

The Nile Valley Civilization and the Spread of African Culture

By Yosef ben-Jochannan

(A lecture delivered for the Minority Ethnic Unit of the Greater London Council, London, England, March 6–8, 1986. It was addressed mainly to the African community in London consisting of African people from the Caribbean and African people from Africa.)

When we speak of the Nile Valley, of course we are talking about 4,100 miles of civilization, or the beginning of the birth of what is today called civilization. I can go to one case of literature in particular which will identify the Africans as the beginners of the civilization to which I refer. And since I am not foreign to the works of Africans in Egypt, otherwise called Egyptians, I think that should be satisfactory proof. This proof is housed in the London Museum that is holding artifacts of Egypt. In that museum you will find a document called the *Papyrus of Hunifer*. At least you should find it there. It was there when Sir E. A. Wallace Budge used it in his translation as part of the Egyptian *Book of the Dead and the Papyrus of Hunifer*.

It was there at that time, a copy of which is in the library of Syracuse University in New York, and I quote from the hieratic writing, "We came from the beginning of the Nile where God Hapi dwells, at the foothills of The Mountains of the Moon." "We," meaning the Egyptians, as stated, *came from the beginning of the Nile*. Where is "the beginning of the Nile?" The farthest point of the beginning of the Nile is in Uganda; this is the White Nile. Another point is in Ethiopia. The *Blue Nile* and *White Nile* meet in Khartoum; and the other side of Khartoum is the Omdurman Republic of Sudan. From there it flows from the south down north. And there it meets with the Atbara River in Atbara, Sudan. Then it flows completely through Sudan (Ta-Nehisi, Ta-Zeti or Ta-Seti, as it was called), part of that ancient empire which was one time adjacent to the nation called Meroe or Merowe. From that, into the southern part of what the Romans called "Nubia," and parallel on the Nile, part of which the Greeks called "Egypticus"; the English called it "Egypt" and the Jews in their mythology called it "Mizrain" which the current Arabs called Mizr/Mizrair. Thus it ends in the Sea of Sais, also called the Great Sea, today's Mediterranean Sea. When we say thus, we want to make certain that Hapi is still God of the Nile, shown as a hermaphrodite having the breasts of a woman and the penis of a man. *God Hapi* is always shown tying two symbols of the "Two Lands," Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt, during Dynastic Periods, or from the beginning of the Dynastic Periods. The *lotus flower* is the symbol of the south, and the *papyrus plant*, the symbol of the north.

But we need to go back beyond Egypt. I used "Egypt" as a starting point, in that of all the ancient civilizations in the world, Egypt has more ancient documents and other artifacts than any other civilization one could speak of. So when you hear them talking about "Sumer" and "Babylon," and all those other places, theoretically, they can't show you the artifacts. Thus my position is, first hand information is the best proof; and I can show you the bones and other remains of *Zinjanthropus Boisei* about 1.8 million years ago. But no one can show me the bones and remains of Adam and Eve, et al.

So I have the proof and you have the belief. If you want to see it you can go to the Croydon National Museum in Nairobi, Kenya; there, you'll see the Bones *Zinjanthropus Boisei*. If you want to see the remains of "Lucy," you can go to the national Museum associated with the University of Addis Ababa.

Of course, there are a host of other human fossils that existed thousands of years ago all over Africa; but you can't find one "*Adam*" or one "*Eve*" in any part of Asia.

But we have to go beyond that. We can look at the artifacts before writing came into being. We will then be in archaeological finds along the Nile. Also you would find that there were two groups of Africans; one called "Hutu," and one called "Twa." The *Twa* and *Hutu* take us back into at least 400,000 B.C.E. (Before the Common "Christian" Era) in terms of artifacts. The most ancient of these artifacts, one of the most important in Egypt, is called the "Ankh," which the Christians adopted and called the "Crux Ansata" or "Ansata Cross." The *Ankh* was there amongst these people, equally the "Crook" and "Flail." All of these symbols came down to us from the Twa and Hutu. You know the *Twa* by British anthropologists who called them "pygmies." There is no such thing in Africa known as a "pygmy," much less "pygmies." But the people call themselves *Twa* and *Hutu*, so that's what they are.

