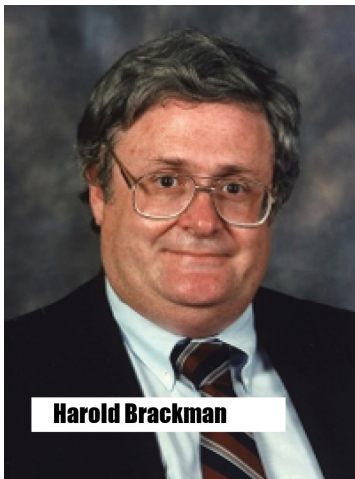


Chapter 3
of Dr. Harold Brackman's
1977 Dissertation
"RACE"

77-19,625

BRACKMAN, Harold David, 1946-
THE EBB AND FLOW OF CONFLICT: A HISTORY
OF BLACK-JEWISH RELATIONS THROUGH 1900.

University of California, Los Angeles,
Ph.D., 1977
History, United States



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The Ebb and Flow of Conflict:
A History of Black-Jewish Relations
Through 1900

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in History

by

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1977

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1977

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Chapter 3

RACE

Late nineteenth-century America was not the only stage upon which Negroes and East European Jews met as strangers. Over 5,000 miles away another dramatic encounter was beginning which has since born tragic fruit in the double anomalous position -- that of an embattled white minority within an embattled white minority -- which South African Jewry occupies today.¹

Before this second encounter began, the only dark-skinned Africans to leave an impression on the minds of the OstJuden were the Biblical Cushites -- often treated with respect in the Old Testament narrative itself, but upon whom the Talmud and Rashi heaped contempt. After 1880, however, the vivid tales told by successful South African Jews revisiting their ancestral homes (often on "wooing expeditions") supplemented the seamless web of Jewish tradition as a source from which young, impressionable Jews later to emigrate to the United States could gain mixed impressions of the "Negro character" even before they had left Eastern Europe.²

Had Theodore Herzl and the leadership of the nascent Zionist movement had their way, there would have been many more Jews than the some 50,000 who immigrated to pre-World War I South Africa with vivid recollections of the Dark Continent.³ For they wanted to carve out of East Africa a haven for a million Jewish refugees; and only the threatened secession of their movement's Russian-Jewish rank-and-file -- for whom Zionism's essence was summed up in the biblical

injunction: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand lose its cunning" -- prevented them from accepting a solicited British offer, which if implemented, would have opened up nightmarish vistas for Negro-Jewish conflict by making Kenya rather than Palestine the modern Jewish homeland.⁴

In proposing the idea of an African Zion, Herzl and his "Western-oriented" colleagues were inspired by the fashionable imperialist ideas that formed the rationale for the European dismemberment of Africa.⁵ In rejecting it, the East European Zionists were demonstrating that they shared with the less "liberated" Ostjuden a loyalty to age-old Jewish traditions which dictated not only the intensity of their attachment to the Holy Land, but also the violence of their recoil from the idea of the Dark Continent as a substitute for it.⁶

A dialectical interplay between these same traditions and New World conditions determined the stance that the Russian Jews -- and the German-Jewish and Sephardic immigrants who preceded them to these shores -- were to take toward the Negroes they encountered in America. The preceding chapter dealt with slavery. This chapter, which focuses on race, attempts to show how Jewish thought and experience on the two subjects slowly converged.

1. "Israel and Ethiopia": The Old Testament Encounter

The Old Testament Jews' knowledge of dark-skinned Africans was limited to their contacts with the racially mixed populations inhabiting the semicircle of lands lying south of Egypt and west of the Horn which the Greeks knew as Ethiopia and the Hebrew Bible

(loosely following Egyptian usage) calls Cush. Ethiopian, of course, means "burnt-faced," while the etymology of Cush is just as firmly rooted in a recognition of color difference.⁷ Both names suggest, in fact, that the Ancients would have been mystified by the distinction between West African "true Negroes" and dark-skinned-but-nevertheless-Caucasoid "Eastern Hamites" drawn by modern systems of racial-linguistic classification which depict Ancient East Africa as basically a White Man's Preserve. Since none of the ancient peoples made such a distinction, it is unnecessary for a discussion of the evolution of their attitudes toward race to do so.⁸

The Greeks, who only began to gain reliable information about Ethiopia in the seventh century when they first entered Egypt as mercenaries, had earlier given their imaginations free reign in populating "the land of the rising and setting sun" with a wondrous race of ebony-hued beings -- both more and less than human -- whose chief distinction was that they dined twice yearly with the gods.⁹ The Hebrew Bible, on the other hand, abounds in legends and lore attesting to contacts with Cush so ancient, extensive, and seemingly authentic that some ethnologists have gone so far as to postulate that Africa rather than Western Asia was the cradle land of the language grouping and associated racial sub-stock from which the Jewish people sprang.¹⁰

The most famous bit of ethnology in the Old Testament itself, the "Table of Nations" in the tenth chapter of Genesis, lends credence to this hypothesis by crediting Ham's son Cush with four Arabian tribes as offspring.¹¹ Cush's Red Sea-spanning paternity

reflects not only the cultural and political ties which since time immemorial have bound together the Sea's two shores but also South Arabia's historic role as a bridge between East Africa and Biblical Palestine. For both the caravan routes and the naval expeditions that carried apes, ivory, and African gold to the Mediterranean basin originated in the land called by the Romans "Arabia Felix" because of the fabled wealth of its trading principalities.¹²

The other major corridor of influence connecting East Africa with the Holy Land is also revealed in the Table of Nations, paralleling its south-to-north enumeration of Cush's fraternal ties with Mizraim (Egypt), Phut (Libya), and Canaan.¹³ Egypt was the cornerstone of this connecting corridor. Ever since the third millenium, it had cultivated commercial relations with both Cush and Canaan, obtaining gold as well as other precious stuffs from the former and timber and naval stores from the latter.¹⁴ Then, during the centuries of the Israelite captivity, both lands were forcibly incorporated within the Egyptian New Empire.¹⁵

Pharaonic inscriptions which show Asiatics and Ethiopians serving under a common yoke demonstrate the enforced intimacy that this involved.¹⁶ And so, too, do Moses' marriage to a Cushite woman, the Nubian-Egyptian name of his grandnephew Phineas, and the legend of the "mixed multitude" accompanying the Israelites out of Egypt.¹⁷ More than a thousand years after the Exodus, classical historians -- who could think of no greater insult -- seized upon these legendary indications of the diverse racial origins of the Jewish people in

order to make the claim that black slaves (or, alternatively, leprous
Egyptians) constituted the core of Moses' following.¹⁸ Ironically,
this same claim has been echoed -- though for very different
reasons -- by Negro ideologues intent on glorifying their race.¹⁹

That the makers of the Old Testament felt no compulsion to
suppress or explain away these legendary race contacts tells much
about their attitude toward Cush and its dark-skinned inhabitants. In
Genesis Cush suffers from inclusion among the least favored third of
mankind, the children of Ham, whom the outraged Noah damns to an
inferior position in his Cursing of Canaan -- the vignette that was
obviously meant to cast a shadow over the Table of Nations immediately
following it in the biblical narrative.²⁰ Color consciousness,
however, had nothing to do with Cush's placement in the Table, which
was dictated by the facts of geography and politics binding Ethiopia
to Egypt, the hated "house of bondage," rather than by considerations
of race.²¹ For skin color just was not salient to the kind of ethno-
centric intolerance pervading the Old Testament -- the chief victims
of which, such as the Canaanites and Samaritans, were racially
indistinguishable from the Jews.²²

The Hebrew Bible, in fact, knows very little of the later Jewish
lore associating darkness of hue with sin, slavery, and savagery. It
does, however, display certain diffuse anxieties about blackness.
In the Psalms, for instance, Ham is identified through a play on
words with Kemi, meaning black, which is another name for the hated
Egypt; this identification may have encouraged rabbinic speculation

linking Noah's curse with the origins of color difference. The words of the Shepherdess in the Song of Songs -- who protests that she is "black but beautiful," attributing her dark features to peasant sunburntness -- set up an unflattering opposition between the two attributes.²⁴ And though Jeremiah owed his life to the intervention of a Cushite court official in the service of King Zedekiah who protected him from the wrath of Judah's nobles, he nevertheless, asked a famous rhetorical question that hardly reflects favorably on the color of his savior's countrymen: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?"²⁵

But these unfavorable allusions are counterbalanced by others -- that find no echo in rabbinic literature -- in which the Cushites are praised for their military prowess and even for their physical comeliness. Isaiah, for example, despite his opposition to a military alliance with Cush, was especially taken by the valor and striking appearance of the "tall and sleek" nilotic Negroes and Nilo-Hamites who fought in its legions:

Ah! Land of the buzzing wings,
Which lies beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,
That sends ambassadors by sea,
In papyrus vessels on the face of the waters:
To a nation tall and sleek,
To a nation dreaded near and far,
To a nation strong and triumphant.²⁶

Moreover, Cush also bulks large in the universal eschatology of the prophets.²⁷ Amos' inspired query -- "Are ye not like the children of the Ethiopians unto me?" -- opened up vast new horizons for prophetic thought. Though the context makes clear that the prime purpose of this comparison was to deflate the pretensions of

the Israelites by invoking the name of a far-distant people, it nevertheless fathered a tradition making the Ethiopian motif central to Old Testament oracles voicing conversionist hopes. The Psalmist's affirmation that "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" is the most famous statement of this theme.²⁸ The prophets, however, were its chief articulators. Indeed, by Deutero-Isaiah's time, the tradition granting Ethiopia primacy of place in prophetic oracles predicting the conversion of the nations was so deeply rooted that even the experience of the Babylonian Captivity -- which made "far-distant Ethiopia" much more remote to the Jews than it had ever been before -- was not enough to cause the great exilic prophet to depart from it.²⁹

What this prominence rightly suggests is that Cush, despite its location on the southern periphery of the biblical world, was not at all isolated from the main currents of ancient history. The establishment of the first Ethiopian state, with its capital located near the Nile's fourth cataract at Napata, coincided roughly with the founding of the Israelite monarchy.³⁰ For several centuries, the Napatan kingdom continued under Egyptian tutelage, providing levies for the Pharaonic armies which twice invaded Palestine in the century after Solomon's death.³¹ But when Israel and Egypt were at peace -- as they were during David's reign and much of Solomon's -- Ethiopians also entered the service of Jewish kings, inaugurating the tradition that accounts for the presence of a Cushite "minister of state" at Zedekiah's court as late as 400 years later.³²

The eighth century ended Ethiopian vassalage to Egypt. The Napatan monarchs turned the tables on their former overlords by conquering the Land of the Two Kingdoms itself and ruling it as the Twenty-fifth or "Nubian" Dynasty (751-671).³³ Intent upon restoring Egypt's past imperial glories, they made Palestine a battleground over which Ethiopian and Assyrian armies struggled for world supremacy.³⁴ The kings of Israel and Judah, who were forced to choose sides, gravitated toward Egypt-Ethiopia.³⁵ Both they and their Napatan overlords suffered the consequences of the Assyrian triumphs that, over the course of three quarters of a century, destroyed Israel, humbled Judah, and reduced Egypt as well, forcing Tanwetamani, its last Cushite king, to retire far up the Nile to his ancestral home.³⁶

There followed nearly a century of border warfare between the Ethiopians and the succeeding Saite Dynasty, which had risen to power in Egypt as the vassal of a declining Assyria.³⁷ Among the foreign troops that constituted the core of the Saite armies were mercenaries supplied by Judah's kings -- first in return for horses, and later as part of the tribute they paid in order to maintain an anti-Babylonian alliance.³⁸ Not only was a heavily Jewish garrison established at Elephantine on the Ethiopian frontier; but Jewish troops seem to have served in the Egyptian punitive expedition which invaded Cush in 590, sacking Napata and forcing its rulers to shift their capital further south to Meroe.³⁹ The veiled allusions in the Old Testament to the existence of Jewish communities "beyond the rivers of Cush" were probably inspired by the exploits of these

Jewish invaders.

Initially, the Saite victories increased the flow into Egypt of dark-skinned slaves -- for whom the Greek mercenaries, and perhaps also their Jewish counterparts, developed a great contempt.⁴¹ Their long-term impact, however, disrupted the traditionally close commercial and political ties of Ethiopia with Egypt and the rest of the Near East.⁴² After repelling a subsequent invasion launched in 525 by Cambyses the Persian, Meroe's rulers reoriented their empire-building activities toward the South. This stimulated the cultural development of the East African interior; but it doomed Cush to centuries of stagnant isolation from the Near Eastern foci of civilized advance.⁴³ The first of Ethiopia's cyclical withdrawals from the mainstream of Western history had begun. It was not to end until the opening century of the Christian era -- when Semitic invaders from across the Red Sea founded the outward-looking Ethiopian trading empire of Axum.⁴⁴

The beginnings of Cush's isolation coincided in Jewish history with the wrenching impact of the Babylonian Captivity. Refugees from fallen Jerusalem at first swelled the numbers of Jews residing in Egypt -- and perhaps also in Ethiopia. Ultimately, however, these far-flung Jewish communities shrivelled up because of the radical eastward shift of the vital focus of Jewish concern that the sojourn in Babylon eventually brought about.⁴⁵ Nor did the landlocked and commercially backward post-exilic Jewish state restore Palestine's previously close relations with the African shore of the Red Sea. Even indirect contacts were slow to redevelop, failing to do so to

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any considerable extent until the Hellenistic period.

During the last few centuries of the pre-Christian era, however, Jewish communities which could serve as indirect links and conduits of information took root in both Alexandrian Egypt and South Arabia.⁴⁷ The Jewish merchant community of Alexandria profited from the Ptolemaic restoration of traditional Egyptian ties with East Africa. The Arabian Jews, on the other hand, were pioneers rather than passive beneficiaries of the East African trade. For they established trading communities in the Yemen of such vigor that their religious as well as economic influence radiated across the Red Sea, winning the Falashas -- the so-called "Black Jews of Ethiopia" -- to the⁴⁸ faith.

But renewed contact with the culturally-decayed Cushite kingdom did not bring with it a renewal of respect. Almost nothing remains to indicate the attitude of the Yemenite Jews toward the Ethiopians, some of whom adopted their faith. It should be sufficient to note, however, that their impact on Ethiopia was one facet of a large-scale Semitic invasion which promoted, not a high regard for the native East African population, but just the reverse.⁴⁹ The Jews of Hellenistic Alexandria actually erected monuments to their contempt. Among these is the Third Sibylline, one of the Apocraphyl Books of the Old Testament, which identifies Ethiopia with the noxious abode of Gog and Magog -- the Messiah's arch-foes -- and consigns "the Moors, Ethiopians, and nations of barbarous speech" to perdition.⁵⁰

This denigrating perspective was certainly not the exclusive possession of the Hellenistic Jews. Gradually forgetting its

antique glories, the classical world came to view the native Ethiopian state as a benighted kingdom notable only for the ivory and slaves that could be obtained from it.⁵¹ The Hellenizing Jews' anti-Ethiopian animus, however, seems to have been given a special edge by their desire to vindicate before the Greeks and Romans what the greatest of their apologists called "the extreme antiquity of our race [and] the purity of the original stock."⁵² Very probably, this motivation led Josephus and his predecessors to manufacture for their histories accounts of Moses' exploits as an Egyptian general in Ethiopia -- accounts which discount his Cushite marriage as a military strategem.⁵³

The Talmudic Sages rejected virtually the whole corpus of Hellenistic-Jewish literature. But despite this wholesale rejection, the legends explaining away Moses' Cushite match found their way into the rabbinic tradition.⁵⁴ For race prejudice proved to be one of the few elements in Hellenism that the rabbis were willing to assimilate.⁵⁵

2. Race Attitudes and Contacts in the Talmud

The opening centuries of the Christian era constituted an interregnum in the native African record of historical achievement separating Cush's era of ancient prominence from the medieval accomplishments of the great Negro states of the Sudan. These same centuries formed the seedbed of rabbinic Judaism. And this fateful coincidence goes far toward explaining why they also formed such fertile soil for the growth of Jewish lore demeaning the Negro.

The most famous of these anti-Negro legends cluster about Ham

and Noah's Cursing of Canaan. In the Genesis narrative, Shem and Japheth avert their eyes and cover their drunken father's nakedness, while Ham looks shamelessly and indecently on; to reward his two modest and respectful offspring and punish the culprit, Noah curses Ham's son Canaan to be "a slave of slaves" unto Shem and Japheth.⁵⁶ The clear purpose of this edifying tale was to justify the Israelite conquest of Canaan by attributing it to the Canaanite's moral enervation and sexual depravity -- the qualities which were foreshadowed, so to speak, in the character of Ham, their eponym's sire.⁵⁷ According to Wellhausen and others, the seeming moral ambiguity that results from Canaan's being cursed for Ham's sin was introduced when a Yahweistic redactor revised an earlier version of the tale -- in which Ham played no part and Shem, Japheth, and Canaan were in trinity of brothers involved -- in order to reconcile it with the genealogies that follow in the Table of Nations. But the moral ambiguity disappears -- and this explanation, which is dubious on other grounds, becomes gratuitous as well -- if one interprets Noah's Curse, not as a magical statement of a predestined outcome, but merely as a "righteous" prediction that no good is likely to come from or to befall the children of such an unsavory father as Ham.⁵⁸

Be this as it may, there is no denying that the Babylonian Talmud was the first source to read a Negrophobic content into the episode by stressing Canaan's fraternal connection with Cush. Two third-century Sages -- who may have been familiar with Oriental and Greek myths in which rebellious sons castrate and supplant their

sires -- seized upon certain hints in the biblical passage itself in order to convict Ham of a much worse offense than merely "looking with unclean intent" on his father. Rab maintained that he had unmanned Noah, while Samuel claimed that he had buggered him as well.⁵⁹

But neither comparative mythology nor the structure of the Biblical Hebrew provided any precedent for the changes which they made in the nature of the rebellious son's punishment. For the talmudic glosses of the episode added the stigma of blackness to the fate of enslavement that Noah predicted for Ham's progeny. Actually, there are two variant explanations of why Ham's children -- and Ham himself -- were turned black. One legend relates that for having violated the Decree of Continenence imposed by God on the Ark's passengers, Ham was "smitten in his skin":

Just as when a man has the audacity to coin the king's currency in the king's own palace, his face is blackened as a punishment and his issue declared counterfeit.⁶⁰

The more important version of the myth, however, ingeniously ties in the origins of blackness -- and of other, real and imagined Negroid traits -- with Noah's Curse itself. According to it, Ham is told by his outraged father that, because you have abused me in the darkness of the night, your children shall be born black and ugly; because you have twisted your head to cause me embarrassment, they shall have kinky hair and red eyes; because your lips jested at my expense, theirs shall swell; and because you neglected my nakedness, they shall go naked with their shamefully elongated male members exposed for all to see.⁶¹

This denigration of the Negro was the obverse of the Talmud's exaltation of the myth of Hebraic descent -- a myth which, as Jacob B. Agus notes, even tawny converts to Judaism felt constrained to embrace:

The Falashas of Ethiopia, the Bene Israel of India, the Berbers of North Africa, the Jewish Arab tribes, all these groups believed themselves to be descended from some authentic, ethnically "pure" Jewish tribe. Even the Khazars who were converted to Judaism in the light of history, regarded themselves as somehow of the "seed" and the "blood" of ancient Israel. They belonged at least in part to the tribe of "Simeon" or the "half-tribe Menasseh." The conversion of individual Gentiles was attributed in the Talmud to the fact that their "outer soul" (mazal) was at Sinai. In Qabbalah, it was assumed that Abraham and Sarah continue to exist in some heavenly form and that out of their celestial union, the souls of converts were generated, so powerful was the dogmatic belief that all Jews are of Abraham's "seed."⁶²

Both the Negrophobic myth and its Hebraic opposite number were given their definitive form during the traumatic first centuries of permanent minority existence in exile -- when rabbinic anxieties about the threat posed to Jewish survival by the enemy without were at a peak. The Pharisees' open-armed acceptance of converts, though never repudiated outright, was replaced by a suspicious reserve which received its bluntest formulation in the talmudic dictum, "We do not believe a proselyte until seven generations [have passed], so that the waters should not return to their source."⁶³ This new attitude amounted to a partial reversion to the pre-Pharisaic emphasis on ethnic-racial purity.⁶⁴ But while Ezra's intolerance had many targets, the "seed of Cush" were not prominent among them. This is to say that the use of the Negro as foil was rabbinic invention.⁶⁵

There are occasional passages in the rabbinic literature which

resonate with sweeping conversionist hopes reminiscent of the biblical prophets. What is chiefly remarkable, however, is that in its whole vast corpus, there is only one passage -- a medieval midrash on Isaiah predicting that "in the days to come" the Negro and the German will walk "arm and arm" -- that echoes with any conviction the Old Testament's "Ethiopian motif." For the rabbis -- who so freely embroidered on Old Testament legends that reflected unfavorably on Cush -- reacted with a mixture of incredulity and embarrassment to the more favorable references. In this respect, the strategies which they used to discount biblical episodes treating individual Cushites with sympathy and respect are just as revealing as their Negrophobic glosses on the Ham myth.⁶⁶

The chief victims of these strategies were Moses' Cushite wife and Jeremiah's Ethiopian savior. The Pentateuch -- which implicitly criticizes his marriage to Zipporah, a princess of the idolatrous Midianites -- seems to defend Moses' Cushite match. For not only does the twelfth chapter of Numbers relate that Moses took a wife from among the Cushites but it also states that God severely rebuked Miriam and Aaron for "speaking against" him in the matter of this marriage.⁶⁷ Not one rabbinic source, however, accepted this interpretation; and the only disagreement among them was over how best to explain away the plain meaning of the biblical text.⁶⁸

The Targum Yerushalmi was the first of these sources to use the Hellenistic-Jewish account of Moses' Ethiopian marriage-of-necessity in order to transform the Pentateuchal episode from "a plea for racial tolerance" into a brief against it. Zipporah,

this Aramaic paraphrase of the Old Testament explains, "was of a comely form and beautiful countenance, and more abundant in good works than all the women of her age"; her Cushite rival, on the other hand, was an ugly creature "of a flesh different from every other" -- from whom Moses separated at the first opportunity. In its rendering of Numbers, Miriam and Aaron are rebuked -- not for "speaking 69 against" the marriage -- but for opposing the subsequent divorce!

