe, on the contrary, whoever bore the imprint of the seal of slavery remained always in the last rank. . . .”¹⁸

According to W. G. Palgrave: “Negroes can without any difficulty give their sons and daughters to the middle or lower class of Arab families, and thus arises a new generation of mixed race. . . . Like their progenitors, they do not readily take their place among the nobles or upper ten thousand; however, they may end by doing even this in process of time; and I have myself, while in Arabia, been honoured by the intimacy of more than one handsome ‘Green-man’ (mulatto) with a silver-hilted sword at his side and a rich dress on his dusky skin but denominated Sheik, or Emeer, and humbly

¹⁸ *Memoirs of the History of France* (London: Colburn, 1823-24), 2nd ed., Vol. III, pp. 152-54, 259-76.

sued by Arabs of the purest Ishmaelitish or Kahtanic stock. . . . All of this was not by Act of Parliament but by individual will and feeling."¹⁹

There arose numbers of cases of ruling blacks and mulattoes in the Near East. Nedjeh, a Negro slave, and his descendants ruled Arabia from 1020 to 1158. Again in 1763 Abbas, called "El Mahdi," black, thick-lipped and broad-nosed, ruled Yemen.

The Crusades and Mongols distracted the paths of leaders and left Africa and the Middle East to the ravages of the leadership of the degenerate Mamelukes of the eighteenth century. The black slaves taken to America became after a short period of hesitancy part of a new system of industry. They were chained to hard labor, kept in ignorance, and given no chance for development. Their one goal became freedom, and the Maroons were the nearest counterpart to the Mamelukes. Toussaint in Haiti was the first successful black sultan of the West. Byano and Palmares cleared his way.

There were twenty-five sultans of the Bahrite Mamelukes dynasty; among them was Bibars, who restored Syria to Egypt and attacked the Negroes of the Sudan between 1272 and 1273. Nubia regained its independence in 1320, and there was strife between Nubia and Egypt in 1366, 1385, and 1396. Nubia became practically independent after 1403.

Most scientists agree that the modern Beja are nearest the Egyptian type. Ibn Batuta described them in the fourteenth century. "After fifteen days' travelling we reached the town of Aydhab, a large town, well supplied with milk and fish; dates and grain are imported from Upper Egypt. Its inhabitants are Bejas. These people are black-skinned; they wrap themselves in yellow blankets and tie headbands about a finger-breadth wide around their heads. They do not give their daughters any share in their inheritance. They live on camels' milk and they ride on Meharis (dromedaries). One-third of the city belongs

¹⁹ W. G. Palgrave, *Narrative of a Year's Journey Through Central and Eastern Arabia* (London: 1866), Vol. I.

to the Sultan of Egypt and two-thirds to the King of the Bejas, who is called al-Hudrubi. On reaching Aydhab we found that al-Hudrubi was engaged in warfare with the Turks (i.e., the troops of the Sultan of Egypt), that he had sunk the ships and that the Turks had fled before him." ²⁰

A new dynasty of the Circassian Mamelukes reigned in Egypt from 1382 to 1517 and included twenty-three sultans. Literature and architecture still were cultivated, but there was license and fighting and slave purchases of Mongolians.

Nizir ruled from 1310 to 1341 in Egypt and exchanged embassies with the Mongols of Kepchak, with the Syrians, with the kings of Yemen and Abyssinia, and with West Africa, as well as with the emperors at Constantinople and the kings of Bulgaria.

Africans later were imported into India. King Rukn-uddin-Barbak, who ruled at Gaur from 1459 to 1474, possessed eight thousand African slaves and was the first king of India to promote them in large numbers to high rank in his service. In 1486 these slaves rebelled, killed Fath Shah, and set their leader on the throne with the title Barbah Shah. Another African, Indil Khan, remained loyal to Fath and, returning from a distant expedition, killed Barbah and accepted the crown under the title of Saif-ud-din-Firuz. Firuz quelled the disorders of the kingdom and restored the discipline of the army. He was succeeded in 1489 by Fath Shah's young son under a regency exercised by another African; but before a year was out still another Negro, Sidi Badr, murdered both child-king and regent and usurped the throne. He reigned three years. In 1493 he was killed at the head of a sortie against rebel forces that were besieging Gaur, and with his death this remarkable Negro regime in Bengal came to an end. An Asiatic from the Oxus country was elected to the throne, and one of his first acts was to expel all the Africans from the kingdom.

²⁰ Ibn Batuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325-1354*, tr. by H. A. R. Gibb (London: G. Routledge & Sons, 1929), pp. 53, 54, 321, 322, 328, 329, 330.

The exiles, many thousands in number, were turned back from Delhi and Jaunpur and finally drifted to Gujarat and the Decan, where the slave trade had also created a considerable Negro population.²¹

In the fourteenth century Islam in the West had been shorn of its outposts in Spain and Sicily, but in the East had been extended into India and Malaysia. It had beaten back the Crusaders, but nevertheless signs of weakness appeared. For two centuries Islam had struggled against the Europeans, and the rule in the Mohammedan world had passed from the Arabs and Persians to the Turks. After the year one thousand, Turkish generals and chieftains had torn the body of Islam, had devastated its land, until at length the heathen Mongols from Central Asia started west against the Turks and in 1258 made the eastern lands of Islam a province of the Mongol empire. Timur the Lame took Bagdad in 1393.

The history of the Nile valley from the time of Saladin to the nineteenth century reads like a phantasmagoria. The promise of high and delicate culture was there; but toward the east rose menacingly the threat of Turkey, forming the right wing of Islam and ready to overwhelm Egypt. If it had not, the history of Europe might have been the history of Egypt. From the west came the steady pressure of a new and virile Negro culture, but one destined to be suddenly arrested by the repulse of the left wing of Islam in Spain, the record of the Sudan, the stubborn resistance of Atlantis overwhelmed by the slave trade to America, and the march of the Bantu toward the Great Lakes.

The effort of this ancient land of Egypt to achieve a new independence and a renewed culture depended on a fusion of Syria and Nubia with Egypt. But the rough and ignorant white slaves, who had lost all culture patterns and learned no new ones, and who nonetheless held all power of government,

²¹ Reginald Coupland, *East Africa and Its Invaders* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), pp. 32-33.

stifled the budding culture which might have been an African Renaissance and led to futile efforts to conquer Nubia. This distraction of power lost Egypt control of Syria.

Nubia gained independence in 1403, and from the west came the Fung and the people of Darfur, while farther down the Shilluk and Central Africa still resisted. It was in vain that Bibars and Kala'un revived Egypt; most of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were filled with struggles of weak and degenerate leaders. Then Selim the Great of the Ottoman empire conquered and annexed Egypt in 1517. Egypt was divided into twenty-four districts, each under Mameluke beys and all under a Turkish pasha. Degeneration set in after the seventeenth century.

Thefts and mutinies filled the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in the eighteenth century the French Revolution tried to unload Napoleon on Egypt and Asia. England thwarted him in far-flung defense of India. In 1811 came Mehemet Ali, a Rumelian, who rid Egypt of the Mameluke beys by deliberate murder and set about the conquest of the Sudan. He overran Nubia in 1820, but lost his son in the mad resistance of the blacks. Meantime he courted Europe by trade and political alliance and tried to share in the profits of the ivory-slave trade. He provoked resistance and rebellion and died a madman in 1849.

His successor, Ishmael, fell into the snare of colonial imperialism, baited by Lord Beaconsfield. Britain saw in the Suez Canal, once conceived by the Pharaohs and dug by the French thousands of years later, a link to unite the British Empire, guard her Indian investment and consolidate her control of trade. Beaconsfield bought the canal from Ishmael after the British and French had involved him hopelessly in debt. When France declined to enter what was to her a doubtful partnership, England practically annexed Egypt to the British Empire.

Why was this? Was it "race"? "Surely," answered the nine-

teenth century, fattening on the results of Negro slavery and sneering at the mongrels of the Nile valley. But the answer was nothing so simple as the color of a man's skin or the kink of his hair. It was because Egypt during centuries of turmoil and foreign control could achieve no nationhood; because her ancient sources of self-support failed under exploitation, and her ancient culture patterns were submerged and could no longer be renewed from Central Africa by reason of the persistent and continued effort to conquer Nubia. Her new flowering of art in the thirteenth century had died. No democracy could arise in the years from Saladin to Mehemet Ali, and by that time the slave trade for ivory, succeeding the slave trade for sugar, backed by the same demand from Europe and America, had put all Africa beyond the pale of civilization.

One result of Egyptian pressure on Central Africa and its connection with modern colonization is shown by the history of Kilwara in East Africa. The empire was dismembered, the largest share falling to Uganda. When King Mutesa came to the throne of Uganda in 1862, he found Mohammedan influences in his land and was induced to admit Protestants and Catholics. The Protestants, representing British imperialism, tried to convert the king, and the Catholics, representing French imperialism, tried to make him a Catholic. In the midst of this more Mohammedans appeared, seeking also to convert Mutesa. He refused all these faiths and died a rugged pagan.

He was succeeded by his son Mwanga, who distrusted the whites. He ordered the eastern frontier closed against Europeans, and when the Protestant Bishop Hannington attempted to cross in 1885, he had him killed. The Protestants organized against Mwanga, and he banished both Protestants and Catholics. The Mohammedans became the power behind the throne. The Protestants withdrew from Buganda into Angola and organized a united front of Christians against Mohammedans and Mwanga. They captured Mwanga's capital

and divided it between Protestants and Catholics. The Mohammedans began to fight back, and finally the Protestants appealed to the British East Africa Company. In 1889 the company dispatched a military mission to Uganda which was later joined by Lugard. Open civil war ensued between Catholics and Protestants.

“At the head of a considerable military force, Captain Lugard, of the Imperial British East Africa Company (Ibea), penetrated as far as Mengo, the residence of King Mwanga, and forced upon him a treaty of protectorate; then, turning against the Catholics, he attacked them on some futile pretext, and drove them onto a big island in Lake Victoria. There, around the king and the French missionaries, had gathered for refuge a considerable multitude of men, women, and children. Against this helpless and defenseless population Captain Lugard turned his guns and maxims. He exterminated a large number and then, continuing his work of destruction, he gave full rein to his troops and adherents, who burnt all the villages and stations of the White Fathers, their churches and their crops.”²² The British Protestant version of this story varies from this in many particulars.

Mwanga was finally defeated in 1899, taken prisoner and deported. Uganda then became a British protectorate.

So for a thousand years Asia and Africa strove together, renewing their spirits and mutually fertilizing their cultures from time to time, in West Asia, North Africa, the Nile valley, and the East Coast. But at last Europe encompassed them both. In Africa she came to the south as settlers, to the west as slave traders, and to the east as colonial imperialists. Africa slept in bloody nightmare.

²² Leonard Woolf, *Empire and Commerce in Africa* (London: Allen and Unwin, n.d.), p. 288.



CHAPTER X

THE BLACK SUDAN

How civilization flamed in the Sudan in a culture which was African and not Arabian and which helped light a renaissance of culture in Europe.

EARLY in the seventh century Islam had entered North Africa and proselyted among the Berbers and Negroes. Aided by black soldiers, the Moslems crossed into Spain; in the following century, repulsed in Europe, they crossed the west end of the Sahara and came to Negroland. Later, in the eleventh century, Arabs penetrated the Sudan and Central Africa from the east, filtering through the Negro tribes of Darfur, Kanem, and neighboring regions.

Frobenius reminded us that the ensuing culture was not Arab but Negro: "The revelations of fifteenth and seventeenth century navigators furnish us with certain proof that Negro Africa, which extended south of the Sahara desert zone, was still in full bloom, in the full brilliance of harmonious and well-formed civilizations. In the last century the superstition ruled that all high culture of Africa came from Islam. Since then we have learned much, and we know today that the beautiful turbans and clothes of the Sudanese folk were already used in Africa before Mohammed was even born or before Ethiopian culture reached inner Africa. Since then we have

learned that the peculiar organization of the Sudanese states existed long before Islam and that all of the art of building and education, of city organization and handwork in Negro Africa, were thousands of years older than those of Middle Europe.

"Thus in the Sudan old real African warm-blooded culture existed and could be found in Equatorial Africa, where neither Ethiopian thought, Hamitic blood, or European civilization had drawn the pattern. Everywhere when we examine this ancient culture it bears the same impression. In the great museums—Trocadero, British Museum, in Belgium, Italy, Holland, and Germany—everywhere we see the same spirit, the same character, the same nature. All of these separate pieces unite themselves to the same expression and build a picture equally impressive as that of a collection of the art of Asia. The striking beauty of the cloth, the fantastic beauty of the drawing and the sculpture, the glory of ivory weapons; the collection of fairy tales equal to the *Thousand and One Nights*, the Chinese novels and the Indian philosophy.

