

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE USE OF THE TERMS
ΑΙΘΙΟΣ AND *ΑΙΘΙΟΠΙΑ* IN GREEK LITERATURE
FROM HOMER TO LYCOPHRON.**

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Abstract

The Greeks and Romans were acquainted with dark skinned people from Africa from an early stage. It has been generally accepted that such people were referred to as Αἰθίοπες by the Greeks, and modern commentators have accepted the term to be a synonym of the English term 'Negro'. Such an assumption ignores the wide variety of connotations associated with the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία. Furthermore, the trend in scholarship in the field of race relations in antiquity has been to study the interaction between Greeks and foreigners based on implicit, and often invalid, theory. The aim of this study is to examine the uses of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία in the context of Greek ideology.

Previous studies in the field have employed naive semiological approaches to the issue of racism in Greece and Rome, whereby references to Negroes have simply been weighed up in order to determine the extent of negative attitude toward Negroes in antiquity. In this regard, the following study departs radically from the approaches of its predecessors in that, although it is not intended as a narrow linguistic study of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία, the focus of the examination concerns the semantics of these terms and the connotations thereof. Through an analysis of these terms in their ideological context, not only do we gain an insight into the processes which underlie Greek perceptions of group boundaries, but we may gain a deeper understanding of our own perceptions of race and racism.

The study is confined to pre-Hellenistic literature (although later works are often used to illuminate Classical and Archaic passages) since it was the perceptions of the authors from this period which shaped the ideas of subsequent authors. In addition, during the Hellenistic period, the focus of Greek literary activity shifted from Athens to Alexandria, allowing Hellenistic authors far more contact with Negroes than was enjoyed by their predecessors. For the purpose of this study, Lycophron's *Alexandria* has been assumed to be the last pre-Hellenistic work, although this point may be debatable.

Declaration

I, Adrian John Ryan, hereby declare that the work submitted is entirely my own unless so indicated in the text, and that no part of this work has been submitted for a degree at any other University.

Signature: _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Ryan', is written over a dashed line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Preface

The aim of this study is to examine the meaning of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία as they were used by Greek authors from Homer to Lycophron. Although the denotative meanings of the terms and the various senses in which they were used form an integral part of this study, the primary focus is on connotative meaning, specifically on the construct of the Ethiopians in the Greek mind and the various connotations associated with them in the context of Greek geographical, religious and socio-political thought.

It seems appropriate to mention the various conventions employed throughout the study before the introduction in which they are used. The terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία are used throughout exclusively to denote the sign vehicles or signifiers used by the Greeks to refer to the Ethiopians. Similarly, 'Ethiopian' and 'Ethiopia' are used to refer to the construct encoded by the sign vehicles Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία respectively. The terms 'Black', 'Coloured' and 'White' refer to the modern social constructs while 'Negro', 'Negroid', 'mulatto' and 'Caucasian' refer to people of these somatic types respectively. The term 'Negro' is used of people with pronounced Negroid features, whereas Negroid describes both mulattos and Negroes. As regards dates, 'Archaic' will be used to refer to the period from the end of the dark ages to c.480 BC, while 'Classical' refers to the period which roughly coincided with the Athenian domination of the Mediterranean, from c.480 BC to the end of the fourth century BC. Authors who wrote after the period with which this study is concerned are referred to as 'later' authors. 'Late authors' will be used exclusively to refer to authors writing after the first century AD. Occasionally the term 'early' is used to denote authors from the Archaic period. As regards archaeological evidence, works of art have been referenced by their Museum location and details of attribution have been provided if available. Sources of illustrations have been provided within curly brackets, where appropriate.

As regards referencing in footnotes, the Harvard system has been employed. Furthermore, page numbers have been given in parenthesis after the date of publication, separated therefrom by a colon. In the case of references which apply to the entirety of a work, no page numbers are provided. In such cases the references

have, for the most part, not been intended to provide sources of further clarification on a particular point, but have been rather included to give credit to the originator of a concept or theory. In addition, parentheses enclosing further parentheses are indicated by square brackets.

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Chapter One : Introduction.

'The use then, of words, is to be sensible markers of ideas; and the ideas they stand for are their proper and immediate signification.'

John Locke.¹

Few words have been misused as much as those which serve to separate groups of people from one another. Such words have little logical function² yet enjoy such widespread use as to make racial awareness one of the primary facets of personal identity. Our society is one in which divisions along racial and cultural lines appear natural, with many people never questioning the validity of such divisions, assuming these distinctions to be metaphysical rather than conventional. Yet in each country, political, cultural and scientific notions have influenced people's perception of racial divisions and seemingly arbitrary characteristics may be considered prominent amongst people of different cultures. Thus, in South Africa, Blackness is indicated by various somatic features, amongst which are dark skin and black tightly curled hair, whereas for many Americans, membership to this group requires simply an ancestor who was considered Black. In Brazil, the system is even more complicated, as there are three separate categories of people who are regarded as being Black.³ In addition, there is the case of apartheid South Africa, in which many 'non-White' foreigners were often given the almost raceless distinction of being classified as 'honorary white'. Amongst such confusion, it is surprisingly easy to consider our present perception of race as having been valid for all historical periods, and to examine interaction between peoples of different colours, from other periods in history and in other geographical locations, as though they had the same preconceptions that we do. It is through the explicit understanding of the meaning of terms which concern race and racism that we may gain a deeper understanding of how our own methods of group inclusion and exclusion operate.

The ancient Greeks and Romans had contact with people of various hues. There were dark haired people amongst the Romans and Greeks, and people depicted as amber

¹ Locke (1690: iii.2.1).

² For example, it is almost impossible to tell the logical meaning of the terms 'Black', 'White' and 'mulatto' save on highly subjective grounds.

³ Dzidzienyo (1987: 28).

skinned on vase paintings.⁴ There were also people whose complexions were fairer than those of the Romans and Greeks (for example, the Gauls and Thracians) and even people whom we would now call 'Negroid'. For the most part, this last group of people were called Αἰθίοπες. However, to assume that the term Αἰθίοψ referred simply, or exclusively, to someone who would be referred to as Negroid nowadays, is to ignore the rich web of connotations that surround the term and the place associated with it, Αἰθιοπία. To put it simply, the term Αἰθίοψ is not a synonym for the modern term 'Black'.⁵ Not only was the term not exclusively used to denote peoples whom we would call 'Black', but the set of associations brought to mind by the mention of the Αἰθίοπες was vastly different for the Greeks from the set evoked by the mention of any number of words which we use today to denote people of colour.

1. A review of current literature: Placing the argument in its modern context.

A number of books and articles have been published in the area of race relations in Greece and Rome, and thus the proffering of yet another work in what may appear to be a saturated field needs some justification. It is useful to split 20th century work in this area into various schools, the most important two of which are the 'race prejudice school'⁶ and the 'anti-prejudice school'. The 'anti-prejudice' school insist that the inhabitants of ancient Greece and Rome were free of racial segregation and bias, and adherents of the 'race prejudice' school believe the contrary. For the most part, these are two sides of the same coin, since both sides seem to agree that the question of colour prejudice is a vital area of study in the field of race relations in ancient Greece and Rome. Before launching into a more general criticism of previous scholarship, it seems appropriate first of all to discuss the most important literature in the field.

1.1. Beardsley.

The first of the important works in English on the topic of race relations in ancient Greece is Grace Beardsley's *The Negro in Greek and Roman Civilisation*.⁷ Although Beardsley

⁴ Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Iv.3576. {Snowden (1976: fig.152)}.

⁵ Neither in the strict nor loose senses of the word.

⁶ The term 'race prejudice' is not meant to imply any prejudice on the part of the scholars concerned. The terminology simply follows that employed by Thompson (1989: 26).

⁷ Beardsley (1929).

offers no explanation of her methodology or aims,⁸ her book represents a landmark in the study of race relations in antiquity, owing mainly to the detailed nature of her analysis of the Negroid type in Greek and Roman art. Amongst other observations on the depiction of the Negroid type in Greek and Roman art, Beardsley suggests that there was some kind of racial prejudice amongst the Romans toward Negroid people⁹ (hence her categorisation as a member of the 'race prejudice' school by Lloyd Thompson¹⁰), but none on the part of the Greeks,¹¹ who seem to be more intrigued by the novel physiognomy and the legends of the Ethiopians of old.¹² Despite not having had the benefit of over sixty years of changing attitudes towards Blacks and the subject of race in general, Beardsley shows remarkable sensitivity in dealing with the subject, and still offers many useful ideas, even to the modern scholar.

Beardsley's study leaves a number of areas to be dealt with in more detail. Of foremost importance, and most relevant to this thesis, is the fact that from the outset she has assumed the term *Αἰθίοψ* to be synonymous with the modern English term 'Negro'.¹³ In addition, she has largely ignored the wealth of literary evidence from the Classical corpus.¹⁴ Of the twelve chapters, only chapters one and eleven specifically deal with written evidence, while six chapters deal with art. Throughout the remainder of the book, while employing literary evidence to support her theses, Beardsley concentrates heavily on iconographic evidence. The date of Beardsley's book is betrayed by her treatment of Greek perceptions of the Ethiopian type. In one example, she notes that 'The Negro, perhaps unfortunately, has always appealed to the comic side of the Caucasian' in response to her finding several depictions of the Negro to be comic.¹⁵ Such interpretations illustrate Beardsley's deep reliance on an implicit and dated theoretical framework, which Thompson refers to as 'defective methodology'.¹⁶ To avoid such pitfalls, it is imperative that the data be reviewed within the context of explicit modern and ancient theory, assuming from the

⁸ Beardsley (1929) has no introduction, and the four page preface (ix-xii) merely explains the reasoning behind her choice of subject matter and establishes a small number of conventions.

⁹ Beardsley (1929: 115; 119). See also Thompson (1989: 22-23) for a criticism of Beardsley (1929).

¹⁰ Thompson (1989: 26).

¹¹ Beardsley (1929: 37).

¹² Beardsley (1929: 20).

¹³ Beardsley (1929: xii).

¹⁴ This is despite Beardsley (1929: ix) herself claiming that she is supplementing the literary evidence with 'objects which show the type'.

¹⁵ Beardsley (1929: 21).

¹⁶ Thompson (1989: 23).

outset no correspondence between ancient perceptions of race and our own, unless backed by compelling evidence.

1.2. Snowden

Probably the most important and well known scholar in this field is Frank Snowden Jr, who has made numerous contributions to our understanding of this subject, most notably in his two books, *Blacks in Antiquity*¹⁷ and the broader ranging, but somewhat less technical, *Before Colour Prejudice*.¹⁸ In addition to these books, two important articles were published in the *LIMC*¹⁹ and the *Image of the Black in Western Art*.²⁰ With *Blacks in Antiquity*, Snowden provides a more thorough analysis of the literary evidence than Beardsley does, and employs a more explicit methodology, borrowing rather loosely from modern anthropological theory to support his claims. Although Snowden has attempted a thorough examination of the Negro in Greece and Rome in this work, there are two gaps left which his contributions to the field have not adequately addressed.

Most important in this regard is the fact that in both of his books, for the most part, Snowden does not properly address the problem of the meaning of the term Αἰθίοψ. It is assumed from an early stage in *Blacks in Antiquity* that the term Αἰθίοψ is a synonym for Black,²¹ although Snowden does not use the term 'Ethiopian' to refer to Negroid depictions in Greek and Roman art. As will be shown, the range of connotations associated with the modern term 'Black' and the Greek term Αἰθίοψ did not correspond exactly. On account of his assumption of an 'Ethiopian-Black' equivalence', Snowden does not distinguish between various uses of the term Αἰθίοψ and the situations in which these terms may be used. It seems to be assumed that the more subtle meanings of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία remain the same throughout lengthy periods. Yet, it is quite clear that words change meaning over time, especially as their use requires more meanings to be conveyed. Snowden only addresses the problem of the meaning of the term Αἰθίοψ in his contribution in *LIMC* I.²² Unfortunately, the entry concerned is not nearly long enough to cover all the connotations associated with the terms. The result is that there has not as yet been a

¹⁷ Snowden (1970).

¹⁸ Snowden (1983).

¹⁹ Snowden (1981).

²⁰ Snowden (1976).

²¹ Snowden (1970: 5).

²² Snowden (1981).

comprehensive study of the meaning of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία. Secondly, owing to the enormous scope covered by his two major works,²³ Snowden's analyses often appear superficial. For the most part, the Greek conception of the Ethiopian is not examined within the context of Greek political, geographical, literary and philosophical thought.

Beardsley and Snowden can be taken as examples of the 'race prejudice' and 'anti-prejudice' schools respectively. As Lloyd Thompson points out, both these schools adopt a similar methodology in two important ways. First, no explicit definition of race prejudice is provided and the assumption is made that our idea of race was a meaningful construct to the ancient Greeks and Romans.²⁴ Secondly, a crude semiological approach has been adopted by the vast majority of those for whom this issue is significant, by means of which evidence for and against racial prejudice is weighed up, and in some cases evidence contrary to the author's thesis is simply ignored.²⁵ Regarding the first point, as Lloyd Thompson points out, there is an unconscious tendency amongst the modern scholars to assume that the concept of race amongst the ancients was similar to ours.²⁶ Our ideas on race have not only been shaped by colonialism, but by scientific and religious theory²⁷ and also by the responses to such racism. Without exposure to such influences, it is unlikely that the Romans and Greeks would have developed a similar racial ideology to ours. Thus, the ancient treatment of foreigners has to be taken into account in any modern analysis of their treatment of different races, particular care being given to the examination of the interaction of these groups within the framework of the ancient perceptions of race.

The study of Negroes in ancient Greece relies heavily on the term Αἰθίοψ, which has often been taken to be a synonym for 'Negro'. In effect, this is doubly problematic, since not only is the term 'Negro' open to interpretation (as has been shown in the opening paragraphs), but the term Αἰθίοψ itself has a number of possible meanings and, as shall be made evident, is used to serve a variety of purposes, literary and otherwise. There is therefore little scope for the meanings of these two terms to coincide completely. The result of the concentration on the issue of racial prejudice and the existence of a 'colour

²³ Snowden (1970; 1983).

²⁴ Beardsley (1929) and Snowden (1970; 76; 81; 83) do not attempt to define race or Greek perceptions of group boundaries.

²⁵ Thompson (1989: 22).

²⁶ Thompson (1989: 21).

²⁷ For example Darwinism and Aryanism.

bar' has meant that little has been done in the way of defining the term Αἰθίοψ, either as a denotative term, or as part of a system of connotations.

1.3. Thompson.

Although Thompson is not directly concerned with the periods covered in this thesis, he has contributed greatly to the field of race relations in antiquity by interpreting the literary evidence within the context of Roman ideology and modern social theory.²⁸ The result is that many passages which have been used as fuel for the 'race-prejudice' or 'anti-prejudice' schools are reinterpreted, offering compelling new insights into the relationship between Romans and Blacks. Unfortunately, Lloyd Thompson has not applied his methodology to the Greek world, leaving open a vital gap.

As is the case with Snowden, Thompson intends to show that we have no basis for assuming any colour prejudice on the part of the ancients (particularly the Romans in Thompson's case). Thompson's thesis rests on his insistence that our modern conception of race does not coincide with any concept held by the Romans. Instead, Thompson argues that the 'deference relevant properties' which entitle one to social status did not include somatic characteristics such as dark or light skin and flatness of nose any more than it included ugliness, beauty or obesity. In addition, ethnicity was only a factor for the Romans in so far as this related to proximity to Roman norms or even Rome itself, as in the case of a person's *origo*.²⁹

Thompson is rightly critical of current scholarship on a number of issues, but many times, he is overly critical. The methodology of Snowden, Beardsley and others is referred to as 'defective' since current perceptions of race are taken as the context within which race relations in antiquity are examined.³⁰ Although this is true to some degree, Snowden and Beardsley require some vindication on the grounds that despite these criticisms, Snowden has done more than any other author to increase our knowledge of Negroes in antiquity through the vast amount of primary evidence he has collected. Beardsley, on the other hand, shows a remarkably enlightened approach to the subject for her time.³¹

²⁸ In Thompson (1989).

²⁹ Thompson (1989: 143).

³⁰ Thompson (1989: 23).

³¹ For example, Beardsley (1929: 20) challenges the received view that Negroes in antiquity were used mostly as prophylactic objects.

2. Aims and Scope

2.1 Aims

As has been pointed out, there has been little interest in gaining an understanding of the meaning of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία. The aim of this study is to provide a detailed description of the Αἰθίοψ as he/she is portrayed in Greek literature prior to the Hellenistic period. Although the issue of colour prejudice has not been ignored, it is not the purpose of this study to concentrate thereon, as there are many aspects of the Αἰθίοψ in Greek literature which deserve more attention than hereto offered.³² It is hoped that this study will bring about a deeper understanding of the concept held by the pre-Hellenistic Greeks of these people. In addition, the way in which the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία are used will be examined, particularly within the context of Greek ideological constructs and appropriate modern theories.

2.2. Scope.

The period covered will be that from Homer to Lycophron.³³ The rationale behind the selection of so narrow a period is that there needs to be an reasonable ammount of primary evidence with a fair degree of homogeneity. Authors of the Classical period would have shared similar experiences, and would have been using established forms to convey their messages. This makes their references to Ethiopians understandable within the confines of their respective genres. Besides this, the Archaic and Classical periods offer a good starting point for an initial study into the meaning of the term Αἰθίοψ. This lays the way for other possible studies along similar lines, covering different periods of classical antiquity.

The relationships between the authors of the Archaic and Classical periods (and before) to the Ethiopians and the Hellenistic authors to the same, are vastly different. After the fragmentation of Alexander's empire, the focus of scholarship shifted from Athens to various centres around the near east, the most important site of literary growth being Alexandria. This is problematic in that the Alexandrians would have had a lot more contact with Negroes, and with people from sub-Saharan Africa, which was to become known as Αἰθιοπία. The Alexandrians would presumably have had a lot more contact with people

³² See Ch1.4 for more information of the areas of investigation ignored.

³³ This does not mean that authors from outside of this period will not be referenced. Often passages from the Hellenistic period and later serve to illuminate works from the Classical period, especially in view of the fact that certain constructs relating to the Ethiopians can be seen to survive into Hellenistic and later Greek literature.

whom they would have referred to as Αἰθίοπες than their Classical counterparts who would have relied more heavily on the reception of information from myth, literature, legend and artwork.

Secondly, much of the Greeks' concept of the Ethiopian, prior to the Hellenistic period, would have been received via myth. While the little contact the mainland Greeks had with the Ethiopians meant that it was relatively easy to reconcile received conceptions with physical evidence, the case is not the same for the Hellenistic authors, who would have had a more concrete image of the Ethiopian to reconcile. This process of reconciliation of the received image of the Ethiopian with the image forced upon them by physical encounter is itself worthy of a complete study. But such a study is beyond the scope of this dissertation, considering such other complexities, such as the role of Rome in the shaping of Hellenistic attitudes towards Negroes (especially in the imperial period).

Lycophron, a writer of the early third century BC, has been chosen as the latest author to be dealt with for a number of reasons, both theoretical and practical. Lycophron is in many ways Hellenistic, being at once critic and poet, and tending towards obscurity as though his *Alexandria*³⁴ was intended to be enjoyed by a learned audience. It is generally recognised that Lycophron's obscurity lies in simple periphrasis, and that after substitution, the form of the work is quite conservative, showing no signs of being influenced by later literary forms.³⁵ Besides, there is evidence that the *Alexandria* is an Attic work, composed before Lycophron's move to Alexandria.³⁶ This is not to say that such an assertion is worthy of categorical support, but in the interest of completeness, Lycophron appears to be suitably ambiguous as to provide a useful boundary between the Hellenistic and Classical authors. In addition there are few references to the Ethiopian between the death of Alexander and the writing of the *Alexandria* so that a fair degree of homogeneity can be maintained.

³⁴ The issue of the dating of the *Alexandria* is a complex issue, but the beginning of the third century BC, or the end of the fourth century BC seems likely. See Mair (1960: 306-314).

³⁵ Mair (1960: 307).

³⁶ Some of these arguments concern Lycophron's glorification of Rome. An alternative explanation has been argued by Stephanie West (1984) who feels that such passages are the work of another hand.

3. Methodology and Theoretical Framework.

3.1. Theoretical Framework.

It is difficult to single out a particular approach that will offer a complete picture of race relations in the ancient world. As has been noted, previous studies have adopted a naive semiological approach in the analysis of such relations in classical antiquity. It is in this regard that this study differs most from its predecessors as the main thrust of this study concerns the semantics of the terms Αἰθίωψ and Αἰθιοπία. The field of semantics has, in the past few decades, been the centre of much debate concerning the appropriate methodology for the study of lexical meaning. The approach to meaning adopted in this work is eclectic, and this requires some justification. Thus, a brief critique of modern semantic theory follows, in which it is argued that these approaches would be insufficient in a study such as this.

The most significant philosophical debate concerning the study of word meaning surrounds the definitions of 'meaning'. Two kinds of semantic theory which have fallen out of favour are mentalist³⁷ theories, which held that the meaning of a term was conceptual,³⁸ and representational theories, in which it was assumed that words directly represented the things they denoted.³⁹ It seems fairly obvious that many words do not correspond to any objects at all, casting considerable doubt on the validity of naive representational theory. On the other hand, mentalist or ideational theories were attacked on two counts.⁴⁰ In the first instance, the notion that a scientific study could be carried out by introspection appears to be in strong opposition to the positivist foundation of much of twentieth century scientific enquiry. Furthermore, there appears to be a conception that mentalist theories rely on the premise that the concepts represented by words were based on logical definitions.⁴¹ It is clear that words do not correspond to strict logical concepts

³⁷ Also referred to as ideational theories by some.

³⁸ Early proponents of ideational theories include John Locke and Ferdinand de Saussure. Although Locke was an opponent of Descartes' theory of innate ideas, he nevertheless held that words stood for 'nothing but the ideas of him who uses them' [Lock (1690: iii.2.2)] and that 'the ideas that they (words) stand for are their immediate and proper signification.' [Locke (1690: iii.2.1)]. Saussure, on the other hand, believed that signs (words in this case) were bipartite 'psychological entities' [Saussure (1916: 66)]. Furthermore, Saussure qualifies his sign by mentioning that the word 'tree', for example, 'is called a sign only because it carries the concept of tree' [Saussure (1916: 67)]. Clearly, both these authors defined words on psychological and conceptual terms.

³⁹ Modern theorists refer to these as intensional and extensional theories respectively.

⁴⁰ For a brief critique of ideational and representational theories, see Cruse (1990: 145-7).

⁴¹ According to a logical model, an object is considered to belong to the group of things which could rightly be referred to by a word if it satisfied certain necessary and sufficient criteria which held for all members of such a group.

since, for example, a person need not know the sufficient criteria for membership to the group of things called fruit⁴² yet may be quite well equipped to judge whether or not the majority of edible objects fall into this category.⁴³

An alternative approach to word meaning that has been popular has been to examine the way in which a word relates to other words in a language.⁴⁴ Relations between words, such as antonymy, metonymy and hyponymy, can give some information as to how a word fits into a particular area of meaning or semantic field.⁴⁵ Furthermore, sense relations theory also relies on the syntagmatic relationships between words, that is, how words relate to each other in grammatical structures.⁴⁶ Unfortunately, such an approach is inappropriate for the purposes of this study for three reasons. First, the term Αἰθίοψ does not occur often enough in contexts which would allow one to study its relations to other words.⁴⁷ Furthermore, a study of the relations between the term Αἰθίοψ and other Greek proper nouns reveals the term to be too vague, polysemous and ambiguous⁴⁸ for such a study to provide meaningful results. Most importantly, such an

⁴² For example, they may not be certain about whether the tomato fits into such a category.

⁴³ In fact, contemporary proponents of the mentalist approach to semantics are acutely aware of such shortcomings [see for example, Murphy (1991) and Malt (1991: 54-57) who provides empirical evidence to support the notion that we do not perceive concepts in terms of sufficient and necessary criteria].

⁴⁴ For the purposes of this study, such approaches will be lumped under the title 'sense relations theory'. See Cruse (1990: 147f); Lyons (1968: 427-470); Malkmjar (1995: 390-395) for introductory explanations of sense relations theory. For a more thorough (and in some ways original) account, see Cruse (1986). The most important contributions to this approach to the study of meaning have come from Lyons (1977), Leech (1981) and Cruse (1986).

⁴⁵ Semantic fields are structured groups of words with related meanings [Cruse (1990: 163)]. Semantic field theory is in no way synonymous with sense relations theory, both having separate histories.

⁴⁶ For example, certain words may grammatically fit within a sentence, but the meaning of the sentence may be 'odd'. Such abnormalities offer significant information of the way in which words may interact with each other. For more information on syntagmatic relations, see Cruse (1990: 160-164).

⁴⁷ Although the Ethiopians are occasionally considered as being opposites of the Scythians and the Thracians (See, for example, Ch.3.3; 4.1), the Greek conception of both races was too vague for this relation to be thoroughly examined on the basis of sense relations theory.

⁴⁸ A vague term is one which can be widely applied, but does not constitute several different 'senses'. For example, the word 'thing' can be extremely widely applied without one ever getting the feeling that in each sentence it is being used as a different word. However, the term bachelor can refer to a person with the lowest academic degree and an unmarried male human. These senses of the term are distinct enough to constitute different meanings. Hence the term is polysemous. A term which has meanings which have apparent similarities is said to be ambiguous. In any event, the distinctions between the various forms of multiple meanings are to some degree arbitrary. See Lyons (1968: 405-7); Cruse (1986: 51-68; 1990: 151-153); Malkmjar (1995: 394) for further discussion. For the various senses of the term Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία, see Ch.3.2.2.1 (as regards location); 4.1.2 (as a synonym for Negro); 4.1.3 (as regards range of somatic types covered by the term); 6.2 (as regards the Ethiopians as a race).

approach can not cover all the aspects of meaning. For example, there is no way to illustrate the apparent association of the Ethiopian with Dionysus⁴⁹ by means of relations between words.

Another popular theory of semantics is the theory of universal semantics with its primary methodology of componential analysis. Universal semantics postulates the existence of primitive components which can be used to define every natural language. The philosophical speculations of such a possibility have been current for some time,⁵⁰ but the modern theory was put forward by Hjelmslev⁵¹ and eventually systematised by Katz and Fodor.⁵² Componential analysis involves the dissection of words into its primitive constituents by a process of factorisation.⁵³ Two important problems emerge: first, the process of factorisation requires too many other words to be taken into consideration and secondly, as is the case with sense relations theory, the method does not allow for some of the more subtle forms of meaning.⁵⁴

With the establishment of Psycholinguistics as a field of study, it became evident that empirical evidence could be used in mentalist approaches to the study of meaning.⁵⁵ There have been numerous studies in which it became obvious that there are mental structures which determine how people read meaning into words.⁵⁶ It is in view of such a resurgence of mentalist approaches to word meaning that a study such as the present can be pursued with confidence, although the study is not undertaken from within a strict psycholinguistic framework.⁵⁷ The study is particularly concerned with concepts, aiming

⁴⁹ See Ch.5.2.2.

⁵⁰ According to Lyons (1968: 472); Cruse (1990: 166).

⁵¹ Hjelmslev (1953).

⁵² Katz & Fodor (1964).

⁵³ Such an elaborate process is not suitable for explication in such a brief summary. A more detailed explanation can be found in Lyons (1968: 470-81).

⁵⁴ Such as the example of the Greek association of the Ethiopians with Dionysus discussed above.

⁵⁵ For example, Stanford and Garrod (1977) showed that certain words which are considered to be typical examples of a group are recalled more quickly than atypical examples when a sentence is being verified for correctness. This points to mental concepts called 'prototypes' which are typical examples of what a word should mean. Other less typical examples are compared with such a prototype.

⁵⁶ For a defence of the mentalist approach as regards Psycholinguistics, see Murphy (1991 esp. 22-27).

⁵⁷ It emerges that at least some of the recent attacks on mentalist approaches to semantics have been based on predisposition on the part of the respective authors. For example, Cruse (1990: 145) claims that it is implicit to mentalist theories that the mind has a clear concept associated with each word which would be called up each time a word is encountered. Using such a limited definition of mentalist semantics, Cruse summarily dismisses mentalist theory by stating that 'sober reflection' should cast doubt over the validity of such approaches. It is no coincidence that Cruse (1975; 1986;

to provide the reader with an understanding of the meaning of the terms Αἰθίωψ and Αἰθιοπία and the connotations associated therewith in the minds of the Greeks. In order to achieve this purpose a less technical framework has been adopted which it is hoped can accommodate all aspects of meaning with regard to the terms in question. In establishing such a framework, two kinds of meaning have been taken to be significant: connotative and logical meaning.

Connotative⁵⁸ meaning takes up, by far, the bulk of the present study. Exactly what is meant by the word 'connotation' is by no means clear, but in general, there appears to be a vague idea that connotation refers to secondary signals carried by a sign vehicle. Eco attempts to provide a more explicit explanation of connotations, claiming them to be further messages carried by a sign vehicle which are distinct from its denotative message.⁵⁹

In essence, if a word, and its logical meaning imply a further meaning, the latter is a connotation carried by the word. Eco argues against the idea that a connotation differs from a denotation simply by strengths of the binding between the denotations and connotations.⁶⁰ The true distinction between denotation and connotation is due to the convention whereby the sign is decoded or encoded.⁶¹ A sign vehicle may carry a wide variety of messages, as interpreted within different coding systems. Eco holds that the message encoded by a sign-vehicle is more aptly denoted by the term 'text' and the coding system is its context.⁶² Considering the complexities arising when decoding a sign, it is

1990) is a proponent of sense relations theories, noting in his entry in a dictionary of linguistics [Cruse (1990: 148)] that 'most advances in understanding linguistic semantics have been founded on the notion of sense, which must therefore be accorded a prominent place in the present chapter.' The chapter in question does not mention psycholinguistic approaches at all.

⁵⁸ Palmer (1981: 92-3) argues that connotation is not a useful term for two reasons. In the first instant, this is because it is often used to mean emotive meaning and it differs very little from cognitive meaning. Secondly, Palmer argues that connotation simply refers to beliefs people have about the referents of a word. However, Palmer has not been able to satisfactorily explain the significance of euphemisms, which have the same referents, but lack the same emotive power of the words they are intended to replace. Instead, he dismisses euphemisms claiming that they soon gain the same connotations of the terms they have replaced. What is ignored is the fact that at any given moment in time, a euphemism does not have the same connotative meaning as another less appropriate word for the same referent. The fact that the connotations of a euphemism change in time should not have any bearing on the argument, in the same way that the fact that denotative meanings of words change over time should not be used to prove that words have no denotative meaning. Leech (1981: 13), while aware of the fact that 'real world' knowledge is heavily reflected in the connotative value of a word, argues that a clear distinction must be made between 'real world' knowledge and connotation.

⁵⁹ The denotative meaning being identical to logical meaning in the case of words.

⁶⁰ Eco (1976: 57).

⁶¹ Eco (1976: 58).

⁶² Eco (1976: 59).

surprising that there has been a tendency amongst modern scholars to ignore the sign in its ideological context:⁶³ careful attention has not been paid to genre, to political, superstitious, social, religious and mythological preconceptions and to personal bias on the part of the respective sources. It is in these contexts that the sign vehicles Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία carry their various connotations, and consequently, it is these contexts that should be made as explicit as possible in any study attempting to determine the meaning of these terms.

The second aspect of meaning which is relevant to this study is logical meaning. Quite simply stated, logical (or ideational) meaning of a term is the meaning which allows the term to be negated. Thus, various connotations which are carried by a sign vehicle⁶⁴ can never form the sufficient basis for a term to be negated. For example, the very selective definition of cup might be given as a drinking vessel made of china which has a handle and weighs less than two hundred grams. Thus one might state that a given object is a cup and the truth of the statement would depend on whether the object complied with the criteria spelled out above. A person might similarly simply state that a given object complied with such criteria, and the truth value of such a proposition would be the same as if the statement had been 'this object is a cup'. For the purposes of this study, all other meanings of the term Αἰθίοψ have been taken to be connotative. As will become apparent, the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπες do not have only one logical meaning each. Each separate logical meaning for a term will henceforth be referred to as a sense of the respective term, and the criteria on which such senses are based will be called defining features.

