THE NEGRO IN ANCIENT GREECE

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INTRODUCTION

SCHOLARS have given little attention to the Negro element in the population of the Greek and Roman world. The present paper is a complement to a recent study in which the writer examined the evidence relating to the Negro in classical Italy.[1] Although this study of the Negro in Italy required some use of Greek materials, it included no detailed examination of pertinent Greek sources. Until the publication of Mrs. Beardsley's study,[2] no comprehensive investigation of the Negro in the Greek and Roman world had been made. Mrs. Beardsley's work, however, dealt primarily with the Negro in classical art. The purpose of the present study has been to collect and to interpret the scattered references to the Negro in Greek literature and, wherever possible, to supplement this material by archaeological evidence.

GREEK DESCRIPTIONS OF THE NEGRO

If we accept the ordinary identification of the Negro on the basis of color of the skin, shape of the nose, and quality of the hair,[3] it is certain that the Greeks were well acquainted with the racial type which anthropologists designate today as Negroid. In view of the Greek usage of the word Αἰθίοψ (Ethiopian) it is safe to assume that a given passage refers to a Negro in the following instances:

1. Whenever a passage mentions two or more of the physical characteristics accepted by modern anthropologists.

2. Whenever the word Αἰθίοψ is used in conjunction with one or more of the physical characteristics accepted by modern anthropologists.

3. Whenever contextual or other evidence indicates that Αἰθίοψ, even in the absence of any other racial characteristic, refers to a Negroid type.

Rather detailed classifications of an anthropological type answering to the Negroid type appear in several Greek authors. One of these will suffice as an illustration.[4]

> Diod. Sic. 3.8.2: The majority of them (i.e., Ethiopians), and especially those who dwell along the rivers, are black-skinned (*ταῖς μὲν χρόαις . . . μέλανες*), flat-nosed (*ταῖς δὲ ἰδέοις σιμοί*) and woolly-haired (*τοῖς δὲ τριχώμασιν οὐλοι*).

The following passages in the extant literature use the word in referring to a racial type which anthropologists designate today as Negroid:

[1] Snowden, 1947. [2] Beardsley, 1929.

[3] Cf. Hooton, 1931, pp. 540–541; Benedict, 1940, p. 51; Lewis, 1942, p. 18.

[4] For other rather detailed descriptions of the Negro in Greek literature, see Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2; Arr. *Ind.*, 6.9; Strabo, 15.1.24.

1. Αἰθιοψ associated with black skin, woolly hair, and flat nose: Diod. Sic. 3.8.2 (cited above); Arr. *Ind.* 6.9, in which it is stated that the natives of Southern India, though blacks, are not so flat-nosed or so woolly-haired as the Ethiopians.

2. Αἰθιοψ associated with black skin and woolly hair: Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2, and Strabo 15.1.24, in which the authors discuss the reason for the Ethiopian's black skin and woolly hair.

3. Αἰθιοψ associated with black skin and flat nose: Sext. Empiric. *Adv. Ethicos* 43, in which the Ethiopians are said to prefer the blackest and most flat-nosed; Xenophanes, *frg.* 16 (Diels), who, in a discussion of anthropomorphism, says that the Ethiopians represent their gods as flat-nosed and black.

4. Αἰθιοψ associated with woolly hair: Hdt. 7.70, in which Herodotus differentiates between the woolly-haired and the straight-haired Ethiopians, dwelling respectively to the West and to the East;[5] Aristot. *Gen. An.* 5.3.782B, in which Aristotle contrasts the straight hair of the Scythians and Thracians with the woolly hair of the Ethiopians and people who live in hot regions; ps.—Aristot. *Physiogn.* 6.812B, in which the physiognomonical interpretation that those with very woolly hair are cowardly is applied to Ethiopians; Galen, *Temperament.* 2.616, in which the woolly hair of the Ethiopians is attributed to the effect of heat.

5. Αἰθιοψ associated with black or dark skin: Aesch. *Prom.* 808–809, *frg.* 370 (Nauck²); Eurip. *frg.* 228.3–4 (Nauck²), cf. *frg.* 771.4 (Nauck²); Theoc. 17.87; Aristot. *Probl.* 10.66 898B, *Hist. An.* 3.9.517A, *Gen. An.* 2.2.736A; ps.—Aristot. *Physiogn.* 6.812A; Lucian, *Adv. Indoctum* 28, *Bis Acc.* 6; Ach. Tat. 4.5; Quint. Smyrn. 2.32, 2.101, 2.642; Sext. Empiric. *Adv. Physicos* 1.249; Arr. *An.* 5.4.4; ps.—Callisth. 2.190; Galen, *Temperament.* 2.628; C. Schmidt, 1897, p. 102.

