

Theological Terrorism: The Theft of African Biblical Culture

The rise of European Christianity stripped African and Asian spiritual systems of every vestige of legitimacy by reducing and disparaging its native iconography and technology, and philosophic and theological systems. Theological terrorism has been an integral aspect of white supremacy which lay claim to ideas and ideology that never belonged to the white world. This form of chauvinism ensures that white men are perceived as God. Early Egyptologists, biblical scholars and religious specialists took Egypt out of Africa and Black skinned Africans out of Egypt. It was a conspiracy to minimize Africa's role in early human civilization. (Asante: 2003 p. 9—10) These Scholars argue against the blackness of Egypt despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

For these scholars, in addition, it was self-evident that the greatest 'race' in world history was the European or Aryan one. It alone had, and always would have, the capacity to conquer all other peoples and to create advanced, dynamic civilizations – as opposed to the static societies ruled by Asians or Africans. Some fringe Europeans, like the Slavs and the Spaniards, might be conquered by other 'race', but such a rule – unlike the conquest of 'inferior races' by Europeans – could never be permanent or beneficial. (Bernal 32)

In this respect, European opinion makers were considered important in determining attitudes relative to race. Bureaucrats manipulated institutional arrangements to create relationships between white and black people or what is called "social engineering." (Drake: 1987 p. 45 and Cox: 1948 p. 322)

Let it be clear the question of Blackness of the ancient Egyptians would never have been raised except for the persistent White racism in Western history. It had not been an issue prior to the 15th century and only became an issue with the vast discoveries in Egypt during the 19th century, a most imperialistic century for Europe.

Audrey Smedley has argued origins of racism- race was constructed with the false idea about human differences to be used to maintain 'distant' and 'social status place' of many peoples. Race became an instrument for determining who should have power, authority, prestige agency and independence. It was a status indicator. Scholars born in this era

viewed Africans as morally, intellectually physically and culturally inferior to white people. (Asante, pg. 10)

This disdain for Egypt being black shows the European's hatred for Africans. This is why dishonest discourse continues today. Hegel (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, 1770-1831) became the primary architect to form the philosophical foundation for white supremacist thinking. At the beginning of the 19th century, Hegel argued that the Negro in Africa exhibits the natural man in his completely wild untamed state... We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality—all that we call feeling – if we would rightly comprehend him; There is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character.... He maintains further, that slavery “bad as this may be” thus, was an improvement of the condition of Negroes “in their own land”... Finally, he posits “At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. For it is not a historical part of the world; It has no movement or developments to exhibit. Historical movements in it-- that it is in its Northern part, belong to Asiatic or European World... Egypt will be considered in reference to the passage of the human mind from its Eastern to its Western phase, but it does not belong to the African spirit. What we properly understand by Africa is the unhistorical, undeveloped spirit still involved in the conditions of mere and nature, and which had to be presented here as on the threshold of the World's History.” (Hegel: 1956 p. 93-96, 99)

Hegel removed history out of Africa. Thus, the ultimate solution to the African problem was to commit—historicide—the terrorist act of erasing the history of African people from the biblical world. This European mindset of the 1790's was determined to control the world and biblical terrorism was a major part this new world order. Dr. Carruthers reminds us that if this plan is to be effective it must be continued from generation to generation. Every subsequent generation must reinforce the international conspiracy of intellectual violence and lying. In this regard, Carruthers tells us that in 1850 Thomas Carlyle wrote an essay entitled, “The Nigger Question”

which criticized the British government for abolishing slavery. Carlyle believed that the only relationship possible between whites and Blacks was master slave with White people as masters. Since slavery had been abolished officially then Whites would have to deceptively re-enslave Blacks. In this respect, the individual would be raised above the group. No matter how badly the group was terrified the good individual was always to be praised, thus giving the group the impression that if they behaved well they would not be tortured and could achieve the 'good life'. Hopes were cultivated for a better reality in the many by systematically extending it to the few. Casinos work on this principle allowing a few to win raising in many the hopes of winning when in reality this hope is only an illusion. Similarly, biblical terrorism gives the masses hope of life where the real possibilities are nominal at best. The high profile wealthy enslaved person inspires hope in the suffering masses to struggle to rise in a system that was designed to keep them enslaved. Organized religion functions to keep the masses oppressed while simultaneously have them believing a new and better day is coming.

Africans have been labeled with the stereotypical terms of pagans, savages and uncivilized when it comes to many of their traditional ceremonies. "African indigenous religions have also been very badly misrepresented on the issue of rituals." (Abimbola: 1997 p. 6) Missionaries and visitors who did not understand African culture wrongly claimed that Africans prayed to trees and rocks. The outsiders failed to consult with the Africans who would have told them: we do not pray to trees or rocks but rather the creator of trees and rocks. This bad press has been perpetuated against African traditional religions to undermine and diminish their validity. This spiritual violence speaks to the international theological war that has been waged by the

European/Western academy against Africans and currently has a psychological choked hold on Black people.