3.2. Methodology.

Although the primary concern of the present study is literary, it is not only concerned with this kind of evidence. Iconographic evidence has played an important role in interpretations of race relations in classical antiquity for a number of modern scholars, and thus it cannot be completely ignored. In addition, the archaeological evidence very often provides illuminating evidence of what semantic traits the term Αἰθίοψ conveys, since the depictions in art tell us things about the Αἰθιοπες that would have been conveyed by the term Αἰθίοψ but which are not specifically mentioned in literature. Caution, however

⁶³ A criticism also levelled by Thompson (1989: 4-5).

⁶⁴ The phrase 'associated with' will often replace 'carried by' with regard to connotations.

should be taken when interpreting artwork as depicting Ethiopians. Since the concern of this study is not the perception of Blacks or dark-skinned peoples amongst ancient Greeks, but simply on the use of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία, not all depictions of black-skinned peoples will be taken to be of Ethiopians.⁶⁵ For this reason, the iconographical evidence should be handled with care, either by using figures which have been established to be likely Ethiopians,⁶⁶ or through the examination in these artefacts, of characteristics which relate directly to the Ethiopians.⁶⁷ Unlike the practice of previous commentators, it was felt that the cataloguing of numerous archaeological examples which depict salient characteristics is unnecessary in a study of this nature. Instead, carefully chosen examples will be used to illustrate these features.

4. Primary Categories and Secondary Categories.

A bifocal approach has been adopted as regards this study, whereby 'primary' and 'secondary' categories have been employed. The terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία readily bring up certain associations amongst modern scholars, along which lines study seems naturally to have followed. Modern literature in this field has concentrated heavily on the idea of racial prejudice, and consequently, categories were chosen accordingly. The terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία would have readily brought up a number of associated concepts in the Greek mind, and the chapter headings have been chosen along these lines. These have been termed 'primary' categories, and they refer to the categories that appear to have been most important to the Greeks as regards the Ethiopians.

For the most part, the primary categories correspond with the chapters of the body of the thesis. However, Chapter Two does not focus on any single primary category, but instead focuses on the Archaic Greeks' conception of the Ethiopians. It is unclear whether the concept of Αἰθιοπία arose from vague knowledge of a real land of men with 'sun burned faces' or was simply a mythological location like the *Cimmeria* of Homer.⁶⁸ Were

⁶⁵ This may seem pedantic, but for the sake of scientific rigour, it cannot be accepted that the term Αἰθίοψ was used in every case as a synonym for 'dark-skinned'. See Ch4.1.2 for a discussion of the term as a synonym for Negro.

⁶⁶ By examination of the context. For example if vase paintings depict Negroes with Memnon, they will be assumed to be Ethiopians owing to Memnon's association with Ethiopia established in Hes.Th.984.

⁶⁷ For example, the characteristics of Negroes in paintings and sculpture have been examined for what they tell us about the Greek perceptions of Negroes, of whom a part were Ethiopian.

⁶⁸ Hom.Od.xiv.4.

the Ethiopians of Homer real? Were they Black, and were they African? Considering the important position accorded to Homer and the early Greek poets, and the obvious influence of these authors on later perceptions of the Ethiopians, these questions need to be addressed before a study of the Ethiopians in Classical Greece can be attempted.

4.1. Primary Categories.

4.1.1. Geography and History.

This category is dealt with in Chapter Three. Archaeological evidence suggests that people in the Mediterranean had contact with Negroes that predated Homer. It is from these sources that Greeks probably heard rumours of people of dark skin colour. Subsequent military expeditions into Africa would have brought some Greeks into close contact with Black Africans for the first time, and eventually Negroes would have appeared on Greek soil. The first part of the chapter deals with the history of such Greek contacts in order that the entire study be placed in its historical context.

As has been noted by previous scholars, the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία carried particular geographical connotations.⁶⁹ Ethiopia first appears as a vague and extremely distant eastern land, but then becomes used of an African reality. However, many of the connotations associated with the eastern Ethiopians are kept with regard to the African variety. Most important of these is the idea of geographical extremity which forms the basic framework from within which most subsequent connotations carried by the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία appear to originate. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the perceived location of Ethiopia, especially as regards the African variety. Thompson has noted that the Latin term *Aethiopes* designated ‘all peoples of the various ill-known or unknown parts of sub Egyptian and sub Saharan Africa’.⁷⁰ It appears as though the Greek term Αἰθιοπία was even vaguer than its Latin counterpart and appeared to be applicable in much less restricted contexts.

⁶⁹ Thompson (1989: 57); Romm (1992: 45-81); Snowden (1981: 413).

⁷⁰ Thompson (1989: 57).

4.1.2 Somatic Characteristics.

The Negroid type has been a popular figure in Greek art, thought by one commentator to be the type which held the most continuous interest for the Greek and Roman artist.⁷¹

This illustrates the interest that the Greeks had for this somatic type. By the time of Xenophanes⁷² (writing in the late sixth century BC), it is certain that, for at least some Greeks, the Ethiopians were associated with Negroidism. A number of issues arise and these are dealt with in Chapter Four, including the context within which the somatic extremity of the Ethiopian was perceived, the range of skin colours covered by the term Αἰθίοψ, the use of the term as a synonym for Negro and the problem of Caucasian Ethiopians: Memnon and Andromeda. Also of significance in regard to this category is the vestimentation associated with the Ethiopians.

4.1.3 Religious Connotations.

Religion played an important role in Greek life, and the religious connotations of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία are the subject discussion in Chapter Five. From as early as Homer, the Greeks have associated the Ethiopians with various gods. Apart from this, they are referred to as 'blameless' in Homer,⁷³ and indeed, even Herodotus makes mention of the piety of the macrobian variety.⁷⁴ Homer refers to Aegisthus by the same epithet,⁷⁵ and this makes one feel the need for a deeper examination of the received view that Homer was making a reference to Ethiopian piety.⁷⁶ It appears that the image of the Ethiopians as long lived, handsome⁷⁷ and pious serves as the basis of an assessment of the mythical nature of the Ethiopians, and this brings to mind the question of to what extent subsequent Greek perceptions of Ethiopia were based on mythopoesis. A further matter of interest is the associations of the Ethiopians with two important gods: Zeus and Dionysus, and how these relate to the context of Greek perceptions of the Αἰθίοψ as a symbol of the extreme.

⁷¹ Beardsley (1920: ix). This should be considered, however, to be a gross exaggeration although the Negroid type certainly did prove a continuous subject of interest throughout the various ages of the Greek world.

⁷² Xenophanes frg. 16.

⁷³ Hom. *Il.* i. 423-4.

⁷⁴ Hdt. iii. 17; iv. 114.

⁷⁵ Hom. *Od.* i. 39.

⁷⁶ See, for example, Snowden (1981: 181).

⁷⁷ Hdt. iii. 20.

4.1.4 Cultural and Political Connotations.

The term 'race' has had a rather fluid semantic history in the English language throughout the word's three hundred year existence. The Greek conception of the Ethiopians is examined in Chapter Six in comparison with the various senses of the English term 'race' with the aim of establishing the possibility of a logical meaning for the term Αἰθίοψ. Chapter Six is divided into two separate studies, in the first of which connotations associated with the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία such as military strength, linguistic and cultural homogeneity, primitivism and political unity are analysed. The results of this study form the basis of a second examination regarding the issue of prejudice and racism within the context of Greek racial ideology.

4.2 Secondary Categories.

For the purposes of this study, secondary categories refer to the tools of analysis that will be used to study the Greek use of the term Αἰθιοπία and Αἰθίοψ within the context of the primary categories. Since these tools vary according to the context in which the relevant passages are analysed, they will not all be listed here. Besides, any terms used which may not be familiar to the Classicist will be explained as necessary. One important category which deserves special mention due to its consistent applicability throughout this study however, is that of distance. Greeks authors often used the Ethiopians as symbols of extremity and distance from their own norms. Such extremity had its origins in the association of the Ethiopians with the borders of the world. A north-south paradigm was established in which the Ethiopians, often in contrast to the Scythians or Thracians, were used as examples of what the Greeks were not. The pervasiveness of this connotation is evident in that it transcends all of the primary categories listed above.⁷⁸

There are many received notions we have about the Ethiopians in Greek literature, many of which have been made on the assumption of some degree of similarity between the Greek and the modern concepts of Blackness and of race. The study proceeds without this assumption, the intention being, to provide from the beginning, a complete definition of

⁷⁸ Snowden (1970:172f); (1983: 85) recognises the north-south paradigm, but only within the context of the environmental theory. Snowden, unfortunately, does not realise the significance of the north-south paradigm or the fact that the environmental theory was only one aspect thereof. Various other aspects of the north-south paradigm are elaborated on in the appropriate chapters.

the possible uses of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία and the appropriate contexts within which the terms could hold such meanings.

Chapter Two: The Ethiopians of the Early Poets.

There are only eight passages which refer to the Ethiopians in Greek literature prior to the middle of the sixth century BC.¹ Despite this paucity of references, when the Greeks came readily to associate Ethiopia with Negroid Africa, they inherited a body of information embedded in the epic tradition, a body of information which was held in high esteem. Although the extant epic corpus is all but silent about the Ethiopians, Homer, Hesiod and Mimnermus provide enough of a glimpse at the Ethiopian through the eyes of the early Greeks to allow for a reasonably detailed analysis. It is the aim of this chapter to describe the Ethiopians of the early Greeks with a view to laying the foundation for the rest of the study.²

1. Geography.

It is difficult to determine an exact location for Homer's Ethiopians. The *Odyssey* makes them a divided race, dwelling both at the sun's setting and at its rising at the extremities of the Earth.³ By far the most common Ethiopians are those who dwell in the east. First of all, Poseidon ventures off to dine with this ephemeral race and on his return, he crosses the mountains of the Solymi.⁴ Since Strabo places these in Lycia⁵ it would appear that Poseidon had visited the eastern Ethiopians. Similarly, Menelaus lists Ethiopia amongst near-eastern countries to which his wanderings took him.⁶ By the time of Hesiod,⁷ the Ethiopians are associated with Memnon, son of Dawn,⁸ and according to M.L. West, it is from the east that Memnon must have led the Ethiopians

¹ Hom.*Il.*i.423-4; xxiii.205-7; *Od.*i.22-24; iv.84; v.282-3; Hes.*Th.*984-5; *Cat.*150. Mimnermus frg.ii.8.

² Since the early poets are referenced in other parts of the study, in order to avoid repetition, cross referencing is used.

³ Hom.*Od.*i.22-24.

⁴ Hom.*Od.*v.282-3.

⁵ Strabo i.2.10.

⁶ In Hom.*Od.*iv.84, Menelaos lists the Ethiopians together with the Sidonians, Erebi and Libyans.

⁷ The exact date for Hesiod is uncertain, and even amongst the ancients there was no consensus as to whether he was earlier or later than Homer. However, M.L. West, in his entry under 'Hesiod' in *OCD*² suggests close to 700 BC as an approximate date for the Hesiod who composed the *Theogony* and *Works and Days*. On the other hand, it appears as though the *Catalogue of Women* was composed no earlier than 600 BC.

⁸ Hes.*Th.*984.

into the battlefield of the Trojan War.⁹ It is again in connection with Dawn that the Ethiopians appear in the east in a fragment of Mimnermus.¹⁰

By contrast the western Ethiopians are seldom referred to. Zeus visits the Ethiopians in the beginning of the *Iliad*, but does not mention in which direction they lie,¹¹ except that they live by the stream of Ocean, for all intents and purposes at the ends of the earth.¹² Later, Iris¹³ claims to be on her way to visit the Ethiopians, and thus cannot sit down with the winds who have assembled in Zephyr's palace.¹⁴ On the strength of Iris' location at this point (the palace of Zephyr), Beardsley has conjectured that Iris must be visiting the western Ethiopians.¹⁵ While there are no other western Ethiopians in the early poetry, it has been suggested¹⁶ that Emathion is mentioned in order that his subjects fill the gap made by the western Ethiopians in the *Theogony*,¹⁷ for he is portrayed, like Memnon, as a son of Dawn, and he must be associated with the west, since he is killed by Herakles on his journey to the Hesperides. Indeed, Diodorus refers to Emathion as an Ethiopian, but it cannot be ascertained whether Diodorus was drawing on such an early version of the myth.¹⁸

Whether Homer intended to refer to a real tribe when he mentioned his Ethiopians is uncertain. Some scholars maintain that perhaps the Ethiopians were people about whom the Greeks had vague information,¹⁹ while others maintain that the Ethiopians of Homer and Hesiod were distinctly from the realms of fantasy.²⁰ At times, the evidence appears to be contradictory. First, although the exact geographical location of Ethiopia is never mentioned, in four of the five references to Ethiopians in

⁹ West (1978: 426).

¹⁰ Mimnermus frg.ii.8.

¹¹ Hom.*Il.*i.423-4.

¹² See Ch3.2.

¹³ See Wilcock (1976:252) who suggests this scene to be comic in intent, with Iris playing on Zeus' absence for similar reasons in Hom.*Il.*i.423-4.

¹⁴ Hom.*Il.*xxiii.205-7.

¹⁵ Beardsley (1929: 2).

¹⁶ By West (1978: 426) who suggests the followers of Emathion to be a western equivalent of the followers of Memnon.

¹⁷ Hes.*Th.*984.

¹⁸ Diod. Sic.iv.27.3.

¹⁹ Some such scholars are Autenrieth (1963: 14); Stanford (1967: 210); Romm (1992: 49). Wilcock (1984: 301) implies that the Homer's Ethiopians were envisaged as living in the south-east and south-west.

²⁰ Most notably West (1978: 426) and Beardsley (1946: 6).

Homer, some geographical information is provided. The location of Ethiopia is clearly of some significance to Homer, so presumably, had he known any details concerning the land (that it was in Africa for instance) he would have mentioned them. Furthermore, it seems clear that the function of the Ethiopians in the *Iliad* is to provide a suitable place for Zeus to disappear for twelve days.²¹ Similarly, in the *Odyssey*, Poseidon's absence in Ethiopia serves to keep the god unaware of events in the οἰκουμένη.²² Ocean was considered by this stage to be that entity which separated the world from the unknown, and the peoples at the end were far removed from the happenings of the world's centre.²³ Thus, the Ethiopians appear in Mimnermus²⁴ as being synonymous with the East, where Helios rests before being woken by Dawn. The tradition of the Ethiopians in the east influenced authors who wrote in a time when Ethiopia had long been established as an African reality.²⁵ It is difficult to imagine that these ἔσχατοι ἄνδρῶν who dwell at the furthestmost reaches of the east represent any knowledge of an African reality on the part of the early Greeks.

However, there are occasions when the Ethiopians appear closer to the world of mortals. Menelaus, in his wanderings, travelled to Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Egypt reaching the Ethiopians, Sidonians, Erebi and Libyans.²⁶ This passage appears to represent an Ethiopia which was fundamentally different from that of *Il.i.423*; *xxiii.205-7*; *Od.i.22*; *v.283-4*. Menelaus is the only mortal to visit the Ethiopians in Homer. The remotest of people from the most distant of lands, with whom the gods dined, now appear amongst a number of other races, some of which the Greeks were familiar with. Egypt had been known to the Greeks through trade for some time (Greek mercenaries may even have campaigned there²⁷) and Greece also had some contact with the Phoenicians, Cypriots and Sidonians.²⁸ There are further indications

²¹ So Kirk (1985: 97).

²² Indeed, Stanford (1967: 210) expresses the accepted view that this is the most common use of these people.

²³ See Ch3.2.

²⁴ Mimnermus frg.ii.8.

²⁵ See Ch3.2.

²⁶ Hom.*Od.iv.84*.

²⁷ See Ch3.1.

²⁸ Jones (1991: 102) suggests that Menelaus' journey reflects lands newly discovered by the Greeks. It may be significant that, as pointed out by Stanford (1967: 284), Homer refers to the Sidonians as πολυδαίδαλοι (with good reason in consideration of the fine craftsmanship evidenced

that the Ethiopians may have been associated with Africa. Although Strabo places the mountains of the Solymi in Lycia,²⁹ he points out that when Poseidon, crossing them on his return from Ethiopia,³⁰ spies Odysseus in his raft, Homer is using these mountains as a metaphor for due south, since the mountains of the Solymi are due south of Pontus, which lake was considered to be an analogue of Ocean. Although Strabo's inventive explanation lacks any supporting evidence, it does bring to light an important fact: if the *Odyssey* was composed from the viewpoint of Ionia, the mountains of the Solymi might appear decidedly south. In fact, a line extending infinitely southward, starting from the Pontic and crossing through Lycia, would pass through the Red Sea, the only place in which an African Ethiopia³¹ could have had a coast. This is all the more significant since the fact that Menelaus visits Ethiopia by sea suggests that it was envisaged as having a coast.³² Probably the most compelling evidence that Ethiopia was conceived of as being in Africa is that Hesiod lists the high souled Ethiopians as the descendants of Epaphus together with the black Libyans, the underground men and the feeble Pygmies.³³ In view of the traditional opinion that Epaphus had an African *origo*, it is not impossible that Ethiopia was by this stage³⁴ associated with Africa.

Thus, a far from consistent geographical image of Ethiopia emerges. On the one hand, Ethiopia appears to be a symbol of western and eastern extremity, and on the other there does seem to be some evidence of a tradition that held Ethiopia to be associated with the south and with African lands. It is difficult to reconcile the conflicting evidence in this regard. Perhaps it is too much to expect of a people whose geographical thought was at its infancy, that their conception of the world be entirely

by the mixing bowl given to Telemachus in Hom.*Od.*iv.616-8). By contrast, the Phoenicians are always described as being sailors.

²⁹ Strabo i.1.10.

³⁰ Hom.*Od.*v.282.

³¹ Menelaus distinguishes between Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia. If Libya is to be taken as the coast of Africa west of Egypt, the only part of Africa left which could be an Ethiopian coast would be alongside the Red Sea.

³² It is possible that the Greeks' conception of the periphery was not concrete enough for them to be concerned with such technicalities as whether it had a coast or not. It is quite conceivable that, at this early stage, for the sake of simplicity, all distant lands were accessible by sea.

³³ Hes.*Cat.* 150.

³⁴ That is, by about 600 BC, see Ch2.fn.7.

consistent. Whatever the reason for the apparent contradictions, the conflict between conceptions of an African and an eastern Ethiopia affected authors as late as the third century AD.³⁵

2. Religion.

The Ethiopians of Homer appear as a pious race who dine with the gods: they are visited by Zeus (the other gods already being present on his arrival),³⁶ Iris³⁷ and Poseidon.³⁸ In the beginning of the *Iliad*, Zeus describes them as ἀμύμονας, blameless, which has been taken as a sign that the Ethiopians held a special position in relation to the gods.³⁹ However, the use of epithets in regard to various peoples has been suggested by Millman Parry to lack anything other than metrical significance.⁴⁰ Certainly, the murderous Aegisthus is described by the same epithet soon after the Ethiopians are first mentioned in the *Odyssey*.⁴¹ However, Parry's ideas have come under serious criticism recently, especially as regards the idea of epithets lacking contextual meaning.⁴² As regards ἀμύμονας as an epithet of Aegisthus, most damaging to the theory that its use is entirely determined by metrical rules is the fact the more appropriate, and metrically equivalent, epithet ἀνάλκιδος is used of him.⁴³ As regards the Ethiopians, it is tempting to view this epithet in the context of the ethnocentric tendency to provide, for foreign peoples, epithets which express racial stereotypes.⁴⁴ It seems clear that, even if Homer did not himself present a negative ethnocentric account of the world,⁴⁵ he certainly appears to be the founder of a tradition of such accounts. The idea of pious Ethiopians certainly outlived the Archaic

³⁵ See Ch3.2.

³⁶ Hom.*Il*.i.423-4.

³⁷ Hom.*Il*.xxiii.205-7. It should be noted, however, that some scholars such as Wilcock (1984: 252) and Richardson (1993: 193) believe Iris may have not intended visiting the Ethiopians, but simply chose an outrageous excuse to avoid sitting next to any of the winds.

³⁸ Hom.*Od*.i.22-24; v.282-3.

³⁹ For example, by Snowden (1970: 144).

⁴⁰ Parry (1971: 99).

⁴¹ Hom.*Od*.i.29.

⁴² Vivante (1982: esp. 164-167).

⁴³ Hom.*Od*.iii.310. For a discussion of other explanations for Aegisthus' epithet, see Jones (1991: 29). See also Stanford (1967: 210) who suggests it to mean 'beautiful' in the aesthetic sense.

⁴⁴ See Sumner (1940: 13).

⁴⁵ In which people of the periphery are presented as superior to those of the οἰκουμένη. For a more detailed discussion of negative ethnocentrism see Ch5.1.1.

period, and it is in the context of a general perception of Ethiopians as being pious that one can understand the Hesiodic reference to them as μεγάθυμοι.⁴⁶

Of all the gods, Poseidon appears to have the most substantial connection with the Ethiopians. In the *Odyssey*, he visits the Ethiopians for the duration of four books.⁴⁷ More significant, however, is the fact that he is the only god for whom the Ethiopians prepare an individual feast.⁴⁸ Furthermore, Hesiod mentions the Pygmies, Subterraneans, Libyans and Ethiopians as the descendants of Poseidon.⁴⁹ Exactly why the Ethiopians should be associated with a god whose domain is usually the sea in Homer,⁵⁰ is uncertain. Poseidon's usual epithet reflects his role as a god of earthquakes⁵¹ and in this capacity one could understand the connection with the Subterraneans, but exactly why the Ethiopians, Libyans and Pygmies should be associated with him is open to speculation.

3. Physical Characteristics.

Homer and the earliest poets are silent about the skin colour of the Ethiopians, making it difficult to ascertain whether there was any idea of the Ethiopians being dark-skinned prior to the sixth century BC. However, even the silence of Homer and Hesiod on the subject can shed some light on this complex problem. It is significant that none of the authors before Xenophanes mentions any somatic characteristics of the Ethiopians.⁵² Homer mentions the Ethiopians five times, never mentioning somatic characteristics, yet he mentions Eurybates four times⁵³ and finds it appropriate to refer to him as being dark-skinned and curly haired on one of these occasions.⁵⁴ While it is not certain whether Homer intended Eurybates as a Negro, it is clear that he had the words to describe the relevant somatic type. It may be argued that this absence of any

⁴⁶ Hes.*Cat.*150. For more on the piety of the Ethiopian in later Greek literature see Snowden (1970: 144-151).

⁴⁷ Between Hom.*Od.*i.22-24 & v.283-4.

⁴⁸ Hom.*Od.*i.22-24.

⁴⁹ Hes.*Cat.*150.

⁵⁰ Otto (1957: 27).

⁵¹ Jones (1988: 6).

⁵² Neither does Pindar, writing slightly after Xenophanes, although he mentions the Ethiopians five times.

⁵³ Hom.*Il.*i.320; ii.184; ix.170; *Od.*xix.246; somatic characteristics are mentioned in the last.

⁵⁴ Hom.*Od.*xix.246-7.

description of skin colour in Homer owes more to metrical restrictions than a lack of knowledge of the type. However, Hesiod mentions the Ethiopians in conjunction with the Libyans, whom he describes as μέλανεσ, yet he refers to the Ethiopians simply as 'great souled'.⁵⁵ It appears that the Libyans were more closely associated with blackness than the Ethiopians.

Iconographical evidence makes this silence even more significant. Although there is a depiction of a Negro in a fresco from Pylos,⁵⁶ this is the only depiction till the middle to late sixth century BC. In this century, not only are Negroes portrayed in vase paintings, in conjunction with Memnon,⁵⁷ but plastic vases and gems inscribed with Negroes also appear at about the same time. In addition, in the same period, the first literary evidence of an association of Negroidism with Ethiopians appears.⁵⁸ It should not be considered to be coincidence then, that early in the sixth century, there was a raid into Nubia under Psammetichus II in which Greek mercenaries took part.⁵⁹ If these mercenaries did not bring slaves to Greece, they may at least have brought information concerning the Ethiopians which allowed artists for the first time to depict a new somatic form. In any event, the accuracy with which the Ethiopians are depicted, in plastic vases in particular, suggests the presence of Negroes on Greek soil toward the middle to late sixth century. These depictions disappear toward the end of the century, suggesting that the flourish of Negroid depictions was sparked by an interest in a new form.⁶⁰ There is absolutely no evidence, literary or otherwise of Negroes in Greece between the fifteenth and sixth centuries BC. There can be little suggestion, if the majority of Greeks had not seen Negroes, that a composite picture or prototype could be called to mind on the mention of the term Αἰθίοψ. It is far more

⁵⁵ Hes.*Cat.* 150.

⁵⁶ From about 1200 BC. See fig. 8.

⁵⁷ See fig. 9; 12; 13.

⁵⁸ Xenophanes frg. 16.

⁵⁹ See Ch3.1.

⁶⁰ Indeed, the realism of the plastic vases has caused some to suggest real models were used, although this was contrary to the established practice [see Ch6.3; Beardsley (1929: 36-7)]. Particularly if one compares the stylised features of the Caucasian female in fig. 11 with the lively Negro opposite whom she is depicted, the use of a model seems quite plausible.

likely that the Greeks would have associated the Ethiopians with the somatic type they were most familiar with: that of the Caucasian.⁶¹

The Ethiopians of the early Greeks appear, for the most part, to be vague and insubstantial, seemingly in communion with the gods. There is no way to place the Ethiopians in a definite location, but they appear to be associated with the far east and the far west. Despite this geographical extremity, there is evidence that there may have been a rudimentary connection of Ethiopia with Africa as early as Homer. The pious Ethiopians appear to be associated particularly closely with Poseidon, although the reasons underlying such an association are obscure. Especially as regards somatic appearance, the Ethiopians of the early poets seem to dwell largely in a different realm from the African tribes from south of Egypt and Libya with whom Herodotus later associates them. It is this image of the Ethiopians that was inherited by the authors of the Classical period, and it is with this image that they would have to reconcile their gradually increasing knowledge of Negroes and sub-Egyptian Africans who came to be known as Αἰθίοπες.

⁶¹ There is no evidence that the etymology of the term Αἰθίοψ from αἶθω, ὄψ (men with the sun burned faces) is behind the terms' use in Homer according to Beardsley (1929: 2); Hall (1989:140). Homer uses the verb αἶθω both in the passive and active [See Chantraine (1968: 32)], suggesting 'blazing faces' to be an equally appropriate epithet at this early stage. It is significant in this regard that Zeus is referred to as Αἰθίοψ by Lycoph.*Alex.*535 and a horse of Helios is called Αἰθίοψ by Eur.frg.896, probably after the same etymology.

Chapter Three: History and Geography.

This chapter has a twofold purpose, and is consequently divided into two sections, the first of which contains a discussion of historical Greek contacts with Negroid people and Africa. The aim of this discussion is to establish the means by which contact was made between the Greeks and Negroid Africans, and to trace the history of such contacts, with the purpose of providing a historical framework within which to contextualise the rest of the study. The second and greater part of the chapter deals with the Greek concept of Ethiopia. In this section, on the basis of the established knowledge of Greek contact with Black Africa,¹ an analysis will be made of the construct of Ethiopia in the Greek conceptions of geography, with specific focus on the geographical distance associated with Ethiopia. Finally, an attempt will be made to establish which areas in Africa would have been referred to as Ethiopia, and to discuss the various possible meanings of the term in a geographical context.

1. Greek contact with Negroes prior to the seventh century BC.

The earliest references to Ethiopia show no evidence of the term being associated with people of dark skin, since neither Homer, Hesiod, Pindar nor Mimnermus mention any somatic characteristics,² despite the fact that two of these authors seem otherwise aware of dark-skinned people.³ Exactly when the term was first employed in anything other than a geographic sense is unclear, since there may be a great deal of literary evidence which has not survived from before the first clear references to the Ethiopians as being Negroid, in the late sixth century BC.⁴ In addition, there is no accurate method with which to ascertain the mechanisms by which the term became applied to a people from Africa. For this reason, what follows is the closest to the ideal that can be discussed with any certainty: the history of Greek contact with people who would later become known as Ethiopians.

¹ The term 'Black Africa' is used henceforth to denote the portion of Africa south of upper Egypt, above the second cataract. As will become evident further on in the chapter, we do not know much about where the Greeks thought the exact boundaries were between the area referred to as Ethiopia and the rest of Africa.

² See Ch2.3.

³ Hom.*Il.*xix.246-8; Hes.*Op.*527; *Cat.*150.

⁴ Xenophanes Frg.16. See Ch2.3; 4.1.

It is likely that before mainland Greeks had any significant contact with Negroid peoples, they would have received second-hand information regarding people of dark skin, probably by way of Crete, Cyprus or traders who had contact with Egypt. Information regarding Negroes probably originated in Egypt, whose proximity made it the first country (of those which had relations with Greece) to have direct contact with Negroid peoples. In addition, it appears that both Crete and Cyprus had contact with Negroes before the Greeks did. For this reason, contacts between Greece and Egypt, Cyprus, Crete and Black Africa will be studied, with a view to establishing the ways in which mainland Greece gained information concerning Negroes.

Scholars differ in opinion as to when Negroid people first came into contact with Egypt. An examination of skulls in the area suggests mid-second millennium BC, but this view has come under serious challenge on a number of grounds.⁵ First, in the twenty fourth century BC, a governor of Elephantine sent a message to Pepy II describing a dancing dwarf. The word used in the message was not the usual word for dwarf, *nemu*, but rather, *deneg*, suggesting that the person in question may have been a pygmy.⁶ If this is the case, it would suggest Egyptian ventures into central Africa in the late third millennium BC. Secondly, archaeological evidence seems to point to an earlier date than the middle of the second millennium: statues which appear to depict Negroid people appear from the mid-third millennium BC.⁷ For example, fig.1 provides us with what is clearly a depiction of a Negro (a Nubian warrior and his wife) from about 2400 BC. As early as the end of the fourth millennium BC, there seems to have been a raid on Nubian land. From this time onward, there was much contact between the two countries,⁸ culminating in a Nubian conquest of Egypt (in the twenty fifth dynasty) and a revenge raid on Nubia under Psammetichus II. At about the same time, there was contact between the Egyptians and the kingdom of Kush, which started just south of the second cataract (see fig.2). Thus, there is evidence that considerable contact occurred between Negroes and Egyptians a long time before the mid-second millennium, and not too much weight should be given to the anthropological study in

⁵ Vercoutter (1976: 33).

⁶ Vercoutter (1976: 35).

⁷ Vercoutter (1976: 38).

