Black Manhood: The Building of Civilization by the Black Man in the Nile

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Fleming: Black Manhood: The Building of Civilization by the Black Man in th

evolution of an egalitarian society. In the
world of reality, experience has shown that
such things as a single educational system—and working together within a
service organization such as the Army, the
National Youth Service or the Peace Corps—do not in themselves foster
egalitarianism nor lead to the demise of
social stratification. These are legacies of a
reactionary capitalist system and will only
disappear with the system itself.

In a similar vein, the author reaffirms in
the second part of the book that although
his purpose was consideration of strategies
aimed at accomplishing changes necessary
for the transformation of the society, he is
not prepared to attempt a quantitative
analysis of what is required, neither would he deal with growth rates nor gross
national production. Be that as it may,
quantification which the author sees as
the business of the technician, and quality
of life as the business of the philosopher,
are indeed not mutually exclusive. The
arguments and postulates of the
philosopher should be predicated on an
understanding and appreciation of relevant facts, knowledge, and
information.

Though an analysis of the economic
problem would have been a plus for the
book, the author carefully avoids such an
effect. Instead, he selects to identify
what he considers as major problems.
Among what he considers the eight basic
problems existing since 1945, Manley
identifies the export-import orientation of the
economy and trader mentality derived from
capitalist and colonial orientation as the
two main economic problems to be
solved. But he offers no practical solutions.
While he contends that an irrelevant
educational system was responsible for the
nation’s lack of basic skills to effect
necessary transformation of the economy,
he does not say what steps should be taken
to make the system relevant.

Proposals advanced by the author for the
economic transformation to create the just
society are indeed novel and seek little
support from established principles of
economics. The act of public ownership of
natural resources—particularly land,
beaches, utilities such as the banking system,
and the bauxite and the sugar industries—do stimulate feelings of
nationalism but not economic
development. En passant, it should be
noted that the section on foreign policy,
seen by the author as an integral part of
economic development strategy, is of
significance since it is a statement of the
policy a Prime Minister intends to pursue.
Nevertheless, only time will fairly evaluate
a foreign policy committed to: positive
commitment to Caribbean economic
regionalism, search for common Third
World economic strategy, support for the
United Nations, and answering
commitment to the right of self-
determination for small countries, the
summary of which is an open foreign
policy.

The main points of weakness in Manley’s
book are excessive repetition and
inconsistency of philosophical thought.
However, it must be acknowledged that
the book is written in language that is
elegant and deserves a place in the libraries
as the outward expressions of the inward
hunger of a Prime Minister.

The reviewer is an associate professor
of history at Howard University.

Black Manhood:
The Building
Of Civilization
By the Black Man
Of the Nile
By Pham Goldman
Tarharka Publishing Company, Annapolis, Md.
242 pp. $14.95

Reviewed by John E. Fleming

The author of Black Manhood carefully
documents Black Africa’s role in the
growth and development of civilization, by
emphasizing those indices of African
genealogy and influence. He begins with
pre-dynastic Egypt and takes his narrative
through the 25th Dynasty by examining
the influence and dominance of Black
people’s culture along the Nile, from
Uganda to the Mediterranean.

Since Western civilization has its origins in
ancient Egypt, Western scholars, unable to
escape their own cultural and racial bias,
have found it necessary to dissolve Egypt’s
traditional and natural relationship with
Black Africa. Black Manhood is thus a
vital and significant contribution to
anthropology and history. The author
concludes: “Racial Chauvinism and
and cultural innuendoes of a derogatory nature
almost invariably accompany the attempts
of one race of people to write the history
of another.” He points out why it was
necessary for the Western world to
“disprove” that Africans were significant,
if not crucial factors, in the development
of Egyptian civilization.

By using the works of renowned
anthropologists and Egyptologists, the
author traces the development of Egyptian
civilization and points out the role played
by Blacks. He effectively challenges the
assertions that Blacks played no role in
Egyptian history outside that of slaves,
captives and other persons of low caste
status. He discusses the absurdity of how
early Western scholars called Egyptians
white when it was clear that these Black
and brown men had the physiognomy of
Black people. Even an Italian scholar,
Giuseppe Sergi, was forced to ask the
question, “But if they are Black, how can
they be white?”

The pointedness of such questions not
withstanding, Goldman documents how
Egyptologists dismissed obvious Negroid
features as “deformities and
abnormalities.” The absurdity of such
glaring distortions is illustrated in the
irrationality of a German scholar,
Heinrich Brugsch-Bay, who suggested that
the Black Queen, Nefertari, ancestress of
the great 18th Dynasty, was portrayed as
Black in an art form because the work was
done after her death and the color black
represented the darkness of the grave.

Because of prejudice and ethnocentrism,
Western scholars refused to acknowledge
that Western culture, to a large degree,
originated in Africa. Further, prejudicial
attitudes against darker races prevented
Westerners from acknowledging the
contributions Africans made to medicine,
religion, astronomy, literature, agriculture,
arithmetic and engineering.

The author’s discussion of Egyptian
religion, especially the growth of
monotheism during the 18th Dynasty,
places in bold relief, the extent to which
Judeo-Christian beliefs are grounded in
Egyptian religion, whose origin Egyptians
themselves traced to the South. But such
revelations and acknowledgments would
have made it more difficult to distort Black
history and subsequently portray Black
people as less than human in order to deny
them human rights.

After reading Black Manhood, one would
be hard pressed to ignore the substantial
contribution of Blacks to world
civilization.

Black Manhood is well worth reading for
any student of Afro-American and African
history.

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for the Study of Educational Policy.