

Africans before columbus



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Gigantic stone head of Negritic African The earliest people in the Americas were people of the Negritic African race, who entered the Americas perhaps as early as 100, 000 years ago, by way of the bering straight and about thirty thousand years ago in a worldwide maritime undertaking that included journeys from the then wet and lake filled Sahara towards the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, and from West Africa across the Atlantic Ocean towards the Americas.

According to the Gladwin Thesis, this ancient journey occurred, particularly about 75, 000 years ago and included Black Pygmies, Black Negritic peoples and Black Australoids similar to the Aboriginal Black people of Australia and parts of Asia, including India. Ancient African terracotta portraits 1000 B. C. to 500 B. C. Recent discoveries in the field of linguistics and other methods have shown without a doubt, that the ancient Olmecs of Mexico, known as the Xi People, came originally from West Africa and were of the Mende African ethnic stock.

According to Clyde A. Winters and other writers (see Clyde A. Winters website), the Mende script was discovered on some of the ancient Olmec monuments of Mexico and were found to be identical to the very same script used by the Mende people of West Africa. Although the carbon fourteen testing date for the presence of the Black Olmecs or Xi People is about 1500 B. C. , journies to the Mexico and the Southern United States may have come from West Africa much earlier, particularly around five thousand years before Christ.

That conclusion is based on the finding of an African native cotton that was discovered in North America. It's only possible manner of arriving where it

was found had to have been through human hands. At that period in West African history and even before, civilization was in full bloom in the Western Sahara in what is today Mauritania. One of Africa's earliest civilizations, the Zingh Empire, existed and may have lived in what was a lake filled, wet and fertile Sahara, where ships criss-crossed from place to place.

The ancient kingdoms of West Africa which occupied the Coastal forest belt from Cameroon to Guinea had trading relationships with other Africans dating back to prehistoric times. However, by 1500 B. C. , these ancient kingdoms not only traded along the Ivory Coast, but with the Phoenicians and other peoples. They expanded their trade to the Americas, where the evidence for an ancient African presence is overwhelming.

The kingdoms which came to be known by Arabs and Europeans during the Middle Ages were already well established when much of Western Europe was still inhabited by Celtic tribes. By the 5th Century B. C. , the Phoenicians were running commercial ships to several West African kingdoms. During that period, iron had been in use for about one thousand years and terracotta art was being produced at a great level of craftsmanship. Stone was also being carved with naturalistic perfection and later, bronze was being used to make various tools and instruments, as well as beautifully naturalistic works of art.

The ancient West African coastal and interior Kingdoms occupied an area that is now covered with dense vegetation but may have been cleared about three to four thousand years ago. This includes the regions from the coasts of West Africa to the South, all the way inland to the Sahara. A number of large kingdoms and empires existed in that area. According to Blisshords

Communications, one of the oldest empires and civilizations on earth existed just north of the coastal regions into what is today Mauritania.

It was called the Zingh Empire and was highly advanced. In fact, they were the first to use the red, black and green African flag and to plant it throughout their territory all over Africa and the world. The Zingh Empire existed about fifteen thousand years ago. The only other civilizations that may have been in existence at that period in history were the Ta-Seti civilization of what became Nubia-Kush and the mythical Atlantis civilization which may have existed out in the Atlantic, off the coast of West Africa about ten to fifteen thousand years ago.

That leaves the question as to whether there was a relationship between the prehistoric Zingh Empire of West Africa and the civilization of Atlantis, whether the Zingh Empire was actually Atlantis, or whether Atlantis if it existed was part of the Zingh empire. Was Atlantis, the highly technologically sophisticated civilization an extension of Black civilization in the Meso-America and other parts of the Americas? Stone carving of a Shaman or priest from Columbia's San Agustine Culture

An ancient West African Oni or King holding similar artifacts as the San Agustine culture stone carving of a Shaman The above ancient stone carvings (500 to 1000 B. C.) of Shamans of Priest-Kings clearly show distinct similarities in instruments held and purpose. The realistic carving of an African king or Oni and the stone carving of a shaman from Columbia's San Agustin Culture indicates diffusion of African religious practices to the Americas. In fact, the region of Columbia and Panama were among the first

places that Blacks were spotted by the first Spanish explorers to the Americas.

