Discourse
George Best (1578)

Others . . . imagine the middle Zone to be extreme hot, because the people of Africa, especially the Ethiopians, are so cole blacke, and their haire like wooll curled short, which blacknesse and curled haire they suppose to come onely by the parching heat of the Sunne, which how it should be possible I cannot see: for even under the Equinoctiall in America, and in the East Indies, and in the Ilands Moluccae the people are not blacke, but tauney and white, with long haire uncurled as wee have, so that if the Ethiopians blacknesse came by the heat of the Sunne, why should not those Americans and Indians also be as blacke as they, seeing the Sunne is equally distant from them both, they abiding in one Parallel?

Therefore to returne againe to the blacke Moores. I my selfe have seene an Ethiopian as black as cole brought into England, who taking a faire English woman to wife, begat a sonne in all respects as blacke as the father was, although England were his native countrey, and an English woman his mother: whereby it seemeth this blacknes proceedeth rather of some natural infection of that man, which was so strong, that neither the nature of the Clime, neither the good complexion of the mother concurring, coulde any thing alter, and therefore wee cannot impute it to the nature of the Clime . . . . And the most probable cause to my judgement is, that this blackenesse proceedeth of some naturall infection of the first inhabitants of that Countrey, and so all the whole progenie of them descended, are still polluted with the same plot of infection . . . . by a lineall descent they have hitherto continued thus blacke.
Best then provides the story of Cham, Noah’s disobedient son, whose excessive sexuality was punished by the blackness of his son, Chus, who founded the black African Moors.