"In comparison with such spiritual accomplishment the impression of the African spirit is easily seen. It is stronger in its folds, simpler in its richness. Every weapon is simple and practical, not only in form but fantasy. Every line of carving is simple and strong. There is nothing that makes a clearer impression of strength, and all streams out of the fire and the hut, the sweat and grease-treated hides and the animal dung. Everything is practical, strong, workmanly. This is the character of the African style. When one approaches it with full understanding, one immediately realizes that this impression rules all Africa. It expresses itself in the activity of all Negro people even in their sculpture. It speaks out of their dances and their masks; out of the understanding of their religious life, just as out of the reality of their living, their state-building, and their conception of fate. It lives in their fables, their fairy

stories, their wise sayings, and their myths. And once we are forced to this conclusion, then the Egyptian comes into the comparison. For this discovered culture form of Negro Africa has the same peculiarity."¹

It was Asia and Africa which in the thirteenth century prepared Europe for the Renaissance through Genghis Khan and the Crusades. Negroes were building then in the Sudan the beginnings of the great states which flourished in the fourteenth century and which became an integral part of the cultural complex of the Middle Ages. For a century Ghana had been trading across the sands with Europe. Already the power of the Mandingos was being felt in West Africa, which in another century would build the great kingdom of Melle known to all Europe. In Asia, the black slaves from Africa had revolted, seizing power and becoming great rulers. The Almoravides, Berbers with Negro blood, and hosts of pure Negro adherents had invaded and seized Morocco. On the African East Coast, Arabs and Persians with troops of Negroid mulattoes had built large and beautiful cities and were trading not only with the black kingdoms of the interior but with China and India. The Crusades, beginning in the eleventh century and extending through the thirteenth, had brought crude Europe into close touch with the civilization of the Orient and led to a desperate effort to ally the Christian Church of Rome with black Prester John of Ethiopia in an attack upon Islam.

Sidjilmessa, the last town in Lower Morocco toward the desert, was founded in 757 by a Negro who ruled over the Berber inhabitants. Indeed, many towns in the Sudan and the desert were thus ruled and felt no incongruity in this arrangement. They say, to be sure, that the Moors destroyed Howdaghast because it paid tribute to the black town of Ghana, but this was because the town was heathen and not because it was black. There is a story that a Berber king overthrew

¹ Frobenius, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

one of the cities of the Sudan and all the black women committed suicide, being too proud to allow themselves to fall into the hands of white men.

In the west the Moslems first came into touch with the Negro kingdom of Ghana. Here large quantities of gold were gathered in early days, and we have the names of seventy-four rulers before A.D. 300, running through twenty-one generations. This would take us back approximately a thousand years, to 700 B.C., or about the time that Pharaoh Necho of Egypt sent out the Phoenician expedition which circumnavigated Africa; and possibly before the time when Hanno, the Carthaginian, explored the West Coast of Africa.

By the middle of the eleventh century Ghana was the principal kingdom in the western Sudan. Already the town had a native and a Mussulman quarter, and was built of wood and stone with surrounding gardens. The king had an army of two hundred thousand. The wealth of the country was great. A century later the king had become Mohammedan in faith. He had a palace with sculptures and glass windows. There was a prosperous desert trade. Gold, skins, ivory, kola nuts, gums, honey, wheat, and cotton were exported, and the whole Mediterranean coast traded in the Sudan. Other and lesser black kingdoms like Tekrou, Silla, and Masina surrounded Ghana.² Semitic immigrants, who probably invaded this part of Africa before the Arabs, settled as farmers and shepherds and had a culture inferior to that of the surrounding Negroes with whom they mingled.

Under the black rulers of Ghana the state attained its highest civilization. Bekri, Yakut, and Ibn Kaldoun testify that it ruled over the Berbers in what is now Mauritania. The Berber capital, Howdaghast, paid tribute to the king of Ghana. On the south its dependencies stretched beyond the Senegal River to the gold mines of the Faleme and the Bambuk. It touched the Mandingo on the Upper Niger. Toward the east it ex-

² *The Negro*, pp. 50, 51.

tended almost as far as Timbuktu. It was known in Cairo and Bagdad.

Around 1040 a movement of Mohammedan propaganda started among the Berbers and Negroes. They formed the famous sect of the Almoravides and began waging war from the Sudan into Spain. "The Almoravides . . . were Berbers and were largely mingled with pure Negroes. Yusuf, their leader, was himself a Negro. The 'Roudh-el-Kartas,' a Moorish work, describes him as having 'woolly hair' and being 'brown' in color. Yusuf's favorite concubine was a white captive, Fadh-el-Hassen (Perfection of Beauty). She was the mother of Yusuf's successor, Ali. Alphonso VI, the white Spanish King, who was often defeated by Yusuf, had, in turn, a Moorish Queen, the lovely Zayda, who was the mother of his favorite son, Sancho. It was the latter's death in battle that hastened the aged Alphonso's death."³

The Almoravides converted numbers of Sudanese Negroes but gained no political control over them. They tried to subdue the kings of Ghana; in 1051 Howdaghast was taken and pillaged. Some of the Negroids migrated south while others, attracted by the new religion, joined the Almoravides. Among the converts was the king of the Mandingos. A number of such kings and chieftains were converted, but the mass of people changed their religion slowly. Finally under the Sarkolle chiefs the Mohammedanized Negroes moved toward the Gulf of Guinea, founding cities and becoming rich from commerce in kola nuts, cattle, cloth, and gold. Habits of intellectual research were introduced which have continued until today.

In 1076 the Almoravides captured Ghana and in 1087 Seville was taken. This made the Almoravides masters of Spain as well as of Morocco. Consisting not simply of Berbers but of numbers of converted blacks, the Almoravides set up a kingdom in Spain, but were finally defeated in 1620. They were followed by the Almohades, who held the Mohammedan part

³ Rogers, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 151-52.

of Spain against the Christians. Under their influence Moorish power in Spain reached its highest peak of grandeur, and reared such monuments of artistic splendor as the Alhambra and the Mosque at Cordova.

In the ninth and tenth centuries Ghana flourished, but toward the middle of the eleventh century began to decline, probably because of the encroachment of the desert and the attack of the Almoravides. Ghana ceased to exist about the middle of the thirteenth century. Its site was excavated in 1914 and vestiges of a great city were found, with ruins of hewn stone construction, and some sculpture.

In the meantime, various tribes freed themselves from the overlordship of Ghana and became independent. The Diawara dynasty, founded in 1270, maintained its power until 1754. The great Songhay state, founded about 690, began to develop but was overshadowed by the kingdom of Melle. Melle was the kingdom of the Mandingos where there ruled and still rules what Delafosse called "probably the most ancient dynasty of the world." For seven hundred years the little village on the Upper Niger was the principal capital of one of the largest kingdoms in Africa, the empire of the Mandingos, or Melle. For several centuries the Mansas, or kings of the Mandingos, ruled their little village. When in 1050 the king was converted to Islamism by the Almoravides, he made a pilgrimage to Mecca and established relations with neighboring states.

"As to the people of Mali [Melle], they surpassed the other blacks . . . in wealth and numbers. They extended their dominions and conquered the Susu, as well as the kingdom of Ghana in the vicinity of the ocean towards the west. The Mohammedans say that the first King of Mali was Baramindanah. He performed the pilgrimage to Meccah, and enjoined his successors to do the same."⁴

⁴ W. D. Cooley, *The Negroland of the Arabs Examined and Explained* (London: Arrowsmith, 1841), p. 62.

The territory of Melle lay southeast of Ghana and some five hundred miles north of the Gulf of Guinea. Its kings were known by the title of Mansa, and from the middle of the thirteenth century to the middle of the fourteenth, the Mellestine, as its dominion was called, was the leading power in the land of the blacks. The state was partially overthrown by the king of Sosa but was restored by Sandiata who captured Ghana in 1240. He introduced the raising and weaving of cotton and made his kingdom secure. His successor increased it. The empire reached its greatest power between 1307 and 1332. Its greatest king, Mari Jalak (Mansa Musa), made his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324 with a caravan of sixty thousand persons including twelve thousand young slaves gowned in figured cotton and Persian silk. He took eighty camel loads of gold dust (worth about five million dollars) to defray his expenses, and greatly impressed the people of the East with his magnificence. During his reign was erected the brick mosque at Gao with crenelated flat roof and pyramidal minaret, a type of architecture which was extended through the Sudan. This type of construction was said to have been originated by an architect hired by Mansa Musa, who rewarded him with fifty-four kilograms of gold according to Ibn Kaldoun.

We must remember that at the time of the development of these Negro kingdoms, Europe was just emerging from the Dark Ages and was full of "robbers, fetishmen, and slaves."⁵ The Mandingan empire of Melle occupied nearly the whole of what is now French Africa and part of British West Africa. Its rulers were in close communication with the rulers of the shores south and north of the Mediterranean.

Ibn Batuta visited Melle in 1352 and wrote: "My stay at Iwalatan lasted about fifty days; and I was shown honour and entertained by its inhabitants. It is an excessively hot place, and boasts a few small date-palms, in the shade of which they sow watermelons. Its water comes from underground water-

⁵ Reade, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

beds at that point, and there is plenty of mutton to be had. The garments of its inhabitants, most of whom belong to the Massufa tribe, are of fine Egyptian fabrics. Their women are of surpassing beauty, and are shown more respect than the men. The state of affairs amongst these people is indeed extraordinary. Their men show no signs of jealousy whatever; no one claims descent from his father, but on the contrary from his mother's brother. A person's heirs are his sister's sons, not his own sons. This is a thing which I have seen nowhere in the world except among the Indians of Malabar. But those are heathens; *these* people are Muslims, punctilious in observing the hours of prayer, studying books of law, and memorizing the Koran.

"I was at Malli during the two festivals of the sacrifice and the fast-breaking. On these days the sultan takes his seat on the *pempi* after the mid-afternoon prayer. The armour-bearers bring in magnificent arms—quivers of gold and silver, swords ornamented with gold and with golden scabbards, gold and silver lances, and crystal maces. At his head stand four amirs driving off the flies, having in their hands silver ornaments resembling saddle stirrups. The commanders, *qadi*, and preachers sit in their usual places. The interpreter Dugha comes with his four wives and his slave-girls, who are about a hundred in number. They are wearing beautiful robes, and on their heads they have gold and silver fillets, with gold and silver balls attached. A chair is placed for Dugha to sit on. He plays on an instrument made of reeds with some small calabashes at its lower end, and chants a poem in praise of the sultan, recalling his battles and deeds of valour. The women and girls sing with him and play with bows. Accompanying them are about thirty youths, wearing red woolen tunics and white skull-caps; each of them has his drum slung from his shoulder and beats it. Afterwards come his boy pupils, who play and turn wheels in the air, like the natives of Sind. They show a marvellous nimbleness and agility in these exercises

and play most cleverly with swords. Dugha also makes a fine play with the sword. Thereupon the sultan orders a gift to be presented to Dugha and he is given a purse containing two hundred *mithqals* of gold dust, and is informed of the contents of the purse before all the people.

"The Negroes possess some admirable qualities. They are seldom unjust, and have a greater abhorrence of injustice than any other people. Their sultan shows no mercy to anyone who is guilty of the least act of it. There is complete security in their country. Neither traveller nor inhabitant in it has anything to fear from robbers or men of violence. They do not confiscate the property of any white man who dies in their country, even if it be uncounted wealth. On the contrary, they give it into the charge of some trustworthy person among the whites, until the rightful heir takes possession of it.

". . . one has the impression that Mandingo was a real state whose organization and civilization could be compared with those of the Musselman kingdoms or indeed the Christian kingdoms of the same epoch."⁶

Cooley has told us: "Ibn S'aid, a writer of the thirteenth century, has enumerated thirteen nations of blacks extending across Africa, from Ghana in the west, to the Beja on the shores of the Red Sea in the east."⁷

Professor Leo Hansberry of Howard University gives me the following list of rulers and the various Sudanese countries:

SOME KINGDOMS AND EMPIRES IN WEST AFRICA IN THE MIDDLE AGES

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The kingdom of Ghana | 6. The kingdom of Borgu |
| 2. The kingdom of Melle | 7. The kingdom of Mossi |
| 3. The Mellestine empire | 8. The kingdom of Nupe |
| 4. The kingdom of Songhay | 9. The kingdom of Yoruba |
| 5. The empire of Songhay | 10. The kingdom of Benin |

⁶ Ibn Batuta, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-22, 328, 329, 330.

⁷ Cooley, *op. cit.*, p. viii.

SOME KINGS OF MELLE AND THE MELLESTINE FROM 1213 TO 1464

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Mause Allakoy | 7. Mause Sakura |
| 2. Mause Jatah | 8. Mause Gongo-Mussa I |
| 3. Mause Wali I | 9. Mause Suleiman |
| 4. Mause Wali II | 10. Mause Magha |
| 5. Mause Khalifa | 11. Mause Mussa II |
| 6. Mause Abu Bekr | 12. Mause Mahmud |

SOME RULERS OF SONGHAY FROM 679 TO 1592

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Za Alayaman | 33. Sonni Ali-Kolon |
| 2. Za Zakoi | 34. Sonni Selman Nare |
| 3. Za Takoi | 35-51. Sixteen Others of this Dy- |
| 4. Za Akoi | nasty |
| 5. Za Kou | 52. Sonni Ali |
| 6. Za Alifoi | 53. Askia El Hadj or Askia the |
| 7. Za Biyai | Great |
| 8. Za Biyai | 54. Askia Moussa |
| 9. Za Karai | 55. Askia Mohammed-Beukan |
| 10. Za Yama I | 56. Askia Isma'il |
| 11. Za Yama II | 57. Askia Ishaq I |
| 12. Za Yama III | 58. Askia Daoud |
| 13. Za Koukorai | 59. Askia El Hadj II |
| 14-32. Nineteen Others of this | 60. Askia Mohammed-Bano |
| Dynasty | 61. Askia Ishaq II |

The greatest development of civilization in Africa, after Egypt, arose late in the fifteenth century in the empire of the Songhay, east of the Mellestine. The story is that a king of Melle, returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca, stopped at Timbuktu, where a black and ancient dynasty was ruling. He seized two young princes and carried them home to educate them and bring them up subservient to his power. Eventually they escaped, returned home, and founded the Songhay state. It expanded rapidly; first westward, where it absorbed the

Mellestine and the remains of ancient Ghana. Then it turned south and drove the peoples of the Mossi and the city-states of the coast south, beyond the Kong mountains. Under the victorious Sonni Ali, the Songhay began to expand east toward the Nile valley, starting ever-widening centers of culture among the Haussa, the peoples of Bornu; and centuries later among the Fung and the folk of Kanem until in the nineteenth century this western culture came in contact with Mehemet Ali in Egypt and the Nubians of the Sudan.

