



# perspectives

By Professor McKinley Burt

## In The Beginning Was The Word, Part II

BY PROFESSOR MCKINLEY BURT  
(This is going to be an experience)

Let us follow on from last week's references to summer reading that can be quite informative as well as in a lighter mode than usual. We left off with an introduction to "Biblical Literature"--or to be more exact, its antecedents as indicated below (Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt).

"The ripe social and moral development of mankind in the Nile Valley which is 3000 years older than that of the Hebrews, contributed essentially to the formation of Hebrew literature. Our moral heritage therefore derives from a wider human past enormously older than the Hebrews, and it has come to us rather through the Hebrews than from them." (J.H. Breasted, History of Egypt)

Coincidentally, I just received a package of catalogs in the mail from "ECA ASSOCIATES," Book Publishers, accompanied by a "thank you" letter for citing several of their publications in a recent article. They are quite relevant to this series and were JUST ORDERED BY THE MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY. I am delighted that they will be available to you. They are fairly expensive (\$20 each) volumes, often quoted by the world's leading African historians (Book of the Beginnings, by Gerald Massey, 1881; Anaclypsis by Geoffrey Higgins, 1836). The address of ECA Associates is P.O. Box 15004, Great Bridge Station, Chesapeake, Virginia 23320; (804) 547-5542. Write for a catalog.

There follows a few stanzas from AKHENATON'S "HYMN TO THE

ATON," fervid and noble lines that reveal the heights to which Egyptian lyric poetry could rise (a quote from "Ancient Egypt," Time-Life Books, 1965). As has often been pointed out, these verses are close in spirit to the "104th PSALM."

And, again, we quote J.A. Rogers who writes of the first human being to found a religion based upon a SINGLE GOD!

"Psalms that read like those of the Bible were written by a Pharaoh, Amenophis IV, better known as "Akhenaton, the Heretic King," 1300 B.C. or more than 400 years before David was born. Akhenaton, who was the father of Tut-Ankh-Amen, was extremely Negro in type. He is called "the most remarkable of the Pharaohs."

HYMN TO THE ATON (The sun):  
"All beasts are content with their pasturage;

Trees and plants are flourishing.  
The birds which fly from their nests,  
Their wings are stretched out in praise to thee.

All beasts spring upon their feet.  
Whatever flies and alights,  
They live when thou hast risen for them.

The ships are sailing north and south as well,  
For every way is open at thy appearance.

The fish in the river dart before thy face;  
Thy rays are in the midst of the great green sea.

How manifold it is, what thou hast made!

They are hidden from the face of man.

O sole god, like whom there is no other;

Thou didst create the world according to thy desire,

Whilst thou wert alone:  
All men, cattle and wild beasts,  
Whatever is on earth, going upon its feet,

And what is on high, flying with its wings."

(Compare these excerpts to the 104th and other Psalms)

This type of documentation, chiseled in ancient stone and written on papyri, should enable you to deal most adequately with the ugly racists who, bereft of soul themselves, will within the same paragraph be forced to admit greatness--and, then, feverishly deny it: "It is clear from the foregoing that the Egyptians had a literature both in verse and in prose, which they appreciated at its true value; and that its value is undeniable. What remains of it should not be made to appear insignificant through being compared to Greek literature. Egypt had no writers to equal Homer, Pindar, Sophocles, or Herodotus. There is no flow of inspiration, the narrative is almost always perfunctory and the style bare." (That stupid pejorative is from Montet, Eternal Egypt, pp.220,221,1964)

The record of the depth and passion of this noble man of ancient Africa has been deliberately hidden from us--except for the most determined and committed reader who has come upon the documentation in some fortuitous

manner. Really, you surely would not expect to be told by the missionaries who opened up Africa "to save the heathens"--or by the slave masters who reaped that grim harvest by the millions; though they have always circulated the information AMONG THEMSELVES! Now, a bit more on the man who long before "Biblical Days", founded a "New Jerusalem," renounced wars, sacrifices, burnt offerings and idols--and a thousand years before Moses wrote the Second Commandment banishing "GRAVEN IMAGES OF GOD"! And chiseled in stone, "The Kingdom of God is within you."