⁸ Snowden (1983: 21-23).

consideration of the vast amount of archaeological evidence.⁹ Greece, in turn, has a long history of contact with Egypt, and by the time the first references to dark-skinned Ethiopians occur in Greek literature,¹⁰ Africa was not entirely unfamiliar to the Greek explorer, since ancient contact with Egypt had probably been established in the Mycenaean age. The extent of this contact is uncertain, but it was probably made through trade after Mycenae assumed commercial dominance in the Mediterranean, during which period Egyptian artefacts are found in greater quantities in the mainland than in Crete.¹¹ Perhaps Greeks were involved in the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt in the early eighteenth dynasty (1580-1315BC) and they were likely to have taken part in two invasions of Egypt in the late thirteenth and in the early twelfth century BC.¹² During the dark ages, there is little evidence of Greek communication with Egypt.¹³

Archaeological remains of Negroid depictions from the Mediterranean world occur as early as the second millennium BC, notably in Cyprus and Crete. In Cyprus, the earliest depiction of the Negroid type dates as far back as the middle Bronze Age (1900-1800 BC)¹⁴ in the form of a bronze pendant found buried in a tomb, possibly to be considered apotropaic. However, the likelihood is that this artefact was imported from Syria, where the custom was to model faience heads at such an early stage.¹⁵

⁹ For discussions on Blacks in North Africa prior to the Greek bronze age, see Vercoutter (1976) and Leclant (1976). Diop (1974; 1990) argues that the Egyptians were themselves a 'Black' race from pre-Dynastic times (5000-3000BC). There are far too many flaws in Diop's interpretation of evidence to enumerate in any detail. With a poor understanding of Classical literature, Diop has often misinterpreted authors such as Herodotus. For example, he reasons that since Herodotus calls people from the upper Nile 'Black', this was evidence of Negro Egyptians (1974: 1). In the first instance, the upper Nile is not necessarily in Egypt and furthermore, later authors clearly distinguish between the skin colour of the Ethiopians and that of the Egyptians (for example, Philostr. *VA* vi.2 mentions people who are in between Ethiopians and Egyptians in colour). Furthermore, it is obvious that Diop employs the modern 'fluid' conception of Blacks as a synonym for Negroid [see Diop (1974: 130)]. Such a fluid conception of Negroidism is evident in Diop's interpretation of iconographical evidence [see, for example, Diop (1974: fig.5) which is interpreted as Negroid]. Diop's theories are not accepted in their entirety by modern scholars. See *GHA* II, 33-61 for summaries of certain scholars' opinions of the subject.

¹⁰ In the late sixth century, as discussed above.

¹¹ Lloyd (1975: 4).

¹² Lloyd (1975: 6-8).

¹³ Lloyd (1975: 9). For a full discussion of the archaeological evidence concerning Mycenaean contact with Egypt, see Lloyd (1975: 1-9).

¹⁴ Nikosia, inv. no. M.34 {Karageorghis (1988: fig.1)}.

¹⁵ Karageorghis (1988: 8-9).

The first depictions of the Negroid type in Cypriot art are from the thirteenth century BC in the form of bronze and ivory weights. Particularly interesting for its detailed rendition of Negroid features is fig.3, on which prognathism, platyrrhiny and curly hair framing the forehead are clearly discernible.¹⁶ Henceforth, Negroes are depicted in Cypriot art quite regularly. Some of the depictions of Negroes in Cypriot art are thought to be derived from Egyptian contact, including figs.4; 5: the first of these because it depicts a sphinx over a Negroid (a conquered tribe, cf. fig.6) and the second because of the common Egyptian practice of decorating the tombs of pharaohs with submissives of the kingdom.¹⁷ Large scale Mycenaean contact with Cyprus probably occurred in the middle of the second millennium (probably c. 1400 BC) and the mainland culture seems to have effectively taken root in Cyprus from 1400 BC onwards.¹⁸ Hence, Cyprus should be considered a possible source of information of Negroes.

Negroid depictions in Crete are considered by Snowden to be the earliest depictions of the type in Mediterranean art outside of Africa.¹⁹ An example is fig.7 which depicts what may be a Negroid profile in a shell.²⁰ Furthermore, two frescoes from the mid second millennium BC were found in Thera and Cnossus, both of which depict what appear to be Negroes.²¹ Crete's position at the centre of the Mediterranean trade routes gave it a disproportionate amount of influence compared with its size.²² From about 1450 BC, writing in the old Minoan Linear A script was superseded in official documents by a form of the script modified to suit the language of mainland Greece.²³ The presence of the same alphabet in mainland Greece suggests a considerable Mycenaean influence in Crete. In view of the evidence presented, Crete

¹⁶ Karageorghis (1988: 10).

¹⁷ Karageorghis (1988: 30).

¹⁸ 'Cyprus' in *OCD*².

¹⁹ Snowden (1983: 14) describes two frescoes from Crete and Thera respectively

²⁰ The lips of the shell appear to be swollen and the nose appears somewhat upturned. This does not necessarily mean that a Negro was intended, but the possibility should not be dismissed.

²¹ Herakleion, Archaeological Museum {Snowden (1976: fig.145)}; Athens, National Museum {Snowden (1976: fig.147)}.

²² Willets (1965: 1).

²³ Chadwick (1961: 14).

may well have been another source of information for Greeks concerning dark-skinned tribes in Africa.

It appears, then, that there was some contact between the Mycenaean Greeks and peoples who apparently had some contact with Negroes from about the middle of the second millennium BC. In addition, certain people from mainland Greece may have been involved in mercenary and trade expeditions into Africa itself. Perhaps these contacts can explain the earliest evidence that people on mainland Greece were aware of people of dark skin colour. For example, archaeological evidence reveals some knowledge of the somatic type from as early as 1200 BC, as there exists a fresco from Pylos (fig.8)²⁴ which clearly depicts a procession of dark-skinned people, the exact context of which is uncertain.²⁵ In addition, as has been noted, Homer mentions a dark-skinned, curly haired person,²⁶ and Hesiod is aware of dark-skinned people in the south.²⁷ However, it is only after the Dark Ages that any large scale contact with Negroes occurs.

There may have been contact between an Ethiopian King and a Greek person as early as 711 BC, according to one interpretation of the Annals of King Sargon.²⁸ However, the opportunity for significant first hand contact between mainland Greeks and Negroes would have been gained by two means: colonisation and mercenary expeditions. In the early seventh century BC, Greek mercenaries were used by the Egyptian king Psammetichus I who encouraged them to settle in Egypt.²⁹ Furthermore, in the late seventh century BC, there was the chance for more considerable contact with Negroes, since the Milesian military fort of Naucratis became a popular Greek trading city.³⁰ Soon afterwards, around 595 BC, Greek

²⁴ Also at Pylos, a documentary tablet mentions a person called *ai-ti-jo-ko* (Aιθίοψ), but there is no evidence that at this stage the term was associated with Negroidism.

²⁵ Snowden (1983: 14).

²⁶ Hom.*Od.*xix.246-7.

²⁷ Hes.*Op.*527; *Cat.*150. See Ch2.3.

²⁸ Braun (1982: 16). A certain Yamani of Ashdod sought refuge in Ethiopia before the Ethiopian king handed him back to his captor (Sargon). *Yamani* seems likely to be an Assyrian name for 'Greek', but as Braun suggests, this should not be taken as indisputable proof that the person in question was Greek.

²⁹ Boardman (1964: 131).

³⁰ Braun (1982: 38).

mercenaries probably took part in an expedition into Nubia under Psammetichus II,³¹ during which campaign, they would most certainly have come into contact with people of Negroid physiognomy. Thus, not too long afterward, Negroes appear on Greek vases in depictions of myths associated with Ethiopia,³² and so do the first references to indicate an association of the Ethiopians with the Negroid physiognomy.³³ It is quite probable that some of these Negroes appeared on Greek soil, since the realism with which some of the depictions are rendered, especially in plastic vases from the same period, suggests that at least some Greeks were very well acquainted with the type.³⁴ Negroes probably also appeared on Greek soil in some significant numbers during the invasion of Xerxes in 480 BC, as Herodotus lists them as part of the contingent against the Greeks.³⁵

Exactly when the Ethiopians became associated with Negroid people is uncertain. What is certain, is that mainland Greeks had received some information concerning dark-skinned people from very early on, perhaps through rumours from traders or through direct contact. Certainly, in Cyprus and Crete, familiarity with the Negroid type occurs very early. In mainland Greece, the first real signs of familiarity with Negroes from Africa come from after the dark ages when mercenary activities and colonisation brought the two peoples into contact, not only in Africa, but ultimately on Greek soil.

2. Ethiopia in the Greek Conception of Geographical Space.

It has been suggested that the dictates of genre created a dichotomous image of the Ethiopian amongst the Greek authors; the Ethiopians of poetry being vague and mythical and those of prose being based on 'African reality'.³⁶ This observation is partially accurate, since there is some difference between the Ethiopians of poetry and those of prose. However, the view is simplistic, since echoes of the poetic Ethiopians

³¹ Boardman (1964: 132).

³² Such as the legend of Trojan War in which they fought against the Greeks under Memnon, see figs. 12; 13; 16; 18. For Memnon and Ethiopians, see Ch4.1.4.

³³ See Ch3.1.

³⁴ See fig. 10; 11. See also Beardsley (1929: Ch2); Beazley (1929) for a discussion of the plastic vases. For the role of Negroes in Greek society at this stage, see Ch6.3.

³⁵ Hdt.vii.70.

³⁶ Beardsley (1929: 1-9 esp. 6).

are discernible in prose and *vice versa*. For not only in the works of marvelists and novelists are fantastic accounts of Ethiopia provided,³⁷ but also in historical³⁸ and philosophical treatises.³⁹ In addition, a poet may have provided us with the first African Ethiopians⁴⁰ and the poets are responsible for reporting geographical information not dissimilar from that of prose authors.⁴¹ It is more natural to see the Ethiopians fitting into two different geographical paradigms, one which was purely mythical, and one which was based on a mixture of empiricism and myth. For this reason, the following study will not follow Beardsley's categorisation of the Ethiopians into poetic and prose variants. Instead the Greek perceptions of the Ethiopians will be examined in the context of Greek geographical thought.

In order to explain the geographical extremity associated with Ethiopia, it is necessary to discuss the Greek geo-conceptual framework. Geography was not a science to the Archaic Greeks, and without the aid of maps, the world's representation was largely conceptual,⁴² relying in part on myth,⁴³ theory and fantasy. The purpose of geographical conjecture was to place the Greeks in a world in which even the unfamiliar could be familiarised. For example, Alexander's men were excited by the discovery of ivy in India, since it meant that Dionysus had been there.⁴⁴ The discovery placed their foreign circumstances within a geographical framework they understood and with which they were familiar: the unknown was now known. In the world of the early poets, a vague notion is discernible that the universe is unbounded: ἄπειρον.⁴⁵ The word itself is possibly more commonly used to describe something unknown, but the term had other connotations.⁴⁶ To avoid the anxiety of living in an unknown

³⁷ Especially amongst later authors, for example, Aelian's fantastic Ethiopian dog king (*NA* vii.40) and flesh eating bulls (*NA* xvii.45).

³⁸ Consider, for example, Herodotus' macrobian Ethiopians of iii.17; iii.114.

³⁹ For example, Arist.*Hist. an.*573a.28 believes there to be excessively virile sheep in Ethiopia, but is cautious about the existence of winged serpents (*Hist. an.*517a.18).

⁴⁰ Aesch.*PI'* 807-9. The issue of whether Aeschylus' Ethiopians are in fact African will be discussed further on.

⁴¹ For example Aesch.frg.300. and *Suppl.*559-561 on snow melting into the Nile, an opinion also held by Anaxagoras frg.91 amongst others.

⁴² Romm (1992: 9).

⁴³ Perikles (1994: 2).

⁴⁴ *Att.Anab.*v.2.

⁴⁵ Romm (1992: 10).

⁴⁶ For a discussion of the term, see Fränkel (1975: 105-107, 262 esp. fn.22).

world, the Greek thinkers modified τὸ ἄπειρον by various means. Homer and Hesiod imagined boundaries around the world, describing πείρατα γαίης: ‘borders of the earth’, which placed clear limits between the unbounded and the world with which they were familiar.⁴⁷

The vagueness and distance associated with the concepts of τὸ ἄπειρον and πείρατα γαίης should not be underestimated. Hesiod places the πείρατα γαίης at the boundary between the void and the existing; even the gates of Hades are at the edges of the world.⁴⁸ In both Homer⁴⁹ and Hesiod,⁵⁰ some paradise exists at the borders of the earth. That the Greeks did not envisage the possibility of reaching the ends of the earth⁵¹ is attested to by the fact that not even heroes like Achilles⁵² were taken to Elysium.⁵³ In addition, the esoteric nature of τὸ ἄπειρον, which impinged on the borders of the earth, can best be illustrated by the Greek authors’ use of the term to define existence. Thus, in the works of Hesiod, τὸ ἄπειρον is that against which the existing is defined.⁵⁴ Anaximander modifies the use of this concept of τὸ ἄπειρον, claiming that in it exist all potentials from within which can arise all degrees of being.⁵⁵ Aristotle seems to revert to a Hesiodic interpretation when he states that the relationship between τὸ ἄπειρον and that which exists is one of mutual exclusion.⁵⁶ Clearly, τὸ ἄπειρον was sufficiently removed from the Greek’ world in their geo-conception, that the philosophers envisaged it as an abstract rather than a physical

⁴⁷ Romm (1992: 11-12).

⁴⁸ Hes.*Th.*622.

⁴⁹ Hom.*Od.*iv.563 places Elysium at the edges of the world.

⁵⁰ In Hes.*Op.* 166-7, Zeus removes the people from the Age of Heroes to the Isles of the Blessed.

⁵¹ Except for Menelaus in Hom.*Od.*iv.84, although this passage may involve some real knowledge of an African Ethiopia. See Ch2.1; Hall (1989: 141).

⁵² At least not until Pind.*O.*ii.78-80.

⁵³ This point is the subject of some debate. In Hom.*Od.*iv.561-9 a few select heroes are chosen to dwell in the Elysian fields. However, controversy surrounds line 166 of Hesiod’s *Works and Days* which appears to limit the heroes removed to the Isles of the Blessed by Zeus to those who survived the Trojan and Theban wars. Two manuscripts of Hesiod (Π38 & Π40) omit this line, and Solmsen (1983: 23) has argued that it is likely that the original version of the poem did not contain it. By far the majority of the ancient manuscripts contain line 166 [which appears without note in Mazon (1977)’s version of the text] and M.L.West (1978a: 192) suggests that Hesiod would not have said that the whole race of Heroes would be transported to the Isles of the Blessed.

⁵⁴ Fränkel (1975: 106).

⁵⁵ See Fränkel (1975: 262).

⁵⁶ See Jaeger (1960: 24) who has omitted to provide a reference.

entity. By comparison, the place where this entity borders the earth should also be considered as beyond the bounds of the imagined world.

As a coastline borders islands, so did the river Ocean bound the earth in the minds of the Archaic Greeks, separating known existence from the unknown. The phrase *πείραθ' . . . Ὀκεανοῖο*⁵⁷ is once even used instead of *πείρατα γαίης*.⁵⁸ In some ways, not only did Ocean take the place of the borders of the earth, but was also perceived in a similar way to *το ἄπειρον*, since like *το ἄπειρον*, it was envisaged by the Greeks as extending infinitely away from the earth⁵⁹ and considered to be a source of all existence by Homer.⁶⁰ According to Romm,⁶¹ the idea of Ocean as the boundary of the world, (and perhaps even as *το ἄπειρον* itself), was a pervasive feature of Archaic Greek thought. It is thus within this framework that we should view the earliest conceptions of the Ethiopians, who are *ἐσχατοὶ ἀνδρῶν* in Homer, and who dwell by the stream of Ocean, at the earth's borders.⁶² That a race who dwell near such an abstract structure such as the limitless Ocean should be associated with distance is natural, and it becomes clear that this association of the Ethiopians with geographical extremity continues throughout the Classical period. Ethiopia fits into two geographical paradigms; one in which they occupy eastern or western extremes, and one in which they are the southern extreme, compared with both mythical and real northern races in an almost symmetrical world.

2.1. Eastern and Western Ethiopians.

India is not mentioned by Homer,⁶³ although perhaps the early Greeks had some vague idea of an area east of Asia Minor. Thus for Homer, the Ethiopians filled the gap, being those people who formed the borders of the world on both its eastern and

⁵⁷ Hom.*Od.*xi.13.

⁵⁸ The two phrases are not metrical equivalents, however.

⁵⁹ Romm (1992: 16).

⁶⁰ In Hom.*Il.*xiv.200; 302, Hera refers to the Ocean as *θεῶν γένεσιν*. Wilcock (1984: 230); (1976: 160) states that the idea of Ocean as the source of life is unique to Homer.

⁶¹ Romm (1992: 13).

⁶² See Ch2.1.

⁶³ Strabo ii.3.8. claims Homer to be completely unaware of Indians. However, Strabo maintains this position on account of Eudoxus' statement that Ptolemy Euergetes was unaware of their existence. Thus, Strabo's reasoning should be suspected although his statement may indeed be correct.

western extremities. Strabo⁶⁴ reconciled this view with his own conflicting concept of an African Ethiopia, by claiming that the Ethiopians of the east and west were the parts of Ethiopia east and west of the Nile.⁶⁵ Strabo does not manage to explain away the fact that Homer⁶⁶ places the homes of the two sets of Ethiopians at the setting and the rising sun: the far east and west. Whomever Homer was talking about, he did not envisage them as being separated simply by a river, as the Homeric Ethiopians were people removed from the imaginable real, dwelling near the edge of the world. The extreme remoteness of their land allowed them to feast with the gods and made their home a convenient place for Poseidon to disappear to for four books of the *Odyssey*.⁶⁷ For the most part, the western Ethiopians are consigned to a couple of references,⁶⁸ although Beardsley is incorrect in saying that these Ethiopians are entirely poetic,⁶⁹ since Ephorus, a writer of prose, maintains them to be the Ethiopians of Mauritania.⁷⁰ By contrast, the idea of the eastern Ethiopians, peoples of extreme remoteness, is evident in some form in Greek literature from Homeric times onward, and an association of Ethiopia with the east continued even after the Ethiopians had become clearly associated with Africa.

Mimnermus associates the Ethiopians with the east in a passage which indicates a similar world view to that of Homer and Hesiod. He describes Helios as being carried from the Hesperides to the land of the Ethiopians while asleep, in order to rise the next day.⁷¹ Once more, the Ethiopians are placed near the stream of Ocean, as this is the place at which dawn arises and awaits him.⁷² The remoteness associated with Ethiopia is evident by the fact that Ethiopia is synonymous with the east and, as

⁶⁴ Strabo i.2.25.

⁶⁵ See Nadeau (1970: 339).

⁶⁶ Hom.*Od.*i.22-24.

⁶⁷ Between Hom.*Od.*i.22-24 & v.283-4.

⁶⁸ For example, Ap. Rhod. *Argon.*iii.1190f.

⁶⁹ Beardsley (1929: 6).

⁷⁰ Ephorus frg.128.

⁷¹ Mimnermus frg.ii.8.

⁷² For a full discussion of the cosmogenic implications of this passage, see Kirk and Raven (1957: 14-15).

Beardsley points out, the Ethiopians are sufficiently mythical to be compared with the Hesperides.⁷³

The eastern Ethiopians seem to appear again in the works of the dramatists, but by this stage, the issue is more complicated. The problems associated with a study of the Ethiopians of the dramatists are probably best illustrated by an analysis of the following passage:

Then you will reach a remote region. Here, near the sun's bright fountains live a dark-skinned race. There is the Ethiopian river; follow its course down, till you reach the cataract where from the Byblis hills the Nile pours fourth his holy stream to quench men's thirst.⁷⁴

At first, the fountain of the sun would seem to demand an eastern reference, but it has been argued that this is simply a reference to Ocean, which, owing to the fact that it encircles the earth, could lie in any compass direction.⁷⁵ Because Aeschylus refers to the river as though it fed the Nile,⁷⁶ Snowden has interpreted this passage as the first to locate the Ethiopians in Africa.⁷⁷ Such an argument would seem to rest on two assumptions: that the source of the Nile was considered to be in Africa, and that the mention of a *κελαινὸν φῶλον* (dark-skinned race) stemmed from a real knowledge of dark-skinned people in Africa.

The first of these assumptions needs more evidence to support it, since the Archaic Greek conception of the world was naive at best.⁷⁸ In a circular world, such as the one conceived of by the Archaic Greeks,⁷⁹ it is not unlikely that Asia was considered as one with Africa. That a such a conception was prevalent seems likely, since even as late as the late fourth century BC, Alexander the Great expected to find the source of the Nile in India.⁸⁰ Popular belief, in fact, held Asia and Africa to be one

⁷³ Beardsley (1929: 4).

⁷⁴ Aesch.*PV* 807-9 tr. Vellacott (1961).

⁷⁵ See Hogan (1984: 296).

⁷⁶ The idea that the source of the Nile was in Ethiopia can also be found in Aesch.*frag.* 192 and Eur.*frag.* 228.

⁷⁷ Snowden (1970: 103).

⁷⁸ For a discussion of the Archaic Greek concept of geography, see Romm (1992: 9-42).

⁷⁹ Hdt.*iv.* 36 criticises his contemporaries for perceiving the world to be circular..

⁸⁰ Arr.*Anab.* vi. 1. In the same passage, Arrian mentions that Alexander the Great thought he had found the source of the Nile in the form of the Ganges. Paus.*ii.* 5.3 maintains that there was a

continent.⁸¹ It is conceivable then, that in some people believed the source of the Nile to be in the East. Thus, the fact that Aeschylus mentions the river *Aithiop* as joining the Nile should not be taken as irrefutable evidence that the passage concerned was referring to African Ethiopians.

The assumption that the swarthy race are indeed African Ethiopians should also be treated with suspicion, primarily because Indians in the east could equally well be the dark race referred to by Aeschylus. In fact, Herodotus refers to an eastern tribe as Ethiopian⁸² and Euripides mentions a dark (μελάμβροτος) race who dwell by the rising sun and who may well have been meant to be Ethiopians.⁸³ Aeschylus himself, in a fragment, the context of which is uncertain, refers to the Ethiopian land as being at the edge of Ocean, where the sun refreshes himself and his steeds, indicating a perceived eastern location.⁸⁴

Perhaps underlying an interpretation of this passage as being a reference to Ethiopians in Africa is a further assumption that the world of the poets was necessarily a reflection of current geographical knowledge.⁸⁵ That Euripides, who had a philosophical training,⁸⁶ should have completely dismissed Herodotus' accounts of an Ethiopia in Africa is unlikely, yet he places the Ethiopians in the east.⁸⁷ Beardsley attempts to explain this apparent contradiction by pointing out that the eastern Ethiopians had become a fixed literary tradition which maintained a separate life outside of scientific knowledge.⁸⁸ If Beardsley's hypothesis, stated above, is correct, then we should assume the κελαινὸν φῶλον to refer, not to real African Ethiopians,

tradition that held the Nile to be the same river as the Euphrates which disappears and reappears in Ethiopia.

⁸¹ Immerwahr (1981: 316). See also Romm (1992: 82).

⁸² Hdt.vii.70; Hdt.iii.94.

⁸³ Eur.frg.771. This fragment of the *Phaethon* concerns the land of Merops, which is close to the stables of Dawn and Helios. It is unclear whether Euripides perceives the Meropians as being dark-skinned or whether the dark-skinned people were their neighbours. Hall (1989: 141) appears to believe the former, since she suggests that the Meropians of the chorus to the *Phaethon* may have been dark-skinned.

⁸⁴ Aesch.frg.192.

⁸⁵ Snowden (1970: 103) suggests that Aeschylus had placed the Ethiopians in Africa because of stories from settlements such as Naucratis.

⁸⁶ Diod. Sic.i.38.4 claims Euripides to have been a pupil of Anaximander.

⁸⁷ Eur.frg.228.

⁸⁸ Beardsley (1929: 6). For a discussion of the passages in question, see Beardsley (1929: 4).

but to the vague and distant eastern variety described by Homer, Hesiod, Mimnermus and Euripides. The fact that Greeks, by the time of Aeschylus, had been in contact with Negroes (whom the term *Αἰθίοψ* was now being used to describe)⁸⁹ should not therefore have any bearing on the argument.

Beardsley's explanation, though plausible, is not without problems. Both Euripides⁹⁰ and Aeschylus⁹¹ make Ethiopia the source of the Nile in passages which attribute the Nile's flooding to melting snows in Ethiopia, information which is partially correct.⁹² Thus, instead of being an entirely mythical land, the Ethiopia of the dramatists seem to be a curious blend of myth and reality. Furthermore, from the mid-fourth century onward, there were attempts to reconcile the eastern and western Ethiopians. During the Classical period, Ephorus tries to reconcile the western Ethiopians of Homer by claiming that the Ethiopians once overran the whole of Libya as far as the Atlas mountains. Thus, the western Ethiopians are those of Mauritania. He mentions, in addition, Ethiopians who occupied the sea board, possibly referring to the eastern variety.⁹³ In another passage, he offers a different explanation, maintaining that the Ethiopians occupied the lands from the winter sunrise to sunset.⁹⁴ If there had been a poetic convention of a mythical eastern Ethiopia which survived until Euripides, the writers of prose were unaware of it. Perhaps the only way to solve this problem is to consider the vantage point of the Greeks, who were situated considerably north of the equator. From this position, the sun would not be seen to rise entirely in the east, but would rather appear from east-south-east. Hence, a general confusion between east and south-east is quite possible. The consequence of such a possibility is that the question of the location of the Ethiopians in Classical drama, should be considered open.

⁸⁹ Xenophanes frg.16 mentions the gods of the Ethiopians as being black-skinned and snub-nosed, clearly a reference to Negroes.

⁹⁰ Eur.frg.228.

⁹¹ Aesch.frg.300.

⁹² Howe & Wells (1967: vol. I, 170).

⁹³ Ephorus frg.128.

⁹⁴ Ephorus frg.30a. Later authors also tried to reconcile the east-west dichotomy with their own perception of an African reality. As already stated, Strabo i.2.25 considers the eastern and western Ethiopians to be the parts of Ethiopia divided by the Nile, and Posidonius (*apud* Strabo ii.3.8) explains the eastern Ethiopians as being Indians.

The Eastern Ethiopians were suppressed for a while in favour of an African variety (to be discussed below), especially in Greek prose. However, it is evident that they were not entirely forgotten. Herodotus⁹⁵ mentions a group of Ethiopians from the east who resemble Indians. These people are certainly real, but it is unclear whether Herodotus calls them Ethiopians because he has borrowed a Persian word, or because he has associated them with the Ethiopians of Homer.⁹⁶ All we know is that they are lumped in with the Indians in the army of Xerxes.

The connection between Ethiopia and the east must have been very strong in the mind of the Classical Greeks, since the association continues in the writing of the later authors, even after the centre of Greek literature had moved to Alexandria, where contact with Ethiopians must have been more common. There are frequent comparisons of Ethiopia with India by authors such as Philostratus, who believed the Ethiopians to have originated in India.⁹⁷ Philostratus also talks about the Indians and Ethiopians as being the extremes of west and east, both places at which dark men live.⁹⁸ Arrian also compared the skin colour of the Indians with that of the Ethiopians.⁹⁹ In the same passage, he claims the Indians to be the tallest men in the east, possibly an echo of Herodotus' long-lived¹⁰⁰ Ethiopians who are the tallest men in the world.¹⁰¹ Numerous other authors mention India in conjunction with Ethiopia, indicating, perhaps, a subconscious tendency to consider them in the same contexts.¹⁰² Some examples are: Theophrastus, who compares the climates of India and Ethiopia;¹⁰³ Philostratus, who compares the sizes of India and Ethiopia;¹⁰⁴ and Aelian compares the size of the snakes of both lands.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁵ Hdt.vii.70.

⁹⁶ See in addition, Ch4.1.2.

⁹⁷ Philostr.*VA* iii.19; v.37.

⁹⁸ Philostr.*VA* ii.18.

⁹⁹ Arr.*Annab.* v.4.

¹⁰⁰ Hdt.iii.17.

¹⁰¹ Hdt.iii.20.

¹⁰² Another example of the a conflation of Ethiopia and the east is evident in the frequent portrayal of the gymnosophists being located in Ethiopia, for example Philostr.*VA* v.37; Heliodorus *Aethiopica* ii.31.

¹⁰³ Theophr.*Caus. plant.* iii.3.3.

¹⁰⁴ Philostr.*VA* vi.1.

¹⁰⁵ Ael.*NA* xvi.39.

The eastern and western Ethiopians of the poets were a mythical race who framed the world at the extremes of the earth. Although the explorations into Africa by people like Herodotus must have brought to the mainland more empirical information concerning Negroid people from the south, the eastern Ethiopians survived in drama, at least until the age of Euripides. The eastern Ethiopians do not survive past the Classical period, but a confusion between the Ethiopians and eastern countries persists past the Hellenistic period.

2.2. African Ethiopia.

While the Ethiopians of the east were, for the most part, a mythical construct, another image of the Ethiopian was current: he was considered to be a person from Africa south of Egypt. Exactly when the Ethiopians of Homer were conflated with the dark-skinned people of the south is unclear. However, it is possible to trace, to some degree, the Greek image of a southern Ethiopia, an Ethiopia that was to be far less vague, and information concerning which was based far more on observation than mythopoeisis. In this regard, it is important to examine these Ethiopians in the context of Greek geographical theory. In addition, it becomes evident that the Ethiopians were again viewed as being extremely remote, this time not in an east-west dichotomy, but in a paradigmatic relationship with peoples from the extreme north, usually Scythians, Thracians and occasionally Hyperboreans.

Exactly when the Ethiopians came to be associated with Africa is uncertain. Considering the early contact of Greeks with Egypt and the early contact of Egypt with Negroes, not to mention the fact that archaeological remains depicting Negroes have been found in Hellenic settlements, it is not surprising that dark people are known to exist in the south from an early stage.¹⁰⁶ The first associations of the Ethiopians with the south are very early, and in this respect the southern Ethiopians fit into the framework of the world bounded by Ocean. A fragment from the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* provides us with a flight sequence in which the world is described. The wonders of the earth's periphery are mentioned and amongst these remote peoples are the Ethiopians in the south and the mare-milking Scythians and Hyperboreans in the

¹⁰⁶

Hes.*Op.*527.

north.¹⁰⁷ After Hesiod, a firm framework of peripheral people was established in which the Ethiopians occupy the southern extreme and the Scythians (and sometimes Thracians and Hyperboreans) in the north. This north-south paradigm, as it shall be referred to from this point onwards, was to become a pervasive feature of many of the accounts of Ethiopia and the Ethiopians. Since Herodotus says more about the Ethiopians than all the authors of the Classical period, the discussion will be centred on his *Histories*, contextualising Herodotus' accounts within the larger framework of Greek perceptions of Ethiopia.

Herodotus seems to have been the first Greek to dispense with the idea of an earth surrounded by Ocean, and instead adopted a world view which was more empirical than abstract. Herodotus attacks the received view¹⁰⁸ on a number of counts, particularly for the symmetry associated with early maps of the world,¹⁰⁹ and for the belief in an all encompassing Ocean.¹¹⁰ Instead, Herodotus envisages a world which is bounded in some directions by wastelands, vast tracts of land uninhabited by people, and thus from which no information could be gained. These places, which Herodotus describes with the word ἐρήμος and the phrase ἐρήμος ἀνθρώπων, take the place of Ocean in its guise as an unlimited expanse.¹¹¹ Thus, beyond the central African ridge, there is only desert, with no men, animals, wood or moisture.¹¹² Herodotus mentions elsewhere that in the south-west, the long-lived Ethiopians are the last people to inhabit land.¹¹³ The other areas which are described in this way are India, east of which is uninhabited desert¹¹⁴ and Scythia.¹¹⁵ Thus, a geographical framework is established in which the Scythians, Indians and Ethiopians form a framework of peripheral peoples.

¹⁰⁷ Hes.*Cat.* 150.

¹⁰⁸ This view is based largely on the work of the Ionian philosophers, particularly Anaximander and his pupil, Hecateus of Miletus. For a more detailed discussion of these world views, see Kirk and Raven (1957: 103-4).

¹⁰⁹ Hdt. iv. 36.

¹¹⁰ Hdt. ii. 23; iv. 36; iv. 8.

¹¹¹ See Romm (1992: 36) for a discussion on Herodotus' conception of the periphery.

¹¹² Hdt. iv. 185.

¹¹³ Hdt. iii. 114.

¹¹⁴ Hdt. iii. 98.

¹¹⁵ Hdt. iv. 17.