The Greeks include one characteristic—the flat nose—omitted in Roman descriptions.[6] Although Greek art shows that the Greeks were not unaware of the thick lips associated with the Negro,[7] the writer has found no references to lip-thickness in Greek descriptions of a type otherwise recognizable as Negroid. Flat noses, woolly hair, integument rich in pigment, these were to the Greek the outstanding physical features of this type. Of these features, it is apparent that the color of the skin was uppermost in the mind of the Greek.

[5] It is generally assumed that the Eastern branch lived in southeastern Baluchistan. Cf. Macan, 1908, p. 94; Smith and Laird, 1908, p. 157; and Fraser, 1935, pp. 43–44. Oldfather, 1933, note on Diodorus 2.22, states that Herodotus in 7.70 by the Eastern Ethiopians probably meant the Assyrians. At any rate, the writer knows of only one attempt to identify a group of Negroes in Greek art as members of the Asiatic division of Ethiopians. Cf. Fraser, 1935, pp. 41–44. Graindor's explanation (1936, 2.110) seems to me more reasonable.

[6] Classifications of the Negroid type are found in three Roman sources: ps.—Verg. *Mor.* 31–35; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 2.189; and Petronius, 102.

[7] Cf. Beardsley, 1929, for example, figs. 4a, 4b, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

By far the most common words which the Greeks used in these passages to designate the color of the Ethiopian's skin were μέλας (black) and compounds of μέλας.[8] Κελαινός (black or dark)[9] and κυάνεος (dark),[10] however, were also used. That the Greeks regarded blackness as typical of the Ethiopian's color is apparent not only from the descriptions of the Ethiopian's skin as the blackest in the world[11] but also from the proverbial Αἰθίοπα σμήχειν[12] (to wash an Ethiopian white). When the Greeks wanted to illustrate blackness of color, they often selected the Ethiopian for this purpose.[13]

Since the Greeks attached importance to the color of the skin as a means of identifying the Negro, it is necessary to determine to what extent μέλας and similar words were used as the equivalents of Αἰθίοψ. Hesiod's κυανέων ἀνδρῶν (dark men)[14] may have been Ethiopians; in fact, the words have been interpreted in such a way. The use of τῶν τὴν χρόανμελάνων (those with black skins) as the equivalent of τῶν Αἰθιόπων is clear from a passage in Aristotle.[15] Heliodorus probably designates an Ethiopian in the following words: τὴν χροιὰν δὲ ἀκριβῶς μέλας[16] (genuinely black-skinned). The fact that μέλας and, perhaps, κυάνεος are the equivalents of Αἰθίοψ in these instances proves only that the Greeks at times used these adjectives in the sense of Αἰθίοψ but does not imply that μέλας, when used alone, always referred to Αἰθίοψ. Μέλας, although probably used more frequently of the Ethiopians than of any other race, was applied also to other peoples, especially East Indians.[17]

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[8] (a) μέλας Xenophanes, *Frg.* 16 (Diels); ps.—Aristot. *Phgn.* 6.812A; Aristot. *Probl.* 10.66. 898B; *Hist. An.* 3.9.517A; Strabo 15.1.24; Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2; Sext. Empiric. *Adv. Ethicos* 43; Arr. *An.* 5.4.4.

(b) μελάμβροτος Eurip. *frg.* (Nauck²) 228.3–4; 771.4; Quint. Smyrn. 2.32.

(c) μελανόστερφος Aesch. *frg.* (Nauck²) 370.

(d) μελανόχρως Quint. Smyrn. 2.642.

[9] Aesch. *Prom.* 808 and Theoc. 17.87.

