

its roots in ancient Egypt through the Greek transmission and the later Roman extensions. Then Europe fell into the Dark Ages after a period of creativity. After a sleep of nearly a millennia, the African genesis, amplified and transmitted by the Moors of North Africa, helped set the stage for the Renaissance in science and learning (Van Sertima, 1992). It is not that the European Renaissance is African! Rather there is a deep current of unfolding that draws heavily from our shared genetic, embryological, and psychological origin as an Africoid species in all its diversifications and surface-structure manifestations.

We now turn our attention to something that has been alluded to throughout this chapter. At various times and at various junctions we have suggested that there is a common route or an enfolded shared source of not only genetic, historical, and embryological significance, but also one of shared consciousness and shared receptivity to the world process. This we have referred to as the African unconscious. It is the substrata out of which all human variations of consciousness have unfolded. It is in essence the collective unconscious of humanity, the ideational and experiential inheritance of the entire hominid line arching back beyond even *Homo habilis* to the first adventures out of the trees on the edge of the savannas. Humanity originated in Africa and did not leave Africa until a relatively short time ago from an evolutionary perspective. Humankind is essentially an African species. It is African in developmental consciousness at its deepest levels. We now turn our attention to that idea and explore it in all of its various root manifestations.

2 THE AFRICAN UNCONSCIOUS

The collective unconscious does not develop individually, but is inherited.
—C. G. Jung, *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*
in *The Collected Works*

There probably exists in the mental life of the individual not only what he has experienced himself, but also what he brought with him at birth, fragments of phylogenetic origin, an archaic heritage. . . . The archaic heritage of mankind includes not only dispositions, but also ideational contents; memory traces of the experiences of former generations.

—Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*

THE NATURE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

Before plunging into the netherworld of the unconscious, it is necessary to say just what on earth is meant by the idea of an unconscious mind. Generally speaking, it means a dimension of mental life in which information is processed outside of conscious awareness. The recognition of this arches back to the ancient Kemetite idea of the creative flux out of which life and conscious awareness arises, the so-called Primeval Waters of Nun (Hourning, 1986). Parallel to it is their notion of consciousness descending in sleep and in death to an all-Black underworld of symbols, animals, forces, and dynamics, only to reawaken or be resurrected in the future. This is the all-Black underworld of their Amenta (King, 1990). In both instances, the priests, both male and female, were *conscious* of this agency of the mind, and it was fully integrated in both medicine and religion, e.g., use of hypnosis, trance, and dream interpretation. These dynamics were known in the Old Kingdom period!

The use of the unconscious reached its most evolved state in the so-called "sleep temples" of these ancient times. The techniques of initiation involved the strict observance of certain ascetic rules of diet, living, and self-discipline, and some systematic method of meditation. This was believed to intensify or awaken the spiritual impulse. In some sleep temples large but harmless serpents were present on the floor while the initiate lay half asleep or in trance in the darkened room. This created a highly aroused state. During this time, the priest, male or female, would verbally guide the patient or student/neophyte, by means of hypnosis or other altered state of consciousness, through certain realms of experience and into deep trance. There occurred a temporary dissociation of the "I" or "ego" from consciousness. The unconscious or Amenta underworld of beings and forces were then manifest to some level of experience. The initiate's body, wrapped in grave clothes or other ceremonial garments and enclosed in the temple tomb after ritual baths and a thorough "interview" by the priest, hovered on the ledge between life and death. Many of the phenomena that now accompany the NDE, or clinical near-death experience, arose, including luminous experiences and the witnessing of spiritual beings. The dissociation between ordinary consciousness and numinous or spiritual experience was temporarily overcome by this intentional but temporary counterdissociation using trance and hypnosis! When the neophyte was awakened from the procedure, the priest would call forth the "traveler" between worlds in what was literally a ritual of resurrection. A mystical death had been experienced, and the neophyte now had a living memory-knowledge of his deeper eternal self that is projected into the realm of space, time, and matter. He or she had seen beyond the five senses and was "born again." These Kemetite Egyptian

even older than the Egyptians and originated in the Nubian civilization that was prior to the Egyptian civilization. As mentioned before, the cult of the Black Madonna in all its variations can be found scattered throughout Europe and the Near East. This is a manifestation of the memory and the influence of the collective unconscious in its African expression. As we shall see in future chapters, numerous luminaries of the Greek tradition actually studied in the Egyptian mystery schools and later translated directly the texts and philosophy of ancient Egypt into their own (Finch, 1990; James, 1954; Schwaller de Lubicz, 1961).

When the genius of Kemetite Egyptian civilization was rediscovered by Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries, this threatened return of the repressed was handled differently. Egypt was mentally and "scientifically" taken out of Africa and made an extension of European and Middle Eastern history and development. It became "Egypt and Africa." Along with this came a sudden interest in Indian culture and the Sanskrit language. The Indo-Aryan connection to India was heightened, and slowly a Caucasian genesis was seen in Hindu civilization. The indigenous African was erased from the teaching of history and the unfolding of human civilization. This subtle psychological process continues to this day on a large scale. With a few notable exceptions, in the Eurocentric tradition it was simply inconceivable that a highly evolved civilization that gave light to the mind could have its genesis in a dark and mysterious world and then move in an African migration down toward the Mediterranean. This is despite the fact that the Romans did not come until Caesar, around 30 B.C.E., that the Greeks did not come in mass numbers before Alexander in 333 B.C.E., that the Jews did not come to be known before Abraham and Joseph, that the Assyrians, Phoenicians, and many others did not come until very late in the day. By that time the Kemetite lens of the human mind had already developed several written scripts, astronomy, medicine, mathematics, mummification, a form of biological psychiatry, a precise calendar, the pyramids, and by the 8th century B.C.E. in the 25th Dynasty, had made contact with peoples from southern India to the Americas. Such awareness must be repressed if you are to hold people in bondage and justify the belief that they are an inferior race. Otherwise, a deep disquiet disturbs the peace and the order of society is merely based on pure power, aggression, and savagery. This is incongruous with a self-perception of being a person or people of reason, enlightened and committed to the spiritual equality of all human souls in the community of God. Yes, all this must be repressed and replaced with a perception that is more soothing and justifying of one's actions and the "mission" of one's culture. And yet this deep memory does not stay dead. It is alive and gives rise to our deeper experiences and perhaps our earliest, most noble aspirations. It is within all of us and all of us are within it.

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initiates were called the "twice born," who now had a direct contact with the great macrocosm of which they were a microcosmic reflection. They had ever so briefly "come forth by day." This was the journey and drama of Osiris, an adventure that we will return to later and find echoed throughout this book.