Although Herodotus is critical of previous geographers for their insistence on an artificially symmetrical world,¹¹⁶ he himself puts forward a world which is not entirely random, owing a lot to the Ionian geographers.¹¹⁷ The north-south paradigm has already been established in the context of peripheral lands which border the inhabited world with the unknowable wastelands, but Herodotus' symmetry extends much further than this. Scythia and Africa resemble each other quite remarkably, with the Danube resembling the Nile in that they both flow east and then north and south respectively.¹¹⁸ The idea that Scythia and Ethiopia are symmetrical is apparent in some later conceptions of the world. Ephorus mentions that Ethiopia and Scythia refer to all countries to the south, and all countries to the north respectively.¹¹⁹ This symmetry is evident in his division of the winds, in a passage in which he places the Indians and Celts in the east and west, and the Scythians and Ethiopians in the north and south.¹²⁰ Ethiopia and Scythia are said to be the largest of these sections, since Ethiopia extends from the rising to the setting winter sun. Since Ephorus does not offer the same explanation for Scythia's size, one can assume it is on account of its perceived symmetry with Ethiopia.

The same sort of symmetry is apparent in the Greek idea of the north and south as climatic extremes. Scythia's winters are exaggerated, being claimed to last eight months, during the duration of which rivers freeze over and mud does not form from spilt water.¹²¹ There is some truth to the account, since the sea of the gulf of Odessa freezes in January, but the eight month winter is an exaggeration, as is the statement that the summers are cool. These are in fact very hot, and Herodotus makes the point to maintain symmetry.¹²² In addition to the bitter cold, there is claimed to be heavy rainfall in the summer. Herodotus does not mention the Ethiopian climate directly, but he describes the southern extremes of Libya as being extremely hot and dry, so dry in

¹¹⁶ Hdt.iv.36.

¹¹⁷ Immerwahr (1981: 315).

¹¹⁸ Immerwahr (1981: 316).

¹¹⁹ Ephorus frg.30a.

¹²⁰ Ephorus frg.30a.

¹²¹ Hdt.iv.28.

¹²² Howe & Wells (1967: vol I, 312).

fact, that no people or animals live there.¹²³ People in the upper parts of Libya are said to enjoy perpetual summer.¹²⁴ Although Herodotus does not mention the climate of Ethiopia in this regard, there is again a north-south framework, in which the Ethiopians form a part in the writings of other authors. In general, Scythia is always cold and harsh, often exaggeratedly so,¹²⁵ while the climate of Ethiopia is dry and hot.¹²⁶ Often, the climatic difference between North and South was expressed in the context of an environmental theory that accounted for the appearances of the different peoples. Thus, Aristotle claims people from excessively hot regions, such as Ethiopia, have curly hair on account of the hot air tending to bend things.¹²⁷ This, incidentally, is also the reason for the bandy legs of the Egyptians.¹²⁸

Detlev Fehling has suggested that Herodotus' conception of symmetry, with regard to the peripheral world, extends to his narrative strategy.¹²⁹ According to Fehling, in Herodotus' narrative framework, three concentric worlds are discernible: the inner, concerning which information can be gained through direct experience; the middle from which information can only be gained second hand; and the outer, which is unknowable.¹³⁰ The world that is knowable by second hand information only, is one of fantasy, and includes the long-lived Ethiopians, handsomest and tallest of all men who are renowned for their piety, and the one-eyed men, of whom the Greeks have information only through the accounts of the Scythians.¹³¹ Herodotus claims to have only second hand information concerning people south of Elephantine¹³² and he claims

¹²³ Hdt.iv.185.

¹²⁴ Hdt.ii.26. It appears as though Ethiopia is considered by Herodotus to be part of Libya, see Hdt.iii.114.

¹²⁵ For example, Hippoc.*Aer.* 19 claims that summer in Scythia lasts for a handful of days and that there is otherwise perpetual winter.

¹²⁶ Xen.*Cyr.* viii.6.21; viii.8.1 maintains that the extremes of Cyrus' kingdom (Ethiopia being the southern extreme) were uninhabitable because of heat. Furthermore, Arist.*Pol.* 362b.22-30 compares India, Scythia and Ethiopia, claiming that further than these extremes there are no people on account of the fact that India is bounded by Ocean, the north of Scythia is too cold and the south of Ethiopia is too hot.

¹²⁷ Arist.*Gen. an.* 782b.35.

¹²⁸ Arist.*[Prob.]* 909a.27. For more on the environmental theory, see Ch4.1.1.

¹²⁹ Fehling (1990: esp. 96-105; 187-189).

¹³⁰ Fehling (1990: 101).

¹³¹ Hdt.iv.27.

¹³² Hdt.ii.29.

that Aristaeas has only second hand information concerning people north of the Issedones.¹³³ Another example of the north-south paradigm in Herodotus' narrative strategy is the fact that in his account of the long-lived Ethiopians,¹³⁴ Cambyses is said to have sent a fish eating tribe to scout these people out. It is unlikely that Cambyses would have not used Persian scouts with translators. In much the same way, the Scythians use seven interpreters of seven different languages when dealing with the Bald Men to the north.¹³⁵ The two accounts are the only accounts in Herodotus of interpreters being used.¹³⁶

One of the consequences of Herodotus' division of the world into zones based on the ability to supply information is that the lack of information concerning any land allows accounts to be made on the basis of exaggerated folk tales and popular myth. Thus, the long-lived Ethiopians whom Cambyses attempts to conquer are not a real people, but a mythical tribe¹³⁷ renowned for their longevity, piety and good looks.¹³⁸ The account of Herodotus is vague in terms of chronological detail¹³⁹ and it is tempting to see in his account echoes of Homer's blameless Ethiopians¹⁴⁰ and Memnon, most beautiful of all men.¹⁴¹ Not only are Herodotus' long-lived Ethiopians the tallest men in the world, but their strength is also significant.¹⁴² Ctesias offers a similarly mythical account of the east, claiming the existence of men who live to be over one hundred and rivers which flow with honey.¹⁴³ Also at the edges of the world in Homer, are the Cimmerians from the north, on whom the sun never shines. Other mythical tribes from the periphery are the Pygmies (a race of dwarves who were slaughtered by the Cranes), the Amazons (a fierce female warrior race who fought in

¹³³ Hdt.iv.16.

¹³⁴ Hdt.iii.17.

¹³⁵ Hdt.iv.24.

¹³⁶ Fehling (1990: 100).

¹³⁷ See Howe & Wells (1967: vol. I, 261).

¹³⁸ Hdt.iii.17-24.

¹³⁹ Hunter (1982: 178).

¹⁴⁰ Hom.II.i.423.

¹⁴¹ Hom.Od. xi.522.

¹⁴² Hdt.iii.21. The leader of the Ethiopians gives a bow to Cambyses' scouts and suggests that Cambyses would not be able to pull such a bow with as much ease as the Ethiopians.

¹⁴³ Ctesias *Indica* xv; xiii.

the Trojan War),¹⁴⁴ and the Hyperboreans,¹⁴⁵ a northerly people of perfect lifestyle and remarkable longevity.¹⁴⁶ In this context, the long-lived Ethiopians are one more mythical race who dwell near the extremes of the known world. Thus, the Ethiopians fit partially in a world of reality and partially in a mythical world, as did the Scythians and Indians.

The periphery, according to Herodotus, was both extremely rich and populous. India and Thrace¹⁴⁷ are the most populous and second most populous countries in the world and the long-lived Ethiopians warn the Persians of their great numbers.¹⁴⁸ As far as gold is concerned, the Indians' supply is plentiful¹⁴⁹ and that of the Thracians excessive.¹⁵⁰ The Ethiopians also have gold in abundance¹⁵¹ to such an extent that they bind their prisoners with gold chains.¹⁵² When Herodotus states that the people on the edges of the world have in abundance things which are sought after in the knowable world, he mentions beasts which are larger than those found elsewhere and trees from which the most beautiful wool can be picked.¹⁵³ Herodotus here expresses a common conception of the lands at the periphery, that they are full of marvels and wonders. For the Greeks, foreign lands were the home to both the grotesque and the beautiful; in short, they expected of distant lands, creatures, habits and beings which lay outside of the normative range one could expect in their own proximity.¹⁵⁴ Herodotus describes Libya as a land inhabited in its western extremities not only by lions, elephants, bears, giant serpents and horned asses, but creatures with no heads

¹⁴⁴ Hom.*Od.* vi.186; iii.109. Aesch.*PV.* 723-5 places them south of the Caucasus and according to Ephorus frg.114, they come from Cumae.

¹⁴⁵ Herodotus' Hyperboreans dwell north of the Scythians (iv. 14.). The Cimmerians are said to have split into factions and destroyed each other (iv.11.) and the survivors departed, leaving a deserted land for the Scythians to occupy.

¹⁴⁶ For example, Pind.*O.x.* 42-44. Strabo xv.1.57 implies that Simonides maintains the same story, as does Megasthenes.

¹⁴⁷ Hdt.iii.94; iii.98; v.3.

¹⁴⁸ Hdt.iii.21.

¹⁴⁹ Hdt.iii.98.

¹⁵⁰ Hdt.iii.116.

¹⁵¹ Hdt.iii.114.

¹⁵² Hdt.iii.23.

¹⁵³ Hdt.iii.106.

¹⁵⁴ Romm (1992: 85). See Romm (1992: 82-120) for a detailed account of the Marvels of India. The marvels of India seem to have particularly fascinated Ctesias and, later, Megasthenes, of whom only fragments have survived.

and eyes on their breasts, dog faced tribes and wild men, not to mention 'other less fabulous beasts.'¹⁵⁵ The authors of the *Corpus Aristotelium* are even convinced of Africa's ability to produce wild beasts, often attempting to explain the phenomenon.¹⁵⁶ Elsewhere, however, a slight amount of scepticism is shown concerning the existence of flying serpents in Ethiopia, although this passage does suggest a popular belief in these creatures' existence.¹⁵⁷ Tales of marvels from Ethiopia were especially popular after the Classical period: Agatharchides claims to have seen pigs with horns¹⁵⁸ and Aelian mentions snakes of one hundred and eighty feet length which are slightly smaller than the one hundred and eighty cubit snakes from India.¹⁵⁹

Marvels in the periphery are not only limited to zoological features, but non-normative geographical features can also be found there. In this regard, Herodotus' description of the 'Table of the Sun' provides a good example. At the edge of the city of the long-lived Ethiopians, he reports the existence of a meadow which is filled with cooked meat, produced by the earth itself, on which the citizens can dine.¹⁶⁰ Ctesias mentions a lake in Ethiopia whose water tastes like Cinnabar and turns mad all those who drink from it,¹⁶¹ and Democritus describes Ethiopia as having the tallest mountains in the world.¹⁶² Clearly, anything extreme could be expected from the ends of the earth, and thus from Ethiopia, the world's southern extreme.

Herodotus clearly established a north-south paradigm within his conception of a periphery that is abundant in respect of wealth, people and marvels, both geographical and zoological. So, far, Ethiopia has been discussed in comparison to the northern races, in the context of the Greek perceptions of these places as being normatively different from their own world. However, the contrast between Scythians

¹⁵⁵ Hdt.iv.192.

¹⁵⁶ This is perhaps best expressed by Arist.*Gen. an.*746.b7-12 who quotes a proverb maintaining that Libya always brings forth something new, explaining that since various species of animals often meet together at drinking sites in Africa, miscegenation is frequent.

¹⁵⁷ Arist.*Hist. an.*517a.18.

¹⁵⁸ Agath.*De Mare*.lxxix. This particular work clearly illustrates the view that Ethiopia was a land of extreme diversity as regards *monstra*. Numerous fantastic tribes are transferred from Ctesias' India to Ethiopia, for example, the dog-milkers (Agath.*De Mare*.lxi).

¹⁵⁹ Ael.*NA* xvi.39.

¹⁶⁰ Hdt.iii.18.

¹⁶¹ As quoted by Plin.*HN*.xxxi.9 and Diod. Sic.ii.15.2.

¹⁶² Democritus *apud* Strabo i.2.29.

and Ethiopians is used (typically by authors toward the end of the Classical period) in contexts which do not suggest any notions of extremity. Thus, Theophrastus discusses the poisonous roots of certain plants with which both Scythians and Ethiopians smear arrows. The plants of the Scythians and Ethiopians are poisonous, while the roots of the Indians are exactly the opposite, being used mainly for medicinal purposes.¹⁶³ It is significant that Theophrastus has discussed the plants of the peripheral peoples together, and that the Scythians and Ethiopians are differentiated from the rest. Menander compares Scythians and Ethiopians with Greeks, claiming that both have the ability to be noble, and Plato uses Scythians and Ethiopians as examples illustrating the principle that things of value to one people may be worthless to others.¹⁶⁴ In none of these passages are the Ethiopians or the Scythians idealised, but Scythia and Ethiopia were so strongly thought of as opposites, that Greek authors frequently thought of them in the same context.

2.2.1. The Location of Ethiopia in the Greek World View.

The question of whom the Greeks were attempting to denote when they used the term Αἰθίοψ is a complicated one, partially owing to the vague nature of the surviving sources, and partially owing to the complexity of the concept. In addition, the Ethiopians belonged to two geographical conceptions, and thus were placed at eastern or western extremes of the earth, or at southern extremes. For the most part, the Ethiopians of the east seem to have been poetic fiction, and there is nothing in the literature to suggest that a fixed location was envisaged for them. This is not to say that mythical races were thought of as having no fixed abode, since various attempts are made to place mythical races within the known world.¹⁶⁵ In the case of eastern Ethiopians, however, they are seldom described by Classical authors as being located near recognisable places. A notable exception is Herodotus, who mentions a race of eastern Ethiopians who form part of Xerxes' campaign in Greece.¹⁶⁶ The question of who this tribe was has been dealt with by other scholars, but the nature of the debate is

¹⁶³ Theophr.*Hist. plant.* ix.5.2.5.

¹⁶⁴ Pl.*[Eryxias]* 400b.

¹⁶⁵ Aeschylus and Ephorus, for example, attempt to provide a definite location for the Amazons. Aesch.*PV* 723-5 places them near the Caucasus while Ephorus frg. 114a places them near Cumae.

¹⁶⁶ Hdt. vii.70.

highly speculative.¹⁶⁷ For the most part, however, the most that can be determined about the eastern Ethiopians is that they occupy the extremes of the earth, either in the east or the west.

It is not clear whether Ethiopia was conceived of as a geographical area or a political unit, or whether the term had other senses. Herodotus seems to use the term Αἰθιοπία to describe two distinct geographical areas. Of these, the land which provides least difficulty is the land of the long-lived Ethiopians. This country is supposed to be in the part of Libya that tends towards the setting of the sun.¹⁶⁸ Very little else is said about this Ethiopia, but it is clear from the context that in three passages, Herodotus is talking about this country.¹⁶⁹ The inhabitants of this land are ruled by a king who is chosen on the basis of his height, they have gold in abundance, and live longer than any other men.¹⁷⁰ For all intents and purposes, this Ethiopia is a mythical land, possibly constructed by Herodotus from travellers' tales and Greek legend.

The other entity which Herodotus refers to as Ethiopia has its seat in a place called Meroë.¹⁷¹ If we assume Herodotus to be consistent, then this must be the Ethiopia he mentions in ii.10; ii.18; ii.146; ii.161.¹⁷² It seems very likely that in this case Herodotus is talking about a particular political entity: Kush, which lay below the second cataract. A number of points make this clear. First, Herodotus mentions the worship of Dionysus and Zeus in Meroë (Napata), which corresponds to the worship of Åmen in Napata amongst other cites.¹⁷³ Napata was capital of the theocratic kingdom of Kush.¹⁷⁴ Secondly, Herodotus mentions the invasion of Egypt by the king of Ethiopia, Sabacus.¹⁷⁵ It seems clear that Herodotus is talking about the conquest of

¹⁶⁷ See Howe and Wells (1967: vol. I, 285) who provide and refute a number of suggestions.

¹⁶⁸ Hdt.iii.114.

¹⁶⁹ Hdt.iii.17-24; iii.114; vii.18.

¹⁷⁰ Hdt.iii.17-24.

¹⁷¹ Hdt.ii.29 in which he claims Meroë to be the capital of all Ethiopia. It is generally accepted that the distances Herodotus quotes indicate that he meant Napata above the fourth cataract, rather than Meroë which was south of the sixth cataract. See Howe & Wells (1967: vol I, 164).

¹⁷² It is unclear exactly which Ethiopia is being referred to in Hdt.vii.90, but it has been suggested to be eastern Ethiopia or Assyria. See Howe & Wells (1967: vol II, 161).

¹⁷³ Laclant (1990: 163).

¹⁷⁴ Laclant (1990: 163).

¹⁷⁵ Hdt.ii.137.

the Nile delta by Shabaka around 713 BC. Shabaka is regarded as the founder of the twenty-fifth or Ethiopian dynasty of Egypt.¹⁷⁶ While modern scholars are more or less clear about the history and geography of Kush, it is not so clear that this was the case as regards Herodotus' perception of Ethiopia's location. Herodotus does not provide us with many details which help us locate exactly where he perceived Ethiopia to be. A number of references help us vaguely locate it as being south of Egypt. First, he mentions his belief that a gulf existed which entered Egypt from the north and extended southward toward Ethiopia.¹⁷⁷ Later, he mentions a fountain which runs northward to Egypt and southward toward Ethiopia.¹⁷⁸

Unfortunately Herodotus says little about the land between Egypt and Ethiopia, which make it difficult to ascertain whether Herodotus recognised a distinction between Kush and Nubia.¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, Herodotus mentions Ethiopians in places which do not appear to be Ethiopia. Thus, there are Ethiopians in Tochompso¹⁸⁰ and the land above Elephantine begins to become inhabited by Ethiopians.¹⁸¹ Furthermore, in discussing the tribes of Libya, Herodotus mentions Ethiopians to be the southern autochthonous inhabitants of that land.¹⁸² It appears that Herodotus is aware of two countries in Africa: Egypt and Ethiopia, and Libya is simply that part of Africa which is not part of Egypt.¹⁸³ Furthermore, since Ethiopians are mentioned in places other than Ethiopia, it seems that the term Αἰθίοπες did not simply denote the people who lived in Αἰθιοπία.

Herodotus' knowledge of Africa was vastly superior to that of most of his contemporaries, and his understanding of Ethiopia must have been different from that

¹⁷⁶ Laclant (1990: 162).

¹⁷⁷ Hdt.ii.11.

¹⁷⁸ Hdt.ii.28.

¹⁷⁹ Nubia started somewhere south of the first cataract. Kush was a Nubian empire which came to prominence during the first millennium BC. There were parts of Nubia which were neither Egyptian nor Kushite.

¹⁸⁰ Hdt.ii.29. It is not clear exactly where Tochompso was, but it is generally considered to be Djerar, near the border of what was to become Ptolemaic Egypt. See Howe & Wells (1967: vol I, 173); Lloyd (1976: 118-120).

¹⁸¹ Hdt.ii.29.

¹⁸² Hdt.iv.197.

¹⁸³ The long-lived Ethiopians and their bows (Hdt.iii.21) show that Herodotus must have heard about Nubia which is the land of the bow in Egyptian tradition according to Adam (1990: 141).

of other Greeks. Few accounts from the Classical period survive¹⁸⁴ and those that do clearly indicate that Greek knowledge about Ethiopia was scant. Thus, Ephorus maintains all lands from the rising to the setting sun in winter to be Ethiopia¹⁸⁵ and Xenophon mentions Ethiopia as the southern border of Cyrus' kingdom.¹⁸⁶ In fact, all that can be ascertained about Classical conceptions is that people seemed to associate Ethiopia with the source of the Nile.¹⁸⁷

3. Conclusion.

It seems as though the Greeks had a long history of brief contacts with Negroes, starting from the second millennium BC, from which period depictions of Negroes have been found in archaeological remains from Crete, Cyprus and even Mycenaean Greece. After the dark ages, through the colonisation in Egypt and the military campaigns under Psammetichus, certain Greeks would have gained first hand contact with Negroes, and from the middle of the sixth century, archaeological evidence suggests Negroes on Greek soil. From the context of such archaeological evidence, it is clear that by the late sixth century, Negroes were already associated with Ethiopia. Exactly when this association was made is difficult to determine.

The meaning of the term in a geographical context is complex primarily on account of the fact that the Greeks held two perceptions of the Ethiopians: they knew of eastern and western Ethiopians who survived in myth and poetry; and southern Ethiopians, from Africa, whose existence was based more on empirical evidence, but who were still placed within a geographical framework which itself was based on empiricism, rationalism and myth. In such a framework, the Ethiopians were most often compared with the inhabitants of the north, such as the Scythians and Thracians. This north-south paradigm would become an integral part of the Greek conceptions of the Ethiopians.

¹⁸⁴ In this case, later authors' accounts should not be taken into consideration, since the centre of Greek literature being in Alexandria meant that they had much more contact with Nubia and Kush, and their knowledge of these areas would be vastly superior to that of their Classical predecessors.

¹⁸⁵ Ephorus frg.30a.

¹⁸⁶ Xen.Cyr.viii.6.21; viii.8.1.

¹⁸⁷ For example, Anaxagoras frg.91; Aesch.PV 810-12; Supp.559-61; frg.300; Arist.Pol.350b.12-14 amongst Classical authors. The association of Ethiopia with the source of the Nile continued into the Hellenistic period, as evidenced by Agatharchides frg.1.2; Paus.ii.5.3.

There is no way of knowing exactly where in Africa the Greeks envisaged Ethiopia to be. Herodotus associates it with Kush, but as regards other Classical authors perceptions of the location of Ethiopia, all that can be ascertained is that they associated it with the source of the Nile. In addition, an analysis of Herodotus' use of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία reveals evidence that they were not simply geographical. It will become evident that the term was associated with somatic characteristics as well as religious, political and cultural identity. It is with these considerations in mind that further analysis of the Greek concept of the Ethiopians will proceed.

Chapter Four: Manifestations of the Ethiopian in Greek Perceptions.

Perhaps foremost in our minds, when mention is made of the Greek term Αἰθίοψ, is the image of a physiognomy of considerable deviation from the Caucasian somatic norm: that of the Negro. It is tempting to consider this as an extension of modern preconceived concepts and racial categories which we intuitively assign to the term Αἰθίοψ. Previous studies have, often in passing, distinguished various contradictory senses of the term,¹ but have not attempted to account for these by means of any systematic analysis.

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the Greek perception of the Ethiopians as regards their physical appearance. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first of these deals with the skin colour of the Ethiopians. It becomes clear that to the Greek mind, the Ethiopian symbolised somatic extremity, an extremity which appears to be an extension of the geographic extremity established in the previous chapter. In addition, the possibility for the term to be used as a logical synonym for Negroid (in other words, a synonym which can be negated by antonyms of the term 'Negroid') is discussed, and so is the phenomenon of Caucasian Ethiopians. The second section deals with other aspects of the Greek perception of the Ethiopians' appearance, such as ulotrichy,² prognathism, platyrrhiny and even vestimentation.

1. Skin Colour.

References to dark-skinned people occur at an early stage in Greek literature, as both Homer³ and Hesiod⁴ mention such people.⁵ Plastic vases depicting Negroid figures appear from as early as the early sixth century BC, in Naucratis, Cyprus and Rhodes, and in the late sixth century appear in mainland Greece. It is from the late sixth century that we have clear evidence of the Ethiopians being associated with dark skin, since not only do we have the first literary reference to dark-skinned (μελανόχροος)⁶

¹ Snowden omits to comment on the seemingly contradictory senses of the term Αἰθίοψ, first as the somatic extreme by which other peoples are judged, and second, as covering a wide range of somatic types.

² I have used this term to denote curly hair, after the example of Snowden (1970).

³ Homer's Eurybates is dark-skinned and woolly haired in *Hom. Od.* xix.246-8.

⁴ *Hes. Op.* 527 refers to a κυανέων ἀνδρῶν δῆμόν.

⁵ Furthermore in *Hes. Cat.* 150.17, μέλανες is used as an epithet for the Libyans and a race of ἀπειρεσίων Μέλανων is mentioned in *Cat.* 150.10.

⁶ Xenophanes frg. 16.

Ethiopians, but black-figure depictions of Negroid⁷ Ethiopians⁸ appear frequently from the middle of the sixth century.

1.1. Ethiopians' Black Skin as a Somatic Extreme.

In the previous chapter, a north-south paradigm was established, in which the Ethiopians were often considered in contrast to the peoples of the north, especially Thracians and Scythians. Of the many hues and shades of people the Greeks came into contact with, the Ethiopians were most often considered the darkest, a sentiment expressed by Aristotle in the fourth century.⁹ However, few explicit statements to this effect from the Classical period have survived. Instead, it will be shown, the Greeks expressed their perception of the Ethiopian as the darkest skinned of all men by choosing them most frequently as examples of blackness, often within the context of the north-south paradigm.

When Greek authors required examples of black-skinned people, their most frequent choice was the Ethiopian. Quite often, he was used to prove quite mundane points, such as that black men had white sperm,¹⁰ white teeth¹¹ and that genetic traits may remain dormant in offspring.¹² Occasionally, the Ethiopians occur together with the Indians or Egyptians to illustrate some aspect of blackness.¹³ From the earliest reference to dark-skinned Ethiopians, a system was established whereby the Ethiopian was compared to the Scythian within the north-south paradigm as an illustration of the range of somatic extremes. Xenophanes provides the best illustration of this, in attempting to illustrate the folly of belief in anthropomorphic divinity:

⁷ The medium makes it difficult to judge skin colour, but the painstaking attempts to indicate platyrrhiny and ulotrichy shows with certainty that the figures are intended to be Negroid. See fig. 9, who is an attendant of Memnon (detail of fig. 16)

⁸ These are assumed to be Ethiopians on the basis of their flanking Memnon, who had been associated with Ethiopia from as early as Hes.*Th.* 984.

⁹ Arist.*[Pr.]* 898b.13f.

¹⁰ Arist.*Gen. an.* 736a.10. This is in contrast to Hdt.*iii.* 101 who believed the sperm of black people to be black.

¹¹ Arist.*Hist. an.* 517a.18.

¹² Arist.*Hist. an.* 586a.4; *Gen. an.* 722a.10.

¹³ For example, Arist.*Soph. el.* 167a.7-11 discusses Ethiopians and Indians together and Arist.*[Phgn.]* 812a13 lumps Egyptians and Ethiopians together as examples of excessively dark people.

The Ethiopians claim that their gods are flat nosed and dark-skinned, the Thracians that they are blue eyed and have red hair.¹⁴

It seems obvious that Xenophanes has chosen the Ethiopian and the Thracian as the perceived extremes of the somatic spectrum, in order best to illustrate his point.¹⁵

Xenophanes was writing at a time when janiform vases depicting both Negroes and Caucasians were popular, for example, figs.10; 11. It seems likely that Greek artists at this stage were as struck by the difference between Negroes and Greeks as Xenophanes was, and they chose to illustrate this with such vases.¹⁶ However, if one interprets some of the Caucasian women in these vases to be maenads,¹⁷ the comparison gains new meaning, since the maenads were closely related to Thrace. A further example of contrasts between northerners and Negroes occurs in a vase depicting a probable Ethiopian¹⁸ flanked by two female warriors, probably Amazons who are often located in Thrace or associated with Scythia.¹⁹ There even seems to be a conflation of Negroes with northerners in a series of *alabastra*²⁰ in which the Negroes are depicted wearing Scythian gear, one of whom appears once more with an Amazon.²¹

Authors after Xenophanes expressed the contrast between the northerners and southerners with regard to skin colour most often in the context of environmental theories explaining the character and characteristics of foreign peoples in terms of climatic differences which in turn are related to geographical extremity.²² According

¹⁴ Xenophanes frg.16 tr. Vernant (1991: 1).

¹⁵ Xenophanes frg.15 uses animals to illustrate the same point.

¹⁶ Until such novelty wore off. The type loses popularity after the fifth century.

¹⁷ See Ch5.2.2.

¹⁸ Probably an Ethiopian, because of his bow and chitoniskos (See below, 2.3). In addition, although the exact setting of the scene is uncertain, the presence of Amazons suggests a Trojan war setting, in which Ethiopians were said to have fought.

¹⁹ Aesch.PV 723-5; Strabo ii.5.4. In addition, Amazons frequently appear with Scythian or Thracian outfits, See Shapiro (1983).

²⁰ *ARV*² 267-269.

²¹ See Ch6.2. for a discussion of the significance of such a conflation.

²² See Ch3.2.2, in which the environmental theory is introduced in the context of Greek geographical thought. The Ethiopians were strongly associated with the sun. In the conception of Ethiopia as an eastern extreme, the sun is closely associated with the land on account of the sun's rising at the eastern end of the world (see Mimnermus frg.ii.8; Eur.frg.771). In the north-south paradigm the Ethiopians' association with the sun survives, this time in contrast with the harsh winters in the north. Associations of the Ethiopians with the sun were no doubt sustained by the southern practice of worshipping sun gods such as *Ámen*. See Ch5.2.1.

to such theories, people of the north were rough and fair due to their excessively cold winters,²³ whereas people to the south were bandy legged²⁴ and dark because of their excessively hot climates. In the earliest stages, it is the Egyptians and Libyans that are most often chosen as the opposites of the Scythians and Thracians, especially in the early fifth century BC.²⁵ From Aristotle²⁶ onward, the Ethiopians were generally used in the north-south paradigm in the context of the environmental theories, especially amongst later authors.²⁷ The understanding that the Ethiopian occupied the southern/dark-skinned extreme in the environmental theory was so pervasive as to extend into Latin literature.²⁸

Two things emerge from the above analysis: that the Ethiopians were often considered to be extremely distant from the Greeks as regards skin colour, and that this was perceived within the context of the north-south paradigm, as an extension of their geographic extremity. However, passages in which it is obvious that the Ethiopian is used because of his extreme darkness are not limited to contrasts with other races. For example, Aristotle claims the Ethiopian to have the whitest teeth in the world, although they have black skin.²⁹ It is tempting to consider his perception of the Ethiopian's extreme whiteness of teeth as a subconscious expression of the contrast between the white teeth of the Ethiopian, which are no whiter in reality than those of any other race, and the dark skin, which was probably considered the chromatic extreme in this case. Finally, there is the well known tale of the Ethiopian slave whose master attempted to wash him white, thinking his skin colour to be a sign

²³ For example, Hippoc.*Aer.*ii.18.1. compares the Egyptians and Scythians with regard to somatic characteristics. The climates in environmental theories are generally heavily exaggerated, for example, Hdt.iv.28; Hippoc.*Aer.*xix for Pontic winters.

²⁴ Arist.*Gen. an.*782b.35. See Also Arist.[*Prob.*]898b.12; 909a.27.

²⁵ For example, Hippoc.*Aer.*ii.18.1; ii.19.2. Even Herodotus more often compares Scythia with Libya rather than Ethiopia, albeit as regards customs and geography rather than somatic type. As is evident from Hdt.iv.197; vii.70, some people may have considered Ethiopia to be a part of Libya.

²⁶ Aristotle does not mention the environment as a determining factor of skin colour, but does explain other features of the Ethiopian physiognomy in this way. For example, [*Prob.*]898b.12 claims the dry air to be the cause of the Ethiopian's white teeth and nails and [*Prob.*]909a.27 claims the bandy legs to be a result of the sun's ability to warp things. In *Gen. an.*782b35 Aristotle contrasts the hair of the Scythians and Ethiopians claiming the Ethiopians' hair to be curly as a result of the dry brain and surrounding air.

²⁷ For example, Strabo ii.3.7 (which explains differences between Indians and Ethiopians as being a result of the differences in the surrounding air); Diod. Sic.iii.34.7-8.

²⁸ Plin. *HN.*ii.80.189.

²⁹ Arist.[*Prob.*]898b.12. Arist.*Soph. el.*167a.11.

of neglect. The result was that the Ethiopian fell ill while maintaining his unfamiliar hue.³⁰ The Ethiopian was obviously chosen as an example because of the perceived extremity of his skin colour, in order that the parable have greatest effect. By this stage, the blackness of the Ethiopian's skin was proverbial.

1.2. Αἰθίοψ as a Synonym for 'Black'.