In classical Biblical studies confusion is the order of the day and with new archaeological discoveries the dates are in constant flux. It appears that each scholar has their own date list and concept of how the ancient biblical world came into existence. There is a reasonable reassessing of this new information in view of historical finds. Given the discoveries of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Nag Hammadi Text and the ancient archeological find that introduced us to the *Enuma Elish*, the “Babylonian Creation Epic” it has become increasingly difficult for theologians to proceed as if we possess the very word or words of God. It has become necessary for the faithful community to reimagine our theological constructions while yet giving primacy to our traditions. We can no longer deny that over time there has been a blending of different literary sources that did not have as their basic concern history as we know it. It is then necessary for theologians to examine the best of our spiritual traditions that inform the biblical material to meet the current spiritual needs of our congregations. It must be admitted that some of the literary and source traditions which found their way into the canon cannot meet today’s standards of historicity and reliability. Nevertheless, the human need for the divine is indisputable. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the church and theologians to fashion theological statements that motivate congregations towards a fuller state of humanity based in traditions that do not divorce us from classical biblical realities. Finally, the details of some of the stories may have become unclear through transmission but it is necessary to maintain a historical core that is a continuum of the bible through acts of God throughout history. Admittedly, it has become increasingly difficult to prove and in some cases disprove whether

events did or did not take place. In this regard, we give primacy to faith and as theologians we must create in a way that is in accordance with the same classical faith.

These patriarchal narratives provide a framework to the background of the emergence of Israel as the nation of God but they functioned primarily as theological rather than historical. Biblical history for Israel as presented in the Bible would appear to begin somewhere in 2000 BCE. For the fundamentalist and the creationist this is the beginning of the history of the world. Contrary to this idea science teaches us that the Hebrew was indeed a late-comer to world history. For the ordinary American citizen this concept is baffling because they function from the illusion that Biblical history is world history and not the mythopoetic reminiscing of Semitic/African ancient farmers. (Bright: 1972 p. 23-24). Israel was born into a world already old. Caution is the operative word when using ancient memories. (Coogan: 1998 p. 55) These are human theological imaginations of scribes, priests, farmers and prophets who came together to form a movement that would use their stories, royal propaganda and ancient poetry, partly original composition, partly adapted for earlier sources to create a literary masterpiece with further editing and elaboration to become the spiritual anchor for many peoples of the world.

(Finkelstein & Silberman:2002 p. 1-2) These stories are rooted in African and Asian matrixes that are non-European. It must be admitted that the Asians referred to were Africans who relocated to Asia. “The first appearance of the human race was currently believed to have occurred in Africa 5,300,000 years ago BP. Homo sapiens appeared about-150,000 and progressively to spread to all the then habitable parts of the Nile basin. Men living in Egypt at that time were black.” (Ajayi: 1998 p. 43) ...Ancient Egyptian civilization entered into contact not only with Europe, but also North Africa and even the Indian sub-continent....(Ajayi: 1998 p.

390.) According to Dr. Alan Gardiner, “Nubia had long been divided into the two provinces Wawae or lower Nubia, and Cush farther south.”(Gardiner: 1961 p. 298) The fact that humanity’s origins are African is a hated reality and forms the bedrock from which international white supremacists have waged theological war on African cultures. “And as the biblical prophets make clear, over and over, Canaanite culture exerted a mighty force over the Israelites.” (Greenberg: 1996 pp. 18-19)

It was the most well educated and intellectually sophisticated who participated in this crime against humanity by depriving the world of the truth. Max Weber in his classic work, *Ancient Judaism* continues the racism Thomas Jefferson brought from France across the Atlantic in 1788 which was international White supremacy which landed squarely in American scholarship. (Hudson-Weems: 2007 p. 47) In Weber’s attempt to divest African and Asian theology of its roots he uses every dastardly tool and dirty trick in his arsenal. When he talks about Judaism he uses coded and evasive language with such skill and accuracy that few people can detect the racism in his text. For example, he talks about Egypt and its influence on ancient Judaism for seven paragraphs each time returning to the idea of Egypt. (6-8) Nevertheless, he concludes, “Egypt’s influence on the culture of Palestine appears, in view of its geographic nearness, strikingly slight.” (7) Of course, this is a lie. The fact that he returns to Egypt so many times suggests that Egypt is paramount in the roots of Judaism. This is not readily admitted today, however, this is how African theology was\is stolen and integrated and divested of its Africanness and called Western theology and Judaism. Another example is taken from Dr. Micheal D. Coogan in the *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*, where he maintains, “The principal setting of the biblical narratives is Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, the band of arable land that

extends northward from the Nile Valley...” In fact, Coogan starts his “explicit geography of the Bible [with] Spain in the west to India in the east, with sporadic references to parts of North Africa west of Egypt, to Ethiopia, and to Arabia.” (4) This is how duplicitous these scholars are: why start the geography in Spain and move through Asia and finally end in Africa? The logic to this nonsense is white supremacy on an international scale. The hated truth is that the African countries Egypt and Ethiopia are the primary scene of what did become Western Christianity and the players themselves are continental Black Africans. (Drake: 1987 p. 228) This is a vast conspiracy of white people attempting to strip the Bible of its African origins and the African personalities that make up the whole of the Old Testament and much of the New Testament. It is interesting to note that current television shows like *Mysteries of the Bible* portray the images of major biblical characters such as David as brown Indians as opposed to brown Africans. Now that science has proven beyond a reasonable doubt that Eastern European types were impossible in this geographic location. This is just one of the powerful and subtle ways of how the European inserts themselves into world history continuing the lie that permeates the historical retelling of biblical stories.