This ancient approach to the Amenta, or unconscious, began in Kemet and spread down the Nile and then throughout the Mediterranean world of Greece, Rome, and the Near East. At one time there were over 400 such temples to the god Asclepius. They existed from 600 B.C.E. to 500 C.E. The medical caduceus, a staff with a serpent entwined around it seven times, was taken from this period. The whole point, beyond physical-medical healing, was to "awaken" the sleepers to the deeper spiritual life existing in the unconscious depths of their experience. It was to *re-member*, to put back together again the consciousness of the finite individual material life with the infinite collective and luminous life of the great spiritual being. When this was accomplished, the neophyte matured into one of the "sons of light" and was capable of "coming forth by day and going forth by night." After the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, there was both struggle and cultural destruction and eventually a papal bigotry arose against these techniques, for hundreds of years driving them underground. For over a thousand years the knowledge was all but lost in Europe until the Enlightenment, when its scholars began to notice again that the mind was active on several levels at once. The personal unconscious is now an accepted mental terrain in science and philosophy. The deeper regions of this unconscious, the unconscious as experienced in the Amenta, however, is still taboo to much of Western science.

Leibniz, in his *New Essays on Human Understanding* (1704/1981), openly suggested that the human mind harbored an unconscious process that influenced behavior. He said, "there are hundreds of indications leading us to conclude that at every moment there is in us an infinity of perceptions unaccompanied by awareness or reflection." "The choice we make arises from these insensible stimuli, which, mingled with the actions of objects and our bodily interiors, make us find one direction of movement more comfortable than the other." It was also Leibniz who, in contrast to Newton and others, emphasized an interpenetrating and wavelike view of reality, a view that implies underlying rhythms, harmonies, and resonances as the ordering structures of the physical universe.

Before Freud, the psychiatrist Janet had suggested the clinical concept of dissociation, which deeply influenced James in America, and later Hilgard. Pierre and Jastrow, working in experimental psychophysical psychology, suggested the phenomena of subliminal perception, which was picked up by others researching unconscious learning and sensation. Helmholtz and others had introduced the idea of automatic processing and unconscious inference

in perception (Kihlstrom, Barnhardt, & Tataryn, 1992). So by the time Freud came on the scene, there was much in the air about unconscious mental life and information outside of awareness that dynamically influenced human behavior.

When Freud arose, he had both a medical background and recent observations of dissociation and hysterical phenomena. He also, as we shall see later, had a foundation in certain currents of Jewish mysticism. His genius was the integration of these vibrant currents in a stunning new synthesis. In a crucial way Freud and the other Western explorers of the newly rediscovered unconscious helped reintroduce the "magical" level of the mind into a Europe whose vision and science were descending deeper and deeper into the three-dimensional world of materialism, where the soul is eclipsed and the essence of humanity was being reduced to the automata of matter, cause, effect, and the rigid space and time world locked in the senses. Einstein in his own way and at about the same time was effecting his own liberation with the exploration of the space-time continuum and transformations between matter and energy.

Freud's unconscious was one that fomented with passion, feeling, primitive impulses, and deep biological drives. In order to hold these in check, to keep the vibrant stream locked in "knots," required force, psychic force. Freud focused on the process of repression as opposed to dissociation. Yet even Freud acknowledged a deep "racial memory" that is inherited by the organism. In this way, he was connected with Jung, who embraced a "collective unconscious" of shared ideas, images, dynamisms, and archetypes.

Nonlocality and the Unconscious

Today, there is little disagreement that there is an unconscious agency in mental life. The question is how intelligent it is and what areas it covers. A good deal of experimental data suggest that nonconscious information-acquisition processes are extremely fast and set up programs that later quickly encode similar information (Lewicki, Hill, & Czyzewska, 1992). In the areas of clinical psychopathology, it is acknowledged that an unconscious agency of mental life can dissociate and exchange or transform one situation for another. These are the so-called dissociative and conversion disorders. Patients with brain damage or other organic pathologies are capable of discriminative responses that they cannot see, the so-called "blindsight syndrome," and, like sighted people, they are capable of certain forms of subliminal perception. There is a wealth of clinical, experimental, and theoretical information we could present on this that would take us far afield. The main thrust here is that the human mind has a dynamic hidden mental life that absorbs images and complex information, processes it on simple and appar-

ently sophisticated levels, is capable of subtle perceptions that influence behavior, and has a deep, implicit memory of important and repeated situations.

This is equally so in the deep-structure syntax of language, for language and grammar, even universal grammar, has embedded in them the ideas, preferences, and intuitive apprehensions of reality. The unconscious here is, therefore, *not* to be identified exclusively with the Freudian unconscious, but rather contains or subsumes it. It also, like Jung's fuller conception, embraces deep and primordial racial memories that are passed across the waves and waves of human generations and are *implicate* or enfolded in each of us. The ego is a local and boundary-setting process. The unconscious or the ancient Kemetic Amentu is a nonlocal phenomenon. The basic "building block" of the psyche and soma is not the isolated, egoic "atom," so to speak, but rather the interconnected, nonlocal "quantum of action." Nonlocality is a feature of the everyday world! It is also, as we will see in the chapter on psychoneurology and the solar logos, an intimate feature of the nervous system and the brain! This unfolds different psychological and psychospiritual field dynamics from the intrapsychic, interpersonal, or even systemic model of influence and causality. The world process, including the psychological plane, is inherently transtemporal and transpatial.

This transtemporal and transpatial matrix of consciousness, energy, and information over duration and development appears to have a profound effect on the members of the matrix. The "wave" form, if you will, acts as an envelope over the separate "parts" of the system here, and the system itself is rooted in an Africoïd phenomenon. The deepest images and memories are primordial and African, whether we like it or not. This includes the deepest primordial images of the familial unconscious. This is true for Europeans as well as modern peoples of African lineage! This primal Alajobi is peopled with the earliest memories of faces of the Blacks and Browns, or "moros," the parents of the human race. They are real and embedded at a certain level of the unconscious, almost like mental archetypes. We bear witness to these under extraordinary conditions, in ancestral visions, and in the vision-quest of indigenous peoples.

We accept and *extend* the tenets of the so-called cognitive revolution in psychology and science that subsumed the mechanistic-behavioral and purely physicalistic-reductionist mode of explanation. The new vision here suggests that these deep primordial currents *and* the emergent mental forces are actually causal and supervenient over lower-order brain and physical states. We *extend* it here to suggest that higher-order enfolded *consciousness* is prior to, all-pervasive within, and causal over even emergent *mental states* and actually arches into the generative order of creativity and consciousness itself. This is both the intimate scope and the subtle reach of the web we are all enfolded in, the African unconscious.

