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## Misconceptions about African Blacks in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Specialists and Afrocentrists

FRANK M. SNOWDEN, JR.

**T**HE BLACKS, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans of antiquity are long gone: most of the relevant evidence is in. Now, contemporary prejudice threatens to distort our interpretations of the evidence relating to ancient blacks. The misreading of ancient documents has come primarily from two sources: from some specialists in the history, literature, and archaeology of the ancient Mediterranean world and, increasingly in recent years, from many Afrocentrists. When errors in previous scholarship on antiquity have been pointed out, the first group has in general acknowledged and corrected them; the second group, however, has completely rejected valid criticisms of their inaccuracies and denounced their critics as either Eurocentric racists (if they are white) or misguided traitors to their race, duped by a so-called “white conspiracy” (if they are black). It is neither racist nor traitorous, however, to insist upon truth, scholarly rigor, and objectivity in the writing of history. I shall treat only briefly the misinterpretations offered by the first group because they have been amply illustrated in several of my studies;<sup>1</sup> on the other hand, I shall expose in detail the shortcomings of much that has been and continues to be written by the second group in order to demonstrate the seriousness of their hitherto insufficiently recognized falsification of the black man’s past.

### Misinterpretations of the Evidence by Specialists in Ancient Studies

The tendency of modern scholarship to project its own prejudices onto antiquity has long been acknowledged. More than twenty years ago, for example, W. Robert Connor referred to the modern treatment of Ethiopians, i.e., blacks in the Greek and Roman world, as a “shoddy chapter in the history of classical scholarship” observing that “the signs of bigotry which we find in studying the

history of classical antiquity are almost always among the modern scholars, not among their ancient subjects."<sup>2</sup>

The first somewhat detailed examination of Negroid types in classical art was published in 1929. G. H. Beardsley's *The Negro in Greek and Roman Civilization: A Study of the Ethiopian Type*<sup>3</sup> was devoted primarily to blacks in the Greek world, confining its treatment of blacks in Roman literature to nineteen pages. Even in her interpretation of Greek art, however, the author made only scant use of the many references to Ethiopians in Greek literature. Her study revealed other serious shortcomings in more recent treatments of blacks as well.

It was not until 1970 and later that the abundant and widely scattered sources relating to blacks in the Greek and Roman world were assembled, interpreted, and published in detail.<sup>4</sup> Even before the basic evidence was collected, however, scholars expressed opinions, in various contexts, on Greek and Roman attitudes toward blacks. Some of these opinions were clearly influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by biased post-classical conceptions of blacks. Drawing upon language often used in early art history in classifications of Negroes, M. Bieber, for example, described a black female dancer depicted on a fourth-century BC vase as an "old woman with grotesque features" (a word often used in early art history in classifications of Negroes).<sup>5</sup> This very figure, however, has been characterized by scholars acquainted with present-day Africa as an authentic portrayal of an African dancer and as a genuine ethnographic document.<sup>6</sup> C. T. Seltman observed that the ugliness of the Negro seems to have appealed alike to sculptor, engraver, and painter;<sup>7</sup> and W. N. Bates, that as a rule the Negro was most absurdly drawn in Greek vases.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, Beardsley, casting the issue explicitly in terms of color, wrote that "Memnon because of his great beauty was evidently white"; that "the average white man is inclined to view humorously a serious portrayal of an African negro"; and that "the negro perhaps unfortunately has always appealed to the comic side of the Caucasian"<sup>9</sup> (a comment regarding a group of fifth-century BC vases depicting a Negro seized by a crocodile). D. K. Hill, in describing a Hellenistic bronze of a Negro, considered the pose of the Negro one "no white person would think of assuming."<sup>10</sup>

It is important to emphasize, however, that prior to 1970 not all specialists in ancient studies made biased statements about blacks.

Objective commentary on what they perceived as distinct differences between ancient and modern views of blacks was possible. J. Bryce, for example, observed that in the Roman Empire we find little if any repugnance to dark-skinned Africans;<sup>11</sup> E. Baring, that antipathy to people of color, in itself, formed no bar to social intercourse in antiquity;<sup>12</sup> E. E. Sikes, that the ancients were quite free from the antipathy of the color bar;<sup>13</sup> A. E. Zimmern, that the Greeks showed no trace of color prejudice;<sup>14</sup> W. L. Westermann, that Greek society had no color line;<sup>15</sup> C. Kluckhohn, that the Greeks did not fall into the error of biological racism, that color was no stigma, and that men were not classified as black and white, but as free or servile;<sup>16</sup> and H. C. Baldry, that the Greeks were spared the modern curse of color prejudice.<sup>17</sup>

Since the widely scattered evidence has been collected and analyzed, classical scholars, with few exceptions, as B. H. Warmington has pointed out, emphasize that my demonstration of the lack of color prejudice in the Greek and Roman world is certainly correct.<sup>18</sup> In R. S. W. Hawtrey's opinion, for example, the observation that there were no traces of the color bar in antiquity is not a new one, but until the publication of *Blacks in Antiquity: Ethiopians in the Greco-Roman Experience* the evidence had not been assembled with such completeness.<sup>19</sup> Connor has observed that *Blacks in Antiquity* made "it possible to correct errors and omissions that have passed for the truth and let us glimpse a society which for all its faults and failures never made color the basis for judging a man."<sup>20</sup> L. Castiglione has remarked that discrimination on the basis of skin color and the concept of apartheid were unknown in classical antiquity and that the truth of these facts is indisputable and clearly demonstrated in *Blacks in Antiquity*.<sup>21</sup>

I shall now examine briefly representative views of the few scholars who have seen what they have considered evidence of color prejudice in the Greek and Roman world. In the first place, it should be emphasized that in the entire corpus of classical and early Christian literature, with its countless references to Ethiopians (the *only* word regularly used by Greeks and Romans as the equivalent of "Negroes" or "blacks" in twentieth-century usage), there are only a few ancient concepts or notions that have been misinterpreted as evidence of antiblack sentiment. And these misinterpretations have often resulted from a failure to comprehend the full significance and relevance of a basic Greco-Roman concept—the environmental explanation of human diversity.

