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SECTION I.A

Ethnophilosophy

In the numerous taxonomies of the varieties of humankind produced during the Enlightenment era (roughly the late 1600s through the early 1800s), typically, Europeans were considered superior to non-Europeans and, within Europe, Anglo-Saxons were held to be superior to Celts, Franks superior to Gauls, etc. Irrespective of the manner in which particular subraces were related, Caucasians were generally considered the most superior and Africans the most inferior of races.

Among the literate, it was widely believed that every species and subspecies, every race and subrace, was ordered in accordance with the Great Chain of Being, in which God was the most perfect form of being, followed by the angels, man, then the apes, and so on, down to the lowest form of life. And just as man was given dominion over all the lower forms of being, so the European was given dominion over the lower races. Such a view provided the ideological justification for slavery, colonialism, and imperialism.

Edward Blyden and W.E.B. Du Bois were African-Americans who, at the end of the nineteenth century, confronted the racist view of the relationship between Africans and Europeans. Born in the first generation after the abolition of slavery (Blyden in the West Indies and Du Bois in Massachusetts), both men were well educated and exceptionally literate. They were thoroughly familiar with the views on race current in the latter part of the nineteenth century and devoted their lives and talents to countering racist practices and arguments.

In contrast to a racist view of the relationship between Africans and Europeans, Blyden and Du Bois embraced a racialist view of that relationship. According to the racialist point of view, each race was different and had unique qualities that could be duplicated by no other race. The races complemented one another, so that what one lacked, the other provided. Only by the cultivation of its unique qualities could any particu-

lar race make its contribution to the progress of world civilization. And this was as true of the African (or black) race as it was of the European (or white) and Oriental (or yellow) races. While some advocated intermarriage and the creation of superior hybrids from the different races (e.g. Frederick Douglass), Blyden and Du Bois argued that Africans needed to turn inward and perfect their unique capabilities through interaction with one another.

The relativism inherent in the racialist point of view is reflected in Levy-Bruhl's contention that there is a basic difference in the mentalities of European and non-European races. Lucien Levy-Bruhl (1857-1939) was a French philosopher who taught at the Sorbonne from 1896 to 1927. In opposition to many earlier anthropologists and students of human culture, Levy-Bruhl argues that non-Western people were not simply less competent at rational modes of thought than western people. It is not, he holds, that non-Europeans cannot think as logically as Europeans. Rather, the thought patterns of non-Europeans follow a different "logic" from that of Europeans. Non-Europeans are not simply less adept at avoiding contradictions than Europeans. Instead of adhering to the law of non-contradiction (one cannot maintain that both of two inconsistent propositions are true) as Europeans do, non-Europeans operate in accordance with "the law of participation," which imposes quite a different set of constraints from the law of noncontradiction.

In a similar fashion, the Belgian priest Father Placide Tempels argues in his famous book *Bantu Philosophy* (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1952) that Africans have a different metaphysical view of reality from Europeans. The ontology of the African world is made up of forces rather than things, and these forces ebb and flow, diminish and increase. Losses and gains are relevant, not in terms of strict quantities, but in terms of their effect in augmenting or diminishing the life forces of those involved.

Tempels' argument is similar to that of the American linguist, Benjamin Whorf, who argues in his book *Language, Thought, and Reality* (NY: MIT Press, 1956) that the structure of a language shapes the way its users structure reality. Whorf argues that the grammar of Native American languages is structurally distinct from that of Indo-European languages, and gives rise to a metaphysics of fields and forces rather than of discrete things colliding. Alex Kagame, a Rwandan philosopher and linguist, assesses and extends Tempels' claims in his books *La Philosophie Bantu-Rwandaise de l'Etre* (Brussels: Academie Royale des Sciences Coloniales, 1956; and *La Philosophie Bantu Comparee* (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1976) Tempels' views have been combined with those of Kagame and applied to Africans in the Americas by the Belgian ethnographer Jahnhein Janz in his book *Muntu* (NY: Grove Press, 1990).

John Mbiti, a Kenyan philosopher and clergyman, adopts an explic-

itly ethnographic approach to demonstrate that there are certain basic similarities between different ethnic groups throughout Africa, and that these similarities manifest a concept of time and person that differs radically from that characteristic of modern Europe. He argued that the African concept of time was phenomenal rather than mechanistic. The passage of time was noted in terms of the individual's phenomenal experiences of concrete events, rather than in terms of the mechanistic processes characteristic of clocks. Moreover, he contrasts time that is relevant to the living (*Sasa*) with time that is beyond relationship with the world of the living (*Zamani*) and uses this distinction to show how traditional Africans distinguished the living, the living dead, and the non-living dead. Within this context, he explains ancestor worship, healing divination, witchcraft, and other puzzling aspects of traditional African culture. Mbiti's view of the relationship between an African concept of time and the continued existence of the dead is meant to show the rational coherence of African belief systems and to challenge their portrayal as inferior, irrational, and incomprehensible.

The doctrine of "Negritude" was a sustained attempt by Leopold Senghor, Aime Cesaire, Leon Damas, and others to reconstruct the distinct character of the African way of knowing. Leopold S. Senghor, first president of Senegal and primary expositor of "negritude," argues that the African is sensual rather than intellectual and gains knowledge by participating in (rather than by analyzing) the object of attention. Senghor emphasizes the importance of the subjective point of view, in contrast to emphasis on objectivity, and identifies negritude with an affectual/emotive attitude toward the world.