We know that our personal consciousness comes and then goes in sleep, in altered states of consciousness, in psychopathological conditions of various kinds, and perhaps in death. It is at least embedded in the world and also, it seems, emerges out of the unconscious. But so far we have not been able to "locate" it definitely anywhere in the brain. Certain regions are more densely associated with it, but it is yet uncertainly located in the brain. It appears to be inherently unlocatable, at least on the personal level.

Also, human consciousness is at the very least embedded in the material world, acts upon and is acted upon by the material world but, again, so far is uncertainly located in the world. Excursions into neuroscience and cognitive psychology will not lead us to the front door of consciousness either, although we would come to know the general neighborhood quite well. The twin pillars of contemporary physics, relativity theory and quantum mechanics, both acknowledge the observing consciousness as an implicit part of the deep and lyrical equation with reality. Relativity reminds us that we cannot view the observer beyond or outside of the observed system and that this consciousness must be granted a specific and unique space-time coordinate in reference to the entire system. Quantum mechanics, from the other direction, suggests that the conscious observer must be present for the reality to be confirmed by the system at all (Kafatos & Nadeau, 1990). In both situations there is no local human consciousness with absolutely clear perception in space and time. Implicitly the "location" of consciousness must be outside the local corridors of space and time in order for transcendent perception to arise. Certain meditative disciplines and traditions and now recently certain suggestive trends in modern science intimate that consciousness and elements of human identity may indeed reflect nonlocal dynamics.

When we turn to striking phenomena reported in African religious disciplines and experimental phenomena, we will return again and again to this notion of consciousness as nonlocal. It is not so much that modern science is *confirming* these ancient phenomena, only that the philosophy of science is expanding to recognized dynamics it has heretofore found inexplicable.

A subtle but important point must be acknowledged at this juncture, and that is the double-edged blade of looking at anything through the eye of "the unconscious." Just as the quantum and relativistic physicists use abstruse mathematics to populate the universe with all kinds of exotic creatures and processes, only some of which are discovered to be "real" while the others remain only mathematical possibilities, so must we be careful in calling something not seen unconscious simply because it is theoretically possible. For that very humbling reason, the processes and experiences outlined in this book will keep referring back to the actual *lived experience* of students, teachers, and initiates of all the different disciplines we will mention.

They believe that the true substances—that is real selves of such objects as man, trees, rivers, hills, desertland, fishes, crocodiles, horses and the like—are these forces which continue in being after the physical forms of the objects have been rendered inactive somehow. As illustrations, they aver that when a fire is extinguished its real self is sheathed in ashes awaiting the next occasion to burst forth in flames; that when a banana tree matures, the real banana assumes new expressions in offshoots, and that a tree when cut down by a wood cutter, comes out as a tender sapling. The capability of human beings to reproduce their kinds is merely one way of expressing the substance or realness of Human Beings. (Akiwowo, 1980, p. 17)

In this worldview is rooted the notion and implicit perception of continuous transformation, including the reincarnation of all beings high and low. It is what we will later look at as the Osirian process of eternal renewal, because, as it is expressed in the West African Yoruba traditions of Ifa and Orunmila, "the purpose of the human physical form is the transmission of certain spiritual values to the inhabitants of the Earth through human beings" (Akiwowo, 1980, p. 11).

Personalism, therefore, includes not only this intuition of spirit inhabiting and pervading material and temporal reality, but it seems to go beyond this to include as a generalized predisposition or mode of perception and cognition and therefore *experience* in the world, the proclivity or tendency to unfold an enfolded higher-order energy and informational matrix at times. This can be seen in the religious systems when an Orisha or Loa, by way of rhythmic entrainment, is unfolded into a more localized situation from a higher-order enfolded reality. This is again a form of the top-down mode of cognitive psychology mentioned earlier, which acknowledges that emergent states of conscious brain activity can come to control the activity of the lower states of activity that gave rise to it and, thereby, influence its behavior. But we ask, what if these "emergent states" are tapping into something, some intelligent energy that is hidden, ordered, and already preexisting? There would be interconnected fields, rhythms, levels of information, forms of intelligent communication. It would be to accept that there are systems of order and planes of intelligence both higher and lower than the human plane. Rhythm is reflected in the primary structure and ordering process of the universe (Cousto, 1990; Flatschler, 1990). Matter itself, from the quantum mechanical view, is a localization of waves and rhythms of probability superimposed upon each other but not absolutely located in one area, rather having its boundaries extended throughout the universe of energy and information. For the African sensibility, rhythm is fundamental and orders both the heartbeat and the orbits of the stars and planets, not to mention communal life and the "spirit world." It embraces a transpersonal and transcendental dimension of reality, a realm from which other phenomena such as healing,

So what are some of the basic principles we might discover if we were to take a bold exploration of the African unconscious? How might these be not only unfolded and differentiated from but also seen as the archetypal or enfolded root form implicit in other philosophical, scientific, and psychospiritual traditions? We will begin a preliminary exploration of this. It is by no means exhaustive, but tentative and suggestive in places. We hope to throw more light on this ancient and overlooked paradigm, a paradigm that was the prototype and the template of humanity's great arch up from primordial times into the light of current day civilization. What are its common routes, what are its earliest forms?

SOME BASIC TENETS OF THE AFRICAN UNCONSCIOUS

Civilization has given rise to different visions of and approaches to reality. These different paradigms can be quite scientific and also give rise to our deepest intuitions of the nature of light, consciousness, and reality itself. In the West, meaning primarily Europe and current-day United States, materialism has taken root as the fundamental notion as to the basis of reality. In other words, physical matter, including energy, is taken to be the primordial reality out of which all other things are composed, transformed, and evolved. In Asia, meaning primarily India but also China and Japan, the spiritual foundation is considered to be the ultimate basis of reality. Matter and energy are taken to be manifestations of spirit. These two world intuitions would seem to dominate the intellectual landscape of modern times. However, there is a third paradigm that is often overlooked but that has also guided humanity for eons. This is the approach of personalism, an approach more indigenous to the African intuition of reality.

In "personalism" the essence of reality is taken to be the personhood of persons, objects, situations, and forces. Personalism is not to be identified with archaic reasoning, but rather there is an emphasis on the "essence" of a person or a force. It implies a certain pantheism in nature. The notion of atheism is itself quite alien in this worldview (Asante, 1984). The world process is literally one of personalized spiritual forces interacting and inter-connected with each other within a nonlinear causal matrix of space, matter, intentionality, and time. As one contemporary African sociologist has put it:

I am strongly inclined to believe . . . that there is an unwell [worldview] characteristic of the African peoples wherever they may live in *asuwada eniyan* [socialized human life], and regardless of the climatic and physical condition. Africans, to my mind, perceive spiritual beings in the world around them.

psi, and prophecy emerge within the context of a disciplined psychospiritual lineage. We will return to this theme again in later chapters. Suffice it to say this is not "primitive" in the simplistic sense, but in the sense of "prime" or first cause.