A theory setting forth the effect of environment on the physical characteristics of peoples and their manner of life was applied in a uniform manner to all peoples, black and white alike. The basic human substance—the same in all people—was tempered differently in different climates. The black, woolly-haired Ethiopians of the deep south and the fair, straight-haired Scythians (southern Russians) of the far north came to be cited as the favorite illustrations of this theory. These geographical and anthropological contrasts were invoked again and again in Greek and Roman authors. And in view of the vast climatic differences, as Diodorus observed, there was nothing unusual in the fact that Scythians and Ethiopians differed in so many respects from Greeks and Romans. Some Ethiopians were described as wise and just: Anacharsis, a Scythian prince, gained a reputation for his wisdom. Yet some Scythians and Ethiopians, like other peoples who lived at the outer extremities of the earth, were reported to follow a primitive way of life. The wild habits of these Scythians and Ethiopians were explained not by color but by climate—excessive cold in one instance and torrid heat in the other.<sup>22</sup> In fact, according to Strabo, it was white people, not black who were said to be the most “savage” in the world: more savage than the Britons were the inhabitants of ancient Ireland who considered it honorable to devour their fathers when they died and to have intercourse with their mothers and sisters.<sup>23</sup>

Likewise, those who have interpreted physiognomical observations as evidence of color prejudice have overlooked the fact that such beliefs, like many comments on “primitive” peoples, applied to whites as well as blacks. The author of the *Physiognomonica*, for example, wrote that swarthy Egyptians and Ethiopians, as well as the woolly-haired, were cowardly, but he also stated that the excessively fair were likewise cowardly.<sup>24</sup> In short, blacks were not stereotyped as either “wild” or as sole possessors of physiognomical flaws. Scholars who have seen color prejudice in various Scythian-Ethiopian and similar contrasts have not only underrated the significance of the environment theory but they have also overlooked the fact that such contrasts were purposely used in later texts to bolster both the conviction that race is of no consequence in evaluating men and the early Christian view that all whom God created He created equal and alike.<sup>25</sup>

In light of the fact that Greeks and Romans regarded black and white skin as mere geographical accidents with no stigma attached

to the color of the skin, it is strange that some scholars have interpreted references to Greek and Roman ethnocentric aesthetic preferences as evidence of color prejudice. Like other peoples before and after them, Greeks and Romans had culturally narcissistic canons of physical beauty—what H. Hoetink has called a “somatic norm image.”<sup>26</sup> Classical authors, while recognizing the subjectivity of their ethnocentric criteria, frequently stated a preference for “Mediterranean” complexion and features—a middle point between the extremes of blond, blue-eyed northerners, and black, woolly-haired southerners. In view of widespread narcissistic standards, there is nothing odd or pejorative about Greek and Roman preferences for a Mediterranean type in a predominantly Mediterranean society, or for dark- or black-skinned beauties in a predominantly black society. What was unusual, however, in the Greco-Roman world was the spirit of those who observed that classical standards of beauty were relative; perhaps most surprising from the point of view of some twentieth-century commentators is the number of those who openly expressed a preference for dark- or black-skinned women.<sup>27</sup>

Men differ in their definitions of beauty, according to Sextus Empiricus, Ethiopians preferring the blackest and most flat-nosed; Persians, the whitest and most hooked-nosed; and others considering those intermediate in color and features as the most beautiful.<sup>28</sup> Herodotus, the first European writer to express an opinion about the physical appearance of blacks, described Macrobian Ethiopians as the most handsome men of all.<sup>29</sup> Asclepiades praised the beauty of a certain Didyme in these words: “Gazing at her beauty, I melt like wax before the fire. And if she is black, what difference to me? So are coals, but when we light them, they shine like rose buds.”<sup>30</sup> Martial wrote that, though he was sought by a girl whiter than a washed swan, than silver, snow, lily, or privet, he preferred a girl blacker than an ant, pitch, a jackdaw, a cicada.<sup>31</sup>

Some scholars have seen prejudice in certain references to the Ethiopian’s color as evidence of a “child-psychological theory” that regarded black skin as unpleasant. Although obviously aware of the black man’s color, classical authors attached no intrinsic significance to the color of the skin. Ethiopians did not astonish Greeks because of their blackness and their physical appearance: such a fear, Agatharchides wrote, ceases at childhood.<sup>32</sup> This statement was not only an accurate assessment of Greek reaction to the Ethiopian’s color, but a sound observation on an aspect of child behavior noted by modern psychologists, according to whom

“four-year-olds are normally interested, curious, and appreciative of differences in racial groups.”<sup>33</sup> Children “do not *necessarily* attach value judgments to [racial differences], especially those leading to the formation of racial stereotypes, *unless* they are exposed to socializing forces characterized by overt racial consciousness and/or hostility.”<sup>34</sup> In other words, Agatharchides was merely recording the normal reaction of young children to observed differences in skin color and he was not setting forth, as A. Dihle has suggested, a theory of aversion to the black man’s color rooted in childhood.<sup>35</sup>

Others have curiously regarded simple realistic portrayals of blacks as revealing a “degree of antipathy . . . [and] a sensory aversion to the physiognomy of blacks.”<sup>36</sup> As early as 1879, however, E. de Chanot foresaw the importance of the classical representations of Negroes in his comments on the anthropological accuracy of south Italian lamps depicting Negroes and the value of these for Greco-Roman relations with black Africans.<sup>37</sup> To see caricature and mockery in an artist’s use of thick lips, flat noses, and exaggerated prognathism or to consider most of the Greco-Roman portrayals of blacks as “hideous and implicitly racist in perspective”<sup>38</sup> shows a complete misunderstanding of the artists’ interest in Negroid types. Whites of many races, as well as gods and heroes, appeared in comic or satirical scenes. If Negroes had been depicted only as caricatures or had been the rule and not the exception, there might be some justification for a negative view of blacks. The majority of scholars, however, see in the blacks of ancient art an astonishing variety and vitality, and penetrating depictions of types which appealed to craftsmen for several reasons. Negro models presented the artists with a challenge to their skill at representing by texture and paint the distinctive features of blacks and with an opportunity to express the infinite variety of a common human nature by contrasting blacks with Mediterranean types. The obvious aesthetic attractiveness of Negro models to many artists—some the finest from ancient workshops—and the numerous sympathetic portrayals of Negroes have given rise to a common view that ancient artists were free from prejudice in their depictions of blacks.<sup>39</sup>

Some interpretations of black-white symbolism in classical and early Christian authors will serve as final illustrations of a misreading of ancient texts. Recent studies point out that there seems to be a “widespread communality in feelings about black and

white,” that among both Negroes and whites the color white tends to evoke a positive and black a negative reaction, and that both colors figure prominently in the areas of human experience concerned with religion and the supernatural.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, research in the social sciences has raised the question of whether individuals who react negatively to the color black also develop an antipathy toward dark-skinned people. Though such a reaction has been considered theoretically plausible, the evidence is far from conclusive.<sup>41</sup>