[10] Quint. Smyrn. 2.101; cf. Hes. *Op.* 527. Κυάνεος, according to Veckenstedt, 1888, p. 138, refers to the Ethiopian's black, oily, shiny skin. These three color adjectives may represent an attempt to describe accurately the different skin-colors which the Greeks had observed. It is interesting in this connection to compare the adjectives which the Romans used: *niger, perniger, nigerrimus, fuscus, decolor* and *rubens.*

[11] Arr. *An.* 5.4.4; Aristot. *Probl.* 10.66.698B. [12] Lucian *Adv. Indoctum* 28.

[13] Lucian *Bis. Acc.* 6, in which reference is made to tanning the skin until it resembles an Ethiopian's, and Ach. Tat. 4.5.2, in which mention is made of a flower among the Greeks as dark as an Ethiopian's skin.

[14] *Op.* 527. Cf. Veckenstedt, 1888, pp. 137–138; Hayes, 1918, pp. 160–161; Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, 1928, p. 104, and Sinclair, 1932, p. 57.

[15] *Gen. An.* 2.736A.

[16] *Aethiopicon,* 2.30.1. Cf. Rattenbury, Lamb, and Maillon, 1935, p. 6, note 2: "Héliodore . . . dépeint l'Éthiopien comme ἀκριβῶς μέλας (d'un noir de jais); and Lewis, 1942, p. 27, for the intense black characteristic of certain Negroes.

[17] Cf. Aesch. *Supp.* 530, referring to Egyptians; Galen, *Temperament.* 2.628, referring to Arabians. For μέλας and compounds of μέλας used of East Indians, see Arr. *Ind.* 6.9; *An.* 5.4.4; Nonn. *Dionys.* 14.395.

THE NEGRO IN THE GREEK WORLD[18]

The Negro as a mythical or partly mythical character appears frequently in Greek literature.[19] Negroes were known in the Greek world as early as Minoan times,[20] and, if Evans is correct, were employed by Minoan commanders as auxiliaries.[21] A Negro on a human mask from a bronze age tomb was found at Cyprus.[22] A Negro trumpeter appeared on the shield of a Homeric warrior.[23] Eurybates, probably of Negroid extraction, was from Ithaca, whence he had come as Odysseus' herald.[24] If we may believe Quintus of Smyrna, the Greeks encountered Negroes in the army of Memnon at Troy.[25] The archaic mask of a Negro, discovered at Akragas along with the representations of Demeter and Persephone and their worshipers, portrays the flat nose, thick lips and short woolly hair with a fidelity to nature that suggests direct obser-

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[18] In the second and third parts of this paper, the writer has considered as references to Negroes only those instances which meet the requirements stated above (*see* p. 31). Any two of the characteristics mentioned by anthropologists leave no doubt as to racial identification of artistic representations of the Negro. In cases of black-white crosses, an excellent guide is provided by Day, 1932. [19] Beardsley, 1929, pp. 1–9.

[20] Evans, 1921, pp. 302, 310, 312, and figs. 230, a, b, and c; 1928, pp. 45–46.

[21] Evans, 1928, pp. 755–757 and plate XIII. Evans (p. 756) states that the blacks may well have served as palace guards also. [22] Marshall, 1911, no. 144.

[23] *Monumenti Inediti*, 1829, pl. 35.

[24] Hom. *Od.* 19.246–248, describes Eurybates, Odysseus' herald, as follows: "He was round-shouldered, dark-skinned (μελανόχροος), and woolly-haired οὐλοκάρηνος), and his name was Eurybates; and Odysseus honoured him above his other comrades. . . . " Although the Greeks used blackness of color as a conventional term when referring to others than Αἰθίοπες (e.g. Aesch. *Supp.* 719–720 and Pind. *Pyth.* 4.376), the use of μελανόχροος must be examined in this case because of its association with οὐλοκάρηνος. Professor Wallace, without attempting to identify specifically racial origin, admits the possibility that Eurybates was a barbarian (Wallace, 1927, p. 20). The important anthropological passages cited above (Diod. Sic. 3.8.2; Arr. *Ind.* 6.9; Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2; Strabo, 15.1.24) use both black skin and woolly hair as principal characteristics in identifying the Αἰθίοπες. The importance of the two words of anthropological significance—μελανόχροος and οὐλοκάρηνος, especially since they are used together, cannot be overlooked. The use of one of these words alone would not be as significant in an attempt to identify Eurybates' racial origin, but since the very same words—μελανόχροες (Quint. Smyrn. 2.642) and οὐλόκρανοι (Arr. *Ind.* 6.9) appear in other key passages which refer unquestionably to Αἰθίοπες, the possibility of Negro extraction cannot be excluded from consideration in the question of Eurybates' race. That the Negro was associated with the Homeric legend is clear from the trumpeter of a very pronounced Negroid type who appears, in a fifth century vase painting, on the shield of a Homeric warrior (*Monumenti Inediti*, 1829, pl. 35). Since, therefore, the Negroid type was known in the Greek world as early as Minoan times (cf. note 20), it is not at all improbable, especially in view of the anthropological evidence cited, that Eurybates was of Negroid extraction. In connection with the honor which Odysseus paid Eurybates, compare Scott, 1946, p. 81, "He [i.e., Homer] had race-pride, but no race-hatreds and prejudices."