The Talmud itself evolved a very different strategy for disposing of this unwanted mate. The Sages adopted a remarkable convention that relegated her and all other notable Ethiopians in the Bible to the status of invisible men. For whenever the Old Testament calls such an individual a Cushite, they interpreted the meaning of the word antiphrastically -- which means that the person in question ceased to be "black" and became "white." Thus the "Cushite woman" whom Moses married was actually not an Ethiopian; she was really none other than Zipporah, his first wife. The Book of Numbers designates her as a member of that "black" nation only because her beauty and goodness made her radically different from all other women in the same way which the Ethiopian's skin color sets him apart from all other men; indeed, the fault of Aaron and Miriam lay in attempting to besmirch the character of one so unimpeach- 70 ably "white."

In the Talmud, the same logic also disposes of the Cushite "minister of state" who figures so prominently in Jeremiah. The Sages actually nicknamed "Ebed-melech the Ethiopian" the "white raven" in order to emphasize that the "true" meaning of his national

designation had nothing to do with skin color, but was made solely to distinguish him from the other, truly "black" -- i.e., malevolent -- members of Zedekiah's court. ⁷¹ Rashi's commentary later stressed the aesthetic rather than moral dimension of the antithesis by explaining that to call a courtier "a Cushite" was to complement him as "a handsome man." What this usage reflects, of course, is just the opposite of a high regard for "African beauty." In fact, a superstition grew up paralleling it which advised the parents of a handsome and gifted son to nickname him "Moor" because so doing would convince the literal-minded devil that the child was really not worth plaguing. ⁷²

Though the conditions of Jewish existence which prevailed during the formative era of rabbinic Judaism may have made the Sages especially receptive to such beliefs, Negrophobia was hardly a talmudic monopoly. For classical science developed pronounced anti-Negro tendencies during the same centuries they took root in Jewish myth. Diodorus of Sicily, Strabo, Pliny, and Claudius Ptolemy had all assiduously collected ethnographic lore before Galen's time; much of this, however, was of a highly fanciful character -- including catalogues of monstrous races and hybrid creatures that demonstrated their compilers' continuing bondage to mythopoeic patterns of thought. ⁷³

Hence it fell to the celebrated second-century physician to make the first attempt at a systematic and naturalistic, racial classification -- a classification which did all the more damage to the reputation of the darker races because of its scientific

trappings. According to Galen, the Greeks, Romans, and certain other Mediterranean peoples possessed "the ideal bodily constitution." But though he viewed "the whiteness of the Kelts" as well as the blackness of the Africans as climate-induced deviations from this ideal, he reserved most of his scorn for the latter. ⁷⁴ In all hot countries, Galen concluded, men suffer from an excess of overheated "black bile" that causes them to grow up "dry, slender, and as it were skeletonized" -- and which also accounts for their tendency toward intellectual and emotional instability. The Negro, however, suffers from this debilitating syndrome in its most extreme form. To it are attributable his crinkly hair, meagre growth of beard, large nostrils, and thick lips, as well as his frivolous disposition, hypersexuality, and lack of cultural attainments. For, as this catalogue makes clear, the Roman physician and the Jewish rabbins shared an aversion to black humanity transcending the differences between the mediums ⁷⁵ of science and myth in which they chose to express it.

The simultaneous emergence of such views in these diverse quarters probably reflected the impact of the activities of slave traders who made Ptolemaic and then Roman Egypt a base of operations for both overland and maritime expeditions that returned from East Africa with unprecedented numbers of dark-skinned slaves. Among these were the Ethiopian slavegirls -- who came to be viewed by Jewish women as dangerous rivals and by Jewish rabbis as threats to the integrity of the family structure upon which continued survival ⁷⁶ in the Diaspora depended. These fears gave to the racial

antipathies of Diaspora Jewry a distinctive underpinning. Yet the anonymous rabbinic preacher who observed that Teutons could be expected to enslave Negroes but not vice versa was expressing an opinion which was common currency throughout the late classical world.⁷⁷

Centuries later, Jewish scholars became carriers of this classical heritage -- helping to win for Galen, for example, the title of "Medical Pope of the Middle Ages" by translating his works from the Hebrew version of the Arabic into Latin.⁷⁸ Some evidence indicates, however, that the influence of classical race thinking on Jewish attitudes actually predated the medieval period. The Hellenistic "science" of physiognomy, which enjoyed a revival during the second century, inspired the phrenological criteria used by the Merkabah school of Jewish mysticism to judge acolytes; and there is an interesting parallelism between these criteria and those that the Mishnah elaborated for disqualifying priestly candidates -- among which are "black skin" or a "very dark" complexion.⁷⁹

But these cross-cultural roots of talmudic race prejudice were denied deep growth by the Sages' hostility to the study of "Greek wisdom" -- the hostility which had aborted the Hellenistic-Jewish Renaissance. The contacts of Hebrewism with Hellenism were to be renewed, however, and in a way that had important consequences for Jewish attitudes toward race. But this did not take place until after the era of talmudic "isolation" had drawn to a close, and then only within the orbit of Islamic civilization.⁸⁰

3. Jews, Moslems, and Black Africa

Judah Halevi and Moses Maimonides, the two greatest thinkers the medieval Jewish world produced, were born in Moorish Spain. The thought of both was shaped by renewed contacts -- direct and also through the medium of Moslem intermediaries -- with Greco-Roman thinking on slavery and race. Halevi's mystical nationalism remained "rooted in Greek biology" even after he had adopted a critical stance⁸¹ toward the pursuit of profane knowledge. Indeed, virtually the only point on which the opposing spokesmen for secular learning and religious tradition in his dialogue The Kuzari agree is that Blacks are biologically inferior. The Philosopher contrasts the perfect man "equipped with the highest capacity" with the Negro -- a species of mankind "fit to receive nothing more than the human form and speech in its least developed form."⁸² So convinced is the Rabbi of the axiomatic truth of the same proposition that it serves as the linchpin of one of his major arguments. For in order to prove that Gentile converts can never become the equals of the born Jews who are "the pick of mankind," he finds it sufficient to state: "If the Law were equally binding on us all because God created us, the white and the black would be equal since⁸³ He created them all."

Halevi turned the traditional doctrine of Israel's election on its head, making it racist in a sense it had never been. For while the orthodox apology argued that the superiority of the Jews resided in the truth of Judaism, Halevi sometimes argues that the truth of Judaism is rooted in the superior "physiological endowment" and natural magnanimity of the Jews.⁸⁴ Nothing could be further than

this mystical self-glorification from Maimonides' sober-minded rationalism. Yet he shared with Halevi a contempt for dark-skinned Africans which was no less deep.

In Maimonides' case, this contempt was the outgrowth, not to a doctrinal commitment to the biological inequality of the races, but in a belief in the cultural backwardness and religious depravity of Black Africa. The Guide of the Perplexed distinguishes the Christians and Moslems from "the extreme Turks that wander about in the North [and] the Cushites who live in the South."⁸⁵ The former acknowledge the reality of the one and incorporeal God; the latter, however, are "the ignoble remnants" of the idol-worshipping Sabians whose blasphemies went unchallenged until Abraham's time. Because they "have no religion" in the true sense of the word, Maimonides declares that:

I consider these as irrational beings, and not as human beings; they are below mankind, but above monkeys, since they have the form and shape of man, and a mental faculty above that of the monkey.⁸⁶

Maimonides' condemnation of primitive peoples echoes that of the Arab philosopher Al Farabi (d. 950) -- who may also have served as the chief model for the philosopher in The Kuzari. Al Farabi's writings, which Maimonides called "as fine as flour," mediated his as well as Halevi's reception of the Aristotelian conceptions of "the bestial man" and "the natural slave."⁸⁷ A century before Halevi's time, this Arab thinker seized on Aristotle's collocation of the human beast and the godlike man -- both of whom are independent of society: the one because he is born beyond the pale of civilization;

the other because he possesses a self-sufficient virtue that makes
him a law unto himself. ⁸⁸ And two centuries before Maimonides did
so, he equated semi-human barbarian with "natural slave." ⁸⁹

Actually, all of medieval Islamic thought's leading figures
seem to have taken for granted "the fact" of Negro inferiority,
disagreeing only as to its causes. The more theologically-minded,
such as the ninth-century annalist Al Tabari, sought an answer in
religious tradition -- and found it in the talmudic glosses on the
Ham myth. ⁹⁰ The secularists, on the other hand, preferred biological
and environmental explanations; but they differed over the relative
importance of "nature vs. nurture." Al Kindi (ninth century) and
Al Masudi (tenth century) turned to Galen's anatomy, attributing
Negro inferiority to congenital brain deficiency. ⁹¹ Ibn Khaldun
(fourteenth century), the profoundest thinker among Islamic historians,
rejected this hypothesis as "inconclusive and unproven." But what he
offered in its stead -- far from being a defense of black capacity --
was a more vigorously environmental explanation, stressing the
combined effects of excessive African heat and aridity, of its
presumed absence. ⁹²

Black African nationalists -- if not their Black American
counterparts -- are well aware that the Islamic world's record with
regard to the race question falls lamentably short of the heights of
color-blind tolerance claimed for it by self-serving propaganda. As
the singular lack of enthusiasm South of the Sahara until recently
for the Arab Cause in the Middle East shows, the deprivations of the
Moslem slave traders who terrorized Beled es Sudan ("the Country of

the Blacks") until the day before yesterday are still too well-
remembered there to easily be forgotten.⁹³

During the middle ages, Moslem lands did not even possess the relative superiority in racial tolerance that they have enjoyed over the West since the beginnings of the Atlantic slave trade. The Koran -- which links blackness with sin, rebellion, misery, and "removal from the face of God" -- affirms that on Judgment Day the faces of the damned will be burnt black as soot.⁹⁴ In seeming but not real contradiction to these theological color prejudices stands the high regard in which the Ethiopian kingdom of Axum was held by the Prophet, who praised it as "a land of righteousness" for the hospitality its Christian kings had extended to his persecuted followers.⁹⁵ For, unlike its Cushite predecessor, Axum was a Semitic conquest state whose rulers prided themselves on the Yemenite blood that flowed in their veins; and neither they nor their Arab brothers from across the Red Sea harbored much respect for East Africa's native races and peoples -- whom the Axumite royal stelae describe as "barbarous."⁹⁶

Two related sayings ascribed to Mohammed reflect a similar attitude. The first advises: "He who has no friend should take a friend from the Nubians"; its favorable surface meaning, however, is undercut and reversed by the second -- "Your best captives are the Nubians" -- which suggests that the relationship he was commending was not that of equals but rather of master to slave.⁹⁷ These sayings are the first in a long line of Islamic aphorisms which praise Blacks -- the men for their military ability and the women for

their good nature -- but always within a servile context. Manuals on the buying of slaves were, in fact, the prime source in which such compliments were bestowed; they so often linked 'abd, the Arabic word for slave, with Nuba, Sudan, and Zanj, the most common designations for Negroes, that the former eventually developed into a racial epithet.

By the late middle ages, when the upper classes of the Negro Sudanic kingdoms converted to Islam, stereotypes branding Blacks as savage and servile were too deeply embedded in Moslem opinion to be displaced. Thus Ibn Khaldun's Muqadimmah, even though it takes note of the achievements of the black states of the Sudan, dismisses these as exceptions which prove "the rule" that:

Negro nations are...submissive to slavery because (Negroes) have little that is (essentially) human and possess attributes that are quite similar to those of dumb animals...."100

Such negative assessments took on a canonical status during Negro Africa's rise to prominence as the leading exporter of slaves to the Moslem world. After the first centuries of Islamic expansion, all other sources of pagan slaves began to dry up. Arab slavers made up for the deficiency by concentrating as never before on the acquisition and sale of "black ivory." Through the mediums of trade, tributary treaty, and occasional raid, they flooded Moslem lands with an unprecedented influx of dark-skinned slaves. The result was the injection of an undercurrent of racial antagonism into the development of Islamic society.

Ninth-century Iraq experienced two massive slave revolts with

racial overtones -- one led by a rebel called "Lord of the Blacks."¹⁰³
Eleventh- and twelfth-century Egypt was periodically convulsed by
conflicts pitting the Sudanic battalions that formed the backbone of
the Fatimid state against Turkish and Berber troops resentful of the
Blacks' ascendancy; this struggle was not resolved until Saladin, the
Kurdish founder of the Ayyubid dynasty, reestablished "white
supremacy" by ruthlessly suppressing the Negroes and burning down
their Cairo encampment.¹⁰⁴ Three hundred years later, Cairo again
erupted in a major racial riot, which was incited by the mamluks,
the white "slave aristocracy" that succeeded the Ayyubids, in order to
cow a sultan who had equipped his black troops with arquebuses and
married their chief to a beautiful white slavegirl.¹⁰⁵ And though
North Africa suffered no such convulsions during the middle ages, it
nevertheless became notorious for the cruel treatment that the Berber
tribes of the interior inflicted on their black slaves.¹⁰⁶

All this suggests the extent to which the heightening and
hardening of the Negrophobic content of the Jewish tradition that
occurred while the Moslem world was the vital focus of Diaspora Jewry's
existence were the product of trends affecting the whole of medieval
Islamic society rather than merely of the workings of an internal
Jewish dynamic. What was involved was a pattern of mutual interaction
-- not one-way influence. Moslem theologians cited the Talmud in
order to buttress their racial prejudices; Jewish philosophers
cited Arab thinkers in defense of theirs; and a confluence of opinion
resulted which made the views of Jew and Moslem virtually
indistinguishable.¹⁰⁷

Travel narratives written by the more peripatetic members of the two faiths provide an important instance of this; for these converge toward a common portrait of the primitive African tribes as an incestuous race of cannibals and half-apes. According to one medieval Arab traveler (who may have been predisposed to credulity by the tales of man-ape transformations and matings included in the Koran and the Arabian Nights), the Negroes "south of Mombasa" were ruled by apes with whom they intermarried. Eldad the Danite (ninth century) and Benjamin of Tudela (twelfth century), the two most famous medieval Jewish travelers, held no higher an opinion of the black tribes they encountered.

Eldad, who is dismissed by some modern authorities as a fraud though others share Maimonides' faith in his veracity, claimed to come from an ancient Jewish community located on the Somali Coast. Benjamin, on the other hand, was a Spanish rabbi who is sometimes called "the Jewish Marco Polo" because he journeyed all the way from Western Europe to China a century before the intrepid Venetian. What chiefly matters, however, is the impact that the accounts of their African adventures had on medieval Jewish opinion. The very first episode in Eldad's narrative is a retelling of his harrowing encounter with the cannibalistic "Romranos" -- a race of "black Ethiopians, tall, without garment or clothing upon them, ... like unto beasts of the field" -- who eat his plump and equally Jewish companion, but pass him over as too scrawny to please the palate. Though Benjamin had no such hair-raising experiences to recount, his description of the inhabitants of "the land of the blacks" lying south of Egypt is hardly

more sympathetic:

Some of ...[them] resemble beasts in every respect. They eat the herbs, which grow on the banks of the Nile, go naked in the fields and have no notions like other men, for instance, they cohabit with their own sisters and with whomever they find. The country is excessively hot and when the people of Assuan invade their country, they carry wheat, raisins and figs, which they throw out like bait, thereby alluring the natives. They are made captive and sold in Egypt and in the adjoining countries, where they are known as black slaves, being the descendants of Cham.¹¹¹

He does not say whether Jewish merchants participated in these slave-raiding expeditions. Jews certainly purchased some of the Blacks imported.¹¹² Indeed, as late as 1772 an Egyptian moralist complained about presumptuous Jewish masters -- carrying "small batons in their hands like chiefs" -- who bought at public auction "Moslem slaves, the offspring of Negroes, Abyssinians, and even white slaves."¹¹³

Enslaving Black Africans, however, never formed an important branch of Jewish commerce. Between the seventh and the tenth centuries, when Jewish merchants were leading slave traders, Eastern Europe and Southern Russia dwarfed the Dark Continent as a source of supply.¹¹⁴ This is reflected in the metaphorical name which the medieval Hebrew literature bestowed on the Slavonic regions: "the land of Canaan."¹¹⁵ By the time a new situation emerged and the major influx of Negro slaves began, Jews no longer figured prominently in the traffic.¹¹⁶

But this is not to say that there were not at least a handful of Jewish dealers in "black ivory." In the seventh century, the Arab conquerors of Egypt negotiated a tributary treaty with the Nubian

kingdom to the south which contained a pledge of protection for
"Moslems and dhimmis" residing or doing business there. ¹¹⁷ Since
Jews belonged to the second category, this made it possible for
Jewish merchants to participate in the slave trade with East Africa.
That at least a few did so is hinted at by an episode with an Arabian
Nights flavor which Baron relates:

During the frequent periods of political instability [in Fatimid Egypt], both the rise and fall of Jewish courtiers were meteoric....[One] prominent [Jewish] banking family, the sons of Sahl of Tustar (Abraham-Ibrahim Abu Sa'ad and Hased-Abu Nasr) achieved the acme of their power in the Fatimid caliphate under Mustansir (1029-94), owing to the sheer accident that Ibrahim ben Sahl had sold a Negro slave girl to the caliph's father. Now regent, during her son Mustansir's childhood and adolescence, she was a loyal supporter of her former master (1036-47). Ibrahim was assassinated, however, in 1048, at the instigation of his own creature, the vizier Al-Fellahi, a converted Jew. The latter paid for his treachery with his life in turn. Ibrahim's son achieved power only after turning Muslim....¹¹⁸

Jewish merchants also participated in the trans-Saharan trade with the Negro states of the Central and Western Sudan. Black slaves formed one of the commodities (though not the most important one) that the medieval Sudan exported to Moslem North Africa; for this reason, they very likely also formed one of the items of commerce dealt in by these camel-riding, merchant Jews. Actually, the involvement of Jews in the traffic with the Sudan seems to have antedated the rise of Islam by many centuries, having its beginnings in the era when their fellow Semites, the Phoenicians and the Carthaginians, established the North African trading communities which were the first to cultivate
¹¹⁹
commercial relations with the Blacks to the south.