This section ends with a discussion of the work of Cheik Anta Diop of Senegal by Jeffrey Crawford and a commentary on an ancient Egyptian text by David James. Diop claims that the ancient Egyptians were a African people but that this fact was obscured by the racist nature of modern European scholarship. Diop employs detailed textual analyses to demonstrate that the main themes of Greek philosophy derive from concepts already present in Egyptian cosmologies. Moreover, Diop proposes to show direct relationships between the language of ancient Egypt and modern African languages such as Wolof, and he makes similar claims regarding the social institutions of ancient Egypt and the social institutions of precolonial subSaharan Africa. Because of the existence of such links between ancient Egyptian culture and contemporary African cultures, Diop concludes that African philosophy must include as careful study of the Egyptian hieroglyphic literature as Western philosophy does of Greek philosophy. In the selection provided, the European philosopher Jeffrey Crawford reviews Diop's claims, compares them to the "stolen legacy" theory of George James, and assesses their relevance to the current debate concerning Afrocentrism.

In support of the position that ancient Egyptian literature had a clear philosophic content, the final paper in this section presents a text, *Instruction of Any*, which dates from the eighteenth Dynasty of the New Kingdom, sometime around the fourteenth century B.C. This work portrays a scribe and his son engaged in a spirited debate concerning the nature of moral instruction. The philosopher David James argues in his commentary that, though a thousand years earlier, *Instruction of Any* is in every sense as philosophical a text as the early Socratic dialogues of Plato.

Ethiopians have also maintained a long tradition of written literature, which is now becoming available in translation. A focus on the literature of ancient Egypt and medieval Ethiopia provides a significant alternative to the exclusive use of orally transmitted folk beliefs as the ground of African philosophy. This shift in attention from oral to written African texts marks a shift from African philosophy viewed as the universal acceptance of certain unconscious principles by members of the African race, to a view of African philosophy engaged in a critical examination of the assumptions on which such an ethnic approach to African philosophy is based.

▲ Negritude, Nationalism, and Nativism: Racists or Racialists?

Albert G. Mosley

This article reviews the claims of Negritude by Senghor and Césaire and the claims of African Nationalists such as Blyden and Du Bois in order to distinguish racist from racialist points of view. It then presents Kwame Anthony Appiah's argument in *My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1992) that Senghor, Blyden, and Du Bois were "intrinsic racists" and that the concept of race is a pseudo-concept. In contrast, Mosley provides good reason to believe that Appiah's notion of "intrinsic racism" is the truly bogus concept. Mosley presents models of races among non-humans in order to illustrate a valid use of the concept of race, and argues that racialist views of human beings are neither unintelligible nor inherently incoherent.

Appiah also suggests that the pursuit of indigenous traditional cultural forms of knowledge is inherently flawed because the reconstruction of traditional beliefs and practices relies on texts created by colonialists, explorers, and missionaries, and natives writing at the time. Each of these sources makes essential use of Western categories, which infects the descriptions of traditional beliefs and practices with terms laden with Eurocentric concerns.

In rebuttal, Mosley argues for the existence of indigenous sources of knowledge about traditional practices, for the legitimacy of recognizing and cultivating important aspects of indigenous culture, and for the legitimacy of using the language of the hegemonic culture to describe the limits of that hegemony. He concludes that Appiah's treatment of negritude, African nationalism, and nativism is seriously flawed.

NEGRITUDE AND NATIONALISM

Leopold Senghor, with Aime Césaire, is one of the originators of the term *negritude* and chief exponent of perhaps its most radical version. In an article published in *Diogené* (no. 37) in 1962 entitled "On Negritude: The Psychology of the African Negro," Senghor wrote that the European

distinguishes the object from himself. He keeps it at a distance. He freezes it out of time and, in a way, out of space. He fixes it, he kills it. With his precision instruments he dissects it in a pitiless factual analysis. As a scientist, yet at the same time prompted by practical considerations, the European makes use of the *Other* that he has killed in this way for his practical ends. He makes a *means* of it.

On the other hand, the African

does not begin by distinguishing himself from the object, the tree or stone, the man or animal or social event. He does not keep it at a distance. He does not analyze it. Once he has come under its influence, he takes it like a blind man, still living, into his hands. He does not fix it or kill it. He turns it over and over in his supple hands, he fingers it.

And of the African-American he claims that

American psychological workers have found that the reflexes of Negroes are surer and more natural because they are more closely related to the object. Hence the employment of Negroes during the Second World War in industry and the technical services, beyond the proportion which they represent of the population. . . . this means that the Negro by the very fact of his physiology has reactions which are more *lived*, in the sense that they are more direct and concrete expressions of the sensation and of the stimulus, and so of the object itself with all its original qualities and power.

This indicates, for Senghor, that the African both on the continent and in the diaspora

reacts more faithfully to the stimulus of the object. He is wedded to its rhythm. This physical sense of rhythm, rhythm of movements, forms and colors, is one of his specific characteristics, for rhythm is the essence of energy itself. It is rhythm which is at the basis of imitation and which plays a determining role in man's generic activity and in his creative activity: in memory, language and art.

He goes on to say the following:

One of my friends, an African poet, confessed to me that all forms of beauty strike him at the root of the belly, and give rise to a sexual feeling. This not only with music, dancing or African mask, but with a painting by Giotto or

a Florentine palace. It goes even further, for the symbolic image, visual and auditory, of a High Mass has the same effect on him. Some one will raise the cry of eroticism. It would be more accurate to talk of sensuality. But the African's spirituality is rooted in his sensuality: in his physiology.

In taking this stance, Senghor appears to be confirming the racist's view of the African and African-American as oriented more toward the concrete than to the abstract. In this way, racists reinforced their claim that Africans should not be given extensive education, because they were not mentally equipped to deal with abstractions. Rather, it was argued, Africans were best suited for manual labor and, indeed, were better at it than the European. Likewise, the claim that Africans were naturally more sensual excused white men for the use they made of black women and justified their brutal treatment of black men (lynching, castration, whipping) to deter them from sexually abusing white women.

While acknowledging such associations, Senghor maintained:

It is a fact that there is a white European civilization and a black African civilization. The question is to explain their differences and the reasons for these differences, which my opponents have not yet done.