From the archeological evidence gathered both in West Africa and Meso-America, there is reason to believe that the African Negritics who founded or influenced the Olmec civilization came from West Africa. Not only do the colossal Olmec stone heads resemble Black Africans from the Ghana area, but the ancient religious practices of the Olmec priests was similar to that of the West Africans, which included shamanism, the study of the Venus complex which was part of the traditions of the Olmecs as well as the Ono and Dogon People of West Africa.

The language connection is of significant importance, since it has been found out through decipherment of the Olmec script, that the ancient Olmecs spoke the Mende language and wrote in the Mende script, which is still used in parts of West Africa and the Sahara to this day. The earliest trade and commercial activities between prehistoric and ancient Africa and the Americas may have occurred from West Africa and may have included shipping and travel across the Atlantic.

The history of West Africa has never been properly researched. Yet, there is ample evidence to show that West Africa of 1500 B. C. was at a level of civilization approaching that of ancient Egypt and Nubia-Kush. In fact, there were similarities between the cultures of Nubia and West Africa, even to the very similarities between the smaller scaled hard brick clay burial pyramids built for West African Kings at Kukia in pre Christian Ghana and their counterparts in Nubia, Egypt and Meso-America.

Although West Africa is not commonly known for having a culture of pyramid-building, such a culture existed although pyramids were created for the burial of kings and were made of hardened brick. This style of pyramid building was closer to what was built by the Olmecs in Mexico when the first Olmec pyramids were built. In fact, they were not built of stone, but of hardened clay and compact earth. Still, even though we don't see pyramids of stone rising above the ground in West Africa, similar to those of Egypt, Nubia or Mexico, or massive obelisks, colossal monuments and structures of Nubian and Khemitic or Meso-American civilization.

The fact remains, they did exist in West Africa on a smaller scale and were transported to the Americas, where conditions such as an environment more hospitable to building and free of detriments such as malaria and the tsetse fly, made it much easier to build on a grander scale. Meso-American pyramid with stepped appearance, built about 2500 years ago Stepped Pyramid of Sakkara, Egypt, built over four thousand years ago, compare to Meso-American pyramid Large scale building projects such as monument and pyramid building was most likely carried to the Americas by the same West Africans who developed the Olmec or Xi civilization in Mexico.

Such activities would have occurred particularly if there was not much of a hindrance and obstacle to massive, monumental building and construction as there was in the forest and malaria zones of West Africa. Yet, when the region of ancient Ghana and Mauritania is closely examined, evidence of large prehistoric towns such as Kukia and others as well as various monuments to a great civilization existed and continue to exist at a smaller

level than Egypt and Nubia, but significant enough to show a direct connection with Mexico's Olmec civilization.

The similarities between Olmec and West African civilization includes racial, religious and pyramid bilding similarities, as well as the similarities in their alphabets and scripts as well as both cultures speaking the identical Mende language, which was once widespread in the Sahara and was spread as far East as Dravidian India in prehistoric times as well as the South Pacific. During the early years of West African trade with the Americas, commercial seafarers made frequent voyages across the Atlantic.

In fact, the oral history of a tradition of seafaring between the Americas and Africa is part of the history of the Washitaw People, an aboriginal Black nation who were the original inhabitants of the Mississippi Valley region, the former Louisiana Territories and parts of the Southern United States. According to their oral traditions, their ancient ships criss-crossed the Atlantic Ocean between Africa and the Americas on missions of trade and commerce.. Some of the ships used during the ancient times, perhaps earlier than 7000 B. C. (which is the date given for cave paintings of the drawings and paintings of boats in the now dried up Sahara desert) are similar to ships used in parts of Africa today. These ships were either made of papyrus or planks lashed with rope, or hollowed out tree trunks. These ancient vessels were loaded with all type of trade goods and not only did they criss-cross the Atlantic but they traded out in the Pacific and settled there as well all the way to California.