This traffic, however, amounted to very little before the Romans

revolutionized trans-Saharan transport through the large-scale
introduction of the camel into North Africa.¹²⁰ At the time of this
transportation revolution, Jews and Berber converts to Judaism
constituted a percentage of the Mahgrib's population many times
larger than they have been at any time since.¹²¹ The Jewish
communities in Carthage and Cyrenaica staged a massive revolt against
the Romans in 115 C.E., the suppression of which forced them to
scatter throughout the North African interior.¹²² Some of these
refugees settled in the Sahara itself, establishing oasis communities
which maintained their Jewish identity centuries into the middle
ages. Others fled even further south, becoming probably the first
Jews to reach the banks of the Niger and Senegal Rivers.¹²³

These sub-Saharan Jews enjoy the dubious distinction of being
one of numerous candidates whom white historians imbued with an
unshakeable faith in black incapacity, have advanced for the honor of
having founded Ghana, the first of the kingdoms to dominate the
Medieval Sudan.¹²⁴ Indeed, some forty years ago one eccentric tome
set out to prove that:

Somewhere in the dim past, a wave, or more probably a
series of waves, of Hebraic influence swept over Negro
Africa, leaving unmistakable traces among the various
tribes, where they have endured even to the present day.¹²⁵

Stated in these bald terms, this thesis is almost on a par with the
venerable idea that the Lost Ten Tribes spawned the Red Indians.¹²⁶
But there is a less extravagant version of it which claims only that
these second-century Jewish refugees, before being absorbed into the
mass of the native population, helped establish the trans-Saharan

traffic on a new, more extensive basis. This less extravagant version may have some merit. The scanty nature of the evidence,¹²⁷ however, makes it impossible to reach a firm conclusion.

During the middle ages proper, the record of Jewish contacts with the Sudan is slightly less shrouded in obscurity. Throughout the period, Jewish merchants travelled with the Saharan caravans that circuited between Negro Africa and the Mediterranean -- carrying salt, glass, wine and precious fabrics south and returning with gold and slaves.¹²⁸ In 1500 Jewish merchant communities existed in the Sahara at Tuat and on its southern fringes at Timbuctoo, the thriving medieval metropolis which became the commercial and intellectual hub of the Songhai Empire, the last of the Negro Sudanic Kingdoms. So renowned were the prosperous Jews of Tuat that their reputation served as a magnet, attracting Spanish refugees who journeyed all the way across the desert in order to swell the numbers of Saharan Jewry.¹²⁹

Unfortunately for these Jews, however, they also attracted the wrath of an Algerian religious fanatic who incited a pogrom in Tuat against them.¹³⁰ When Al Maghili, after fleeing south to escape revenge at the hands of the Jewish survivors, learned that they had killed his son in his stead, he sought to convince Askia Mohammed, Songhai's greatest ruler, to purge his realm of Jews as well.¹³¹ Askia, whose piety is the delight of Moslem biographers, ultimately acceded to his spiritual advisor's request by issuing an order that closed Timbuctoo to Jewish merchants and forbade them to trade with his subjects.¹³² This ban on Jewish residence, which survived the

fall of Songhai and the eclipse of the Negro Sudan by 300 years,
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remained in effect until 1856.

But what chiefly matters is the golden age that preceded this ugly denouement. During the medieval heyday of the trans-Saharan traffic, red gold rather than black slaves formed the Sudanic kingdoms' chief commercial contribution to the outside world.
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Though the Central Sudan specialized from a very early date in selling captives to the desert Berbers in exchange for horses, the more important Negro states of the Western Sudan did not begin exporting slaves to North Africa on a regular basis until after 1100.
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Nor was their entry into this traffic altogether voluntary.
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For during the eleventh century, a Moroccan army -- which, however, lacked the military and transport technology to make its conquest stick -- invaded Ghana and carried back to North Africa many thousands of
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enslaved Blacks.

Mali and Songhai, the successor kingdoms, allowed the trade in black ivory initiated by the invaders to continue, but imposed a royal monopoly between the Mahgrib and the source of supply -- restricting the flow of human chattels northward to the limited number obtainable
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without strain from the more primitive, sub-Sudanic tribes. Limiting the slave trade was, in fact, a conscious policy pursued by monarchs who were unwilling to see their realms disrupted and depopulated. And until the sixteenth century -- when Moroccan invaders, equipped with firearms, destroyed Songhai and plunged the Sudan into a time of troubles from which it never fully recovered -- these kings successfully denied slave traders from the Moslem North

the free hand they enjoyed in East Africa.¹³⁹

The medieval Sudanic kingdoms were impressive creations by any standards. Ghana established the pattern, the key to which was control of the gold-bearing valleys of the Niger and Senegal, winning for itself the title "land of gold" -- a designation applied by Arab geographers to the whole of the Sudan from 800 on.¹⁴⁰

Songhai carried the system to completion, ruling an empire which stretched 1500 miles from east to west and 1000 miles from north to south.¹⁴¹

More impressive than either, however, was Mali, the middle kingdom. Mansa Musa, its most illustrious monarch, staged a magnificent state pilgrimage to Mecca via Cairo which dispensed so much largesse en route that the value of gold in fourteenth century Egypt was debased.¹⁴² Its mariners ventured out into the Atlantic, reaching the Azores and -- if the medieval Arab geographers are to be believed -- western lands located far beyond as well.¹⁴³ And its political system received a remarkable tribute from Ibn Battuta, a Moslem traveler who logged more miles and visited more lands than Marco Polo, which he could hardly have bestowed on Feudal Europe's warring principalities:

The negroes possess some admirable qualities. They are seldom unjust, and have a greater abhorrence of injustice than any other people. Their sultan shows no mercy to anyone who is guilty of the least act of it. There is complete security in their country. Neither traveller nor inhabitant in it has anything to fear from robbers or men of violence.¹⁴⁴

Ironically, the impression of felicity born of great wealth that the Medieval Sudan produced on the outside world proved its undoing. For not only did its riches, real and fabled, attract the North

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African armies which disrupted the Sudanic state system. They also inflamed the imaginations of the Portuguese Atlantic adventurers who destroyed the Sudanic kingdoms' monopolistic hold on the gold and slave trades by outflanking them and establishing direct commercial contacts with the West African Coast.

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The Jewish mapmakers of Majorca, who acquired their information from their coreligionists among the merchants and goldsmiths of North Africa, were instrumental in creating the considerable reputation that the Negro Sudan enjoyed in Medieval Europe. In 1375 the Catalon Atlas of Abraham Cresques quite literally put Mansa Musa of Mali on the European map, identifying him as "Lord of the Negroes" and "King of the Gold Mines." Forty years later, in the wake of the Portuguese conquest of the North African port of Ceuta, their young Prince Henry was profoundly affected by the tales that the Jewish as well as Moorish prisoners told of sub-Saharan "rivers of gold." He eventually acquired the services of Abraham Cresques' son Jehuda, who had fled to Barcelona under the name of Jaime Ribes after his forcible conversion to Christianity, appointing him head of the Academy of Sagres, which made major contributions to the art of shipbuilding, the science of navigation, and the Portuguese campaign of exploration.

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The career of "Master Jaime," however, only began a long association between Jewish cartographers and cosmographers and the expansion-minded rulers of the Iberian monarchies. Joseph Vecinho -- royal physician, pupil of the famous Spanish-Jewish astronomer Abraham Zacuto, and head of John II's "nautical junta" -- was blamed by

Columbus for Portugal's rejection of his proposed western
expedition.¹⁵¹ But "the Jew Joseph" withheld his assent, not because
of obscurantism, but only because he believed that continued
concentration on the exploration of the West African Coast -- in which
he himself participated -- would be more conducive to Portuguese
interests. Subsequently, the Italian adventurer received crucial
support from New Christians of dubious orthodoxy highly placed in the
Spanish court.¹⁵²

Thus the services rendered by Jews during the fourteenth and
fifteenth centuries as conduits of information between Africa and
Europe helped shape the age of discovery that the Renaissance
inaugurated. European expansion, on the other hand, had a profound
impact on Jewish history by drawing whole sectors of world Jewry out
of the orbit of the Moslem East and into that of the Christian
Occident. These same patterns of expansion, of course, also thrust
not only Christians and Jews but Black Africans as well into the New
World. And this is the manifold reason why a more detailed considera-
tion is warranted of the bearing on Negro-Jewish relations of the
medieval European centuries that were the incubator of "the Faustian
West."

4. The Jews, the Christian West, and the Dark Continent

Before the rise of Islam and the isolation and decline of African
Christianity, neither the need nor the opportunity existed for Jews to
play the vital role of intermediaries between continents and religions
they later inherited. For North Africa, Egypt and Nubia formed

integral parts of the Christian world during the late classical period, contributing to it such Church Fathers as Origen, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Arnobious -- to say nothing of Augustine. This is the record which caused Mommsen to declare: "It was through Africa that Christianity became the religion of the world."¹⁵³

Axum, which was one of the first important targets of Christian proselytizing zeal, produced no pillars of the early Church. Its royal house, however, converted to Christianity as early as the fourth century, winning the praises of Byzantine travelers and even emperors.¹⁵⁴ The high regard that the Church Fathers harbored for this Semitic conquest state may, in fact, form part of the explanation of why unflattering talmudic speculations about Cush-Ethiops failed to find their way into the patristic writings. For in the early Christian corpus, Axum and its Semitic core population are not distinguished from the ancient Cushite kingdom and its native East African subjects: both are included under the general rubric of dark-skinned Ethiopians.

Echoing the Hellenistic-Jewish confusion of the Queen of Sheba with the Ethiopian "Queen of the South," the New Testament reiterates hopes for the conversion of "her" people that had not been expressed with any conviction in the Jewish sources since prophetic times:

The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.¹⁵⁵

Origen built on the same fertile confusion. Linking this Sheban-Ethiopian Queen not only with Moses "Cushite wife" but also with the

"black but comely" Shepherdess in the Song of Songs, he pioneered a popular allegorical interpretation which established an identity between all three of these dark-complexioned personages and "the Church gathered from among the Gentiles" that "[shall be] healed while Israel is still sick."¹⁵⁶

But this is not to say that the patristic tradition knows nothing of color prejudice. Origen usually sets up an opposition between "blackness of skin" and "blackness of soul," attributing the former to natural causes and only the latter to divine displeasure.¹⁵⁷

Sometimes, however, he lapses into a different scheme of things which identifies ebony hue with the "lowly origin" of "a black and ignoble race." By bracketing "the Ethiopian" with "pure evil [which] has no participation in light," Philo had already shown that the kind of mystical-symbolic interpretation of scripture favored by the Church Fathers could have explosive implications when used to elucidate the hidden meaning of color difference.¹⁵⁸ Philo's writings, which had no influence to speak of on rabbinic Judaism, occupy an important niche in the Christian tradition. And his style of thought, though not his anti-Negro prejudices, shaped the interpretation of the Ham myth offered by Church Fathers from Irenaeus to Augustine -- an interpretation that later, Negrophobic Christian exegetes used to magnify the theological significance of "the curse of blackness."¹⁵⁹

The interpretation of Noah's Curse pioneered by Irenaeus and subsequently perfected by Augustine identifies Ham -- Noah's "middle son," according to the Vulgate -- with "the tribe of heretics" who recognize the truth of neither the Old Law (Shem) nor the New

Dispensation (Japheth). In The City of God and Against Julian, it is not only elaborated upon but endowed with a dogmatic authority. For only "the most open enemy of the divine word," Augustine avers, would challenge the justice of the father's iniquity being visited upon the son -- the principle seeming exemplified in Canaan's punishment for Ham's sin.¹⁶⁰

Thus the biblical antipathy to Ham's progeny -- which the rabbis had rationalized by weaving myths that implicate Canaan in his sire's guilt -- won the great Christian theologian's acceptance as an unquestionable datum of faith. By the sixteenth century, when his successors began applying a similar mystifying logic to Cush's color as well as Canaan's conduct, the great age of African Christianity, which may earlier have discouraged such speculation, had receded far into the past. During the middle ages, it survived only in the fantastic hopes for an alliance with the fabulous kingdom of Prester John that an embattled European Christendom entertained.¹⁶¹ And even these vestigial pro-Ethiopian hopes dissipated under the powerful, new motive for anti-Negro prejudice which the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century origins of modern racial slavery created. The mythical void was soon filled, however. For the Renaissance and Reformation discovered that for the Church Fathers' flattery of Ethiopia, they could substitute the talmudic and cabalistic lore's demeaning of Cush.¹⁶²

Christian theologians and philosophers made up for their millenia-long delay in exploiting such Jewish lore by putting it to new, explosive uses never dreamt of by its rabbinic originators.

The theologians transformed the curse of blackness from a biblically-rooted punishment for moral transgression into a species of metaphysical guilt, prior to history and beyond the bounds of rational understanding, the justice of which had to be accepted as a matter of faith and a providence of God.

Ironically, the Protestant Reformation, which was the seedbed of the evangelical antislavery impulse, also nurtured the fundamentalist frame of mind that was most congenial to such theological rationales for color prejudice -- rationales which still hold sway in the Calvinist backwaters of the American South and the Dutch Reformed bastions of South Africa. But though certain varieties of Protestants came to show a special affinity for arguments predestining Blacks to hell, the Catholic planters of the Brazilian backlands were almost equally attracted by them.

The mainstreams of both major branches of Christianity eventually recoiled against such extreme statements as Negrophobic belief -- especially when they saw eighteenth-century free thinkers forge them into an anti-religious ideology that openly challenged the biblical account of the unitary creation of mankind in the name of a diversitarian theory of racial origins.¹⁶³ The pre-Enlightenment originators of the so-called "polygenic hypothesis," however, did not recognize the distinction between religious myth and scientific truth so sharply drawn, for example, by Voltaire.¹⁶⁴¹⁶⁵

Indeed, classical accounts of monstrous African races, the product of "spontaneous generation" or man-beast couplings, and contemporary descriptions of teeming New World populations, whose

existence was difficult to reconcile with Genesis, were not the only sources that these sixteenth-century philosophers drew upon in support of polygenesis.¹⁶⁶ The Jewish mystical tradition, which blossomed between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries in the works of the medieval cabalists, was a third source of their ideas. For while the traditionalist core of classical Judaism would have been at least as horrified as were the Christian orthodox by the conclusions about Negro origins reached by the Renaissance "anthropologists," the Jewish mystics had propounded notions pointing in the direction of their ideas.¹⁶⁷

In the Cabala, the Cursing of Canaan is exalted both as part of a sex mystery and as a key to the understanding of the nature of Sheol or Hell.¹⁶⁸ The Zohar, the tradition's masterpiece, likens Ham to "the refuse and dross of gold" and "the unclean spirit of the ancient serpent"; it calls Canaan "the notorious world-darkener" and hints that in the world to come he alone will be consigned to "the deep below the deep"; and it echoes the ancient anti-Negro beliefs that sin leaves a visible mark in the form of a dark, spreading stain and also that "crisp and frizzy hair" reflects the "choleric temper" and "tortuous heart" of the person who should be shunned.¹⁶⁹

Other Cabalists integrated these assertions into a complex system of panpsychic and anthropomorphic belief, the doctrinal cornerstone of which contended that only the observant among the seed of Shem were created in God's image while the rest of mankind possesses the nature of beasts in proportion to its ignorance of the

Law. There were theologians on the peripheries of both Christianity and Islam who also claimed a monopoly on the divine mold for the members of their respective faiths. ¹⁷¹ Jewish mysticism, however, seems to have been the primary medium through which such doctrines exercised their impact on the thought of Paracelsus and Bruno, the occult philosophers of the Renaissance who originated the polygenic hypothesis, and indirectly through them on that of Lucilio Vanani and Isaac de La Peyrere, the seventeenth-century thinkers who completed the pre-Enlightenment's transmutation of religious anthropomorphism into racist anthropology by arguing that Blacks were a separately created species -- descended, not from Adam, but from ¹⁷² the apes.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed the first major exploitation of the Negrophobic content of Jewish lore by the philosophers and theologians of Christian Europe. Their culture's propensity to think in terms of race, however, had roots stretching back at least to the First Crusade -- and perhaps even further back to the Christianization of Northern Europe and the Teutonization of Christianity which occurred during the Dark Ages. Indeed, the four centuries of isolation from the races and cultures of Afro-Asia that the rise of Islam forced upon European Christendom very probably formed the crucial incubation period for both the hyper-intense color consciousness and dynamic anti-Semitism characteristic of what Spengler called "the Faustian West." ¹⁷³

The Crusades constituted an appropriately bloody "dress rehearsal" for the modern European onslaught on all five of the other inhabited

continents. Just because "the land of the Franks" was so long cut off from direct contacts with the exotic lands and peoples beyond the Mediterranean, it reacted with convulsive violence to the renewed encounter that the eleventh century initiated. The medieval Christians could not match the sophisticated and intricate Negrophobic traditions possessed by both Jews and Moslems. Yet, perhaps for this very reason, there is nothing in either tradition to equal the intensity of the horror with which the heroes of The Song of Roland react when confronted by "the loathesome race" -- "inky black, big-nosed, wide-eared" -- of "angry demons" from "Afric and the accursed lands beyond" whom they meet on the legendary battlefields of Moorish Spain.¹⁷⁴ By the same token, the adventure narratives written by Jewish and Moslem travelers -- despite the contempt they heap upon primitive black tribes -- fall far short of the violence of the medieval Christian recoil from the mere fact of color difference that is reflected in Marco Polo's description of the "horrible to look at" Zanzibar Negroes "[whom] anyone who saw them in another country would say ...they were devils."¹⁷⁵

Thanks to such vivid descriptions of "the marvels of the East," the devil, the Negro, and also the ape became bound up in a popular Romanesque and Gothic artistic motif -- that of a simian demon obsessing a black heathen -- long before they were linked in the speculations of early modern thinkers.¹⁷⁶ In fact, even these speculations were not entirely without medieval precedent. For during the Twelfth Century Renaissance and in its immediate aftermath, William of Conches had hinted at the compatibility of the divine

nature with mankind's having more than one pair of parents, while Albertus Magnus had politely but firmly rejected Augustine's inclusion¹⁷⁷ of the African pygmies within the bounds of the human race.

Jews as well as African ethnic types were more numerous in Iberia than anywhere else in Medieval Europe. The inexorable progress of the Reconquista slowly shifted the center of gravity of the Jewish world by drawing the Sephardim into the orbit of medieval Christian civilization. This meant that the same process of mutual influence which had earlier been at work in the Moslem East now began to cause the racial attitudes of Europe's Jews and Christians to gradually converge. The late-medieval and early-modern borrowings by non-Jewish thinkers from Jewish lore formed only one side of this process. Its other side was the profound impact that prolonged residence among the medieval Christians had on European Jewry's stance toward the¹⁷⁸ Dark Continent.