It was actually Auguste Comte (1830) who originally gave the notion of personalism a bad name by associating it negatively with the idea of "primitive and less articulate, irrational, and more archaic." Eventually this tradition became even more pejorative, e.g., inferior, antilogical, alogical, "impressionistic," "prelogical," etc. This arose in Europe during the heyday of logical positivism. It was also historically a time when the European powers were supreme in terms of military power and technological science, and had geopolitical and financial hegemony over the other parts of the world. However, the notion of personalism did not completely submerge in European philosophy. In fact we can find certain aspects of "personalism" in the philosophy of the great paleontologist, priest, and mystic Teilhard de Chardin. Here in this great Jesuit visionary and scientist we find the personal imbued not only in the day-to-day activities of humankind, but also in evolutionary philosophy and in the divine milieu.

The notion of personalism progressively finds more expression in climatically scientific events and day-to-day circles within the lifestyles of families. In other words, in families the personality or the personhood of another person is primary as opposed to their thinghood. From the perspective of personhood, no one person or situation or thing is ever ultimately separate or autonomous from any other thing. Psychological and emotional boundaries are a matter of emphasis or focus, not a matter of absoluteness. The so-called "participation mystique" is an outgrowth and natural expression of this dynamic interpenetration paradigm of energies and essences in the world process. This is most clear in issues surrounding the notions of blame, causality, and emotional influence as seen in both family therapy and family medicine practice. From this arises one of the fundamental differentiations one finds in the personalism view that is a manifestation of the African unconscious. In other words, the collective and familial emphasis on the web of identity and causality is highlighted as opposed to the more individual or egoic. One finds this in many areas of the African unconscious paradigm.

Diop (1991) and others have alluded to this numerous times. Looking at the collective and familial versus the individual and egoic, one reveals a number of interesting "dichotomies." In other words, if we took the collective and familial and placed this opposite the individual and egoic, we'd be able to notice very much an emphasis on the syncretic versus the analytical, the poly as opposed to the mono, the rhythmic as opposed to the melodic, the continuous as opposed to the discrete, the organic as opposed to the

mechanistic, the inductive as opposed to the deductive, pattern recognition as opposed to discrete identities, and a sensory tactile mode as opposed to the mood of isolation and withdrawal. The oral tradition is emphasized over the written here, and it defines time in relation to interpersonal events in the past and future (White & Parham, 1990). These are of course simplifications, but they begin to give one a notion of the differences and the drift and the tone of the different approaches inherent and embedded in the African unconscious. Linda James Myers (1993), in her compendium of African-centered belief systems and paradigms, has succinctly organized this perspective, echoing some of the same dichotomies as Diop while placing an emphasis on the optimal functioning of the human mind and spirit. (See Figure 22.)

There are different streams that make up the African unconscious in terms of the psychological process. Nothing is foreign or alien to it, rather certain areas are emphasized more than others. From the African unconscious emerges an approach to dream interpretation and theory that has been elaborated in other works (Bynum, 1993). In the African unconscious, as we've just seen, personalism is emphasized and to some extent it enfolds both spiritualism and materialism. It is more than possible to do science in each of these worldviews. This will have profound implications for certain areas of psychology and the scientific process.

Personalism, spiritualism, and materialism each have a special strength and none are totally distinct from the others. They do, however, see each other differently. Spiritualism sees the world process as primarily a manifestation of transcendental intelligence—matter, energy, and mind all being projections of spirit into time and every manner of circumstances. As the great scholar-mystic and yogi, Sri Aurobindo, said "some people see Beings and others see Forces" (Satprem, 1968, p. 198). Materialism on the other hand sees spirit as either a myth or at best like mind itself, a mere energetic epiphenomenon of matter, while personalism is relegated to either "archaic" thinking or just plain primitivism. Personalism sees matter and spirit co-existent in every form as essences which, while eternally alive in some *transformation*, are subtle expressions of a great personalizing Being. It is again more than possible to do science *within* each worldview.

The Web of Transformations

One of the other primary principles or matrices of the African unconscious, as we said earlier, is the active perception of transformations in all of the life processes and creation. In other words, $E = mc^2$ is an active personalized perception of what is occurring in nature. Again, some people see Beings, others see Forces. In both paradigms it is an active *perception* of

constant transformations. This occurs in the creation of polyforms of rhythms in music, in the creation of shifting patterns in the production of textiles, and in the religious intuitions in the lives of practitioners (Thompson, 1983). The earliest known metaphysical and philosophical codification of an active perception of endless transformations in nature and human life can be seen in the Kemet Egyptian text of the *Going Forth By Day*, more commonly known as the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, written some 3,500 years before the birth of Christ. In this active perception of transformations in all of the life processes in creation, personal or egoic death is seen as real, yet an illusion to the soul and a radical shift in spiritual consciousness. There is an inherent belief in the levels of consciousness as reflected in the perception of the presence of deceased family members at different levels of subtle embodiment and our capacity to make contact with them. This is seen as a supersession or fear from the physicalistic and traditional materialistic point of view but is seen as a living reality from an Afrocentric point of view. We might also add that most peoples throughout the Earth also share this intuition. Embedded in this worldview—a worldview that gave rise to the first sophisticated medical science, architecture, the building of the pyramids, and mathematics—is the intuition that consciousness itself is implicit everywhere in nature and the world process. Consciousness is believed in living principle to pervade the spaces between the stars and the shifting dances below the quantum. In science, particularly in medicine and biology, it gave rise to the belief in the projection of healing to others and the belief in a living energy throughout the body that can be used by skilled medical and psychological practitioners. It gave rise to the use of sophisticated trance, elaborate herbs, and specialized medicines, both psychosomatic and otherwise, for the healing of the body. These techniques were later partially absorbed by the Romans and Greeks. It also significantly enough gave rise to the first codified notion of an evolutionary energy in the body, known as Kundalini.

In ancient Kemet Egypt this active perception of transformations in all of the life processes and creation is seen metaphorically and mythologically in the dynamics of the earth and sky as intrinsically united. In other words, there is no body-mind split or inherent dissociation as one finds in certain other forms of Western and even Asian psychologies and spiritual traditions. The Hermetic tradition is intuited and rooted here. It's an intuition of an implicate order in nature in which each part reflects each other part in nature. An aspect or permutation of this finds expression again today in certain areas of science, such as David Bohm's (1980) implicate order as outlined in *Wholeness in the Implicate Order*. We see that it is the intuition that different aspects of the entire living, conscious field of life have reflected or enfolded in them all other aspects of the field, including the body and the

FIGURE 22. Optimal Conceptualization: Methods of an Ancient Afrocentric Psychology.