In fact, the tradition of Black seafarers crossing the Pacific back and forth to California is much older than the actual divulgance of that fact to the first

Spanish explorers who were told by the American Indians that Black men with curly hair made trips from California's shores to the Pacific on missions of trade. On the other hand, West African trade with the Americas before Columbus and way back to proto historic times (30, 000 B. C. to 10, 000 B. C.), is one of the most important chapters in ancient African history. Yet, this era which begun about 30, 000 years ago and perhaps earlier (see the Gladwin Thesis, by C. S. Gladwin, Mc Graw Hill Books), has not been part of the History of Blacks in the Americas. Later on in history, particularly during the early Bronze Age. However, during the latter part of the Bronze Age, particularly between 1500 B. C. to 1000 B. C. , when the Olmec civilization began to bloom and flourish, new conditions in the Mediterranean made it more difficult for West Africans to trade by sea with the region, although their land trade accross the Sahara was flourishing. By then, Greeks, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Babylonians and others were trying to gain control of the sea routes and the trading ports of the region.

Conflicts in the region may have pushed the West Africans to strengthen their trans-Atlantic trade with the Americas and to explore and settle there. Ancient sea-going vessel used by the Egyptians and Nubians in ancient times. West African Trade and Settlement in the Americas Increases Due to Conflicts in the Mediterranean The flowering of the Olmec Civilization occurred between 1500 B. C. to 1000 B. C. , when over twenty-two colossal heads of basalt were carved representing the West African Negritic racial type.

This flowering continued with the appearance of " Magicians," or Shamanistic Africans who observed and charted the Venus planetary complex (see the

pre-Christian era statuette of a West African Shaman in the photograph above) These " Magicians," are said to have entered Mexico from West Africa between 800 B. C. to 600 B. C. and were speakers of the Mende language as well as writers of the Mende script or the Bambara script, both which are still used in parts of West Africa and the Sahara. These Shamans who became the priestly class at Monte Alban during the 800's to 600's B. C. (ref.

The History of the African-Olmecs and Black Civilization of the Americas From Prehistoric Times to the Present Era), had to have journeyed across the Atlantic from West Africa, for it is only in West Africa, that the religious practices and astronomical and religious practices and complex (Venus, the Dogon Sirius observation and the Venus worship of the Afro-Olmecs, the use of the ax in the worship of Shango among the Yoruba of West Africa and the use of the ax in Afro-Olmec worship as well as the prominence of the thunder God later known as Tlalock among the Aztecs) are the same as those practiced by the Afro-Olmec Shamans.

According to Clyde Ahmed Winters (see " Clyde A. Winters" webpage on " search. " Thus, it has been proven through linguistic studies, religious similarities, racial similarities between the Afro-Olmecs and West Africans, as well as the use of the same language and writing script, that the Afro-Olmecs came from the Mende-Speaking region of West Africa, which once included the Sahara. Sailing and shipbuilding in the Sahara is over twenty thousand years old. In fact, cave and wall paintings of ancient ships were displayed in National Geographic Magazine some years ago.

Such ships which carried sails and masts, were among the vessels that swept across the water filled Sahara in prehistoric times. It is from that ship-

building tradition that the Bambara used their knowledge to build Thor Hayerdhal's papyrus boat Ra I which made it to the West Indies from Safi in Morocco years ago. The Bambara are also one of the West African nationalities who had and still have a religious and astronomical complex similar to that of the ancient Olmecs, particularly in the area of star gazing.

A journey across the Atlantic to the Americas on a good current during clement weather would have been an easier task to West Africans of the Coastal and riverine regions than it would have been through the use of caravans criss-crossing the hot by day and extremely cold by night Sahara desert. It would have been much easier to take a well made ship, similar to the one shown above and let the currents take it to the West Indies, and may have taken as long as sending goods back and forth from northern and north-eastern Africa to the interior and coasts of West Africa's ancient kingdoms.

Add to that the fact that crossing the Sahara would have been no easy task when obsticales such as the hot and dusty environment, the thousands of miles of dust, sand and high winds existed. The long trek through the southern regions of West Africa through vallies, mountains and down the many rivers to the coast using beasts of burden would have been problematic particularly since malaria mosquitoes harmful to both humans and animals would have made the use of animals to carry loads unreliable.

Journeys by ship along the coast of West Africa toward the North, through the Pillars of Heracles, eastward on the Meditterran to Ports such as Byblos in Lebanon, Tyre or Sydon would have been two to three times as lengthy as taking a ship from Cape Verde, sailing it across the Atlantic and landing in

North-Eastern Brazil fifteen hundred miles away, or Meso America about 2400 miles away. The distance in itself is not what makes the trip easy. It is the fact that currents which are similar to gigantic rivers in the ocean, carry ships and other vessels from West Africa to the Americas with relative ease.