The Talmudic Sages' low regard for Black Africans had not implied an identification with Nietzsche's "blond beasts." Rabbi Ishmael, for example, had evinced great pride because "the Children of Israel ...are¹⁷⁹ like boxwood, neither black nor white, but of an intermediate shade." His preference was for the olive complexion and dark features typical of the peoples who inhabited the Near East and the Mediterranean basin. Such views were commonplace among the Arabs as well as the Near Eastern Jews; the Greeks and the Romans had generally shared them; and so, too, had the ancient Egyptians -- except when¹⁸⁰ they were being ruled by Ethiopians. For obvious reasons, the Northern Europeans came to hold different opinions: opinions that,

however, were given a special cutting edge by the struggle against "the tawny Moor" -- during which colorphobia even invaded the pages of hagiographies written in "the land of the Franks," compelling one monkish biographer to apologize at length for the black hair and eyes of his saintly subject.¹⁸¹

What is more surprising is that the feudal classes of Mediterranean Christian lands began to cultivate a rather artificial preference for the same blond-haired and blue- (or emerald-) eyed ideal that won the spontaneous plaudits of the Northerners. As early as the third century, Tertullian complained because Tacitus' glorification of the Teuton was invading the world of Mediterranean fashion, forcing Roman women who wanted to be adjudged beautiful to bleach their hair "the color of saffron."¹⁸² This change of aesthetic values, which was mightily abetted by the Germanic invasions, derived a final and decisive impetus from the subsequent entry into the feudal societies of Italy as well as Iberia of a leaven of Normans, Burgundians, and Flemings -- who spearheaded the First Crusade, inspired the Reconquista, and founded the Portuguese monarchy.¹⁸³

One result was the emergence of the ideal of "the blue-blooded aristocrat": quite literally, one with skin white enough for the veins to show through. This was the invention of the medieval Spanish nobility, most of whom were afflicted with olive tinctures that hardly qualified.¹⁸⁴ A similar perverse logic dictated their largely fanciful claim to "Gothic" descent -- a claim which certainly was not rooted in admiration for the barbarous manners or heretical Arian leanings of "the golden-haired Goths."¹⁸⁵

Whatever the virtues of Gilberto Freyre's thesis about the extraordinary "miscibility" of the Portuguese character and the related idealization of "the Moorish enchantress," it certainly has little applicability to Castille -- where, for a variety of reasons, the struggle against the Moor produced aesthetic preferences that were quite "Teutonic."¹⁸⁶ And though in Renaissance Italy sultry Latin and even tawny North African beauties may have been prized very highly in the flesh, they were not admired greatly in the abstract. For there the Venetian masters and Florentine aestheticians were engaged in a joint enterprise that involved elevating the blonde into the painterly ideal while demeaning her less radiant sister in the name of Neoplatonic theories which linked darkness of hue with evil, imperfection, and distance from God -- the source of beauty, goodness, and light.¹⁸⁷

These same trends in European attitudes toward color and race manifested themselves among the Jews. The Ashkenazim of Central and Eastern Europe sloughed off their ancestors' "Mediterranean" preferences by slow and imperceptible stages without even fully realizing that they were doing so. The Sephardim, on the other hand, developed a self-conscious pride in purity of blood and nobility of lineage rivalling that of the Castillian aristocrats.¹⁸⁸

Not even the Great Expulsion of 1492 was enough to destroy their self-esteem. Surviving the transplantation to new climes, it inspired their haughty bearing toward the specimens on non-Hispano-Jewish humanity -- including the German Jews -- whom they encountered in exile.¹⁸⁹ Indeed, Isaac Abravanel, one of the most gifted and

colorful figures the Sephardim produced, responded to their tragedy -- which was doubly crushing for him, since his own personal tragedy involved a forced flight from the Portuguese court as well as subsequent expulsion from Spain -- by exalting the Jews even higher through a revival of Halevi's doctrine of Israel as the spiritual and biological "pick" of mankind.¹⁹⁰

Yet Abravanel, despite his unshakeable faith in Jewish superiority, could not help but voice his admiration for "the sons of Japheth":

How beautiful are all their deeds, their conduct, their politics, the manner of their rule and their prowess; all of them are beautiful in form and appearance.¹⁹¹

The Greeks and the Romans were, of course, "the sons of Japheth" for whom the praise was meant; for this statement is primarily a declaration of high regard for classical culture. When viewed in light of the Renaissance's idealized conception of "the Golden Greeks," however, its last line hints at the emergence among the European Jews of a frame of "racial" reference quite different than Rabbi Ishmael's.

This impression is confirmed by the extremely revealing emendations made by late-medieval European editors to one particular rabbinic legend describing the diverse endowments of Noah's three sons. The Pirke De Rabbi Eliezer is a pseudo-epigraphic work, probably composed in ninth-century Italy but based on second- and third-century materials. The oldest edition relates that Noah "especially blessed" Shem by making him "dark but comely," that he "blessed" Ham by making him "dark like the raven," and that he "blessed" Japheth by making him "entirely white."¹⁹² Shunning both

the raven-hued Ham's "excess" of pigment and the albino-like Japheth's "lack" of it, the compiler had honored the aesthetic presuppositions of his talmudic sources. By the sixteenth century, however, subsequent editors had so thoroughly "Teutonized" this passage's hierarchy of color preferences that Rabbi Ishmael, had he known, might have been chagrined enough to seek out the nearest boxwood tree, there to hang his head in shame.

One emendation lightened Shem up several shades by replacing "dark but comely" with "white and comely." A second further defamed Ham by substituting for "dark like the raven" an epithet even more transparent in its negativity: "dark and uncomely." And a third, to remove any imputation of unnaturalness from Japheth's coloration, attached and "beautiful" to "entirely white." That black is not beautiful the Jews had long assumed. But that white possesses all the virtues that black lacks is a lesson which they learned only after living for centuries in the midst of the European Christians. ¹⁹³

Medieval Europe, however, did not allow its Jews to enjoy their new-found "pure white" identification. It refused to give the secularizing logic of race and color prejudice free reign and instead subordinated it to religious distinctions. The opposed meanings that the very idea of a White Jew developed on the two sides of the Atlantic reflect the differing priorities that Old World and New came to place on racial vs. religious prejudice. In European folklore the phrase originated as an epithet used to damn an unsavory Christian for possessing "typically Jewish traits"; whereas on the American frontier

it became a compliment bestowed upon a popular Jew with a reputation
as an exemplar of "Christian virtues."¹⁹⁴ Both usages are, of course,
anti-Semitic; but only in America did the favorable associations
attached to being "white" override the unfavorable ones attached to
being a "Jew."

Moreover, the linkage between Jewishness and blackness -- which
even the American usage preserves in a vestigial form by implying
that the average Jew possessed a "black" character -- was taken much
more seriously in Europe: where the dearth of Negroes insured that
Jews would always be the chief targets of stereotypy in terms of
color, blood, and sex. The foul, lecherous, and diseased Jew, whose
swarthy complexion mirrors his unsociable and unwholesome "melancholic"
disposition, never has enjoyed much of a following in the United
States -- not even among anti-Semites.¹⁹⁵ He so haunted the medieval
Christian mind, however, that in Gothic art the figure of "the
prurient ape" became a symbol, not only of African depravity, but
also of the Synagogue's opposition to the Church.¹⁹⁶

The propensity of one medieval Christian land after another to
act out these fantasies and obsessions by "wretching up" its Jewish
population eventually propelled some of those expelled into the role
which Jews played in the formative era of both American colonization
and the Atlantic slave trade. The Jewish exodus from the Iberian
countries reached its zenith during the same decade that witnessed
the voyage of discovery which opened up possibilities for Jewish
settlement undreamed of by the medieval rabbis who had given to the
British Isles a Hebrew name meaning "the end of the earth."¹⁹⁷

New Christians who were Jews in all but name, in fact, accompanied Columbus. Among them was the interpreter Luis de Torres, later to become the first "Jewish" landowner (as well as slaveholder) in the New World, who converted to "the true faith" scarcely forty-eight hours before the sailing time so that the Indies would not be polluted with Jews. But the lands discovered by the Admiral were not the first refuge resorted to by Jews forced to flee Spain and Portugal. The other three points of the compass had provided them with havens long before they began crossing the Western Sea in significant numbers. Some of the earliest and not the least important of these lay south across the Mediterranean in Africa.¹⁹⁸

Following the riots which swept Castille, Catalonia, and Aragon in 1391, North Africa's indigenous Jewish communities were swamped by a deluge of Spanish newcomers who compelled their hosts to abandon age-old religious usages in favor of the Sephardic ritual.¹⁹⁹ Of even greater significance, however, was the further influx triggered by the tragic events of 1492. For the Great Expulsion not only cemented Sephardic predominance in North Africa; it also set in motion the process that implanted Jewish settlers on the islands of the West African Coast that became a halfway house between Europe, Africa,²⁰⁰ and America.

Before 1504, when the Spanish Crown introduced the Inquisition into the archipelago, a smattering of Jews and Marranos or crypto-Jews settled in the Canaries -- the white European population of which displayed an aptitude for little else than staging slaving expeditions to the nearby Barbary Coast.²⁰¹ But Jewish immigration

to Medeira and São Thomé, the Portuguese possessions located to the north and south, was more important. In 1420, twenty years after their mariners had reached Medeira, the Portuguese transplanted sugar cane to it from Sicily -- not the only Mediterranean island to cultivate the crop during the middle ages with black as well as white slaves.²⁰² A century later, this process of transplantation was carried a giant step further by the predominately New Christian plantation masters and technicians from this Atlantic island who established the first engenhos in Portuguese Brazil.²⁰³

By the early 1500's, however, Medeira's reputation -- both as a sugar manufactory and as a haven for Judaizing New Christians -- was fast being overshadowed by that of São Thomé, a forbidding island located in the Gulf of Guinea 150 miles off the West African Coast.²⁰⁴ This island became eventually not only a microcosm of the New World sugar economies but also a leading entrepot supplying them with slaves. Yet the Europeans who pioneered in colonizing São Thomé following its discovery in 1470 arrived long before it realized its reputation for riches. For it was chiefly populated during this early phase by felons banished for their crimes and Jews deported for their religion.²⁰⁵

The Shepherd Ycabo (Jacob) in Samuel Usque's Consolidation for the Tribulations of Israel, a moving, sixteenth-century Portuguese-Jewish apologia, calls 1493 "when my children were sent to the lizards" because in that year King John II of Portugal issued an order designed to terrorize his Jewish subjects by recruiting from among those unwilling to accept conversion the guinea pigs whose fate

would determine whether or not the West African Coast was really "the
White Man's grave."²⁰⁶ He decreed that the children of the stiff-
necked Spanish-Jewish refugees who had entered his kingdom in excess
of "stipulated numbers" were to be taken away from their parents,
transported to São Thomé, and there brought up as Christians. The
human costs of this cruel order were, indeed, great -- though not
lizards, but neglect and the island's insalubrious climate took the
heaviest toll.²⁰⁷

Some of these involuntary immigrants survived, however, to enjoy
the golden age which São Thomé experienced during the second third
of the sixteenth century -- when, for the course of a generation, it
became Europe's chief source of sugar and Brazil's chief supplier of
slaves.²⁰⁸ Their numbers supplemented by Marranos who preferred
the hazards of West Africa to the hell the Inquisition created for
Portuguese New Christians, the Jewish survivors planted cane, built
sugar mills, and employed a labor force of 3,000 enslaved Blacks
whose arrival was no more willing and subsequent lot a great deal
worse than that of their owners.²⁰⁹ They and their descendants also
specialized in the Atlantic slave traffic, for which purpose wide-
ranging trading contacts were established -- first with the New
Christian merchants of Lisbon who largely controlled exports to
sixteenth-century Brazil, and then with the Jewish merchants of
Amsterdam who came into their own as a consequence of the rise of the
seventeenth-century Dutch maritime empire.²¹⁰

Of course, the Jewish identification of these Africanized
Europeans is problematical, both because of their nominal Christian

upbringings and because of the paganizing effect of prolonged residence along the slave coast on Europeans of all religious persuasions.²¹¹ Nevertheless, what evidence there is indicates that, to the extent they maintained any religious identification at all, it was, in fact, Jewish. On any other hypothesis, it is impossible to explain the alacrity and fervor with which New Christians living in Portuguese possessions on both sides of the Atlantic openly reverted to Judaism after the Dutch occupations of Northeastern Brazil (1630) and São Thomé (1641) made it possible for them to do so.²¹² Indeed, Arnold Wiznitzer relates an intriguing episode which suggests that the Bible-spouting, Christian sea captains who occasionally appear in the narratives of the Atlantic slave trade had a counterpart of sorts in the person of at least one Jew. For in 1611 the Spanish Inquisition accused Diogo Dias Querido of Amsterdam not only of maintaining a fleet of "ten large ships as well as many smaller ships and boats... [engaged in large-scale operations on the west coast of Africa]," but also of "instruct[ing] in the Mosaic Law and convert[ing] to Judaism" the black interpreters who helped him obtain his cargoes of gold, ivory, and slaves.²¹³

During the seventeenth century, Amsterdam earned the title of "the New Jerusalem" because of the succor it extended to the continuing stream of refugees from the Iberian Peninsula as well as to the unprecedented flight of Ashkenazic Jews from the havoc wrought in Central and Eastern Europe by the Thirty Years War and the Polish time of troubles that followed in its wake.²¹⁴ Although for very different reasons, both anti-Semites and Jews intent on self-glorification have

grotesquely exaggerated the economic significance of these shifts in Jewish population, which reintroduced significant numbers of Jews into Western European countries that had expelled their ancestors centuries before.²¹⁵ Sombart, for example, who blamed the rise of capitalism on the Jews in his radical youth while attributing the origins of socialism to them in his reactionary old age, reduced the complex of causes accounting for the seventeenth-century decline of Spanish and effulgence of Dutch power to the workings of a single lurid mechanism: "Israel passes over Europe like the sun: at its coming new life bursts forth; at its going all falls into decay."²¹⁶ The truth, however, is that the prosperous Jews of Amsterdam owed far more to the "Dutch Jerusalem" than it owed to them.²¹⁷

The golden age of the Dutch-Jewish financiers did not really begin until Holland's golden century was drawing to a close.²¹⁸ For though Jewish investors by the 1650's had begun to acquire a substantial interest in the two Dutch India Companies, they played virtually no role in the formation of either.²¹⁹ But this is not to say that Sombart's thesis does not contain a grain of truth. For the knowledge of trade routes and willingness to act as spearheads of Dutch colonial enterprise which Jewish exiles contributed to the Netherlands during the first 100 years of its independence were of considerably greater importance than the modest capital resources they brought with them.²²⁰

Spanish and Portuguese fears that "the sons and grandsons of the burned" would gain vengeance by conspiring with the Protestant powers were, in fact, well borne out.²²¹ Between the 1580's and the 1620's

seafaring Portuguese Marranos helped the still-novice Dutch to
engross the bulk of the trade to both Indies.²²² In 1624 and again in
1630, their Brazilian counterparts acted as a fifth column aiding
the expeditions mounted by the West India Company against Bahia and
Pernambuco, the success of which allowed them to discard the Christian
mask.²²³ And then, during the 1630's and 1640's, Ashkenazic as well as
Sephardic immigrants from Europe so swelled the ranks of these
colonial-born "New Jews" that together they came to constitute nearly
half (the only loyal half) of Dutch Brazil's white civilian
population.²²⁴

For every Jew in Dutch Brazil, however, there were two black
slaves. What this rightly suggests is that the Negro-Jewish encounter
in New York had a prelude in the New World as well as Old -- a prelude
which took place within the crucible of the sugar-and-slave societies
that emerged in South America and the Caribbean.²²⁵

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1

For a compassionate treatment of the dilemma of South African Jewry, see André Ungar, "The Jew and the Negro," Conservative Judaism, XIII (Fall, 1958), 1-34

2

See, for example, U. Katzenelenbogen's intriguing reminiscence, "I See a Colored Man for the First Time," Opportunity, VI (September, 1928), 261-262.

3

Gustav Saron and Louis Hotz, (eds.), The Jew in South Africa: A History (Capetown: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1955), p. xv.

4

Robert G. Weisbord, African Zion: The Attempt to Establish a Jewish Colony in the East African Protectorate, 1903-1905 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), passim.

5

Portuguese Angola, the Belgian Congo, and French North Africa were also considered (though not seriously considered) as possible sites for a Jewish colony; see ibid., pp. 64, 248, et passim. For Herzl considered that his project, whether realized in the Near East or in Africa, would "form a portion of the rampart of Europe...., an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism"; see his The Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution to the Jewish Question, trans. Sylvie D'Avigdor (London: The Central Office of the Zionist Organization, 1934), p. 30. And though he once declared that "only a Jew" could understand "the African problem" in its "profundity," his proposed solution to it was a microcosm of that implemented by white Christian imperialists; the quote is from Albert Memmi, Dominated Man: Notes Toward a Portrait (New York: Orion Press, 1968), frontispiece.

6

One deranged Russian Zionist was so outraged that he attempted to assassinate Max Nordau, Herzl's chief lieutenant, shouting as he did so: "Death to Nordau, the East African." See: Weisbord, op. cit., pp. 143-44; and The Complete Diaries of Theodore Herzl, trans. Harry Zohn under the editorship of Raphael Patai (New York: Herzl Press 1960), IV, 1551-552.

7

As much as possible, I have avoided descending into the thicket of controversies surrounding Old Testament geography. On such important issues as the location of Cush (whether in Africa, Arabia,

both, or neither), I have followed the lead of J. Simon's The Geographical and Topographical Texts of the Old Testament (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1959).

8

Despite its racist presuppositions, C.G. Seligman's The Races of Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1957 [1938]) was long the standard work in the field. Its core thesis with regard to East Africa -- that "better armed as well as quicker witted" Caucasoid pastoralists conquered and partly displaced a substrate population of "dark agricultural Negroes" (p. 141) -- is no longer accepted. A new school has arisen, however, which salvages the essence of the "white dominance" hypothesis by turning it on its head, arguing that "the Whites...have been solidly entrenched in East Africa since the latter Pleistocene," while the Negroes did not put in a significant appearance on the scene until the opening centuries of the Christian era -- when the great migrations of Bantu-speaking tribes began; see William Howells' Mankind Evolving (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1959), p. 311. But this claim is unequivocally rejected by the most judicious treatment of the subject, Sonia Cole's The Prehistory of East Africa (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 337. According to Joseph Greenberg, the very idea of a Caucasoid sub-race of dark-skinned "Hamitic" pastoralists, which is a cornerstone of the still-regnant system of racial-linguistic classification, is to blame for the confusion because of its overly facile equation of racial and cultural differences; see his scathing critique, The Languages of Africa ("Publications of the Indiana University Research Center in Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics," No. 25; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963), pp. 49-51.

9

Od. i.22-28, in Homer, trans. A.T. Murray ("Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann, 1969 [1919]). I, 5; The Iliad of Homer i.423-24, trans. Richard Lattimore (Chicago: Phoenix Books, the University of Chicago Press, 1964 [1951]), p. 70; W.E.B. DuBois, The World and Africa (New York: The Viking Press, 1947), pp. 120-21; Frank M. Snowden, Jr., "The Negro in Ancient Greece," American Anthropologist, L (January-March, 1950), 31-37.

10

Cole, loc. cit., Edward Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible. ("The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy," 1967; London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 4.

11

Gen. 10:7; Ullendorff, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

12

I Kings 9:26-28, 10:22; II Chron. 9:21; P.L. Shinnie, Meroe: A Civilization of the Sudan ("Ancient Peoples and Places"; New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), p. 35; William Tarn, Hellenistic Civilization (3d ed. rev.; London: Edward Arnold and C.H. Oldfather, II ("Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann, 1935), pp. 227-33.

13

Gen. 10:6; Simons, op. cit., pp. 19, 75.

14

James Henry Breasted, A History of Egypt: From Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest (2d ed. rev.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), pp. 94-95, 134, 136-37.

15

Ibid., pp. 330-31, 424-29; Norman K. Gottwald. All the Kingdoms of the Earth: Israelite Prophecy and International Relations in the Ancient Near East (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 15.

16

Breasted, op. cit., p. 449.

17

Ex. 12:38; Numb. 12:5-7; Salo Wittmayer Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews (2d ed. rev.; New York: Columbia University Press, 1952-67), I, 38; Jacob Bernard Agus, The Meaning of Jewish History (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1963), I, 40.