The organized Songhay state at the height of its power under the black Mohammedan Askia the Great was a remarkable state from any point of view. Its organized administration, its roads and methods of communication, its system of public security, put it abreast of any contemporary European or Asiatic state. It was as large as Europe. The emperor "was obeyed with as much docility on the farthest limits of his empire as in his own palace." Gao, Timbuktu, and Jenne were intellectual centers, and at the University of Sankoré gathered thousands of students of law, literature, grammar, geography, and surgery. A literature began to develop in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The University was in correspondence with the best institutions on the Mediterranean coast.

Art, especially in building and manufacture, reached a high level. The system of labor rested in part on domestic slavery, but that slavery not only protected the slave from exploitation and poverty, but left the way open, with no barrier of class or color, for him to rise to high positions of state. The clan organization of the artisans gave each one a chance for individual taste in his work and no fear of hurry or hunger.

Leo Africanus describes the kingdom of Songhay under the Askias in the fifteenth century: "Corne, cattle, milke, and butter this region yeeldeth in great abundance: but salt is verie scarce here; for it is brought hither by land from Tegaza, which is fue hundred miles distant. When I my selfe was here,

I saw one camels loade of salt sold for 80 ducates. The rich king of Tombuto hath many plates and sceptres of gold, some whereof weigh 1300 poundes: and he keeps a magnificent and well-furnished court. . . . Here are great store of doctors, iudges, priests, and other learned men, that are bountifully maintained at the kings cost and charges. And hither are brought diuers manuscripts or written bookes out of Berbarie, which are sold for more money than any other merchandize. . . ." ⁸

It is a matter for reflection to ask what influence Africa might have had on the world if the Songhay state had been able to fulfill its promise. But a singular fate overtook it. First came the Mongol and the Turk from Asia. The Turk seized the Eastern Roman Empire and in the west drove Arab and Berber from the coast down into Africa and below the barrier of desert sand. Armed with gunpowder, these fugitives fell upon the Songhay and overthrew their state and culture at Tenkadi-bou in 1591. Shutting themselves up in North Africa, they degenerated and dragged the Songhay with them, leaving only the eddies of their culture to move farther east. If the culture of Ethiopia had not been imprisoned by the desertion of European Christianity, it might have expanded under another Taharqa and rescued the Songhay culture. On the contrary, it was nullified by the decline of the Mamelukes after the brilliant age of Saladin.

For one hundred and twenty years after 1660 these pashas of mixed Turkish, Berber, and Negro blood ruled Timbuktu, paying tribute to the black Bambara kings and bribing the Tureregs. Finally in 1894 the city was taken by Marshal Joffre of France.

East of the Songhay there developed two powerful states. The Hausa states were formed of seven cities, among which were Kano and Katsina. They were centers of cotton and

⁸ Leo Africanus, *History and Description of Africa*, tr. by John Pory (printed for the Hakluyt Society, London, 1896), Vol. III, pp. 824, 825.

leather manufactures, agriculture and trade, smelting, weaving and dyeing. Katsina in the middle of the sixteenth century was thirteen miles in circumference and divided into quarters for the different trades and industries. The Haussa fell under the control of other rulers and finally was governed by Mohammed Bello in the eighteenth century. Bello was a noted man of letters. The Haussa states were occupied by the British in 1904.

Still farther east was the domain called Bornu in the west and Kanem in the east. The population occupied a large territory and was of mixed Negro and Berber descent. The first ruler was Saefe, and the kings took the title of Mai. Mai Idris I (1352-1376) was visited by Ibn Batuta, who found copper mines in full operation, the Negro custom of concealing the king behind a curtain, and the use of drums to send messages.

In the political development of the western Sudan the kingdom of Bornu played a notable part and has a recorded history as far back as the tenth century A.D.⁹ The influence of its rulers extended far. The kingdom or empire of Bornu had its beginnings probably within two hundred years of the opening of the Mohammedan era. During these centuries the Christian West had remained ignorant, rude, and barbarous, while Saracenic culture passed on the torch of civilization to future ages. The kingdom of Bornu drew its inspiration from Egypt and North Africa. The degree of civilization achieved by its early chiefs would appear to compare favorably with that of European monarchs of that day. It was probably during the twelfth century that a settled capital was founded at Nnjimi (Sima) near Mao, in Kanem, east of Lake Chad. From thence a redoubtable warrior, Mai Dunama Dabalemi (1221-1259), extended the Bornu empire up to Kauwar and Tibesti in the north, and to the regions southwest of Lake Chad.

⁹ H. R. Palmer, *Mai Idris of Bornu* (Lagos: Government Publication, 1926), preface.

At the close of the period, rendered illustrious for Bornu by Dunama Dabalemi, there occurred the sack of Bagdad by the Mongols under Hulagu Khan. This event caused an increased number of itinerant Arab divines to go west and enter Egypt and Africa, taking with them the teaching of the various Tarikas of Islam which had arisen in Irak.¹⁰

Though the royal line was continuous from the beginning (A.D. 750 to 800) till it was superseded by the Kanembu Kurburi about 1810, there were fundamental differences between the Bornu (Kanem) kingdom as it existed at the time of the death of Dunama Dabalemi in the thirteenth century and the revived Bornu kingdom which was established about 1470. The earlier kingdom was a rule established by camel-men over the tribes extending from Lake Chad east to Borku and Wadai. These monarchs conquered the Teda, or Tebu, races which lay to the north of them and solidified their position by marrying into the Tebu royal clan.

Athwart the direct road to the East from Kanem now lay the Fung dynasty of Senaar on the Blue Nile and the Christian Dongola kingdom. One tradition survives of a time when the Meks of Senaar, possibly a remnant of the Meroitic kingdom, were connected with the early Bornu Mais of Wadai.

Within a hundred years of the date of the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, Idris Alooma had as mercenaries Turkish musketeers. The keeping open of all routes from the Mediterranean and Egypt was at least one service of the kingdom.¹¹

Southwest of Lake Chad in 1520 was the sultanate of Bagirmi, which was annexed by the French in 1896. In the eastern Sudan, Darfur and Kordofan arose to power in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Kordofan was allied with Napoleon in the Egyptian campaign.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

In the nineteenth century the central power of eastern Sudan was Rabah. At one time Rabah conquered Bornu and brought a considerable part of North Africa under his control, overthrowing Bagirmi, Bornu, and other states around Lake Chad. He was the son of a Negro woman and was finally conquered and killed by the French in 1900.

Since the fifth century the capital of Nubia had been at old Dongola, where Silko, King of the Beja, had embraced Christianity in 450. As the Mohammedans pressed up the Nile valley, the Nubians held them back for two centuries. For a period of six hundred years they were compelled to pay tribute to the Mohammedans; then were annexed to Egypt in 1275 but became independent in 1403. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries fighting went on between the Nubians and Arabians, but the Christian kingdom of Nubia finally fell to Islam in the sixteenth century.

Farther south, the Fung pushed up out of the Sudan and made their capital at the junction of the White and Blue Nile. When Selim invaded Egypt in 1617, the Fung became Mohammedan and arranged to divide Ethiopia between them and the Arabs. They ruled from the Third Cataract to Senaar during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Eventually they conquered the Shilluk and later the Abyssinians. The state of Darfur reached great proportions in the early seventeenth century.

Meantime the Portuguese had reached Abyssinia and opened it again to the knowledge of Europeans. Abyssinia had reached a high degree of culture before that, but at the time of the arrival of the Portuguese had fallen into a number of petty states. The Fung now tried to annex northern Ethiopia but were driven back with slaughter by the new ruler of Egypt. Mehemet Ali sent his son to conquer them. The son was killed in 1822 just as he had founded Khartoum. His father wreaked

a terrible vengeance on the Sudanese for this death and then in 1839 began to plan to take part in the ivory-slave trade which now was reaching up from East Africa.

This trade and turmoil reduced the Sudan to a state of ruin and misery in the nineteenth century. Thereupon Mohammed Ahmad, the Mahdi, revolted in 1881 and, aided by the Dinka, another Negro tribe, drove both the Egyptians and English out of the Sudan for sixteen years. The Mahdi was a black Kushite. He escaped capture and in 1883 saved Kordofan, where he massacred the English army led by Hicks Pasha in southern Equatoria. In 1885 the Mahdi captured Khartoum and killed Chinese Gordon. He died the next year, and his successor attacked Abyssinia and killed the Emperor John.

In Abyssinia, Menelik of Shoa became ruler and resisted the efforts of Italy to reduce his country to vassalage, overthrowing the Italians at the battle of Adua in 1896. The British Empire in Africa was now threatened by two black men, one in Abyssinia and one in the Sudan, and when Menelik and the French made alliance, the English army started immediately, captured Khartoum in 1898, killing twenty-seven thousand natives, and defeated the successor of the Mahdi.

Through this development in Egypt and in the Sudan there had gone on in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries a significant interchange of culture between the East and the West through Africa. Greek scientists made pilgrimages to Egypt and Assyria and carried home the lore of yellow and black sages. As the Greek-Roman culture declined, the Arabs seized intellectual leadership and developed it in Africa, marching to western Asia and southern Europe. With the Crusades came a new period of intercourse between Negroid Africa and other areas of civilization.

Constantine the African (1020-1087) may or may not have had some Negro blood. He was born in Carthage where all races were represented. He became one of the important medi-

cal writers of the Middle Ages and started the translation from Latin to Arabic. His work began the end of the Dark Ages in Europe, and the dawn of scholasticism and his imperfect efforts marked the flow of Greek culture into Europe through Africa.

Whether or not Constantine himself was Negroid, many Negroes shared in later phases of this same cultural intercourse.

Because of this, by the thirteenth century the European world looked upon the black world with romantic respect. As early as the fifth century the legend of Saint Moor occurs: the legend of a saint of the Roman Catholic Church who was a black man and was reputed to have been a prince in Egypt. In the tenth century Otto of the Holy Roman Empire chose Saint Mauritius as the patron saint of Germany, and from 1000 to 1500 his statues and his worship were dominant in central Europe. Walter von der Vogelweide sang of knightly virtues regardless of skin color:

Many a Moor is rich in virtues within:

Behold their white hearts, if someone turns them round.

In the epic *Parsifal*, Wolfram von Eschenbach in the thirteenth century portrayed a white man and a black man as brothers. A European knight comes to the country of Zassamank, whose Queen Belakane and people were described as "*noch schwarzer waren als die Nacht*" (even blacker than the night). He falls in love with the queen, courts and marries her, because her noble and pure character seems to him quite equal to that of a Christian. Later, however, disturbed by the difference in their religions, he abandons her, and back in his own country of Valois he wins the Queen of Valois in a tournament and becomes king. Yet always he cherishes a deep feeling of love for, and sense of wrong toward, his abandoned black wife. After his death, his son Parsifal becomes the great knight who leads the search for the Holy Grail. But meantime

the deserted black queen has given birth to a son, and this son is miraculously black and white ("ein sohnlein das zweifarbig war") and therefore named Feirefiz, or "colored man" ("bunte sohn"). Later Parsifal meets this brother, and not knowing him, joins battle with him in the hardest fight he ever had. In the duel his sword breaks and he would have been killed had it not been for the generous mercy of his colored foe. Finally they recognize each other as half-brothers and Feirefiz proves as faithful as any Christian. Led by his love for a white European woman, he agrees to baptism and then carries Christianity to the East.

This story of the crossing of the paths of Parsifal and Feirefiz is more than a side issue to the main story of the Holy Grail. It points toward the bridging of the gaps between creeds and races and is of great significance in revealing the thought of enlightened and civilized society in Europe in the thirteenth century.¹² Throughout the Middle Ages, in German and in Latin Europe, statues of the "Black Virgin Mary" and portraits of Negro saints of the Church were widely exhibited. The stained glass of the Cathedral at Chartres especially illustrates this.

Shakespeare, writing to entertain England in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries portrayed a black man not only as a courageous soldier, but also a great gentleman who sued successfully for the hand of the daughter of a senator of the richest Italian state; and in *The Merchant of Venice*, too, a black suitor for a white princess is portrayed as natural and equal.

In Shakespeare's *Othello*¹³ there are ten allusions to his race and color: to his thick lips (Act I, Scene II, line 66); to his "sooty bosom" (Act I, Scene II, line 70); when Emilia calls him "black" (Act V, Scene II, line 130); when the duke alludes to

¹² Cf. *Phylon*, Vol. II, pp. 375-76.