Senghor's explanation of the difference is that reason manifests itself in different ways in different races. Among Africans, reason manifests itself as a "reason-by-embrace," a participation of the knower into the object known. But for the European, reason is the "eye-reason" of logic and precise measurement.

For many, Senghor's views generate concern because the idea that different racial, ethnic, or national groups have different genetically determined social tendencies is one that was used prominently to justify the enslavement and exploitation of Africans. Racists of the eighteenth and nineteenth century argued that the different races of mankind were arranged hierarchically, with the African or black race at the bottom—closest to beasts of burden—and with the Caucasian or white race at the top—the most advanced of the human species.

J. F. Blumenbach, professor of natural history at Göttingen, was the first to use the term *Caucasian* to describe the white race, which he held to be the first and most beautiful race and from which all others races were degenerate offshoots. Part of the belief that the people of the Caucasoids were the first race derived from the belief that Noah's ark had landed at Mount Ararat in the Southern Caucasus. This scheme of the origins of the original Europeans—the Aryans—placed Germans closer to the origins of mankind than other Europeans (Bernal 1987, 219–20).

Arthur de Gobineau (1816–1882), considered to be the father of racism, divided human races into three types: White, Black, and Yellow.

I understand by white men the members of those races which are also called Caucasian, Semitic or Japhetic. By black men I mean the Hamites; by yellow the Altaic, Mongol, Finnish and Tartar branches. (Biddiss 1970, 119)

He wrote of Africans:

The black variety is the lowest and lies at the bottom of the ladder. The animal character lent to its basic form imposes its destiny from the moment of conception. It never leaves the most restricted intellectual zones. If its faculties for thinking are mediocre or even nonexistent, it possesses in its desire and as a consequence in its will an intensity that is often terrible. Many of the senses are developed with a vigor unknown in the other two races: principally taste and smell. It is precisely in the greed for sensations that the most striking mark of its inferiority is found. (Bernal 1987, 241)

Gobineau believed, however, that civilization advanced only by the intermixture of the races, an intermixture that inevitably raised the level of other races while diluting the white race:

The two most inferior varieties of the human species, the black and yellow races, are the crude foundation, the cotton and wool, which the secondary families of the white race make supple by adding their silk; while the Aryan group, circling its finer threads through the noble generations, designs on its surface a dazzling masterpiece of arabesques in silver and gold. (Biddiss 1970, 119)

It is such an intermixture of the races that produces the arts:

Artistic genius, which is equally foreign to each of the three great types, arose only after the intermarriage of White and Black. (Biddiss 1970, 119)

Negritude rejects the negative evaluations of the traits considered typical of the African personality and emphasizes their positive character. For Senghor, the African's sensuality is the basis, not of brutal instincts, but of sublime spirituality: "the spirituality of the Negro is rooted in sensuality: in his physiology" (Senghor 1962, 5). Modes of thought and ways of knowing are "partially transmitted through heredity" and "are diverse and tied to the psychological and physiological makeup of each race" (Senghor 1962, 7). This mode of knowing, this "embracing reason," in which the knower participates intimately and physiologically with the known, is one that differs from the analytical reason characteristic of Europe but is equally important for human development. Senghor argued that Europeans were themselves being forced to acknowledge the limitations of their mode of knowing through their own researches in mathematical logic and quantum physics and had begun "going to the school of participant reason" (Senghor 1962, 8).

Senghor and Césaire's early views on the relationship between races

are presaged in the work of Johann Gottfried Herder. Herder argued that a nation reflected the racial genius of the people of a particular geographical and historical context. Once impregnated with this particular trait, the people maintained it, no matter how they might be divided by artificial borders. Herder further held that "all peoples, not merely Germans, should be encouraged to discover and develop their own geni" (Bernal 1987, 206). Herder denied the hierarchical ranking of mankind into four or five races, with blacks at the bottom and whites at the top. Rather, for Herder, each *Volk* had its own role to play in making its contribution to human civilization, a role that no other group could fulfill.

We may characterize Herder's view (following Frederickson, discussed later) as "racialist," to distinguish it from the "racist" views of Gobineau. But even the "racialist" formulation of racial differences was a double-edged sword, for the claim continued to be made that the Anglo-Saxons' or Aryans' special gift was to lead, to conquer, to break new ground, while the special gift of the African Negro was to serve, to forgive, and to exhibit the virtues of the true Christian. Thus, Frederick Schlegel argued that it was the Aryan race descending from the mountains that conquered not only India, but Egypt as well. And it was the Aryans that led these civilizations to their greatest achievements. It was thus the inescapable destiny of the Aryans to lead (Bernal 1987, 230ff).

Such views on the nature of racial differences were also prominent in the debate concerning the social role of African slaves and freedmen in the Americas. The historian George Fredrickson characterized this debate as follows:

The biological school saw the Negro as a pathetically inept creature who was a slave to his emotions, incapable of progressive development and self-government because he lacked the white man's enterprise and intellect. But those who ascribed to the priority of feeling over intellect sanctioned both by romanticism and evangelical religion could come up with a strikingly different concept of Negro "differences." Whereas scientists and other "practical" men saw only weakness, others discovered redeeming virtues and even evidences of black superiority. (Frederickson 1971, 101)

Frederickson calls this latter doctrine "romantic racialism," and cites evidence to show that it was a popular view among northern abolitionists of the nineteenth century. Some went so far as to argue that the Negro was in fact a superior race to the Anglo-Saxons, because they were natural Christians, carrying within, much more than the Caucasian, "the germs of a meek, long-suffering, loving virtue" (1971, 106). In 1845, James Russell Lowell, a Garrisonian abolitionist wrote:

We have never had any doubt that the African race was intended to introduce a new element of civilization, and that the Caucasian would be benefited greatly by an infusion of its gentler and less selfish qualities. The Cau-

casian mind, which seeks always to govern at whatever cost, can never come to so beautiful or Christian a height of civilization, as with a mixture of those seemingly humbler but truly more noble qualities which teach it to obey. (Frederickson 1971, 107)

Theodore Tilton, editor of the New York *Independent*, wrote in 1863:

In all the intellectual activities which take their strange quickening from the moral faculties—which we call instincts, intuitions—the negro is superior to the white man—equal to the white woman. It is sometimes said . . . that the negro race is the feminine race of the world. This is not only because of his social and affectionate nature, but because he possesses that strange moral, instinctive insight that belongs more to women than to men. (Frederickson 1971, 115)

Both racism and racialism tend to assume that the social potential of a particular group derive from racially determined factors peculiar to that group. These factors constitute influences over which individuals have little personal control. The views differ primarily in that racists portray such factors hierarchically, with certain predispositions superior to others; while racialists view such factors as complementary, with each predisposition having its relative strengths and weaknesses.

Given this distinction, it is easy to see how Senghor's racialist views could be confused with the racist views of someone like Gobineau. Each view accepts the assumption that biological characteristics determine social characteristics, and they differ only in the racist viewing certain social characteristics (aggressive, analytical) as being absolutely superior to other social characteristics (participatory, intuitive), while the racialist viewed all social characteristics as only relatively superior. Some forms of racism and racialism further assume a biological connection between racial type and "mode of cognition." Cesaire accepted such a connection in his early years, and Senghor has maintained such a belief.

In both racism and racialism, character differences between groups are to be traced to and explained by reference to specific racial differences between the groups. While the concept of race has evolved from a religious to a biological to the current ethnic conception, the practice of viewing race as determinative of social character has continued.

Racialist and racist views argued that a biological connection to a particular "race" was necessary for certain kinds of social achievements. For Negritude, as for many other African nationalists, only the African could teach the African. Thus, Edward Blyden held that "each of the races of mankind has a specific character and specific work" (Blyden 1967, 277). And in "The Conservation of Races," Du Bois wrote that mankind was divided into races, and each race was characterized by, to use Crummell's term, "distinct proclivities." As such, the destiny of the Negro American was not absorption by white Americans; rather, it was in

Negroes working with Negroes to produce their own distinctive nations and national cultures.

THE CRITIQUE OF NATIONALISM

In his book *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*, Kwame Anthony Appiah (1992) defines "racialism" as the belief that all the members of a particular race "share certain traits and tendencies with each other that they do not share with members of any other race. These traits and tendencies characteristic of a race constitute, on the racialist view, a sort of racial essence . . . [which] account for more than the visible morphological characteristics—skin color, hair type, facial features" (1992, 13). Appiah denies that racialism itself is dangerous: "Provided positive moral qualities are distributed across races, each can be respected, can have its 'separate but equal' place."

While racism presupposes racialism, it differs from racialism in that it attributes the most valuable personal and social qualities to one race, while limiting the presence of valuable social traits in other races. Racism thus establishes a hierarchy of qualities, reflecting a hierarchy of races. Racialism also assumes that different qualities reflect the causal influence of different races, but it denies that any one set of qualities is absolutely superior or that any one race is superior to all others. Appiah aptly summarizes the "Africa for the African" position of Du Bois, Blyden, and Crummell as "the acceptance of difference along with a claim that each group has its part to play, that the white and the Negro races are related not as superior to inferior but as complementaries; the Negro message is, with the white one, part of the message of humankind" (Appiah 1992, 24).

Although negritude is most often associated with the name of Senghor, the first to actually coin the term "negritude" was Aime Cesaire, of Martinique. Initially, both Senghor and Cesaire attributed the differences between African and European cultures to the influence of race. But while Senghor maintained a belief in a biological basis for the peculiar orientation attributed to African culture, Cesaire altered his views and came to hold that negritude was not biologically but historically determined:

I do not in the slightest believe in biological permanence, but I believe in culture. My Negritude has a ground. It is a fact that there is a black culture: it is historical; there is nothing biological about it. (Arnold 1981, 37)

While maintaining the importance of art and poetry as an antidote to logic and science, Cesaire accounted for the orientation of blacks toward

the arts as an adaptation of traditional African orientations to the historical conditions imposed by the slave trade, slavery, colonialism, and segregation.

Du Bois's concept of race likewise evolved from a biological to a sociohistorical form. Thus, in 1947 Du Bois seemed quite clear about his notion of race: The Negro race is all those forced to bear the insult of being slaves or the descendants of slaves during the Industrial Revolution of Western Europe. Du Bois writes:

[S]ince the fifteenth century these ancestors of mine and their descendants have had a common history; have suffered a common disaster and have one long memory. The actual ties of heritage between the individuals of this group vary . . . But . . . the real essence of this kinship is its social heritage of slavery; and this heritage binds together not simply the children of Africa, but extends through yellow Asia and into the South Seas. It is this unity that draws me to Africa. (1940, 41, 116-7)

And in *The Crisis*, Du Bois (1947) writes:

The so called American Negro group . . . while it is in no sense absolutely set off physically from its fellow Americans, has nevertheless a strong, hereditary cultural unity born of slavery, of common suffering, prolonged proscription, and curtailment of political and civil rights. . . . Prolonged policies of segregation and discrimination have involuntarily welded the mass almost into a nation within a nation.

Appiah acknowledges that Du Bois changed his view of race from a biologically based to a culturally based conception, but he nonetheless considers this insufficient to avoid a basic flaw. As such, Appiah asserts that the passage from *Dusk of Dawn* "seduces us into error" by substituting a sociohistorical conception of race for a biological one. This, for Appiah, "is simply to bury the biological conception below the surface, not to transcend it" (Appiah 1992, 41).