18

Michael Grant, The Ancient Historians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), passim; A.N. Sherwin-White, Racist Prejudice in Imperial Rome (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 97-99. Impressed by the tales which he heard in Egypt of Ethiopia's "ideal theocracy" and also of its successful repulsion only a few generations before of an invading Persian army, Herodotus lauded it as an ancient and mighty civilization. See: The History of Herodotus ii.104, iii.17-25, trans. George Rawlinson, II (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1859), pp. 146-48, 344-51; and Wilhelm Spiegelberg, The Credibility of Herodotus' Account of Egypt, trans. Aylward M. Blackman (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1927), p. 17 et passim. Eventually, however, a counter-tradition heaping scorn upon the Ethiopians developed among the classical historians. In Diodorus these two contrary traditions -- one stressing ancient lineage and freedom from foreign rule, the other emphasizing isolation and primitiveness -- lead an uneasy coexistence reflecting the ambivalence and transitional nature of the Hellenistic outlook on Ethiopia; see Diodorus of Sicily iii.2-3, 7-8, loc. cit., pp. 89-95, 103-07. Perhaps as a consequence of the invasion of Ethiopia launched late in Augustus'

reign and the heightened influx of dark-skinned slaves that followed in its wake, the negative tradition among the Roman historians largely won out; and it is in this denigrating context that Tacitus speculated upon the Jews being "the progeny of the Ethiopians." See: Strabo's Geography xvii.1.54, trans. Horace Leonard Jones ("Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann, 1917-32), VIII, pp. 140-41; The Natural History of Pliny vi.35, trans. John Bostock and H.T. Riley (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1855), I, 97-105; and Hist. v.2, in The Works of Tacitus, Oxford Translation Revised, II (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1865), p. 265. Medieval as well as modern anti-Semites attempted to tar the Jews with the same brush by attributing to them a dusky or African origin. One monkish translator of an Arabic medical treatise added a gloss explaining that they suffered from a swarthy complexion mirroring their unwholesome, "melancholic" nature; whereas eight centuries later a follower of Voltaire declared that they were "hordes of Africans" and demanded their expulsion from the Alsatian district he represented in the French National Assembly. See: Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art (London: Thomas Y. Nelson and Sons, 1964), pp. 131-32; Arthur Hertzberg, The French Enlightenment and the Jews (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 356; and also notes 75 and 165 infra.

19

The assertion made by black nationalists of a wide variety of ideological hues that the Jews are a Negro offshoot obviously continues, though in a radically new form, the identification with the suffering but ultimately triumphant Hebrews which American Negroes have maintained since slavery times. For an orthodox affirmation of this identification without any racial overtones, see R.A. Morrissey's Bible History of the Negro (Nashville: National Baptist Publishing Company, 1915) -- a popular work that went through numerous editions. For works reading a color content into it, see Fleming Aytes, The Teaching Black Jew (New York: [By the author?], 1927) -- a pioneering, but barely literate manifesto in favor of religious separatism; Albert Bo Cleage, The Black Messiah (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968) -- a sophisticated and politically topical elaboration of the same theme; and two works by J.A. Rogers that completely secularize as well as racialize the identification: Sex and Race (New York: By the author, 1944), III, 317 et passim; and 100 Amazing Facts About the Negro Complete with Proof (23d ed. rev.; New York: By the author, 1957), pp. 118, 143.

20

Gen. 9:20-27.

21

Simons, loc. cit.; Gerhard von Rad, Genesis: A Commentary,

trans. John H. Marks (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), pp. 32, 38.

22

Agus, loc. cit., pp. 48, 93; Baron, loc. cit., pp. 147, 163.

23

Ps. 105:23, 106:22; Robert Graves and Raphael Patai, Hebrew Myths: The Book of Genesis (London: Cassell, 1961), p. 21; J.A. Wilson, "The Kingdom of the Two Lands," in At the Dawn of Civilization: A Background of Biblical History ("The World History of the Jewish People, First Series: Ancient Times," Vol. I; n.p.: Rutgers University Press, 1964), p. 268; S. Augustus Mitchell, Ancient Geography (Philadelphia: E.H. Butler, 1873), p. 127.

24

S.O.S. 1:5-6; Morris Jastrow, The Song of Songs: A New Translation (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1921), p. 162; Leroy Waterman (trans.), The Song of Songs (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1948), p. 69.

25

Jer. 13:23; A.A. Roback, A Dictionary of International Slurs... (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Sci-Art Publishers, 1944), p. 283, cited in Thomas F. Gossett, Race: The History of an Idea in America (Dallas: Southern Methodist Press, 1963), pp. 5, 461.

26

Jer. 46:9; Isa. 18:1-2. The translation of Isaiah is from Smith and Goodspeed, The Complete Bible (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), cited in DuBois, op. cit., p. 132. A more literal rendering of the Hebrew phrase translated as "tall and sleek" would be "tall and of glossy skin" -- or, even more literally -- "tall and drawn out and polished"; see. I.W. Slotki, Isaiah: Hebrew Text and English Translation with an Introduction and Commentary ("Soncino Books of the Bible," Vol. 6; London: The Soncino Press, 1949), p. 86.

27

Amos 9:3; Isa. 11:11, 24:16, 45:14-17, 66:21; Seph. 2:11-12, 3:10; Ps. 68:32, 87:4.

28

Gottwald, op. cit., 94, 112; idem, A Light to the Nations: An Introduction to the Old Testament (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), p. 290; Abraham Joshua Heschel, The Prophets (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 33.

29

Gottwald, All the Kingdoms of the Earth, op. cit., p. 223; J. Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Fortress

Press, 1965), pp. 366, 371. With regard to his attitude toward Ethiopia and other potential candidates for conversion, Deutero-Isaiah gravitated between two poles. He sometimes affirms that they will wholeheartedly and spontaneously accept Yahweh, thereby earning the right to participate in the sumptuous festal banquet on the occasion of His enthronement as king of the world (25:6) -- and even to become Priests and Levites (66:21). At other times, however, he voices the less generous belief that their conversion will be prompted more by fear than magnanimity, and that it will involve paying homage -- not only to Yahweh -- but also to His Chosen People (45:14, 61:5-7). Later, Negrophobic rabbinic commentators seized on these less generous passages -- and also on the earlier Isaiah's prediction of Ethiopian-Egyptian defeat at the hands of Assyria (20:4) -- in order to transform them into a rationale for racial slavery; see, for example, Gen. Rab. xxxvi.6, in Midrash Rabbah, trans. H. Freedman and M. Simon (London: The Soncino Press, 1939), I, 292.

30

Shinnie, op. cit., p. 30; Breasted, op. cit., pp. 537-38.

31

II Chron. 12:2-3, 9; 14:9-15, 16:8; T. Eric Peet, Egypt and the Old Testament (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 1922), pp. 59, 163-65.

32

II Sam. 18:21; Jer. 38:7-13; Gottwald, All the Kingdoms, op. cit., p. 283.

33

Ibid., p. 17; Breasted, op. cit., pp. 539-51.

34

Ibid., p. 552 et passim.

35

Peet, op. cit., pp. 172-75; Gottwald, All the Kingdoms, op. cit., pp. 163, 167, 169, 179.

36

Breasted, op. cit., pp. 551-60; Peet, op. cit., pp. 172-79; Shinnie, op. cit., p. 31.

37

Peet, op. cit., pp. 180-81.

38

S. Davis, Race Relations in Ancient Egypt: Greek, Egyptian, Hebrew, Roman (London: Methuen and Company, 1951), p. 23; Peet,

op. cit., pp. 182, 192.

39

Ibid., pp. 182, 190, 192.

40

Ps. 68:31, 87:4; Zeph. 3:10.

41

For evidence that the Greeks came to equate darkness of skin with inferiority and servile status, see: Grace Hadley's Beardsley, The Negro in Greek and Roman Civilization: A Study of the Ethiopian Style ("John Hopkins University Studies in Archaeology," No. 4; Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1929), pp. 10-14, 21, 37, 65, 111; Herbert Wendt, It Began in Babel, trans. James Kirkup (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961), pp. 65-66; Elizabeth C. Evans, Physiognomics in the Ancient World ("Transactions of the American Philosophical Society," New ser., Vol. LIX, Part 5; Philadelphia: APS, 1969), p. 9; and the Peripatetic treatise, Physiogn. 812ab, in Aristotle's Minor Works, trans. W.S. Hett ("Loeb Classical Library"; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), I, 126. Liberal-minded Hellenophiles have a vested interest in the thesis that, in the words of Alfred Zimmern, "[the Greeks] show[ed] no trace of 'colour prejudice'." See his The Greek Commonwealth: Politics and Economics in Fifth Century Athens (5th ed. rev.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931), p. 323; and also: E.E. Sikes, The Anthropology of the Greeks (London: David Nutt, 1914), p. 89 et passim; Snowden, Jr., "The Negro in Ancient Greece," op. cit., p. 37 et passim; and Clyde Kluckhohn, Anthropology and the Classics ("The Colver Lectures, Brown University," 1960; Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University Press, 1961), pp. 34-36. Their argument -- which usually boils down to the assertion that the Greeks were innocent of anti-Negro bias because they explained the origins of color difference in terms of environment rather than racist biology -- hardly accounts for why Greek environmentalists, almost without exception, took it for granted that blackness was a defect in need of explaining.

42

Shinnie, op. cit., p. 34.

43

Breasted, op. cit., p. 561.

44

Richard Greenfield, Ethiopia: A New Political History (London: Pall Mall Press, 1965), pp. 18-20 et passim.

45

Davis, op. cit., pp. 89-90; Baron, loc. cit., p. 165; Gottwald, All the Kingdoms of the Earth, op. cit., p. 223.

46

Tarn. op. cit., pp. 211, 217, 261; Phillip K. Hitti, History of the Arabs (London: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 41.

47

Ibid., pp. 61-62; Tarn. op. cit., pp. 178, 186; Baron, loc. cit., 169, 283; Ullendorff, op. cit., pp. 17-20; idem, The Ethiopians (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 52-53.

48

Richard Pankhurst, An Introduction to the Economic History of Ethiopia: From Earliest Times to 1880 (n.p.: Lalibela House, 1961), p. 10; M. Cary and E.H. Warmington, Ancient Explorers (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company; 1929), p. 68; Tarn, op. cit., pp. 246-48; Hitti, loc. cit. Both the Falashas (literally: "Exiles") and the Ethiopian Christian kings claim to be descended from Jews who came to Ethiopia with Menelik I, the supposed scion of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. The Septuagint's identical spelling of Seba, the son of Cush-Ethiops, and Sheba, the Arabian trading principality ruled by the legendary Queen, probably inspired the legends relating that she was an Ethiopian monarch; whereas the desire of Ethiopian converts to both Judaism and Christianity to root their genealogies in the common religious tradition no doubt accounts for the additional legendary embroidery about Menelik. The Falashas' Judaism, which knows almost nothing of the Talmud, conforms in most other respects to post-exilic Jewish norms. The authorities disagree as to their ethnic origins (including how "black" are the Black Jews) and also as to the date of their conversion. The most plausible conjecture, however, is that Judaism was introduced into Ethiopia during the Second Commonwealth period as a consequence of the impact of influences radiating across the Red Sea on its indigenous Agau tribesmen -- who, despite their often dark complexions, are classified by the anthropologists as "Caucasoid Hamites." The existence of the Falashas did not begin to register in a major way on the consciousness of the outside Jewish world until the nineteenth century; for the triumph of Christianity inside Ethiopia and of Islam in the lands surrounding it doomed these African Jews to the doubly unenviable fate of being an isolated and embattled minority within an isolated and embattled land. But, aside from generally unreliable travel accounts, there is one intriguing reference to the Falashas in the earlier Jewish literature. It is a sixteenth-century responsum in which David ibn Zimri, the Spanish-born head of Cairo's Jewish community, answers the question of a Jewish slave owner who wanted to marry a Falasha woman whom he had purchased. If the woman did, indeed, possess an "Ethiopian" complexion, then the discussion -- which does not bring up the issue of color difference -- can be viewed as a victory for "Jewish racial tolerance." The substance of Zimri's answer deals instead with the issues of her previous marital status -- and of her religious orthodoxy. The decision reached is that she cannot remarry because there is insufficient proof of her husband's death. More important, however, is the raising of the question of

orthodoxy. Zimri brackets the Falashas with the Karaites -- a heterodox sect of Jewish "biblical fundamentalists" who rejected the authority of rabbinic Judaism; and this imputation of heresy may explain why the idea of a Jew holding this particular variety of fellow Jew as a slave was tolerated as late as the sixteenth century. On this subject and that of the Falashas in general, see: Baron, op. cit., II, 211, 407, III, 116; Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible, op. cit., pp. 17-20; A.H.M. Jones and Elizabeth Munro, A History of Ethiopia (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), pp. 10-18, 40-43; Carleton Coon with Edward Hunt, Jr., The Living Races of Man (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 120; Wolf Leslau (trans.), The Falasha Anthology ("Yale Judaica Series," Vol. VI; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), passim; and Solomon B. Freehof (comp.), A Treasury of Responsa (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1963), pp. 122-27.

49

Pankhurst (comp.), Royal Ethiopian Chronicles (Addis Ababa: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 5; idem, Travelers in Ethiopia (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 6-7; Cosmos Indicopleustus, The Christian Topography, trans. J.W. McCrindle ("Publications of the Hakluyt Society," No. 98; London: The Hakluyt Society, 1897), p. 65 et passim.

50

Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible, op. cit., p. 12.

51

Beardsley, op. cit., p. 77; Tarn, op. cit., 246-48, 258; R. Coupland, East Africa and Its Invaders (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), p. 17.

52

Tarn, op. cit., pp. 233-34; Josephus C. Ap. i.1. The translation of Josephus quoted is that by H. St. J. Thackeray and Ralph Marcus, Josephus: The Jewish War and Other Selections, abridged by M.I. Finley ("The Great Histories"; New York: Twayne Publishers, 1965), p. 22.

53

Josephus Ant. ii.10.1-2, in The Works of Flavius Josephus, . . ., trans. William Whiston (in 1 vol; Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1837), pp. 69-70; Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews, trans. Henrietta Szold (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909-28), II, 285-9, V, 407-10.

54

The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch with Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum, trans. J.W. Etheridge (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1968 [1865]), II, 376-77.

55

Moshe Aberbach, "The Negro in Jewish Tradition," Herzl Institute Bulletin, III (7 May 1967), 1.

56

Gen. 9:20-27.

57

Gottwald, A Light to the Nations, op. cit., p. 228.

58

John Skinner, Genesis: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary ("The International Critical Commentary"; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1930), p. 182. For a masterful argument in favor of the unity of the Genesis narrative, see U. Cassuto, A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, Part II: From Noah to Abraham..., trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, n.d.), pp. 151-55, 164, 185-86, et passim.

59

B. San. 70a (on the method of talmudic citation herein pursued, see note 5 to Chapter I supra); Graves and Patal, op. cit., pp. 121-22; Ginzberg, op. cit., V, 188-89; Cassuto, op. cit., pp. 150-51.

60

B. San. 70a, 108b; Gen. Rab. xxxvi.7, quoted in Samuel Rapaport (comp.), A Treasury of the Midrash (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1968), p. 76. These same sources also relate that Ham's bad example inspired a like disobedience on the part of the dog and the raven; this is why the former leads a miserable life and publicly exposes its copulation, while the latter is unacceptable either for the table or for sacrifice and is forced to conceive through the mouth.

61

B. San. 70a; Gen. Rab. xxxvi.4-7, in Midrash Rabbah, loc. cit., pp. 290-93; Tanh. Noah xiii.21b, in C.G. Montefiore and H. Loewe (comps.), A Rabbinic Anthology (n.p.: Greenwich Editions, Meridian Books; n.d. [1936]), p. 56. A further exegesis explains the fitness of slavery as a punishment on the grounds that Ham castrated Noah in order to prevent him from bearing a fourth son who would have served all three brothers, making it only meet that Ham's loins provide a servile substitute. Finally, in order to remove any lingering doubts on the score of justice, the rabbis weaved yet another series of myths implicating Canaan in his father's guilt -- some of which even went so far as to convict him of Noah's unmaning while attributing only a passive role to Ham. See: Ginzberg, op. cit., I, 169, V, 101; and Cassuto, op. cit., pp. 151-54.

- 62 Agus, loc. cit., pp. 42-43. See also Baron, op. cit., I, 181.
- 63 Pirke De Rabbi Eliezer xxix, trans. Gerald Friedlander (New York: Hermon Press, 1965), p. 208.
- 64 Baron, op. cit., II, 147-49.
- 65 Ezra 9, 10.
- 66 Quoted in Robert Gordis, "Race and Religious Tradition," Jewish Frontier, XXIX (March, 1962), 72. The Psalmist's prediction that "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hand to God (68:31)" is also echoed on occasion in the rabbinic literature of the late-talmudic period. See for example: B. Pes. 118b; and Ex. Rab. xxxv.5, in Midrash Rabbah, op. cit., III, 433-34. The purpose of these citations, however, is not to express conversionist hopes for Ethiopia but rather to score polemical points against Rome and Christianity. For the moral that the rabbis drew from this text was that the Messiah -- even though he will accept "the gifts" offered by Egypt, Israel's former oppressor, and by Ethiopia, a distant and despised people -- will reject those offered by "Edom" (Christian Rome), whom they identified by means of a complicated exegesis with "the beast of the reeds" castigated in the Psalms. See Baron, op. cit., II, 152.
- 67 Numb. 12, 25.
- 68 Aberbach, loc. cit.
- 69 The Targums...with Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum, loc. cit.
- 70 B. M.K. 16b; Pirke De Rabbi Elizer liii, op. cit., p. 430; Midrash on Psalms, Ps. 7, trans. William G. Braude ("Yale Judaica Series," Vol. XIII; New Haven Yale University Press, 1959), I, 116-19. These interpretive strategems, while disposing of Moses' unwanted Cushite mate, created another problem by requiring the rabbis to exalt the worth of Zipporah -- about which they had grave doubts because of her heathenish Midianite ancestry. Rabbi Eliezer, however, pointed the way toward an ingenious, eclectic solution to this subsidiary problem that was later perfected by Solomon ben Isaac, better known as Rashi, the most enduringly influential of the

of the medieval Jewish commentators on the Pentateuch. For Rashi argued that the passage does, indeed, refer to a divorce -- but that the wife being divorced is the beautiful (i.e., "Cushite") Zipporah. In this way he vindicated both the racial and religious purity of Israel -- though at the price of depriving Moses of both of his mates! See: Solomon Goldman, The Book of Human Destiny, Vol. III: From Slavery to Freedom ("The Solomon Goldman Memorial Foundation"; London: Abelard-Schuman, 1948), p. 511; The Pentateuch...with Rashi's Commentary, Numb 12, trans. M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silberman in collaboration with A. Blaski and I. Joseph (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, n.d.), IV, 59-60, 192, and The Pentateuch and Rashi's Commentary: A Linear Translation to English, Numb 12, trans. Abraham Ben Isiah and Benjamin Sharfman, in collaboration with Harry M. Orlinsky and Morris Charner (Brooklyn: S.S. and R. Publishing Company, 1949), pp. 119-120. A minority view among modern biblical scholars also holds that Moses' Cushite wife was not an Ethiopian -- on the unrabbinic grounds, however, that the "Cush" referred to in the Pentateuch was an Arabian tribe closely related to the Midianites rather than an African land; see, for example, Yohanan Aharni, The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography, trans. A.F. Rainey (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), p. 134. Such a possibility never occurred to the rabbis, and it is painfully obvious that their qualms over Numbers 12 were rooted in race prejudice rather than scruples with regard to scriptural geography.

71

B. M.K. 16b; Midrash on Psalms, Ps. 7, loc. cit., p. 118; Pirke De Rabbi Eliezer liii, loc. cit. The Pirke identifies Ebed-melech, whose name literally means "servant of the king," with the Scribe Baruch, who was a disciple of Jeremiah; the Talmud and Midrash Tehillim, on the other hand, claim that he was none other than King Zedekiah himself. It might be noted in passing that the King James Version's designation of Ebed-melech as "one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house" does not necessarily mean that he was a castrato; for in the Hebrew Bible the word eunuch, which in several of the Eastern languages became a virtual synonym for "court official," is sometimes applied to royal functionaries who obviously were not. See: Henrich Ewald, The Antiquities of Israel (Boston: Lockwood, Brock, and Company, 1876), p. 164; and Gottwald, All the Kingdoms of the Earth, op. cit., p. 283.