¹³ Hudson Shakespeare, edited by E. C. and A. K. Black (New York: Ginn and Company, 1926).

him as "black" (Act I, Scene III, lines 288-89); and especially when Othello alludes to himself, "black as mine own face" (Act III, Scene III, lines 286-87), and says, "haply for I am black" (Act III, Scene III, line 263). There are any number of other allusions to the contrast of color that first startled Desdemona (Act III, Scene III, lines 229, 230; Act I, Scene III, line 98); and in Desdemona's defense of a black woman (Act II, Scene II, lines 132-34). Yet with all this Shakespeare did not hesitate to allude to Othello as descended from kings (Act I, Scene II, lines 21-22), and all Othello's companions agree as to his nobility of character: "a worthy governor," "brave Othello," "noble" and "true of mind," "great of heart," and especially Iago's tribute:

The Moor, howbeit that I endure him not,
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature,
And I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona
A most dear husband. (Act II, Scene I, lines 278-82)

Despite this there are critics who have almost had hysterics in seeking to deny that Shakespeare meant to paint a Negro as a noble warrior and successful suitor of a beautiful white woman.

When Italian painters and others began to paint the legend of the three kings who visited the cradle of Christ, it seemed logical that one of the three princes, who represent the three great peoples of earth, should be a black Negroid of Africa as the other two represented yellow Asia and white Europe.

In the same fourteenth century we see growing in the Sudan the expansion of imperialism in black Africa. The movement of Islam up the Nile continued from the middle of the thirteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. As a result, the Bantu tribes, which probably had originally moved north from the Great Lakes toward the Mediterranean, began a countermovement perhaps long before the eleventh century. They moved toward the West Coast and the kingdom of the Congo,

which dominated the valley and forests of the great Congo system; they pressed upon the Great Lakes, threatening the Negroids and mulattoes on the East Coast; and they fell upon the civilization of the Monomotapa centering at Zimbabwe. They overthrew and changed the culture while at the same time continuing it. They marched on in a series of stops and forays until they reached South Africa at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In the west came greater disaster to black Africa. The city-state coast culture, withdrawing from the Sudanese imperialism, met expanding Europe; and that Europe, beginning with trade in gold and pepper, turned to a trade in human flesh on the greatest scale the world has ever seen. The gain from American black labor together with the loot of India changed the face of world industry. Built on a miraculous union of science and technique, the capitalistic system was founded on African slavery and degradation. The very name of the Songhay was forgotten, and Europe ruled the world.

This thousand years of history might have been different if the Christian Church had retained its hold upon Asia and Africa instead of expelling these countries and turning to the Nordic barbarians. In Northern Africa, the Nile valley, and Ethiopia, in Syria and the Middle East, the Catholic Church had wide range and power during the early Middle Ages. Through the greed of the Eastern Roman Empire, and because of endless controversy and disputes like that of Arianism, all these churches were lost to the Roman hierarchy. Thus when Islam came to the valley of the Nile it came to defend Egyptian Christians and was welcomed by them, instead of meeting opposition from the organized Christian Church. When, on the other hand, Christianity met black folk in the African slave and red men in America, it regarded them as lost heathens to be exterminated or enslaved. Thus the Church upheld the slave trade and its consequences.

Was it possible that so fine a flowering of culture as that

of the Sudan should have had no influence on the renaissance of culture in Europe? There was but scant indigenous culture in Arabia. The rise of civilization among Arabs, as among all peoples, took place where they were fired by contact with Mongoloids at Bagdad, Negroids in the valley of the Nile; and in Spain after the Arabs had passed slowly and in comparatively small groups through Africa and augmented their numbers with black and brown Negroids and mixed Berbers. So much so that Europe for five centuries described Islamic culture in Spain as a civilization of colored people, "Moors"—Blackamoors and Tawny Moors; and the whole discussion of human skin color and its social implications in the Middle Ages assumed that Moors and Negroes were identical.

"Adolphe Bloch has given the following precise description of the present race of the Moors and the manner in which black and white amalgamated over long centuries to form it. He says: 'The race which gave birth to the Moroccans can be no other than the African Negroes because the same black type with features more or less Caucasian is found all the way to Senegal upon the right bank of the river without counting that it has been recognized in various parts of the Sahara . . . and from there come black Moors who still have thick lips as a result of Negro descent and not from intermixture.'

"'As to the white, bronze, or dark Moors, they are no other than the near relations of black Moors with whom they form the varieties of the same race; and as one can also see among the Europeans, blonds, brunets, and chestnuts in the midst of the same population, so one may see Moroccans of every color in the same agglomeration without its being a question of their being real mulattoes.'"¹⁴

These Moorish sea-rovers sailed along the coasts of Scotland for centuries. David McRitchie has told of them: "Allan McRuari, the black-skinned Hebridean pirate of the fifteenth century, is one notable instance of these black invaders."

¹⁴ Rogers, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 112.

George Hardy said: "The Moors profited by their maritime situation to create a powerful fleet and to undertake against the Christian countries of the Mediterranean a savage struggle. From their ports left armed ships manned by men of proved bravery and maintained by communal societies. These 'corsairs' descended unexpectedly upon the coasts or isles of the Mediterranean, and they captured and sold as slaves the sailors and the passengers. A veritable terror reigned in the Mediterranean. . . . They ravaged the coasts of Portugal, Spain, Southern France—and even went as far as Britain."¹⁵

Draper, writing of the eleventh century, speaks of the vastly superior social and artistic development of the swarthy Moors, who, he says, might well have looked "with supercilious contempt on the dwellings of the rulers of Germany, France, and England, which were scarce better than stables—chimneyless, windowless, and with a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape like the wigwams of certain Indians."¹⁶

Lately some recognition of the part that the Mohammedan East and Asia played in the European Renaissance has been made; but significant silence and indisposition to investigate has been shown in the case of the black Sudan. Centers of culture and learning are known to have existed there long before they arose in France, Germany, or England. But if they are recognized at all, it is assumed that the leaders were "Arab" or "Berber." In literature alone, and there sparingly, have single black men been mentioned; but is it reasonable to suppose that in Cairo and Seville, in the Universities of Sankoré and Timbuktu, black brains did not function? It is unreasonable only to those who accept and spread the American slave theory of the eternal inferiority of Negroes.

Remember that Europe did not raise herself out of the semi-barbarism of the Dark Age and bring back the culture of

¹⁵ George Hardy, *Les Grands Etapes d l'Histoire du Maroc* (Paris, 1921), pp. 50-54.

¹⁶ J. W. Draper, *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe* (London: Bell, Daldy, 1864), Vol. II, pp. 26, 29.

Greece and Rome. After Greece had floundered in petty feuds and Rome had fallen in senile decay, Byzantium, through Constantinople, handed Greek culture back to Asia and Africa, whence it came. At Bagdad and Alexandria and Cairo it flamed anew under Islam. It was not "Arabian"; the nomad Arabs carried culture but seldom originated it. From the Euphrates and the Nile the renewed civilization moved into North Africa, into Moorish Spain, and into black Africa. Nothing that ever touched Africa could evade the fertilization of Negroid culture and Negroid blood. Black universities sent black scholars to learn and lecture to the Mediterranean world. Black historians, like Abderrahman Es-Sadi, wrote the "Bible of the Sudan"—*Tarikes-Sudan*; and the *Tarikh-el-Fettach*. From this Africa a new cultural impulse entered Europe and became the Renaissance.

Was it possible or inherently probable that black Africa had no creative part in all this? That none of the science and literature came from black brains? That the Europe which praised and lauded black folk of that day, did it in mere curiosity or charity? Or is it more probable that the cultural contributions of many Negroids have been forgotten or unrecognized because their color seemed unimportant, or was unknown or forgotten; and because to modern Europe, black civilization has been a contradiction in terms? Renaissance Europe, bounding forward on new cultural conquests, flowered in art, science, and literature; then traded with the world and discovered endless profit in stealing and selling human beings and in the scientific enslavement of the major portion of mankind, until in the twentieth century came suicide and collapse, analogous to, but on a vaster scale than, the Peloponnesian War.

A determined legend can successfully contradict fact; Australian and New Zealand soldiers coming to Egypt in 1919 were astonished to find that Egyptians were "Niggers"; that is, not "white" as they had always been told; troops quartered

in Germany by the French in 1919 were reviled by Americans as "Negroes." No, said the French, they were "white" Algerians! Visitors to North Africa are surprised to find so many Negroes and mulattoes and hasten to explain it as the result of the modern slave trade. There were Negroes and mulattoes in North Africa in Egyptian times.

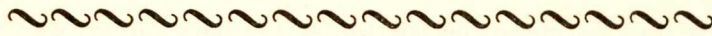
It must be remembered that in ancient and medieval days the color of a man's skin was usually not stressed or even mentioned unless it had cultural significance; that is, if a group of black folk had a particular cultural pattern, then reference to the skin color of an individual belonging to that group fixed his cultural status. On the other hand, a man might be black and not belong to a black cultural group; in that case his skin color would not be mentioned at all. Thus Ra Nesi, Pharaoh of Egypt, was mentioned as black probably because he was also a member of an Ethiopian clan; while Nofritari, although black, was called Egyptian. In North Africa a follower of Mohammed in 800, as in 1800, was a Mohammedan, no matter what his color; but a member of a Sudanese tribal clan was referred to as "black," because of his political and religious affiliations. So in East Africa, the powerful Tipoo-Tib is always called an "Arab," when his pictures clearly show him to be what Americans would denominate a "full-blooded" Negro.

Moreover, "black" is a relative expression; no human skin is absolutely black, and any so-called black skin can be called "dark." Thus many persons of Negro lineage appear in history simply as brunets or without reference at all to color. In African history particularly, tens of thousands of persons have thus been assigned to the "white" race, partly because their descent was not known and partly because color did not matter in the twelfth century as it did in the nineteenth.

A work by Al-Jahiz, a writer, whom Christopher Dawson calls the greatest Arab scholar and stylist of the nineteenth century, is a book entitled *Kitab al Sudan wa'l-Bidan*, or *The Superiority of the Black Race over the White*. "White"

here does not mean the fair whites, but dark-skinned whites and mulattoes. The fair white is called "red man." Jahiz included the East Indians among the blacks.

If when the civilization of the Sudan turned eastward it had been inspired by the best culture of Asia and Europe, what might not have happened? But Europe at that hour regarded both continents as enemies of the "City of God" and was also moving rapidly toward a conception of economic mastery of the world beginning with conquest and loot, marching thence to human slavery on an unprecedented scale, and ending in capitalistic exploitation not simply of the working class in Europe but especially of the dark workers of Asia and Africa. All this ended in colonial imperialism. In this direction, then, there was after the Battle of Tenkadibou no hope for a welcoming hand in work, faith, or self-development in culture from Europe. Civilization in the Sudan died of strangulation by slavery and the European determination to master the world, no matter what the cost in degradation and pain.



CHAPTER XI

ANDROMEDA

Of the future of the darker races and their relation to the white peoples.

IN GREEK mythology Andromeda was the black daughter of Cepheus, King of Ethiopia and of Cassiopeia,

That starr'd Ethiop Queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise
Above the sea nymphs and their powers offended.

It is said that Poseidon, angry at this black woman's affront to the Nereids, threatened to flood the land and send a sea monster. The Egyptian oracle of Ammon foretold that only the sacrifice of Andromeda to the monster could stay destruction. Thus Andromeda was chained and exposed on a headland facing the sea; Perseus, forefather of the Asiatic Persians of Iran, returning from the slaying of Gorgon, freed Andromeda and married her. After her death she reigned among the stars, her arms extended and chained, together with Cassiopeia and Perseus; and anyone may see them shining upon a beautiful night.

It might be asked what has this or any fairy tale to do with a world stricken, starving, and half-insane; or with the relations of Africa to Europe and America? Very little perhaps;

and yet we must remember that this folk tale was part of the culture complex of the Mediterranean area where there was no color bar and no name for race; and where, at least in theory, the world was a fight between civilization and barbarism. Perhaps then in some way this legend may guide us in the present and the future. What in truth is going to be the future of black folk? Are they going to die out gradually, with only traces of their blood to remind the world of their former existence? Are they going to be permanently segregated from the world in Africa or elsewhere, leaving the white world free of its fear and repulsion? Or in some slow or fast intermingling of peoples will all colors of mankind merge into some indistinguishable unity? None of these solutions seems practicable or imminent for many a long day. And, after all, none would really solve the basic problem of the relations of peoples; for even if extremes of human differences vanish, there will always remain differences, and around them the problems of human living-together.

Facing then the present problem, may we not frankly ask: Does the world need Africa? What has Africa to offer Europe, Asia, and America? Does Africa need the world? Certainly in the past the world has needed and used the Negro race: in Egypt and Ethiopia, and even in Asia; in the first building of the Christian Church and in the encouragement and transmission of thought and science from the East to the West that is known as the Renaissance; and especially in the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, the Negro race has been the foundation upon which the capitalist system has been reared, the Industrial Revolution carried through, and imperial colonialism established.

If we confine ourselves to America we cannot forget that America was built on Africa. From being a mere stopping place between Europe and Asia or a chance treasure house of gold, America became through African labor the center of the sugar empire and the cotton kingdom and an integral part of

that world industry and trade which caused the Industrial Revolution and the reign of capitalism.

Through the nineteenth century America, on the strength of its black labor as well as white, grew in wealth and importance. It became the greatest experiment in modern democracy, seeking to embrace eventually not simply the white but the black worker. Today not only is the Negro an important part of the world of labor and art in all the Americas, but beyond this the trade of America is built in large degree upon the products raised by Africans and their children the world over.

But beyond America and in the main states of the modern world the cold economic fact is that Africa, its labor and products, are of prime importance. Of the typical products of Africa, cotton, one of the oldest there, is still valuable, and cotton cloth was exported from Africa long before it was woven in England. Sisal, hemp, and other fiber plants and flax are indigenous to Africa. The vast demand for vegetable oil has resulted in the oil industry, especially in West Africa. Palm oil is used for margarine, soap, lubrication, "olive oil," and for other industrial purposes. Thus the oil palm of West Africa is a valuable product and supplies palm kernels which are exported from the whole West Coast. The ground nut and cocoa-nut also produce oils. The coconut palm is found all over the continent north of the Tropic of Capricorn and also south of the date-palm line.