In the process of obscuring the fact that Egypt had anything to do with these lands the word “Orient” is often employed and to the ordinary reader the Orient has to do with Asia and the far east—not Africa. But the actual meaning of Orient has to do with the orientation of the sun or more accurately this is the location where the sun rises first which is in the east and so is Africa. This also has to do with the word Levant which meant rising, initially the rising of the sun but the Europeans changed the meaning to connote the sun rising over European countries or South West Asia. Today we know this is simply not true. So the words Levant and Orient which were

disassociated with Africa must now be given context to the true meaning of the words which definitely included Africa. This is the linguistic confusion and political evasion that aided and abetted European scholarship in stealing Egypt from Africa and subsequently turning African brown people into Indians and swarthy Italians negating West Africa's connection to Spain from the 8th century to the 15th century 711-1490s. "Ex oriente lux goes the Latin tag—from the East, light. Civilization begins, from a European perspective, in the East" (Coogan: 1998 p. 2) The east of civilization of course is the far east and not Africa and if Africa is not north Africa because as the Europeans would make clear through stereotypes and robbery the Africans were anything but civilized. They were so-called pagans and they came from "the dark continent" which incidentally only happened to be located in the East but the Africans had no part according to this myth of civilization. This position continues to have merit although North Africa's geographic location brought this position into question from the earliest of times. North Africa and Africans have been separated from the rest of Africa. This is the magic that causes ancient Egypt to be considered a different place than the rest of Africa. Dr. Diop maintains that "the history of Black Africa will remain suspended in air and cannot be written correctly until African historians dare to connect it with the history of Egypt." (Diop: 1974 p.xiv)

Insofar as Egypt is the distant mother of Western cultures and sciences,...most of the ideas that we call foreign are oftentimes nothing but mixed up, reversed, modified, elaborated images of the creations of our African ancestors, such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, dialectics, the theory of being, the exact sciences, arithmetic, geometry, mechanical engineering, astronomy, medicine, literature (novel, poetry, drama), architecture, the arts, etc. (Diop: 1991 p. 3)

I am aware that not all of the creativity and science that developed came from Africa. We must also be aware that not everything the Europeans created was good for Africans for example the Europeans created hatred of Africans as a method of usurping African genius and creativity.

Africa became what Europeans map makers decided what Africa would be. “It was the European who decided that the western side of the Red Sea and the Suez Canal was indeed Africa while the eastern side was not despite the fact that geologically the Arabian Peninsula still shares much with that part of Africa that is nearest to it.” (Mazrui: 1986 p. 101) White scholars simply superimposed borders and claimed that the African people living in European dominated lands were themselves “geographically white” i.e. Black people living on land controlled by white people were made politically white. This is yet another way that the ancient Egyptians were transformed into Europeans. This political changing of Africans into Europeans continues today by claiming that Egypt is part of the so-called middle-east or the near East or the Orient. All of these euphemisms obscure the fact that the people being referred to are Africans and are consequently Black. But the political muddying of the water with terms that do not have definite meanings shrouds an indigenous African population in mystery and suggest to an American people who are weak and ignorant (unlearned or unknowing) for the most part in ancient history and geography that these people may have been other than Africans when in fact they were not. This is the magic of contemporary European chauvinism and imperialism. It is very difficult for theologians, Old Testament Scholars and historians to deal with the reality that Judaism is rooted in African culture and that the Bible itself came from Africans who were theologically more sophisticated than early Israel. (Cross: 1973 p. 3) When we begin to discuss ancient Ugarit for Canaanite civilization in Mesopotamia this culture is talked about and discussed as if it was not Africa. “The textual discoveries at Ugarit (modern Ras Shamra) rival the great Mesopotamian tablet finds in their impact on the study of the Bible and ancient Israelite religion. Ugarit lies on the coast of northern Syria, just north of the modern city of Latakia, and

the site has undergone regular excavation from 1929...” (Coogan: 1998 p. 52) According to Dr. Gardiner:

The invasion of the Delta by a specific new race is out of the question; one must think rather of an infiltration by Palestinians glad to find refuge in a more peaceful and fertile environment... It is doubtless impossible to suppress the erroneous usage of the word Hyksos as though it referred to a special race, but it should be borne in mind that the Egyptians themselves usually employed for those unwelcome intruders the term ‘Aamu’ which we translate with rough accuracy as ‘Asiatics’ and which had much earlier served to designate Palestinian captives or hirelings residing in Egypt as servants. (157)