In view of the widespread association of white with good and black with evil, interpretations of the Greek and Roman application of black-white imagery to Ethiopians as evidence of antiblack sentiment are questionable. The introduction of dark-skinned peoples—Ethiopian, Egyptian, Garamantian—in ill-omened contexts was obviously related to classical associations of the color black, and of darkness, with death and the Underworld and was in many respects a natural development. The Underworld as portrayed in Homer’s and Vergil’s poems was dark and murky; the god of the Underworld himself was often described as black; and the ferryman Charon, son of Erebus and Night, was gloomy, grim, and terrible in his squalor. There was, then, nothing unusual or pejorative, arguments to the contrary notwithstanding, about the appearance of black actors in a nocturnal scene from the Underworld: it was simply an instance of imaginative and realistic casting, since blacks enjoyed popularity as actors.<sup>42</sup>

Those who have considered certain aspects of black-white imagery in early Christian writings to be antiblack in sentiment have given insufficient attention to such imagery in its entirety. In some visions of saints and monks, demons at times assumed the shape of “Ethiopians,” but in demonological texts the color black alone was emphasized as a physical characteristic of demons; such an emphasis recalls earlier classical associations of the color black with evil and the Underworld. In the demonological context, however, there was no stereotypical image of Ethiopians as personifications of demons or the Devil. Nor does the symbolism of black demons seem to have had a negative effect on the generally favorable view of blacks dating back to Homer’s “blameless” Ethiopians, favorites of the gods, and to Herodotus’ Macrobian Ethiopians, the tallest and most handsome men on earth, whose ruler upbraided the Persian king Cambyses for unjustly coveting land that was not his own.



Furthermore, it is often forgotten that scriptural references to Ethiopians—much broader than their demonological counterparts—left no doubt as to the fundamental Christian attitude toward blacks and set forth a coherent body of doctrine in which Ethiopians in fact became an important symbol of Christianity's ecumenical mission. Building on classical usages, the Christian writers developed an exegesis and a highly spiritual black-white imagery in which Ethiopians illustrated the meaning of the scriptures for *all* men.<sup>43</sup>

The pioneer in the use of an Ethiopian symbolism was Origen, who became the model for later patristic treatment of "Ethiopian" themes. Origen's choice of black-white contrasts may have been inspired in part by his firsthand acquaintance with blacks in the motley population of Alexandria, a daily reminder of the many Ethiopians on the southern fringes of the world who had figured prominently in classical imagery. In his commentary on the "black and beautiful maiden" of the Song of Songs, Origen was illustrating the applicability of black-white imagery to all peoples: "We ask in what way is she black and what way fair without whiteness. She has repented of her sins; conversion has bestowed beauty on her and she is sung as 'beautiful' . . . If you repent, your soul will be 'black' because of your former sins but because of your penitence your soul will have something of what I may call an Ethiopian beauty."<sup>44</sup> The mystery of the church arising from the Gentiles and calling itself black and beautiful, Origen pointed out, is adumbrated in the marriage of Moses to a black Ethiopian woman, which he interpreted as a symbolic union of the spiritual law (Moses) and the church (the Ethiopian woman)—a foreshadowing of the universal church.<sup>45</sup> Origen expressed a basic Christian tenet when, in the process of extending the traditional Ethiopian-Scythian formula, he declared that it made no difference whether one was born among Hebrews, Greeks, Ethiopians, Scythians, or Taurians, all whom God created, He created equal and alike.<sup>46</sup> When, in a similar spirit, Saint Augustine declared that the catholic church was not to be limited to a particular region of the earth but would reach even the Ethiopians, the remotest of men, he was not only recalling Homer's distant Ethiopians but also summoning to mind those Ethiopians on the southernmost fringes of his own native northwest Africa.<sup>47</sup>

In a coherent body of exegesis during the first six centuries of Christianity blacks were summoned to salvation and welcomed in

the Christian brotherhood on the same terms as others. All men were regarded as black who had not been illumined by God's light, and all men, regardless of skin color, were considered potential Christians. The baptism of the minister of the Ethiopian queen by Philip the Evangelist<sup>48</sup> was a landmark insofar as it proclaimed that considerations of race were to be of no significance in determining membership in the Christian church. All believers in Christ were eligible. Blacks were not only humble converts but influential figures like Saint Menas, sometimes portrayed as a Negro, a national saint of Egypt, whose shrine attracted pilgrims not only from Africa but also from Europe and Asia;<sup>49</sup> and the picturesque father of the Egyptian desert, the black Ethiopian Moses, reported to have left seventy disciples at this death, who had been a model of humility and the monastic life, an excellent teacher and a Father's Father.<sup>50</sup> In short, the Ethiopian imagery dramatically emphasized the ecumenical character of Christianity, and adumbrated the symbolism of the black wise man in the Adoration of the Magi. There is no evidence that Ethiopians of the first centuries after Christ suffered in their day-to-day contacts with whites as a result of metaphorical associations of black-white symbolism. Nor did the early Christians alter the classical symbolism or the teachings of the church to fit a preconceived notion of blacks as inferior, to rationalize the enslavement of blacks, or to sanction segregated worship. In the early church blacks found equality in both theory and practice.

In summary, both the Greeks and Romans, in spite of their association with conceptions which a few scholars have misinterpreted as antiblack, had the ability to see and to comment on the distinctive physical characteristics of blacks without developing an elaborate and rigid system of discrimination based on skin color. Color did not acquire in the Greco-Roman world the great importance it has assumed in some post-classical societies as an arbiter of individual self-image and access to equality: the onus of intense color prejudice cannot be placed upon the shoulders of the Greeks and Romans.

So much for the misinterpretations of the evidence by some specialists in ancient studies.

Afrocentric Misconceptions Concerning African Blacks in the  
Ancient Mediterranean World: Implications for Education

Afrocentrists frequently, and often accurately, maintain that the history of blacks has been distorted or neglected in traditional curricula. Exposing students to an unbalanced and inaccurate picture of the black man's present or past, however, will not correct such defects. Unbalanced Afrocentric accounts, for example, call attention, as A. M. Schlesinger, Jr., has noted, to the glories of West African emperors and their civilization, but not to ferocious West African warfare, tribal massacres, the squalid condition of the masses, slavery, and involvement in the Atlantic slave trade.<sup>51</sup>

At the outset, I should state my disagreement with certain aspects of the Afrocentric approach to education. I reject any conception of the intellectual capabilities of blacks, of their aesthetic sensibility, or of their so-called special black cultural style that would deny blacks the best education that can be provided. It is demeaning to blacks to adopt the premise that their intellectual life should not encompass the whole of human experience. Further, I object to specialized and narrow definitions of the black man's humanity. The Roman playwright Terence, who came to Rome from north Africa in the second century BC, expressed a view that mirrors my own regarding what is relevant for *all* students (blacks included) when he wrote, "I am a man (*homo*), I consider nothing human (*humani*) alien to me"—a sentiment echoed later in the nineteenth century by the French poet Lamartine, "I am a fellow citizen of every thinking soul: the truth—that's my country." And the truth is that blacks have not existed nor do they now exist in a vacuum; they live in a world wider than the black community—African, African-American, or Caribbean. A one-sided approach to education with an emphasis on blackness is destined to result in the development of individuals unprepared to meet the challenges that confront them as active, responsible citizens and as members of a wider society and of the international community. In short, to borrow Alexander Pope's words "The proper study of Mankind is Man"—Man with a capital M.