The shea-nut tree grows where the oil palm does not, and its fat is used for food, soap-making, and butter. The cocoa industry of West Africa now supplies two-thirds of the cocoa of the world. Kola nuts are also exported. In the Mediterranean area practically all grains cultivated in Europe can be grown. Coffee is native to Africa and is named after the province of Kaffa, Abyssinia. It grows also in Liberia. The greater part of tropical Africa produces some kind of rubber. Nearly all the cloves are gotten from Zanzibar and Pemba. Fruits are grown and exported from nearly every part of Africa, from the bananas and

mangoes in the tropics to the wine grapes of the north and south. The date palm flourishes throughout North Africa. Large areas of the continent are suitable for cattle and sheep raising, although flies and diseases keep them out of other districts.

• Gold is widely distributed in Africa and has been worked from prehistoric ages on the West Coast, the Nubian desert, Central and South Africa. A third of the world's supply of gold in the world today is mined on the Witwatersrand. Diamonds are found in three districts of South Africa and in the Belgian Congo. They are of immense value. There are coal-bearing areas in South Africa. Iron has been worked from an early age, and on the Gold Coast, manganese is being developed.

There are four great copper-producing areas, principally in Rhodesia and the Belgian Congo, and also in the Northern Transvaal. Lead, graphite, and zinc are widely distributed. Phosphates occur in the North. Mineral oil has been discovered in Egypt near the Red Sea. Soda is largely an African product. Maize is cultivated in many regions. Tobacco is a crop of South Africa. Sugar is grown in Egypt, Mozambique, and Natal. And there is much valuable timber all over the continent.

Besides supplying these materials Africa is one of the largest reservoirs of human labor, not only of common labor, but of semi-skilled and increasing numbers of skilled laborers. For the most part these laborers are unorganized and without political power, and consequently they form the cheapest labor available, save in Asia.

On account of this wealth of labor and material, not only in the past but between the two world wars, capital has poured into Africa. In addition to primary sources of wealth—mining, agriculture, timber—industrialization has begun, and in the postwar period larger and larger investments of the accumulated profits of industry will seek new investments in this industrial paradise, where there are few laws to limit labor, even

of women or children, and where profits are lightly taxed.

It has been argued with regard to this matter of profit in colonial regions that the profit has not been large and therefore is not the main object of colonial enterprise. This is especially the carefully worked out thesis of Lord Hailey's "African Survey." The survey follows an old pattern of British imperialism. A colonial official with the facts of the situation under his control writes a history of the condition and past of his region. It is usually done judiciously, and with much historical research, but it is, and in the nature of the case, has to be, a special plea for the defense of imperialism. And it omits consistently the point of view of the native and any body of fact which weighs against European aggression. Sometimes, as in Claridge's *History of Ashanti*, frank criticism of Great Britain creeps in; but for the most part, as in the works by Johnston, Lugard, and others the story is heavily weighted on the side of the imperialists.

It is of especial importance that the assertion of huge profits from cheap and half-slave labor and low price of materials should be answered. Consequently, Lord Hailey's co-workers point out that the "average" rate of profit from investment in Africa during the last century has amounted to little more than 4 per cent. Why is it, one asks on reading this, that profits are always reckoned as a percentage of some fixed sum while wages and salaries are counted in bulk?

It is, of course, as all men know, because the rate of income depends entirely upon the capital sum fixed as its base, and the fixing of the estimated amount of this capital sum is practically always in the hands and the control of the investors. Practically, then, the investors can fix their rate of profit at any sum simply by estimating at their own figure the amount of capital invested.

What is "investment" and how can we measure it? If ten dollars' worth of poisonous synthetic gin is exported to Africa, as it has been by the tens of thousands of gallons, and if there

it buys labor and materials, which, when processed, are worth a hundred dollars, what is the value of the investment on which the rate of profit is based? If in the days of Cecil Rhodes lands stolen from the natives were mined with cheap half-slave labor and brought gold and diamonds worth a million dollars to London, at what figure should this mine be "capitalized"? At the figure paid for its acquisition and cost of carrying on, or the figure the shares sold for in the stock market? In the great centers of capital investment, the legal right to determine the value of capital is today to some extent limited, but it was not limited in the wild gambling which accompanied the development of gold and diamond mining in South Africa, nor in the returns to trade in West Africa during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. No matter, then, how vast a profit is made in Africa, and that it has been vast there cannot be the slightest doubt; it can be always made to look modest by watering the actual investment or putting a high estimate on good will. The only reason back of colonial imperialism is a rate of profit which the spread of democracy and trade unions has curtailed in Europe and North America.

The actual value of capital goods at the time of their investment in Africa, as compared with the realized value of the labor and material taken from Africa by investors and other claimants, legal and illegal, would if known, without shadow of doubt prove the enormous theft which Europe has perpetrated on peoples deliberately made helpless before greed and aggression. In the face of fact, statements like that of Lord Hailey as to the meager profits of African exploitation must be reinterpreted.

For these reasons there is ferment in Africa today to which the world must pay more and more attention. Only yesterday a general strike in Nigeria affected nearly forty thousand workers. But this hardly makes headlines in the news, and few people who read daily about Argentina realize that Nigeria is twice as populous.

The effort to make peace in the world today finds one of its stumbling blocks in Italy's former African colonies—Eritrea, Libya, and Somaliland. Two of these are claimed by Ethiopia, whose conquest was one cause of World War II, and whose reconstruction is attracting capital from America. Native congresses in South and East Africa recently appealed to the world for the application of the Atlantic Charter to them. Their voices fell on silent cables, but they were strong enough and passionate in logic. At the recent Trades Union meeting in Paris black African unions were for the first time in history represented by a dozen delegates, telling the world that black labor is labor. Egypt is straining at British control, and the Pan-Arab League is demanding Libya. In Kenya has arisen the problem of forced labor, and all over Africa, the plight of returning black soldiers who fought in Asia and the South Seas. Political change looms in Rhodesia and Southwest Africa, while the Belgian Congo simmers in uneasy consciousness of the anomaly of being fourteen times the size of Belgium itself with none of that democracy for which Belgium fought. Africa is quiet today, but may not be tomorrow.

Perhaps one of the most striking protests against conditions that has come out of Africa is that of the National Congress of British West Africa which met in 1920. As a statement of democratic aims it deserves wider circulation than it has had. I venture to quote parts of it.

MEMORANDUM of the case of the National Congress of British West Africa for a Memorial based upon the Resolutions to be presented to His Majesty the King Emperor in Council through the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, March 1920.

“In presenting the case for the franchise for the different colonies composing British West Africa, namely, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Nigeria, it is important to remember that each of these colonies is at present governed

under the Crown Colony System. By that is meant that the power of selecting members for the legislative councils is in the Governor of each colony and not dependable upon the will of the people through an elective system.

“For a long time in the history of each of these colonies the anomaly of the nomination of members of the legislative council by the Governors and not by the people electing their own representatives has struck the inhabitants of each community, and now and again representations have been made with a view to remedying the disability.

“Up to the beginning of the present year (1920), there had been no improvement in the situation, with the result that in March 1920 a Conference of Africans of British West Africa was held at Accra, the Capital of the Gold Coast Colony, at which were present the representatives of each of the four colonies composing British West Africa. . . . A reference to the programme of the subjects discussed will show the various topics of importance that came under the consideration of the Congress. Before the rise of the Conference it resolved itself into the National Congress of British West Africa as a permanent official body for the purpose of representing constitutionally British West African need, political and otherwise. At each of the sessions an opportunity was given for the full discussion of the particular subjects under consideration, and upon the same being fully debated, resolutions arising out of the discussions were passed. . . . It will be noticed that the first resolutions deal with legislative (including municipal) reforms and the granting of the franchise and administrative reforms with particular reference to equal rights and opportunities. . . .

“The first submission with respect to this particular resolution is that in the demand for the franchise by the people of British West Africa it is not to be supposed that they are asking to be allowed to copy a foreign institution. On the contrary, it is important to notice that the principle of electing representatives to local councils and bodies is inherent in all the systems

of British West Africa. According to African institutions, every member of a community belongs to a given family with its duly accredited head, who represents that family in the village council, naturally composed of the heads of the several families. Similarly, in a district council the different representatives of each village or town would be appointed by the different villages and towns, and so with the Provincial Council until, by the same process, we arrive at the Supreme Council, namely, the State Council, presided over by the Paramount Chief.

“Again, according to the African System no Headman, Chief, or Paramount Ruler has any inherent right to exercise jurisdiction unless he is duly elected by the people to so represent them. This, coupled with the facts in the preceding paragraph stated, makes the African system essentially a democratic one, and the appointment to political office depends entirely upon the election and the will of the people.

“From the foregoing it is obvious that a system by which the Governor of a Crown Colony nominates whom he thinks proper to represent the people is considered by them as a great anomaly and constitutes a grievance and a disability which they now request should be remedied. Hence the constitutional agitation in the past, as in the present, for a change in the constitution of British West Africa so as to enable the people in the future to elect their own representatives to the Legislative Councils of the different colonies.

“It will be observed in paragraph 2 of the resolutions under consideration that it is not proposed to disturb the Executive Council as at present composed. As regards the Legislative Council, however, a radical change is desired so that one-half of its members shall be nominated by the Crown and the other half elected by the people to deal with legislation generally. A further radical reform is the institution of a House of Assembly, composed of the members of the Legislative Council together with six other financial representatives elected by the

people, who shall have the power of imposing taxes and discussing freely and without reserve the items on the Annual Estimates of revenue and expenditure prepared by the Governor in the Executive Council and of approving them. The unofficial elective reform herein proposed includes both European and African representation.

“Before leaving the point under consideration, attention may be drawn to what is stated in *Gold Coast Native Institutions*¹ on page 164:

Legislation to be effectual, must be with the Chiefs in a representative legislative assembly. Any important measure affecting the people must be passed with the consent and the direct co-operation of the Chiefs themselves.

If the policy of the Government had been based upon this principle there would be no need today for this work. What the country requires most urgently today is a National Assembly wherein all sections of the community will be adequately represented. That is the fundamental element of progress, the reform at which all right-thinking men must directly aim.”² This was written more than seventeen years ago; and as has been explained above, by the African system of representation even the Chiefs are the mere representatives of the people in a democratic system.

Britain after delay yielded to this demand in characteristic fashion: it gave Negroes partial elective representation in the “Legislative Councils,” but the councils still “advised” the governor, who retained large power of legislation. British industry sat directly on the Council and in England continued to name West African governors and dictate colonial policies.

In the first chapter I have told of the Pan-African Congress which met in Paris after World War I. Similar efforts of Afri-

¹ Written by Caseley Hayford, a prominent Negro barrister of the Gold Coast.

² Quoted from the official text of the Memorandum as published in Lagos, 1920, pp. 1-3.



cans and peoples of African descent to unite in mutual exchange of culture and co-operation for social betterment have been made since the idea was established in 1919.

We went to work in 1921 to assemble a more authentic Pan-African Congress and movement. We corresponded with Negroes in all parts of Africa and in other parts of the world and finally arranged for a congress to meet in London, Brussels, and Paris in August and September. Of the one hundred and thirteen delegates to this Congress, forty-one were from Africa, thirty-five from the United States, twenty-four represented Negroes living in Europe, and seven were from the West Indies. They came for the most part, but not in all cases, as individuals and more seldom as the representatives of organizations or groups.

The Pan-African movement thus began to represent a growth and development; but it immediately ran into difficulties. First of all, there was the natural reaction to war and the determination on the part of certain elements in England, Belgium, and elsewhere, to recoup their war losses by intensified colonial exploitation. They were suspicious of native movements of any sort.

Then, too, there came simultaneously another movement, stemming from the West Indies. This was a peoples' movement rather than a movement of the intellectuals. It was led by Marcus Garvey and it represented a poorly conceived but intensely earnest determination to unite the Negroes of the world, especially in commercial enterprise. It used all of the nationalist and racial paraphernalia of popular agitation, and its strength lay in its backing by the masses of West Indians and by increasing numbers of American Negroes. Its weakness lay in its demagogic leadership, poor finance, intemperate propaganda, and the natural apprehension it aroused among the colonial powers.

The London meetings of the Congress of 1921 were preceded by a conference with the International Department of the

English Labor party, where the question of the relation of white and colored labor was discussed. Beatrice Webb, Leonard Woolf, Mr. Gillies, Norman Leyes, and others were present. Otlet and La Fontaine, the Belgian leaders of internationalism, welcomed the Congress warmly to Belgium, but strong opposition was encountered. The movement was confounded by the press and others as a part of, if not the real "Garvey Movement." The Brussels *Neptune* wrote June 14:

Announcement has been made . . . of a Pan-African Congress organized at the instigation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People of New York. It is interesting to note that this association is directed by personages who it is said in the United States have received remuneration from Moscow (Bolsheviks). The association has already organized its propaganda in the lower Congo, and we must not be astonished if some day it causes grave difficulties in the Negro village of Kinshasa composed of all the ne'er-do-wells of the various tribes of the Colony aside from some hundreds of laborers.