Dr. Gardiner’s position is radical for its time in that it makes the Hebrew native as opposed to intruders and on this score, Black Africans. Many biblical scholars and Egyptologists of his day insisted that these Hebrew were from the so-called Middle East and Greece and were other than the Black Africans of their time. In fact, in the Book of Exodus 12:38 where the Bible indicates that a “mixed multitude” went out of Egypt during this time suggests that somehow the fleeing group were a race other than African. Consequently, some biblical scholars argue as if these refugees were somehow white. Nothing could be further from the truth. “It is as though the more mixed the blood of the inhabitants became the greater was the nostalgia for the Old Kingdom when the Pharaohs were true-born Egyptians.” (355) “It is very interesting that the very first mention of the name Israel occurs in Egyptian writing; it does not appear again in the historical record for almost four hundred years afterward.” (Greenberg: 1996 p. 15) The claim was that with the incoming of a foreign agent other than the native Africans diminished the quality of art and monument building. It is important to remember that Africans perfected the oral tradition and Israel’s history is rooted in the African/Canaanite oral tradition. Nevertheless, this tradition is praised when it is considered Semitic and non African (Bright: 1972 pp. 70-73) and dismissed out of hand when it is native African (Ajayi: 1998 p. vii).

Professor Walter Brueggemann his book, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* says that the canon of the Torah has come to us as a result of a complex system of intentional traditioning and has given us a common text as the grounds for faithful Jewish and Christian imagination and practice. It is unnecessary to understand the complex early history although it is useful. The compelling significance for the church is preaching and teaching. What matters is the manner “in which a relatively *constant theological intentionality* is woven through and eventually made intrinsic to the *complexity of materials*.” In this theological remembering is Israel’s notion of “Mosaic authority” The process is always a human process that has been constantly at work in Israel’s theological imagination but it bears witness to the purpose and presence of YHWH who remains invisible and hidden throughout the scriptures yet who reveals YHWH’s own holy self through these scriptures. Moses signifies a faithful tradition that maintains these scriptures are “a reliable source upon which to ground faith and life.” (21) This is beautiful, however, the problem lies in the fact that Israel’s theological imagination cannot be creditable if Africa’s theological imagination is not creditable. Either both are valuable or neither is valuable because they are a result of human ‘traditioning.’ This is the theological terrorism and warfare to which African originality is subject.

The language was deciphered quickly and it was realized to be west Semitic and related to the Canaanite language which incidentally is an African language. The content of the libraries found there with its myths and epic poems provide considerable insight into the Canaanite mythology. El was the father of their gods and their king. Baal was a storm god and a fertility deity. Asherah was the wife of El and the mother of god. Anat was the war goddess. This mythology has many parallels in the Bible and gives us an understanding of the ancient conflict between the

storm god Marduk, patron god of Babylon and the ocean goddess Tiamat which terminated Marduk's victory and the creation of the world out of Tiamat's body similar to the conflict between Yahweh and the sea. For example, Psalms 74:12-17 which has connections with the creation of the world is clearly an African/Canaanite story which lay the bases to the biblical creation story. Baal was Yahweh's primary rival. Dr. Cross maintains that the Israelite god took over characteristics of both El and Baal. The Israelites used African/Canaanite language to objectify and historicized the literal prose that is taken to be ontological truth. (Cross p. 72)

Dr. Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* talks about the Semitic and African origins of many of the classical Greek and Jewish concepts. Many in the Black community took for granted that his ideas supported what he considered was the nationalism of scholars like Dr. Diop.

Certainly, if a Black were to say what I am now putting in my books, their reception would be very different. They would be assumed to be one-sided and partisan, publishing a Black nationalist line, and therefore dismissed...I would not enjoyed even a first hearing. However, being not only white, male, middle-aged, and middle class but also British in America has given me a tone of universality and authority that is completely spurious. (20)

Bernal's correct assumption was historical in that when an African-American scholar the caliber of Leo Hansberry, a relative of the award winning playwright Lorraine Hansberry could be dismissed with impunity is proof of the racism Bernal so readily admits. Hansberry's work may have also been overlooked because of his excessive emphasis on Ethiopia and not Egypt.

Further Hansberry's work connected classical Crete with north African Blacks. "Archaeological synchronisms made it possible to establish links between prehistoric Crete and ancient Egypt."