[25] 2.100–101. Sources like Quintus of Smyrna and Frontinus (see note 26) may not be of the same merit as some of the older authorities, but are included for whatever value they may have.

vation from life.[26] Negro contingents formed a part of Xerxes' army,[27] and, according to some scholars, fought at Marathon.[28]

Although Greek writers in only a few instances state specifically that Negroes were on Greek soil,[29] the numerous references to Negroes in certain passages,[30] together with the many representations of Negroes in Greek art, seem to furnish evidence of a racial type that was taken for granted by the average Greek.

Aristotle mentions a woman from Elis whose child had an Ethiopian father.[31] Plutarch relates a story of a Greek woman who was the great granddaughter of an Ethiopian.[32] Menander's sympathetic reference to those who are far from their homes and without friends—Ethiopians and Scythians—suggests that the Greeks were well acquainted with these two racial stocks.[33] Theophrastus states that the "man of petty ambition" had an Ethiopian slave.[34] One of the pupils of Herodes Atticus was a Negro.[35]

Of the art objects representing Negroes, many are without doubt the work of Greek artists who had actual models before them. Such an assumption, at any rate, has been accepted by scholars in their interpretation of certain objects. A statuette vase in the form of a "temple boy," together with the mould for making it, was discovered at Olynthus in 1928.[36] A mulatto priest of Isis has been identified as the work of an artist working in Athens in either the first century B.C. or the first half of the first century A.D. The priest, according to Poulsen, represented one of the native clergy whom the Egyptian metics demanded for their Isiac worship.[37] Graindor believes that a herm discovered at Athens is that of Memnon, one of the pupils of Herodes Atticus.[38] There can be little doubt that many other art objects which depicted Negroes

[26] Marconi, 1931, pp. 959–960, and figs. 1 and 2. For Negroes in Sicily, see also Frontinus, *Strat.* 1.11.18. [27] Hdt. 7.69–70. [28] Frazer, 1913, p. 434, and Graindor, 1908, p. 29.

[29] Mrs. Beardsley's statement (*op. cit.*, 11) "Beyond this [i.e., Herodotus 7.69–70; Theophrastus, *Char.*, 7 (no. 21 in the manuscript) Jebb, 62–63] Greek literature is silent and the many representations of the negro type in Greek art must furnish their own interpretation" overlooks several important literary references which indicate the presence of Negroes on Greek soil. See especially notes 31–35. [30] See pages 38–39.

[31] *Gen. An.* 1.18.722A; *Hist. An.* 7.6.586A. These passages, as well as Plutarch, *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*, 21, would have little meaning unless they referred to the offspring of a black-white union. Aristotle's general usage of μέλας, furthermore, indicates that in these passages he clearly had in mind the Negro type.

[32] See note 31. [33] *Frg.* 533 Kock. See below, pp. 38–39. [34] *Char.* 21.4.

[35] Philostr. *V. A.* 3.11 reads *Menon* and *V. S.* 2.558 *Memnon*. See below, pages 37–38, for a fuller discussion of Herodes Atticus.

[36] Robinson, 1931, page 78, no. 384, and plate 42.