And I should add that there is no single "African" culture from which African-American culture derives. Questionable also are the claims of some Afrocentrists who maintain that because they are not African-Americans, white teachers are incapable of providing

blacks with the inspiration that they need to overcome the limitations that society has imposed on them. It is encouraging to see that scholars are increasingly questioning certain Afrocentric approaches to education at the risk of being branded “Eurocentric racists” or “dupes of the white conspiracy.” Henry L. Gates, Jr., chairman of Afro-American studies at Harvard, has described as intellectually “bogus” some of the work currently being done in more than two hundred Afro-American studies programs around the country, because, in his view, the programs are essentially inventing a past that never was and their approach is “classic escapism and romanticism.” At a recent meeting in Paris of some four hundred scholars in the field of African-American studies, Gates stated, “we wanted to have the conference here to refute the notion that only blacks can teach African-American studies.” At the same meeting Robert Bone, professor emeritus at Columbia University, observed: “The cultural atmosphere in the United States among blacks is a little too tribal for its own good. . . . [Europe] restores your sense of proportion—you see yourself as a member of the human race, rather than of some sort of soul fraternity or sorority.”<sup>52</sup>

Many Afrocentrists are adherents of a school of black historical thought which Professor Orlando Patterson twenty years ago called “contributionism.” This school, Patterson pointed out, attempts to prove that white history has been a big lie and that the black man lived not only in preliterate societies, but was a part of the “big-time” civilizations of Egypt and North Africa. This school—following what Patterson called the three P’s approach to black history as the rediscovery of princes, pyramids, and pagentry—can make it four P’s by adding pharaohs.<sup>53</sup>

Patterson properly noted that the “contributionist approach,” now commonly called Afrocentric, does violence to the facts, is ideologically bankrupt, and is methodologically deficient. He pointed out that in many respects only a small part of the history of the African continent is relevant to the Afro-American experience, because it has been long established that the vast majority of American blacks came from the western coast of Africa. And he correctly observed that there is no justification for defining the term “black” to include all the swarthy peoples of Egypt and north Africa.<sup>54</sup>

Though Afrocentrists may be competent in their own specialties, many of their statements about blacks in the ancient world

demonstrate clearly that they have not approached the ancient evidence with the relevant scholarly apparatus. Many shortcomings have resulted: unfamiliarity with primary sources; reliance on the undocumented *opinions* of fellow Afrocentrists (usually the same few); a tendency to make broad statements on the basis of a few lines from a single author, or from a few texts, without considering the total picture of blacks in antiquity; the use of language charged with political rhetoric; and a tendency to read a “white conspiracy” into scholarly interpretations of the ancient evidence.

Among the most blatant examples of methodological weakness is the claim that the inhabitants of Africa in antiquity were predominantly black—a claim not supported by linguistic, archaeological, or historical evidence. Afrocentrists have assumed that the word “African” and color adjectives used by ancient writers were always the equivalents of words such as “Negroes” and “blacks” in twentieth-century usage. The only Greek or Latin word, and I emphasize *only*, that most frequently referred to a black or Negroid type from the sixth century BC onward is *Aithiops* or *Aethiops* (Ethiopian), literally a person with a burnt face. These Negroid peoples, who exhibited various shades of pigmentation and whose facial features encompassed a variety of types, came from either the south of Egypt (Kush, Ethiopia, Nubia) or the interior of northwest Africa. Ancient sources also differentiate clearly between people who lived along the coastal areas of northwest Africa (i.e., modern Libya to Morocco) and those who inhabited the interior. “Aethiops,” it should be emphasized, with few exceptions, was applied neither to Egyptians nor to inhabitants of northwest Africa, such as Moors, Numidians, or Carthaginians.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, a detailed study of the classical usage of “Ethiopian” and “African” indicates that there is no ancient evidence whatsoever to support the following statement in Chancellor Williams’s *The Destruction of Black Civilization*: “In ancient times ‘African’ and ‘Ethiopian’ were used interchangeably because both meant the same thing; a Black.” Nor have those blacks who have followed Williams in this view adduced any proof of such an equivalence. Williams attributes the failure of white scholars to equate “African,” “Ethiopian,” and “black” to the distortions of the “white conspiracy,” a frequent terrifying specter in black studies. To quote Williams’s rhetoric on this point, the equivalence of these three words “was [established] before the Caucasians began to

reorder the earth to suit themselves and found it necessary to stake their birthright over the Land of the Blacks also.”<sup>56</sup>

Cheikh Anta Diop, a favorite “source” for Afrocentrists, misinterprets also the classical usage of color words. Diop not only distorts classical sources but, like many Afrocentrists, omits those Greek and Roman authors who clearly distinguish between Egyptians and Ethiopians. Diop writes that, according to Greek and Latin writers contemporary with the ancient Egyptians, “the Egyptians were negroes, thick-lipped, kinky-haired and thin-legged; the unanimity of the authors’ evidence on a physical fact as salient as a people’s race will be difficult to minimize or pass over.”<sup>57</sup> I agree with Diop that the salient evidence provided by the Greek and Roman contemporaries of the Egyptians cannot be minimized or passed over. But the passages cited by Diop do not prove his claim that the Egyptians, according to classical sources, were Negroes. In fact, most of the passages do not even mention lips or hair. They only verify the point which I have already made—that adjectives denoting color in classical texts were used to designate peoples darker than Greeks or Romans—a practice which by no means indicated that the persons so described were Ethiopians, i.e., Negroes or blacks. Five of the texts Diop cites describe Egyptians as black in color but mention no other physical characteristic. He omits one reference in a source which describes Ethiopians, but not Egyptians, as having extremely woolly hair. Further, a key passage from Herodotus, cited by Diop, comparing Egyptians with Colchians, not Ethiopians, makes it clear that the historian is stressing the importance of cultural, *not* physical criteria.<sup>58</sup>