The question is double-edged: It relates as much to African centered scholars as it does to Egyptologists and classicists. (Keita: 2000 p.117-121)

As a graduate student in the Africana Center at Cornell University I selected Dr. Bernal as co-chair on my thesis committee. I had the opportunity to have many personal conversations with Dr. Bernal who was almost always very positive and encouraging of my academic studies and my pursuit for higher education. In one such exchange while discussing where I might possibly apply for my post-graduate studies, I suggested seriously that I might apply to Cambridge and his response to me was simply, "it is very difficult to get into Cambridge." I thought this statement odd in as much as I already had earned a Master's degree from Harvard Divinity School and was currently working on a terminal Master's degree at Cornell. It was obvious to me that some of the same racism met by Hansberry I was now experiencing. In my quest to acquire a classical education I also encountered another such incident. While a student at Harvard's Seminary, Dr. Paul Hanson, a tenured professor of Old Testament was also my first year academic counselor. He shocked me with a disparaging statement that he thought was positive. I was standing in front of the entrance to the seminary. Dr. Hanson came running down the stairwell pass me to open the door for an African-American woman. After she passed through, he turned to me and said with a smile, "Black is beautiful but I don't tell everybody." Can you imagine my surprise? Here we have a first rate scholar and professor who encounter in his academic research beautiful Black people but like he says he doesn't tell everybody. "According to the sociologist Peter Berger, who has drawn upon the analytic models of Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, the definition of reality in any given culture is what its members have agreed it to be." (Green:1989 p. 56) Thus, Europeans and other whites have defined the world in Eurocentric terms with the African and the Asia being always the other and or sub-human. Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers was "led to the obvious discovery that the Greek word - Theology – originally meant Divine Speech which is approximate to the meaning of Medu Netcher. (5) Since this divine speech or god talk

falls within the realm of ideas and ideas are abstract this is certainly not an enterprise that Africans can enter in to because by definition Africans are non-human and not abstract thinkers. This is in partly why the Egyptians are considered not to have developed a philosophy. This is the apex of European racism.

In fact, most of the theological conversations in the contemporary world center on white or European iconography although these images of Europeans are most misplaced because the implication is that whites are from regions in Africa and Asia. They're usually not directly said to be the people themselves although they are almost always associated with these ancient cultures. Similarly, Jesus in the Western world is thought to be of European extraction. Nevertheless, the major groups of whites in the area at the time were Greeks and Romans. Since Jesus was neither Greek nor Roman by necessity he had to be African or Asian. The brain being what it is automatically takes the associated and makes a connection. Therefore to associate white people and these ancient lands is to suggest that the people themselves were white. The analogy can be made between Dr. Pavlov's dogs' association with food and a bell and the dogs conditioning to associate the sound of the bell with being fed. Therefore, over time the association grows so strong that when the dogs are allowed to hear the ringing of the bell they begin to salivate. The implication being that they would be fed even though they had not seen or had been given any food. Similarly, human beings make associations. This showing of white pictures with ancient lands creates the desired response of whiteness being associated with ancient Black and brown civilizations. Thus, associating Babylon, Egypt, Phoenician/Canaanite/Ugaritic/Punic/Carthage/Sumerian societies with being European. This is

how the African world has been robbed of its heritage and Europeans have arrogated to themselves cultures that they never created.

Genesis, Chapter 10 is known as the table of nations although it is mythological many practicing Christians and Jews accept this as the actual history. If this is the case the sons of Ham were considered Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. Ham which literally meant dark, heat or burnt has been traditionally seen as the father of Africans. Cush was considered Ethiopian and Egypt/mesraim as herself, Put as Somalia or parts of East African, and Canaan as Phoenicia/Amorite (used as colonies of Egypt). Clearly in this myth Egypt is Black. I mention this only to demonstrate that Africa is paramount in the emerging and creation of Israel. In fact, Africa is so prominent in the creation of Israel and biblical culture that many ancient “biblical writers had never entertained an original thought in their lives. Practically everything they wrote, it was suggested was borrowed in its totality from the ancient Egyptians or Babylonians.” (Craigie 69) In order to establish Judaism and Christianity as independent world religions within themselves some scholars took the extreme position to strip Israel and Christianity of any association with the African and Asian cultures out of which they had grown. This idea is taken to the extreme by scholars like Irving M. Zeitlin who posits, “magic is therefore an expression of human arrogance and rebellion against God.” (31). The Egyptians are reduced to being magicians whereas the Europeans are seen as spiritual and theological and servants of Yahweh, i.e. the one and only true God. However, this is a matter of subjectivity, a matter of pure faith, and one could make a similar claim against the servants of Yahweh that Zeitlin levels against the Egyptian priests. Over and over again we witness Western theologians, Jewish scholars and academics that malign the character of ancient priests who shared a different spiritual and

religious worldview. This criticism would be considered outrageous and in some cases racist if their position were held against other world religions and perspectives. But, because these are ancient Africans they can use the difference in perspective to elevate their own particular religious worldview. This denigration of the ancient African worldview is the reason many people talk of “the dark continent” of “savages” and “pagans” when Africans are referred to. It is the multiplication of this cultural European ethnocentrism that robs traditional African religions of both its spirituality and its humanity while accrediting Western religions with an unearned spiritual superiority.