[37] Poulsen, 1913, pp. 217–223 and plate VI. For Negroes as devotees of Isis and as attendants of priests in Italy, see Gusman, 1900, p. 79, and Rostovtzeff, 1938, plate XI, no. 2, and commentary on p. 342. [38] Graindor, 1915, p. 402, and 1930, pp. 114–116, 128, 131, 150.

were also the work of artists who had before them as models Negroes who were seen daily in the agora, palaestra, or elsewhere.[39]

The theatre also served to acquaint the Greek with the Negro. It is not surprising that the Negro became a familiar character on the Greek stage, since he had long been known in Greek mythology. The Negro appearing on certain coins, according to several scholars, is Delphos, the eponymous hero of Delphi.[40] Negro bodyguards marched to the assistance of the Egyptian Busiris whom Heracles had laid low.[41] Memnon led Negro warriors at Troy.[42] Negroes appear also in the Andromeda story.[43] Circe is represented on several vases as a Negro.[44] One of the followers of Theseus was a boy whose thick lips and curly hair suggest that he was a Negro.[45] A Negro youth, interpreted as an attendant of the sons of Niobe, appears in a group of the Niobids.[46]

The Negro, therefore, was comparatively well known to the Greek in mythology. It is reasonable to assume that plays which presented these and similar myths helped, in many cases, to familiarize the Greek with the Negroid type. The *Memnon* or *Aithiopes* of Sophocles and possibly the *Memnon* of Aeschylus had an Ethiopian chorus.[47] The *Andromeda* of Euripides, if the Andromeda crater in Berlin can be trusted, represented the country and people of Ethiopia by a Negro wearing a tight jersey and a short, richly patterned chiton.[48] Scholars have regarded the scene on a fifth-century lecythus depicting a Negro woman tortured by satyrs as a reference to some satyr drama.[49] One of two actors appearing on an early fourth-century vase is a bald, beardless Negro, who wears a little skin fastened on the right shoulder, walks by the aid of a staff, and holds a flaming torch.[50] The actors, in some cases perhaps, used masks of the type suggested by the life-sized terracotta mask of a Negro, each ear of which was pierced with a hole, presumably for a string with which to fasten the mask to the head.[51] Negroes, in other cases, as Mrs. Beardsley has argued, were probably brought upon the stage.[52] It is likely that Negroes

[39] The activities in which the Negroes in ancient Greece engaged are listed in Beardsley, 1929, pp. 65–66 and 111–112.

[40] Babelon, 1907, pp. 1000–1001 and plate XLII, figs. 22 and 23, believes that the type perhaps reproduced the head of the gigantic statue raised to Delphos, 60 stadia from Delphi (Pausanias, 10.32.2); Head, 1911, pp. 340–341. Seltman, 1924, p. 97, considers as unfounded the doubts expressed in Pauly-Wissowa IV 2700 as to this identification of Athenian and Delphic coinage.

[41] See Beardsley, 1929, no. 7 and fig. 1; nos. 104–110. [42] Quint. Smyrn. 2.100–101.

[43] Beardsley, 1929, nos. 102–103. [44] Walters, 1893, p. 81, fig. 2, and pl. 4.

[45] Beardsley, 1929, p. 63, no. 121. [46] Beardsley, 1929, p. 86, no. 179.

[47] Soph. *Frgs.* 25–30 (Nauck²) and Webster, 1936, p. 173.

[48] Bieber, 1939, p. 54 and fig. 62.

[49] I have found no satisfactory explanation of this scene. Mayer, 1891, pp. 300–312 and Seltman, 1920, p. 15, suggest that the Negro woman is Lamia. Buschor, 1927, pp. 230–232, connects the scene with Pausanias, 1.23. [50] Tillyard, 1923, no. 121, pl. 19 and p. 71.

[51] Walters, 1903, p. 365, no. D361.

[52] Beardsley, 1929, pp. 113–114, and Webster, 1936, 173.

appeared as actors not only in regular dramatic performances but also in myths danced in pantomime.[53] A bronze statuette of a Negro usually interpreted as a dancer represents one of the wildest moments of a dance, reminiscent of certain African tribal dances.[54]

THE GREEK ATTITUDE TOWARD THE NEGRO

The available evidence supports the general statements of Zimmern that the Greeks show no trace of color-prejudice,[55] and of Westermann that Greek society had no color line.[56]

Several authors give rather definite information as to what the Greeks thought of the Negro in his native land. Diodorus spoke highly of the civilized Ethiopians who inhabited Meroe and the land adjoining Egypt. He regarded the Ethiopians as the first people to worship the gods, and most Egyptian institutions as derivatives of their civilization.[57] Lucian records that the Ethiopians were the first to deliver the doctrines of astrology to men and that their reputation for wisdom was great.[58] The Greeks also had knowledge of the uncivilized Negro tribesmen who lived beyond Napata and Meroe.[59] Ptolemy attributed their savage habits to the fact that their homes were continually oppressed by the heat, just as continual cold explained the savage behavior of the Scythians.[60]