If we look at the southern tip of Africa, a place called "Monomotapa," before the first Europeans came there with the Portuguese in 1486, C.E./A.D. (Christian Era), a man called Captian Bartholomew Diaz, and subsequently another European and his group came, one called Captain Vasco da Gama, who came there ten years later in 1496; when they came to that part of Africa they met another group of people there as well, which they called "Kaffirs." Now this is a long time before the Boers came there in 1652. When the Boers came those Africans may have gone to the moon on vacation (or there they "didn't meet any natives" [Africans] so they say. But one thing is certain, that Bartholomew Diaz and Vasco da Gama had already left records showing that when they arrived there at Monomotapa the Khaffirs [Africans], including the small ones (Khoi-Khoi, and Khalaharis) (remember I didn't say "Bushmen" or "Hottentots," that's nonsense, the racist names given them by the British and Dutch Boers), were already there.

So with all of these people that were found in this area we could go back at least 35,000 to 40,000 years to another group of people who left their writings and their pictures. Those people are called Grimaldi. The Grimaldi were there in the southern tip of Africa, and traveled up the entire western coast, then came to the northwestern coast of Africa, and crossed into Spain. Not only in Spain, but all the way up to Austria; it was found that the Grimaldi had traveled and left their drawings in caves all along the way. In the Museum of Natural History, New York City, New York, you can see Grimaldi paintings going back to at least 35,000 years ago. I remind you that it is only about 31,000 years before Adam and Eve! It is very important you realize *that*, the next time you talk about Adam and Eve. So we are told that there is an Adam and Eve that started the world, but *that* is a "Jewish world" and I'm talking about before Abraham, the first Jew.

The country that I am talking about now goes back to a period called the Sibellian Period. *Sibellian I* brings us to a period where you will find hieratic writings, the type that no one in modern times has been able to decipher. *Sibellian II* existed about 25,000 years before the birth of Jesus-the Christ. *Sibillian III* would bring us to about 10,000 B.C.E., in which we now have the Stellar Calendar that I spoke about, and the pre-dynastic period will be considered from the same, 10,000 to 6,000 B.C.E., and that is the point when High Priest Manetho, in about 227 or 226 B.C.E., attempted to present for the Greeks, who had imposed upon him to write a kind of chronological history of the Nile Valley. Europeans, instead of saying what Manetho said in his chronology of the history of the Nile Valley, forget to say it was at the end of the Nile Valley he addressed. For example, the "*First Cataract*," i.e., an obstruction in the Nile River, is at a place called the City of Aswan, when in fact it is the last; the "*Sixth Cataract*" is in fact Aswan, Upper (or Southern) Egypt.

This is important to understand, because Egypt, which most of us deal with and forget the rest of the Nile Valley, is not at the beginning of the Nile Valley high cultures, but the end. High culture came down the Nile; but if you go on the Nile you will always hear about the "pyramids of Egypt." Yes, they are the "world's largest"; they will blow your mind, so to speak, but they are not the first pyramids of Africa; they are the last. There are thirty-two pyramids in Sudan, none in Ethiopia, and seventy-two in Egypt. What happened is that as the Africans became much more competent in engineering, etc., they increased the size of their pyramids in sophistication; thus at the end of the Nile you could see different forms and the colossal pyramids, the largest being one by Pharaoh Khufu, whom Herodotus called Cheops, and that would be one of the pyramids built in the 4th Dynasty. The first of the pyramids of Egypt being that by *Imhotep*, for his Pharaoh Djoser/Sertor ("Zoser"), the third pharaoh of the Third Dynasty. The architect was the multi-genus, Imhotep, who introduced to mankind the first structure ever built out of stone, and with joints without mortar of any other binding materials.

Now you could understand if I said that the pyramids in Sudan are older than the pyramids in Egypt, and I simultaneously say that Imhotep built the first stone structure known by man, it would seem to be a contradiction. It is not a contradiction, because those in Sudan were built by two methods. There were some pyramids called silt pyramids, and the second method was mud-brick pyramids. Not the type of "bricks made of mud and straw" mentioned in the *Hebrew Holy Torah*, specifically the *Book of Exodus*. That has to be made clear. How did the silt pyramids come about? That type of pyramid came about due to the Inundation Period of the Nile River. This was the period when the Nile River overflowed its banks bringing down the silt from the highlands of Ethiopia and Uganda, and from the Mountain of the Moon, which the people of Kenya called Kilimanjaro.