Based on the philosophical assumptions and principles serving as the foundation of the worldview of ancient Africans, a conceptual system has been identified that empowers us toward the achievement of everlasting peace and happiness. When we value such an aim, it may be described as optimal. In the West, however, most of us have been socialized into a worldview undergirded by a conceptual system that is less than optimal, yielding racism, sexism, classism, and so on. This conceptual system is termed sub-optimal.

Described below are the differences between the optimal and sub-optimal conceptual systems and their consequent worldviews.

Assumptions	Optimal Systems	Sub-Optimal Systems
Ontology (nature of reality)	Spiritual (known in an extrasensory fashion) and material (known through the five senses) as one	Material with possible spiritual aspect is separate and secondary
Epistemology (nature of knowledge)	Self-knowledge known through symbolic imagery and rhythm	External knowledge known through counting and measuring
Axiology (nature of value)	Highest value placed on positive interpersonal relationships	Highest value placed on objects or acquiring objects
Logic (reason)	Diurnal—emphasizes union of opposites (both/and conclusions)	Dichotomous—emphasizes duality (either/or conclusions)
Process	Ntology—all sets are interrelated through human and spiritual networks	Technology—all sets are repeatable and reproducible
Identity	Extended self, multidimensional	Individual form
Self-worth	Intrinsic in being	Based on external criteria or materialism
Values guiding behavior	Spiritualism, oneness with nature, communalism	Materialism, competition, individualism
Sense of well-being	Positively consistent despite appearances due to relationship with source	In constant flux and struggle
Life, space	Infinite and unlimited (spirit manifesting)	Finite and limited (beginning with birth and ending with death)

Developed by Linda James Myers, Ph.D., this table shows many, although not all, of the conceptual and paradigmatic differentiations between present-day "Western" philosophical assumptions and those of traditional and ancient African conceptual systems. (Permission of Linda James Myers, *Understanding An*

and withdrawal from this vitalistic life current. It is believed that ancient man was immersed in the unconscious and that therefore the rise of civilization is a matter of increasing *repression* of this unconscious and its vitalistic life current. For the Kemets it was not so much repression as sublimation and controlled direction of the life current. For the former the unconscious, especially an Africoid unconscious, must be repressed. For the latter it needs to be integrated and divinized by discipline and controlled tactile sensuality and rhythm.

This intuition or perception of life or vitalism in everything that exists is not confined to philosophy alone even in our own day. The founders of modern quantum mechanics felt that supposedly purely physical reality, including micro-objects, had a certain "animate-sentient"-like aspect. In other words, embedded in the primary constitution of the material world was a certain consciousness and life or initial capacity for volition and self-activity (Miller, 1991). This is to admit that consciousness and life are in a sense *immanent* in everything and that *biology has a more fundamental status than physics* in the world process. Human consciousness is a living part of a vast, interconnected community of spirit, information, and energy. This extends to the perception and belief from the African unconscious perspective in intelligences above and beyond ordinary human experience that are fuller and still natural expression of evolutionary unfoldment. These forms of intelligence are believed to communicate themselves within the context of disciplined attention and bodily absorption within specifically designed ritualistic processes. Rhythm brings one into attunement with this vibratory matrix. This root intuition is what informs the African unconscious that personhood and spirit are in all forces, objects, and persons. Africans do not believe, as E. B. Tylor (1871) and other early Eurocentric scholars of Africa suggested when they talked of animism, that *every* object has a soul. Rather they tend to believe certain spirits can have specific objects as their abode or habitat and that they can be embodied or attached to material-energetic objects and through these objects exert their influence (Opoku, 1978). This notion and the transformations of consciousness will reappear throughout this book whenever this consciousness turns its attention to forces and interactions in the worlds, and whenever we talk of life force, a vitalism pervasive throughout the cosmos, we will look toward the current scientific idea of biological superconductivity.

Rhythm and Organization

Another primary matrix of the African unconscious is the apprehension or perception of rhythm or the propensity for pattern repetition as intrinsic in nature. We mentioned it earlier in reference to *personalism* and

wider environment. The ancient Kemetic Egyptians believed that a subtle seed of the pharaoh himself was enfolded in their own bodies and vice versa. From the myth of Osiris, they believed that the god's dismembered body was buried in sacred sites all over Egypt, binding the nation into one body and civilization, renewing its life and energy from time to time.

The upshot of all of this is that there is an intuition that there is a constant and active transformation of body, mind, and consciousness in the life process at all levels. Not only great trees, rivers, animals, and ancestors, but also inanimate nature itself seems to reflect or exhibit mental and spiritual qualities. Death is perceived as an illusion of the embodied soul and a radical shift in consciousness. In this worldview, consciousness is prior to and implicate in the body-mind, eternal, and all-pervasive. Individual essences or human beings participate and go through transformations within this greater sea of consciousness. It is all-pervasive in noumena and yet localizing in phenomena and therein personalizing in its specific aspects.

A Basic Aliveness in All Things

One of the other primordial matrices of the African unconscious is the belief, perception, and intuition of a vitalism in all things. In West African tradition, it is often referred to as "Ase," another form of conscious energy or shakti, and dwells in all things. It is what artists seek to evoke in their work and religious persons seek to manifest. Like rhythm, it is imbued with the sense of time and pattern, and is thought to be deeper than the three dimensions of an object, yet gives the object its life force. This can be traced in a formalized fashion all the way back to the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*. This vitalism can be understood as a heightened ability to experience the essence of the all-pervasive life feeling or the life current (Bynum, 1994). It has led to the valued and refined ability, particularly the familiarly or collectively heightened ability at times, to enter into trance states of so-called possession for healing and other purposes. The essence of things and the forces that bind and *mutually define* people are experienced as primary.