Appiah characterizes the views of these African nationalists as Sartre had characterized negritude—as forms of antiracist racism. To justify labeling Senghor, Blyden, Crummell, and Du Bois as racists, Appiah proposes a distinction between what he calls "extrinsic" and "intrinsic" racism. *Extrinsic racism* associates valuable social traits with membership in a particular race. To illustrate, being a member of the white race would be conceived of as causally determining whether one would be a bearer of certain superior qualities. *Intrinsic racism*, on the other hand, makes no necessary association between being a member of a particular race and having certain valuable social qualities. For the intrinsic racist, the very fact that one is of a particular race gives one preferential advantages, just as being a human gives one preferential advantages over non-humans.

Appiah argues that nationalists were "intrinsic racists" because they considered Africans to be more like members of a family than like bearers of similar traits. The fact that a particular individual, *b*, is a member of *B*'s family gives *b* preferential access to *B*'s wealth over individuals who are not members of *B*'s family, independently of whether *b* has any behavioral or social traits in common with *B*. But I wish to argue that Appiah's "intrinsic racism" is a bogus concept because, as he has characterized it, "intrinsic racism" is not a form of racism at all.

The "intrinsic racist" views other members of his or her race as members of the same family, and on that basis alone, irrespective of talent or merit, gives the "family member" preferential treatment over members of other "families" (or "races"). Thus, the preferential treatment of a member of one's own family over a nonfamily member need not be based on the belief that members of one's own family are superior to members of other families. Preferential treatment of a member of one's own family could as well be based on a moral duty of gratitude and/or a prudential rule favoring reciprocal altruism between (alleged) relatives. But there need be no assumption that members of one's own family are superior to members of other families.

But as we have seen, the assumption of superiority is central to the definition of a racist. As such, Appiah's notion of "intrinsic racism" is not a form of racism at all. Nor is it a form of racialism, because it contains no suggestion that valuable social qualities are selectively distributed between groups. Preferential treatment for a member of a particular family requires no assumptions that the individual is the bearer of certain traits associated with that family. On the other hand, Crummell, Blyden, Du Bois, and Senghor were racialists because they did believe that the African harbored special talents, which made possible certain contributions to world civilization that only the African could provide.

Despite whatever weaknesses racialism might harbor, one of the primary concerns of African nationalism and negritude was to deny racist claims of superiority, even as they acknowledged claims of racial differences. Racialism attempted to acknowledge racially determined differences while divesting those differences of any implication of absolute superiority or inferiority. To characterize the negritude and African Nationalist movements as racist, as Appiah does, is to accuse them of an error they were designed to oppose. To do this using the notion of "intrinsic racism" amounts to an attempt to rewrite history by selectively redefining its central concepts. I believe Appiah is seriously in error in characterizing Senghor, Césaire, Crummell, Blyden, and Du Bois, as racists. They espoused a form of racialism, not racism.

This is not to imply, however, that racialism is itself without error. A commonly cited weakness of racialism is the suggestion that racial type is a necessary or sufficient condition for the display of certain be-

havioral and social traits. To say that being a member of race *X* is sufficient for having (the potential for) trait *x* does not preclude race *Y* and race *Z* from also having (the potential for) trait *x*. Both racism and racialism require viewing race as a necessary condition for possessing (the potential for) certain traits to achieve selective distribution of traits by race.

To illustrate, if being a member of the Caucasian race were considered a necessary condition for being intelligent/analytical, then while all Caucasians need not be intelligent/analytical, all intelligent/analytical type persons would have to be Caucasian. Similar comments apply if negritude is interpreted in this way. As J. O. Sodipo points out, if the racialism of negritude is taken literally, then Wordsworth and the romantic poets of Europe must be regarded as Africans (Sumner, 290). And, as we have seen, this is a conclusion suggested by both Senghor and Gobineau.

From Césaire we learn that it is no accident that Senghor's views seem so close to Gobineau's. In an interview in 1967 Césaire says this about the influence of Gobineau on himself and Senghor:

Yes, we read Gobineau, Senghor and I. It was essentially to refute him, since he was the great French theoretician of racism. But at the same time, I must admit, Senghor liked him a great deal. His liking was understandable; he was grateful to Gobineau for saying: "Art is black." The Black is an artist. If there are artists in Western civilization, it is because there are nonetheless a few drops of Negro blood in them. Consequently the attitude toward Gobineau was very ambivalent. (Arnold, p. 41)

One way of avoiding this difficulty is to view the association between race and social traits in statistical rather than categorical terms. This involves viewing race *X* as displaying a significantly higher frequency of the occurrence of trait *x*, rather than as being the exclusive bearer of trait *x*. Thus, to use the typical traits cited by racists and racialists, a population with a higher proportion of Africans might show a higher proportion of artists, musicians, and athletes; while a population with a higher proportion of Europeans might show a higher proportion of scientists, mathematicians, and engineers. Nonetheless, many Africans might be scientists, mathematicians, and engineers, and many Europeans might be artists, musicians, and athletes.

Racialism affirms that certain kinds of social behavior are selectively linked to certain races and explains this link in terms of causal connections. But, of course, correlation does not necessarily imply causation. And it might be that the correlation between racial type and behavioral type is purely coincidental, a mere artifact of chance. Or the correlation might be the result of some further cause, perhaps of a religious, economic, or other sociohistorical nature.

Thus, the association between members of the African race and the

display of an aesthetic orientation could be explained by reference to the systematic exclusion of Africans from the development of analytic skills and their confinement to opportunities in the "arts." On the other hand, the higher frequency of the display of analytic skills among Europeans could be explained by the preferential treatment accorded Europeans for opportunities to develop such skills. Certainly, then, there might be conditions that might cause race X to display a disproportionate frequency of behavior x , without race itself being a cause of the behavior x . On the other hand, if the frequency of x is a defining characteristic of race X , then the relationship between race X and trait x is stipulative rather than causal: Race X just is that race in which x occurs with a higher frequency than in other races.