It is in this perspective that we are talking about Africa as a people. Because, all of that period of time we are talking about, you can go there now and see the artifacts in museums all over Europe and the United States of America. I'm not speaking to you chronologically, because I am using my recall; let us go back to the event that took place; and as I thought about this, something about medicine came to my mind, I remember going to the double *Temple of Haroeris and Sobek*; Haroeris represented by the Cobra Snake and Sobek represented by the Nile Crocodile. In that temple at the rear, you will find drawings of medical instruments going back to the time of Imhotep. That will bring us to about 285 B.C.E. to the construction of the Double Temple which was during Greek rule. Most of the medical instruments you see there are the exact dimension, the exact styles and shapes still used in medical operation theaters today. You could see all kinds of symbols relating to the use of incense; you could also find the beginnings of the aspect of the calendars (the dating process for the farmers) the same the Coptic farmers still use, the 13-months calendar, twelve months of thirty days each, and one month of five days. The same one the Ethiopian government still uses, officially; that calendar still a means of telling time to date. When we go to the Temple of the Goddess Het-Heru (Hathor) at a place called *Dendara*, we see the beginnings of what is called the Zodiac. The French stole the original, and in carrying it to France, in hot pursuit by the Arabs of Egypt, they dropped it in the River Nile. Yet a Frenchman said he remembered everything, and he produced a whole new one within two weeks. So if you read *Revelations*, like this false Zodiac, it has nothing to do with St. John, but in fact Bishop Athanasius. This is the same thing. How could the French remember the stolen Egyptian Zodiac so well? It was rectangular, but what they remembered is circular. Thus it is the French who made the Zodiac they placed in the *Temple of Goddess Het-Heru* for tourist these days, and the tourist guides will tell you that is the French one. So!

You can see that even in those early times we were dealing with astronomy, and Europeans have not gone one inch further than those Africans along the Nile. What you have to remember, however, is that

the *Papyrus of Hunefer* deals with the Africans who came down the Nile, who were already using this type of thing: and we must wonder since we don't have the day-to-day, or enough artifacts to put them together to see the transition. Why is it that the Yorubas of West Africa have the same structure of the deity system as the Nile Valley? I don't remember much because the Yorubas in their own folklore speak of having come from the Nile Valley; so you can stop wondering right there, since it is from their earliest teachings in their folklores.

When we go down the Nile and look at the engineering, and our engineering goes not only to the building of the pyramids by Imhotep, this multi-genius, but equally to the time of Senwosret II, with the division of the Nile water; equally to stop the rush of water. That would put us right back to 2,200 Before the Common "Christian" Era (B.C.E.).

The use of navigation and navigational instruments by using the sun and the stars as navigational tools—we have the best record of that going back even before *Pharaoh Necho II*, who saw the navigation of the entire continent and had a map of Africa in almost the common shape it is; and that dates to ca 600 B.C.E. Whereas Herodotus, who came to Egypt in 457 B.C.E., and Erastosthenes, who came there between 274–194 B.C.E., used maps which were rectangular in shape. They reflected the end of Africa being where the Sahara is, the southern end of the Sahara, meaning that they had no concept of Africa from about Ethiopia south to Monomotapa, now called the Republic of South Africa. It is important to note that England played a major role in most of the distortion that we are talking about.

Then we come again to another part that we are talking about, that is, agriculture, before we even come to writing. At the gathering state, when man observes the seed germinating, and out of that came the religious conflict, which other men are to later follow, comes out of one of the most secret symbols of the religiosity of Egypt and other parts of Africa. We are now talking about the dung beetle, and the observation of the African along the Nile with respect to the dung beetle, otherwise called the Scarab. The dung beetle hibernates, goes into the manure of a donkey, horse and the cow, only animals with grass manure. And that beetle remains in there for twenty-eight days; you know that particular beetle died in your mind. And when the beetle finally comes out, what better symbol will you have than the resurrection?