Odysseus regarded Eurybates very highly and gave him a place of esteem among his heralds.[61] A Negro trumpeter on a Homeric shield is one of several devices which Chase is inclined to regard as indication of rank.[62] In spite of the Aristotelian physiognomonical interpretation that those who are too swarthy[63] and those who have very woolly hair are cowardly,[64] many a Negro warrior must have won the respect of the Greek world. The Minoans probably employed Negroes as auxiliaries.[65] Negro warriors fought against the Greeks in both the Trojan[66] and Persians Wars[67] and appeared in the Carthaginian army against Gelon of Syracuse.[68] The rather extensive use of Negroes as auxiliaries may be an indication of the premium which certain Mediterranean peoples placed on their military prowess. Quintus of Smyrna, at any rate, records that the Ethiopians at Troy excelled in battle.[69] Negroes on the coinage of Phocis, Delphi, Lesbos, and Athens[70] point to the existence of a tradition which honored some Negro hero, whether it was Delphos, as some have maintained, or some other unknown black hero. Herodes Atticus mourned the death of his pupils (one of them a Negro) as if they had been his own children be-

[53] Harrison, 1890, p. cxvii. [54] Beardsley, 1929, no. 207 and fig. 18; also nos. 211–212.
[55] Zimmern, 1931, p. 323. [56] Westermann, 1943, p. 346. [57] 3.2.1–4.
[58] *Astr.* 3. [59] Diodorus, 3.8.2–4. [60] *Tetr.* 2.2. [61] *Od.* 19. 246–248.
[62] Chase, 1902, p. 88. [63] *Phgn.* 6.812A. [64] *Phgn.* 6.812B.
[65] Evans, 1928, pp. 755–757, and plate XIII. [66] Quint. Smyrn. 2.101, 642.
[67] Hdt. 7.69–70. [68] Frontinus, *Strat.* 1.11.18. [69] 2.216. [70] See note 40.

cause they were noble-minded, honorable youths, fond of study, and a credit to their upbringing. In their honor he erected statues.[71]

A passage in Menander is of importance in determining the Greek attitude toward the Negro. Persons of no account, says Menander, attempt to compensate for their worthlessness by reciting their pedigree. But, insists the comic poet, pedigree is unimportant, for

> The man whose natural bent is good,
> He, mother, he, though Aethiop, is nobly born.
> "A Scyth," you say? Pest! Anacharsis was a Scyth![72]

In other words, it makes no difference whether one is an Ethiopian or a Scythian; it is natural bent, not race, that determines nobility.

Allinson translates lines 11–12 as follows: "The man whose natural bent is good, he, mother, though Aethiop is nobly born."[73] Some scholars, however, translate this line in a manner which indicates that they have approached the subject with fixations which derive from certain modern attitudes toward the Negro. Waddell, for example, has the following note on Αἰθίοψ: "contemptuously, like 'blackamoor,' 'nigger': cf.: the proverb Αἰθίοπα σμήχειν (wash an Ethiopian white) and *Dacus et Aethiops*, Horace, C. 3.6.14."[74] Waddell's explanation is not supported by the evidence. Nor do his suggested comparisons with Αἰθίοπα σμήχειν and *Dacus et Aethiops* prove his point. The proverb Αἰθίοπα σμήχειν appears in a passage in Lucian, in which the author is illustrating the futility of advice to the ignorant book-collector on the proper use of books, i.e., advice has been wasted, or, in the words of the proverb, efforts are as futile as an attempt to wash an Ethiopian white.[75] There is nothing contemptuous in the proverb. Horace[76] by his use of *Aethiops* does not refer to Ethiopians at all but is using the term loosely for an Egyptian. At any rate, Horace is thinking of the Egyptians and the Dacians as the military inferiors of the Romans. Furthermore, as the writer has pointed out in an earlier article,[77] nothing in Roman literature indicates that the Negro in classical Italy fared any differently from slaves of other racial origins.