Despite these caveats, the possibility of a selective distribution of behavioral traits causally determined by race cannot be ruled out as impossible. The fact of such, were it established, could be used to justify a racist orientation, on the assumption that certain selectively distributed traits were inherently superior to other selectively distributed traits. But this is certainly not the position of the African nationalists we have reviewed, nor of the negritudists.

Appiah's error in characterizing nationalism and negritude as racist is compounded by his misguided critique of a basic assumption of both racism and racialism. This critique calls into question the very existence of races and hence the differential distribution of traits between races. Appiah denies the possibility of developing an adequate conception of "race," and urges that we "transcend" such usage altogether.

A major reason Appiah cites for rejecting the concept of race altogether is the dilemma that the offspring of two different races would be equally of both races or a hybrid that was a member of no race. But it is not clear why this in itself is reason to reject racial classifications. The existence of cases that do not fit an accepted taxonomic schema has never, in itself, been a sufficient reason for rejecting that schema. More concretely, the fact that there might be more mongrels than purebreds is no argument against the existence of different breeds of dogs.

Indeed, a good model of a racialist schema would be the case of breeds of dog (see Smith 1975). While each breed may be superior to other breeds in certain respects, no breed is superior to all other breeds in all respects. And though it might be typical of breed X that it exhibit trait x , this might be neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for a particular individual's being a member of that breed. And though the offspring of two distinct breeds might itself be a member of neither, it might still be possible to account for some of the mongrel's behavior/morphology by reference to the behavior/morphology of its immediate progenitors—to traits distinctive of the breed of its parents. Thus, pit-bulls (or dalmatians) have traits that are distinctive to their breed, and although

we might not want to say that having a pit-bull (or dalmatian) parent is sufficient to cause a particular dog to be aggressive (or white with black spots), we might explain its aggressiveness (or being white with black spots) by pointing out that the dog is the immediate progeny of a breed that is typically aggressive (white with black spots).

Theodore Dobzhansky defined races as "Mendelian populations which differ in the incidence of some genetic variants in their gene pools" (1962, 239), and he illustrated the concept in terms of different races of the fruit fly *Drosophila* that had adapted to different elevations of the Sierra Nevada mountains of California. Differences between races are not determined by distinguishing individuals with different traits into correspondingly different classes. Rather, racial differences apply only at the level of the population, in terms of the relative frequency of traits between populations. "Mankind," he writes, "is a polytypic species composed of a cluster of races, Mendelian populations with more or less different gene pools" (232).

The analogy being drawn between races of *homo sapien, canis car-nivore*, and *drosophila* is not meant to denigrate human beings, but rather is meant to illustrate that biologists apply the same classificatory principles to humans, dogs, birds, and fruitflies. To the extent that we accept the existence of different breeds of domesticated dogs, and different varieties of fruitflies, I see no reason to deny the existence of different races of human beings. All that is necessary in either case is that a population (race or breed) be genetically isolated and that the frequency of certain traits be selected for.

Usually, the traits used to distinguish different races of mankind are the visible morphological ones such as skin color, eye color, hair type, nose and lip shape, etc. But such traits are not always the most important one's in distinguishing races, and recent research in human biology has used a number of traits that can only be discerned by instrumental analysis but that provide more reliable indicators. Appiah is aware of such developments and uses the genetically determined propensity to produce certain protein types to reach the following conclusion:

the chances of two people who are both "Caucasoid" differing in genetic constitution at one site on a given chromosome are about 14.3 percent, while, for any two people taken at random from the human population, they are about 14.8 percent. (1992, 36)

In other words, two individuals chosen at random from two different races have only a 0.5% greater probability of differing in the kinds of proteins they produce than two individuals chosen at random from within the same race. His general point is that, because variations within a race are almost as great as variations between different races, divisions

between races are based on differences so minuscule as to be insignificant.

In a footnote to this discussion, Appiah's bias and selective use of data are scarcely veiled. He writes:

These figures come from Nei and Roychoudhury, "Genetic relationship and Evolution of Human Races." I have used figures derived from looking at proteins, not blood groups, since they claim these are likely to be more reliable. I have chosen a measure of "racial" biological difference that makes it look spectacularly small, but I would not wish to imply that it is not the case, as these authors say, that "genetic differentiation is real and generally statistically highly significant" (41). I would dispute their claim that their work shows there is a biological basis for the classification of human races: what it shows is that human populations differ in their distributions of genes. That is a biological fact. The objection to using this fact as a basis of a system of classification is that far too many people don't fit into just one category that can be so defined. (1992, 196)

One marvels at Appiah's verbal sophistry, for as Dobzhansky has pointed out, races are just populations within a species that differ in their distributions of gene frequencies. Nei and Roychoudhury use both protein and blood group data to conclude that "the genetic differentiation of human races is of the same order of magnitude as that found in local races of other organisms" (1983, 41) and that "the races of each of Caucasoid, Asian, Mongoloid, and Negroid form a separate cluster" (40). That there are many individuals who do not clearly fit into one race or another is never an issue.

While Nei and Roychoudhury acknowledge that interracial genetic variation is small when compared with intraracial genetic variation, they stress that "the genetic differentiation is real and generally statistically highly significant." At the same time, they warn that two populations that look alike (e.g., Australian aborigines and South African Bushmen) might nevertheless be strikingly dissimilar in terms of protein and blood type frequencies. Thus, "genetic distance between populations is not always correlated with morphological difference" (41). To return to our previous analogy, just because a dog looks like a dalmatian does not mean that it really is one. But it also does not mean that there are no dalmatians.