The Old Testament cannot be properly understood without its Ugaritic/Canaanite/African roots. It is within this matrix of Asian and African cultures that these scriptures derive their context and meaning. The isolation and separation of these cultures from their historical context has done violence to the text and brings the lethal weapon of confusion to the Biblical text. “Writers are also readers and listeners. Consequently, the words a person writes may well be influenced by the words a person reads and hears. (Craigie 68-69) Part of a theologian’s task is to determine influences of the biblical writers. Literary criticism has proven that creative people are influenced by other creative people. For example, the writings of Langston Hughes were influenced by the scholarship of W.E.B. Du Bois just as the scholarship of Dr. Manning Marable was influenced by Du Bois. One might expect a similar kind of influence in the biblical text although each writer has a unique perspective. Egyptian, Babylonian and other influences are an integral part to Biblical theology but the need to isolate African and Asian influences that so dominated the Eurocentric perspective would have us believe that these influences are negotiable when in reality they are paramount. It is not that Biblical writers did not have original thoughts

rather those original thoughts were often influenced by what had preceded them. Craigie suggests that the Biblical writers had original ideas is true. However, Cross' Chapter 6 *The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth* gives us a classical example of near "wholesale borrowing" by the Biblical writers from the ancient Canaanite/African mythology. Not only can this example be found but Cross identifies the high God El-Elohim as a "dead god or hero" (20) El is subsequently supplanted by Israel's god Yahweh. (72) In this regard understanding that 21st century Israelite Biblical theology has historicized, objectified and lifted the Biblical mythology of ancient Africa and Asia. Therefore, in the 21st century many believing and practicing Christians have an ancient African/Canaanite theological construct that is out of step with the times. Over reverence to this antiquated theology accepting ancient myth as historical reality keeps the masses locked in the past. This is why the church has such a difficult time promoting religious and social progress. (Cross 169) The cultural debt that is owed to Africa is in fact overwhelming. The African high God El is also the Greek God Kronos and the Latin Saturnus. While the fact that Greek mythology has African roots has been known in the scholarly world, it would certainly be news to the average white American because this fact is carefully hidden away. There was a cult of child sacrifices in Africa but also became common in parts of Italy. It was believed in the cult of the African God El which is echoed in Biblical tradition that the first born child belonged to the pagan god. This sacrifice of the first born myth in Africa is parallel in the sacrifice of Jesus. (Cross 25-26) The ordinary Christian would be dismissive and flabbergasted to know that their god concept has its origins based in African myth. The Phoenicians/Canaanites spoke the punic language which is an African language. This list could be multiplied. The European Egyptologists, Biblical scholars and highly trained specialist who control this area have suppressed such facts. This is part of what Hitler called, "the big lie

theory.” People will hardly believe that European stole their theology from Africans. Like Weber minimizing the role of ancient Egypt when in fact he knew that Egypt played a major role in the culture of Israel and the so-called ancient near East. Dr. Alan Gardiner in *Egypt of the Pharaohs* in discussing the ancient Orient which Egypt was considered “the oldest, and certainly the most splendid, of all Eastern civilizations it is fitting to begin with some account of the impact upon it of these two techniques, so far as it can be known. Unfortunately the origin of the EGYPTIAN LANGUAGE lies so far back in the uncharted past that only little that is certain can be said about it. Since it is generally agreed that the oldest population of Egypt was of African race [Black], it might be expected that their language should be African too.” (19) Dr. Gardiner makes it perfectly clear that the Jewish/Semitic alphabet has African origins. Cross argues the African high god El the ancient one has parallels in Canaanite mythology and is connected to the Egyptian God Ptah. This is an amazing set of facts.

After the discovery of the *Dead Sea Scrolls* international teams of scholars were formed to translate the massive material. Roland de Vaux a Catholic priest and a scholar of Arabic and Aramaic languages led this effort to which created committees of scholars who would decide by consensus which interpretation of the text would be considered legitimate. He refused to allow Jews to work on these scholarly teams. “But behind his personable façade, de Vaux was ruthless, narrow-minded, bigoted and fiercely vindictive. Politically, he was decidedly right-wing. In his youth, he had been a member of Action Francaise, the militant Catholic and nationalist movement which burgeoned in France between the two world wars, which extolled the cult of ‘blood and soil’ and expressed more than a little sympathy for the dictatorships in Germany, Italy and, on Franco’s triumph, Spain. Certainly he was ill-suited to preside over

research on the Dead Sea Scrolls. The first scholar to be appointed under de Vaux's authority was Professor Frank Cross [who was later given an appointment at Harvard's Divinity School.]” (Baigent & Leigh: 1991 pp. 26-28) It was late in his career where he is considered one of the foremost authorities on Old Testament that he became my teacher. This is why the story of the Dead Sea Scrolls became so fascinating and intriguing to me. It was considered an honor and a privilege to be taught by such a great professor. It was announced to our class that this would be the last time that Cross would teach OT as he was preparing to retire. I read Baigent and Leigh with great enthusiasm but it came as a surprise when I learned that Dr. James B. Robinson, Professor at the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity at Claremont Graduate School, California had to sue the international team that Cross was a member of to gain access to the scrolls. The claim was that de Vaux's team was suppressing the information by going slow and doing everything to avoid embarrassing the Christian establishment. The material was considered explosive and could change the world's view of Christianity. This was the opposite of what the prestigious international team was stating for the record (30-31) and had suppressed for nearly fifty years. This unprofessional behavior denied to other academics the right to translate the text for themselves and the world thus forcing the world into a biblical orthodoxy that is opposite the original text.