The general tenor of the passage clearly indicates that Menander meant merely that it is not race that counts; that it makes no difference if one is racially as far removed from the Greek as the Negro on the one hand, or the

[71] Philostr., *V. A.* 3.11; *V. S.*, 2.558–559.

[72] *Frg.* 533 Koch. Allinson's translation in the Loeb edition.

> ὃς ἂν εὖ γεγονὼς ᾖ τῇ φύσει πρὸς τἀγαθά,
> κἂν Αἰθίοψ ᾖ, μῆτερ, ἐστὶν εὐγενής.
> Σκίθης τις; ὄλεθρος· ὁ δ' Ἀνάχαρσις οὐ Σκίθης;

[73] Loeb edition. [74] Waddell, 1927, p. 152.

[75] *Adv. Indoctum*, 28. Compare the following proverbs: (1) You cannot make a crab walk straight; (2) It's little good a-watering last year's crop.

[76] *Carmina*, 3.6.14. [77] Snowden, 1947, pp. 283–292.

Scythian on the other. Such racial contrasts are common in Greek literature. Aristotle contrasts the straight hair of the Scythians and the Thracians with the woolly hair of the Negroes.[78] Ptolemy[79] contrasts Negroes and Scythians in a passage in which it is clear that the author is interested in the anthropological aspects of the two types. Xenophanes[80] in a similar contrast recounts that the Negroes represent their gods as black-faced and flat-nosed, while the Thracians show their gods to be blue-eyed and red-haired. And, finally, Sextus Empiricus[81] writes that beauty is relative, the Negroes preferring the blackest and the most flat-nosed and the Persians approving the whitest and the most hook-nosed. No contempt is apparent in any of these passages. The authors cite the Negroes and Scythians or Thracians as examples of distinct racial opposites. A similar practice is reflected in the Menander passage. Furthermore, numerous Janiform objects which contrasted white and Negroid types reveal the same anthropological interest in racial contrast.[82] An awareness of anthropological differences is by no means evidence *per se* of an attitude of contempt. Hence, Waddell's interpretation is untenable when it is considered in the light of similar anthropological usages and of other evidence which points to an absence of anti-Negro sentiment.[83]

Modern scholars have at times suggested that the Greeks regarded the Negro's physical appearance as ugly and that the Greeks saw something comic in many artistic representations of the Negro type. Nothing in Greek literature, however, warrants such an assumption. Philostratus, for example, writes of the Ethiopian's color as follows:

> Charming Ethiopians with their strange color . . . [84]

Sextus Empiricus, as stated above, says that beauty is relative and that standards vary from nation to nation, i.e., the Negroes preferred the blackest and the most flat-nosed and the Persians approved the whitest and most hook-nosed.[85] He did not say, as one modern scholar does, "Their [Negroes'] ugliness seems to have appealed alike to sculptor, engraver, and painter. . . ."[86] The

[78] *Gen. An.* 5.3.782B. [79] *Tetr.* 2.2. [80] *Frg.* 16 (Diels).

[81] *Adv. Ethicos*, 43. Mrs. Beardsley's comment (1929, p. 22) on certain Janiform vases is interesting in this connection: "An interest in the Ethiopian features more scientific than humorous is shown by the makers of the ointment vases in which an Ethiopian is contrasted with an Asiatic."

[82] Cf. Beardsley, 1929, nos. 8, 9, 36, 37, 39, 40, 44, 45, 47, 50.

[83] Although the Menander passage suggests that the ordinary people might have held a different opinion of Ethiopians, all other evidence—both archaeological and literary—points to an absence of anti-Negro sentiment. Unless other evidence is brought to light therefore, one must be cautious in attributing anti-Negro feeling to the ordinary people. In the absence of any other evidence, such an attribution would probably represent a reflection of certain modern attitudes toward the Negro. The writer of an inscription found on a tombstone expressed a sentiment similar to that of the Menander passage; cf. Schmidt, 1897, p. 102.

[84] *Imagines*, 1.29. ἡδεῖς Αἰθίοπες ἐν τῷ τοῦ χρώματος ἀτόπῳ . . .

[85] *Adv. Ethicos*, 43. [86] Seltman, 1920, p. 14.

numerous representations of the Negro in Greek art as a whole seem to the writer to reveal the same type of interest in the anthropological aspects of the Negro as is expressed in the literature.[87] Further, the same pathos of an exile revealed in the Menander passage is reflected in the sad, sensitive face of a young Negro musician, possibly singing a song of his native land.[88] It is true that some objects are depicted in a comic vein, but in some instances modern scholars, it appears, find comedy where none exists.