As to the physical characteristics of the ancient Egyptians, both iconographic and written evidence differentiated between the physical traits of Egyptians and the populations south of Egypt. The art of ancient Egypt frequently painted Egyptian men as reddish brown, women as yellow, and people to the south as black. Ancient Egyptians, like their modern descendants, varied in complexion from a light Mediterranean type, to a light brown in Middle Egypt, to a darker brown in southern Egypt.<sup>59</sup> There was also a mixed black-white element in the Egyptian population as early as the middle of the third millennium BC. In fact, the earliest clearly recognizable Egyptian portrait of a black is preserved in a limestone head of a woman, together with that of her Egyptian husband, a prince from the court of Memphis.<sup>60</sup> Verdi’s *Aïda* was not

the first Ethiopian princess to attract an Egyptian admirer. Interracial mingling continued as black mercenaries increasingly served in the Egyptian army, married Egyptian women, and had mixed children. Inter marriages between Egyptians and women from the south were not uncommon, and the harems of the pharaohs included Nubian ladies.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, as the Egyptologist David O'Connor has pointed out, "Thousands of sculpted and painted representatives from Egypt as well as hundreds of well preserved bodies from its cemeteries show that the typical physical type was neither Negro nor Negroid."<sup>62</sup>

Ancient art also sheds light on the physical characteristics of Cleopatra, the last Ptolemaic ruler of Egypt, whom many Afrocentrists describe as black or Negroid. Cleopatra was not even an Egyptian but, like the other Ptolemies, of Macedonian descent. Authentic coins struck by the Ptolemies leave no doubt about the non-Negroid features of the entire Ptolemaic Dynasty. The ancient portraits of Cleopatra, including those on coins commemorating her union with Mark Antony, depict the queen with non-Negroid features like those of the other Ptolemies.<sup>63</sup>

One of the first to circulate the Cleopatra myth was Joel A. Rogers,<sup>64</sup> followed by many others who, with a complete disregard for the clear evidence provided by the coinage, have stated that the Ptolemaic queen was black. A recent version of the Rogers nonsense appears in a chapter entitled "African Warrior Queens," by John Henrik Clarke in *Black Women in Antiquity*: "More nonsense has been written about Cleopatra than about any other African queen, mainly because it has been the desire of many writers to paint her white. She was not a white woman, she was not a Greek . . . . Until the emergence of the doctrine of white superiority, Cleopatra was generally pictured as a distinctly African woman, dark in color. Shakespeare in the opening line of *Antony and Cleopatra* calls her 'tawny.' In his day, mulattos were called 'tawny Moors.' . . . In the Book of Acts, Cleopatra describes herself as 'black.'"<sup>65</sup> In the first place, the word "tawny" does not appear in the first, but the sixth line of the Shakespearean play—a minor point, however. There is no evidence that Shakespeare, who lived more than sixteen hundred years after Cleopatra, had reliable evidence that Cleopatra was black. Nor can it be demonstrated that Shakespeare intended to suggest by his use of "tawny" that he regarded Cleopatra as a "black"—Shakespeare would have used "Ethiopia," which he used in other plays. Furthermore, there is no

reference to Cleopatra in the Book of Acts. Another unscholarly point made by Clarke to “prove” that Cleopatra was black is a reference to the queen as “fat and black” in Ripley’s *Believe It or Not*. Clarke’s final bit of “evidence” is a modern painting of a Negroid Cleopatra by an Earl Sweeney, but he omits completely the evidence ancient portraits offer regarding the physical features of Cleopatra.<sup>66</sup>

In northwest Africa, as in Egypt, we find that some Afrocentrists frequently create “blacks” out of whites and adduce the “white conspiracy” theory. George G. M. James, in *The Stolen Legacy*, incorrectly used “African” and “black” interchangeably in his description of the Greek geographer Eratosthenes merely because he was a native of Cyrene in North Africa.<sup>67</sup> The Roman Emperor Septimius Severus, because he was born in North Africa, at Lepcis Magna (near modern Tripoli), is described as black by Edward L. Jones, who writes, “. . . a rock, a piece of white marble or limestone, has successfully transformed this Black Emperor into a white ‘Roman Emperor,’ for almost eighteen hundred years. What is being said is that Africans everywhere have been passing by the statue of Septimius Severus and have been unable to identify with him racially because the marble is white and his features have been ‘refined.’ . . . Since the majority of the portraits of Severus are represented by white marble, how will Black people be able to identify with one of their ancient heroes? The answer seems obvious; his portraits must be done in Black marble and limestone. Then Black children everywhere will be able to recognize and read about an outstanding Black Emperor of Rome.”<sup>68</sup> There is no evidence in the entire history of ancient art to support Jones’s statement that artists deliberately “refined” the features of blacks who served as their models, or used marble or limestone to conceal the identity of Negroid types. In fact, Jones seriously underestimates the consummate skill and anthropological accuracy with which ancient artists rendered, in both limestone and marble, the features of their Negroid subjects. Despite Jones’s highly emotional rhetoric,<sup>69</sup> however, as iconographical studies of the Emperor Septimius Severus have shown, in none of the numerous portraits of Septimius Severus is there any evidence of Negroid characteristics.<sup>70</sup> And as to the number of blacks in Mediterranean northwest Africa, also worthy of note is the fact that in the art of this part of Africa there are relatively few blacks, far fewer than elsewhere in the ancient world.



A recent book entitled *African Presence in Early Europe* is one of the latest examples of an Afrocentric study which ignores the ancient evidence, written and iconographical, concerning the white and black population in northwest Africa and maintains, without providing evidence, that all the inhabitants of northwest Africa have been and are black.<sup>71</sup> Hannibal, the Carthaginian general, for example, has been described as a black and, like many of the blacks in Afrocentric studies, appears as such in Rogers's publications. In his discussion of Hannibal, Rogers states that the Carthaginians were descendants of the Phoenicians, a Negroid people, and that until the rise of the doctrine of white superiority Hannibal was traditionally known as a black man.<sup>72</sup> Van Sertima accepts this myth; refers to Carthaginians as Africoid peoples; publishes some illustrations of coins depicting Negroes and elephants; and, though he cites no proof, states that these coins indicate the Africoid ancestry of the Carthaginians (misspelled four times on two pages).<sup>73</sup> Coins with realistic portraits of Hannibal's family, the Barcids, however, depict them as obviously non-Negroid. Furthermore, there is no classical source which describes the Carthaginians who came from Phoenicia at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea as Ethiopians, i.e., Negroes or blacks.