West Africans during the period of 1500 B. C. to 600 B. C. up to 1492 A. D. may have looked to the Americas as a source of trade, commerce and a place to settle and build new civilizations. During the period of 1500 B. C. to 600 B. C. , there were many conflicts in the Mediterranean involving the Kushites, Egyptians, Assyrians, Phoenicians, Sea Peoples, Persians, Jews and others. Any kingdom or nation of that era who wanted to conduct smooth trade without complications would have tried to find alternative trading partners.

In fact, that was the very reason why the Europeans decided to sail westward in their search for India and China in 1492 A. D. They were harassed by the Arabs in the East and had to pay heavy taxes to pass through the region. Still, most of the Black empires and kingdoms such as Kush, Mauri, Numidia, Egypt, Ethiopia and others may have had little difficulty conducting trade among their neighbors since they also were among the major powers of the region who were dominant in the Mediterranean.

South of this northern region to the south-west, Mauritania (the site of the prehistoric Zingh Empire) Ghana, and many of the same nationalities who ushered in the West African renaissance of the early Middle Ages were engaged in civilizations and cultures similar to those of Nubia, Egypt and the Empires of the Afro-Olmec or Xi (Shi) People. Nubian-Kushite King and Queen

(circa 1000 B. C.) It is believed that there was a Nubian presence in Mexico and that the West African civilizations were related to that of the Nubians, despite the distance between the two centers of Black civilization in Africa.

There is no doubt that in ancient times there were commercial ties between West Africa and Egypt. In fact, about 600 B. C. , Nikau, a Pharaoh of Egypt sent ships to circumnavigate Africa and later on about 450 B. C. , Phoenicians did the same, landing in West Africa in the nation now called Cameroon. There they witnessed what may have been the celebration of a Kwanza-like harvest festival, where " cymbals, horns," and other instruments as well as smoke and fire from burning fields could be seen from their ships.

At that period in history, the West African cultures and civilizations, which were offshoots of much earlier southern Saharan cultures, were very old compared to civilizations such as Greece or Babylon. In fact, iron was being used by the ancient West Africans as early as 2600 years B. C. and was so common that there was no " bronze age" in West Africa, although bronze was used for ornaments and instruments or tools. A combination of Nubians and West Africans engaged in mutual trade and commerce along the coasts of West Africa could have planned many trips to and from the Americas and could have conducted a crossing about 1500 B. C. and afterwards. Massive sculptures of the heads of typical Negritic Africans were carved in the region of South Mexico where the Olmec civilization flourished. Some of these massive heads of basalt contain the cornrow hairstyle common among West African Blacks, as well as the kinky coiled hair common among at least 70 percent of all Negritic people, (the other proportion being the Dravidian Black race of India and the Black Australoids of Australia and South Asia).

Colossal Afro-Olmec head of basalt wearing Nubian type war helmet, circa 1100 B. C. Afro-Olmecs Came from the Mende Regions of West Africa

Although archeologists have used the name " Olmec," to refer to the Black builders of ancient Mexico's first civilizations, recent discoveries have proven that these Afro-Olmecs were West Africans of the Mende language and cultural group. Inscriptions found on ancient monuments in parts of Mexico show that the script used by the ancient Olmecs was identical to that used by the ancient and modern Mende-speaking peoples of West Africa. Racially, the colossal stone heads are identical in features to West Africans and the language deciphered on Olmec monuments is identical to the Mende language of West Africa, (see Clyde A. Winters) on the internet. The term " Olmec" was first used by archeologists since the giant stone heads with the features of West African Negritic people were found in a part of Mexico with an abundance of rubber trees. The Maya word for rubber was " olli, and so the name " Olmec," was used to label the Africoid Negritic people represented in the faces of the stone heads and found on hundreds of terracotta figurines throughout the region. Yet, due to the scientific work done by decipherers and linguists, it has been found out that the ancient Blacks of Mexico known as Olmecs, called themselves the Xi People (She People).