As was mentioned briefly in Chapter One, the terms 'Black' and 'Coloured', which have been used to describe various people of different shades throughout the world, have both technical, common and borrowed uses. Popular in South Africa, especially during the apartheid era, was the use of the term 'Black' to denote people of purely Negroid extraction, and whom the government had decided did not fit into the category of 'Coloured' people.³¹ However, the most common usage of 'Black' in the United States is as a term denoting any person with a black ancestor. However, in South Africa, various peoples of non-White extraction started to refer to themselves as 'Black', including people from the 'Indian' community. Another interesting trend which became popular during the nineteen-seventies was to refer to people who were not white as being African.³² Thus, in South Africa, the term 'African' lost its geographical meaning in favour of a somatic one.³³ Considering the fact that extreme darkness became so closely associated with the Ethiopian that Ethiopian blackness became proverbial, the question should be asked whether a similar sense of the term Αἰθίοψ was current, in which it was used to describe a somatic type in the same way that the term 'African' did in South Africa.

That the term Αἰθίοψ had a sense in which somatic characteristics were the defining feature is suggested by a passage from Herodotus in which he refers to an eastern race of people also called Ethiopians.

³⁰ Aesop *fab.* 6.

³¹ These terms enjoyed legal status, 'Coloured' referring to people of mixed descent and 'Indian' referring to people of Indian and near Eastern extraction. Chinese people were variously classified as White, Coloured or Asian, see Wallerstein (1991: 75).

³² See Wallerstein (1991: 72).

³³ Although a recent trend has been to argue that African rightly refers to all people born in Africa.

The Ethiopians from the setting of the sun (for there were two kinds in the army) were drawn up with the Indians. They were not different from the other Ethiopians, save in language and hair, since the eastern Ethiopians have straight hair while those from Libya are the most ulotrichous of all men.³⁴

It would seem that these eastern Ethiopians were of Indian origin, with the suggestion having been made that they were some unknown dark race which immediately called for comparison with the Ethiopians.³⁵ Indeed, Indian extraction seems likely, since they differ from the African Ethiopians only in matters of language and hair texture, are dressed like the Indians and are lumped together with the Indian troops. Furthermore, since Herodotus distinguishes these people from the Indians, there can be no suggestion that the phrase which he uses to describe them: οἱ Αἰθίοπες ἀπὸ ἡλίου ἀνατολέων, was simply an alternative, less prosaic, denotation for Indians.

Although Herodotus uses the term Αἰθίοψ in this way, it should not be assumed that he was following a Greek practice of referring to all dark-skinned people by this term. In the first instance, we cannot be sure that Herodotus is not using a translation of a Persian word for dark-skinned people. Herodotus' sources are not easily discernible, but for the above passage, there is evidence that Herodotus has gained his information from an official Persian enumeration of an earlier invasion or from the satraps themselves,³⁶ since he claims there to have been no records for numbers of the respective forces in this particular campaign.³⁷ This leaves us in some doubt as to whether the people Herodotus describes as οἱ Αἰθίοπες ἀπὸ ἡλίου ἀνατολέων were so described owing to a general Greek tendency to use the term in a sense based on somatic characteristics, or rather as a result of the translation of a Persian word which was so used.

There are other instances of the term Αἰθίοψ used to denote a somatic type. Aristotle mentions an interesting case³⁸,

³⁴ Hdt.vii.70 tr. the author.

³⁵ Howe and Wells (1968: vol. I.285) discuss some of the suggestions relating to the ethnic composition of the seventeenth satrapy.

³⁶ Waters (1985: 86).

³⁷ Hdt.vii.60.

³⁸ Arist.*Gen. an.* 722a.8-11. He again mentions a similar story set in Sicily in *Hist. an.* 586a.4.

“There once was a woman at Elis who had intercourse with a blackamoor (Αἰθίοψ). Her daughter was not a black (Αἰθίοψ) but that daughter’s son was.”

For the moment there is no need to be concerned over the historicity of the case, as we are only interested in the use of the term Αἰθίοψ. This passage suggests that geography has lost its primary relevance in the definition of the term Αἰθίοψ to such an extent that the logical meaning of the term no longer rests on geographical grounds. While it could be argued that the man with whom the woman had an affair was from Ethiopia or some area associated with it in the Greek psyche, this cannot be argued for the son, who is referred to by this term simply because of his somatic characteristics. It could be argued that there may have been some vague underlying notion that the somatic characteristics of the son were linked to the geographical origin of his forefathers, but it is clear, since the daughter is free of this distinction on account of her being Caucasian, that geography is by this stage not strong enough a semantic category (in this context) to be assigned to someone simply on the basis of ancestral origin. Indeed the daughter’s genetic link to Ethiopia is stronger than that of her son. Therefore, we should conclude that the son’s categorisation as an Αἰθίοψ is as a result of his somatic appearance.

We are, unfortunately, prevented from making a fuller study of this particular usage in this period, because of a lack of literary evidence. However, considering that Aristotle and Herodotus make similar use of the term, we should consider this as being representative of a general Greek usage of the term. While it is probable that this particular sense of the word was most likely used to describe people in Athens of the Negroid type, it is possible that even in the Greek popular conception, the term Αἰθιοπία could be used in a sense whose logical meaning was based on somatic type. In other words, the term Αἰθιοπία may have meant, in some instances, land of the Negroes. However, it should be noted that when Herodotus actually uses the term Αἰθιοπία, he appears to be referring to two specific countries.³⁹ In addition, he

³⁹

For example in Hdt.ii.29 & iii.114. See Ch3.2.2.1.

mentions Ethiopians inhabiting areas other than Ethiopia.⁴⁰ Thus, somatic type is clearly not the only factor in the Greek definition of Ethiopia.

1.3. The Range of Skin Colours Covered by the Term Αἰθίοψ.

It may seem contradictory to consider the possibility that the term Αἰθίοψ be used to refer to a wide range of skin colours considering its use as a symbol of somatic extremity. However, studies in semantic fields⁴¹ have shown that the areas covered by words to denote certain 'continuous' concepts do not correspond very much from language to language, particularly when large cultural barriers are crossed. For example, the term μέλας seems to denote a greater range of shades than the English term 'black' as is illustrated by a passage from *de Coloribus* in which the author explains that the term can be used to describe the darkness of a rough sea, shadows and thick clouds.⁴² Similarly, some words containing the μελ- stem seem to be applicable to both Caucasians and Negroes.⁴³ In addition, it seems that Egyptians are also considered to represent a somatic extreme,⁴⁴ yet the skin colour of the people of Egypt was considerably lighter than those of the lands to the south. Thus, we should not expect a range of shades associated with the term Αἰθίοψ to correspond completely with those associated with the English term 'Negro'.

Snowden speaks of a lack of Greek condemnation of miscegenation,⁴⁵ leaving the question to be asked: would the Greeks have referred to the offspring of such unions as Αἰθίοπες? In addition, one might ask the same concerning tribes in Africa

⁴⁰ Such as the land above Elephantine (Hdt.ii.29); southern Libya (Hdt.iv.197). The Trogydtes (who are Ethiopians according to Herodotus) share the land with the Garamantians, whom Herodotus does not call Ethiopians (Hdt.iv.183).

⁴¹ There is no non-technical definition for semantic fields which is useful in this context. See, for example, Lyons (1968: 429) who avoids explicit definition of the concept, and Grandy (1992: 109) who provides a more technical definition. The term refers to an area of semantic space which is divided by words which bear some relation to each other. Examples of semantic fields are kinship, flora, fauna, cooking terms, colour, race, weights, military ranks and academic qualifications.

⁴² Arist.[*Phgn.*]791a.19-21.

⁴³ For example, Homer uses the term μελανόχροος to describe the possibly Negroid Eurybates (who also has woolly hair) and Xenophanes frg.16 uses it to describe the skin colour of the Ethiopian gods (who are also flat nosed) while Arist.[*Col.*]791a.19f uses the term to describe the skin colour of the man with acid temper, who has, in addition, drawn back lips and straight hair. The context seems to suggest that Homer and Xenophanes are referring to Negroid people while Aristotle is referring to Caucasians.

⁴⁴ They are described as being δειλοὶ μέλανες by Arist.[*Col.*]812a.13.

⁴⁵ Snowden (1970: 192-3).

whose skin colour was between that of the Egyptians and that of the pronounced Negroes. There is little in the way of literary evidence from the Classical period concerning the terms used to refer to mulattos. Later authors felt the need to invent terms to describe people of intermediate colour, such as *vóθος Αἰθίοψ*,⁴⁶ *Leukaethiops*⁴⁷ and *Melanogaetuli*,⁴⁸ suggesting there to be no word to describe that particular somatic type. However, these words were used by authors writing much later, in a time where people of darker complexion were far more common. In the Classical period, it may well be that there were few enough people of dark-skinned complexion for them all to be described by the term *Αἰθίοψ*. It should be noted, in addition, that the Greeks would have increasingly come into contact with people of intermediate hues, necessitating the invention of words to distinguish them from other dark-skinned people. The clearest literary evidence surrounds the tribe referred to as the Garamantians,⁴⁹ who are variously described as Ethiopian⁵⁰ and not Ethiopian.⁵¹ Thus, it is plausible⁵² that people of the shade of the Garamantians occupied the boundary of what the term *Αἰθίοψ* could refer to, as regards skin colour. Although we cannot be sure exactly what skin colour the Garamantians were, anthropological remains seem to indicate people of mixed descent.⁵³

As a last resort, we need to look at depictions of Ethiopians in art. The earliest depictions of Ethiopians in Greek vase painting quite clearly depicted pronounced

⁴⁶ Achilles Tatius *Leuk.* iii.9.

⁴⁷ Plin. *HN* v.8.43; Pompon. i.4.23. Snowden (1983: 9) suggests that *Leukaethiopes* and *Melanogaetuyli* were Negroes without pronounced features.

⁴⁸ Ptol. *Geog.* iv.6. Ptolemy does not describe these people as Ethiopians, but refers to nearby tribes, such as the *Girei* and *Nigritae* as such.

⁴⁹ Herodotus appears to provide contradictory accounts of the Garamantes as regards military strength (cf. *Hdt.* iv.174 & iv.183). It has been suggested that textual corruption has left Garamantians in iv.174 instead of the name of some other tribe, possibly Gamphasantes (mentioned by Pompon. i.8; Plin. *HN* v.8). See Bates (1970: 53).

⁵⁰ For example, by Ptol. *Geog.* i.8.5.

⁵¹ *Hdt.* iv.183 does not refer to this tribe as being Ethiopian, while he makes sure to mention that the Troglodytes, whom the Garamantians live with, are. Strabo ii.5.33. also seems to distinguish between the Garamantians and Ethiopians.

⁵² This is not the only plausible explanation, since it is also possible that the Garamantians are referred to as Ethiopians by some authors because they dwelt in an area which was called Ethiopia. There may also be cultural and linguistic reasons which could account for the fact that the Garamantians are sometimes called Ethiopian.

⁵³ Bates (1970: 43) refers to the Garamantes as non-pronounced Negroes, in other words, Negroid people whose Negroid characteristics were not pronounced enough for classification as Negro. See Snowden (1970: 192f); (1983: 9) for a discussion on the Garamantes, including an alternative explanation of the contradictory evidence.

Negroes.⁵⁴ Later depictions become more ambiguous, however, particularly in scenes concerning the Andromeda myth. While Andromeda is almost always depicted as Caucasian in red-figure before the Hellenistic period, occasionally the attendants are depicted as what seem to be mulattos.⁵⁵ In one depiction, which has been interpreted as a scene from a play about Andromeda, a figure with less pronounced Negroid features, which may be a personification of Ethiopia, watches over the proceedings.⁵⁶ It is unclear exactly when Andromeda came to be associated with Ethiopia, but many later authors are quite clear that the myth takes an Ethiopian location.⁵⁷ The presence of mulattos in situations where one would expect Ethiopians does seem to suggest that the term *Αἰθίοψ* may possibly have been used to describe intermediate skin tone as well as the more pronounced Negroid type discussed earlier.

Studies have shown that people from the same culturo-linguistic group often disagree as to the exact boundaries of a term within a semantic field. For example, English speakers may not concur as to where red becomes orange. With regard to the Greek perception of Ethiopians, this is evident from the uncertainty concerning an appropriate term for the Garamantes. Instead, it appears that people agree on what constitutes the best example of a particular term. This 'best example' is called a focal point,⁵⁸ and this refers to the image called to mind by the use of a particular term. In black-figure, Ethiopians are almost always depicted as being of the true Negroid type,⁵⁹ and depictions of Negroes in especially in plastic vases are almost always of the pronounced type. From the frequency with which Ethiopians⁶⁰ appear as pronounced Negroids, it appears that the pronounced Negroid type must have been the focal point

⁵⁴ For example, figs.9; 12; 13; 14 which are taken to be Ethiopians on account of their association with Memnon.

⁵⁵ See, for example, fig.21 (a clearer, more detailed photograph may be found in Snowden (1970: fig.36). The Negroid features are not pronounced, but the curly hair and upturned nose indicate that the type was intended.

⁵⁶ See fig.15. Bieber (1961: 31) considers this to be a masked personification of Ethiopia. It could be argued that the figure in question may be a poor attempt at the rendition of pronounced Negroid features, but the quality of the rest of the scene undoubtedly shows proficient technique on the part of the vase painter. The Negro type was accurately portrayed in earlier, black-figure, vase paintings such as fig.9; 12; 13; 14; 16; 18 and it is unlikely that the artist should not have been able to depict the pronounced Negroid type had he intended it.

⁵⁷ See below, 4.1.4.

⁵⁸ The focal point was introduced as a concept by Rosch (1975). For a discussion of focal points and their use in semantics, see Leech (1981: 84-86).

⁵⁹ Occasionally Ethiopians are Caucasian, See below, 4.1.4.

⁶⁰ Negroes who appear in depictions of scenes where one would expect to find Ethiopians.

of the term Αἰθίοψ in the Archaic period. However, as has been discussed, what appear to be mulattos become more popular as subjects of vase painters, although the pronounced type remains popular in plastic vases. This may suggest that the focal point of the term shifted. It seems quite possible that Greeks were becoming more and more familiar with the mixed type, as the very few true Negro slaves interbred with members of other slave populations.⁶¹ Few people from mainland Greece would have come into contact with people from south of Egypt and it is only natural that the focal point of the term Αἰθίοψ reflect what was most often seen by users of the word.

1.4. White Skinned Ethiopians.

The most general use of the term Αἰθίοψ is to denote some kind of dark-skinned individual and this is the image most likely to be brought to mind when the term is encountered by a modern scholar. However, the first usage of the term suggest its logical meaning not to have been based at all on somatic grounds, but rather seemed to be related to geography.⁶² It is only in the Archaic period that the Ethiopians are clearly identifiable as being black-skinned, and it is probable that they were perceived to be for the most part, Caucasian, in their earliest conception.⁶³ Thus, it is not surprising that two famous inhabitants of Ethiopia appear to be Caucasian in Greek art and literature, Memnon and Andromeda.⁶⁴

Memnon is associated with Ethiopia very early on in the Greek tradition, and by the time of Hesiod, he appears as their leader.⁶⁵ Prior to the Hellenistic period, nothing is said about his skin colour, but later tradition held him to be Negroid. Thus, the Romans often referred to him as being *Niger*,⁶⁶ and even the Greek Philostratus maintains that Memnon struck fear into the Greek hearts during the Trojan War, on account of the Greek unfamiliarity with black skin.⁶⁷ Archaeological evidence points to a Classical tradition of Memnon being Caucasian, however. This is best illustrated

⁶¹ See Ch6.3.

⁶² See Ch2.1.

⁶³ See Ch2.3.

⁶⁴ Persinna's daughter in Heliodorus *Aethiopica* iv.8 is also white, but this reference is very late, and is the only clear literary reference to a Caucasian Ethiopian besides Memnon and Andromeda.

⁶⁵ Hes.*Th.* 983-4.

⁶⁶ For example, Ov.*Am.* i.8.3.

⁶⁷ Philostr.*Imag.* ii.7.2.

by figs.12; 13; 16 in which Memnon is surrounded by his Negro squires. It appears as though great pains have been taken by the artists to render faithfully the Negroid type of the squires, who are prognathous, have platyrrhiny (which is indicated by an upturned nose) and are ulotrichous (rendered in fig.16 by the technique of raised spots). By contrast, no attempt has been made to portray Memnon, who has a straight nose and long hair, with any Negroid features. Other paintings, in which Memnon is not depicted with his squires, such as fig.17, also indicate an absence of Negroid features. In view of the fact that Negroes were faithfully portrayed by artists as early as the mid sixth century, it seems almost certain that Memnon was intended to be Caucasian.

While almost all vases depicting Memnon show him to be Caucasian, it has been suggested that the Negroid figure appearing on a black-figure neck amphora attributed to the Swing painter,⁶⁸ which depicts a prognathous⁶⁹ and ulotrichous figure standing between two Amazons, is Memnon. It is difficult to relate this scene to any known myth, but certain iconographical elements suggest the Negroid figure not to be Memnon. In the first instance, while almost all depictions of Memnon in battle have him in full panoply, the figure in the present painting appears with chitoniskos and no helmet, breastplate or shield. More significant, however, is the fact that the figure is depicted with bow and quiver, whereas in both literary⁷⁰ and iconographical tradition, Memnon carries a spear. On the other hand, bows are frequently associated with the generic Ethiopians, many of whom appear to be attendants of Memnon. Thus, it is highly unlikely that the figure in question is meant to be Memnon, but the scene is more likely to depict attendants of Memnon and Penthesilea respectively, as suggested by Beazley.⁷¹

Later authors do not agree over what the skin colour of Andromeda should be. While Ovid⁷² refers to her as *fusca*, some later authors such as Achilles Tatius,⁷³

⁶⁸ Fig. 18.

⁶⁹ The prognathism is rather pronounced in this depiction.

⁷⁰ For example, Pind. *Pyth.* vi.32-34.

⁷¹ *ABV* 308.82.

⁷² *Ov. Her.* xv.35-36; *Met.* iv.676.

⁷³ Achilles Tatius *Leuk.* iii.7.4.

Philostratus⁷⁴ and Heliodorus⁷⁵ stress her whiteness. On a red-figure *pelike* attributed to the Workshop of the Niobid Painter,⁷⁶ from around 460 BC, Andromeda's features can be clearly compared with those of her Negroid attendants. While the attendants are painted with upturned noses, curly hair (which is painted white) and thick lips, Andromeda's lips are thin and the sharpness of her nose is somewhat pronounced. Most notably, however, is the fact that the flesh of the attendants is glazed over in black, with a red outline, while Andromeda is painted red, in the usual manner. Thus, by contrast with her attendants, it can clearly be seen that Andromeda was intended to be Caucasian. Two other Attic red-figure vases, a crater from Berlin⁷⁷ and a London hydria,⁷⁸ show Andromeda with Negroids, recognisable as such by their curly hair and upturned noses. On neither of these are the Negroes painted black, and it is more difficult to tell them apart from the Caucasians. Clearly tradition held Andromeda to be Caucasian.

It has been suggested⁷⁹ that the ruling class of Ethiopia was considered to be Caucasian. Beardsley's reasoning is that Greeks would not be able to imagine people whom they knew only as slaves (Negroes) as being rulers. This reasoning should be considered suspect to some extent, since Negro slaves must have been quite rare in Greece,⁸⁰ and it is far more likely that the somatic type of the Persians and Scythians would be more associated with slaves. In addition, Beardsley's argument rests on the evidence that Ethiopian soldiers, attendants and slaves appear black, while people of the ruling classes do not. For the most part, this is true, since Cepheus, Perseus, Memnon and Andromeda almost⁸¹ always appear as Caucasians in vase paintings. There are, however, exceptions to this rule. On a south Italian red-figure volute-crater of the Sisyphus School, a clearly Caucasian attendant ties Andromeda to two posts⁸²

⁷⁴ Philostr.*Imag.* i.29. Caution should be used when approaching the reference by Philostratus, however, as he may be using whiteness to indicate her trepidation as she awaits her doom at the jaws of the sea monster.

⁷⁵ Heliodorus *Aethiopica* iv.8.

⁷⁶ Boston, 68.2663 attr. Trendall *apud* Boardman (1989a: n.162).

⁷⁷ Berlin, 3237 *ARV*² 1336 & 1690.

⁷⁸ London, E169 *ARV*² 1062 & 1081.

⁷⁹ By Beardsley (1929: 42).

⁸⁰ See Ch6.3.

⁸¹ Snowden (1976: 155) argues that Cepheus on the Boston Pelike (Boston, 68.2663) is a mulatto.

⁸² Malibu, Getty Museum, 85.AE.102 {Trendall (1989: fig.44)}.

and none of the figures on a rather unusual south Italian red-figure amphora of the Metope Group appears to be Negroid.⁸³ Neither are all of Memnon's attendants Negroes; for example, fig.20 is a depiction of Memnon with two attendants, neither of whom show any signs of Negritude. That these attendants are intended as Ethiopians is clear from the short clothes, bow and quiver, club⁸⁴ and the fact that the scene follows the same composition of the standard Memnon and attendants scene. Clearly, not only the ruling classes of Ethiopia are depicted as Caucasians by Greek artists.

Both the Memnon and Andromeda myths appear to be connected with the east. Memnon appears to be associated with various eastern cities, including Susa, which Herodotus refers to as 'Memnon's city.'⁸⁵ Memnon is associated with various other eastern locations throughout antiquity.⁸⁶ Andromeda seems to be associated with every eastern location imaginable. These include Joppa (possibly owing to linguistic confusion with Ethiopia),⁸⁷ Babylon⁸⁸ and Herodotus hints at a possible Persian origin.⁸⁹ In view of such confusion between Ethiopian and Asian versions of both myths, it has been suggested that vase painters depicting these characters as Caucasians may be following Asiatic traditions and that the Andromeda and Memnon myths were transferred to Ethiopia from the east.⁹⁰ This suggestion is problematic on two counts. In the first instance, there appears to be no evidence that either the Andromeda or the Memnon myths were associated with Ethiopia only late in the transmission of the myth. Memnon is associated with Ethiopia as early as Hesiod⁹¹ and it is most probable that he had an Ethiopian *origo* in the *Aithiopsis*. Thus, Memnon is associated with Ethiopia in surviving literature from a long time before the first author places him elsewhere. Similarly, vase paintings depict Andromeda with Negroes

⁸³ Malibu, Getty Museum, 82 AE 16 {Trendall (1989: n.182)}.

⁸⁴ For the Ethiopian panoply, see below, 2.3.

⁸⁵ Hdt.v.54; vii.151. Aeschylus, *apud* Strabo xv.3,2, also indicates that Memnon was associated with Susa.

⁸⁶ Simonides *apud* Strabo xv.3.2 claims him to have been buried in Syria and Diod. Sic.ii.22 claims Memnon to have been a servant of an Assyrian king.

⁸⁷ Joseph.BJ iii.420-21; Plin. HN v.14; v.128.

⁸⁸ Hellanicus *apud* Stephanus' entry for Χαλδαῖοι.

⁸⁹ Hdt.vii.61;150.

⁹⁰ Particularly by Snowden (1970:153) who suggests the myth to have been eastern in origin and only to have been associated with Negroidism and Ethiopia after contacts between Africa and Greece made Ethiopia more familiar. Snowden implies a similar migration concerning the Andromeda myth, apparently making a clear distinction between Asiatic and Ethiopian versions of the myth.

⁹¹ Hes.Th.984.

before any surviving author offers an alternative location for the myth.⁹² Clearly, both these mythological figures were associated with Ethiopia at a very early stage.

Secondly, there is no reason for a distinction to be made between Asiatic and Ethiopian versions of the myth. The early Ethiopians were, for the most part, almost synonymous with the east.⁹³ It is quite natural that Memnon, who must have been conceived in the bed of Dawn and Tithonus, be associated with the land at which the sun rose: Ethiopia.⁹⁴ The other eastern traditions locating Memnon elsewhere in Asia must be considered to be later versions of the myth.⁹⁵ Andromeda appears to be associated with almost every eastern location, and since Ethiopia was originally conceived of as being in the east, it is not surprising that Ethiopia was one of the many locations in which the myth was set. Thus, to suggest a distinction between Asiatic and Ethiopian versions of the myth would be to ignore the fact that the Ethiopians were themselves closely related to the east (it would be more appropriate to distinguish between African and eastern versions of the myths).

The explanation for the occurrence of Caucasian Ethiopians probably lies in the perception of Ethiopia as an eastern extreme in its earliest conception.⁹⁶ Since the earliest Greeks probably considered the Ethiopians to be Caucasian, should an iconographical tradition have been associated with these two figures⁹⁷ from before the mid-sixth century (when Ethiopia appears to start being associated with Negroes), it is only logical that later depictions would follow in the same tradition. Thus, the myths of Andromeda and Memnon were not transferred to Ethiopia at a late stage. Instead, although Ethiopian became associated with dark skin toward the end of the sixth century, Andromeda and Memnon remained Caucasians in the eyes of the Greeks. The fact that despite a strong association of Ethiopia with black skin, Memnon and

⁹² See fig. 19 from about 480 BC.

⁹³ For example, *Hom. Od.* i.22-24; *Mimnermus frg.* ii.8; *Eur. frg.* 771.

⁹⁴ That Memnon most naturally would be associated with the east is suggested by Lesky (1959:39).

⁹⁵ Possibly developed to account for his Caucasian appearance.

⁹⁶ See Ch2.3.

⁹⁷ The Andromeda myth appears on vase paintings from the beginning of the fifth century BC, but it is not impossible that an iconographical tradition predated this. Iconographical traditions of Memnon predate the appearance of Negroes in mainland Greek art.

Andromeda (and occasionally some attendants) appear Caucasian suggests that the term Αἰθίοψ was flexible enough to denote non-Negroes.⁹⁸

2. Other Somatic Features.

Although throughout history, skin colour has been considered the most important indicator of somatic difference, there are other physical characteristics which mark out people of different genetic history, and from the evidence of Greek literature and art, it is evident that the Greek image of the Ethiopian took these differences into account. Because of the few literary references to the somatic characteristics of the Ethiopians, the information we have is best supplemented by archaeological evidence.

The first somatic trait associated with the term Αἰθίοψ in Greek literature is platyrrhiny, as Xenophanes⁹⁹ describes the gods of the Ethiopians as being flat nosed, σιμοί. This passage quite clearly places the flat nose of the Ethiopian in the context of the familiar north-south paradigm.¹⁰⁰ A later author also places the flat nose of the Ethiopian within the north-south paradigm, comparing Ethiopian's image of beauty with that of the Persians,¹⁰¹ contrasting their high regard of flattest and most hooked noses respectively.¹⁰² Considering the appearance of the flat nose in the north-south paradigm, it appears platyrrhiny was considered to be a sign of Ethiopian distance from the Greek somatic norm. Attempts to portray platyrrhiny in vase paintings appear to be somewhat crude, especially when compared with the faithful rendering of this trait by the makers of plastic vases.¹⁰³ The most common technique in both black and red-figure is to make the nose slightly upturned, and this is best illustrated by figs.15; 21. By contrast, Greek noses appear more pointed and sharp.¹⁰⁴ It should be noted that the noses of various other foreigners¹⁰⁵ also occasionally appear slightly upturned,

⁹⁸ Pind. *Ol.* ii.83 refers to Memnon as Αἰθίοπα.

⁹⁹ Xenophanes frg.16.

¹⁰⁰ Xenophanes here compares the features of Ethiopian gods with those of the Thracians.

¹⁰¹ Persia was not, strictly speaking, north of Greece, but was occasionally associated with other northern races of Asia Minor, such as the Scythians and Thracians.

¹⁰² Sext. *Emp. Math.* xi.43.

¹⁰³ See figs.10; 11.

¹⁰⁴ See fig.22 for an example of the red-figure depictions of Caucasian noses. Black-figure painters often depict somewhat sharper Caucasian noses, such as that of Memnon in fig.16.

¹⁰⁵ Such as Scythians, as in fig.23.

making it difficult to determine whether some figures are intended as Negroes or not, for example, the servant in fig.24.

Woolly hair is first mentioned in Greek literature by Homer, in a description of the dark-skinned Eurybates.¹⁰⁶ Herodotus is the first person to mention this characteristic in connection with the Ethiopians, claiming the Ethiopians to be the most ulotrichous men in the world.¹⁰⁷ The author of the *Physiognomonica* states

People with excessively curly hair are cowardly, hence the Ethiopian . . . hair which does not curl at the ends tends towards stout-heartedness.¹⁰⁸

The use of the Ethiopian as proof of this thesis suggests a perception that the Ethiopian was considered a paradigm of ulotrichy. The curliness of the Ethiopian's hair is often mentioned in the north-south paradigm, and is attributed to the effects of the environment.¹⁰⁹ Clearly, the curly hair of the Ethiopian was also a symbol of somatic distance from the Greek norm.

The significance with which the Greeks held the curly hair of the Ethiopian is evident in the care taken to render this feature in black-figure vase paintings and in plastic vases. In plastic vases, the most common technique used to render tight curls was to raise small dots from the head, and often, to paint these circles black against a reserved background. Such dots, whether black on reserved ground (fig.10; 11) or simply in relief (fig. 9), are used to indicate tight curls in both black and red-figure vase paintings. It should be noted that the technique of raised dots is also used to depict the hair of Herakles in a pelike by the Niobid Painter.¹¹⁰ Other techniques employed to produce the same effect, include the painting of curls at the forehead (fig.25) and the painting of a wavy outline, with the hair painted white in contrast to the black flesh

¹⁰⁶ Hom.*Od.*xix.246-8.

¹⁰⁷ Hdt.vii.70.

¹⁰⁸ Arist.[*Phgn.*]812b.30.

¹⁰⁹ In the classical period, Arist.*Gen. an.*782b.35 claims the hair to bend on account of the excessive heat of Ethiopia. Later authors who compare the hair of the Ethiopians with that of northerners are Ptol.*Tetr.* ii.2.56; *Dion.*xvii.385.

¹¹⁰ Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles {Snowden (1976: fig.173)}.

(fig.19). Toward the end of the Classical period, not as much attention was paid to depicting the hair of the Ethiopian with as much accuracy as before.¹¹¹

Prognathism and thick lips are typically Negroid characteristics which are not mentioned by authors prior to the Hellenistic period. There does, however, appear to have been an effort to portray this characteristic in numerous vase paintings. Two striking examples of prognathous Negroes appear on a black-figure amphora by the Swing Painter (fig.25) and in a Memnon scene (fig.14). Both these vases show a marked attempt to illustrate this feature of the Ethiopian physiognomy.¹¹² In almost all depictions of Negroes and Ethiopians, thick lips are portrayed, such as on figs.9; 13; 14. However, considering the lack of literary evidence regarding these features of the Ethiopian, it is quite possible that they did not symbolise the distance from the somatic norm that features such as black skin and curly hair did.

2.1. Aesthetic Judgements concerning the Ethiopians.

Some interesting features of the Greek accounts of the Ethiopians are the height, beauty and longevity associated with them, almost always in a mythical context. Homer describes Memnon as being the most handsome man in the world¹¹³ and he describes the Ethiopians as long-lived. Elsewhere, Herodotus tells us that the long-lived Ethiopians are the tallest and most beautiful men in the world.¹¹⁴ Such idealisation has been taken to be evidence of a lack of negative aesthetic judgement against the somatic appearance of the Ethiopian.¹¹⁵ There is no evidence to suggest that Herodotus was making his own judgement on the possibility of beauty in a black physique, since his story is based on tradition and travellers' tales.¹¹⁶ In other words, the judgement of the beauty is not that of Herodotus, but that of his sources, and his sources are extremely vague. Herodotus needs to manipulate the audience with the

¹¹¹ It is possible that mulattos became more common on Greek soil than Negroes of the pronounced type (see Ch3.1.3) and as a result, Greek artists simply depicted the Negroid people whom they saw most often, that is, people whose hair was not as tightly curled.

¹¹² The iconographical features, such as chitoniskos, club, bow and quiver, indicate that these are intended as Ethiopians.

¹¹³ Hom.*Od.*xi.522 It is unclear whether by this stage Memnon had been associated with the Ethiopians. It is also natural for the son of Dawn to share in her beauty.

¹¹⁴ Hdt.iii.20.

¹¹⁵ Snowden (1970: 178).

