

# EVIDENCE OF AFRICAN ORIGIN OF EGYPTIANS

## Migration and Colonization the Chief Causes of Amalgama- tion of Primitive Races

### VIEWS OF DR. VON LUSCHAN

By JOHN E. BRUCE CURTIS.

A great many modern writers and not a few who wrote in an earlier period are disposed to discredit the African origin of the Egyptians, although their color, customs and other physical characteristics clearly indicate that if any race of people on earth came out of the loins of Ham these did.

Nothing seems to be more certain to those who have studied the question closely. Dr. Felix von Luschan, professor of anthropology in the University of Berlin, in an admirable paper before the first universal races congress, which met in London in 1911, approaches the subject with more candor and honesty than usually characterize the writings or the utterances of white men who have investigated this subject.

While we know or have been told that all the Egyptians are not white or brown or of any of the intermediate colors between white and black, we also know from those who have traveled in that country that the majority of its inhabitants are black and possess all the physical characteristics of the African.

#### Cause of Distinct Color Varieties.

The color of the Egyptian results, therefore, from the admixture of the blood of neighboring races with the African blood of these indigenous blacks. Professor von Luschan says:

While the first varieties of primitive man were certainly formed and fixed by long isolation, later variations and races were caused by migration and colonization, as might perhaps best be shown by sketching the anthropology of Africa and the Pacific islands.

Just as Madagascar was peopled about 900 or 1000 A. D. by Indo-Asian colonists coming from Sumatra, so untold ages ago the first inhabitants of Africa came from a place somewhere in southern Asia on the great line from Gibraltar to Australia. No skulls or skeletons of these earliest Africans are as yet known, but we may hope to find them sooner or later, as we already now know a good many sites of paleolithic implements in various parts of tropical and southern Africa.

The anatomical qualities of these first Africans will certainly be found to differ from those of aboriginal Australians, but in tens of hundreds of thousands of years the paleolithic African evolved into a real Negro. He exists in two varieties—a tall variety like the modern Nigritian from the coast of upper Guinea and a small one like the Bushmen and the pygmies, now known in so many places in central Africa.

#### Third Race Makes Its Appearance.

But I have already stated that we are as yet quite ignorant of the real home of these small races. To these two oldest elements in Africa was added ages afterward, but still in prehistoric times, a third one, the Hamitic. It is descended from the same ancient Gibraltar-Australia line, but was in a higher stage of civilization.

These Hamites had already a greatly refined language, with an admirable grammar closely related to that of the Semitic and Indo-Germanic languages. In Egypt they created more than 6,000 years ago the marvelous civilization we now admire as the mother of our own.

Ancient Hamitic influences can be traced all through Africa. In Abyssinia, in Galla, Somali, and in Masailand we find even now Hamitic languages or at least Hamitic grammar and Hamitic types. In central Africa, in the region of the great lakes, we have the Hima and Tusi, generally as chiefs reigning over Bantu tribes, often with face and figure like those of the old pharaohs of Egypt.

#### Physical Features of Hamitic Type.

Even in South Africa nearly 1 per cent of the actual Bantu population have high and narrow noses, thin lips and fine large orthognathic skulls of the Hamitic type, and all the Hottentot languages and dialects have a pure Hamitic grammar. Also the pastoral habits of many Africa tribes, their long horned cattle, spiral basket work, etc., are Hamitic, and all can thus trace Hamitic influence from the Nile to the Cape of Good Hope.

Still there are some Negroes and many, many white people in this country who profess to believe with a sort of pitying contempt that the African is an irredeemable barbarian.

Rev. E. L. L. Thompson of Sierra Leone, West Africa, in his address before the Negro Society For Historical Research of Yonkers, N. Y., on the subject "Race Consciousness Race

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**Ideal," said, among other things: "As the preponderance of the inhabitants of Egypt today are of unmixed African blood, we may I think reasonably conclude that these people are of African origin. Otherwise how are we to account for their black faces, crisp hair and other typical Negro physical characteristics?"**