One scholar, for example, interprets the use of the Negro in certain crocodile vases as revealing "A keen sense of the comic interest of the Ethiopians. . . ."[89] Neither the Boston example (which the writer has examined carefully) nor the Munich vase seems to indicate anything comic. The Negro, on the contrary, expresses terror at the thought of impending death, as one of his arms has been seized by the crocodile's mouth and his thigh has been grasped by the animal's forepaw. The artist must have been inspired by a scene similar to that described by a modern African traveler whose guide narrowly escaped painful death from an attack by a crocodile.[90] It is difficult to believe that a people whose literature reflects the quality of mercy as early as Homer[91] saw comedy in the accidental seizure of a terrified innocent.

Crossings between Negro and whites in ancient Greece were not uncommon. Aristotle[92] mentions a woman of Elis whose daughter by a Negro was not Negroid but whose grandson was. Plutarch[93] relates a similar story about a Greek woman whose black baby caused her to be accused of adultery, although an investigation of her lineage revealed that she was the great granddaughter of an Ethiopian.[94]

Mixture between blacks and whites in the Greek world is confirmed by the evidence of sculpture. A vase of a temple boy from Olynthus is described by Robinson as a boy with "almost negroid features."[95] Another Olynthus head whose features Robinson also regards as "almost negroid" can be explained in terms of race mixture.[96] Reference has already been made to a mulatto priest of Isis whose racial stock has been analyzed as follows: " . . . cet homme, dont le crâne appartient au type de l'Asie Mineure et dont le bas du visage et le cou sont ceux d'un nègre, est évidemment d'une race mixte; tout

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[87] See pp. 38–39. [88] Richter, 1930, pp. 82 and 356, fig. 58. [89] Beardsley, 1929, p. 37.

[90] Park, 1883, p. 196. [91] Macurdy, 1940.

[92] *Gen. An.* 1.18.722A and *Hist. An.* 7.6.586A. [93] *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*, 21.

[94] The representations of some Negroes as ithyphallic should be noted in this connection. Wace, 1903–04, p. 110, partially on the basis of the ithyphallic representation of a misshapen Negroid, argues that the object was a charm against the evil eye. Cf. ithyphallic Negroes in Roman art, Maiuri, 1933, pp. 146–148, and Reinach, 1898, p. 563, no. 6. For a modern sociologist's view on this point, see Dollard, 1937, pp. 160–161.

[95] Robinson, 1931, p. 78, no. 384 and pl. 42.

[96] Robinson, 1931, p. 87, no. 405 and pl. 45.

bien considéré nous avons affaire à un mulâtre."[97] The herm of Memnon, according to Graindor, reveals that this pupil of Herodes Atticus was "de race métisse mais avec prédominance du type nègre du Nord de l'Afrique, de la Nubie ou de l'Abyssinie."[98]

Nothing in Aristotle's[99] or Plutarch's[100] observations on the racial characteristics of second and third generation black-white crosses gives any indication of modern concepts of "racial purity." The facts are stated scientifically without any of the modern strictures on such racial crossing.

Unless other evidence is brought to light, we cannot place the onus of "color-prejudice" on the ancient Greeks, as some scholars have done. The attitude of the ancient Greeks toward the Negro is epitomized, as this paper has shown, by Menander, who insists that it makes no difference whether one is an Ethiopian or a Scythian; natural bent, not race, determines nobility. The evidence of both art and literature seems to indicate that Menander was representing not merely the philosophic hope of an idealist, but that he was reflecting rather an attitude which had its roots deeply imbedded in the social subsoil of contemporary society.[101]

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[97] Poulsen, 1913, p. 218 and pl. VI. [98] Graindor, 1915, p. 402.

[99] *Gen. An.* 1.18.722A and *Hist. An.* 7.6.586A. [100] *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*, 21.

[101] This conclusion is in accord with the findings of Schlaifer, 1936, p. 202: "Others . . . denied at least that race or nationality had anything to do with the determination of character." Cf. Scott, 1946, p. 82, "This respect for peoples of other races separated Homer and the Greeks who followed him from all ancients and perhaps from all moderns as well."

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