James's statement in *Stolen Legacy* that Aristotle stole important ideas from the great Library at Alexandria provides a final example of the serious inaccuracies in the publications of many Afrocentrists.<sup>74</sup> How could Aristotle have purloined ideas from the Alexandrian library? In the first place, there is no evidence that Aristotle ever went to Egypt. Secondly, ancient sources, for the most part, consider Ptolemy II the founder of the Library after the death of Aristotle in 322 BC. Even if the Alexandrian Library had been founded by Ptolemy I—as is indicated in a few ancient sources—it is doubtful that it would have been much of a bibliographic center at such an early date. Hence, a major point in the thesis that Aristotle stole important ideas from Egyptians, blacks in James's opinion, is not supported by the ancient evidence.

Considerations of space do not allow for additional illustrations of the unscholarly approach and methodological flaws of many Afrocentrists in their distorted accounts of blacks in the ancient world. Suffice it to say that the time has come for Afrocentrists to cease mythologizing and to cease claiming, in spite of the copious evidence to the contrary, that Egyptians, Carthaginians, Moors,

and other inhabitants of ancient Africa were blacks or Negroes in the twentieth-century sense of these terms.

The black experience as documented in antiquity—our oldest account of black-white relations—is in itself a fascinating chapter in the history of blacks, even when stripped of Afrocentric myths. It is this type of carefully documented information that should be included in courses of study designed to present an accurate picture of the black man's past. It is unfortunate that this chapter has been omitted almost entirely in Afrocentric publications. As Timothy Kendall, a specialist on Nubia at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has pointed out, the distorted Afrocentric emphasis on ancient Egypt has contributed to the neglect of ancient Nubia, "which really was a black African culture of enormous influence and power."<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, the pattern of black-white relations in the Greco-Roman period helps us understand better some of the reasons for the later development of virulent color prejudice in the modern world.

What are some highlights of this chapter in the history of blacks neglected by Afrocentrists?<sup>76</sup> The chronicle begins with Egyptian efforts to exploit the human and natural resources of the country to their south—most commonly known as Kush, Ethiopia, or Nubia. As a military power on the periphery of the Mediterranean world, this region was featured prominently in the ancient profile of blacks. Long before Egypt conquered Kush, and then occupied it for almost five hundred years beginning about 1570 BC, Egyptians employed southerners in their armies out of respect for their skill as archers. About 751 BC, after the long period of Egyptian occupation, the Napatan kingdom of Kush turned the tables on its former conquerors, came north, conquered Egypt, and ruled the Nile valley from deep in the south to the Mediterranean before being driven out in 663 BC by a powerful Assyrian war machine. This was the only time in history that a state from deep in the interior of Africa played an important role in the politics of the Mediterranean. The Napatans, however, in the meantime had laid the foundation of a state that, with its later capital at Meroë, survived for more than a thousand years, longer than any single period of Egyptian unification.

The ability of the black southern neighbors of Egypt to defend themselves from foreign aggression gained the respect of their enemies, even of Egyptians and Assyrians, in spite of the often exaggerated, contemptuous claims of their "official" accounts. Later,

in the time of Augustus, the Romans decided that the best way to prevent the recurrence of an Ethiopian attack upon the Roman border in Egypt was by diplomacy, not by arms. And Augustus, according to Strabo, granted the ambassadors of the Ethiopian queen everything they pleaded for, including the remission of the tribute he had imposed.

The overall Greco-Roman view of blacks—influenced to a great degree by the Ethiopians' demonstrated piety and love of justice—was very positive. The “blameless” Ethiopians of Homer were favorites of the gods and, according to Herodotus, were both champions of justice and the most handsome men on earth. Ethiopians, as reported by the historian Diodorus, were said to be the first of all men and the first to worship the gods, whose favor they enjoyed so much that the Olympian deities doomed to failure attempts of foreign rulers to invade and occupy their country. Ethiopians, in Diodorus' accounts, were not only pioneers in religion but the source of many Egyptian beliefs and practices. As late as the fourth century the writer Heliodorus described Ethiopian king Hydaspes as a model of wisdom and justice and as a ruler who, like earlier Ethiopian kings, preferred not to put captives to death but to take them as prisoners.

Greeks and Romans attached no special stigma to the color of the skin and explained the physical differences of all men as the effects of diverse environments upon a uniform human nature; there were no hierarchical notions concerning race, with whites occupying the highest and blacks the lowest position. Blacks suffered no detrimental distinctions excluding them from occupational, economic, social, or cultural opportunities available to other newcomers. Ancient slavery was color-blind. Both blacks and whites were slaves, but slaves and blacks were never synonymous; in fact, the majority of slaves were white, not black. Like other slaves and freedmen, blacks engaged in occupations at the lower end of the economic scale. But blacks with special qualifications found a place for their talent or skill, whether, for example, in the military, the arena, the theater, or agriculture. Miscegenation was as old as the Old Kingdom of Egypt. Classical legends of the interracial amours of gods and heroes caused no embarrassment and evoked no apologies from poets or artists. References to black-white racial mixture included nothing resembling later strictures. Blacks were to be counted among those who assimilated classical culture. Greek was taught at Meroë, deep in

Ethiopia; the Ethiopian king Ergamenes had a Greek education and studied Greek philosophy; and included among the distinguished followers of Epicurus were two men from Alexandria named Ptolemaeus, one black, the other white. The dark-skinned playwright Terence, who might have been of Negroid extraction, arrived in Rome as a slave and received his freedom and a liberal education from his owner, a Roman senator. Achieving fame as a comic poet, Terence became a member of the learned Scipionic circle, and his daughter is said to have married a Roman knight. In no Afrocentric study have I found any mention of the prominence given to Ethiopians in the ecumenical creed of early Christianity or to the role of blacks in the early church, where they were welcomed in the Christian brotherhood on the same terms as others, and where they found equality in both theory and practice. In short, the curse of acute color prejudice did not have its origins among the ancient Greek or Roman forerunners of the “Eurocentric tradition” that has been much maligned by Afrocentrists.

Afrocentrists have maintained that if black students are nurtured on black history as they have reconstructed it and if they cease to be warped by the lies of Eurocentric racists, the subsequent restoration of the pride of which blacks have long been robbed will be followed by raised aspirations and improved academic performance. On the contrary, blacks have already been misled and in many ways confused by the kinds of inaccuracies and omissions I have illustrated, but the damage to future generations will be incalculable if the present Afrocentric trend continues. The time has come for Afrocentrists to cease mythologizing and falsifying the past. The time has come for scholars and educators to insist upon truth and scholarly rigor in current and projected revisions of historical curricula.