In ancient Egypt the vitalism of the king was associated with his or her capacity to rule in the royal line. It historically grew out of a cycle of eight years of a royal lineage. The origin of this is shrouded in history and no doubt the result of ancient tribal rites (Diop, 1974). However, the notion of vitalism or life energy or life intensity is primary in the African unconscious worldview. It also is subject to intense criticism when encountering a force or a civilization that has a more dissociated or hostile approach to the life current. In that situation vitalism is seen as "lower, dirty, primitive, sexual," and all the other negative connotations that one too often associates with darkness. In many European traditions, there is a subtle mood of isolation

just now in the context of vitalism, but it requires a little more clarification. Rhythm is one of the great and powerful ordering principles in nature. There was believed to be a hidden consonance between matter, rhythm, harmony, and life, of interpenetrating forces and frequencies that bound the universe together. This extended from the stars to human life to the forces in the deepest interior of the Earth. In the external world this rhythmic sense and rhythmic apprehension of the universe led to the construction of the first exact calendars. It also led to the perception of cycles and cycles within cycles. This eventually gave rise to the intuition of the end enfolded in the beginning and the beginning implicit in the end. This opens to the eternal enfolded in time. Out of rhythm and cycles came mathematics and indeed the zodiac. All of these were later codified in the earliest forms of African science in the Kemet civilizations of Egypt and Nubia.

In the external world this rhythmic sense can be seen in the "mystical trances" that are highly identified with the music of Blacks and dark-skinned peoples. We mention in this context also the whirling dervishes of the Muslim lineage, particularly the *Zhikr*. Each of these involves the repetition of certain rhythms, words, and so forth in a very intense regular fashion combined with breath and bodily gestures. When these are intensified, this leads to an obliteration or eclipse of ordinary consciousness and the benign fixation of the psyche and other mental processes such that a transformation in consciousness can arise. This is similar to certain processes formalized in Yoga in which there is a fusion of concentration, contemplation, and stages of Samadhi so that eventually the emergence of a transcendental consciousness occurs.

Rhythm finds expression in the healing arts that use incantation and repetition of powerful phrases to affect mental and physical states. Like different radio frequencies that inhabit the same "space," the different rhythms of the body, soul, spirit, and "other" can coexist in the same space of the person, a person who takes as self-evident that he or she lives in a multidimensional universe. Rhythmic entrainment can also unfold these dimensions under disciplined conditions. We will have more to say about this later when we focus on trance healing and the bioinformational field of the body. For now we are outlining the rootwork of this paradigm.

In the context of rhythm giving rise to cycles, calendars, and mathematics, it is significant that the Egyptian calendar is the oldest and the most accurate until those of relatively recent times. It was in use prior to 4236 B.C.E. Rhythm and interconnectedness are the primary matrix out of which modern physics operates. Physics finds a certain parallel to these phenomena in the eastern or Asian forms of mysticism in which fluctuations, oscillations, and so forth are seen to be the literal "tissue of reality." The ancient classic, the *Tao De Ching*, is another variation of the subtle rhythms and cycles of

nature and their reflections of the cosmic dance. When this basic apprehension of pattern repetition and rhythmic incantation is fully recognized and exploited, it will influence the process of insight and memory and group cognitive behavior and in the process lead to a revolution in the educational system of America's inner cities.

It has, no doubt, crossed your mind that rhythm and waves or wavefronts are much the same in the sense of their repetition, pattern creation, and ability to carry, store, and communicate information. It is implicit in this perspective that each person, each individual, past and present, regardless of surface phenotype, carries this deep rhythmic signature of an African origin. It is reflected in our genetic structure, our hominid morphology, our shared early Paleolithic adventures, and it is constantly recapitulated anew in our individual embryological unfoldment. These individual wavefronts, like all waves, are interconnected with each other and their hominid signature over time, and their repetition creates a holonomic sea of consciousness and information that sustains on a deep level the African unconscious. The rhythmic- or frequency-oriented apprehension of the world process is actually a direct path into the spectral domain of this holonomic vision of the cosmos. This includes our intuitions about bodily and terrestrial currents and forces that, while not presently accepted in the domain of scientific thought, are nevertheless enduring perceptions of natural occurrences and, therefore, worthy of our respect.

Magical-Religious Perception

Still another foundational intuition or matrix within the African unconscious paradigm is the perception of so-called magical-religious permutations in nature. Here different psychological boundaries are perceived to be exactly that, different and shifting. The practical fall-out of this is in the human encounter with the phenomenon of death. Death is a shift in consciousness, a transformation of one's self on the divine matrix. The belief in death is an illusion of finitude. For this very reason ancestor reverence, not ancestor worship, is known throughout Africa and many parts of the world associated with the African lineage. There is an active perception and an open embrace of the experience of "psychic forces" in reality, the *literal felt presence* of the essences of other personhoods. This is seen to be primitive and is anathema in contemporary Western scientific circles, but it seems to be the living reality for most peoples of the planet. The world is not a circus of dead matter and its chance and random permutations. Scientific materialism with its "faith" in reductionism, its "belief" that matter can ultimately be understood by mechanics and mathematics, and its "hope" that objective mind separate from the phenomena it observes can discover physical

laws with an exact correspondence to physical theory and measurement—this scientific fundamentalism would have us believe all other thinking is but archaic thought. The totality of the world process is composed certainly of matter and energy, but also spirit and the essence or personhood of persons, forces, and other aspects of nature. There is a tacit acceptance of all of these—matter, spirit, and personhood—in a unified field within the African unconscious worldview. It is just that at certain times specific rhythmic vibrational dimensions are emphasized more than others. Spirit and personhood are not dissociated from the field of matter, nor are the others dissociated from each other. They are interconnected, each aspect implicating all others.

These motifs find beautiful, abundant, and recurrent expression in the oral and literary tradition of African peoples and those deeply affected by a sustained contact with people of African lineage, such as the Spanish and Portuguese of the Iberian peninsula and the Americas, including the Caribbean. African-American folktales speak of the people who could fly (Hamilton, 1985), of “supernatural” forces imbuing the world, psychic events, and epiphanies of the dead. Nobel laureate Toni Morrison’s work breathes with this, as does the work of other literary laureates in this tradition, Wole Soyinka and Derek Walcott. Caribbean and Latin writers reflect the same currents, e.g., Gabriel García Márquez, Jorge Amado, and Isabel Allende. Many of these roots, no doubt, spiral into the collective racial memory of beliefs and hidden disciplines in Vodoun, Santería, psi episodes, OBEs (out-of-body experiences), and lucid dream experiences. These practices and disciplines have always been terrifying to the Western world. In recoil from this dimension of the world process, they are simply dismissed as crude superstition and pseudoscience. But make no mistake about it, there is a deep and steep basis in fact here. There is also an empirical methodology that incorporates many disciplines within a paradigm of rhythm, vibration, and a field of consciousness totally coextensive with the realms of matter, energy, and spatiotemporal coordinates. This does not contradict modern science, it complements it! There is a *mutability* in the boundary between self and other, between substance and force, between life and death.

