

The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful

by John B. Williams

The Good

Cooperation and sharing, more than anything else, are the social interactions that define us as human. They are the cultural traditions that have allowed our species to become the superior form of life on earth, and they arise from the philosophy of life that lets us identify those among us who are *good*.

The Bad

The converse of cooperation is dominance; the converse of sharing is hoarding. Dominance and hoarding are the social interactions of people who have created much of the conflict and human suffering that prevail during the age we call *Civilized*, and they are the attributes that let us identify those among us who are *bad*.¹

The Beautiful

“Black is beautiful,” was heard throughout the African-American community in the 1960’s. This battle cry was an attempt to combat the widely held opinion that black people in all eras of history and in all places on the globe were incapable of intellectual expression beyond the most childlike and simplistic displays. That notion has been discredited, and the events that led to it being discredited have led to other surprising discoveries.

The building of the Aswan High Dam in Egypt set off a chain of events that caused a shift in scientific thinking about race because it led to the discovery of Nubia, a region along the southern and central portion of the Nile River inhabited by black people who created sophisticated, advanced cultures in the earliest era of human existence. The Nile Valley just south of Egypt was to be inundated beneath the flood plains that would become Lake Nassar after the dam was built, so extensive archaeological excavations began in that area early in the Twentieth Century, and these excavations uncovered evidence of ancient civilizations that had long been forgotten. American and European archaeologists could not imagine that the artifacts they found to the south of Egypt could have been created by the indigenous population. The indigenous population, after all, consisted of Africans who had long been portrayed by common stereotypes as being too backwards to have achieved anything of consequence in any historical era. It took decades longer, well into the second half of the Twentieth Century, after archaeologists had gone farther south and had found cultural sites of great importance and had found signs of civilizations and cultures more advanced, that scientists began to understand that indigenous Africans along the southern reaches of the Nile Valley were not only highly advanced but that their earliest cultural achievements predated those of Egypt.

¹ Support for these assertions is found in the book *The Fourth Age, Fourth Edition* available at <http://www.thephylaxis.org/williams/fourth.php>.

Gradually, there accumulated overwhelming evidence that Africa has not only created advanced cultures from the earliest era of human existence, but that Africa is almost certainly the birth place of the human race.

Archaeologists learn a lot studying human burial sites. Carbon dating lets them determine the age of the remains and study them in relation to the historical era in which the person lived. In North America, human remains found in places where Europeans are heavily settled would be expected to date no farther back than the Fifteenth Century. Anything older than five or six centuries would be assumed to be of Native American origin. Native American remains might date back thousands of years. In fact, human relics have been found in North America that date to about 18,000 years before present. This is fairly consistent with the theory that the North American continent was populated by people who ventured across an icy passage from Asia some twenty to twenty-five thousand years ago.

The oldest remains found in North America are fairly recent compared with those found in Europe. Evidence of modern man in Europe goes back some forty thousand years. The oldest known relics of modern man, however, have been found, not in America or in Europe, but in Africa—in modern-day Ethiopia. It is significant also that the continent of Africa is the only place on earth where scientists have found every known link in the human ancestral chain. This leads to a surprising, and for some people, a disturbing conclusion: that all human beings have ancient ancestors who are Africans—indigenous Africans who lived in places where people are indisputably black. Every person who lives today, and every person who has ever lived, has these African ancestors. This news might be disturbing, but only to those who accept the Twentieth-Century stereotypes about black inferiority. From what is known today about the accomplishments of the Nubians, anyone connected with them can be proud to acknowledge them as ancestors. Based on evidence now available, and based on what was written by Herodotus, the Ethiopians were the first people on earth—Herodotus spoke of them as beautiful people²—and it is from them that all other people and all other races of men originated. Serious student of archaeology discount the civil-rights-era notion that the black race has achieved nothing of distinction. The Nubians are now recognized widely as having created some of the most advanced cultures in human development, and they are among the first people on earth to have done so.

Although the preponderance of evidence points to Ethiopia as the birthplace of modern man, it is conceivable that older relics might be found elsewhere someday. No one can say to an absolute certainty that the human race originated in Ethiopia, but the evidence of it is overwhelming. Scientists are still looking for earlier evidence and it is no accident that the only place they expect to find it is in Africa. There is little doubt that we all are the offspring of Africans. The sooner people embrace this

² Ernestine Jenkins in her book, *A Glorious Past: Ancient Egypt, Ethiopia, and Nubia* (Chelsea House Publishers, New York, 1995) page 69 says: “To the ancient Greeks and Romans, Nubia was one of the world’s great civilizations. They called it *Aethiopia*—‘land of the Burnt Faces,’ in Greek—a reference to the dark skin of the region’s inhabitants. Herodotus, the Greek historian, proclaimed the Nubians to be the ‘tallest and most handsome of men.’”

idea, the sooner we can go to the next vital step of resolving the social and cultural problems of mankind.

The oldest bones ever found of modern humans were found in Herto in Ethiopia and they date to 160,000 years ago.³ DNA studies show that modern humans spread from there to southern Africa 100,000 years ago and to central Africa 90,000 years ago. They began to leave Africa 60,000 years ago with the first migration spreading eastward along the southern coast of Asia; they reached Australia 55,000 years ago. The second wave, about 40,000 years ago, marks the initial incursion of modern humans into Europe.

To say that “black is beautiful” takes on new meaning in light of these recent discoveries. To me it means that not just the blacks but that the people of all races and all colors are beautiful. It will take time for people to embrace this idea. The bitter hatred that has separated men for so many centuries will not be quickly overcome, but acknowledging our common ancestry will start us in the right direction. It is my observation that the good people outnumber the bad people, and this gives hope that the good will ultimately prevail. There is hope also that people will someday acknowledge that other people share the beauty of this thing that we call humanity.

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³ Winston, Robert and Wilson, Don E., *Human*, Dorling Kindersley Limited, New York, NY, 2004, 31.