72

The Pentateuch...with Rashi's Commentary, Numb 12, loc. cit., p. 59. A related superstition, shared by the Jews with a number of other peoples, held that exposure to the fact of blackness (in the form of either a black man or a picture of him) might bring on the same misfortune that invocation of the disembodied word alone could help ward off. The most important form of this related superstition

was rooted in the near-universal folk belief in the power of maternal impressions to shape for either good or all the character -- and even the color -- of the unborn child. In the rabbis' view, a pregnant (or soon to be pregnant) woman who passed within sight of a scholar had cause for rejoicing, while one who encountered a dog, an ass, or an ignoramus had legitimate reason for forboding. Given their racial views, there is little doubt about on which side of the polarity they would have placed contact with a Negro. See: Gen. Rab. lxxiii.10, Numb. Rab. ix.34, both in Midrash Rabbah, op. cit., II, 674, V, 308-09; Joshua Trachtenberg, Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion (New York: Behrman's Jewish Book House, 1939), pp. 187, 303; and Jacob Z. Lauterbach's essay, "The Belief in the Power of the Word," in Studies in Jewish Law, Custom, and Folklore, selected by Bernard J. Bamberger (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1970), pp. 143-58. For comparative purposes, see, for example: The Satires of Juvenal, v.52-55, trans. Rolfe Humphries (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), p. 57; Lynn Thorndike, A History of Magic and Experimental Science (New York: Columbia University Press, 1923-58), I, 77, IV, 136; and idem, "De Complexionibus," Isis, XLIX (December, 1958), 400.

73

Strabo's Geography, vii.3.6, op. cit., III, 191; Diodorus of Sicily iii.15, 18, 20, 28, loc. cit., pp. 124-27, 131-37, 141, 159-60; The Natural History of Pliny vi.35, loc. cit.; Ptolemy's Tetrabiblos ii.2, iii.8, trans. F.E. Robbins ("Loeb Classical Library"; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1940), pp. 121-25, 261-65. Hillel, though perhaps not in all seriousness, also advanced one of these fanciful beliefs -- namely, that Negroes are the human counterparts of the web-footed duck, possessing flat feet which enable them to navigate with ease through Africa's marshlands; see B. Shab, 31a.

74

Robert Montraville Green, A Translation of Galen's Hygiene i.5, ii.7 (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas), pp. 16, 20, 75. Rudolph E. Siegel, Galen's System of Physiology and Medicine: An Analysis of His Doctrines and Observations and Blood Flow, Respiration and the Humors (Basel: S. Karger, 1968), pp. 220-21, 297-300, 315-21 et passim.

75

Green, loc. cit.; Galen on the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body ii.161, trans. Margaret Tallmadge May ("Cornell University Publications in the History of Science"; Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1968), II, 535; Kendt, loc. cit. Before Galen, classical writers had often disparaged the cultural attainments of dark-skinned Africans, but rarely their innate ability.

Diodorus, for example, had written that "they are entirely savage and display the nature of a wild beast, not so much, however, in their temper as in their ways of living"; see Diodorus of Sicily iii.8.2, loc. cit., p. 105. Moreover, earlier writers had generally explained this backwardness in solely terms of climatic influence. Galen shifted the emphasis from environment to biology by stressing the importance of mankind's humoral endowment as a mediating variable between the climate and its effects on human nature. In his humoral pathology, melancholy (literally: "black bile") is an extremely variable disease that manifests itself in three distinctive sets of symptoms -- which, though originally induced by climate, soon become inherited norms responsible for the varying temperaments of geographical diverse populations. In colder European climes, the symptoms of the disease are depression, gloominess, and such unsociable traits as miserliness and unkemptness -- all of which medieval Christian commentators came to attribute to the Jews. In hot climes, on the other hand, its sufferers display the "manic" symptoms that are embodied in the stereotyped conception of the garrulous and "rhythmic" Negro. Finally, in the "temperate zone" melancholia takes ambivalent forms -- dooming some to madness while inspiring others to genius. On the malicious application of this typology to the Jews -- which may have been encouraged by Gnostic speculations identifying them with Saturn (the patron diety of melancholics) as well as with the Devil -- see: Montefiore and Lowe, op. cit., p. 626; and Klibansky, Panofsky, and Fritzl, op. cit., pp. 121, 131-32.

76

William L. Westermann's The Slave Systems of Greek and Classical Antiquity (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1955) tends to discount the claims made by a number of historians that there was a significant influx of dark-skinned slaves into the ancient world (p. 97). For evidence that supports such claims, however, see: Cary and Warmington, op. cit., 173-75; Pankhurst, An Introduction to the Economic History of Ethiopia, op. cit., pp. 12-13; Coupland, loc. cit.; Baron, op. cit., II, 238, IV, 194-96; Beardsley, op. cit., pp. 116-120; Snowden, Jr., "The Negro in Classical Italy," Journal of Philology, LXVIII (July, 1947), pp. 282-83 et passim; and Edward Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (London: A. Strahan T. Cadell, Jr., and W. Davies; 1797), VII, 406. On any other hypothesis than a heightened influx of "black ivory," it is difficult to explain why dark-skinned slaves -- treated as an exotic "luxury item" in the classical Greek and Hellenistic literature -- seem to have lost their popularity as a vehicle for "conspicuous consumption" during imperial Roman times. Compare for example, the Hellenistic philosopher Theophrastus' Characters, xxi.4, trans. J.M. Edmonds ("Loeb Classical Library"; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946), p. 93, which castigates "the pettily proud man" who "takes vain delight in his ownership of a black slave, with two Roman sources: The Satires of Juvenal vi.600-01, op. cit.,

p. 87, which expresses outrage over the commonness of the "off-color heir[s]" of promiscuous Roman matrons and their black slaves, and The Scriptorum Historiae Augustae, Elagab. xxi.7-xxxii.5, trans. David Magie ("Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann, 1924), II, 169, which relates that Elagabalus humiliated his courtiers by making them sleep with "old hags from Ethiopia."

77

Baron, op. cit., II, 238.

78

Arthur John Brock (trans.), Galen on the Natural Faculties ("Loeb Classical Library"; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947 [1916]), p. xvi; George Sarton, Galen of Pergamon ("Logan Clendening Lectures on the Philosophy and History of Medicine," Ser. 3; Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1954), pp. 89-90; Harry Friedenwald, The Jews and Medicine: Essays (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1967 [1944]), p. 48.

79

Gershom G. Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism (rev. ed.; New York: Schocken Books, 1946), p. 48; Evans, op. cit., pp. 5, 9, 11, 16, 38, 55, 67; The Mishnah, Ber. vii. 5-6, trans. Herbert Danby (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pp. 538-39. All three of the amoraim most prominently identified with the talmudic transfiguration of the Ham myth -- Rab, Huna, and Mar Samuel -- came from Babylon, where Jewish knowledge of "Greek wisdom" was at a minimum. It is significant, however, that each eventually migrated to Palestine, where Jewish Hellenism had laid down deeper roots. Moreover, there is no doubt that at least one of their number -- Mar Samuel, a learned physician and an adept at astrology -- knew how to read Greek and was familiar with classical science. See: Saul Lieberman, Greek in Jewish Palestine (New York: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1942), pp. 19, 26-27; and Moses Mielziner, Introduction to the Talmud (4th ed.; New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1968), p. 41. On the general subject of Jewish knowledge of classical medicine and scientific theory -- and the limits of that knowledge -- see: Solomon R. Kagan, Jewish Medicine (Boston: Medico-Historical Press, 1952), pp. 34-35; and Benjamin Lee Gordon, Medicine Throughout Antiquity (Philadelphia: F.A. Davis, 1949), pp. 752-759.

80

"Cursed be a man who rears pigs and cursed be a man who teaches his son Greek wisdom (B. St. 49b)." Lieberman makes a strong argument against reading too much into this ban, claiming that its intended scope was limited to the literal meaning of the words -- which is to say that only the teaching of children, but not study by learned adults, was prohibited; see his Hellenism in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Literary Transmission, Beliefs, and (2d ed.; "Texts and Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of

of America," Vol. XVIII; New York: The JTS of A, 1962), pp. 101, 103, et passim. Even if there had been no ban in effect at all, however, the decline of the more cosmopolitan Palestinian Academies and the rigidities and self-absorption promoted by the traumatic first centuries of the Galuth would have been enough to set extremely narrow bounds to the Sages' willingness to assimilate classical ideas; see Baron, op. cit., II, 173-75, 204-09, et passim.

81

Isaac Heinemann (trans.), Kuzari: The Book of Proof and Argument (abridged; Oxford: East and West Library, 1957), Introduction, p. 23. On the evolution of Halevi's thought, see Isaac Husik, A History of Medieval Jewish Philosophy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), pp. 157, 174-75.

82

Judah Halevi, The Kuzari: An Argument for the Faith of Israel I, 1, trans. Hartwig Hirschfeld (New York: Schocken Books, 1964 [1905]), p. 37.

83

Ibid., I, 27, p. 47.

84

Cedric Dover, "The Racial Philosophy of Jehuda Halevi," Phylon, XIII (Fourth Quarter, 1954), 312-17. For his glorification of the racial endowment making "the sons of Jacob" an "angelic caste," see ibid., I, 27, 95, 103, II, 44, 56, IV, 3, pp. 47, 64-67, 73, 109-11, 117, 201-03.

85

Maimonides, The Guide of the Perplexed, trans. M. Friedlander (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, n.d.), Part III, Chap. li, pp. 279-80; Leo Strauss, Liberalism: Ancient and Modern (New York: Basic Books, 1968), p. 170.

86

The Guide of the Perplexed, loc. cit. Maimonides also includes the 'am ha-ares -- "those in our own country who are like these" -- in his classification of bestial men.

87

Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey, History of Political Philosophy (Chicago: Rand McKally and Company, 1963), pp. 73-76 et passim; Baron, "The Economic View of Maimonides," in Essays on Maimonides, ed. idem (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), p. 230; Robert Hammond, The Philosophy of Alfarabi and Its Influence on Medieval Thought (New York: Hobson Book Press, 1947), p. ix.

88

Al Farabi, The Aphorisms of the Statesman (Fusal Al-Madani), trans. D.M. Dunlop ("University of Cambridge Oriental Publications," No. 5; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp. 19, 33, 81; Aristotle Eth. Nic. vii.1 (1145a), Pol. i.2 (1253a), both in Richard McKeon (ed.), The Basic Works of Aristotle, trans. W.D. Ross et al. (New York: Random House, 1941), pp. 1036-037, 1129; Strauss, Persecution and the Art of Writing (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1952), p. 117.

89

Al Farabi, op. cit., p. 57; Aristotle Pol. i.2 (1252a), in McKeon (ed.), op. cit., p. 1128. Maimonides had some reservations about the Aristotelian idea of the natural slave -- in large part because he was painfully aware of the existence of unfortunate Jewish travelers enslaved by Mediterranean pirates and was completely unwilling to admit that these Jews were slaves "by nature"; see Baron, "Economic Views," op. cit., p. 236.

90

Chronique de...Tabari, trans. Herman Zotenberg ("Editions Bessonet Chantermerle"; Paris: G.P. Maissonneuve, 1958), I, 114-15.

91

See Ibn Khaldun's comment on their views, in his An Introduction to History (The Muqaddimah), trans. Franz Rosenthal (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 64. Al Masudi, however, incorporated the Ham motif as well as Galen into his anthropology; see his Prairies D'Or, trans. C. Barbier de Meynard ("Collection D'Ouvrages Orientaux"; Paris: La Societe Asiatique, 1869-74), I, 75-78, III, 240, 270, VI, 154.

92

Ibn Khaldun, op. cit., pp. 58-64; Cedric Dover, "The Racial Philosophy of Ibn Khaldun," Phylon, XIII (Second Quarter, 1952), 107-19.

93

On the black African stance toward the Arab-Israeli conflict prior to the 1970's, see Jean-Claude Froelich, "Israel and Black Africa," The Wiener Library Bulletin, XII (Winter, 1967-68), 13-19.

94

Koran 3:101-03; E.M. Wherry (ed.), A Comprehensive Commentary on the Quran: Comprisonq Sale's Translation and Preliminary Discourse, ... (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, 1896), VI, 151. On the Jewish antecedents of these Moslem beliefs, see Ginzberg, op. cit., I, 108, V, 137. The immensely influential Moslem philosopher Avicenna grounded the same color prejudices in the Neoplatonic and

Gnostic doctrine of the "two faces" of the soul -- the white face of the uncorrupted Adam, the "man of light," and the black face of the fallen Adam, the earthly "man of flesh"; see Henry Corbin, Avicenna and the Visionary Recital, trans. Willard R. Trask ("Bollingen Series," LXVII; New York: Pantheon Books, 1960), pp. 231-34.

95

Pankhurst. An Introduction to the Economic History of Ethiopia, op. cit., pp. 49-50; William Muir, The Life of Mohammed (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1923), p. 69.

96

See the sources cited in note 49 supra and also: Hitti, op. cit., pp. 62-63; and Coupland, op. cit., p. 29.

97

Quoted in Yusuf Fadl Hassan, The Arab and the Sudan: From the Seventh to the Early Sixteenth Century (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1967), p. 43. On the position of dark-skinned slaves within the Arab society of Mecca, see: Muir, op. cit., p. 59 et passim; and Pankhurst, loc. cit., p. 282.

98

Ibid.; Hasan, op. cit., p. 43 et passim; James Kritzeck (comp.), Anthology of Islamic Literature (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964), p. 164; "'Abd," Encyclopedia of Islam (1960), I, 32. Nubian archers earned the sobriquet of "eye-smiters" because of their deadly accuracy; this is one of the reasons they came to be highly prized as soldier-slaves. See Al Baladhuri, The Origins of the Islamic State, trans. Hitti ("Khayats Oriental Reprints," No. 11; Beirut: Khayats, 1966 [1916]), pp. 379-80.

99

David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 50; Coupland, op. cit., p. 50. The ability of dark-skinned slaves on occasion to rise to positions of great power in the Moslem world had less to do with the absence of color prejudice than with the triumph of a species of bureaucratic feudalism within Islamic society which expressed itself in the form of rule by "slave aristocracies." Significantly, the two most famous of these formally servile but actually ruling military casts -- the Mamelukes of Egypt and the Janizaries of the Ottoman Empire -- were recruited from among whites only; indeed, the striking headdress of pure white worn by the latter in order to set them off from the rest of the Sultan's retainers could just as well have served as a symbol of the "purity" of their racial origins as of their faith. See: David Ayalon, Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom (London: Valentine Mitchell,

1955), pp. 66-71; Muir, The Mameluke or Slave Dynasty of Egypt, 1260-1517 (London: Smith Elder and Company, 1896), pp. 215-16 et passim; J.A.B. Palmer, "The Origins of the Janissaries," The John Rylands Library Bulletin, XXXV (March 1953), 45-46; and Nahoum Weissmann, Les Janissaries: Etude De L'Organisation Militaire Des Ottomans (Paris: Libraire 'Orient', 1964), pp. 46-48 et passim. On the eclipse of "Black Power" in Medieval Egypt and the abortive attempt by an eighteenth-century Moroccan sultan to create a black slave aristocracy, see: Stanley Lane-Poole, A History of Egypt in the Middle Ages (5th ed.; London: Methuen and Company, 1936), pp. 192, 197, et passim; Hasan, op. cit., pp. 44, 47-49; and Norman R. Bennett, "Christian and Negro Slavery in Eighteenth-Century North Africa," Journal of African History, I (1960), 71, 74. Even the Romance of Antar, a popular medieval Arab ballad often pointed to as a striking example of Moslem racial tolerance because its hero is the son of a Negro slave-girl and a Bedouin Sheikh, is shot through with racist sentiments associating blackness with baseness which cause Antar to protest ad nauseum that "[at least] on one side" he is "nobly born and of the best" -- while his sword "will make good the rest". See: Peter N. Boratav, "The Negro in Turkish Folklore," Journal of American Folklore, LXIV (January-March, 1951), 83-88; and Reynard A. Nicholson, A Literary History of the Arabs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962 [1907]), pp. 114-15, 459.

100

Ibn Khaldun, op. cit., p. 117.

101

Coupland, op. cit., pp. 31-32; Baron, SRHJ, op. cit., IV, 187, 196; Donald L. Wiedner, A History of Africa South of the Sahara (New York: Vintage Books, Random House; 1962), p. 46.

102

Coupland, loc.cit.; Hassan, op. cit., pp. 42-50; Pankhurst, An Introduction to the Economic History of Ethiopia, op. cit., p. 388. If Pankhurst's estimate that between the rise of Islam and the late nineteenth century Arab slave traders exported as many as two and one half million slaves per century from East Africa, then they very likely equalled -- or even exceeded -- the total number exported from West Africa during the 400 year span of the Atlantic slave trade; but compare Edward A. Alpers, The East African Slave Trade (Nairobi: published for the Historical Association of Tanzania by the East African Publishing House, 1967), pp. 4-5. The most reliable estimates of the number of Negroes landed in the New World over the course of those four centuries range from twelve to fifteen million -- to which, however, must be added several million more who died during mid-passage. See, for example, Roland Oliver, and J.D. Fage, A Short History of Africa (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962), p. 120.

- 103
Coupland, op. cit., p. 32.
- 104
Hasan, op. cit., pp. 44, 47-49; Hitti, op. cit., p. 622; Pankhurst, loc. cit., p. 382.
- 105
D.B. Davis, op. cit., pp. 50-51; Ayalon, op. cit., pp. 66-71.
- 106
Davis states, "In general, it would appear that colored slaves in Algiers, Morocco, and Tripoli suffered little discrimination in status or treatment (p. 51)." He cites an article by Norman R. Bennett which I have cited in a slightly different connection in note 99 supra. But even Bennett states that one Sultan's policy of vesting great power in his black troops and even promoting their marriage to whites was "not always a popular step" and that it was reversed by his successors (pp. 71, 74). Moreover, he admits that the Berbers of the interior viewed Negroes as "the perfect people for slaves (p. 75)." For evidence that the Berbers practiced an even harsher form of racial slavery than Bennett is willing to admit, see: Oliver and Fage, op. cit., p. 63; and Basil Davidson with F.K. Buah and the advice of J. E. Ade Ajayi, A History of West Africa to the Nineteenth Century (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company; 1966), p. 181.
- 107
Chronique de...Tabari, loc. cit.
- 108
G.S.P. Freeman (comp.), The East African Coast: Select Documents; From the First to the Earlier Nineteenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 33. For Jewish and Moslem ape lore relating man-beast couplings and transformations, see: Ginzberg, op. cit., V, 66, 152; Koran 2:60, 7:24; E.M. Wherry (ed.), op. cit., I, 139; and H.W. Janson, Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and Renaissance ("Studies of the Warburg Institute," Vol. XX; London: Warburg Institute, University of London; 1952), p. 268.
- 109
Elkan Nathan Adler (comp.), Jewish Travellers: A Treasury of Travelogues from Nine Centuries (2d ed.; New York: Hermon Press, 1966), pp. 3-5; Baron, SRHJ, op. cit., III, 116-17; Manuel Komroff (comp.), Contemporaries of Marco Polo (New York: Horace A. Liberight, 1928), p. 252.
- 110
Adler (comp.), op. cit., p. 6.