The beetle played the same part in the religion of the Egyptians that spread to other parts of Africa, and subsequently into Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and so on. Thus the beetle became the symbol of resurrection. Of course the religion itself had started then. Just imagine you've got to go back 1000 years and see your woman giving birth to a baby. I hope I did not frighten most of you fellows about childbirth; because if you had some experience of seeing a baby being born, you would be less quick to abandon your child. As you are standing there and this baby comes from the woman's organ. You witness this, while the pelvic region is expanding about four or five inches in diameter for the head to pass through, and you are there. You can't perceive that you have anything to do with this 100,000 or 5,000 years ago. Witnessing the birth of that baby sets you thinking. You immediately start to transcend your mind, and you also start to attribute this to something beyond. Thus you start to believe. You start to wonder' why is it here? Where did it come from? And where is it going ? Because you are now experiencing birth! But your experience is coming from a woman. Thus you start to pray and the woman becomes your Goddess, your first deity. She becomes Goddess Nut, the goddess of the sky; and you become God Geb, the god of the earth. You suddenly see the sun in all of this and you realize that when the sun came the light came; and when the sun went, the light went; when the moon came you saw a moon in there and you don't see any light because the light is not shining on it. So you see there is a God,

at least there is the major attribute of God because you realize when that doesn't happen, the crops and the vegetation don't come.

You also realize that the sun and the moon make the river rise, and the Africans regarding these factors created the science of astronomy and astrology. Astrology, having nothing to do with your love life. Astronomy is the chart of the scientific data of the movement of the planets and the sun and so forth, to the movement of each other. Astrology is a physical relationship of astronomy, the water rising at the high tide and that is what the ancients spoke about and the division of the two disciplines.

It was the Greeks like Plato, Aristotle and others who came and learned. In those days the students would come and read for their education. There were no books to take home, there were no publishing houses like now. You had only one book and most of the subjects were taught orally. Certain instructions were given toe to toe, shoulder to shoulder, mouth to ear. I will go no further than that. Some of you here may know how that was done and under what conditions. The English adopted it and called it Freemasonry. Sir Albert Churchward's book, *Signs and Symbols of Primordial Man*, is a corner stone of Freemasonry. Churchward was a big man in England. Besides being a physician, he was also one of those who made English Freemasonry what it is today. So in another adaptation, the British took twenty-two tablets from Egypt, brought them here and set up what they called "Freemasonry." Of course, the Americans followed suit.

These Africans had moved along the entire continent. You see, we are treating the Egyptians today as if the Egyptians had a barrier that stopped them from going to other parts of Africa. So we say the Egyptians were of a special race, and they had nothing to do with the other Africans. Can you imagine the Thames River at this side stopping the people from the other side from contact with this side, especially when a man standing over there saw a woman here bathing naked; do you think that that river would stop him? Do you think that the Alps stopped a German from going to see an Italian woman? What makes you think that the little river or a little bit of sand would stop a man from seeing a woman naked over there in Africa? I'm using these common symbols so that you can appreciate what I mean. So it isn't because when you go to Egypt you will notice that the ancient Egyptians are shown by the artist as the ancient Nubians or Ethiopians or anybody else, except when you are talking about the conquerors. In most of these museums they purposely bring you the statues of the Greeks, of the Romans, of the Persians, the Assyrians, and the Hyksos. They don't bring you any of the Africans. So when they can't help it, and they need to bring you one that you call a typical African like Pharaoh Mentuhotep III, it is important to Egypt that they have to show him. What they did was to make his nose flat, so you can't tell the difference.

Thus once in a while, but when they couldn't do it, what they did say, was: "Well, Negroes came into Egypt in the Eighteenth Dynasty." Now it couldn't be, because the Portuguese hadn't created Negroes until the seventeenth century, C.E., but how come the Negroes created by the Portuguese have a place they called Negroland, which was in fact the Songhai Empire? In the map you could see where Negroland was, and so how do you get the "Negroes and Negroland" way back in the Eighteenth Dynasty? The Eighteenth Dynasty has such figures as Akhenaton, or Amenhotep IV, and his father, whom the Greeks called Amenhotep III; in the West you would call him Amenophis III. The civilization in Africa did not spread only from along the Nile, but it spread into your own writings, documents, and belief system right here in England.