¹¹⁶ See, for example, Howe and Wells (1967: vol. I, 261). For a discussion on the idealisation of the Ethiopians, see Ch5.1.

creation of this fictitious people, and romanticising features such as beauty, righteousness and longevity serve this purpose.

There is no real way to corroborate the beauty of the Ethiopians with archaeological evidence, for obvious reasons. However, claims have been made that the opposite is true: that Greeks viewed the Negroid characteristics with distaste. Two main pieces of evidence are used to support such theories. In the first instant, frequent use is made of the Negroid type for prophylactic and apotropaic purposes. Negroids are frequently portrayed on beads, necklaces, lamps¹¹⁷ and antefix masks,¹¹⁸ and there is even a Negroid gorgon from the Roman period.¹¹⁹ It is evident that features are exaggerated in order to produce a more striking effect, and occasionally the eyes are painted red. The argument based on prophylactic use of the Ethiopian fails on two counts. First, little prophylactic use is made of the Negroid type in the Attic Classical period. In fact, almost all the minor objects appear to come from Naucratis, Cyprus or Rhodes,¹²⁰ and there is very little to suggest such use was made of the type in Athens. Secondly, ugliness is not the only characteristic that would cause a figure to be used prophylactically. This is most apparent in the case of the antefix masks, since both maenads and satyrs are used to fulfil this purpose. Negroes appear frequently in contexts which suggest some relationship with Dionysus in the Greek mind, and it may well be that the Ethiopians were used prophylactically for the same reasons that maenads and satyrs were.¹²¹ It is also possible that the mythical closeness of the gods to the Ethiopians may have played a role in the choice of the Negro as a prophylactic item.¹²² Thus, even if the absence of evidence that prophylactic use was made of the Negroid type in Athens were to be ignored, it still cannot be proven that such use was made on account of an aesthetic aversion to the type.

Occasionally, the Negroid type appears in grotesques and caricatures. Some examples of these have been illustrated in figs 26; 27; 28; 29. These can be separated

¹¹⁷ Most of the beads, necklaces and lamps are from the late Archaic period.

¹¹⁸ The antefix masks were are from the late Classical period.

¹¹⁹ Krauskopf (1988: fig.75).

¹²⁰ See also Ch6.3.

¹²¹ See Ch5.2.2.

¹²² This explanation would also account for the absence of prophylactic Negroid artefacts in Classical Athens, since by this time the Negroid type was familiar enough for them not to have been viewed with the same disbelief that they were when first encountered in Naucratis, Cyprus and Rhodes.

into two categories: depictions of Negroes in what appear to be satyr and phlyax plays; and the scenes on *skyphoi* found near the Kabeiric sanctuary at Thebes. The appearance of the Negro in the first should not be considered as significant, since Negroes are not the only subjects of such caricature. In fact, in phlyax scenes, not only are everyday people caricatured, but even the gods do not escape such treatment.¹²³ In Kabeiric *skyphoi*, Negroes appear in a number of scenes from mythology, and Snowden has identified the following mythological characters as being Negroid: Circe, Aphrodite, Hera, Cephalus and pygmies. Three signs of Negritude in the *skyphoi* have been pointed out by Beardsley, platyrrhiny, prognathism and thick lips.¹²⁴ Since the technique of caricature is to distort the faces, some features are exaggerated, and this may account for the thick lips and protruding jaw on these figures. Not too much should be read into the upturned noses, since this is technique appears to be used in the caricature of apparent Caucasians. Thus, it is uncertain whether the figures in the Kabeiric *skyphoi* are intended as Negroes or whether the technique of caricature makes them appear as such.

While there certainly does seem to be some prophylactic and apotropaic use made of the Negroid features, and there are Negroid figures which appear to be grotesques in plays, this evidence is not sufficient to establish a Greek aversion to the somatic type. In addition, there are testimonies from later Greek authors to the contrary.¹²⁵ Such testimonies represent the perceptions of certain individuals and should not be taken to be representative of Greek attitudes in general.¹²⁶ Although much of the evidence of a Greek aversion to the Ethiopian somatic type does not hold up to intense scrutiny, this should not be taken as evidence that Greeks did not have a negative aesthetic perception of the Negro type. At this stage, there is simply not enough evidence for us to know for certain how the Negro was perceived as regards

¹²³ A significant example of gods being caricatured is a painting depicting Nike (fig.27) in a chariot riding Herakles. It appears as though Nike may well have been intended as a Negro in this case.

¹²⁴ Beardsley (1929: 60-61).

¹²⁵ As has been noted by Snowden (1970: 178), Pseudo Callisthenes iii.18.1 claims the queen of Meroë to have been the most beautiful person in the world, and Philostr.*Imag.*i.29 finds the blackness of certain Ethiopians to be charming.

¹²⁶ In much the same way that the fact that intermarriage between Blacks and Whites in the modern world does not indicate a general aesthetic appreciation of the Caucasian type by Negroes and vice versa.

Greek perceptions of beauty. It is likely that the Greeks would have, in general, preferred people of their own somatic type, but as is the case today, the image of ideal beauty was probably a matter of personal preference.

2.3. Vestimentation.

It is not possible to conclude a study of the Greek perceptions of the appearance of the Ethiopians without discussing the Ethiopian iconography. Since little contact with Ethiopians would have been made by Greeks during the sixth century, during which period the Ethiopian military iconography was developed, it is likely that reports from mercenaries would have been supplemented with received views. It is evident from the earliest depictions of the Ethiopian on black-figure vases, that there was a standard iconography for the Ethiopian, particularly in scenes involving Memnon and his attendants. There are very few Ethiopian warriors with full body armour;¹²⁷ most appear with chitoniskos, no breastplate and no helmet, such as in figs.12; 16. The Ethiopian panoply is also quite typical, being composed of a club or a bow and quiver.¹²⁸ Occasionally a pelta is also carried, such as in fig.16.¹²⁹ The only real exception to the rule is Memnon who, as has been discussed previously, most often appears in full panoply, carrying a spear. Literary evidence corroborates this panoply, as Herodotus describes the standard Ethiopian weapons as the spear, bow and club.¹³⁰ Obviously, long before Herodotus described the Ethiopians' weaponry, these weapons had become part of the popular perception of the Ethiopian. In depictions of Ethiopians outside of a military context, there is some confusion amongst the Greeks. In Andromeda scenes, the main characters occasionally appear in Oriental clothes. It is unclear, however, whether this is because of a general confusion of Ethiopia with the east or because Andromeda was closely associated with Asia. Unfortunately, very little is said about the Ethiopian vestimentation to supplement what the archaeological evidence tells us about the common perception of what Ethiopians wore.

¹²⁷ The only depiction of a Negro with full panoply that the author is aware of is the apparent caricature on a south Italian *lekythos* in Six's technique (fig. 30).

¹²⁸ Again, fig.30 is a notable exception.

¹²⁹ Frazer (1935: 39) suggests that the Ethiopian shield was not a pelta, since it is not held at the bottom and supported with an armband. Careful study reveals this not to be the case, however, and armbands can be seen on most depictions of Ethiopians and Negroes with shields.

¹³⁰ For bow, see Hdt.iii.21 and for spear, bow and club of the Ethiopians in Xerxes army, see Hdt.vii.69.

3. Conclusion

Ethiopians were associated with dark skin as early as the later sixth century BC, in which literary and iconographical evidence indicate that the Ethiopian was considered to be Negroid, for the most part. Most often, the Ethiopian's blackness was expressed within the context of the north-south paradigm, most often as an example of extreme somatic distance. This distance is related to the geographical distance associated with the Ethiopian, as shown by the environmental theories which held that the climate associated with the extreme north and south was responsible for such somatic differences between Scythians, Greeks and Ethiopians.

It appears that the association of the Ethiopian with dark skin becomes so strong that a sense of the word *Αἰθίοψ* becomes discernible in which the logical meaning was based on somatic characteristics. It is not clear to what extent this sense of the term is used. It is quite certain that within the confines of Athens, a person referred to as *Αἰθίοψ* is so called on account of somatic type as opposed to on national origin. It also becomes apparent that a wide range of somatic types was associated with the term *Αἰθίοψ*. Although it is not certain exactly what the most popular image of the Ethiopians was, it appears that towards the end of the Classical period, depictions of mulattos become increasingly popular, even in situations in which one would expect Ethiopians, although the evidence is too scant to indicate whether, by this stage, the mulatto had become the focal point of the term *Αἰθίοψ*. Despite the fact that there was a sense of the term which was logically based on somatic characteristics, it appears as though, prior to the Hellenistic period, the Greeks did not have much trouble accepting depictions of Caucasians who were associated with Ethiopia.

Apart from dark skin, other somatic characteristics were associated with the Ethiopians, as evidenced by both literary and archaeological evidence. Some of these, such as platyrrhiny and ulotrichy, appear in the context of the familiar north-south paradigm in which it is apparent that these features, along with dark skin, are symbols of the Ethiopian's distance from the Greek somatic norm. It also becomes evident that certain items of vestimentation were associated with the Ethiopians, particularly in a military context, wherein Ethiopians appear to have been conceived as wearing little

armour and brandishing clubs, bows and quivers. Thus, far from being a simple synonym for Negro, the term Αἰθίοψ is rich in meaning, with numerous connotations with regard to somatic characteristics.

Chapter Five: Myth and Religion.

The piety and justice of the Ethiopians was proverbial throughout much of Greek literary history.¹ Homer's Ethiopians were blameless and feasted with the gods,² Hesiod's Ethiopians were great-souled³ and Herodotus' long-lived Ethiopians have no wish to conquer lands not their own, a compulsion explicitly referred to as unjust by the Ethiopian king.⁴ The Ethiopians would later be associated with the cult of Isis and Christianity. In addition, the Ethiopians, from as early as Homer, played a substantial role in Greek mythology. This chapter explores the Ethiopians in Greek myth and religion, with the particular aim of answering two questions. The first concerns the extent to which the Ethiopians were a mythical race and the second concerns the gods associated with the Ethiopians prior to the Hellenistic period.

1. The Ethiopians : Myth or Reality?

Homer's Ethiopians, who dwell by the setting and rising sun and with whom the gods dine, appear largely to be a fictional race in a mythical setting. Previous studies have offered differing conclusions as to the extent to which accounts of Ethiopians, such as that of Homer, are based on a knowledge of African reality, and how much was the product of mythopoesis. The arguments of modern scholars concerning this problem seldom reveal any attempt at a systematic investigation. Comments concerning the mythical nature of the Ethiopians include: that the Ethiopians of the poets had become a 'fixed literary tradition in Greek poetry, maintaining a separate life of their own and having little to do with reality';⁵ that Homer's Ethiopians lay perhaps on 'opposite coasts of a dimly perceived African continent.';⁶ and that Classical authors reporting on Ethiopia were for the most part 'dealing with African realities.'⁷ English authors have offered little in the way of lucid explanations as to what constitutes the difference between 'African reality' and myth.

¹ See Snowden (1970: 144-150) for a discussion of the Greek idea of literary echoes of Homer's blameless Ethiopians, and some explanations for the association of Ethiopians with piety.

² Hom.*Il.*i.423-4; xxiii.205-7; *Od.*i.22-24.

³ Hes.*Cat.*150.

⁴ See Ch2.2

⁵ Beardsley (1929: 6).

⁶ Romm (1992: 49).

⁷ Snowden (1970: 56).

A clear distinction between myth and reality is a modern convention. The Greeks did not begin to realise a distinction between *μύθος* and *λόγος* until the Ionian philosophers in the sixth century began critically to examine received traditions.⁸ Even after this attempt at rationalisation, the legends of heroes were still considered to be historic according to the Greeks throughout the Classical period.⁹ Not even the Ionian philosophers categorically denied the previous intercourse between gods and men.¹⁰ Furthermore, such poetic abstractions as the *ἄπειρον* were employed by later philosophers like Aristotle; and as late as Aelian, obvious folktales are presented as science.¹¹ This is not to say that sceptical contemporaries would not have considered these ideas to be ludicrous, but for the general populace, there is no evidence that a clear distinction between mythology and reality was made.

In view of the ancient confusion between myth and reality, a modern attempt to make the distinction should be based on modern criteria and theory. A rather obvious method by which to determine the historicity of a literary account is to compare it with what is known from other sources, both literary and archaeological. Considering the paucity of both archaeological and literary evidence concerning the Ethiopians, this approach has little value as regards the present study. Two other modern approaches offer more useful means by which to analyse this problem: the comparative and psychoanalytic. While comparative studies have shown similarities in themes between myths of various cultures, psychoanalysis has proven to be a useful tool in accounting for these similarities.

Psychoanalysis attempts to account for the similarities in myth by explaining them as expressions of subconscious ideas.¹² Most of the passages which call into question the extent to which Greek authors were relying on myth for their account of Ethiopians can be explained within the framework of the negative ethnocentric impulse, to be expanded on shortly, in which natives of remote lands are subject to idealisation and used as paradigms of primitive contentment. That these passages

⁸ Brillante (1990: 94).

⁹ Brillante (1990: 94).

¹⁰ Brillante (1990: 97).

¹¹ A number of passages could illustrate the point, but a few examples are: the dog king of Ethiopia in *Ael.NA* vii.40 and the giant serpents from the same country in *Ael.NA* ii.21.

¹² Caldwell (1990: 346).

reflect the corrupt transmission of reality has been argued before,¹³ but it will be shown not only that elements of the idealised image of the Ethiopians are explained completely by psychoanalytic theory, but that these elements are matched by other myths, not only of the Greeks, but of other races as well.

1.1 Ethnocentrism and Negative Ethnocentrism.

Ethnocentrism is defined by one author as the technical name for the view in which :

one's own group is the centre of the everything, and all others are scaled and rated according to it.¹⁴

Negative or inverse ethnocentrism is the construct of space whereby people of the periphery are considered to be more virtuous in proportion to their distance from the imagined centre.¹⁵ For the purposes of this study,¹⁶ the use of the peoples of the periphery as paradigms of moral superiority is not important, but rather, the superiority of their life on account of their primitivism. Here follows a brief psychoanalytic explanation of this impulse.

The first six months of a child's life is spent in a state of primitive consciousness in which it does not perceive its identity as being separate from that of its mother. The needs of the child are, for the most part, taken care of by the mother. When the child becomes aware of its own identity, it realises that the person on whom it relies for all its needs is someone separate from itself; it imagines the former state, called 'symbiosis' or the 'symbiotic state', as being lost. The process by which the child realises its separate identity, known as individuation, results in two contradictory desires: to lose identity and to preserve identity. For the first time, desire manifests

¹³ For example, Snowden (1983: 56) has suggested that the notion of piety associated with Ethiopians may have been the result of real knowledge of the piety of citizens of Meroë, and Howe & Wells (1967: 261) and Snowden (1980: 57) suggest that the table of the sun may be a misinterpreted account of a meadow of offerings in which food was left for the dead. Lesky (1959: 27) rightly points out that such an explanation ignores the significance of the sun.

¹⁴ Sumner (1940: 13).

¹⁵ Romm (1992: 49).

¹⁶ Previous studies have stressed the virtue of the peripheral inhabitants, for example Romm (1992) and Flory (1987: 81-118).

itself in the form of a longing for what is considered lost in the symbiotic state: love, nourishment and security.¹⁷

The memory of symbiosis forms the core of the child's subconscious and the desire to return to the symbiotic state becomes one of the basic desires which manifests itself in myth.¹⁸ The most well known expression of this desire in Greek myth is Hesiod's story of the Golden Age of man¹⁹ according to which men were thought once to have lived like gods without worry of old age, dying painlessly in their sleep; and they had access to all the foods they enjoyed. In general, myths of Golden Ages (for example the Garden of Eden myth²⁰) place this age in the distant past. Hesiod, in his discussion of the ages of man, introduces the Age of Heroes, akin to the Golden Age,²¹ which comes before the present and fifth age of man, but after the Golden, Silver and Bronze ages. He effectively translates historical distance into geographical distance by having Zeus remove the survivors of this age to the Isles of the Blessed.²² Thus, a negative ethnocentric perception of geography is created.

Jean-Pierre Vernant notes that death is the one of the most problematic phenomena to any people who want to view their lives as ordered, since it represents the unknowable, 'chaos', in its purest sense.²³ As has been mentioned, the process of individuation results in the contradictory desires for both self-preservation and loss of identity. The fear of death is the manifestation of the desire for self-preservation, and it is natural that inhabitants of a primitive Utopia should lack such a fear. In this regard, the Hyperboreans, inhabitants of the northernmost edges of the world, were considered by some to be the longest lived men in the world, whose lives were not troubled by either death or old age.²⁴ Another race of people from the periphery blessed with long life according to Ctesias of Cnidus are the Indians.²⁵ Homer's Ethiopians are never explicitly stated to be long lived, but their isolation from the rest

¹⁷ See Caldwell (1989: 22-27) for a more detailed discussion of symbiosis and separation.

¹⁸ Caldwell (1989: 26).

¹⁹ Hes.*Op.* 109-120.

²⁰ *Genesis* 1-3.

²¹ Kronos is the ruler of the people of the Golden Age (Hes.*Op.* 111) and he is again the ruler of the Isles of the Blessed in Hes.*Op.* 174.

²² Hes.*Op.* 166-173

²³ Vernant (1991: 76).

²⁴ Pind.*Pyth.* x.41-42. It is uncertain whether Pindar's Hyperboreans were immortal or just excessively long lived, although subsequent tradition held them to live for one thousand years.

²⁵ Ctesias *Indica* xv.

of the world, their constant dining with the gods and their feasts which last for seven days, lend a feel of timelessness to the Ethiopians, who, for Homer, lay at the ends of the earth. Thus, the entire action of the *Iliad* is set against a single divine holiday with the Ethiopians.²⁶ Unlike Homer, Herodotus mentions explicitly the long life of the Ethiopians, making them the longest lived of all men.²⁷ From the Classical period no other authors mention the long life of the Ethiopians, unless we consider Aristotle's comment that sheep in Ethiopia live to twelve years of age²⁸ as a subconscious association of Ethiopia with long life.²⁹

The people of Hesiod's Golden Age were not immortal, although the manner of their death is entirely unproblematic. Often, 'noble savages' from the periphery are not mortal, but they are spared the fear of death or old age. For example, Herodotus describes one of the furthestmost races of Indians as not caring about the dead or sick³⁰ and another who seem to be spared old age by the fact that people are invariably eaten before they reach this stage.³¹ While Herodotus has not been this creative in his account of the long-lived Ethiopians, they seem equally unafraid of death, as people who die are embalmed and preserved in crystal coffins in such a manner that they neither produce any odour, nor appear unseemly.³² The deceased are then kept in the family's house and offered sacrifices for one year, after which they are placed in a field near the town. Thus, while like the people of Hesiod's Golden Age, Herodotus' long-lived Ethiopians are not entirely immortal, death's blow is softened since the dead appear lifelike and remain with their families.

The loss of the symbiotic state is interpreted by the infant to be the start of desire, and amongst these desires, the most important is food. While in the symbiotic state, the baby gets all its nourishment without having to work for it. The same can be said about the primitives of the periphery. The Garden of Eden is a limitless source of food for the original inhabitants of earth who do not have to work to receive nourishment. The people of Hesiod's Golden Age have similarly no problem as

²⁶ So Romm (1992: 53).

²⁷ Hdt.iii.114. Herodotus distinguishes between the long-lived Ethiopians and the rest. For the most part, there is no idealisation of the other Ethiopians in Herodotus.

²⁸ Arist.*Hist. an.* 573b.27-8.

²⁹ Of the late authors, Philostr.*VA* vi.4, in discussing the role of Memnon in the Trojan War, also speaks of the Ethiopians as the longest lived of all men.

³⁰ Hdt.iii.100.

³¹ Hdt.iii.99.

³² Hdt.iii.24.

regards sustenance, as the earth produced fruit by itself in abundance.³³ The same applies to the Hyperboreans who joyously banquet while dancing to the lyre.³⁴ The Ethiopians of Homer have such an abundance of food that they can afford to share it with the gods. Hence, in three³⁵ of the five passages in which the Ethiopians are mentioned in Homer, the gods are feasting with them.³⁶ This is all the more significant as it provides a contrast with the hardships of the real world.³⁷ The long-lived Ethiopians of Herodotus are equally blessed as regards abundant sources of food. For at the corner of the city is a field on which boiled meat appears nightly, of which the citizens partake freely.³⁸ Like many other peoples on the periphery, then, the Ethiopians of Homer and Herodotus do not have to work to appease the most important desire, since their world is close to that of the symbiotic infant.

Closely associated with abundance of food is abundance of other desirable items. Herodotus maintains that people of the periphery have gold in abundance. This includes the Indians,³⁹ the Thracians⁴⁰ and the Ethiopians.⁴¹ This motif is found in other legends as well, for example in the Mesopotamian epics, the far away land of Utnapishtim has lush flowers, adorned with lapis lazuli.⁴² In the symbiotic state, the child lacks desire (which appears as a result of individuation)⁴³ and this lack of desire for the worldly possessions which people of the periphery covet is discernible in Herodotus' account in which the Ethiopian king laughs at their garments and neck-chains, thinking them to be fetters.⁴⁴

One of the primary drives described by Freud⁴⁵ is that which causes the desire to dissociate things and reduce them to their simplest state. This desire can be traced to individuation in which the child learns that the more complicated life gets, the

³³ Hes.*Op.* 117-18.

³⁴ Pind.*Pyth.* x.38-40.

³⁵ Hom.*Il.* i.423-4; xxiii.205-7; *Od.* i.22-24.

³⁶ Lesky (1959: 28).

³⁷ According to Romm (1992: 52), the word for these feasts in the *Iliad*, δαίτα, may recall the banquets of vultures at the corpses of heroes in Hom.*Il.* i.4-5.

³⁸ Hdt.iii.18. Lesky (1959: 28) and Snowden (1970: 106) both suggest that the table of the sun may be an echo of the feasting of the gods in Homer. Neither consider the possibility that both accounts are based on the same mythopoeic process.

³⁹ Hdt.iii.98.

⁴⁰ Hdt.iii.116.

⁴¹ Hdt.iii.114.

⁴² *Gilg.* xi.195. For a comparative study of the Golden Age, see Mond (1990: 166-177.)

⁴³ Caldwell (1989: 25).

⁴⁴ Hdt.iii.22.

⁴⁵ Freud (1963: 6). For a more in depth discussion, see Freud (1937: 135-143).

further they seem from the symbiotic state. The idealised people of the periphery have lives which are simpler than those of the people in the οἰκουμένη. Although this lack of complexity is evident in their lack of need to work for food, it finds clearer expression in the lack of deception associated with accounts of the people of the periphery. In Eden, for example, when there is an attempt at deception, the entire state dissolves. In the clearest sense, this account illustrates the privative relationship between deception and Utopia. The Ethiopians do not live with deception, and Cambyses' plot is immediately recognised by the king of Herodotus' long-lived Ethiopians.⁴⁶ Similarly, the king shows contempt for dyed cloth and perfume, as they attempt to hide natural colour and odour. It is clear that the state within which the long-lived Ethiopians live is owing to what they have been given by nature. Thus, their long life is a result of the waters in which they bathe⁴⁷ and owing to the food which they eat. Unlike the Persians, they do not eat bread, which the king of the Ethiopians refers to as 'dung'.⁴⁸ Milk is also a source of their longevity, notable in that the drinking of milk was also one of the aspects which ennobled the Scythians to some Greek authors.⁴⁹ Thus, it is clear in the case of the Ethiopians that it is the primitive state which grants them their superiority to people from the Mediterranean world, and in turn, it is this that would account for their piety.⁵⁰

Clearly, much of the idealisation of the Ethiopians can be seen to be the result of the same mythopoeic process by which other myths such as Hesiod's Golden Age and Pindar's Hyperboreans came about. There should be little doubt, then, that the accounts of Homer and Herodotus are mythical, or owe a large part to mythopoesis. The psychoanalytic approach has, however, left two questions unanswered: what of the accounts which appear mythical but do not fit into the negative ethnocentric framework? and to what extent are the idealised accounts of the Ethiopians by

⁴⁶ Hdt.iii.21.

⁴⁷ Hdt.iii.23.

⁴⁸ Hdt.iii.22.

⁴⁹ See Romm (1992: 45 fn.1).

⁵⁰ The piety of races of the periphery could also be explained by anxiety and guilt which is attached to individuation. In this regard, the child considers the loss of individuation as a punishment from the father, whom he perceives as the main competitor for the mother's affection. In myth, this is born out by the fact that the loss of the symbiotic state always seems to be the result of punishment by the gods, such as the flood in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and the flood in the Hesiodic account of the Golden Age. Thus, it is quite natural that the people of the periphery, who have not been punished, must in some way be superior to those of the centre.

Herodotus and Homer representative of the general perception of Ethiopians by the Greeks of the pre-Hellenistic age?

There are three pre-Hellenistic authors who provide highly idealised and vague accounts of the Ethiopians: Mimnermus, Aeschylus and Euripides. None of these authors mention primitivism, abundance of food or lack of deception. Instead, geographic extremity is expressed as all place the Ethiopians at the setting of the sun. Clearly, Mimnermus' account is mythical, since he contrasts the Ethiopians squarely with the Hesperides,⁵¹ suggesting that he thought of them in the same context. In addition, he places them in the east, and not in Africa, and makes Ethiopia the land where Dawn and Helios dwell. The Ethiopians of Aeschylus are similarly distant, dwelling by the fountain of the sun,⁵² and at the borders of Ocean.⁵³ Similarly, Euripides' Ethiopians appear at the place where the sun rises, by the stables of Dawn and Helios.⁵⁴ The context clearly indicates that these accounts of the Ethiopians are more the result of mythopoesis than observation, since the Ethiopians are either associated or contrasted with clearly mythical characters. The geographical extremity, especially the proximity to the sun and Ocean accentuate the fact that these Ethiopians are not considered people likely to be part of the activities of the οἰκουμένη.

It is difficult to ascertain to what extent the image of the Ethiopians presented by Homer, Mimnermus, Herodotus, Aeschylus and Euripides was representative of the general perception of Ethiopians. In the earliest iconographical depictions, the Ethiopians are always in mythological settings, most commonly in scenes associated with the Trojan War. The motif of the Ethiopian warrior barely survives into the fifth-century, during which period Negroes appear more commonly in everyday scenes, especially as attendants⁵⁵ and actors. In addition, few Classical authors idealise the Ethiopians⁵⁶ and during the fourth century, they are discussed in rather ordinary terms.⁵⁷ There is good reason for the Ethiopian to be less idealised during the

⁵¹ Mimnermus frg.ii.8.

⁵² Aesch.*PV* 807-9.

⁵³ Aesch.frg.192.

⁵⁴ Eur.frg.771.

⁵⁵ This includes the Ethiopians in scenes from the Andromeda myth.

⁵⁶ The last surviving authors to idealise Ethiopians are Herodotus and Euripides. From the fourth century, Scylax *Periplus*.112 *apud* Ferguson (1975: 18) idealises the Ethiopians. However, the *Periplus* is sourced from numerous older works, so the account in question may originate from before the fourth century.

⁵⁷ For example, by Men.frg.533k; Arist.*Hist. an.* 517a.18.

Classical period than in the Archaic. In the first instance, the idea that peoples of the periphery could be more noble than the people of Athens did not fit in with the ideology of fifth century Athenian nationalism. Furthermore, it is quite possible that increased acquaintance with Negroes and mulattos as slaves led the Greeks increasingly to associate the Ethiopians with ordinary life.

The question of the mythical nature of the Ethiopians prior to the Hellenistic period is not one that can easily be answered. While it is clear that much of the what has survived from this time betrays the mythopoetic process behind it. For the most part it appears that the Ethiopians of myth were an early conception of the race, and by the fourth century BC, it appears as if the Ethiopians of myth are all but forgotten.

2. The Gods Associated with the Ethiopians.

Previous studies concerning the Ethiopian associations with the gods have concentrated on later developments, such as the cult of Isis. This is not surprising considering the scant number of references to Ethiopians with other gods, especially during the Classical period. This section of the chapter deals simply with the two gods most commonly associated with the Ethiopians, Zeus and Dionysus. Not only will the extent to which these gods are associated with the Ethiopians be established, but attempts at explaining the associations will be made.

2.1 Zeus.

Zeus' association with the Ethiopians begins as early as Homer, where he visits the Ethiopians to receive hecatombs of sacrifice.⁵⁸ Herodotus makes Zeus one of only two gods to be worshipped by the inhabitants of Meroë.⁵⁹ Apart from this, there are no references to Zeus in connection with the Ethiopians. However, two passages illustrate that the association of Zeus with the Ethiopians may have been stronger than this paucity of references would suggest. First, Sophocles refers to Zeus as *κάρβανος αἰθῶς*,⁶⁰ which has been interpreted as a Negro Zeus.⁶¹ Furthermore, on the authority of Tzetzes, when Lycophron refers to *Αἰθίωψ Γυράψιος*,⁶² he is referring to Zeus

⁵⁸ Hom.*Il*.i.423-4.

⁵⁹ Hdt.ii.29.

⁶⁰ *Soph*.frg.269a.54.

⁶¹ See Snowden (1981: 414).

⁶² Lycoph.*Alex*.535-7.

using one of his Chian epithets.⁶³ Although evidence is scant, it will be shown that the most likely explanation for these rather surprising references concerns the association of the Ethiopians with the sun in the Greeks' minds.

A commentator of the Augustan age claims that the visit of Zeus to the Ethiopians in Homer was a metaphor for Zeus' visit to the sun.⁶⁴ In Homer, the Ethiopians are made to dwell at both the setting and the rising sun and in subsequent poetry of the Classical period, the Ethiopians appear to dwell close to the sun. Thus, Mimnermus takes the land of the Ethiopians to be the place where Helios sleeps before Dawn awakes.⁶⁵ Euripides places the stables of Dawn and of the sun in Ethiopia⁶⁶ and Aeschylus places the Ethiopians at the shore of Ocean where the sun bathes himself.⁶⁷ A further association of the Ethiopians with the sun is evidenced by the myth of Tithonus who married Dawn. Their son was Memnon, king of the Ethiopians.⁶⁸

The prose authors equally bring the sun into discussions of Ethiopia. Herodotus mentions a 'table of the sun' near the city of the long-lived Ethiopians, from which the citizens feast.⁶⁹ The great heat of Ethiopia, as a result of its proximity to the sun, is made clear in Herodotus⁷⁰ who disagrees with Aeschylus⁷¹ and Anaxagoras⁷² on their explanation of the Nile's flooding as being due to the snows melting in Ethiopia, since in his opinion, Ethiopia is too hot for snow to form. In another passage, he maintains that the southern parts of Libya (in which Ethiopians live), are too hot and dry to be inhabited.⁷³ It might even be possible that when Ephorus states that Ethiopia stretches from the rising to the setting of the winter sun, he is expressing the association of the sun with Ethiopia.⁷⁴

Although Zeus may not have been a sun god in the proper sense, being related to other Indo-European gods of the weather, there is ample evidence that Zeus was connected with the sun in some way. A.B.Cook provides considerable evidence that

⁶³ Tzetzes *Alexandria ad loc.* *apud* Cook (1964: 290).

⁶⁴ Cornificius Longus *apud* Macrob. *Sat.* i.23.1-2.

⁶⁵ Mimnermus *frg.* ii.8.

⁶⁶ Eur. *frg.* 771.

⁶⁷ Aesch. *frg.* 192.

⁶⁸ As in Hes. *Th.* 984; Pind. *Pyth.* vi.32.

⁶⁹ Hdt. iii.18.

⁷⁰ Hdt. ii.22.

⁷¹ Aesch. *frg.* 300.

⁷² Anaxagoras *frg.* 91.

⁷³ Hdt. iv.185.

⁷⁴ Ephorus *frg.* 128.