- 111
A. Asher (trans.), The Itinerary of Rabbi Bejamin of Tudela (New York: Hakesheth Publishing Company, n.d.), pp. 145-46.
- 112
Hai Gaon's Sefer ha'Shetarot (Book of Deeds) contains a specimen contract that includes "Senegalese [Zanzibar] slaves" as one of varieties commonly dealt in; see Baron, SRHJ, op. cit., IV, 336. In the same work, Baron also relates that Jewish women came to view Ethiopian slavegirls as "dangerous rivals (II, 238)." Some of the "Moorish slaves" who worked the estates that Jews owned on the Christian island-kingdom of Majorca may also have been Negroes; see Yitzak Baer, A History of the Jews in Christian Spain (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961), I, 52-56, 139-40, 182.
- 113
Jacob Rader Marcus, The Jew in the Medieval World (Cleveland: Meridian Books, The World Publishing Company; 1961 [1938]), p. 17.
- 114
Baron, SRHJ, op. cit., IV, 187, 196, 336.
- 115
A. Asher (trans.), op. cit., p. 164.
- 116
Baron, SRHJ, loc. cit.
- 117
Ibid., p. 181; Hasan, op. cit., pp. 45-46.
- 118
Baron, SRHJ, op. cit., III, 158. See also: Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 137; and Walter J. Fischel, Jews in the Economic and Political Life of Medieval Islam (London: The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1968), pp. 68-89.
- 119
Rhys Carpenter, "A Trans-Saharan Caravan Route in Herodotus," Journal of American Archaeology, LX (1956), 231-42; Baron, SRHJ, op. cit., I, 176; Cary and Warmington, op. cit., p. 180; Sarton, A History of Ancient Science, Vol. I: Ancient Science Through the Golden Age of Greece (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 300-01; Nahum Slouschz, The Jews of North Africa (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1944 [1927]), pp. 213-14.
- 120
Wiedner, op. cit., p. 17.

121

Slouschz, op. cit., p. 215.

122

Ibid., pp. 215, 279; Baron, SRHJ, op. cit., II, 94-95.

123

Wiedner, op. cit., p. 28.

124

Maurice Delafosse, Haut Senegal-Niger ("Series d'etudes publiees sous la direction de M. la Gouverneur Clozel," I; Paris, 1912), I, 226.

125

Joseph J. Williams, Hebrewisms of West Africa: From Nile to Niger with the Jews (New York: Lincoln MacVeagh, the Dial Press; 1930), pp. 319-320.

126

The legend that the Lost Tribes had found their way south of the Sahara was first advanced by Eldad the Danite more than 600 years before imaginative Europeans began populating the Americas with Wandering Jews. Indeed, among the Renaissance English Eldad's claim was embroidered upon and popularized by John Pory's "Relation of the Great Provinces of Africa," which he appended to his translation of Leo Africanus. See: Charles de la Ronciere, La decouverte de l'Afrique au moyen age (Paris, 1920), I, 103; and Pory (trans.), The History and Description of Africa, ed. Robert Brown ("Publications of the Hakluyt Society," No. 82, London: The Hakluyt Society, 1896), III, 1004. For its popularity in seventeenth-century England, both Old and New, see, for example, Alden T. Vaughen, The New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians 1620-1675 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company; 1965), p. 20.

127

Wiedner, loc. cit.; Ronald Cohen, The Kanuri of Bornu (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), pp. 12-13.

128

H.Z. (J.W.) Hirshlers, "The Problem of the Judaized Berbers," Journal of African History, IV (1963), 313-39; Ronciere, op. cit., I, 107 et passim; E.W. Bovill, The Golden Trade of the Moors (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 112; DuBois, op. cit., p. 46; Pory (trans.), loc. cit., p. 824; P. de Cenival and Tho. Morod. (trans.), Description de la cote de L'Afrique de Ceuta au Senegal, par Valentin Fernandes ("Publie Du Comite D'Etudes historiques et Scientifiques de l'Afrique Occident le Francaise"; Paris: Librairie Larose, 1938), p. 85. Fernandes' work, written in the early 1500's, claims that a Jewish merchant community

community also existed completely south of the Sahara at Walata in the Sudan itself; he described the wandering merchants, goldsmiths, and jewels who comprised its membership as "tres riches mais tres opprimes."

129

Henrich Graetz, History of the Jews (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1894), IV, 197-98, 389; Slouschz, op. cit., p. 203.

130

J. Spencer Trimingham, The Influence of Islam Upon Africa (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 14; Ronciere, op. cit., I, 168; Bovill, op. cit., p. 110.

131

Ibid.; Felix DuBois, Timbuctoo the Mysterious, trans. Diana White (London: W. Heinemann, 1897), pp. 109, 298-99.

132

Ibid.; Bovill, loc. cit.

133

Brown (ed.), The History and Description of Africa, loc. cit., p. 844.

134

W.E.B. DuBois, loc. cit.

135

Davidson with Buah and the advice of Ajay, op. cit., pp. 86, 141, 157; Pory (trans.), loc. cit., pp. 843-44.

136

Oliver and Fage, op. cit., p. 110.

137

Ibid., pp. 85-86; Davidson with Buah and the advice of Ajay, op. cit., pp. 47-49.

138

Davidson, The African Slave Trade ("Atlantic Book of the Month"; Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1961), p. 23 et passim.

139

Idem with Buah and the advice of Ajay, op. cit., pp. 126-28, 180-81; Melville J. Herskovits, Dahomey: An Ancient West African Kingdom (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1967), pp. 97-98. Within West Africa itself, a relatively mild form of domestic slavery prevailed.

140

Davidson, The Lost Cities of Africa (Boston: Little, Brown and Company; 1959), p. 83; idem with Buah and the advice of Ajay, op. cit., pp. 46-70; Al Bakri, Description de l'Afrique Septentrionale..., trans. MacGuckin de Slane (ed. revue et corrigee; Paris: Librairie D'Amerique et D'Orient, 1965), pp. 328, 335, et passim.

141

Davidson with Buah and the advice of Ajay, op. cit., pp. 65-69, 119-120, 123-35.

142

Ibid., p. 58.

143

Davidson, Lost Cities, op. cit., pp. 74-75. Africa and the Discovery of America (Philadelphia: Innes and Sons, 1920-22), a three volume tome by Leo Wiener (the father of Norbert), argues that seafaring Negro merchants from the Sudan, either alone or in the company of Africanized Europeans, reached the New World at least a half century and perhaps even more before Columbus. The least one can say for this thesis is that a number of less likely white candidates -- including one medieval Irish Saint -- have been advanced for the same honor; see Arthur Percival Newton, "Travelers' Tales of Wonder and Imagination," in Travel and Travelers' Tales of the Middle Ages, ed. idem (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, 1926), p. 162 et passim.

144

Ibn Battuta, Travels in Asia and Africa, trans. H.A.R. Gibb ("The Broadway Travellers"; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1925), pp. 329-30.

145

Davidson with Buah and the advice of Ajay, op. cit., pp. 121-28.

146

Davidson, Lost Cities, op. cit., pp. 76-77 et passim; Sarton, Introduction to the History of Science, Vol. III: Science and Learning in the Fourteenth Century ("Carnegie Institution of Washington"; Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins Company, 1948), Pt. II, p. 1142.

147

Ibid., pp. 1140-41, 1591-93; Brown (ed.), The History and Description of Africa, loc. cit., p. 1005; Bovill, loc. cit.; Davidson, Lost Cities, op. cit., p. 72.

148

Sarton, Introduction to the History of Science, loc. cit.; Davidson, Lost Cities, op. cit., p. 72.

149

Boies Penrose, Travel and Discovery in the Renaissance, 1420-1620 (New York: Atheneum, 1962), p. 44; M. Kayserling, Christopher Columbus and the Participation of Jews in the Spanish and Portuguese Discoveries, trans. Charles Cross (New York: Herman Press, 1968), p. 5.

150

Penrose, op. cit., pp. 45-47.

151

Kayserling, op. cit., pp. 12-13, 16-17, 47.

152

Ibid., p. 17 et passim. Salvador De Madariaga's Christopher Columbus (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1967 [1940]) goes one step beyond the argument that confiscated Jewish wealth and enthusiastic converse support played an important role in the genesis of Columbus' voyages; for Madariaga argues that the Admiral himself was of Jewish antecedents, having been born into a family of Spanish expatriates resident in Genoa which had converted to Christianity no earlier than the opening decades of the fifteenth century. The first few chapters make an ingenious case for this contention -- the credibility of which, however, is progressively undermined by the kind of fanciful evidence (including Columbus' "typically Jewish" fascination with "the metallic and glittering quality" of gold [p. 91]) that the author later adduces in its support. Samuel Elliot Morison's Admiral of the Ocean Sea (Boston: Little Brown and Company; 1942) heaps scorn on "Madariaga's fairy tale of the Enterprise of the Indies as...sort of Zionist movement," dismissing it to "crackpot Columbiana (I, 9, 23, 144)." In the Preface to the 1967 edition of his biography, however, Madariaga won the polemical exchange -- if not scholarly debate -- by styling Morison's labor of love "a most interesting Life from a yachtsman's point of view."

153

Quoted in W.E.B. DuBois, op. cit., p. 146.

154

Greenfield, op. cit., p. 23; Cosmos Indicopleustus, op. cit., p. 120; Louis Marie Oliver Duchesne, Early History of the Christian

Church: From Its Foundation to the End of the Third Century, trans. Claude Jenkins (New York: Longmans, Greene and Company; 1914), I, 286; Steven Runciman, Byzantine Civilization (Cleveland: Meridian Books, the World Publishing Company; 1961 [1933]), p. 132.

155

Matt. 12:42. See also Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of the Expansion of Christianity, Vol. I: The First Five Centuries (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1937), p. 71.

156

Origen, The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homilies, trans. R.P. Lawson ("Ancient Christian Writers: Works of the Fathers in Translation," No. 26; Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1957), pp. 92, 97, 277, et passim; Charles P. Groves, The Planting of Christianity in Africa (London: Lutterworth Press, 1948), p. 49.

157

Origen, op. cit., pp. 97, 104, 107, et passim.

158

Philo Qu. in Gen. ii.82, in Philo: Supplement I, trans. Ralph Marcus ("Loeb Classical Library"; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 174. Elsewhere, Philo offered another such unflattering allegory that identifies the River Geon with "courage" and Ethiopia, the land it "encompasses and beleaguers," with "lowness" and "cowardice [which] is a low thing, while courage is a foe to lowness and cowardice"; see Leg. All. i.21, in Philo, trans. F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, I ("Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann, 1929), 192-93.

159

On Philo's philosophy and its influence, see, for example: Edwin R. Goodenough, An Introduction to Philo Judaeus (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962); and Harry Austryn Wolfson, Philo (2d ed. rev.; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948).

160

Irenaeus, Proof of the Apostolic Preaching, trans. Joseph P. Smith ("Ancient Christian Writers: Works of the Fathers in Translation," No. 16; Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1952), pp. 32, 59-60; The City of God xvi.1-2, in Augustine's Works, trans. Marcus Dods, II (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1934 [1872]), 104-05; Against Julian 25.82, trans. Mathew A. Schumacher ("The Fathers of the Church," No. 35; New York: The Fathers of the Church, 1957), p. 394.

161

On the rise and fall of the legend of Prester John, see:

Henri Baudet, Paradise on Earth: Some Thoughts on European Images of Non-European Man, trans. Elizabeth Wentholt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), passim; C.F. Beckingham, The Achievement of Prester John ("An Inaugural Lecture," 17 May 1966; London: The School of Oriental and African Studies, the University of London; 1966), passim; E. Denison Ross, "Prester John and the Empire of Ethiopia," in Travel and Travelers' Tales of the Middle Ages, op. cit., pp. 174-94, and Eldred Jones, Othello's Countrymen The African in English Renaissance Drama (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 3. Ariosto burlesqued the legend by having Astolpho relieve the Siege of Paris with an army of 30,000 Ethiopians -- "swarthy people...baptised with fire" -- who are magically transported for the purpose from "Afric's Burning stand"; see the Orlando Furioso xxxiii.102, xxxviii.24-35, xxix.21-25, xliv.19-23, trans. William Stewart Rose (London: John Murray, 1827-31), VI, 125, VII, 61-64, 98-99, VIII, 85-86.

162

On the impact of talmudic and cabbalistic lore on Renaissance and Reformation thinkers of a wide variety of ideological hues, see: Isaac E. Barzilay, Between Faith and Reason: Anti-Rationalism in Italian Jewish Thought, 1250-1650 (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), p. 195 et passim; Paul Otto Kristeller, Renaissance Thought II: Papers on Humanism and the Arts (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965), p. 99; Frances H. Yates, Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 257-74; Hiram Hadyn, The Counter-Renaissance (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), 45, 181, 464, 526, et passim; Louis I. Newman, Jewish Influence on Christian Reform Movements (New York: Columbia University Press, 1925), pp. 444-45, 626-31 et passim; Cecil Roth, The Jews in the Renaissance (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1959), p. 117 et passim.

163

Francis Lee Utley, "Noah's Ham and Jansen Enikel," Germanic Review, XVI (December, 1941), 241-49; Donald Cameron Allen, The Legend of Noah: Renaissance Rationalism in Art and Science (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), p. 119 et passim; Jordan, op. cit., pp. 18, 35-36, 40-42, 60, 200-01, 205, 242; D.B. Davis, op. cit., p. 236. Charting the evolution of thought on slavery and race in America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Jordan concludes that "the theologically oriented explanations, notably the curse on Ham, gradually lost their popularity (p. 243)." But the new, anti-Enlightenment currents in thought ushered in by the nineteenth century, which won their most notable American victory in the antebellum South, nurtured a frame of mind among intellectuals that made them much more receptive to such obscurantist ideas than had been the philosophers -- who though often Negrophobic, would never have dreamt of justifying their racism by citing the

the Book of Genesis and what Voltaire, in his article on "Adam" in the Dictionnaire Philosophique, called the "idle stories respecting [it], told by the rabbis. Moreover, one doubts that such "theologically oriented explanations" ever really lost their popularity in fundamentalist backwaters untouched by Enlightenment influences. In 1928 Enoch Lewis, the editor of one of the first Negro journals in America, indignantly reported the closing words of a sermon by a Southern preacher "of the old school":

"And you black Negers, you dirty, lazy creatures, you won't do your master's work, without the rod. Ye are the cursed race of Ham. The Lord hates you and so do I." (See The African Observer for October, 1827, issued in book form by the Negro Universities Press of Westport, Connecticut [1970].)

For the enduring popularity of such ideas in the Southern strongholds of Calvinist "true belief" and their resurgent popularity among Southern intellectuals recoiling against Enlightenment rationalism and scepticism, see, for example: William Sumer Jenkins, Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1935), pp. 205-06, 253-54, 272; E. Merton Coulter, John Jacobus Flournoy: Champion of the Common Man in the Antebellum South (Savannah: Georgia Historical Society, 1942), pp. 44-45 et passim; and William Stanton, The Leopard's Spots: Scientific Attitudes Toward Race in America, 1815-59 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 172, 194, et passim. For their blossoming during the same period but a continent away into the beginnings of the doctrine of apartheid, see: C.R. Boxer, The Dutch Seaborne Empire, 1600-1800 ("History of Human Society"; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), pp. 215, 232, et passim; Paul Giniewski, The Two Faces of Apartheid (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1965), pp. 127-31; and Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism (Cleveland: Meridian Books, the World Publishing Company; 1958 [1951]), p. 195 et passim.

164

D.B. Davis, op. cit., pp. 452, 454, et passim. All four of the pre-Enlightenment thinkers most prominently identified with the polygenetic hypothesis aroused the ire of Rome: Paracelsus was periodically hounded by it throughout his career, which is one of the reasons he won the title Lutherus medicorum; Bruno in 1592 and Lucilio Vanini a generation later were burnt by Catholic authorities; and Isaac de La Peyrere only avoided the same fate by recanting both his pre-Adamite heresy and his Protestant leanings in 1656. See: Anna M. Stoddart, Life of Paracelsus, Theophrastus Von Hohenheim, 1493-1541 (London: John Murray, 1911), p. 265 et passim; J. Lewis McIntyre, Giordano Bruno (London: The Macmillan Company, 1903), pp. 267-68 et passim; Cesare Serafini,

Guilo Cesare Vanini (Rome: Editoriale Galileo Gaililei, 1914), pp. 86-91 et passim; and David Rice McKee, "Isaac de La Peyrere: A Precursor of Eighteenth-Century Critical Deists," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LIX (June, 1944), 458-59. On the rather more tardy Protestant recoil against such ideas, see also Jordan, op. cit., pp. 229, 231, et passim.

165

Voltaire, who revived classical theories linking the Jews with leprous Egyptians and enslaved Ethiopians, was sure that they, no less than the Negroes, constituted "une espece d'hommes inferieure." See: Oeuvres completes de Voltaire (Paris: Garnier-Moland, 1963), XI, 223; I. Poliakov, "Racism in Europe," in Caste and Race: A Comparative Approach, ed. Anthony de Reuck and Julie Knight ("Ciba Foundation"; London: J.A. Churchill, 1967), pp. 224, 233; and Hertzberg, loc. cit.

166

For classical theories positing the multiple origins of the human race as well as demeaning primitive peoples as subhumans fit only for slavery, and for the role they played in conditioning European response to black Africans as well as red Indians, see: Sikes, op. cit., pp. 28-30, 50-54; Thomas Cole, Democritus and the Sources of Greek Anthropology ("American Philological Association Manuscripts," XXV; n.p.: Western Reserve Press, 1967), p. 181; Kluckhohn, op. cit., p. 31; Thorndike, A History of Magic and Experimental Science, op. cit., IV, 533; J.S. Slotkin (ed.), Readings in Early Anthropology ("Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology," No. 40; Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1965), pp. 40-43; Margaret T. Hodgen, Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964), pp. 234-35; and Lewis Hanke, Aristotle and the American Indians: A Study in Race Prejudice in Medieval World (London: Hollis Carter, 1959), p. 44 et passim. For the more obvious impact of the discovery of "new worlds" and peoples, see: McKee, op. cit., p. 467; Slotkin, loc. cit.; Hodgen, op. cit., pp. 272-73; and Richard Popkin, History of Scepticism From Erasmus to Descartes (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum and Company, 1960), p. 51.

167

Moses Gaster (comp.), Studies and Texts in Folklore, Music, Medieval Romance, Hebrew Apocrypha and Samaritan Archaeology (London: Maggs Brothers, 1925-1928), II, 1052-056. On the relatively minor place which mysticism and such esoteric doctrines as metempsychosis occupy within the Talmud itself, see: Husik, op. cit., pp. xvi, 167, 303; Montefiore and Lowe (comps.), op. cit., pp. 660-63, and Ernst Muller, History of Jewish Mysticism (Oxford: East and West Library, 1946), pp. 122-23.

168

A.E. Waite, The Holy Kabbalah: A Study of Secret Tradition in Israel (London: Williams and Norgate, n.d.), p. 329.

169

Ibid., p. 531; The Zohar, trans. Harry Sperling and Maurice Simons (London: Rebecca Bennet, 1931), I, 246, 249.

170

Ginzberg, op. cit., I, 50, 123, V, 65-66, 152, 201-03; Scholem, op. cit., p. 243 et passim; Altmann, Studies in Religion, Philosophy, and Mysticism (New York: Cornell University Press, 1969), p. 195 et passim; J. Abelson, Jewish Mysticism: An Introduction to the Kabbalah (New York: Hermon Press, 1969 [1913]), p. 133. See also Saadia Gaon's disapproving comment on the "underground" popularity among Jews of the belief in the transmigration of souls and the return of the evil and ignorant in animalistic forms; Book of Beliefs and Opinions, trans. Samuel Rosenblatt ("Yale Judaica Series," Vol. I; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), pp. 259-60.

171

For parallels in the patristic writings, see: Ginzberg, op. cit., V, 66, 152; and George Boas, Essays on Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages (New York: Octagon Books, 1966), p. 54. Averroes' doctrine that only the philosopher possesses the spark of divinity and an immortal soul, while the average man is akin to the animal in that his unenlightened soul expires at death, was an heretical outgrowth of similar anthropomorphic beliefs adhered to by one school of Moslem theologians. For Averroes' followers among the Jews, see Joseph Sarachek, Don Isaac Abravanel (New York: Bloch, 1938), pp. 38, 121.