Nevertheless, meetings of interest and enthusiasm were held. The Congress assembled in the marvelous Palais Mondial. There were many more white than colored people, and it was not long before we realized that their interest was deeper, more immediately significant than that of the white people we had found elsewhere. Many of Belgium's economic and material interests center in Africa in the Belgian Congo. Any interference with the natives might result in an interference with the sources from which so many Belgian capitalists draw their prosperity.

Resolutions passed without dissent at the meeting in London contained a statement concerning Belgium, criticizing her colonial regime, although giving her credit for plans of reform for the future. This aroused bitter opposition in Brussels, and an attempt was made to substitute an innocuous statement concerning good will and investigation, which Diagne of France, as the presiding officer, declared adopted in the face of a clear majority in opposition.

At the Paris meeting the original London resolutions, with some minor corrections, were adopted. They were in part:

To the World: The absolute equality of races, physical, political and social is the founding stone of world and human advancement. No one denies great differences of gift, capacity and attainment among individuals of all races, but the voice of Science, Religion, and practical Politics is one in denying the God-appointed existence of super-races or of races naturally and inevitably and eternally inferior.

That in the vast range of time, one group should in its industrial technique, or social organization, or spiritual vision, lag a few hundred years behind another, or forge fitfully ahead, or come to differ decidedly in thought, deed, and ideal, is proof of the essential richness and variety of human nature, rather than proof of the co-existence of demi-gods and apes in human form. The doctrine of racial equality does not interfere with individual liberty; rather it fulfills it. And of all the various criteria of which masses of men have in the past been prejudged and classified, that of the color of the skin and texture of the hair, is surely the most adventitious and idiotic. . . .

The beginning of wisdom in interracial contact is the establishment of political institutions among suppressed peoples. The habit of democracy must be made to encircle the earth. Despite the attempts to prove that its practice is the secret and divine gift of the few, no habit is more natural or more widely spread among primitive people, or more easily capable of development among masses. Local self-government with a minimum of help and oversight can be established tomorrow in Asia, in Africa, America, and the isles of the sea. It will in many instances need general control and guidance, but it will fail only when that guidance seeks ignorantly and consciously its own selfish ends and not the people's liberty and good.

Surely in the twentieth century of the Prince of Peace, in the millennium of Mohammed, and in the mightiest Age of Human Reason, there can be found in the civilized world enough of altruism, learning, and benevolence to develop native institutions, whose one aim is not profit and power for the few. . . .

What then do those demand who see these evils of the color line and racial discrimination, and who believe in the divine right of suppressed

and backward people to learn and aspire and be free? The Negro race through their thinking intelligentsia demand:

- I. The recognition of civilized men as civilized despite their race or color.
- II. Local self-government for backward groups, deliberately rising as experience and knowledge grow to complete self-government under the limitation of a self-governed world.
- III. Education in self-knowledge, in scientific truth, and in industrial technique, undivorced from the art of beauty.
- IV. Freedom in their own religion and social customs and with the right to be different and nonconformist.
- V. Co-operation with the rest of the world in government, industry, and art on the bases of Justice, Freedom, and Peace.
- VI. The return to Negroes of their land and its natural fruits and defense against the unrestrained greed of invested capital.
- VII. The establishment under the League of Nations of an international institution for study of the Negro problems.
- VIII. The establishment of an international section of the Labor Bureau of the League of Nations, charged with the protection of native labor. . . .

In some such words and thoughts as these we seek to express our will and ideal, and the end of our untiring effort. To our aid we call all men of the earth who love justice and mercy. Out of the depths we have cried unto the deaf and dumb masters of the world. Out of the depths we cry to our own sleeping souls. The answer is written in the stars.

The whole press of Europe took notice of these meetings and more especially of the ideas behind the meeting. Gradually they began to distinguish between the Pan-African Movement and the Garvey agitation. They praised and criticized. Sir Harry Johnston wrote: "This is the *weakness* of all the otherwise grand efforts of the Coloured People in the United States to pass on their own elevation and education and political significance to the Coloured Peoples of Africa: they know so *little about real Africa.*"

Even *Punch* gibed good-naturedly: "‘A PAN-AFRICAN MANIFESTO’ ‘NO ETERNALLY INFERIOR RACES’ (headlines in *The Times*) No, but in the opinion of our coloured brothers, some infernally superior ones!"³

The Second Pan-African Congress sent me with a committee to interview the officials of the League of Nations in Geneva. I talked with Rappard who headed the Mandates Commission; I saw the first meeting of the Assembly, and I had an interesting interview with Albert Thomas, head of the International Labor Office. Working with Bellegarde of Haiti, a member of the Assembly, we brought the status of Africa to the attention of the League. The League published our petition as an official document saying in part:

The Second Pan-African Congress wishes to suggest that the spirit of the world moves toward self-government as the ultimate aim of all men and nations and that consequently the mandated areas, being peopled as they are so largely by black folk, have a right to ask that a man of Negro descent, properly fitted in character and training, be appointed a member of the Mandates Commission so soon as a vacancy occurs.

The Second Pan-African Congress desires most earnestly and emphatically to ask the good offices and careful attention of the League of Nations to the condition of civilized persons of Negro descent throughout the world. Consciously and subconsciously there is in the world today a widespread and growing feeling that it is permissible to treat civilized men as uncivilized if they are colored and more especially of Negro descent. The result of this attitude and many consequent laws, customs, and conventions, is that a bitter feeling of resentment, personal insult and despair, is widespread in the world among those very persons whose rise is the hope of the Negro race.

We are fully aware that the League of Nations has little, if any, direct power to adjust these matters, but it has the vast moral power of public world opinion and of a body conceived to promote Peace and Justice among men. For this reason we ask and urge that the League of Nations take a firm stand on the absolute equality of races and that it

³ September 7, 1921.

suggest to the Colonial Powers connected with the League of Nations to form an International Institute for the study of the Negro problem, and for the evolution and protection of the Negro race.

We sought to have these meetings result in a permanent organization. A secretariat was set up in Paris and functioned for a couple of years, but was not successful. The Third Pan-African Congress was called for 1923, but the Paris secretary postponed it. We persevered and finally without proper notice or preparation met in London and Lisbon late in the year. The London session was small. It was addressed by Harold Laski and Lord Olivier and attended by H. G. Wells; Ramsay MacDonald was kept from attending only by the pending election, but wrote: "Anything I can do to advance the cause of your people on your recommendation, I shall always do gladly."

The meeting of an adjourned session of this Congress in Lisbon the same year was more successful. Eleven countries were represented there, including Portuguese Africa. The Liga Africana was in charge. "The great association of Portuguese Negroes with headquarters at Lisbon, which is called the Liga Africana, is an actual federation of all the indigenous associations scattered throughout the five provinces of Portuguese Africa and represents several million individuals. . . . This Liga Africana which functions at Lisbon, in the very heart of Portugal so to speak, has a commission from all the other native organizations and knows how to express to the government in no ambiguous terms but in dignified manner all that should be said to avoid injustice or to bring about the repeal of harsh laws. That is why the Liga Africana of Lisbon is the director of the Portuguese African movement; but only in the good sense of the word, without making any appeal to violence and without leaving constitutional limits."⁴

Two former colonial ministers spoke, and the following demands were made for Africans:

⁴ Statement to the Congress made by Deputy Megalhaes.

1. A voice in their own government.
2. The right of access to the land and its resources.
3. Trial by juries of their peers under established forms of law.
4. Free elementary education for all; broad training in modern industrial techniques; and higher training of selected talent.
5. The development of Africa for the benefit of Africans, and not merely for the profit of Europeans.
6. The abolition of the slave trade and of the liquor traffic.
7. World disarmament and the abolition of war; but failing this, and as long as white folk bear arms against black folk, the right of blacks to bear arms in their own defense.
8. The organization of commerce and industry so as to make the main objects of capital and labor the welfare of the many rather than the enriching of the few. . . .

In fine, we ask in all the world, that black folk be treated as men. We can see no other road to Peace and Progress. What more paradoxical figure today fronts the world than the official head of a great South African state striving blindly to build Peace and Good Will in Europe by standing on the necks and hearts of millions of black Africans?

So far, the Pan-African idea was still American rather than African, but it was growing and it expressed a real demand for examination of the African situation and a plan of treatment, from the native African point of view. With the object of moving the center of this agitation nearer African centers of population, I planned a Fourth Pan-African Congress in the West Indies in 1925. My idea was to charter a ship and sail down the Caribbean, stopping for meetings in Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba, and the French islands. But here I reckoned without my steamship lines. At first the French Line replied that they could "easily manage the trip"; but eventually no accommodations could be found on any line except at the prohibitive price of fifty thousand dollars. I suspect that colonial powers spiked this plan.

Two years later, in 1927, American Negro women revived the Congress idea, and a Fourth Pan-African Congress was held in New York. Thirteen countries were represented, but

direct African participation lagged. There were two hundred and eight delegates from twenty-two American states and ten foreign countries. Africa was sparsely represented by representatives from the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Nigeria. Chief Amoah III of the Gold Coast, and anthropologists like Herskovits, then of Columbia, Mensching of Germany, and John Vandercook were on the program. The resolutions stressed six points:

Negroes everywhere need:

1. A voice in their own government.
2. Native rights to the land and its natural resources.
3. Modern education for all children.
4. The development of Africa for the Africans and not merely for the profit of Europeans.
5. The reorganization of commerce and industry so as to make the main object of capital and labor the welfare of the many rather than the enriching of the few.
6. The treatment of civilized men as civilized despite difference of birth, race, or color.

The Pan-African Movement had lost ground since 1921. In 1929 to remedy this we made a desperate effort to hold a Fifth Pan-African Congress on the continent of Africa itself; we selected Tunis because of its accessibility. Elaborate preparations were begun. It looked as though at last the movement was going to be geographically African. But two insuperable difficulties intervened: first, the French government very politely but firmly informed us that the Congress could take place at Marseilles or any French city, but not in Africa; and second, there came the Great Depression.

The Pan-African idea died apparently until twenty years afterward, in the midst of World War II, when it leaped to life again in an astonishing manner. At the Trade Union Conference in London in 1944 to plan for world organization of labor, representatives from black labor appeared from the Gold Coast, Libya, British Guiana, Ethiopia, and Sierra Leone.

Among these, aided by colored persons resident in London, Lancashire, Liverpool, and Manchester, there came a spontaneous call for the assembling of another Pan-African Congress in 1945 when the World Federation of Trade Unions would hold their meeting in Paris.

After consultation and correspondence with trade union, co-operative, and other progressive organizations in the West Indies, West Africa, South and East Africa, a formal invitation for the conference was issued. Most of these bodies not only approved and endorsed the agenda, but pledged themselves to send delegates. In cases where either the time was too short or the difficulties of transport too great to be overcome at such short notice, the organizations gave mandates to the natives of the territories concerned who were traveling to Paris to attend the World Trade Union Conference.

The Fifth Pan-African Congress met October 15 to 21 in Manchester, England, with some two hundred delegates representing East and South Africa and the West Indies. Its significance lay in the fact that it took a step toward a broader movement and a real effort of the peoples of Africa and the descendants of Africa the world over to start a great march toward democracy for black folk.

Singularly enough, there is another "Pan-African" movement. I thought of it as I sat at the San Francisco Conference and heard Jan Smuts plead for an article on "human rights" in the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations. It was an astonishing paradox. The "Pan-African" movement which he represents is a union of the white minority in Kenya, Rhodesia, and the Union of South Africa, to rule the African continent in the interest of investors and exploiters. This plan has been incubating since 1921, but has been discouraged by the British Colonial Office. Smuts is now pushing it again, and the white legislatures in Africa have asked for it. The San Francisco trusteeship left a door open for this sort of thing. Against this upsurges the movement of black union delegates

working in co-operation with the labor delegates of Russia, Great Britain, and the United States in order to build a new world which includes black Africa. We may yet live to see Pan-Africa as a real movement.

This Fifth Pan-African Congress placed great hope on the British Labour movement and its sudden induction as the government of the British Empire. But the Congress had put before it a curious example of how organized labor may handle colonial problems. There came before us literally a Man of Sorrows: black, with a deeply-lined face. Gershon Ashie-Nikoi was in desperate earnest. He shouted repeatedly: "We must be free! We will be free!" He said that he represented three hundred thousand cocoa farmers on the Gold Coast and Nigeria; that he and his committee had come to lay a petition before the new Labor Secretary of State and Colonies. He had been refused audience because Mr. Hall declared that the committee was not "official"; which meant that it was not appointed in accordance with the procedure of the colonial governments, and was not composed of the representatives which these governments had officially chosen.

The committee secured a hearing before the Colonial Section of the Fabian Society, which acts as a sort of Brain Trust to advise the Labour government on colonial affairs. Among them were many people of importance: Mr. Creech-Jones, the Under-secretary of State for the Colonies, Miss Rita Hinden, Lord Farringdon, the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society, and others. They listened indifferently. The representatives of the farmers therefore brought their case to the Pan-African Congress and laid it before us. The committee had been sent to London at the expense of the farmers, and had established a permanent office in Arundel Street. They were prepared for a long, hard fight, and the Pan-African Congress pledged help.

It will repay us to glance briefly at this tale of the cocoa crop as illustrating the methods of modern colonial exploitation

and its results even under a liberal administration. The world consumption of cocoa has increased from 77,000 tons in 1895 to 700,000 tons at present. Formerly three-fourths of the cocoa was raised in South America. Now two-thirds is raised in West Africa.