Apart from the giant stone heads of basalt, hundreds of terracotta figurines and heads of people of Negritic African racial features have also been found over the past hundred years in Mexico and other parts of Meso-America as well as the ancient Black-owned lands of the Southern U. S. (Washitaw Proper, (Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Arkansas), South America's

Saint Agustin Culture in the nation of Colombia, Costa Rica, and other areas) the " Louisiana Purchase," lands, the south-eastern kingdom of the Black Jamassee, and other places including Haiti, see the magazine Ancient American).

Various cultural clues and traces unique to Africa as well as the living descendants of prehistoric and ancient African migrants to the Americas continue to exist to this very day. The Washitaw Nation of Louisiana is one such group (see [www. Hotep. org](http://www.Hotep.org)), the Garifuna or Black Caribs of the Caribbean and Central America is another, the descendants of the Jamasse who live in Georgia and the surrounding states is another group. There are also others such as the Black Californian of Queen Calafia fame (the Black Amazon Queen mentioned in the book Journey to Esplandian, by Ordonez de Montalvo during the mid 1500's).

Cultural artefacts which connect the ancient Blacks of the Americas with Africa are many. Some of these similarities can be seen in the stone and terracotta works of the ancient Blacks of the Americas. For example, the African hairline is clearly visible in some stone and terracotta works, including the use of cornrows, afro hair style, flat " mohawk" style similar to the type used in Africa, dreadlocks, braided hair and even plain kinky hair. The African hairline is clearly visible on a fine stone head from Veracruz Mexico, carved between 600 B. C. to 400 B. C. , the Classic Period of Olmec civilization. That particular statuette is about twelve inches tall and the distance from the head to the chin is about 17 centemeters. Another head of about 12 inches, not only poseses Negroid features, but the hair design is authentically West African and is on display at theNational Museumof

Mexico. This terracotta Africoid head also wears the common disk type ear plugs common in parts of Africa even today among tribes such as the Dinka and Shilluk.

One of the most impressive pieces of evidence which show a direct link between the Black Olmec or Xi People of Mexico and West Africans is the presence of scarification marks on some Olmec terracotta sculpture. These scarification marks clearly indicate a West African Mandinka (Mende) presence in prehistoric and ancient Meso-America. Ritual scarification is still practiced in parts of Africa and among the Black peoples of the South Pacific, however the Olmec scarification marks are not of South Pacific or Melanesian Black origins, since the patterns used on ancient Olmec sculpture is still common in parts of Africa.

This style of scarification tatooing is still used by the Nuba and other Sudanese African people. In fact, the face of a young girl with keloid scarification on her face is identical to the very same keloid tattoos on the face of an ancient Olmec terracotta head from ancient Mexico. Similar keloid tattoos also appear on the arms of some Sudanese and are identical to similar keloid scars on the arms of some clay figures from ancient Olmec terracotta figurines of Negroid peoples of ancient Mexico. Bronze head of an ancient king from Benin, West Africa, The tradition of fine sculpture in West Africa goes back long before 1000 B. C. Colossal head of Afro-Olmec (Xi) warrior-king, circa 1100 B. C. Descendants of Ancient Africans in Recent America In many parts of the Americas today, there are still people of African Negritic racial backgrounds who continue to exist either blended into the larger African-Americans population or are parts of separate, indigenous

groups living on their own lands with their own unique culture and languages. One such example is the Washitaw Nation who owned about one million square miles of the former Louisiana Territories, (see [www. Hotep. org](http://www.Hotep.org)), but who now own only about 70, 000 acres of all their former territory.

The regaining of their lands from the U. S. was a long process which concluded partially in 1991, when they won the right to their lands in a U. S. court. The Black Californian broke up as a nation during the late 1800's after many years of war with the Spanish invaders of the South West, with Mexico and with the U. S. The blended into the Black population of California and their descendants still exist among the millions of Black Californians of today. The Black Caribs or Garifunas of the Caribbean Islands and Central America fought with the English and Spanish from the late fifteen hundreds up to 1797, when the British sued for peace.

The Garifuna were expelled from their islands but they prospered in Central America where hundreds of thousands live along the coasts today. The Afro-Darienite is a significant group of pre-historic, pre-columbian Blacks who existed in South America and Central America. These Blacks were the Africans that the Spanish first saw during their exploration of the narrow strip of land between Columbia and Central America and who were described as " slaves of our lord" since the Spaniards and Europeans had the intention of enslaving all Blacks they found in the newly discovered lands.