Zeus was associated with the sun, although not a sun god proper.⁷⁵ However, Zeus shows remarkable propensity for assimilation with foreign solar gods. Thus, the Theban god Åmen-Râ was associated with Zeus, who in his new guise was worshipped as Zeus Åmmon. The cult of Zeus Åmmon was established in Athens as early as the fourth century⁷⁶ and perhaps earlier in Sparta. As early as Pindar, a hymn had been dedicated to the God⁷⁷ and a bust of Zeus (fig.31) has even been found with the horns of a ram, the animal associated with Åmen. It is this aspect of Zeus which probably led Herodotus⁷⁸ to say that the citizens of Meroë worshipped only Zeus and Dionysus.⁷⁹ Certainly, Napata had been conquered by Thebes and the Theban cult of Åmen was established there, as is attested to by archaeological evidence.⁸⁰

Another popular conception of the sun, or sun gods, is as a burning wheel or disk. Thus Åmen-Râ was often considered to be a Ram with a solar disk between his horns. It is quite possible that Zeus in his guise as a solar wheel is being referred to by Lycophron when he calls him Αἰθίοψ: 'burning faced' and Γυραψίος: 'of the wheel.'⁸¹ A later commentator has suggested this to be one of the names by which Zeus was worshipped in Chios. This could suggest a cult of the solar wheel at Chios, although Cook is sceptical, claiming that Γυραψίος was probably an erudite compound invented by Lycophron to describe elements of Chian worship rather than a cult epithet.⁸² While Lycophron was quite obscure, he was not prone to the more complicated techniques of later Hellenistic scholars, and often relied on simple periphrasis for obscurity. In any event, Lycophron does not actually tell us that Γυραψίος Αἰθίοψ was Zeus, but Tzetzes fifteen centuries later does, explaining that these were Chian epithets of the god. Whatever the sources available to this late commentator, should his word be taken that Lycophron was referring to Zeus, it is difficult to see why his explanation should not be accepted. Whatever the case may be,

⁷⁵ For example, Cook (1964: 195-7) demonstrates that there were a number of Greek epithets which illustrate a solar connection and that the sun was often seen as the eye of Zeus. For a survey of solar aspects of Zeus, see Cook (1964: 186-730).

⁷⁶ Burkert (1985: 179).

⁷⁷ Pind.frg.36.

⁷⁸ Hdt.ii.29.

⁷⁹ Meaning Åmen and Osiris respectively.

⁸⁰ There is a temple of Åmen at Napata. See Howe & Wells (1967: vol. I, 174).

⁸¹ Lycoph.Alex.535-7.

⁸² Cook (1964: 290) claims that Γυραψίος does not sound like a popular epithet.

it is safe to assume that Zeus is referred to as Αἰθίοψ on account of his association with the sun.

To sum up, it seems evident that Zeus' association with the Ethiopians is a result of the close association of Ethiopia with the sun. That the association of Ethiopia with the sun is geographic seems evident. When Homer's Ethiopians are visited by the gods, this is done in order that the gods be temporarily removed from the narrative. Thus, their geographic extremity is stressed: they are ἔσχατοι ἄνδρῶν.⁸³ They are made to dwell by the setting and rising sun, since in the early conceptions of geographical space, this indicated the ends of the earth. Likewise, the Ethiopians of Mimnermus, Aeschylus and Euripides being placed at the rising sun indicates them to be the furthest inhabitants of the world. This is made clear by Euripides' claiming the Ethiopians to be the first people to be struck by the rays of the sun.⁸⁴ As regards the prose authors, the relation between the Ethiopians and the sun again appears to be as a result of their geographic extremity, as it has been shown that in the Greek symmetrical view of the world (which was never entirely disposed of) the extremes of Ethiopia and its northern counterpart, Scythia, were regarded as climatic extremes.⁸⁵ Thus, although there are few references to Zeus in association with the Ethiopians, they all seem to be related to the perception of Ethiopia as a southern extreme in the north-south paradigm.

2.2 Dionysus.

In the all literature prior to the Hellenistic period, only one author connects the Ethiopians with Dionysus, and this is Herodotus who claims the Ethiopians to worship him along with Zeus.⁸⁶ It is likely that Herodotus is here referring to Osiris. It has been noted that the inhabitants of Napata, who had been conquered by the rulers of Thebes, would naturally have maintained some of the Theban religious practices. The cult practices of Osiris and Dionysus have a number of similarities which may have induced Herodotus to refer to Osiris as Dionysus.⁸⁷ Literary evidence of an

⁸³ Hom.*Od.*i.22.

⁸⁴ Eur.*frg.* 771.

⁸⁵ See Ch3.2.2.

⁸⁶ Hdt.*ii.*29.

⁸⁷ On the similarities between Osiris and Dionysus, See Diod. Sic.*i.*11.3; *i.*15.6. Hdt.*ii.*146 claims Dionysus to have been reared in Nysa, which he himself places in Ethiopia.

association of the Ethiopians with Dionysus is scant, but there exist numerous examples of archaeological artefacts depicting Negroes in Dionysian scenes or in scenes accompanied by Dionysian iconography. These may be divided into five categories: Negroes in possible depictions of theatre scenes, Negro masks, Negroes as satyrs, Negroes on plastic vases and Negroes on shield devices. The purpose of this section is to assess the significance of these artefacts as evidence of a general association of the Ethiopians with Dionysus (however slight) and to account for such an association.

There are a number of depictions of Negroes in scenes which appear somewhat Dionysian.⁸⁸ One such is a fifth century (c.480 BC) black-figure *lekythos* depicting a Negro woman being tortured by satyrs.⁸⁹ There have been numerous interpretations of this scene, a popular one being that she is Lamia, the Libyan bogey-woman, bane of Greek children and beloved of Zeus.⁹⁰ A similar looking Negro woman dances amongst Maenads and Satyrs in a south Italian *askos*.⁹¹ A plausible interpretation which has been offered for both these scenes is that they represent scenes from satyr plays.⁹² Snowden goes as far as to suggest a general association of Ethiopians with the stage.⁹³

Other depictions of Negroes in Dionysian scenes show a more definite connection with the theatre. Some examples of these occur in depictions of phlyax farces, as, for example, on two fourth century calyx-kraters from south Italy. On one, two Negro masks appear, under which a farce is performed in front of Dionysus.⁹⁴ On the other, an apparently Negroid female dancer see-saws with a farcical figure on either side of Silenus.⁹⁵ Also to be included amongst these is a depiction of two actors and two satyrs (seemingly plotting against them.)⁹⁶ One of the satyrs appears to be an old Negro slave.⁹⁷ Not all the depictions of Negroes in a theatrical scenes show

⁸⁸ A scene will be considered to be Dionysian if there is any sign of Dionysian iconography, such as satyrs, maenads, or if Dionysus himself is present.

⁸⁹ Fig.26.

⁹⁰ For discussions on previous scholarship on this scene see Snowden (1970: 155 and 310 fn.89) and Beardsley (1929: 59).

⁹¹ Ruvo, Jata Collection, 1402 {Snowden (1970: n.2)}.

⁹² See Snowden (1970: 160; 1976: 160).

⁹³ Snowden (1976: 171).

⁹⁴ Fig.32.

⁹⁵ Fig.33.

⁹⁶ This interpretation offered by Snowden (1970: 160).

⁹⁷ See Beardsley (1929: 63).

elements of Dionysian iconography, however. The depictions of lively, comical, Negroes in scenes of the Busiris legend have been interpreted as belonging to this category, since this particular story was a popular theme for satyr plays.⁹⁸ The scenes of Andromeda should be included in this class as well, since the theme was popular in Greek drama.⁹⁹

That the depictions of plays concerning Andromeda and Busiris should have Negroes is understandable considering the African setting of the plays (Ethiopia in the case of Andromeda). The depictions of Negroes in phlyax farces and in other satyr plays is more difficult to explain. Phlyax farces usually depicted scenes from myth, or scenes from everyday life. Thus, in some cases it would be appropriate to consider the presence of Negroes in such scenes as representative of slaves in everyday life. This does not account for the Negroid masks overlooking a farce in the presence of Dionysus.

Certain Negro masks have been taken as evidence of an association of the Negro with the theatre.¹⁰⁰ An example of such a mask is a life-size terracotta, possibly from Sicily, which has holes for eyes and mouth which suggest it was intended to be worn, probably in the theatre.¹⁰¹ Despite the probable use of certain Negro masks in the theatre, the mask had a significant role in the cult of Dionysus which should not be overlooked.¹⁰² Not all Negro masks are related to the theatre, however. Two Negroid antefix masks have been found in Greek Italy,¹⁰³ and one in the Etruscan port

⁹⁸ Snowden (1970: 160). For descriptions of Negroes in depictions of the Busiris legend, see Beardsley (1929: 104-110; figs.4; 7).

⁹⁹ Some examples of depictions of the Andromeda myth in which there are Negroes are figs.15; 19; 21. In the first of these, Andromeda and Cepheus are depicted as white, but Ethiopia is personified as a vaguely Negroid figure. Suggestions have been made that this particular character is wearing a Negroid mask [see Bieber (1961: 31) and Snowden (1976: 155)].

¹⁰⁰ Snowden (1970: 162) interprets the masks to be further evidence of Ethiopian activity in the theatre.

¹⁰¹ London, 1926.3-24.96 {Snowden (1976: fig.204)}.

¹⁰² So Kerényi (1976: 238) who calls Dionysus the 'mask god'. Otto (1965: 90) explains the use of the mask in the ceremony of the mixing of wine. Masks of satyrs and silenoi were worn by wine tasters according to Kerényi (1976: 67). Kerényi (1976: 282) claims the mask to represent the dead state of the god while Burkert (1985: 103) explains it as signifying the surrendering of one's own identity. It should be mentioned that the mask is an extremely old ritual artefact which predates Dionysus, being used in Neolithic religion as early as 6000 BC [Burkert (1985: 13)]. In addition, the mask was not only used for Dionysus, but also for a variety of other gods [see Burkert (1985: 103-104)].

¹⁰³ Houston: Menil, CA 7009 {Snowden (1976: fig.181)} & Hamburg, 1917, 1002 {Snowden (1976: fig.182)}.

of Pyrgi.¹⁰⁴ Such masks are usually employed to ward off evil and are usually in the form of the heads of women (possibly maenads) or satyrs. Clearly, the Negro was considered by the sculptors of these vases to perform the same function as the companions of Dionysus.

Women, Negroes and figures associated with Dionysus are also found on Attic red-figure head vases. Of the four hundred and seven vases catalogued by Beazley, only eight depict males not associated with Dionysus. These are five youths on face vases¹⁰⁵ and three Persians on the vases of the Persian Class.¹⁰⁶ Excluding what Beazley refers to as 'Class W', which group contains *rhyta* in the form of animals' heads, the rest of the head vases depict either Caucasian women, Heracles, Dionysus, satyrs or Negroes. There are no other types of heads featured. The same holds true for the head vases of southern Italy. Previous commentators have suggested that the Caucasian women represent maenads, and this would be appropriate, since many of these women wear ivy garlands and on one *aryballos* by Proklees in the shape of a woman's head, the handles are formed as serpents. Heraclean iconography is often conflated with that of Dionysus.¹⁰⁷ Both were able to conquer all the nations of the world save for Ethiopia, on account of the piety of its inhabitants.¹⁰⁸ Thus, almost all the figures on the head vases appear to be associated with Dionysus, except for the Negroes.¹⁰⁹ It is only natural that companions of Dionysus are found on the head vases, since, with the exception of a few *aryballoi*, they are mostly drinking vessels. Thus, almost all of these are decorated with Dionysiac scenes. Few arguments have been put forward that account for the pattern which emerges. Beardsley suggests that Heracles, Dionysus, maenads and satyrs all signify festivity and debauchery, and suggests, furthermore, that the inclusion of Negroes was as a reflection of their use for amusement in the revelry at Naucratis.¹¹⁰ While certain depictions of Negroes may indicate comic intent, the Negroes of the head vases show no signs of caricature. In

¹⁰⁴ Rome, scavo no. 203 {Snowden (1976: fig.183)}.

¹⁰⁵ *ARV²*. 1529. top 1-5. These face vases are clearly distinct from the head vases according to Beazley (1929: 41).

¹⁰⁶ *ARV²*. 1550. top 3-5.

¹⁰⁷ See Carpenter (1986: 98-123).

¹⁰⁸ According to Diod. Sic.iii.3.1.

¹⁰⁹ The vast majority of these vases depict women. Satyrs are also frequent, appearing forty two times while Negroes appear twenty four times. Heracles and Dionysus appear eleven and five times respectively.

¹¹⁰ Beardsley (1929: 36).

fact, the realism of these vases is so faithfully rendered that Beardsley herself considers the potter to have used models. It seems unlikely that an artist would go to great lengths to produce a realistic depiction of a Negro in the context of drunken revelry if he intended it to reflect the comic function of the type.

There are three examples of decidedly Negroid satyrs, two on janiform head vases and one in a vase painting. The first of these is part of a janiform head vase which depicts a satyr and a Caucasian woman (fig.34). The satyr is painted black and Beazley notes that he is 'turned into a kind of Negro.'¹¹¹ That the artist intended this to be a real Negro is indicated by the hair, which is formed by the familiar technique of raised dots, used to depict the tightly curled hair of the pronounced Negroes discussed earlier.¹¹² From southern Italy of the fourth century come the other two Negroid satyrs. The first appears on a krater from Bari¹¹³ and the second appears on a janiform vase together with a seemingly Caucasian satyr which was made from the same mould.¹¹⁴ The hair of the Negroid satyr in the janiform vase is again formed by the technique of raised dots, which seem to extend over to the head of the Caucasian satyr whose hair is tied by a wreath. The Negroid satyr is again painted black while the other remains reserved. The similarity of the two types has been previously noted, especially as regards their upturned noses and thick lips,¹¹⁵ so it could be argued that the depictions of Negroes as satyrs indicates no more than that some artists had decided to exploit the similarity of the two types for the sake of variety. It should be noted in this regard, that the types of the Negro and satyr are in no way identical and the creators of the head vases seem more than capable of rendering such differences: the hair of the satyr is not depicted using the technique of raised dots (unless the satyr is Negroid); the Negro has human ears, while the satyr's are equine, and although both have noses which are different from the Greek norm, unlike the noses of the satyrs, those of the Negroes are always platyrrhine, not upturned (unless the Negro is also a satyr). Upturned noses are only used to depict Negroes on two dimensional vase paintings, in which it is more difficult faithfully to render true platyrrhiny.

¹¹¹ *ARI²*. 1537, extreme bottom.

¹¹² In Ch4.2.

¹¹³ Copenhagen: Nationalmuseet, Chr VIII 88 {Snowden (1976: fig.212)}.

¹¹⁴ New York, 06.1021.204 {Snowden (1970: fig.93)}.

¹¹⁵ Snowden (1970: 160) and Snowden (1976: 160) following Frazer (1935: 40) who points to a conflation of the Negro and satyr.

Furthermore, later literary evidence points to a definite association of satyrs with Africa¹¹⁶ and Ethiopia.¹¹⁷ In view of the classical iconographical evidence, these later references suggest a continuation of the same Dionysian association.

Three times Negroes appear on shield devices, and all three of these appear in conjunction with some aspect of Dionysian iconography. The first of these depictions is of the judgement of Paris. In this depiction, two figures which appear to be Ethiopians¹¹⁸ flank a serpent on a shield held by two warriors.¹¹⁹ The serpent is an occasional companion of Dionysus, appearing three times at his assistance in the Gigantomachy, and once elsewhere.¹²⁰ Snakes become a regular feature of the iconography of the maenads from the early red-figure tradition.¹²¹ The remaining two depictions of Negroes on shields both show a gay looking Negro blowing a salpynx (fig.35; 36). On both vases, the Negro's legs are bent in a manner suggestive of a procession or dance. The salpynx was used in a number of ways, often for military purposes in Greece,¹²² but it was also connected with the summoning of Dionysus from the dead.¹²³ The most obvious interpretation of the salpynges is that they have a military association in the shield devices, although this argument does not account for the gay poise of the Negroid bearers. The presence of the salpynx does not necessarily mean an association with Dionysus, however. The instrument was considered to be a symbol of the foreign,¹²⁴ and the shield devices with Negroes and salpynges may simply indicate an attempt to portray something exotic on the part of the artist.

Thus, the Negro appears a number of times in situations suggestive of an association of the type with Dionysus. Such depictions include Negroids in satyr plays and farces, Negroid antefix masks (which perform a function usually associated with maenads and satyrs), Negroes on plastic vases and Negroes in shield devices. Although there are alternative explanations for the appearance of Negroes in conjunction with Dionysian iconography, none of these successfully accounts for all

¹¹⁶ Pompon.i.48; Plin.*HN* v.7.44.

¹¹⁷ Philostr.*VA* vi.27 tells of a satyr ravaging women in an Ethiopian village and Diod. Sic.i.18.4 makes the satyrs an Ethiopian race.

¹¹⁸ Based on their panoply which matches that of the Ethiopians established in Ch4.3.

¹¹⁹ Beardsley (1929: n.71).

¹²⁰ Carpenter (1986: 71-2).

¹²¹ Carpenter (1986: 84).

¹²² Kerényi (1976: 174).

¹²³ Kerényi (1976: 201).

¹²⁴ Kerényi (1976: 174).

such depictions. Thus, the possibility that the Ethiopians were associated with Dionysus should seriously be considered.

There are arguments to account for an association of the Ethiopian with Dionysus. Two of these have been mentioned already: the association of Dionysus with Osiris and the conflation of the Negroid type with that of the satyr. Other possible explanations deserve mention. The first of these concerns the perception of Dionysus as a foreign god. It has been pointed out that many of the words associated with the cult are not of Greek origin.¹²⁵ Later cult practices re-enact the arrival of Dionysus in a ship.¹²⁶ He is associated with Thrace in Homer¹²⁷ and generally, Greek tradition associates him closely with Phrygia and Asia Minor.¹²⁸ Despite the strong association of Dionysus with the north and the north-east, the prevalence of the panther and the snake¹²⁹ in Dionysian iconography also indicate a possible eastern or southern¹³⁰ association with the cult in popular Greek perception. In this regard, the frequent depictions of Negroes on janiform vases with women (maenads or nymphs) should be considered, since maenads were associated with Thrace, and in conjunction with the Negro,¹³¹ they represent the north-south paradigm already established. It is also possible that the image of Dionysus as a foreign god accounts for the appearance of the serpent between the two Negroes and the Negroes with salpynges in shield devices.¹³²

In conclusion, there is ample explanation for an association of the Ethiopians with the cult of Dionysus and a significant amount of evidence that such an association did exist. As regards the image of Dionysus as a god of foreigners and as a symbol of the primitive and un-Greek, the Ethiopian suits well the purpose of exemplifying what is distant, with regard to custom and appearance, from that which is Greek. Distance from Greece also accounts for the association of the Ethiopians with Zeus, albeit geographical distance in this instance. Thus, all the religious connotations of the terms

¹²⁵ These include *thyrsos*, *thriambos* and *dithyrambos* according to Burkert (1985: 162).

¹²⁶ Burkert (1985: 163).

¹²⁷ Hom. *Il.* vi. 130-140.

¹²⁸ Burkert (1985: 163).

¹²⁹ For the significance of the snake and panther as foreign elements in Dionysian iconography, see Carpenter (1986: 125).

¹³⁰ The east and the south were occasionally conflated, especially with regard to the location of Ethiopia. See Ch3.2.1.

¹³¹ Especially considering the later association of the satyr with Africa and Ethiopia.

¹³² For the foreign nature of the salpynx, see Kerényi (1976: 174).

Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία seem to stem from the perception of the Ethiopians as symbols of extreme distance from that which is Greek.

Chapter Six: Culture and Politics.

We are separated from the Classical Greek world by over two millennia of changing cultural perceptions and political ideology. Race relations and race prejudice are issues which underpin modern society to such a degree that projecting our current perceptions of inter group relations onto the peoples of antiquity seems natural. Yet even today, terms such as 'race' and 'prejudice' enjoy a wide variety of meanings, and perceptions of race and ethnicity differ not only from country to country, but from province to province and even between various ethnic groups within such geographical boundaries. For this reason, it is important not to misuse modern understandings of the term 'race' and 'prejudice' by applying them indiscriminately in the analysis of historical contexts in which they are not applicable. This chapter focuses on the Greek perception of the Ethiopians as a group, with threefold aim: to establish the criteria by which individuals were judged to be Ethiopian, to compare the Greek perceptions of the Ethiopians as a group with modern perceptions of race, and to examine the Greek attitudes to the Ethiopians with regard to race prejudice.

1. Framework and Definitions.

The meaning of the term 'race' has undergone considerable evolution, having gained new meanings over the past three centuries whilst retaining the old meanings, culminating in the present situation in which the term enjoys a variety of uses.¹ There is, therefore, no word in Greek which could be entirely synonymous with the English word 'race', which is not only used to denote a number of different types of groups, but, as a result of political circumstances and historical events, has a wide range of connotations associated with it.

Considering the fundamental significance of race relations in modern society, it is not surprising that some scholars have examined ancient race relations without any explicit definition of either race or prejudice, allowing them to claim, for example, that the 'Greeks and Romans counted blacks in'² and that certain vases showed 'no signs of race prejudice.'³ Such analyses have been based on modern criteria and have led to

¹ So Banton (1983: 33).

² Snowden (1970: 218).

³ Beardsley (1929: 37).

conclusions that Greeks and Romans were not affected by race prejudice. In any study employing a modern framework to analyse race relations, care should be taken lest analytical tools are used which are inappropriate to the particular socio-historical context.

The word 'prejudice' is loaded with connotations in common use as a result of its being applied to many forms of negative discrimination against peoples of colour. To illustrate the complexity of the issue, the following definitions of 'prejudice' have been proposed:

a pre-judgement or an evaluation or decision made before the facts of a case could properly be determined or weighed.⁴

and

a a preconceived opinion. b (foll. by against, in favour of) bias or impartiality.⁵

Yet in current use, the term 'race prejudice' has a cultural significance which transcends the dictionary meanings of 'race' and 'prejudice'. In order to accommodate the complexities of the term 'race prejudice', there have been numerous definitions of the term, each designed to suit a particular study. The following example of an attempt to define 'race prejudice' illustrates the point:

interpersonal hostility which is directed against individuals based on their membership in a minority group.⁶

This example is clearly limited to countries like the United States or the United Kingdom where Whites are in the majority, since according to this definition, race prejudice did not exist in South Africa, save in the case of Black hostility towards Whites. In addition, such a definition relies on hostility, ignoring more subtle forms of prejudice, which could simply appear in the form of a slightly lower tolerance toward people of a different skin colour. In addition, the above definition does not cover institutionalised prejudices in which people of particular groups receive preferential

⁴ Levin (1975: 12).

⁵ Fowler & Fowler (1990: 940).

⁶ Levin (1975: 12).

treatment at the hands of the authorities.⁷ Some scholars have opted to distinguish between race prejudice and racism,⁸ proposing definitions based on belief in genetically transmitted differences.⁹ Such definitions would render the term 'racism' completely invalid in a society which did not understand genetics, no matter how hostile they were to people of different perceived groups. In fact, racism changes, and there may be little similarity between the forms it takes from one politico-historical context to another.¹⁰

Thus, narrow definitions created for use in a modern context are extremely limited and inappropriate for this type of historical study. With this in mind, the broadest definitions of both 'race' and 'prejudice' have been employed, although care has been taken that it be explicit which sense of each word is being discussed. For the purposes of this study, therefore, race prejudice will be defined as: preconceived ideas concerning people made on the basis of their membership to a particular 'race';¹¹ and racism as: any social and political institutions which enforce or perpetuate race prejudice and which are in turn perpetuated by such prejudice. Unfortunately, the term 'race' is much too complicated to be covered by such a simple definition. The study is therefore centred on the different meanings of the modern term 'race' and how each sense of the term applies to the Greek conception of the Ethiopian. In addition, evidence of prejudice against Ethiopians associated with each sense of the word 'race' will be looked for. The purpose of this analysis is to distinguish between the different ways in which the Greeks beheld the Ethiopians as a socially-constructed group,

⁷ For example, subtle institutionalised prejudices, such as a stronger likelihood for a member of a particular socially-constructed group to be convicted in courts, or different groups receiving different levels of police protection.

⁸ 'Racism' seems to be used to describe institutionalised forms of prejudice.

⁹ See Jackson (1987: 7) in which he shows sympathy for this type of definition.

¹⁰ There appears to be a trend to distinguish between racism and ethnocentrism, and particularly noteworthy in this regard Anthony Spawforth's entry under 'race' in *OCD*³ which states that 'racism must be distinguished from - even if somatic judgements may form an element in - cultural prejudice (ethnocentrism)'. Although in this particular entry, no explicit definition has been offered for 'race', it appears implicit that 'race' concerns 'departures among foreigners from their (Greeks' and Romans') own somatic norms'; and 'racism' appears to concern "white" as a privileged somatic category (with "black" as its antithesis). As will be made obvious during the course of this study, the term 'race' is not only applicable to people of differing somatic characteristics, but has numerous cultural and linguistic connotations. While the term 'ethnocentrism' was coined as a scientific term with a particular logical meaning [see Ch5.1.1; Sumner(1935: 13)], the term 'race' has been in popular use for three centuries and has picked up numerous senses which are still in current use today. As a result, the term 'race' is too broad a term to allow for a clear distinction between race-prejudice and ethnocentrism.

¹¹ This would include racial stereotypes.

specifically by comparison of the Greek idea with modern conceptions of race; and to examine perceptions of the Ethiopian within the systems of prejudice which upheld Greek society. It will become apparent that the Greeks' conception of the Ethiopians is not covered by any single sense of the modern term 'race', but by a number of senses of the term.¹²

For the purpose of this study, it has been useful to examine the Greek perceptions of the Ethiopians in two parts. The first deals with Greek perceptions of Ethiopians as members of a nation outside of Greece. The aim of this part of the study is to ascertain what features the Greeks felt defined¹³ the Ethiopians as a group and to what extent the current uses of the term 'race' applied to them. The second part deals with the Greek perception of Ethiopians within their own political system, and with institutionalised racism.

2. The Ethiopians as a Race.

The English term race has a number of senses in current English use, but often it is used to denote a group of people believed to be of common stock and who share certain physical characteristics. However, a glance at the *Oxford English Dictionary* illustrates the variety of senses in which the word has been used throughout history. Many of these senses of the word are still employed today, and any attempt to find a single logical definition of the word would be fruitless.¹⁴ The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides the following broad definitions of the term 'race':

I. A group of persons, animals or plants connected by descent or origin.

and

II. A group or class of persons, animals or things having some common feature or features.

¹² See Ch6.fn.81-83.

¹³ For the purpose of this study, a defining feature refers to a characteristic which is necessary for membership in a group. Thus, any aspect of 'race' which was held to apply to all Ethiopians will be considered a defining feature.

¹⁴ For a survey of the wide variety of racial perceptions current in modern society, see Sigler (1987); Berry & Tischler (1978).

Clearly, such definitions are too broad to be of significant use. However, sociologists have studied the senses of the word race, and these have been used as the basis of the discussion to follow.

The quest for a scientific basis for race led the American anthropologist D.C. Coon to propose five original biological subspecies of humankind which were in existence between 35000 BC and 1500 AD: Congoids, Mongoloids, Caucasoids, Australoids and Capoids.¹⁵ The term 'race' in its modern context is often used to describe 'genetically distinct breeding groups'¹⁶ or peoples who share similar somatic characteristics. Some of the groups established by Coon could hardly be considered relevant to the ancient Greeks, but the idea of group distinction on the basis of somatic characteristics was, with Ethiopia being associated, for the most part, with Negroid people.¹⁷ As has been shown previously, the fact that some Caucasian mythological figures were Ethiopians¹⁸ illustrates that Negritude was not a defining feature of the Ethiopian group. In addition, one of the later authors indicates that most Ethiopians were black, flat nosed and curly haired,¹⁹ suggesting that the rest were not. Clearly, the term Αἰθίοψ did not simply mean 'visibly Negroid'.²⁰

Evidence that the Greeks held any prejudice against Ethiopians on account of their skin colour is scant. The only literary evidence on this part comes from Aristotle, who claims excessively dark skin colour²¹ and woolly hair²² are signs of cowardice, citing Ethiopians as proof.²³ This passage suggests a common belief in the Ethiopian being cowardly, since the author would not otherwise have had recourse to the Ethiopian as evidence for his theory, although it does not necessarily follow that the Greeks in general attributed this cowardice to skin colour.²⁴ Aesthetic judgements about the Ethiopian somatic type might also be considered prejudice in the loosest sense of the word. Early scholarship has held that the frequent prophylactic use of the

¹⁵ Klass & Hellman (1971: 37-38).

¹⁶ A term used by Richmond (1972: 35).

¹⁷ As established in Chapter Four, especially Ch4.1.2.

¹⁸ See Ch4.1.4 concerning Memnon and Andromeda. See also Ch2.2 in which it is suggested that the term Αἰθίοψ was in use before it was associated with Negritude. The use of the term as a synonym for 'visibly Negroid person' was a later development.

¹⁹ Diod. Sic.iii.8.2-4.

²⁰ See Ch4 for a discussion the physical appearance of the Ethiopians in Greek minds.

²¹ Arist.[*Phgn.*] 812a.13-14.

²² Arist.[*Phgn.*] 812b.30-32.

²³ See also Ch4.2.

²⁴ It is clearly the author who makes the connection between cowardice and skin colour.

Negro and the appearance of the Negroid type in comic scenes and depictions of phylax plays indicated a general aversion for the somatic characteristics of the Negroid type. However, much of the prophylactic use of the Negro was from outside of Greece²⁵ and the appearance of these and caricatures of the type can be explained without recourse to a Greek aversion for the somatic type.²⁶

Senses of the term 'race' inherited from nineteenth century use include the following three: **a.** a group who share a common language (for example the 'Afrikaner race'), **b.** a group who have political autonomy, such as the 'British race'²⁷ and **c.** a group with a common perceived cultural and religious heritage (such as the 'Jewish Race'). It may seem at first that there is some cultural or religious aspect about all the above uses of the term, for example, the Afrikaner race are united by a common culture and many follow a particular religion, the British nation also had a common culture and language, and many Jews speak Yiddish or Hebrew. However, some people who are not British speak English, for example, South Africans. There were also British people with first languages other than English, such as Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Manx and Cornish.²⁸ Thus, although language is an aspect which many Britons share, it is not the defining feature of their race. Similarly, many Jews share a common language, but many can only speak English. Hence, religion and a perceived cultural heritage are what unite them.²⁹

2.1. Language and Culture.

Ancient Greece, at least prior to Alexander the Great, did not constitute a politically autonomous unit,³⁰ since each state had its own political system, and even in the age of hegemonic leagues, there were still at least two major powers who were considered to be Greek: the Athenians and Spartans. Thus, for the period concerned (before the

²⁵ Particularly from Naucratis, Cyprus and Rhodes. See Ch6.fns.82-84.

²⁶ See Ch4.2.2 for a review of the evidence concerning the Greeks' aesthetic appreciation of the Ethiopians' skin colour.

²⁷ Banton (1983: 33).

²⁸ Whether Scots is a dialect of English is debatable, but Scots Gaelic, which is certainly not, was spoken by many people who would still have been counted in as part of the British race at the time this usage of the term 'race' was popular.

²⁹ As regards the Afrikaner race, the question of who is regarded as Afrikaner is complicated, 'Coloureds' who speak Afrikaans are often not considered to be Afrikaners. However, the term 'Afrikaner' is perceived to be primarily linguistic.

³⁰ From this point, this shall be simply referred to as political unit, meaning a geographical area in which people are bound by one law-making body, which has the ability to wage war.