172

Joseph Leon Blau, The Christian Interpretation of the Cabala in the Renaissance (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), passim. Translations of some key passages from Paracelsus, Bruno, Vanini, and La Peyrere are conveniently available in Slotkin (ed.), op. cit., pp. 42-43, 80-82. More extensive passages from the first three are rendered into English in T. Bendysh, "The History of Anthropology," in the Anthropological Society of London's Memoirs for the years 1863-64, I (London: Trubner and Company, 1865), 352-55, 378-80. Paracelsus' treatise on "Nymphs, Sylphs, Pygmies, and Salamanders, and Other Creatures" is available in full in a translation by Henry E. Sigerist in Four Treatises of Theophrastus Von Hohenheim Called Paracelsus, ed. idem (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1941), pp. 223-53; whereas La Peyrere's Pre-Adamite was anonymously translated and published in London within a year of after the Latin version first appeared in 1655. Bruno, who

supplemented his imperfect knowledge of Hebrew with Latin translations of the Cabala by Reuchlin and Cornelius Agrippa, was frank about his anthropology's indebtedness to ideas which, with some exaggeration, he called "commonplace among the Jews." Paracelsus, who preceded Bruno in advancing the idea of "another Adam," was familiar with the same sources, and his debt to them, though not explicitly admitted, was obvious. For the impact of Jewish mystical lore on both these thinkers, see, in addition to the references given in this note, those cited in note 162 supra.

173

For a provocative statement of this thesis, see Geoffrey Barraclough's review essay in the New York Review, XIV (21 May 1970), 12-17. On Spengler's characterization, see H. Stuart Hughes, Oswald Spengler: A Critical Estimate (rev. ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962), pp. 28, 81-82, et passim.

174

The Song of Roland, trans. Frederick Bliss Luquiens (New York: Macmillan Paperbacks, 1960), pp. 66, 88. On the encounter of the First Crusaders with the Sudani troops of Fatimid Egypt as well as with other dark-skinned Africans, which may have inspired the aversion that became a stock theme in chivalric romances, see: Steven Runciman, A History of the Crusades (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951-54), I, 279, II, 89; and Edward C. Armstrong, "Old French Acoport, 'Ethiopian'," Modern Philology, XXXVIII (February, 1941), 243-50. Later mock epochs burlesqued not only the credulous faith in the Christian Ethiopian kingdom of Prester John entertained by medieval balladeers, but also their preference for swarthy Moors and black pagans as villains -- the use of which as foils was reduced to absurdity by one eighteenth-century Italian verse satirist who had an army of belligerent pygmies ("inumano Negrita") pose "the threat to Christendom" against which the heroes of his poem must contend; see William W. Comfort, "The Saracen in Italian Epoch Poetry," PMLA, LIX (December, 1944), p. 907.

175

The Travels of Marco Polo, trans. Roland Latham (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958), pp. 275-76. The Venetian did not visit Zanzibar; but the vividness of his description leaves little doubt that it reflects an actual encounter with the black slaves from there who were imported by the peoples of Southeast Asia and even the Chinese. See: Henry A. Hart, Marco Polo: Venetian Adventurer (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), p. 154; and Pankhurst, An Introduction to the Economic History of Ethiopia, op. cit., pp. 336-87.

176

Janson, op. cit., pp. 55-56, 65, et passim.

177

Slotkin, (ed.), op. cit., pp. 5-6; Janson, op. cit., pp. 84-89.

178

Baron, SRHJ, op. cit., IX, v, XII, iii; Americo Castro, The Structure of Spanish History, trans. Edmund L. King (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), pp. 158-76, 219-24, et passim.

179

Arnold J. Toynbee, A Study of History, I (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), 226; Evans, op. cit., pp. 14-15, 20, et passim; Ptolemy's Tetrabiblos ii.2, op. cit., pp. 121-25; Green, A Translation of Galen's Hygiene i.5, ii.7, op. cit., pp. 20, 75; Pseudo-Aristotle, Physiognomics 812ab, op. cit., p. 127; Hutton Webster, Ancient Civilization (New York, 1931), p. 16, and Gerlad Massey, A Book of Beginnings (London, 1881), I, 454, both cited in Gossett, op. cit., p. 461. Havelock Ellis was committed to the ludicrous thesis that there is an "objective standard of aesthetic beauty" dictating a near-universal recognition of the superior pulchritudinous endowments of "the fair type of women" who is the ornament of "the white peoples of European origin." His own magnum opus, however, in itself contains enough evidence to prove its untruth. See Studies in the Psychology of Sex, Vol. IV: Sexual Selection in Man (Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Company, 1927), pp. 142-46, 176-77, 183, et passim.

180

Thorlief Roman, Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), pp. 84-89.

181 Ibid., pp. 146-49, 180; J. Houdoy, La Beaute Des Femmes Dans La Literature et Dans L'Art Du XII^e au XVI^e Siecle... (Paris, 1876), pp. 36-7. The saint in question was Godelive of Bruges. In light of the theological significance which the Christian Middle Ages attached to aesthetics, the apology offered by the Acta Sanctorum for her coloration is less frivolous than would appear. During the twelfth century, St. Hildegard of Bingen had broken new theological ground by arguing that Adam, before the Fall, had possessed a sanguine nature, manifesting itself in a bright countenance and rosy features, while after it he developed the melancholic disposition, the physical expression of which medieval writers described in terms like: "facies nigra," "luteique coloris," and "mud-colored." See: Janson, op. cit., pp. 87-88; and Klibansky, Panofsky, and Fritzl, op. cit., pp. 111, 290. Given such a scheme of things, it is understandable why medieval aesthetic theorists replaced the classical emphasis on form as the chief criterion of beauty with a new emphasis on light and brightness summed up in such words as claritas, splendor, lux, illustro, and resplendentia. See: Katherine Everett Gilbert

and Helmut Kuhn, A History of Aesthetics (Rev. ed.; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1953), p. 141; and J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought, and Art in France and the Netherlands in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954), pp. 267, 269. This intense color consciousness probably played an important role in inspiring the Western European nobility's dual claim that, on the one hand, they were the descendants of conquering reges-crinitos or "golden-haired kings" (either Goths, Franks, or -- of all things -- Trojan princes) while, on the other hand, their ill-kempt and supposedly coarser-complexioned serfs were the offsprings of the cursed Ham. See: John Fortescue, De Laudibus Legum Anglie, ed. and trans. S.B. Chrmas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1942), p.33; Anon., Cursor Mundi: (The Cursor of the World), ed., Richard Morris (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company; 1893), I, 126-36; D.B. Davis, op. cit., p. 97; Jordan, op.cit., p. 257; Eric Voegelin, The New Science of Politics: An Introduction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), pp. 45-46; Frederick Hertz, Nationalism in History and Politics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 57; Jacques Barzun, The French Race: Theories of Its Origins and Their Social and Political Implications (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), passim; Jean Bodin, Method for the Easy Comprehension of History, trans. Beatrice Reynolds (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), p. 363 et passim; and Jones, loc. cit.

182

Houdoy, op. cit., pp. 38-39; Ellis, op. cit., p. 179.

183

David C. Douglas, The Norman Achievement, 1050-1100 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 123-24, 131, 199, et passim; Castro, op. cit., 158-76 et passim. For an admirable, short summary, see H.R. Trevor-Roper, The Rise of Christian Europe (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World; 1965), pp. 118-20.

184

Ellis, The Soul of Spain (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, n.d.), p. 79.

185

Bodin was astonished that "Spanish princes" should claim descent from "barbarians"; see his Method..., loc. cit. For an interesting discussion of the interplay of race ideas and class imperatives in defining the Spanish conception of honor, see Henry Kamen, The Spanish Inquisition (London: Weidenfeldt and Nicolson, 1965), pp. 135-36.

186

Ellis, Soul of Spain, op. cit., pp. 76-79; idem, Studies in

the Psychology of Sex, loc. cit., pp. 146-47, 181. Freyre himself limits his generalizations to Portugal, refusing to make blanket statements about the "Iberian" character. See his Brazil: An Interpretation (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), pp. 18-21; and also his The Masters and the Slaves, trans. Samuel Putnam, (abridged; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), pp. 18, 162, 166. For a critique of Freyre's position, see C.R. Boxer, Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire ("University of Virginia Lectures," 1962; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), passim.

187

Ellis, Studies of the Psychology of Sex, loc. cit., pp. 149-51, 179; Houdoy, op. cit., p. 40 et passim; Gilbert and Kuhn, op. cit., p. 114; Jacob Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, trans. S.G. Middlemore (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958), II, 292, 340, 342; Ruth Kelso, Doctrine for the Renaissance Lady (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), pp. 193-96; Baldassare Castiglioni, The Book of the Courtier, trans. Leonard Eckstein Opdycke (New York: Horace Liveright, 1929), pp. 290-95.

188

The psychological impact of living for centuries amidst a sea of generally fair-haired Gentiles no doubt was chiefly responsible for slowly "Teutonizing" the Ashkenazim's color preferences. But intermarriage, even though it did not take place on a significant scale before the nineteenth century, probably also had something to do with it; see Juan Comas' discussion of "the variability of...somatic characteristics of the misnamed Jewish Race," in his Racial Myths ("Race Questions in Modern Science"; Unesco, 1958), p. 30. (Even the most diverse and far-flung branches of the Jewish people, however, show more evidence of a common, Eastern Mediterranean "racial" origin than Comas is willing to admit; see, for example, A.E. Mourant, The Distribution of the Human Blood Groups [Oxford: Blackwell Science Publications, 1954], pp. 70-74.) For treatments of the strong Hispanic emphasis on limpieza or "purity" of blood and religion, as well as of its parallel among the Sephardim, see: Henry Charles Lee, A History of the Inquisition in Spain (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922 [1906-07]), II, 285-314; Kamen, op. cit., 177-36; Castro, op. cit., pp. 489, 524-27; and J.H. Elliot, Imperial Spain, 1469-1716 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), pp. 213-16. Almost four centuries after the Great Expulsion, Isaac Mayer Wise attributed the continued adherence to Judaism of the Sephardim's American descendants to the uninterrupted workings of the same pride in birth:

"They are very proud of their descent. They lay the greatest stress on the genealogical tree. Hence Jewish history is of prime importance in their eyes. They like to hear about the Jewish worthies of afore-time.

The princes of Judah and the heroes of the olden days are of greatest interest to them, because their blood flows through the veins of the present generation of Jews. Ancestral pride of birth has been beaten out of the German and the Polish Jews with whip and knout; but it has persisted in these American Portuguese." (See Reminiscences by Isaac M. Wise, trans. David Philipson [Cincinnati: Leo Wise and Company, 1901], p. 216.)

189

Castro, op. cit., p. 571; Graetz, op. cit., III, 229, IV, 389; Boxer, Dutch Seaborne Empire, op. cit., p. 129; Cecil Roth, A History of the Marranos (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1941), p. 249.

190

Sarachek, op. cit., pp. 19, 48, 85-86, et passim; Barzilay, op. cit., p. 120; B. Netanyahu, Don Isaac Abravanel (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968 [1953]), pp. 97, 100, 142, 154.

191

Sarachek, op. cit., p. 26.

192

Pirke De Rabbi Eliezer xxiii, op. cit., pp. 172-73.

193

Ibid., the notes thereto.

194

Rudolph Glanz, The Jew in Old American Folklore (New York: By the author with the assistance of the Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1961), p. 7.

195

The idea, which has since become a sociological commonplace, that the Negro in the United States has acted as a lightning rod siphoning off prejudices that would otherwise be vented at the expense of the Jew was first advanced more than a century ago, by the J.J. Benjamin, a world-travelling Jew from the Balkans. See his Three Years in America, 1859-62, trans. Charles Renikoff (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956), I, 76; and also: Tr. W. Adorno et al., The Authoritarian Personality ("Studies in Prejudice"; New York: Science Editions, John Wiley and Sons; 1964 [1950]), Part II, pp. 824-25; and Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz, Dynamics of Prejudice: A Psychological and Sociological Study of Veterans (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), pp. 41-42 et passim.

196

Janson, op. cit., p. 119. For the racist content of medieval anti-Semitism, see: Montefiore and Lowe, op. cit., p. 626; Trachtenberg, The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern Antisemitism (New York: Yale University Press, 1947), pp. 50-52 et passim; A. Lukyn Williams, Adversus Judaeos: A Bird's-Eye View of Christian Apologia Until the Renaissance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), p. 387; Klibansky, Panofsky, and Fritzl, op. cit., pp. 131-32; Joseph Reider, "Jews in Medieval Art," in Essays on Antisemitism, ed. Koppel S. Pinson (New York: Conference on Jewish Relations, 1946), pp. 97-102; and also the discussion in note 75 supra.

197

Cecil Roth, A History of the Jews in England (3d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 155. Though estimates vary widely, the most reliable place the Jewish component of the Iberian Peninsula's population prior to 1492 at 200,000 to 250,000, some three percent of the total. This figure, however, does not include the perhaps even greater number of Jewish converts -- both voluntary and forced, sincere and feigning -- to Christianity. Of two hundred thousand Spanish Jews who up to 1492 had not taken this path, three out of four responded to the cruel choice of baptism or expulsion which the Spanish Crown forced upon them by opting for exile. See: Castro, op. cit., p. 509; and Lea, op. cit., I, 142.

198

Kayserling, op. cit., pp. 90, 93-95. For the refuges the Spanish Jews found in Ottoman Turkey and the Balkans, in the city states of Italy and Southern Germany (which, however, also expelled them eventually), and later in the Netherlands and England, see Roth, A History of the Marranos, op. cit., passim.

199

Graetz, op. cit., IV, 197-98, 389; Elliot, op. cit., p. 95.

200

Oliver and Fage, op. cit., p. 118.

201

Roger B. Merriam, The Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and in the New (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), I, 150, 152, II, 188-89.

202

Arnold Wiznitzer, "The Jews in the Sugar Industry of Colonial Brazil," Jewish Social Studies, XVIII (July, 1956), 189; D.B. Davis, op. cit., p. 42 et passim.

203

Wiznitzer, op. cit., pp. 189-98.

204

Ibid.; Oliver and Fage, op. cit., pp. 118, 120.

205

Wiznitzer, loc. cit.; James Duffy, Portugal in Africa ("Penguin African Library"; Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 35; Samuel Usque, Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel, trans. Martin A. Cohen (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication of America, 1965), pp. 201-202.

206

Graetz, op. cit., IV, 371; Roth, A History of the Marranos, op. cit., p. 55.

207

Ibid.; Cohen (trans.), Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel, op. cit., Introduction, p. 5, et passim; Boxer, Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire, op. cit., p. 38
In the neighborhood of 100,000 of the Jews expelled from Spain sought refuge in Portugal. The record of the Portuguese monarchy toward them is one of unrelieved perfidy. Its "grocer kings" impressed Jews and New Christians into its colonizing enterprises but denied them the right to freely emigrate. Finally, in 1497, they forced the Jews to convert en masse rather than allowing so many talented subjects to depart with at least their faith intact as had the fanatical Spanish monarchs. As a consequence, Portugal, whose capital was to become ten percent black by 1550, acquired a Marrano population of twenty percent -- making it both the most Negro and the most "Jewish" country in Europe. See: Wiznitzer, Jews in Colonial Brazil (Morningside Heights, New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 1; and Pankhurst, An Introduction to the Economic History of Ethiopia, op. cit., p. 386. Critics of Portuguese, from the sixteenth century on, used these facts to brand them a "Jewish race" (Erasmus' characterization) and a "nation of kaffirs." See: Trevor-Roper, Historical Essays (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966), pp. 42-43; and Boxer, The Golden Age of Brazil, 1695-1750: The Growing Pains of a Colonial Society (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 370.

208

Wiedner, op. cit., pp. 48-51; Charles Verlinden, The Beginnings of Modern Colonization: Eleven Essays With an Introduction, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1970), pp. 234-35. During the 1570's, a series of slave uprisings disrupted Sao Thome's sugar industry at the same time its supremacy as a slaving entrepot was being overshadowed by the newly-founded port of Luanda in Angola; see Penrose, op. cit.,

pp. 160-61.

209

Wiedner, loc. cit.; Wiznitzer, "Sugar Industry," op. cit., p. 189.

210

Ibid., p. 190; idem, Jews in Colonial Brazil, op. cit., pp. 6, 40, 43 et passim; Boxer, Dutch Seaborne Empire, op. cit., p. 130 et passim; idem, Golden Age of Brazil, op. cit., p. 4; Pieter Geyl, The Netherlands in the Seventeenth Century, Part II (London: Ernest Benn, 1964 [1936]), p. 372 et passim.

211

Daniel P. Mannix with the collaboration of Malcolm Cowley, Black Cargoes: A History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1518-1865 (New York: Compass Books, the Viking Press, 1962), pp. 75-79, 141-52. For the popularity of the theory that the Ten Commandments did not hold south of the Equator, see Boxer, Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire, op. cit., pp. 87-88. For the peculiar breed of Africanized Europeans known as pumbeiros (literally: "chicken catchers") who did business off the West African Coast, dealing in slaves and other commodities, see: Wiener, op. cit., II, 112, 116; and Boxer, Golden Age of Colonial Brazil, op. cit., p. 5.

212

Wiznitzer, Jews in Colonial Brazil, op. cit., pp. 52-53, 83-85, 129, et passim.

213

Even after turning against the traffic, the pious eighteenth-century slaving captain John Newton could write, "I never knew sweeter or more frequent hours of divine communion than on the last two voyages to Guinea"; he is quoted in Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery (New York: Russell and Russell, 1961), pp. 42-43. On Querida, see Wiznitzer, Jews in Colonial Brazil, op. cit., p. 46.

214

Boxer, Dutch Seaborne Empire, op. cit., pp. 129-31; Roth, A History of the Marranos, op. cit., p. 248 et passim; Semen Markovich Dubnov, History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, trans. I. Friedländer (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1916), I, 138-87.

215

Werner Sombart, The Jews and Modern Capitalism, trans. H. Epstein (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1951), pp. xxxiii, 13, et passim. For a Jewish echo of Sombart's claims, see, for example, Louis Herrman, A History of the Jews of South Africa

(Johannesburg: Jewish Board of Deputies, 1935), p. 41 et passim.

216

Sombart, op. cit., p. 13.

217

By the middle decades of the seventeenth century, the Jewish population of Amsterdam was approaching 5,000. The majority, of course, did not enjoy the affluence of the Dutch-Jewish financiers. Indeed, the Ashkenazim especially arrived in a state of dire poverty from which they had great difficulty in removing themselves -- in large part, because of still-prevailing medieval guild restrictions that denied them the right to become mechanics or retail merchants. Acute poverty was one of the reasons hundreds were willing to uproot themselves a second time and try their luck in the Dutch possessions in the New World. See: Boxer, Dutch Seaborne Empire, op. cit., pp. 129, 131; and Wiznitzer, Jews in Colonial Brazil, op. cit., pp. 59, 130, et passim.

218

Boxer, Dutch Seaborne Empire, op. cit., p. 130.

219

Roth, A History of the Marranos, op. cit., pp. 244, 392; Herbert I. Bloom, The Economic Activities of the Jews of Amsterdam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (New York: Kennikat Press, 1969 [1937]), pp. 125-26 et passim.

220

Boxer, Dutch Seaborne Empire, op. cit., p. 21.

221

Wiznitzer, Jews in Colonial Brazil, op. cit., p. 53; Kayserling, op. cit., 128-32.

222

Boxer, loc. cit.

223

Wiznitzer, Jews in Colonial Brazil, op. cit., pp. 52-59, 65, et passim.

224

The numbers involved were large only in relative terms. Dutch Brazil's total population was under 13,000; of these, some 7,000 were white -- perhaps half of whom, however, were military personnel and their dependents. This means that the peak Jewish population of 1450, which was reached in 1645, constituted just half of the colony's 2900 white civilians. The other half

was made up primarily of Catholics -- who posed the same kind of subversive threat to the Dutch as had the crypto-Jews to the Portuguese. See ibid., pp. 59, 85, 129, et passim.

225

Ibid., p. 129.