The claim that concepts of race have a biological legitimacy is not meant to suggest that current concepts of race are based primarily on biological considerations. Indeed, the conceptions of race institutionalized by slavery and colonization were designed primarily around socioeconomic considerations. The conception of an African as any individual with at least one traceable African ancestor (the "one-drop rule") is absurd as a means of differentiating distinct biological groups. It is like claiming that having one traceable dalmatian progenitor makes a dog a

dalmatian. But such a rule did make sense in a society in which the most valuable form of property was in the form of human beings held as slaves.

The "one-drop rule" definition of the African race was devised to support the establishment and maintenance of slavery and segregation. Whereas in the rest of the Americas, slavery was replenished by new imports from Africa, in the United States, the primary means of replenishing slaves was by birth. Rules stipulating that only Africans could be treated as property, that any person who had at least one traceable African ancestor was of the African race, and that the child of a slave was a slave were critical to the program of replenishing slaves by birth and maintaining the exploitation of freed slaves.

Freedmen's status was not an end to the process of marginalization but merely the end of one phase of that marginalization, slavery, which itself had several stages. Freedmen's status began a new phase, but the ex-slave was still a marginal person. (Patterson 1982, 249)

It is in this context that the current conception of the African or Negro or black race evolved. And although such a conception may make little biological sense, it makes perfect sense when seen as a historical means of establishing and maintaining European supremacy (Patterson 1982, 176).

It is in such a historical context that Du Bois was considered an African, even though he was the product of a mixed father and a mixed mother. Clearly, the conception of race he lived was not a purely biological one, for biologically, he was as much European as African (and perhaps more so). But Du Bois did not attempt to evade identification as an African and deftly used the intellectual tools of his time to transform the view of the African as intrinsically inferior to the European.

In contrast, Appiah wishes to divest the world of the concept of race by denying that the notion plays any constructive part in dealing with the problems Africa faces. Further, because African-Americans (e.g., Blyden and Du Bois) conceived of their relationship to Africa primarily in terms of their belonging to the same race, he considers that relationship to be as tenuous and infertile as the concept of race on which it is built.

Appiah holds that Africans and African-Americans have experienced different degrees of involvement with European cultural values, and so have been affected by European expansionism in very different ways. The vast majority of Africans, he argues, experienced European expansionism only tangentially, at the periphery of their lives. Only those Africans sent to be educated in the West approximated the degree of alienation experienced by slaves and their progeny.

Appiah believes that African nationalists, because most have been

influenced by African-Americans, have a romanticized view of Africa, deriving from the European concept of the African. The European conceived of the African as "the other," the opposite to the domineering and analytical bent of Europe; and negritude enshrined this view of the African as a virtue, the natural antidote to European militarism and will to dominance.

African nationalists held that African cultural institutions should reflect the uniqueness of the African character. In the field of literature, this claim to uniqueness is presented under the guise of "nativism": the view that African literature must take a peculiarly African form. For Appiah, this involves accepting the European stereotype of the African while merely reversing its value. The nationalist/negritudist/nativist conception of the African remains that provided by the European.

Some nativists (e.g., Okot p'Bitek, Mazisi Kunene, Robert Mungoshi) have advocated writing in traditional African languages to recreate the values implicit in traditional life. But Appiah believes this offers little hope because, he argues, our very conception of traditional African ways is shaped by the European reconstruction of African traditional life. Appiah illustrates his point with a case he should know best, that of his own group, the Ashanti.

For Appiah, what we know of the laws and customs of traditional Ashanti is best summarized in Rattray's book *Ashanti Law and Constitution*. But, clearly, Rattray brought to his study of the Ashanti European assumptions that became embedded within his description of traditional Ashanti law and customs. This means that the nativist, in accepting such views of traditional life, is unwittingly adopting a European view of traditional African life.

During the rigors of the slave trade and colonialism, Europeans created chieftainships and tribal allegiances where none had existed before. More often than not, the traditional chiefs were chosen, not by Africans, but by Europeans, to represent Africans to Europeans to the explicit advantage of Europeans. The traditional chiefdoms recognized by Europeans were often as much a creation of the European as of the African. Rattray's book is supposed to describe the traditional world of the Ashanti, but it is as much a reflection of Europe's effect on Africa as it is of an Africa unadulterated with European cultural impositions. Thus, while nativists may want to go back to tradition, Appiah argues that the only tradition they have to go back to is the tradition as reconstructed by Europeans.

Appiah holds that the very idea that there should be a literature that is peculiarly African is a Western idea. He considers the conceptual progenitor of nativists and African nationalists to be Herder, who held that every race had an essence that was expressed through its literature. But for Appiah, the nativist attempt to realize such a form of literature is

doomed to failure, much as the attempt to find a good witch is doomed. For as there are no witches, the search for a good one is quixotic and self-abortive. And as there are no races, the nationalist quest for a racially determined culture can never be completed.

For Appiah, both the racialist and the nativist inherit their orientations from a European perspective in which a racial essence is manifested in the form of its nation-state and in the form of its literature. For this reason, Appiah considers African nationalism to be just as wrong-headed as European racism. Because nativists use European concepts of race to justify their rejection of European racism, Appiah is able to charge that "Few things are less native than nativism" (1992, 60). Rather, he argues, nativism is the continuation of a European problematic. It never escapes Western categories. "The cultural nationalists are blind that their nativist demands inhabit a western architecture."

