When I think of Nigeria I let my mind wander from the ultra-humid, ultra-hot cesspool of Lagos and drift slowly over the higher and cooler elevations until I reach the dry lands away from the coast.

As I do this, the whole tenor of the place changes from the swarming, grasping, Christian ports and islands, rank with the smell of greed and desperation, to the arid asceticism of the Muslim-held interior of the country.

I don't blame Nigerians for being greedy. Last time I looked, the exchange rate of the U.S. Dollar against the Nigerian currency was 1:13, so a hundred dollar bill equals $1300 in the local economy.

There are a lot of people in Nigeria, mostly crammed into a small section of the western coast, and by far, the vast majority of these people are very poor, scrambling along, trying to make a buck any way they can, having to strive hard to keep themselves and their families fed.

Sanitation is a constant problem in the densely populated areas of Nigeria, and successive waves of disease are common. First it's cholera, then it's malaria, then it's hemorrhagic fever, then it's...well, you get the picture.

Except for Missionaries and Oil Company Personnel and gun runners, envoys from the West are seldom seen in Nigeria, and the only ones that make a point of mingling with the locals are the Missionaries.

It has been this way for centuries, because other than oil, and in the old days of the slave trade, its people, Nigeria has little to sell to the rest of the world.
When all the other countries lined up for "American" Foreign Aid (not that any of them actually got much) Nigeria was sent ship loads of old, moldy, green Army Surplus wool blankets from the Second World War. The Nigerians and the Missionaries stood on the dock and scratched their heads. Not very helpful in Equatorial Africa, but they accepted the gift anyway, and made use of the cloth in amazing ways --- tablecloths in restaurants, Christmas ornaments, shade tents.

The Nigerian people are nothing if not resourceful. They've had to be.

Yet, downtrodden, poor, by-passed, sickly Nigeria is where everything began from language to knowledge of advanced physics.

Unknown thousands of years ago, Nigeria gave us language.

Untold thousands of years ago, Nigerians knew the truth about the structure of the Universe.

We are just now discovering what the artifacts of the Igbo people of Nigeria mean.

So, let's pause and reflect. That same country that we have ignored and pillaged and fought with, these same people who have suffered and starved and been enslaved and treated like animals by successive waves of European Colonialists --- and now, by US and European Corporations engaged in the same thing --- they solved the Unified Field Theory long, long ago. And taught us how to speak.

So much for the inferiority of black people, forever and ever, Amen.

Nigeria is hardly where we would look for the roots of all known language groups on Earth, nor would anyone expect that Ancient Nigerians hand-carved the structure of the Universe and the mathematics of it all on a rock--- but they did.

May we all pause for a moment and be humble.

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