This development of a new industry has an interesting history. A black laborer, Tetteh Quarsie, in 1879 brought cocoa beans from Spanish Africa and distributed them among his friends on the Gold Coast, British West Africa. In 1891, eighty pounds of cocoa were raised by West African farmers. By 1936 this crop on the Gold Coast alone had been increased to 250,000 tons. It was purely an indigenous enterprise of black peasant farmers. The deeply laid plan to transfer the raising of cocoa from Spanish Africa to plantations in British West Africa, developed by the Cadbury-instituted "boycott," went astray, and the black peasants took over the job. On their own little farms, averaging about two and one-half acres, they increased crops and made cocoa and chocolate in wide demand throughout the civilized world. Their fathers in Ashanti and Benin had fought Britain for centuries to retain ownership of this land.

For cocoa and chocolate today consumers pay annually at least \$500,000,000. Out of each dollar, of this less than three cents goes to the cocoa farmer; and this is another instance of the squeezing of agriculture by trade and manufacture.

Since the cocoa in West Africa is not raised on plantations as it is in the West Indies and South America, the problem of the traders and manufacturers is to make profit by beating down the sale price and by manipulation of the world market. For this reason the price to cocoa farmers has varied from \$44 per ton during the depression, to \$188 per ton during the time of scarcity in 1927, and about \$60 a ton today.

Ostensibly for correcting this price fluctuation, but really for controlling the price, the British buyers on the Gold Coast have for many years tried to come into agreement so as to

make one price and one bid for all the cocoa offered. There are thirteen main buyers: the British Unilevers, Cadbury and Fry, buying for themselves and the Lyons' Teahouses; and others.

Finally in 1937 these firms came to a buying agreement. The cocoa farmers desperately resisted. They staged a boycott for eight months, reducing the sale of cocoa from 250,000 tons to 50,000 tons. The buyers resisted. They applied pressure on the Colonial Office in London, and without showing it the text of the "buying agreement," induced it to advise the natives that the proposal was for their benefit and to accept it. The colonial governor, also without sight of the agreement, immediately followed this directive from London and strongly "advised" acquiescence by the natives. The natives still refused. Mr. Cadbury then went to the Gold Coast and talked to the chiefs and farmers. They demanded to see a copy of the agreement. He "regretted" that he had not brought a copy with him. Finally the British government capitulated and sent a Royal Commission to the Coast, under Mr. Nowell. This Commission secured a copy of the agreement, but made public only a part. After careful investigation, they recommended that the buying agreement be terminated and that co-operative enterprise be instituted with representation of the African farmers.

Before this plan could be implemented however, the war broke out and the Government proposed to take charge of the cocoa crop, set prices, and sell it for the farmers. They promised to bear any losses and to distribute any profit among the farmers. This was satisfactory to the farmers, although they protested at the low price per ton which the government set in order to guard itself against loss.

The African colonial governments are virtually ruled by investors in England. Investors not only dictate the choice of governors, but these governors have the sole right of legislation under the Colonial Office in London. They are "advised" by councils on which business interests are directly represented. Recently local natives have been elected to such councils; but

even so the real power still rests in the hands of the governor.

Government conduct of industry in West Africa, is therefore conduct by London investors. The whole economy of the colony is rigged by outside business interests. Instead of a tax on imports to encourage local effort, the Gold Coast, for instance, claps an *export* duty on cocoa of \$3.75 a ton; and during the war it added a surtax of \$4.58, making a total tax of \$8.43 on a ton of cocoa, for which the cocoa farmer has at times during this war received as little as \$37 a ton; and on the average not more than \$52 from 1939 to 1943. At the same time, English exporters of goods to Africa need pay no import tax. As a result the cost of imported goods skyrocketed during the war, so that cotton print which sold before the war for \$2.50 rose to \$18, Khaki from \$.60 to \$3.20, and sheet iron from \$1.00 to \$20. "The result of this situation is that today many of the farmers have been completely impoverished and paralyzed economically." (Speech of Ashie-Nikoi.)

However, the whole picture changed in the minds of the Negro farmers when the Labour party came to power and took over the Colonial Office. Perhaps they were overoptimistic, but they were certainly justified in some degree by the results of government operation during World War II. Instead of the anticipated losses, the government in five years of operation, netted the neat profit of \$25,000,000. Indeed, if they had previously built proper storage facilities on the Gold Coast, instead of compelling farmers to sell and rush the crop immediately to Europe, regardless of prices or conditions of the market; and if they had ever encouraged simple processing operations, which would have saved freight and increased local employment; if such policies had been followed, much cocoa could have been saved from spoiling, and some 150,000 tons need not have been burned. The net profit might have been doubled.

The Labour party came to power and, to the indignation of the black cocoa farmers, proposed to put *all* West African

produce under control of a board sitting in England with representation of the manufacturers of cocoa and other materials and with no representation of the farmers! In addition, instead of returning the profits of the cocoa pool to the farmers as promised, the government now proposed to use it "for their benefit," including the hiring of a number of English "experts" at high salaries to protect the cocoa trees from disease. The farmers protested bitterly and demanded:

1. That since the war is over, the recommendations of the Nowell Commission be implemented, and that the Imperial Government now make good the promises made to the African farmers.
2. That the price of \$160 per ton should be paid farmers, and should be set for the 1945-1946 season.
3. That the profits from cocoa control since 1939, amounting as it probably will to \$25,000,000, be turned over to the farmers' own existing organizations as capital for the establishment of co-operative agricultural banks in British West Africa.
4. That the operations of the West African Produce Control Board should cease, and a new system of centralized marketing should be installed, and effective co-operation, under the control of the farmers' own organizations, be established.
5. That the present quota allocation of the crop to special buyers be abolished, and that the farmers be free to market their crop collectively to their own accredited agencies.
6. That the present restrictions of exports and imports be removed in order to allow the West African farmers to trade with the United Kingdom and other countries through their own agencies.
7. That an International Council on cocoa should be planned, in order to adopt a comprehensive approach to all problems of cocoa as an important world commodity.
8. That the Ordinances of British West Africa with regard to co-operation be changed so as to correspond to practices in the United Kingdom.

And the farmers concluded:

This delegation of Gold Coast and Nigerian farmers are of the opinion that there are enough men and women of good will in the

Imperial Government of Britain who might bring economic justice to bear on these pressing problems, and thus might prevent the occurrence of a tragic economic upheaval, the consequences of which, unfortunately, might affect the peaceful life of innocent people in all parts of the world and not only in West Africa and Britain.

If this is not statesmanship, which eventually must be listened to, I am greatly mistaken. It seems to me to point a path toward the emancipation of the world's colonial populations and the beginning of democracy among the majority of the people of the world, for which we have fought two devastating world wars, without yet seeing the light.

The cocoa situation in West Africa is only one example of what colonial imperialism means to the people involved. Turning from this to our own country, we may ask what is America, and what duty and opportunity has it toward Africa and the peoples of African descent who live within her borders? It is a great working nation, vast, marvelously organized, and rich. We grow and mine materials; we process and manufacture them; we trade them, we transport them, we buy and sell them. Bound up with this, there is not only the planning for this work, but also the hard digging, lifting, and cleaning, and the services of parents, and friends, professional men and servants. With all this we produce goods and homes, buildings and roads, light and heat, tools and machines, and all manner of transport from railways and automobiles to airplanes.

Of course, the basic question here is; for whom is all this work done? How are the goods and services divided among consumers? Here we realize that all the facts are not known in America, just as they are partially unknown in other parts of the world. The distribution of wealth and of human services is a more or less closely guarded secret. We have some general ideas and they are disconcerting: we know that the lowest and hardest work and the work least honored is, despite its necessity, the lowest paid. We know that men do not get rich according to ability or according to the degree in which they

serve the public. There is something, of course, of recognition of talent, but it is confined to certain sorts of talent and it is not sufficient to keep down dissatisfaction. The demand of the twentieth century in America, just as the demand of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe, is that the distribution of wealth be more logical and ethical.

Men have tried to avoid action to achieve this by arguing that the distribution of goods and services is a matter of "natural" law. We know better than that today; we know, especially in America, that planning of work does go on on wide scale and that it involves personal decisions and is based today on autocratic will and not on democratic methods. Managers and groups have power to plan industry and divide its results: groups carrying on organized industry, like General Motors and General Electric and the British Unilevers—these groups own machines, materials, and inventions which enable them to reap large profits by marvelous and striking organization. Imports and exports depend upon the decisions of captains of industry. Monopoly of natural resources and the ownership of land play a tremendous part. Economic rent that comes with time and with growth of population, city sites, the shores of the ocean, the places suited for business and pleasure, all is controlled and distributed by individual or group decision. We know that the control of credit, the foreseeing of need for materials and machines, and supplying capital to those who can use it most profitably, is in itself a field of tremendous planning and prophecy. We know that the government must come in and help this planning where individual initiative lacks power, and that the field of government in industry is growing and must grow.

What now are the results of this planning and why do these results make Americans dissatisfied? We still have poverty, not nearly as much as many other parts of the world, but most Americans do not receive an income large enough to allow them to live in health and decency. This leads not only to

envy but to cheating and stealing, to the kind of competitive struggles which begin as strikes and end as riots. It leads to widespread loss of belief in hard work and increased reliance on chance, so that gambling on horse races is today one of our greatest businesses. All this encourages or compels the postponing of marriage and limiting of children.

Poverty makes for ignorance; not simply illiteracy which is still serious among us, but for inexperience, the neglect of the lessons of history, reliance on selfish prejudices and conventions. Poverty leads to disease; it lets us spend more for war than for the perfectly possible extirpation of tuberculosis, the lessening of cancer, and the physical welfare of children. Poverty, ignorance, and disease are back of most of our crime, and to this is added a curious lack of ethical guidance. Churches tend to teach dogma rather than what is right and wrong; and the funny strips exalt craftiness and laugh at suffering.

In contrast to all this comes the reign of luxury, conspicuous expenditure, the flaunting of diamonds and furs; the demand for great estates and servants, while round about is sickness, starvation, and insanity. We grow used to luxury and display that we know is built upon wealth and work stolen from suffering mankind. We demand profit for investment even at the expense of public welfare. Thus the great business organizations of the United States struck and drove a hard bargain in blood and pain to increase profits during World War II; America invests in colonies—British, Dutch, and French; and colonies are slums used to make a profit from materials and cheap labor. We continually set before us the successful rich man as more typical of what America means than the student or the philanthropist or the unselfish man of small income and simple tastes.

It is this kind of thing which makes for our continued spiritual slavery. We demand Freedom; but thousands upon thousands are toiling discontentedly at work which they hate, when more careful and thoughtful planning could make work

much more agreeable by a more efficient distribution according to ability and taste. We curb thought and discussion because we are afraid that those who are powerful and comfortable under present conditions may be disturbed in their present control of the world. Our news is distorted and our newspapers prostituted by those who own and use them for profit and propaganda. Our "free press" is a series of tight little principalities which channel public opinion with prejudiced headlines and screened news.

Our training for careers and opening of opportunity for the working masses has been hailed as the greatest in history. There can be no doubt but that more individuals have had opportunity to rise from repression and obscurity in America than in Europe. But even here we have not done anywhere near what we might, and today in many respects are regressing toward race and class discrimination and special privileges for the rich. Only the Jews among us, as a class, carefully select and support talent and genius among the young; the Negroes are following this example as far as their resources and knowledge allow. It is for this very reason that jealousy of the gifted Jew and ambitious Negro is closing doors of opportunity in their faces. This led to the massacre of Jews in Germany.

In America the only path to preferment and promotion left open and beckoning, is that which industry thinks will make profit. The opening of other paths is left to the rare chance that genius in literature or art be coupled with "push," which means the boldness and crudity for self-advertising from which delicate souls shrink.

When by chance or benevolence a boy "makes good," we grant him a profession. If he studies law he can gain a large salary when he becomes a tool by which great corporations evade those laws which try to curb monopoly and distribute wealth more equitably. Large numbers of such lawyers become lawmakers, and they enact laws which can be circumvented. Others are raised to the bench, where they are above law and

highly honored. They in many cases protect wealth and monopoly and "make examples" of the poor. The greatest work of Franklin Roosevelt was to start cleansing the Supreme Court of the accumulated refuse of reaction to economic democracy. Living men may yet see a Supreme Court with the guts and common decency to throw out the window the whole body of legal color-caste in the South and elsewhere as both unconstitutional and uncivilized. At the other end of the scale our labor unions are so monopolizing skills by limited apprenticeship and secret ritual that much "industrial" training is a farce.

Science is becoming increasingly not the work of free universities but the property of organizations for private profit and directed to their objects. Education both in school and out is encouraging that economic illiteracy which keeps the mass of American people from knowing and inquiring just how work is done. To the support of all this comes the theater and the movies and other forms of arts, serving the idea that private profit rather than social welfare is the end and aim of man.

Is there any wonder that the result is widespread Fear? We are afraid of unemployment and loss of work; we are suspicious of other men, other races, and other nations; not because we are the poorest and most wretched, but just because here in America we have tasted the possibility of comfort and happiness. Perhaps all this is best shown by certain paradoxes in our daily life, thought, and action. We Americans boast and strut when we have every cause to be meek and humble. We seek happiness and escape through drunkenness and night clubs. We couple our religion with hate, saying, "God so loved the world," and boasting how much we hate our enemies; we turn the other cheek to make bombs. We want peace and make war. We want truth and curb research. We produce our own wealth and steal it from others.