The Ascending Force: Kundalini

One of the most profound aspects of the African unconscious worldview, we believe, is the openness to the phenomenon of Kundalini as the basis of religion, art, science, and metaphysics. Kundalini is literally the evolutionary force becoming conscious in man. This ancient force, associated with certain movements and energies of the braincore and spine in consciousness, was first uncovered in Kemetian science approximately 7,000 years before

Christ. It was later partially codified in ancient Kemetian science in terms of the eye of Horus. It has also been associated with light, the pineal gland, and brain neuromelanin (King, 1990). We’ll explore these further in the next chapter. Suffice it to say here that it is the foundation of many aspects of the African unconscious worldview. If one looks at the heraldry of ancient Egypt, particularly the headress, we find references to the luminous serpent of Kundalini many times. If we study the Pyramid Texts of ancient Egypt and their ramifications, we quickly realize that the science of Kundalini was well known in ancient Egypt (King, 1990). If we look to genetic, racial, and cultural connections with the other civilizations of African lineage, particularly those of the Dravidians in India, we find numerous references to the presence and the perception of the process of Kundalini. It was central to their Yogic-based religions in the ancient cities of Harappa and Mohenjodaro. This is all at least 1,000 years before the first Aryan invasions of northern India.

Communal Consciousness

Another one of the primary matrices or reflections of the African unconscious can be found in the emphasis on group or tribal or community consciousness as opposed to egoic or individualized or autonomous consciousness. We have alluded to this earlier. This emphasis on tribal or group or shared consciousness has very many practical aspects. In a very real way the approach is a much more ecological and relational one as opposed to an autonomous or atomistic one. Clinically speaking, in the approach one focuses on the wider environment both internally and externally. This wider environment includes not only the somatic expression of the body but also the health of the family, the community, and a person’s relationship to the gods. There is a subtle bias toward nurturance and interconnectedness with the wider ecology, a relational and resonate affinity in one’s perceptions with a deemphasis, but *not* negation, of objectification and market values. Because it is a highly personalized world and the consciousness is not isolated but rather localized in certain areas, boundaries are inherently permeable by other personhoods and so, clinically speaking, it is not a matter of “What is the matter with you?” but rather “Who is the matter with you?” Or, said in another way, “I am because we are and since we are, therefore I am.” The emphasis is on racial and collective or community consciousness and it is seen as prior and primary to individuated consciousness. This is why again the individual or localized principle is seen to participate in a wider sea of consciousness that is prior to it and will exist after that individualized or more localized principle has gone through dissolution.

In day-to-day living reality, this finds its expression in terms of one's experience and perception of one's own individual identity and also the existence of one's community and family. The family unconscious, the shared field of experience that each member of a family participates in, is seen to unfold like a wave over at least three or four levels or generations. In other words, family consciousness is said to enfold not only the person *to be born* but also the *present living person*. But more than that, it said to enfold the *recent dead* or deceased in the family. This is known as "the living dead." In the West this has all kinds of negative connotations, but certainly it does not from an Afrocentric point of view. There are certain metaphysical beliefs and experiences about "the living dead" and family dynamics that greatly extend our conception of family and of individual identity (Mbiti, 1969). This family unconscious is said to spread out and enfold the recent or the living dead up to *at least four generations from the present living person*. Living human beings have enfolded in their own lives the reincarnated attributes and feelings of the dead. The family unconscious is seen to be an active, living, conscious principle that moves back numerous generations in time and also reaches forward to those who are not yet born. This dimension of familial consciousness emerges to us in extraordinary states of awareness such as vision-quests, death itself, and the clinical NDE where we are met in the immediate post-mortem state by deceased relatives and others we know by intuitive feel and kinship association. This occurs prior to our encounter with the luminous being beyond mental comprehension with whom we experience a vast panoramic life review. This family system, or Ajobi, is a constant theme in African life and scholarship. As the sociologist Akiwowo (1980) puts it:

Ajobi refers to members of a family or a group of related families or several groups of related families, in a house, in a compound of dwellers, units in a village, town and so on. Ajobi also refers to members united by birth and blood who live separately in distant villages, towns or regions of the world, or a people in diaspora. According to the Orumilaist perspective of mankind, all human beings, regardless of race, color, and religion belong to a primordial alajobi or common origin and therefore share the ajobi bond. This idea is expressed thus: Iya kan, baba kan lo bi gbogbo wa, (translated as one mother, one father gave birth to us all, humankind). (pp. 18-19)

This, of course, is the great, enfolding family unconscious. In the imprecise order that enfolds us, we each have a minority representation in the other and in more intense localized family systems. This representation is an almost "inverse square" representation in terms of shared identity, imagery, affect, and ideation. We are, after all, beings in "energetic" relationships with each other. It is a dynamic, personalized matrix and a representation of

the transformation of individualized consciousness.¹ This can be seen literally mapped out in particular sections of the Pyramid Texts and the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*. Indeed the *Egyptian Book of the Dead* can be seen as a codified projection of the transformations of consciousness after its release from local embodiment and also the transformations of consciousness that occur when the person or individualized principle of consciousness moves through the different levels of consciousness that are anterior to the body-mind.

In this last area we must mention that regardless of how alien it may seem to the Eurocentric point of view, the African unconscious believes that the living dead can be sent against another person with an evil purpose. We find a proliferation of beliefs in living sorcerers and witches who can use the vital forces spoken of earlier for evil. However, this is a very rare practice even when it is believed in. The community is believed to be ultimately hurt by this kind of malignant practice. The potential damage inflicted by these practices extends beyond the particular individuals who may be involved to the community of which that individual is a member (Mbiti, 1969).

In indigenous African belief systems the localized family unconscious, or Ajobi, is "guarded" or watched over by one or more of the deceased ancestors. Members psychologically and spiritually have a dynamic relationship with these ancestors, who in special cases have evolved in the unseen but coextensive spirit world with other natural forces to become the Orishas. This human intuition is pervasive in almost every non-European culture of today regardless of modern technological level (e.g., Yoruba, Japanese, Chinese, Australian Aboriginal, etc.). Before the invasion of the Indo-Aryans into Europe, the indigenous Europeans for millennia also practiced a form of ancestor veneration. Families were known to have a "family spirit" (Gimbutas, 1992). Most of this was swept away or crushed into repression with the conquest of the horse-riding patriarchal tribes. Yet deep in the interior of the African unconscious level of their own psyche, this dynamic intuition still lives.