## NOTES

This article, in its original form, a lecture given at Boston University, was completed and accepted before the completion and publication of Snowden’s chapter, “Bernal’s ‘Blacks’ and the Afrocentrists,” in *Black Athena Revisited*, edited by M. R. Lefkowitz and G. M. Rogers (University of North Carolina Press 1996).

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and London 1983) hereafter cited as *Before Color Prejudice*; J. Vercoutter, J. Leclant, F. M. Snowden, Jr., and J. Desanges, *The Image of the Black in Western Art I: From the Pharaohs to the Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York 1976), now distributed by Harvard University Press, hereafter cited as *Image of the Black*.

2. W. Robert Connor, *Review of Books Recommended by the Princeton Faculty* 21 (1970), 4.

3. G. H. Beardsley, *The Negro in Greek and Roman Civilization: A Study of the Ethiopian Type* (Baltimore 1927, New York 1967), cited hereafter as G. H. Beardsley, *The Ethiopian Type*.

4. Add to the publications of F. M. Snowden, Jr., cited in note 1 *supra* the following: "Blacks, Early Christianity, and," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: Supplementary Volume* (Nashville 1976) 111–14; "Aethiopes," in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* I, 1: AARA-APHLAD (Zurich and Munich 1981), 413–19, I, 2 (Plates) 321–26; "Μέλαις-λευκός and *Niger-candidus* Contrasts in Classical Literature," *The Ancient History Bulletin* 2.3 (1988), 60–4; "Bernal's 'Blacks,' Herodotus and Other Classical Evidence," *Arethusa* (Special Fall Issue 1989), 83–95; "Romans and Blacks: A Review Essay," *American Journal of Philology* 111, no. 4 (1990), 543–57; "Review of Blacks in Ancient Cypriot Art by Vassos Karageorghis," in *American Journal of Archaeology* 94 (1990), 72–4.

5. M. Bieber, *The History of the Greek and Roman Theater*, 2nd ed., rev. and enl. (Princeton 1961), 296.

6. R. Lonis, "Les trois approches de l'Éthiopien par l'opinion gréco-romaine," *Ktéma* 6 (1981), 79, hereafter cited as R. Lonis, *Ktéma*.

7. C. T. Seltman, "Two Heads of Negresses," *American Journal of Archaeology* 24 (1920), 14.

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9. G. H. Beardsley, *The Ethiopian Type*, 8, 21, 79.

10. D. K. Hill, *American Journal of Archaeology* 57 (1953), 266.

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12. E. Baring, *Ancient and Modern Imperialism* (London 1910), 139–40.

13. E. E. Sikes, *The Anthropology of the Greeks* (London 1914), 88.

14. A. E. Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth*, 5th ed. (Oxford 1931), 323.

15. W. L. Westermann, "Slavery and the Elements of Freedom," *Quarterly Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences* 1 (1943), 346.

16. C. Kluckhohn, *Anthropology and the Classics* (Providence 1961), 34, 42.

17. H. C. Baldry, *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought* (Cambridge 1965), 4.

18. B. H. Warmington, *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 17 (1983), 520.

19. R. S. W. Hawtrey, *Review of Blacks in Antiquity. Prudentia* 4 (1972), 58.

20. W. Robert Connor (note 2), 4.

21. L. Castiglione, *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 24 (1972), 441.

22. F. M. Snowden, Jr., *Blacks in Antiquity*, 170–78, and *Before Color Prejudice*, 85–7.

23. Strabo 4.5.4.

24. [Aristotle] *Physiognomonica* 6.812a

25. F. M. Snowden, Jr., *Blacks in Antiquity*, 196–97.
26. H. Hoetink, *The Two Variants in Caribbean Race Relations: A Contribution to the Sociology of Segmented Societies*, trans. Eva M. Hookyaas (New York 1967), 120 and 126, where Hoetink cites as an example of the somatic norm image a central African creation myth in which the Negro regards himself as perfectly cooked but the white man as undone because of a defect in the Creator's oven.
27. F. M. Snowden, Jr., *Before Color Prejudice*, 75–82.
28. Sextus Empiricus *Adversus mathematicos* xi.43.
29. Herodotus 3.20.
30. Asclepiades, *Anthologia Palatina* 5.210.
31. Martial 1.115. 4–5.
32. Agatharchides, *De Mari Erythraeo* 16, GGM I, 118.
33. Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Boston 1964), 304.
34. Alan Marsh, "Awareness of Racial Differences in West African and British Children," *Race* 113 (1970), 301.
35. A. Dihle, "Zur hellenistischen Ethnographie," in H. Schwabl et al., *Fondation Hardt, Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique*, vol. 8 *Grecs et barbares: six exposés et discussions* (Vandoeuvres-Genève 1962), 214–15.
36. L. A. Thompson, *Romans and Blacks* (Norman and London 1989), 160.
37. E. de Chanot, "Bronzes antiques," *Gazette Archéologique* 5 (1879), 209–10.
38. Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, Mass. and London 1982), 421, note 16.
39. For examples of such views, see A. J. Evans, "Recent Discoveries of Tarentine Terra-Cottas," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 7 (1886), 37–38 and plate LXIV for the description of a third-century BC askos in the shape of an emaciated Negro boy sleeping beside an amphora as "probably without a rival amongst Greek terra-cottas" for its realism and true pathos; J. D. Beazley, "Charinos: Attic Vases in the Form of Human Heads," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 49 (1929), 39 for the aesthetic attractiveness of Negroes as models; H. E. Read, *A Coat of Many Colours: Occasional Essays* (London 1945), 2, 5 for the description of a tiny Hellenistic bronze head as "a great work of art, even the greatest work of art in the world"; H. Deschamps, *Review of Blacks in Antiquity in Africa: Journal of the International Institute* 41 (1971), 68 for the view that classical art has an astonishing diversity and vividness, and a grace that bespeaks an absence of prejudice; D. M. Buitron, "Greek Encounters with Africans," *Walters Art Gallery Bulletin* 32 (Feb., 1980, vol. 32, no. 5), 1 for the high quality of the representations of Ethiopians in Greek art; and R. A. Higgins, *Greek Terracottas* (London 1987), 120 for the view that a first-century BC terra cotta of a Negro Spinario is a "creation of unusual charm," and "a human document, a sympathetic study of a racial type."
40. Kenneth J. Gergen, "The Significance of Skin Color in Human Relations," in *Color and Race*, ed. John Hope Franklin (Boston 1968), 120, 112–125.
41. Kenneth J. Gergen, *Ibid.*, 121.
42. F. M. Snowden, Jr., *Before Color Prejudice*, 82–85.
43. *Ibid.*, 99–108.
44. Origen, *Homilia in Canticum Canticorum* 1.6 (GCS, Origen 8.36).
45. Origen, *Commentarium in Canticum Canticorum* 2.362 and 366–367 (GCS, Origen 8.115 and 117–118).
46. Origen, *De principiis* 2.9.5–6 (GCS, Origen 5.164–170).
47. Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 71.12 (CCL 39.980).