de Vaux's international team were high-handed in monopolizing materials. They were also high-handed in their interpretations. “A rigid orthodoxy of interpretation evolved, from which any deviation was tantamount to heresy.” (32) Thus careers were either made or lost by the committee's influence. In order to be considered a first rate Biblical scholar one had to cross the sands of this international team with favor. There was a conspiracy to keep the church's version

of the Bible orthodox and any contrary issues or controversy had to be swept right under the academic rug. After having lost the legal right to keep the public and other academics from the scrolls Dr. Robinson and his team within three years of gaining access to the scrolls had drafts of transcriptions and translations there were being made available to the wider academic community. The long winter of de Vaux's rule had finally broken. (35) The way in which de Vaux and his team monopolized and determined first rate scholarship is similar to the way the Western world and Europe have monopolized and interpreted the biblical world excluding African interpretation in particular. This conspiring was a crime against TRUTH and the intellectual community. This is a classical example of how the western world suppressed vital theological information deceiving the world.

The Egyptian indigenous spiritual system which contemporary African scholars label as maatian was a part of the Egyptian world while Israel was insignificant. Nevertheless, few people other than specialist like Egyptologists, archeologists and biblical scholars know of this dominate conception and worldview. Israel has so monopolized the theological imagination of the Western world that it is little realized that Israel was not a major player in the ancient world. When we begin to speak of ancient social justice the name of Khun-Anup, the eloquent farmer is a good reference point. It is a moral narrative where a poor farmer brings forth grievances against a rich person and wins his case. What Khun-Anup did in his petition for justice is that he set the standard for social justice and morality in ancient Egypt. "Moreover, he instructs the leader that "The balancing of the land lies in Maat (Truth, Justice, Righteousness). Do not speak falsely for you are great; do not act lightly for you have weight; be not untrue for you are the balance (scales of justice) and do not swerve for you are the standard." (Karenga: 1990 p. 84)

The Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations at Northeastern Illinois University gave lessons to the African-American community regarding these ancient social teachings. Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers led the study groups.

Khun-Anup delineates five criteria for a just leader and thereby gives us the just leader as: 1) One “without greed”; 2) one “without baseness”; 3) “a destroyer of falsehood”; 4) “a creator of righteousness; and 5) “one who comes at the voice of the caller” (Karenga 85)

That Egypt had a moral system that was superior to Israel is a concept that the Western world does not readily promote. Israel was not the teacher but rather the student. There is a prejudice that is shared with biblical scholars that runs rampant throughout the biblical literature and relegates the theological practices of Africans and Asians to the dust pile of history. But, in many instances it is from this dust pile of so-called antiquated theological ideas that Israel/Judaism would emerge as one of the greatest world religions.

The words “Apiru” and “habiru” weren’t originally terms which identified any particular nation or race. They represented a confluence of nationalities both African and Aryan...”

The Old Testament first records this work in Genesis 14:13, as a slang term used by the ancient Black Canaanites of Palestine to identify Abraham calling him “Ha-Ibri” or “The one who crossed over”, that is, the one who crossed over the Euphrates River to journey in the Land of the Canaanites of Canaan. At no time, in the Old Testament literature, does it mean anything else. (Ben –Levi:1986 p. 60)

The point here is that Africa is the mother of much that the Israelites hold sacred nevertheless she is neglected, despised, and dishonored. It is this abuse that contributes to the intellectual terrorism that is waged against Africa. Not until and unless we elevate the position of the African cultures and traditions that gave birth to Judaism and Christianity can Christianity have any legitimacy that is not superimposed and artificial. Much of the Old Testament is a result of the African oral tradition. However, as I have noted above it is dismissed while the Semitic tradition is honored. One of the most crucial events in the history of Israel is the Exodus. It is interesting how biblical scholars and ancient specialists frame this story. The Exodus story is

problematic at best and did not occur at worst. In fact when biblical scholars are forced to use such terms as “there can be no doubt’ that Israel’s faith rests on an actual historical occurrence raises doubt itself. The Exodus is considered “a crucial event” then we are told that is was a “border incident”. It cannot be both. The most telling aspect of this story is that the Egyptian records make no reference to this event as ever having occurred. (Oxford Annotated Bible 67) Dr. Gardiner informs us that the Egyptians were the most meticulous of the ancient record keepers. Dr. Paul Hanson affirms the communal confessional memory of the community but because he is aware of the problematic nature of the Documentary source material (J) Yahweh 950 BCE; (E) Elohim 850 BCE; (P) Priestly 550 BCE and (D) Deuteronomy 650 BCE) he adds, “anyone applying a narrowly positivistic methodology must answer this question negatively, for the sources do not allow us to reconstruct a newsreel-like account of the escape of slaves for Egypt and their encounter with the Deliverer God at the Sea.” (11) On the other hand, Greenberg dismisses this negative commentary and claims that “True biblical history [which] begins with the Exodus, and the patriarchal history is myth, pure and simple.” (18)