Several of the leading Egyptologists have spoken in highest praise of him. Breasted calls him "the most remarkable of the Pharaohs," with whom "there died a spirit such as the world had never seen before...a brave soul unflinchingly facing the momentum of immemorial tradition, and thereby stepping out from the long line of conventional and colorless Pharaohs that he might disseminate ideas far beyond and above the capacity of his age to understand...the modern world has yet adequately to value or even acquaint itself with this man who in an age so remote and conditions so remote became the world's first idealist."

"No such grand theology had ever before appeared in the world so far as we know," says Petric.

Arthur Weigall says:  
"When the world reverberated with the noise of war he preached the first known doctrine of peace; when the glory of martial power swelled the

hearts of his subjects, he deliberately turned his back upon heroics. He was the first man to preach simplicity, honestly, frankness, and sincerity, and he preached it from a throne.

"He was the first Pharaoh to be a humanitarian, the first man in whose heart there was no trace of barbarism. He has given us an example three thousand years ago that might be followed at the present day--an example of what a husband and father should be; of what an honest man should be; of what a poet should feel; of what a preacher should teach; of what a scientist should believe; of what a philosopher should think.

"Like all other great teachers, he sacrificed all to his principles and his life plainly shows, alas! the impracticality of his doctrine; yet there can be no question that his ideals will hold good 'till the swan turns black, and the cow turns white, 'till the hills rise up to travel, and the deeps rush into the rivers."

And, descending the Nile, built the beautiful city of Akhenaton (now Tell-el-Amarna)--a city "great in loveliness, mistress of pleasant ceremonies...At the sight of her beauty there is rejoicing. She is lovely and beautiful; when one sees her, it is like a glimpse of heaven."

Here he erected beautiful temples dedicated to religion, art, and music. He taught his poets to write what they felt, and his artists to paint what they saw. The temples of his new God were unlike any that had been built before. In the place of gloomy, mystifying, terror-inspiring structures, he constructed halls, resplendent with light and beauty. No

oracles, no stage effects, no tricks of priest-craft to terrify the ignorant.

"He gave," says Breasted, "the first signal of the religion that the West upholds today."

His bust in the Louvre shows a face of extraordinary sweetness, gentleness and refinement. It strongly resembles Toussaint L'Ouverture's seen in profile.

Judged by prevailing standards, Akhenaton was not handsome. His skull, which has been preserved, is what some scientists call that of a typical Negro. The jaw is exceedingly prognathous. His lips, as seen in profile, are so thick that they seem swollen. His father, Amenophis was Negroid, and his mother, Tiye, a full-blooded African. That his wife, Nefertiti, was Negro, cannot be denied.

Howard Carter, discoverer of the tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen, says that he was especially struck by the resemblance that Tut-Ankh-Amen bore to Akhenaton, and the latter's mother, Queen Tiye. Several leading Egyptologists are inclined to believe that Tut-Ankh-Amen, whose earlier name was Tut-Ankh-Aton, was both the son and the son-in-law of Akhenaton. Tut-Ankh-Amen addressed him as "father."

Mercy! How beautiful were our forebearers--they set the standards for all the world to follow. The preceding paragraphs were taken from Volume II of J.A. Rogers, "World's Great Men of Color," pp. 12 to 20. Next week, The Proverbs and foundations of 'EUROPEAN,' literature, plays, operas and folktales.

### Oregon Triggers Off Federal Extended Benefits

Oregon has triggered off federal extended unemployment insurance benefits as of the week ending July 6, 1991 according to Oregon Employment Division officials.

The federal extended benefits program, which triggered on the week of April 7, is triggering off now because the state insured unemployment rate - which had been rising during the winter months - dropped and stabilized during the spring, according to Employment Division Administrator Pamela Mattson.