The above mentioned Blacks of precolumbian origins are not Blacks who mixed with the Mongoloid Indian population as occurred during the time of slavery. They were Blacks who were in some cases on their lands before the southward migrations of the Mongoloid Native Americans. In many cases,

these Blacks had established civilizations in the Americas thousands of years ago. An early Black Californian, a member of the original Black aboriginal people of California and the South Western U. S.

The fact of the northern portion of Africa now known as a vast desert wasteland being a place of large lakes, rivers and fertile regions with the most ancient of civilizations is a fact that has been verified, (see African Presence in Early America, ed. Ivan Van Sertima and Runoko Rashidi, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ " The Principle of Polarity," by Wayne Chandler: 1994.) From that region of Africa as well as East Africa, diffusions of Blacks towards the Americas as early as 30, 000 B. C. are believed to have occurred based on findings in a region from Mexico to Brazil which show that American Indians in the region include Negritic types (eg. Olmecs, Afro-Darienite, Black Californians, Chuaras, Garifunas and others). Much earlier journeys occurred by land sometime before 75, 000 B. C. according to the Gladwin Thesis written by C. S. Gladwin. This migration occurred on the Pacific side of the Americas and was begun by Africans with Affinities similar to the people of New Guinea, Tasmania, Solomon Islands and Australia.

The earliest migrations of African Blacks through Asia then to the Americas seemed to have occurred exactly during the period that the Australian Aborigines and the proto-African ancestors of the Aborigines, Oceanic Negroids (Fijians, Solomon Islanders, Papua-New Guineans, and so on) and other Blacks spread throughout East Asia and the Pacific Islands about one hundred thousand years ago. The fact that these same Blacks are still among the world's seafaring cultures and still regard the sea as sacred and

as a place of sustenance is evidence of their ancient dependance on the sea for travel and exploration as well as for commerce and trade.

Therefore, they would have had to build sea-worthy ships and boats to take them across the vast expanses of ocean, including the Atlantic, Indian Ocean (both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans were called the Ethiopian Sea, in the Middle Ages) and the Pacific Ocean. During the historic period close to the early bronze or copper using period of world history (6000 B. C. to 4000 B. C. migrations of Africans from the Mende regions of West Africa and the Sahara across the Atlantic to the Americas may have occurred.

In fact, the Mende agricultural culture was well established in West Africa and the Sahara during that period. Boats still criss-crossed the Sahara, as they had been doing for over ten thousand years previously. The ancient peoples of the Sahara, as rock paintings clearly show, were using boats and may have sailed from West Africa and the Sahara to the Americas, including the Washitaw territories of the Midwestern and Southern U. S. Moreover, it is believed by the aboriginal Black people of the former Washitaw Empire who still live in the Southern U. S. , that about 6000 B. C. there was a great population shift from the region of Africa and the Pacific ocean, which led to the migrations of their ancestors to the Americas to join the Blacks who had been there previously. As for the use of ships, ancient Negritic peoples and the original Negroid peoples of the earth may have began using boats very early in human history. Moreover, whatever boats were used did not have to be sophisticated or of huge size. In fact, the small, seaworthy " outrigger" canoe may have been spread from East Africa to the Indian Ocean and the Pacific by the earliest African migrants to Asia and the Pacific regions.

Boats of papyrus, skin, sewed plank, log and hollowed logs were used by ancient Africans on their trips to various parts of the world. Gigantic stone head of Afro-Olmec (Xi People) of ancient Mexico, circa 1100 B. C. Face of Afro-Olmec child carved on the waste " belt" of an Olmec ballplayer This stone belt was used by the Olmec ballplayers to catch the impact of the rubber balls in their ball games. This face is typical Negritic, including the eyes which seem to " slant," a common racial characteristic in West Africa, the Sahara and in South Africa among the Kong-San (Bushmen) and other Africans.

During the years of migrations of Africans to all parts of the world, those who crossed the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and Pacific also used the seas to make trips to the northern parts of Africa. They may have avoided the northern routes across the deserts at particular times of the year and sailed northward by sailing parallel to the coastlines on their way northward or southward, just as the Phoenicians, Nubians and Egyptians had done. Boats made of skin, logs, hollowed tree trunk, lashed canoes and skin could have been used for trading and commerce.