Finally, according to Finkelstein and Siberman, “the only independent mention of the name Israel in this period—the victory stele of Merneptah—announces only that this otherwise obscure people, living in Canaan, had suffered a crushing defeat. Something clearly doesn’t add up when the biblical account, the archaeological evidence, and the Egyptian records are placed side by side.” (79) If the Europeans experts are in heated debate as to the validity of this central event the African-centered scholars see clearly that the evidence is almost always stacked against Africa and favors Israel. We are aware that a cultural theft has occurred of international magnitude and that it is too embarrassing culturally and theologically to admit that this has occurred. The emergence of sea people, Greek warriors and mixed multitudes is primarily an

arbitrary event that serves the theological imagination of Israel and Europe which supports their imperialistic mythology.

Christianity has taken its cues from ancient Egyptian theology and has created its universal faith system based and parallel to that which the ancient Egyptians created:

“In the text of Isaiah 7:14 has been an indispensable basis for the NT assertion of the “virgin birth” of Jesus that has loomed so large in Christian tradition.” The word at issue in Hebrew was “almah” which meant young woman. A Greek translation before the Christian Era substituted the word “parthenos” which means virgin and it is from this meaning that the Gospel of Matthew reread the text with reference to Jesus and his birth from a virgin. (Wildberger: 1991 p. 308)

This move from the OT to the NT via the Greek translation means that the text was literally transformed by this new Christological meaning. What it really says is the new second meaning is completely different for its original meaning. And, although the second meaning has served the church well in many ways it is a corruption of the Hebrew of the Book of Isaiah. It is the second meaning that has come to symbolize the Christian doctrine of today. That these two meanings have been merged is the cultural and historical wrong that has been committed against the first meaning. (Brueggeman: 2003 pp. 173-174)

Like the Egyptians the Jesus story has been historicized, objectified and solarized just like the Egyptian story of Osiris which demonstrates to us the anthropology of theology. If these scholars who suppress biblical evidence and misled humanity are not the devil they will have to sacrifice until the devil comes!

The architects of white supremacy such as Hegel, de Vaux’s international team of scholars and Weber took that the European aesthetic was universal while demoting African and Asian cultures distancing their white creation when in fact it was its own particularism. Theology like all other disciplines is human. Unlike other disciplines that admit their humanity theology is evasive relative to its human origins. God talk does not begin in the metaphysical world but is rooted right here on earth and the prejudices, the biases of ordinary society perpetuate and dominate theological imagination. The creators are always ordinary human beings. This construction does

not serve genuine universality nor humanity. The African has been purposefully and consciously wiped out of this abstract enterprise leaving the theological world to imperialistic ideologues who consciously alienate the African from the equation. In order to balance the universe when searching for the origins of white theology one finds themselves in an African and Asian world. A world which is completely opposite of that which has been constructed by Europeans. It is necessary for liberation theologians to define their worldview along the precepts of challenging and correcting the theological ideology that has been forced upon the world.

In the 21st century we must dare to create our God concepts in Black. In order to properly understand what must be done one need only look at the Black Arts Movement which had its roots in the Black Power Movement. This pivotal movement in African-American history forced Black people to see themselves as powerful by using their own ingenuity, iconography, and their own innate sense of righteousness. In order to be a truly creative people it is necessary to see that you are a powerful people. Power establishes itself by affirming and constructing its own language, iconography and worldview after itself and never apologizes. The European worldview supplanted the African worldview and constructed its ideology in white which has led to their world domination. Fear and failure to construct a worldview in our own African image will forever keep us from becoming a sovereign people again. We have forgotten from whence comes our power. The European theologians and historians are the true revisionists of history. The pre-Socratic Xenophane maintained, "The Ethiopians say that their gods are snub-nosed and black." (Green 61) This will be the beginning of our liberation. The absence of broken glass, twisted dead and dying bodies, blood and guts strewn everywhere is no indication that we are not at war. Chattel slavery and colonialism has ended, but racism replaced them. It is racism that

continues to fuel these vicious attacks on the people on the Continent of Africa. Broken windows, destroyed buildings emerge from the midst of human carnage from this horrific act of terrorism. But the battle field has shifted and the order of the new landscape is intellectual warfare. Let us not think for one moment that since the struggle is psychological and invisible it is any less brutal. In fact, the intellectual wounds may arguably be worst. In order to recapture and restore our power we must relearn this lesson. Until then, we remain the theological captives of white supremacy or any other people who dare to create a world where the leaders see within themselves and their people the image of God.

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