Federal extended benefits are triggered on when the ratio of those receiving unemployment benefits to the number of workers covered by unemployment insurance law averages 5 percent or more for 13 weeks.

The federal extended benefits program is designed to provide additional unemployment benefits during periods of high unemployment. Oregon was in the extended benefit period for the mini-

mum 13 weeks required by law.

Mattson said it is unlikely that any further extensions will be available under the federal extended benefit program or the state additional benefits program unless Oregon's economy takes a critical turn for the worse. A state-funded additional benefit program, that Oregon went into in February, ended when federal extended benefits were triggered in April.

The maximum unemployment benefit generally available now is 26 weeks.

During the 13 weeks that federal extended benefits were available in Oregon, approximately 12,000 people took advantage of the program, bringing about \$12 million into local communities. Federal extended benefits are paid by both the state and federal government on a fifty/fifty basis.

The last time Oregon triggered on to federal extended benefits was in 1983, for a total of 13 weeks.

### DMV Grounds Juvenile Offenders

A total of 970 Oregonians aged 13 to 17 were denied driver licenses in the first six months of 1991 because of drug - or alcohol-related crimes. Ann Snyder with the state Motor Vehicles Division says more than 840 denials were for possession of alcohol or drugs, while 73 were for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

SNYDER: ALMOST ALL OF THE TEENAGERS CITED WERE MALES. BOYS SEEM TO MAKE UP THE BULK OF THE TEENAGERS INVOLVED WITH ALCOHOL OR DRUGS ALTHOUGH THE NUMBER OF GIRLS IS STARTING TO RISE. (:09)

Snyder says first offenders are denied driver licenses for one year or until the youth reaches 18.

Snyder says young people need to realize that driving privileges may be denied even when the offenses are not related to driving a motor vehicle.

### Oregon Citizens Alliance Has Requested A Meeting With Police Chief

Oregon Citizens Alliance has requested a meeting with Portland Police Chief Potter regarding his position on the hiring of homosexuals to the Portland Police Department.

OCA will be addressing the issue of voluntary hiring quotas for homosexuals in the Portland Department, as well as discussing new information that has come to OCA since the development of this controversy.

In a related development, OCA Chairman, Lon Mabon has filed a complaint with the Portland Police Department regarding a death threat made by a man who may be a member of the militant homosexual group, "Queer Nation", on the set of the AM Northwest following the television talk show at KATU-TV on July 9, 1991.

While initially minimizing the danger posed by the threat against his life, subsequent threatening calls to the OCA's Wilsonville office, including a bomb threat on July 10th, have caused Mr. Mabon to reconsider the seriousness of the threat and report it.

OCA has retained the services of a security consulting firm, and has received assurance from the Clackamas county Sheriff's department that additional patrols will be scheduled in the vicinity of the OCA office.

Portland Observer encourages our readers to write letters to the editor in response to any articles we publish.

United Airlines



Are • The • Proud • Sponsors • Of

### Reinvestments in the Community

#### "Boyz N The Hood" Opens To Nationwide Violence: Director Cries "Artistic Racism"

BY PROFESSOR MC KINLEY BURT

Many say this was to be expected as a determined breed of young, black moviemakers invaded Hollywood with a cluster of hard hitting "entertainment" products. The prediction was based upon the fact that over 30% of American moviegoers are black, and that whatever the intention of the director/writers, the predominate themes of violence and despair are what a mostly young audience will relate to. And the gory reception accorded "New Jack City" is given as a case in point.

The mounting toll of dead and critically injured at the nation's cinemas (all victims to date have been black) has provoked an unprecedented level of debate throughout the print and television media--in public places and in the homes. Opinions have been solicited from the criminal justice system, social agencies, parent groups, teenagers; and of course from the movie's director/writer, 23-year-old, black John Singleton. "The movie promotes peace--the growing cancellations represent 'artistic racism.'" That statement in itself has sparked fierce debate. Also, it occurs to wonder if the "concern" of the media should be held suspect. Many feel it has been more exploitive than concerned about black violence.