48. Acts 8:26–39.
49. J. Devisse, *Image of the Black* II, 1, pp.38–43. For ampullae depicting a Negroid Menas, see, for example, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1933.717; Paris, Musée du Louvre, MNC 140.
50. F. M. Snowden, Jr., *Before Color Prejudice*, p.106 and note 243, 150–151.
51. A. M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multi-cultural Society* (Whittle Direct Books 1991), 42.
52. *The New York Times*, June 3, 1992, p. B7; *The Washington Post*, Feb. 8, 1992, pp. D1 and 7.
53. Orlando Patterson, “Rethinking Black History,” *Harvard Educational Record* 41 (1971), 305.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 307.
55. F. M. Snowden, Jr., *Before Color Prejudice*, and James D. Muhly, “Black Athena versus Traditional Scholarship,” *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 3/1 (1990), 83–106.
56. Chancellor Williams, *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race from 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.* (Chicago 1974), 32.
57. C. A. Diop, “Origin of the Ancient Egyptians,” in *General History of Africa*, volume II: *Ancient Civilizations of Africa*, ed. G. Mokhtar (Berkeley 1981), 36.
58. *Ibid.*, 36–41. For a discussion of Diop’s and M. Bernal’s misuse of classical sources, see F. M. Snowden, Jr., “Bernal’s ‘Blacks,’ Herodotus, and Other Classical Evidence,” in *Arethusa: The Challenge of Black Athena*, Special Issue (Fall 1989), 83–95.
59. Frank J. Yurco, “Were the Ancient Egyptians Black or White?” *Biblical Archaeology Review* XV, No. 5 (1989), 58.
60. *Image of the Black*, pp. 38, 41, and fig. 7; Cyril Aldred, *Old Kingdom Art in Egypt* (London 1949), 3; *Before Color Prejudice*, figs. 1–2, page 11. The Giza princess was not to be the last black woman to appear in royal circles. H. E. Winlock, *Excavations at Deir El-Babri, 1911–1931* (New York 1942), 130 has called attention to the non-Egyptian coloration of two princesses in the court of Mentuhotep II—Ashayet and the ebony black Kemsit, whose tightly curled hair and broad nose are clearly depicted in a limestone fragment, J. Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals: Egyptian Art in the Middle Kingdom* (Cambridge 1988), 14–16.
61. *Before Color Prejudice*, 11–12, 40–41, figs. 5a–b; *Image of the Black*, figs. 10–12; Frank J. Yurco, loc. cit., note 59, supra, 7–8.
62. D. O’Connor, “Ancient Egypt and Black Africa—Early Contacts,” *Expedition: The Magazine of Archaeology/Anthropology* 14 (1971), 2.
63. J. M. C. Toynbee, *Roman Historical Portraits* (Ithaca 1978), 79–88, and *Cleopatra’s Egypt: Age of the Ptolemies* (New York 1988), Cat. 61 n, o, u–w, z, Cat. 76–77, and Color Plate xvi.
64. J. A. Rogers, *World’s Great Men of Color* I (New York 1946), 66.
65. J. H. Clarke, in *Black Women in Antiquity*, ed. I. V. Sertima (New Brunswick and London 1984), 126.
66. *Ibid.*, 127.
67. George G. M. James, *Stolen Legacy: The Greeks were not the authors of Greek Philosophy, but the people of North Africa, commonly called the Egyptians* (New York 1954), 50.
68. Edward L. Jones, *Profiles in African Heritage: Black Studies Series* (in Classical History) (Seattle 1972), 126.

69. *Ibid.*, p. xvi which provides a good example of the type of rhetoric found in some Afrocentric studies: "A large number of Black African emperors of Rome and other African leaders are usually portrayed in statues of *white limestone* instead of black marble, or at least bronze. You know what this means? We Africans who have visited the different museums of the world passed by our soulbrothers without receiving one vibration. Such a cruel hoax has been played on the African people—but they are now awakening and will never get caught sleeping again." The white limestone "reserve" head of a Negro princess and that of her Egyptian husband bring out clearly the differences between the Negroid lips and nose of the princess and those of her husband (from Giza, ca. 2600 BC, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)—see illustrations 1 and 2 in *Before Color Prejudice*. A scene on an early third-century AD marble sarcophagus depicting a Roman general, whose features resemble those of Septimius Severus, flanked by an elite guard of three soldiers, one a Negro whose broad nose and thick lips obviously distinguish his features from those of all the "white" figures in the scene showing suppliant barbarian warriors (now in Palazzo Rondinini, Rome)—*The Image of the Black*, no. 281. For other examples of Negroid or mixed black-white types in marble, see the statuette of a first-century AD woman from Lower Egypt, perhaps an allegory of "Africa," whose mixed black-white features were carefully delineated by the sculptor (present location unknown)—*The Image of the Black* no. 286; and the white marble statue (second century AD) of a Negro actor or singer from the vicinity of Naples (Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples)—*The Image of the Black*, nos. 291–292. Cf. C. C. Vermeule, with the collaboration of Richard Newman, "Roman Portraits in Egyptian Colored Marbles," *Journal of the Museum of Fine Arts*, Boston 2 (1990), 39–40.

70. Cf. A. M. McCann, *The Portraits of Septimius Severus* A.D. 193–211 (1968)= vol. 30 of the *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*.

71. I. V. Sertima, ed., *African Presence in Early Europe* (New Brunswick and Oxford, 1985), 10, 96–107.

72. J. A. Rogers, *Sex and Race: Negro-Caucasian Mixture in All Ages and All Lands* I (New York 1967), 90, and *World's Great Men of Color* (note 64), 50.

73. I. V. Sertima (note 71), 138–139.

74. George G. M. James, *Stolen Legacy* (note 67), 17.

75. Timothy Kendall, *The New York Times*, Feb. 11, 1992, C1 and C10.

76. For a detailed discussion of these highlights, see F. M. Snowden, Jr., *Blacks in Antiquity* and *Before Color Prejudice*.