The reed boat is a common type of watercraft used in West Africa and other parts of the world, yet there were other boats and ships to add to those already mentioned above. Boats similar to those of Nubia and Egypt were being used in the Sahara just as long or even longer than they were being used in Egypt. In fact, civilization in the Sahara and Sudan existed before Egypt was settled by Blacks from the South and the Sahara. The vessels which crossed the Atlantic about 1500 B. C. during the early Afro-Olmec period) were most likely the same types of ships shown in the sahara cave

paintings of ships dating to about 7, 000 B. C. or similar ships from Nubian rock carvings of 3000 B. C.. Egyptologists such as Sir Flinders Petrie believed that the ancient African drawings of ships represent papyrus boats similar to the one built by the Bambara People for Thor Hayerdhal on the shores of Lake Chad. This boat made it to Barbadoose, however they did not reinforce the hull with rope as the ancient Egyptians and Nubians did with their ancient ships.

That lack of reinforcement made the Bambara ship weak, however another papyrus ship built by Ayamara Indians in Lake Titicaca, Bolivia was reinforced and it made it to the West Indies without difficulty. Naval historian Bjorn Landstrom believes that some of the curved hulls shown on rock art and pottery from the Nubian civilization (circa 3000 B. C.) point to a basic three-plank idea. The planks would have been sewn together with rope. The larer version must have had some interior framing to hold them together.

The hulls of some ot these boats show the vertical extension of the bow and stern which may have been to keep them bouyant. These types of boats are stilll in use in one of the most unlikely places. The Djuka and Saramaka Tribes of Surinam, known also as 'Bush Negroes," build a style of ship and boat similar to that of the Ancient Egyptians and Nubians, with their bows and sterns curving upward and pointing vertically. This style of boat is also a common design in parts of West Africa, particularly along the Niger River where extensive river trading occurs.

They are usually carved from a single tree trunk which is used as the backbone. Planks are then fitted alongside to enlarge them. In all cases, cabins are built on top of the interior out of woven mat or other strong

fibrous material. These boats are usually six to eight feet across and about fifty feet long. There is evidence that one African Emperor Abubakari of Mali used these "almadias" or longboats to make a trip to the Americas during the 1300's. (see, *They Came Before Columbus*, Ivan Van Sertima; Random House: 1975)

Apart from the vessels used by the West Africans and south western Sahara Black Africans to sail across the Atlantic to the Americas, Nubians, Kushites, Egyptians and Ethiopians were known traders in the Mediterranean. The Canaanites, the Negroid inhabitants of the Levant who later became the Phoenicians also were master seafarers. This has caused some to speculate that the heads of the Afro-Olmecs represent the heads of servants of the Phoenicians, yet no dominant people would build such massive and colossal monuments to their servants and not to themselves.

During the International Congress of American Anthropologists held in Barcelona, Spain in 1964, a French anthropologist pointed out that all that was missing to prove a definite presence of Negritic Blacks in the Americas before Columbus was Negroid skeletons to add to the already found Negroid featured terracottas. Later on February of 1975 skeletons of Negroid people dating to the 1200's were found at a precolumbian grave in the Virgin Islands.

Andrei Wierzinski, the Polish craniologist also concluded based on the study of skeletons found in Mexico, that a good portion of the skulls were that of Negritic Blacks. Based on the many finds for a Black African Negroid presence in ancient Mexico, some of the most enthusiastic proponents of a pre-columbian Black African presence in Mexico are Mexican professionals.

They conclude that Africans must have established early important trading centers on the coasts along Vera Cruz, from which Middle America's first civilization grew. In retrospect, ancient Africans did visit the Americas from as early as about 100, 000 B. C. where they stayed for tens of thousands of years. By 30, 000 B. C. , to about 15, 000 B. C. , a massive migration from the Sahara towards the Indian Ocean and the Pacific in the East occurred from the Sahara. Blacks also migrated Westward across the Atlantic Ocean towards the Americas during that period until the very eve of Columbus' first journey to the Americas. Trade, commerce and exploration as well as the search for new lands when the Sahara began to dry up later in history was the catalyst that drove the West Africans towards the Atlantic and into the Americas.