We Americans have invented an apt phrase to enrich the

English language—"So what!" It expresses a singular complex: a great statesman comes from Britain and tells us that he wants a world of free states and democracy—and admits in the same breath that his Britain admits nine-tenths of the subjects to neither freedom nor democracy. So what? We see standing before the United Nations at San Francisco a prime minister elected by two million whites asking for recognition of "humanity"—and in the same voice tells the world that anyone who regards the eight million natives of South Africa as human in the same sense as white folk is "mad, quite mad." We have a Secretary of State who arraigns Russia for lack of democracy while he represents South Carolina, where the majority of the people have never had a chance to vote. So what?

But perhaps our subtlest and most complete contradiction and paradox comes in our attitude toward servants. We know that personal services between mother and child, friend and relative, is the highest form of human effort; but we treat that same personal service when it is done for pay as the lowest form of work, paid least and subject to special forms of personal insult.

What can we do about all this? It is not a matter of law, it is a matter of the human heart. We know what must be done; industry must be carried on not primarily for private profit but for public welfare. We must progressively approach the time when no person shall have cake while any person is deprived of bread. We must increase production and income by the use of the great natural powers which science has placed in our hands: electricity which is being kept from the masses by organized effort in the valley of the Missouri and in the valley of the St. Lawrence, just as once monopoly fought it in vain in the valley of the Tennessee and still fights it at Boulder Dam. We know that automobiles could be built to last ten years at little greater cost than those which last two years, if the object was transportation and not gain. We must have schools that teach truth, despite what some people are afraid to learn.

We must use new inventions like the radio for real information rather than for quack advertising, and the cinema for instruction as well as entertainment. We must have a press that is free and not monopolized by business and hate. We must have socialized medicine, following the great example being set today by Britain and going far beyond it as we ought to.

This increase of production for public welfare can only be brought about by careful intelligent planning and thorough democratic methods. The workers of the world must have voice not only on conditions of work but also as to what kinds of goods shall be produced and what methods of production used. Industry ruled by monarchs and oligarchies cannot continue in a democratic world.

Moreover, this increased production must be more equitably and justly distributed among the workers and among all citizens. Distribution of wealth and services by plan, emphasizing ability and deserts, and especially the public weal; and guarding mankind from ignorance and disease must be a primary object of civilization. "To each according to need, from each according to ability." Here again this can be accomplished only by widespread and intelligent democracy. It cannot continue to be a matter of personal wish and whim and of monopolized power; it must be the result of intelligent experience, public opinion working according to enacted law.

Democracy is not privilege—it is opportunity. Just as far as any part of a nation or of the world is excluded from a share in democratic power and self-expression, just so far the world will always be in danger of war and collapse. If this nation could not exist half slave and half free, then the world in which this nation plays a larger and larger part also cannot be half slave and half free, but must recognize world democracy.

How can we accomplish this? We can do it by releasing black Andromeda, and by that act release ourselves. We can rise above the insult of the color line in denying work to able people and in helping hold colonies in thrall; and we can

invoke in a real democracy a reservoir of all human ability and dream and with free vote of intelligent men.

The sin of capitalism is secrecy: the deliberate concealing of the character, methods, and result of efforts to satisfy human wants. When men choose and understand their work and see its results and can sell their toil in open market to those who want and use it, there is opportunity for ethical judgment, public justice, and commonweal. But when the nature of work, its methods and results are hidden behind legal barriers so that a man knows neither what he is doing nor what the results of his toil will be, or who will enjoy it, or why nor whence nor how his income is made, nor at whose hurt or weal; then the opportunity for human degradation is limited only by the evil possibilities of the lowest of men; murder and theft may ensue with no chance to fix the guilt. Not mass production but mass concealment is the sin of the capitalistic system. This is the meaning of African slavery and this is the virus it poured into the veins of modern culture and fatally poisoned it. Once all the facts of the industrial process are known, then if a man eats, he should work; and if he does not work he should not eat, unless the free, intelligent judgment of his fellows declares that his existence at public expense is for the public weal. This and this alone is Democracy.

Who are we who call ourselves intelligent, and yet in dire dearth of air and light leave millions of acres of the roofs of New York and a thousand other cities to a black and dirty desert of chimneys and ugliness? The horror which today stops the hearts of men at the mere thought of atomic energy is knowledge of the secrecy which today conceals its use and bids fair to veil its inhuman force tomorrow in the hands of the most ruthless of mankind. The iron curtain was not invented by Russia; it hung between Europe and Africa half a thousand years. When the producer is so separated from the consumer in time and space that a mutual knowledge and understanding is impossible, then to regard the industrial process as "in-

dividual enterprise" or the result as "private initiative" is stupid. It is a social process, and if not socially controlled sinks to anarchy with every possible crime of irresponsible greed. Such was the African slave trade, and such is the capitalistic system it brought to full flower. Men made cotton cloth and sold sugar; but between the two they stole, killed, and raped human beings, forced them to toil for a bare subsistence, made rum and synthetic gin, herded white labor into unsanitary factories, bought the results of their work under threat of hunger which forced down their wage, and sold the sugar at monopoly prices to consumers who must pay or go without. A process of incredible ingenuity for supplying human wants became in its realization a series of brutal crimes.

There are people, and wise people, who have said that this can never be accomplished under the present organization of the world for business, industry, and profit; that in order to accomplish this we must establish stern dictatorship of a few who hold to this idea of the commonweal. This is the theory of Communism. There are many who dislike the idea; there are some who fear and hate it for obvious reasons. But to these there is one clear answer: accomplish the end which every honest human being must desire by means other than Communism, and Communism need not be feared. On the other hand, if a world of ultimate democracy, reaching across the color line and abolishing race discrimination, can only be accomplished by the method laid down by Karl Marx, then that method deserves to be triumphant no matter what we think or do.

Here in America we must learn to be proud of the things of which we are ashamed, and ashamed of things of which we are proud. America should be proud of the fact that she is a nation with increasing democracy composed of the most unlikely peoples and groups on earth; that out of criminals, paupers, and slaves she has built this land of promise. We should be ashamed that despite this known historical fact, we are trying to build up class and race differences and refusing

to carry out the democratic methods which we profess, because we deal with people too stupid, diseased, and criminal to make our own democracy work.

America has need to remember that out of Asia and Africa, past and present, help can come for this land: Asia has produced a Gandhi who does not strut or wear Savile Row clothes; who will not kill—and whom average Americans regard as a fool. But he is not. Africa has provided in the past group ownership of land, family cohesion, and a curious combination of beautiful art and useful industry. We have helped the world to despoil this land, enslave its people, decry its ability, and distort its history. For three centuries we have led in the attempt to degrade Africa in the eyes of men. We owe it to Africa and ourselves to release Andromeda and place her free and beautiful among the stars of the sky.

If we refuse to do this; if we stubbornly cling to our race prejudices, what of the future of this civilization? The continuity of a social group, the continuity of a civilization is at best doubtful and precarious. Most of the civilizations of the world have lasted less than three centuries, save Egypt. Even Egypt is only an apparent exception since, being for centuries without effective rivals, it did not actually collapse; but it changed so radically from age to age as to become almost a new land and culture. So too India and China lasted longer in name than in real cultural continuity. The broader the basis of a culture, the wider and freer its conception, the better chance it has for the survival of its best elements. This is the basic hope of world democracy. No culture whose greatest effort must go to suppress some of the strongest contributions of mankind can have left in itself strength for survival. War which typifies suppression and death can never support a lasting culture. Peace and tolerance is the only path to eternal progress. Europe can never survive without Asia and Africa as free and interrelated civilizations in one world.

“I believe it is specifically the mission of African civilization

to restore ethical principles to world civilization. Unless this attempt is made all civilization must come to an end. The African by virtue of his detachment, his direct vision, and his innate kindness, is qualified to bring humanitarianism to the technical and materialistic concepts of the Western World.”⁵

Few people realize what Africa and her children have done to win the World Wars. In the first, the Senegalese saved France at the first onslaught of the Germans; black soldiers of Africa conquered the German colonies; American Negroes rushed the critical supplies to Europe which turned the tide of victory.

In World War II thousands of Africans fought in Europe, Burma, India, and Africa; they formed a large part of Montgomery's Eighth Army in the decisive North African campaign; an American Negro physician contrived the banks of blood plasma which saved tens of thousands of lives; Negroes built thousands of miles of strategic road under direct enemy fire; Negroes handled three-fourths of the ammunition in the European Theatre of Operations and fired much of it. Negro fighting troops took part in the invasion of Normandy, in the invasion of Italy, and as flight squadrons and hospital corps. In America eight Negro scientists were engaged in the research on the atomic bomb.

The stars of dark Andromeda belong up there in the great heaven that hangs above this tortured world. Despite the crude and cruel motives behind her shame and exposure, her degradation and enchaining, the fire and freedom of black Africa, with the uncurbed might of her consort Asia, are indispensable to the fertilizing of the universal soil of mankind, which Europe alone never would nor could give this aching earth.

⁵ Armattoe, *op. cit.*, pp. 18, 19.



THE MESSAGE

READER of dead words who would live deeds, this is the flowering of my logic: I dream of a world of infinite and invaluable variety; not in the laws of gravity or atomic weights, but in human variety in height and weight, color and skin, hair and nose and lip. But more especially and far above and beyond this, in a realm of true freedom: in thought and dream, fantasy and imagination; in gift, aptitude, and genius—all possible manner of difference, topped with freedom of soul to do and be, and freedom of thought to give to a world and build into it, all wealth of inborn individuality. Each effort to stop this freedom of being is a blow at democracy—that real democracy which is reservoir and opportunity and the fight against which is murdering civilization and promising a day when neither

. . . star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken
Nor any sound or sight;
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.¹



There can be no perfect democracy curtailed by color, race, or poverty. But with all we accomplish all, even Peace.

This is this book of mine and yours.

¹ Swinburne, "The Garden of Proserpine."

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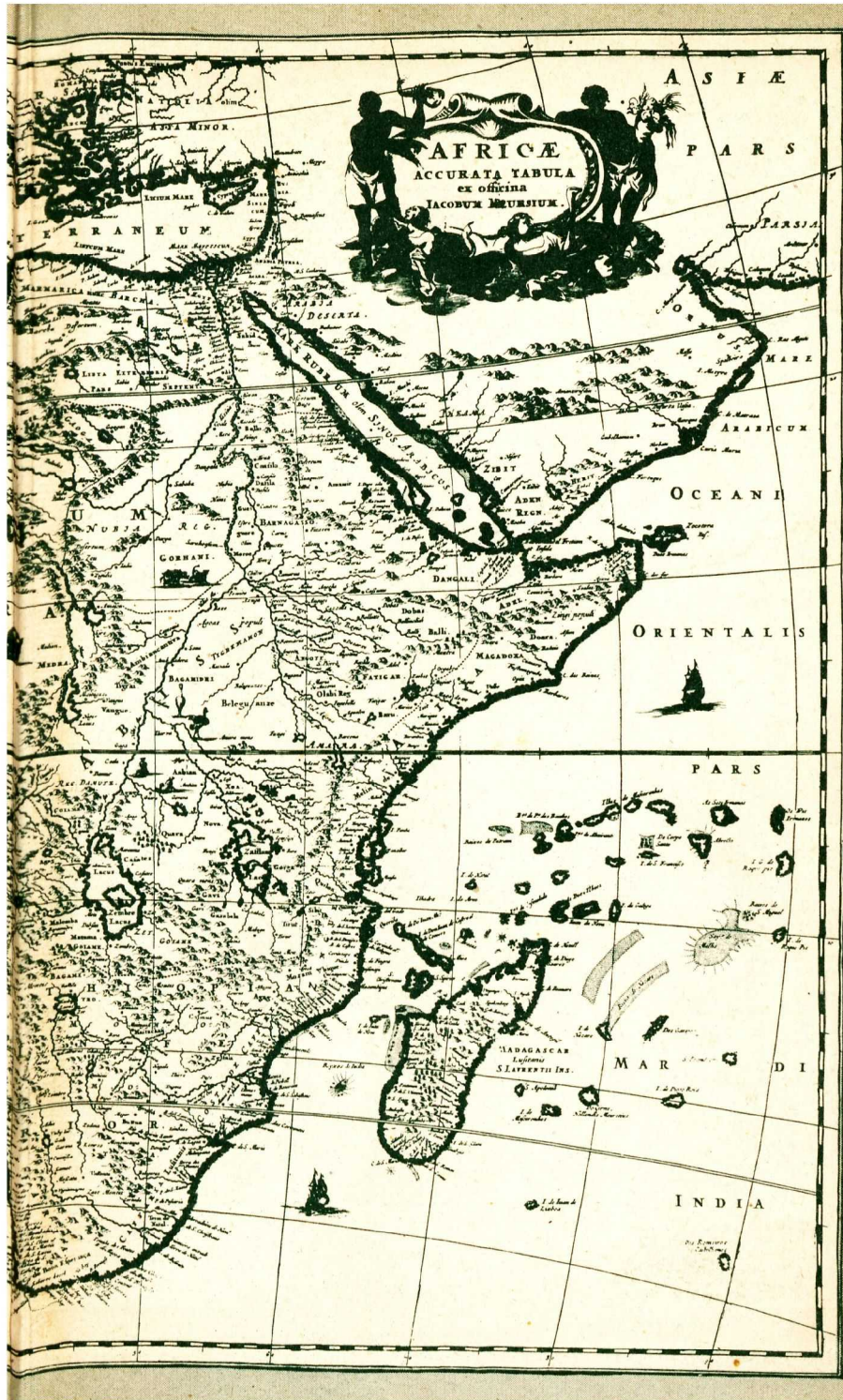
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