The Portland Observer would like to hear the readers' viewpoints and opinions on this growing nationwide controversy. We believe it would be very helpful if the residents of this

community--especially parents, grandparents, and social workers and students were to share their opinions on a matter of such serious import. While to date we do not know of any local repercussions, it would surely be wise to be prepared if this trend in "entertainment" continues. Write us at 4747 N.E. Martin Luther King Blvd. Portland, OR 97211.

We are certainly being supplied with a lot of issues for consideration. Mr. Singleton, the director and producer says "there is a need to separate the movie from reality." What does he mean? Can teenagers do that? What is reality for a gang member? He also said on network television, "I visited several theatres and I saw LOVE--I wasn't afraid to venture." It would seem that he picked his flicks. A mother of three teenagers asked me, "Can a man that young really assess the social and psychological impact of the movie--not only on the youngsters, but on a society that already believes the worst in most cases?"

But on the other hand, Dr. Alvin Poussaint, the noted black psychiatrist on the staff of Harvard University had this to say: "Very positive--not about gangs, but about family. I recommend it! Theatres should simply increase security like they did for New Jack City. Some kids got excited, caught up in it and stood up and cheered." So, evidently there are a number of viewpoints and there will be many more. Let's hear yours. Certainly, things prom-

ise to get more interesting all the time; the newest black Hollywood mogul is only 19 years of age, Matty Rich, "Straight Out of Brooklyn."

There is, of course, another approach to this situation. We could all suggest the many wonderful themes of black accomplishment, adventure, romance, literature and science which could be made into movies that would entertain and inspire Americans of all races and from all walks of life. Can you imagine blacks reprising their original roles in the world's religions, in technology, in the seminal formation of civilization--clearly documented?

We could draw wonderful scripts from Hannibal's defeats of the Roman legions, from the adventures of black buccaneers of the 17th century who sailed to Scotland and Ireland to conquer. There is the life of Alexander Dumas who wrote the "Three Musketeers," "The Count of Monte Cristo," and "Camille," the novel that was made into great operas by our most famed composers. The lives of many of the great black inventors and scientists would provide equally as interesting scripts. What about a film on the life of the top neuro- surgeon in America, young African American Dr. Ben Carson of Johns Hopkins; from housing project to worldwide recognition?

One could go on and on, but the point is made. There may be a "window of opportunity" here if we but seize the moment. Will we? Let's talk about it.

"Reinvestments in the Community" is a weekly column appearing in API publications through out the USA

**PORTLAND OBSERVER**

(USPS 959-680)  
OREGON'S OLDEST AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLICATION  
Established in 1970

<p><b>Alfred L. Henderson</b> Publisher</p>	<p><b>Joyce Washington</b> Operations Manager</p>
<p><b>Gary Ann Garnett</b> Business Manager</p>	

**The PORTLAND OBSERVER is published weekly by Exie Publishing Company, Inc.**  
4747 N.E. M.L.K., Jr. Blvd.  
Portland, Oregon 97211  
P.O. Box 3137  
Portland, Oregon 97208  
(503) 288-0033 (Office)  
FAX#: (503) 288-0015

*Deadlines for all submitted materials:*  
Articles: Monday, 5 p.m. -- Ads: Tuesday, 5 p.m.

**POSTMASTER: Send Address Changes to: Portland Observer, P.O. Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208. Second-class postage paid at Portland, Oregon.**

The Portland Observer welcomes freelance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self addressed envelope. All created design display ads become the sole property of this newspaper and can not be used in other publications or personal usage, without the written consent of the general manager, unless the client has purchased the composition of such ad. 1990 PORTLAND OBSERVER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED.

Subscriptions: \$20.00 per year in the Tri-County area; \$25.00 all other areas.  
The Portland Observer -- Oregon's Oldest African-American Publication -- is a member of The National Newspaper Association -- Founded in 1885, and The National Advertising Representative Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., New York, NY.