I now go back to the Etruscans, who later became the Romans; the people of Pyrrhus, who later became

the Greeks, because Pyrrhus was what later became Greece. But we don't have these people until they came from the island of the Mediterranean or the Great Sea. At the time when they left, the Egyptians were the colonizers of other Africans in Egypt. Setting up the first educational system for the people of Pyrrhus, where the borders of Libus (now Libya) and Egypt meet; a little enclave which later became Africa. It is there that the educational system for the Greeks occurred, and from there the Africans moved the system to a place called the city of Elea. It is there that the Greeks would come. This is after they left the Greek peninsula, go to the Italian peninsula where they would meet others to come over to Libus, because they couldn't come the other way as they were going illegally, sneaking out! Remember, the period of time of which we are speaking, there is no writing in Greece yet. Until Homer there is no writing in Greece. No record you could deal with. Whatever they learned, came from outside, came from Egypt, came from Babylonia. The Babylonian writings are part of this origin of Greece as well as the writings from at least 4100 B.C.E., the First Dynastic period, and this is not when writing started along the Nile. This is the First Dynasty, when Egypt reorganized herself from under two men. The war between the north, headed by King Scorpion, and the south headed by King Narmer, and that will bring us to about 4100 B.C.E. when Narmer started United or Dynastic Egypt.

So the pre-dynastic period was the period of the introduction of religion, of mathematics and science, engineering, law, medicine and so forth. The period of documentation also started then to some extent in the First Dynasty. The period of belief in "One God" really did not start with Akhnaten, that is, when somebody said there must be only "One God." But the period of absorbing "One God" didn't start then, because it is that period in 4100 B.C.E., when Narmer, after defeating Scorpion, the leader of the North, decided that the deity of the North, *God Amen* (which you say at the end of every prayer, you are still praying to the African *God Amen*), be put together with his own deity of the South, *God Ra*. But they didn't notice that he made "One God" out of the two, *God Amen-Ra*. He used them in that respect. But the people fell into civil war and there was division again. From that union, God Amen-Ra became God Ptah, and the Goddess of Justice became Maat. Justice, shown as a scale which is the same symbol now used in the United States for justice, except that there is no justice in the United States, because one scale is up, the other is down, and that is not justice; that is "just this"! Justice is when both scales are on the same level, and so the African in America who asks for justice is being foolish. The symbol says you will never get it; you'll get "just this"!

Before these symbols came the laws on morality and human behavior, the Admonitions to Goddess Maat—Goddess of Justice and Law. There were forty-two Admonitions to Goddess Maat forming the foundation of justice. Then there are the teachings of Amen-em-ehope one thousand years before Solomon stole them, some of which he plagiarized word for word, and others he paraphrased, which are now called the Proverbs of Solomon. And yet if we could have stopped there we would have done enough. But it wasn't the last of it, so to speak. Because we came down with jurisprudence, the basis of law attached to the deity which we are teaching now as jurisprudence. And there is a thing in the African jurisprudence that a harbinger should not get away from the penalty of the thief.

During the earliest time of the Kingdom of Ethiopia, King Uri, the first King of Ethiopia had spoken about, "justice isn't based upon strength, but on morality of the condition of the event." This now interprets as "the stronger should not mistreat the weaker"; and this is supposed to be something said by Plato, just like the nonsense we hear that "the Greeks had democracy." The Greeks have never democracy. They never had one in the past and they don't have it now. When they were supposed to have had democracy in Greece no more than five percent of the people had anything you could call democracy. When you look at that, you find it was from this background going back to the time of

Amen-em-ope that these fundamental laws came from, you could see why those laws spread from North Africa and into Numidia, which is today called Tunisia.