Conductivity of the Life Force

Finally, we should mention one last principle of the African unconscious, the subtle presence of the above principles integrated into a belief in the literal movement of the life process by way of rhythm and vitality through the body. This is associated with light, bioenergy, and the life force. In modern terms we refer to this as bioconductivity. It has a certain affinity to more

1. On the deepest level of this family unconscious for all peoples, including the European branches of the great Alajobi, the primal members are "moro" or Browns and Blacks.

recent scientific notions such as biological superconductivity, which we will mention later. It is also highly associated with certain neurobiological and neuroembryological processes embedded in the human body-mind structure. We are referring to neuromelanin, which is present from the beginning of human embryogenesis and is highly integrated and subtle throughout the braincore of the adult human being. It is highly associated with the "energy line" that we see in Yoga and acupuncture. In further chapters we shall return to this last and vital area.

A Living Memory

So quickly then, how does this living system perpetuate itself in us? These deep structures of the African unconscious are both *inherited* and *transmitted* across the ages and generations. It is an informational and energy system rooted in the brainwork and the living tissue of culture in all its permutations that we both give to and take from. It is almost as though such a memory is stored vibrationally in both the body and the air! Imagine this. A message is sent to the moon at the speed of light by S_1 to S_2 . It takes nearly three seconds. The person on the moon, or S_2 , reflects this signal and sends the message back to S_1 . Now imagine numerous persons at the S_1 area sending multiple messages to numerous persons at the S_2 site, at different times, and each is reflecting and sending back the messages, but somewhat differently and at different time intervals. Different signals and messages cross at different times. New information is added all the time. After a while the messages, in this somewhat linear analogy, are being "stored" in the seemingly empty or virtual "space" between them. It is, energetically speaking, somewhat like a conscious and living worldwide Internet, only more subtle and extensive in time, and everyone is inherently connected. All are taking and receiving from this "storehouse memory." The system, after a while, affects those who send and receive the messages. The system we are all plugged into feels alive and suffused with information and therein consciousness. This is how the system perpetuates itself.

SUMMARY

We have mentioned a number of basic principles that seem to be associated with the deep collective unconscious matrix of the African primordial consciousness. It is by no means a simple or simplistic affair, nor does any one area totally exhaust or preclude any other area. Rather they are processed and integrated with each other, and at different times different areas receive a different degree of emphasis. We have mentioned the emphasis in

the African unconscious paradigm of personalism not as opposed to materialism and spiritualism but as enfolding them both. These are all worldviews and in various historical eras have given rise to the dominant scientific paradigms. We have mentioned that the collective unconscious is the inherited experiences and proclivities of humanity from the earliest times. Since the roots of humanity of the last 2½ to 3 million years have been primarily an African experience and present-day racial diversification has begun only in the last 25,000 years, we are suggesting that the bedrock or archetypal template of human experience, both genetic and conscious, is primarily an African-rooted apprehension of the universe. The collective unconscious in its deepest roots is the African unconscious. From the initial pre-Australopithecines of East Africa to *Homo habilis* to *Homo erectus* on through to present-day *Homo sapiens sapiens*, all the major transformations of the species have occurred in Africa. We have, therefore, emphasized the act of the perception of transformations in all of life and life processes and creations as an archetypal process that has reached human consciousness by way of the root and route of this primordial unconscious of humanity. This is enfolded in the areas of music, textiles, religion, the perception of death, and also the ultimate union of body and mind as opposed to the split dissociation of mind and body. The Hermetic tradition is the oldest known and still practiced tradition that amplifies and puts forth this worldview. It has profound implications for our perception of body, mind, and consciousness. We have also emphasized the inherent vitalism or perception of a life current pervasive in all things which have different manifestations at different times. Again the essence or personhood of things is amplified and taken to be the primary reality. We have also emphasized the basic perception of rhythm and cycles of nature. Not only did this give rise in the outer world to the earliest calendars, mathematics, and other associated sciences, but in the inner world it has given rise to the earliest metaphysical religions and theories of transcendence and salvation. Depending on your point of view, this "rhythmic" process can be seen in a negative context (e.g., dirty, primitive, sexual, etc.), or it can be seen as the cornerstone of life, modern science (especially physics), and philosophy. We've also at various times in this chapter mentioned the inherent magical-religious perception of permutations in the universe and how that affects the experience and perception of boundaries and the perception of death. This has direct bearing on one's perception of one's relationship through family members, including the not yet born, the presently living, and the deceased up to four generations. It has given rise to the earliest highly codified science of Kundalini. It's also given rise to the emphasis on tribal or family or community consciousness as opposed to individual autonomy in the egoic consciousness. Its various emphases can be either positive or negative and need not be confined to either or both.

Finally we mentioned that from our own point of view there is implicit in this a perception that the life current can not only move through the body by way of rhythm and vitalism but also can be consciously focused and is inherently associated with light, bioenergy, or bioconductivity. This has an affinity to certain current scientific notions such as superconductivity and evolutionary neurobiology; particularly brain neuromelanin development in embryology and biological superconductivity.

The African unconscious is the bedrock, the deepest rootwork of the primordial collective unconscious, the sea and ocean of consciousness that humanity has been immersed in since it left the hominid species on its own trek toward modern civilization. Each chapter to come in this book, be it the Osirian complex, the neurodynamics of psychoneurology and the solar logos, or the paths of meditation, explores a line of development about the evolution and unfolding of mind toward the literal light of our embodied species. It is about consciousness and its trajectory in the cosmos. It is an open question whether the other ancient hominids who went into an evolutionary dead end may have also in a limited way shared this sea of consciousness. In all likelihood they did. Why they did not survive is a great mystery. Perhaps in some curious way they live enfolded within us. All we know is that so far we have survived, that we are all permutations of the same great familial stock, and that our apparent differences are like the differences of language, merely surface structure, and that at the deeper, more primordial level, we are all children of the African womb.

3 THE ROOTS OF MODERN SCIENCE AND RELIGION IN ANCIENT EGYPT

This civilization, called Egyptian in our period, developed for a long time in its early cradle; then it slowly descended the Nile valley to spread out around the Mediterranean basin. This cycle of civilization, the longest in history, presumably lasted 10,000 years.

—Cheikh Anta Diop, *The African Origin of Civilization*

When Herodotus visited it, Egypt had already lost its independence a century earlier [525 B.C.E.]... Ruined by all these successive invasions, Egypt, the cradle of civilization for 10,000 years while the rest of the world was steeped in barbarism, would no longer play a political role. Nevertheless, it would long continue to initiate the younger Mediterranean peoples (Greeks and Romans, among others) into the enlightenment of civilization. Throughout Antiquity it would remain the classic land where the Mediterranean peoples went on pilgrimages to drink at the fount of scientific, religious, moral and social knowledge, the most ancient such knowledge that mankind had acquired.

—Cheikh Anta Diop, *The African Origin of Civilization*

It now seems perfectly clear that the vast majority of pre-dynastic Egyptians were of continental African stock, and even of central-west Saharan origins.

—Basil Davidson, *Africa in History*