The very notion of Pan Africanism was founded on the notion of the African, which itself was developed, not on the basis of any genuine commonality between them, but on the basis of the European concept of the African. The very category of the Negro is a European concept, invented by the European so as to justify his domination of them. The very course of African Nationalism has been to make real the imaginary identities to which Europe has subjected us. (Appiah 1992, 62)

Because African nationalists, nativists, and negritudists have defended their position by reference to the doctrines of Herder, Appiah assumes that they have no other basis for such views. We are left with the suggestion that African nationalists and nativists have no orientation except that derived from European influences. But this view must certainly be rejected. There is no reason to believe that traditional intellectuals such as Ogotomeli of the Dogon (interviewed by M. Griaule in *Conversations with Ogotomeli*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), the Luo sages interviewed by H. Odera Oruka (1990) of Kenya, the Yoruba Babalwa interrogated by Hallen and Sodipo (1986) of Nigeria, and the Akan Onyansafo interviewed by Kwame Gyekye of Ghana were inaccessible to African nativists.

The Kenyan philosopher H. Odera Oruka, has coined the term "philosophical sagacity" to describe the result of traditional intellectuals reflecting on African traditional beliefs. Such individuals are not only wise in the customs and beliefs of their people, they are also wise in assessing the efficacy of such practices and beliefs. Oruka cites his father as such a sage and in his book *Sage Philosophy* (1990) provides interviews with many other such individuals.

Barry Hallen and John Sodipo have also engaged in extensive interviews with the Onisegun sages of Nigeria. In so doing, they uncover a critical, empirical epistemological orientation that is seldom attributed to

traditional cultures. They conclude that "the conceptual systems of alien languages—including those of so-called traditional cultures—have implicit in them alternative epistemological, metaphysical, moral, etc. systems that are of philosophical interest in their own right" (1986, 84). To illustrate, they provide a comparative investigation of "witchcraft" and its closest Yoruba equivalent "àjé." But there is no reason to believe that their interest in this subject is merely the projection of a European phenomenon onto traditional African beliefs.

It is likewise with Appiah's countryman and fellow Akan, Kwame Gyekye. Gyekye's position is that the tendency to think deeply about certain kinds of questions is a universal human propensity, and is the source of all philosophical ideas. The task of the professionally trained African philosopher is to lift ideas expressed on such questions from their cultural context and critically develop them. He writes:

Regarding the difficulty of getting at indigenous ideas in the light of Africa's historical contact with Christianity and Islam, I wish to say that in Akan, as indeed in every African community, there are certain individuals who are steeped in the traditional lore. These individuals are regarded as wise persons in their own right. They stand out in their own communities and command the respect and esteem of their townfolk. A researcher who goes to any Akan town or village would invariably be directed to such individuals; they are generally tradition bound in their intellectual and general outlooks. Some of them have had no formal education at all. (1987, 53)

In his book *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought—The Akan Conceptual Scheme*, Gyekye cites the medium-priest Kwaku Mframra, the elder Nana Bofo-Ansah, and other indigenous sources regarding traditional Akan beliefs about personal identity, the relationship between religion and ethics, the relationship between free will and responsibility, the nature of time and causality, etc.

Oruka, Sodipo and Hallen, and Gyekye see themselves as initiating dialogues that incorporate the analytical training of the professional philosopher with the critical reflections of the traditional sage. In such dialogues, it does not follow that European concepts must necessarily exert the dominant influence. African philosophers need not deny their Western training, nor need they depend on it as the only guide for their intellectual life.

Similar comments hold true for African literature. Although the concept of "the African" has emerged as a result of historical processes over the last few centuries, its contingent beginnings are no less real beginnings, which give rise to a focused consciousness. Abiola Irele has coined the term "African imagination" to reflect "the expression of Africans and people of African descent arising out of these historical determinations":

Despite the disproportionate attention paid to literature by Africans in the European languages, the primary areas of what I've called the African imagination is represented by the body of literature produced by, within, and for the traditional societies and indigenous cultures of Africa. This literature forms an essential part of what is generally considered the oral tradition in Africa. (Irele 1990, 53)

These comments apply no less to Africans in the diaspora than to Africans on the continent. Henry Louis Gates (1988), in his book *The Signifying Monkey*, identifies a tradition of interpretation and reinterpretation that is an essential element in African-American music and literature. If we were to mime Appiah's reasoning, this feature of African-American culture would be interpreted as only one of many adaptations of European hermeneutics. To his credit, Gates's accomplishment was to demonstrate in "Signifying" a hermeneutical principle of African origins that had maintained itself despite the rigors of slavery, colonization, and segregation.

Gates shows that the signifying monkey of African-American oral literature is the cultural progeny of the trickster gods of West Africa. He argues that the tradition of interpretation and reinterpretation, exemplified by the Yoruba deity Esu-elegbara, maintained its vitality among "traditional intellectuals" in the New World—individuals who maintained a connection with the vital cultural life of their communities. This would include storytellers, musicians, artists, and religious leaders—just those people who survived, not by a wholesale adoption of the European cultural tradition, but by syncretizing it with African cultural memes.

It is not clear why Appiah would want to deny African intellectuals independent access to endogenous African beliefs and practices. But, clearly, his views are not shared by many leading African and African-American philosophers and literary critics. Appiah makes much of the African intellectual's use of European languages and concepts to reject European hegemony. But as I have shown, using the concept of race to oppose racism does not make one a racist. Likewise, using European concepts to reject European cultural imperialism does not make one wholly Eurocentric. To the contrary, the creative accommodation of indigenous African traditions to modern, Western-derived forms reflects a characteristic feature of its orally based literature (Irele 1990, 54; Gates 1988, chaps. 2, 3).

CONCLUSION

I have tried to show in this essay, (1) that contrary to Sartre and Appiah's claims, Senghor and Du Bois—with Crummell, Blyden, and Césaire—opposed racism, not with another form of racism, but with racialism; (2)

that though racist claims may in many cases be false, such claims are not nonsensical; (3) that the concept of race has both a biological and historical legitimacy; and (4) that African nativism (in both philosophical and nonphilosophical literature) is not necessarily a self-contradictory enterprise driven by European conceptions of African traditional culture. In all, I hope to have shown that Appiah's treatment of nativism, nationalism, and Negritude is seriously flawed.

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