It is at Numidia then that Augustine's family, continuing the practice of the Manichean religion, carried it into Rome later in the Christian Era. When he left his education in Khart-Haddas or Carthage, it is that same teaching from the Manicheans that Augustine carried into Rome. Ambrose, the greatest Christian scholar in all of Europe, became stunned. But when this twenty-nine-year-old boy arrived and spoke to Ambrose about his education in Carthage, Ambrose said, "Man, you're heavy." And Augustine took over. It was the same teachings that Guido the Monk, who went to Spain in the time of the Moors, had taught at the University of Salamanca which they had established. And it was the same Manichean concept that made Augustine write against the Stoics. Augustine wrote the fundamental principle that was to govern modern Christianity in its morality, when he presented them with a book called *On Christian Doctrine*. He had previously written the *Holy City of God*. If you want to check Augustine to see if he was an indigenous African read his *Confessions*. There he will tell you who he was.

When Islam came it was supposed to bring something new, but I ask "what did it bring new?" Because Islam was supposed to have started with an African woman by the name Hagar, according to Islamic literature. Hagar was from Egypt, and Abraham was from Asia—the City of Ur in Chaldea. At the time of Abraham's birth a group of African people, called Elamites, were ruling. Before Abraham, the sacred river of India has been named after General Ganges, an African who came from Ethiopia. The River Ganges still carries the name of General Ganges. And I notice in India they haven't given up the symbolic worship of the cow, which represents the Worship of Goddess Het-Heru, Hathor, the "Golden Calf" of the Jews. They also haven't given up the obelisk that still stays there, which the Hindus copied. Again came an Englishman by the name of Sir Geoffrey Higgins, who published a two-volume work in 1836, and in Volume One in particular, he is speaking about all the deities of the past being "black," but said: "I can't accept that they could have come from even Egypt, they must have come from India." He couldn't accept it!

Out of that religion of the Nile Valley came the Religion of Ngail in Kenya from the same river base. And as the situation changed you had the Amazulu going for it, because the Zimbabwe river is still there. The people who were originally there were kicked off their land by the British, and equally by the Germans. When the German Dr. Carl Peters came there, the struggle between the Germans and the English for Tanganyika was going strong; both sides killed off the people around that area who spoke the local Rowzi language. So when you talk about Zimbabwe, don't think about the nation alone. Zimbabwe also means a metropolis of buildings equal in design to the pyramids' cone shape. When the sunlight coming in strikes the altar, the altar shines because of the sunlight. They had a mixture of gold and silver, the exact thing as what happens when you are down at the rock-hewn Temple of Rameses II, which is on November 22nd, when the sun comes in past the doors. It also happens in February. This shows the commonality of the African culture throughout Africa.

And lastly, just remember that when you see the Ashantis, the Yorubas, and all the other African people, they were not always where they are now. Arab and European slavery made the African migrate from one part of the African world to the other; that is why you can see in Akan culture as written by the African writer Dr. J. B. Danquah, the people with the same hair-cut, and the same beads and jewelry system as Queen Nefertari (the wife of Pharaoh Rameses II in the Nineteenth Dynasty), and Queen Nefertiti (the wife of Pharaoh Akhnaton in the Eighteenth Dynasty). It is too much to speak about it, really.

If you had known this when you were much younger, you too over there, you would have wanted a nation; for you too would have realized that if you have a golden toilet in another man's house (nation) you have got nothing. It is only when you have your own house (nation) that you can demand anything, because you don't even need to demand anything, you do it. It is only when you have your own nation that you can decide the value and the judgment of beauty. If I was ruling England and you came to run for a beauty contest, you could be disqualified even before you came. You're talking about racism; why not? This isn't your country. You cannot run for a beauty contest in a white man's country. You don't see any Europeans winning any beauty contest in China, Japan or India; but the funny thing is that they come and win one in Nigeria. As a matter of fact Miss Trinidad was a white girl. Miss Barbados also a white girl, and Miss Jamaica was a white girl, all of them in a Black country. And this is what I'm saying. You can call it racist, but you know I'm telling the truth.

What I hope I have done is to make you understand the necessity for further research; but more than all, the necessity to talk to your child. When your physician tells you that you are pregnant that's when you start teaching your child. Talk to the child at the time of birth. This is when his and/or her education starts, before he/she gets out of school, and before you and I die.

[Yosef A.A. ben-Jochannan Virtual Museum](#) | [The Virtual Masters of the Museums](#)
[FRONTal View: An Electronic Journal of African Centered Thought](#)
[NBUF Homepage](#) | [DuBois Learning Center Homepage](#)