Hellenistic period), the Greeks were never a single political entity. Their Hellenic identity was based, for the most part, on linguistic and cultural grounds.³¹ The term βάρβαρος was originally used as a generic term for peoples who did not speak Greek³² or whose Greek was accented.³³ After the Persian wars, Athenian national pride increased, and with it came a change in the perception of foreigners. Thus, the term βάρβαρος became increasingly used with contempt,³⁴ although this is not always the case.³⁵ However, for the moment, only the linguistic and cultural aspects of the term are important.³⁶

It is difficult to determine to what extent the Greeks defined the Ethiopians in terms of language. Herodotus seems to be aware of one language for the Ethiopians,³⁷ although he claims the language of the Trogodyte Ethiopians to be unlike any other in the world, resembling the sound of screeching bats.³⁸ The significance of language in the Greek perception of the Ethiopian is perhaps indicated by Herodotus' use of it in his narrative involving the long-lived Ethiopians who spoke a language that required interpretation by the Ichthyophagi.³⁹ This is one of only two accounts in which translators are needed, the other being set in the extreme north.⁴⁰ In this context it appears as though language has formed the basis of a narrative technique aimed at emphasising the difference of the peoples on the southern and northern periphery.⁴¹ Little else is said in the Classical period about Ethiopian language, except for a fragment of Aeschylus which mentions an Αἰθίοπα φωνήν.⁴² The context of the fragment is impossible to determine, since it was simply cited by Eustathius to explain

³¹ Isoc.*Paneg.* 50. See also Hall (1989: 4).

³² For example Pl.*Prt.* 341C; Soph.*Aj.* 1263. For examples of βάρβαρος used to describe confusing speech, not necessarily foreign, see Aesch.*Ag.* 1051; Hdt.ii.57.

³³ Strabo xiv.2.28. discusses the use of the term with regard to Carians, on account of their unusual accents. In the same passage, a useful discussion of the use of the term is provided.

³⁴ LSJ sv βάρβαρος. See for example, Dem.*Meid.* cl.6 in which the term is used to mean 'savage'. For Greek perceptions of barbarians based on modes of production, see Cunliffe (1988: 1-11).

³⁵ For example, Xen.*An.* v.4.34.

³⁶ Since the term βάρβαρος was not used of a particular race, but rather of a number of races in general, it is useful to think of it in the same terms that one thinks of modern racial terms like 'non-white' or 'coloured'.

³⁷ The Ichthyophagi are claimed to speak the language of the Ethiopians in Hdt.iii.19.

³⁸ Hdt.iv. 183.

³⁹ Hdt.iii.19.

⁴⁰ The other is Hdt.iv.24.

⁴¹ This narrative technique is described in detail in Ch3.2.2.

⁴² Aesch.frg.328.

a grammatical rule. We thus cannot be certain whether Aeschylus was referring to an Ethiopian language or perhaps even an Ethiopian accent. Aelian reported that animals have natural languages, in the same way that Scythians, Indians, Ethiopians and Greeks do,⁴³ suggesting that by the first century AD, the belief that Ethiopians shared a common tongue was sufficiently widespread for Aelian to use it as an example. Considering the evidence of Herodotus and Aeschylus provided above, it is not entirely implausible that this belief in a common tongue for the Ethiopians had its roots in the Classical period. With regard to culture, however, Herodotus never indicates that Ethiopians were united by a single culture. Thus, there are the cave dwellers who speak like bats and eat reptiles,⁴⁴ long-lived Ethiopians who buried their dead in crystal coffins,⁴⁵ the theocratic subjects of the kingdom of Meroë⁴⁶ and the Ethiopians whom the Egyptians had civilised.⁴⁷ Later authors like Diodorus distinguish between both primitive⁴⁸ and civilised⁴⁹ Ethiopians. Clearly, although although there could have been a popular perception that Ethiopians shared a common language, the Greeks did not perceived them to have a common culture.

Up until now, the discussion has centred on that which separated the Ethiopians from other foreigners in Greek perceptions. However, Greek thought as regards foreigners was to a large extent polarised in that the world was divided into Hellenes and foreigners.⁵⁰ In previous chapters it has been shown that Ethiopians were often imagined in the context of a north-south paradigm in contrast to the Thracians and the Scythians. That the Ethiopians were lumped in together with other foreigners in the Greek mind is attested to by the frequent conflation of Ethiopian and other barbarian iconography. Evidence of a conflation of Ethiopians with barbarians of the north is found in the depiction of Negroes in Scythian and Thracian outfits. The earliest depictions of Negroes occasionally carried peltas, part of the traditional barbarian iconography (Amazons regularly appear with pelta and even with full

⁴³ Ael. *NA* v.51.

⁴⁴ Hdt. iv.183.

⁴⁵ Hdt. iii.17-24.

⁴⁶ Hdt. ii.29.

⁴⁷ Hdt. ii.30.

⁴⁸ Diod. Sic. iii.8.2-4.

⁴⁹ Diod. Sic. iii.2.2-4.

⁵⁰ See Schlaifer (1936: 94).

Scythian or Thracian gear⁵¹). The most striking example of this early conflation of the Ethiopian and Scythian iconography is an unattributed black-figure neck-amphora in which a Negro squire stands behind a horse wearing Scythian boots in a scene not dissimilar to that in which one would normally expect a Scythian.⁵² From the Classical period, the most famous example of Ethiopian-northerner conflation is a series of about thirty *alabastra*, mostly from early fifth century Athens,⁵³ including one on which a Negro appears together with two Amazons.⁵⁴ The *alabastra* depicting Negroid people in Scythian outfit, together with Amazons, may have represented Greece's war against the Persians in 480 BC, recalling the defeat of the Trojans, who had the support of both Ethiopians and Amazons.⁵⁵ Ethiopian iconography is also occasionally conflated with that of the east, in that often Andromeda and her attendants appear in oriental outfits.⁵⁶ Evidently, to some extent at least, the Greeks lumped Ethiopians in with other foreigners.

2.2. Political Unity.

The evidence regarding Greek perceptions of the Ethiopians as members of a political unit is not consistent.⁵⁷ The first indication that Greeks viewed Ethiopia as a political entity appears in Hesiod's *Theogony* in which Memnon is referred to as βασιλέα Αἰθιοπῶν.⁵⁸ Scylax mentions the Ethiopians as choosing the tallest man as king,⁵⁹ a story repeated with caution by Aristotle,⁶⁰ and Herodotus' long-lived Ethiopians were ruled by a king.⁶¹ Later authors also mention the Ethiopians in terms suggestive of perceived political unity, such as Philostratus, who claims them to have been an Indian

⁵¹ For Amazons as Thracians, see Shapiro (1983: 107-110). For Amazons as Scythians, *ibid.* 110-113.

⁵² From a private collection in Germany {Lissarrague (1990: fig.4)}.

⁵³ Now dated to 480 - 460 BC and depending on the Syriskos painter. *ARV²*. 267 1- 268. 33. For example, fig.37.

⁵⁴ London B672; *ARV²* 268.33.

⁵⁵ See Snowden (1976: 150) who argues that even if these *alabastra* were produced before 480 BC, they may have been produced in view of rumours of Greek invasion. Considering the dating of the series and the fact that no other such depictions occur to my knowledge, Snowden's hypothesis appears to be the only plausible explanation.

⁵⁶ For example, London, E 169; *ARV²* 1062 {Phillips (1968: pl6, figs. 11;12)}.

⁵⁷ For the purposes of the following discussion, political autonomy entails legal and judicial infrastructure, and *ius belli*.

⁵⁸ Hes.*Th.* 984.

⁵⁹ Scylax *Periplus* 112 *apud* Ferguson (1975: 18).

⁶⁰ Arist.*Pol.* 1290b.5.

⁶¹ Hdt.iii.18.

race, ruled by king Ganges, who moved to Africa after killing their king.⁶² All these passages suggest that at least some people envisaged Ethiopia as being a political unit, and in particular, as a monarchy.

Before Greeks would have had first hand contact with Ethiopians, it is likely that they received information concerning this race through trade contacts, especially with other Mediterranean nations, such as Cyprus and Crete.⁶³ It is from these places that they may have learned about the kingdom of Kush which, in the mid second millennium⁶⁴ and between the eighth and fourth centuries,⁶⁵ was a considerable power. Certain items found in Cyprus suggest the Negro was occasionally used as an iconographical representation of Kush by the Egyptians.⁶⁶ It has even been proposed that the popularity of the Negro type in Egypt from the beginning of the New Kingdom (around the sixteenth century) was due to the Egyptian defeat of Kush. In addition, Nubian mercenaries are thought to have been employed by Amasis in his annexation of Cyprus between 569 and 525 BC.⁶⁷ It is thus possible that the Greeks inherited an image of Ethiopia as a political unit based on information of the powerful empire of Kush.⁶⁸

If the Greeks had inherited some knowledge of the powerful nation of Kush, however, the information may have been vague, since apart from Herodotus, few authors before Agatharchides show any indication that they knew about a civilised Ethiopian kingdom. In fact, the opposite seems to be true, especially during the Classical period. Scylax presents a rather primitive political system in Ethiopia, whereby kings are selected by height.⁶⁹ In fact, the general idealisation of the Ethiopians by authors such as Herodotus,⁷⁰ Scylax and Homer are based on the

⁶² Philostr. *VA* iii.19.

⁶³ See Ch3.1.

⁶⁴ According to Vercoutter (1976: 46-47).

⁶⁵ Snowden (1983: 24).

⁶⁶ Compare figs.4 & 6, both of which illustrate the Egyptian iconographic practice of showing their subjects under the sphinx or winged lion.

⁶⁷ Snowden (1983: 27).

⁶⁸ On the relations between Kush and Egypt, and in particular on the power of Kush, see Vercoutter (1976: 46-47).

⁶⁹ Scylax *Periplus* 112 *apud* Ferguson (1975: 18).

⁷⁰ Herodotus claims the Egyptian deserters to have civilised the Ethiopians (Hdt.ii.30).

primitive lifestyles enjoyed by these people.⁷¹ It seems likely that the above authors were relying on a common perception of primitive Ethiopians.⁷²

Where relations with other peoples were concerned, *ius belli* was probably the surest indication of supreme autonomy,⁷³ since in the ancient world, it was on a military basis that foreign groups represented the greatest threat. From an early stage, the Ethiopians were associated with warfare, for example, in the Trojan War in which they fought against the Greeks. Pindar mentions the Ethiopians a number of times, and only in association with Memnon, who is referred to as στρατάρχον Αἰθιοπῶν⁷⁴ and as κοίρανος⁷⁵ of the Ethiopians.⁷⁶ Clearly, for Pindar, the Ethiopians were conceived of primarily as warriors. Archaeological evidence seems to suggest a common perception of the Ethiopian as a warrior during the Archaic period, as toward the end of the sixth century, Ethiopians⁷⁷ appear on vases flanking Memnon in scenes from the Trojan War. It would be expected that Greeks would have associated the Ethiopians with warfare before the fourth century, since their earliest contact with Negroes would have been in a military context.⁷⁸ Although it is likely that Ethiopians were included in the army of Xerxes,⁷⁹ the Ethiopian warrior motif surprisingly loses popularity during the fifth century.⁸⁰ Instead, Negro slaves become popular, as well as Negro attendants.⁸¹

As a race of foreign people, it is not clear exactly how the Greeks conceived of the Ethiopians. The Ethiopians did not seem to fit squarely into the Greek framework of barbarians as regards their culture, especially in that there is no evidence that they

⁷¹ See Ch5.1.1.

⁷² The perception of savage Ethiopians continues throughout Greek history, and Diodorus is ambiguous about the subject, claiming some Ethiopians to have been the founders of civilisation (Diod. Sic.iii.3-4), and others to be the most savage men in the world (Diod. Sic.iii.8.2). Ptol.*Tetr.* ii.2.4-32 considered the savagery of the Ethiopians and Scythians to stem from the effects of the environment.

⁷³ Meier (1990: 15).

⁷⁴ Pind.*Pyth.* vi.30; *Isthm.* v.40-41.

⁷⁵ According to *LSJ* sv. κοίρανος, the term is used of kings and political leaders in Homer, but by the time of Hesiod, it appears to be used as a military leader, and this is how the term is most generally used during the Classical period.

⁷⁶ Pind.*Nem.* iii.61.

⁷⁷ These are assumed to be Ethiopians because of their attendance on Memnon, who was by this stage clearly associated with Ethiopia.

⁷⁸ Greeks served as mercenaries in Psammetichus' punitive campaign against Nubia.

⁷⁹ Hdt.vii.70.

⁸⁰ The warriors on the *alabastra* (ARV². 267 1- 268. 33) appear to be the last Negro warriors in Greek art prior to the Hellenistic period.

⁸¹ For example, in depictions of the Andromeda myth, such as figs.19; 21.

were hated in the same way that Scythians, Thracians and Persians were. It is even more difficult to ascertain in what way the Greeks imagined the Ethiopians to be homogeneous. They were not all considered to be Negroes, and Negritude was not a prerequisite for being Ethiopian. While there seem to have been widespread beliefs that that Ethiopians shared common language, had political autonomy and were capable of waging war, there were always authors who undermined such beliefs. It is unlikely that the Greeks had a coherent view of what made the Ethiopians 'Ethiopian', and it is only fair that we accept that their perception of racial boundaries might have been as confused as ours.

3. Ethiopians in Greece.

Thus far, the Ethiopians have been discussed as people from outside the Greek sphere of life, but little has been said about the Greek perceptions of Ethiopians on Greek soil. Occasionally the term 'race' is applied to a specific caste, such as the Gypsies in modern Europe.⁸² Castes refer to various exclusive socio-economic groups, often assigned a certain status in a hierarchy.⁸³ It is debatable whether one would refer to slaves and metics in Athens as being a caste or a race,⁸⁴ although it is useful to examine the Ethiopians in the context of the socio-economic role they played in Greece itself.

The presence of realistic plastic vases and cups in Athens from the late sixth century BC, mostly from the workshop of Charinus,⁸⁵ has been taken as evidence that Negro slaves stood as models, suggesting Ethiopian slaves lived in Athens by the sixth century BC. Numerous gems and terracottas from about the same time, depicting Negroes engaged in tasks associated with slavery,⁸⁶ have been taken as support of this thesis.⁸⁷ Snowden mentions that some of the Ethiopians from Xerxes' army may have

⁸² On the distinction between these variants, see Richmond (1972: 35).

⁸³ Like the term 'race', 'caste' has an enormous range of meanings, see *OED*² sv. 'caste'. In some senses there is an overlap between the word 'class' and 'caste'. For the purposes of this study, a distinction will be made between the two in that a person can not do anything to change his or her caste.

⁸⁴ Although there are many aspects of the Greek perception of slaves that appear to be remarkably similar to an awareness of race difference: slavery was to some extent hereditary and there was an attempt to ascribe to slaves as a group certain somatic traits, such as a curved back (Thgn.535-8) and a non-Greek odour (Xen.*Symp.*ii.4).

⁸⁵ Beardsley (1929: cat.30-56).

⁸⁶ For example Beardsley (1929: cat.10-29) and Boardman (1968: 107 n.312).

⁸⁷ Beardsley (1929: 36-38).

been captured as slaves.⁸⁸ The early date of the gems and plastic vases precludes the possibility that they were representations of the slaves from Xerxes' army. The provenience of the gems offers us a clue as to how they originated, since only one was found in mainland Greece, most of them having been found in Naucratis,⁸⁹ Cyprus⁹⁰ or Rhodes.⁹¹ The Greeks who took part in the punitive campaign against Nubia under Psammetichus II in the early sixth century would probably have taken slaves,⁹² explaining the large number of these gems in Naucratis. The gems from Cyprus and Rhodes may well be representations of slaves captured by Egyptians and sold on the foreign slave market. It is possible that a few of these may have made their way to Athens, and these may well be the Negroes depicted in the plastic vases.⁹³ It is impossible to determine the exact number of Negro slaves in Archaic Athens, although Beardsley's suggestion of at least eight is plausible.⁹⁴

The presence of Ethiopians on Greek soil, however, does not necessarily signify their positions as slaves, since in the sixth century, when the Ethiopians begin to appear as Negroes, foreign specialists were encouraged, especially during the reign of Pisistratus. The fact that the most popular depictions of Negroes in Athenian vase paintings had them in battle gear suggests that some potters, at the very least, had seen Ethiopians in their natural battle gear. The club and bow, which formed part of the basic Ethiopian panoply, were indeed real Nubian weapons.⁹⁵ Since it is unrealistic that Ethiopian slaves should appear in Athens with full battle gear, alternative explanations should be considered. It is possible that people who had been on mercenary campaigns into Nubia had been told of the weaponry of the Ethiopians, and

⁸⁸ Snowden (1970: 184).

⁸⁹ Beardsley (1929: cat.19;20;21;22;28).

⁹⁰ Beardsley (1929: cat.16; 24;25;26;27;29).

⁹¹ Beardsley (1929: cat.10;11;12;13;14;15).

⁹² In previous Egyptian raids on Nubia, numerous slaves were taken (Snowden 1983: 21). It seems unlikely that they would not have done something similar in this instance. It is similarly unlikely that the mercenaries would not have taken slaves as booty. In any event, the raids on Nubia must be considered to be the main source of Negroid slaves in this period, especially considering the strength of the Kushite kingdom, out of which slaves must otherwise have been difficult to take, piracy excepted.

⁹³ Beardsley (1929: 12-13) recognises that the slaves would have come from Naucratis, but does not make the connection between the prevalence of Negroes in the sixth century and the Nubian raids.

⁹⁴ Beardsley (1929: 37) distinguishes eight different faces in the vases.

⁹⁵ See Also Hdt.vii.69 who describes the Ethiopians as brandishing spears made of antelope horn, clubs and bows.

the potters had painted these on the slave models they had in front of them.⁹⁶ Alternatively, considering Pisistratus' reliance on foreign support for his recapture of Athens in 546 BC,⁹⁷ it may be that there were a few Negro mercenaries among his supporters. In the end, however, owing to a lack of literary evidence from this period, the question of who provided the inspiration for the early black-figure Ethiopian warriors is open to speculation.

From the Classical period, there are no clear literary references to Ethiopians as slaves, and the first reference in Greek literature is by Theophrastus, who claims Ethiopian slaves to be sought after by people with petty ambitions.⁹⁸ This suggests that even in the early Hellenistic times, Ethiopian slaves were not very common. Greeks were, however, familiar with Ethiopians in the late fourth century, since a number of authors mention the Ethiopian in contexts which suggest their presence on Greek soil. Aristotle often used Ethiopians as examples of the Negro somatic type,⁹⁹ suggesting that his audience was familiar with the type. There is not the increase in depictions of Negroes in late fifth century art that one would expect, if many slaves had been taken in the battle of Salamis.¹⁰⁰ Instead, during the fifth century depictions of Ethiopians seem increasingly to show mulattos.¹⁰¹ What does emerge is an increasing propensity to depict Negroes or mulattos in everyday scenes, rather than in scenes of war. The increase in mulattos probably indicates that the Ethiopians on Greek soil may have been descendants of the slaves taken in the raids during the

⁹⁶ This seems to be supported by the fact that the Ethiopian panoply as depicted by black-figure vase painters appears to be a blend of Nubian, Scythian and Greek iconography. It appears as though Greek vase painters were attempting to reconstruct something foreign they had seen with elements of traditional Greek iconography. Thus, the chitoniskos is Greek, but may indicate a Greek attempt to illustrate the short loincloths worn by Nubians (as depicted on a Caeretan hydria: Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Inv.3576. {Snowden (1976: fig.152)}). The bow was a traditional Nubian weapon and the Greek vase painters have used the traditional Thracian bow to depict this. Finally, the Nubians had a shield which was leaf-shaped [Frazer (1935: 39)] and the Greek artists simply used a pelta to depict this. Perhaps the vase painters were simply painting what they had heard about in terms most familiar to them. One would expect that if the Greeks had Ethiopian models in front of them, they would have depicted the Ethiopian panoply with more realistic accuracy.

⁹⁷ See Sealey (1976: 128); Shapiro (1983: 107).

⁹⁸ Theophr.*Char.* xxi.4.2.

⁹⁹ For example, Arist.*Hist. an.* 517a.18; [Phgn.]812a.13-14. For the significance of these passages, see Ch4.1.

¹⁰⁰ Snowden (1976: 148) implies an increase in depictions of Negroes in the fifth century, but provides little evidence to support this. In fact, much of the archaeological evidence from after the mid fifth century comes from outside of mainland Greece, especially in south Italy.

¹⁰¹ See Ch4.1.3.

punitive campaigns against Nubia in the sixth century or slaves taken from the battle of Salamis.

If one were to consider the slave caste in Greece as a separate race, the question of racism would be easily settled. However, racism and slavery were intertwined in yet another way, since the majority of slaves were foreigners.¹⁰² It is clear that there was discrimination against foreigners in Classical Athens, and in a number of ways, their legal position was similar to that of a slave.¹⁰³ However this is not racism as defined in the beginning of this thesis, since it does not involve the perpetuation of stereotypes. What could be called racist, however, are the justificatory theories which explained the reasons why foreigners could be enslaved.¹⁰⁴ It is within the context of these theories that we should examine Greek stereotypes of the Ethiopian.

The subject of Greek justification of the enslavement of foreigners is complex, since there is no surviving work dedicated to this subject.¹⁰⁵ It is generally thought that the idea of Greek superiority over the barbarian took root after the Persian Wars.¹⁰⁶ It was with the rise in power of Athens and the spread of Greek democracy that the idea arose that those who suffered monarchy were already enslaved.¹⁰⁷ From this idea, the natural conclusion was that these people were naturally suited for slavery.¹⁰⁸ Also associated with monarchy is cowardice,¹⁰⁹ and this cowardice was occasionally explained by environmental theories.¹¹⁰ In the context of these theories, one needs to ask whether the perception of the Ethiopians as being subjects of

¹⁰² Greeks were also enslaved for various legal reasons, although there was certainly a distaste for the enslavement of Hellenes, and often it was considered the duty of relatives or friends to rescue the Greek slave from his predicament, see Garland (1988: 45).

¹⁰³ The punishment for the murder of a slave was the same as that for the murder of a foreigner or the accidental killing of a citizen: exile, since these were all supposed to be crimes against the gods, but not against the city. Furthermore, the low esteem in which the body of the foreigner was held is evident in the fact that foreigners could be tortured on demand by the state in the same way that a slave could. See Schlaifer (1936: 180-81).

¹⁰⁴ This is, in fact, hinted at by Gambiano (1987: 33) who maintains that if race is not dependant on physical characteristics, then the Greek treatment of foreigners was racist.

¹⁰⁵ Garland (1988: 119).

¹⁰⁶ For example, Garland (1988: 120); Fischer (1993: 86); Schlaifer (1936: 166)

¹⁰⁷ Hdt.vii.135; Aesch.Pers.241 both call subjects of monarchies slaves.

¹⁰⁸ Isoc.iv.131-2.

¹⁰⁹ Hippoc.Aer.xxiii.

¹¹⁰ For example, Hippoc.Aer.xvi says that Asians are particularly prone to monarchy on account of their existence in a moderate climate. Arist.Pol.1327b also relates the servile nature of the Asians to their climate.

monarchy¹¹¹ and being cowardly¹¹² are coincidental, or are they rather part of the subtle system of justifications which helped to perpetuate and justify Greek enslavement of foreigners.¹¹³ If we are to accept the latter, we should conclude that the Ethiopians were subject to racism,¹¹⁴ as it has been defined in the beginning of this chapter.

Although the images we have of Ethiopian slave life are few, it seems as though for Ethiopians slavery may not have been as harsh as it was for other races. Beardsley has suggested that the presence of Ethiopians on cups indicates Ethiopians used as waiters, also noting that their extreme rarity made them unsuitable for menial labour.¹¹⁵ Ethiopians on cups need not suggest Ethiopians as waiters, however, although this is a plausible suggestion, since the Negro type was occasionally used prophylactically and appears to have been associated with Dionysus.¹¹⁶ Considering the prevalence of Negroid types on vases of extreme realism, it is possible that the Ethiopians slaves were also used as models. It has been noted that in these vases (such as figs.10; 11), for example, the artist has portrayed the Ethiopian with more spirit than the Caucasian female.¹¹⁷ A closer examination reveals that, while the features of the Caucasians are stylised, the Negroid features are realistic. It is possible that a model was used for the Negroes. Negro slaves were possibly also used for entertainment, as the small number of caricatures suggests that there may have been some humour value attached to the Negroid type. In the light of Theophrastus' suggestion that Ethiopian slaves were the marks of petty ambition, the possibility should be considered that Ethiopian slaves were bought as status symbols, and would probably have been displayed. Archaeological evidence bears this out, as many of the depictions of Ethiopian slaves suggest their use as personal attendants.¹¹⁸ Thus, it would be likely

¹¹¹ See Ch6.2.2.

¹¹² See Ch6.2.

¹¹³ It is also noteworthy that environmental theories also were used to explain savagery and absence of political structure. There appears to be a perception amongst later authors that Ethiopians were savage, often because of their environment. In one example, Ptol.*Tetr.*ii.2.4-32 compares Ethiopians with Scythians, claiming that their savagery was the result of their environment.

¹¹⁴ Despite the fact that they were not singled out as specific targets of racism, but were simply one of the large group of barbarian peoples who were the subjects of racism.

¹¹⁵ Beardsley (1929: 36).

¹¹⁶ See Ch5.2.2.

¹¹⁷ Beardsley (1929: 33).

¹¹⁸ See fig.24. Another example is Copenhagen Chr.VIII 320; *ARI*² 150.3 {Snowden (1976: fig.198)}; For Negro attendants in Andromeda scenes, see figs.19; 4.21.

that they were bought as personal attendants. Whatever the case, because of their scarcity in Greece, and their obvious value, it is unlikely that Ethiopian slaves experienced anything but the best treatment at the hands of their Greek masters.

4. Conclusion.

The Ethiopians as a group defy definition, since there seem to be no criteria which satisfy all the uses of the terms Αἰθίοψ or Αἰθιοπία. While the Ethiopians in many ways constituted a different 'race' to the Greeks in a number of the senses of the term, the Greek perception of Ethiopians was not the same as modern perceptions of Blacks. There were a number of associations made with regard to Ethiopia and Ethiopians, such as association with a particular somatic type, a particular system of government, military power, culture and language. However, none of these associations of the Ethiopian could be spoken of as a defining feature of the race in the Greek mind.

Although at first there appear to be only minor signs of prejudice against the Ethiopians, it is only when these are examined within the context of general Greek perceptions of foreigners that the possibility becomes apparent that certain Ethiopian stereotypes may have been part of a general system of racism whereby Greeks perpetuated the enslavement of foreigners. Thus, although the Greeks did not look down on the Ethiopians on account of their skin colour, and although, if anything, Ethiopian slaves received preferential treatment, it cannot be categorically stated that the Greeks were free of racism with regard to the Ethiopian.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion.

1. The Ethiopians of the Early Poets.

The first occurrence of the term Αἰθίοψ in mainland Greece occurs in the middle of the second millennium BC, albeit in its Linear B form, transliterated as *ai-ti-jo-ko*. The term represents the name of a person of whom we know nothing, and no satisfactory interpretation of the term can be conjectured without further evidence. Unfortunately, the earliest subsequent occurrences of the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία which have survived are in Homer, considerably later. However, it becomes apparent that even the Ethiopians of Homer, Hesiod and the Cyclic poets are vague, and from the few remaining references to Ethiopians in early Greek literature, a clear picture of what Homer was trying to communicate by the use of the term cannot be ascertained, although at least some reasonable conjecture can be attempted.

Homer's geography as regards the location of the Ethiopians is vague. While in some cases they appear at the eastern and western boundaries of the world, in others they appear rather closer to the sphere of Greek life. The same is true of the Ethiopians of all the poets before the classical period, since the Ethiopians appear variously in the extreme east and the extreme west, and are occasionally mentioned in conjunction with places concerning which information was readily available to the average Greek. However, with a few exceptions, the most important connotation carried by the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία was geographic extremity, as the Homeric Ethiopians dwelt by the edges of the earth either by the rising or the setting sun, or both. In Homer, this served the purpose of allowing the gods (particularly Poseidon) to find a comfortable location outside the narrative of the Epics, where they could remain at ease until needed in the events of the story. The Ethiopians do not serve a discernible narrative function in any extant Archaic Greek poetry outside of Homer, since the textual contexts are either too fragmentary or the accounts are of an episodic nature. In addition to the eastern Ethiopians, it appears as though there may possibly have been a vague notion that Ethiopia existed in the south.¹

It seems as if the Ethiopians held a privileged position in the eyes of the gods. The Ethiopians of Homer are 'blameless', an epithet that would otherwise be

¹ See Ch2.1.

meaningless were it not for the fact that in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the Ethiopians were always feasting with the gods and were seemingly not subject to the same hardships of the people of the main narrative, and the fact that the Ethiopians of Hesiod are referred to as 'high-souled'. The naming of races by epithet is a common ethnocentric custom of primitive people, although these epithets are usually negative.² However, there was always a tendency on the part of some authors to idealise the Ethiopians as *exempla* of the merits of simple life.³ Thus, it is plausible that the epithet 'blameless' as applied to the Ethiopians is a symbol of the negative ethnocentric perception of the Ethiopians as enjoying a privileged position in relation to the gods. Of all the gods, it appears as though the Ethiopians enjoyed a closer relationship with Poseidon than with any other god. This association allowed the Ethiopian land to form a convenient hiding place for Poseidon during the first few books of the *Odyssey*. However, there is little other evidence to help explain the Greek association of the sea god with the Ethiopians.⁴

Nothing is said about the somatic appearance of the Ethiopians in early Greek poetry. Without making too much of the silence regarding the Ethiopians' skin colour, it should be noted that both Homer and Hesiod were aware of people of dark-skin colour (and curly hair in the case of Homer's Eurybates.) In view of this, it is surprising that neither Homer nor Hesiod refers to any dark-skinned people as Ethiopians (or even compares dark-skinned people to Ethiopians.) It is significant that Eurybates is mentioned four times in early poetry, and on one occasion, skin colour was considered significant enough for it to be mentioned, and yet the Ethiopians occur eight times in early poetry and nothing is said about their skin colour. Although it could be argued that darkness of skin is implied in the term Αἰθίοψ or 'of the burned face', the verb from which the participle is formed occurs in both passive and active forms in Homer, indicating that 'they of the burning faces' would be a possible and appropriate epithet for the Heroic race who dwell at the earth's extremities. In addition, at some stage, probably between Homer and Hesiod, the legends of Andromeda and Memnon were transferred from the east to Ethiopia and the tradition of these mythological figures as being Caucasian continued in vase painting until the

² See Sumner (1940: 13)

³ In fact, Homer often idealises people of the periphery.

⁴ See Ch2.2.

Hellenistic period.⁵ It seems improbable that such a transferral could have been made, if the Ethiopians had been considered to be a race of dark-skinned people. Thus, although the evidence is far from conclusive, the weight of it seems to suggest that the Ethiopians of the early poets were not considered to be significantly different from the Greek somatic norm.⁶

Thus, the Ethiopians of the early poets are vague beings, concerning whom little geographic information can be ascertained, save that they were viewed as being extremely distant from Greece. Similarly little can be known for certain about the Greek perception of the somatic characteristics of the Ethiopians at such an early date, although it seems probable that they were considered to be Caucasian. Concerning religion, all that can be said for certain is that the Ethiopians were held to be particularly close to the gods. It is this picture of the Ethiopians that was inherited by the Greeks of the Classical period, and many of the connotations carried by the terms *Αἰθίοψ* and *Αἰθιοπία* were deeply to influence the uses of the terms for a number of centuries to follow.

2. The Ethiopians of the Classical Period.

Some time before the Greeks came into contact with people whom they would later call Ethiopians on Greek soil, they would have heard stories of people of the Negroid somatic type, as shown by the appearance of dark-skinned people in mainland Greek art as early as the middle of the second millennium BC. The most probable sources of information concerning people of the Negro type would have been Egypt, Cyprus and Crete, all of which enjoyed much early contact with Greece, and from where considerable archaeological evidence of familiarity with the Negroid type has been found from very early dates.⁷

The first time the Greeks of the mainland came into contact with Negroes is likely to have been in the early sixth century BC, when Greek mercenaries took part in Psammetichus II's punitive campaign against Nubia.⁸ The presence of Negroes on Greek soil in the late sixth century BC is attested to by the fact that from this period

⁵ And in fact, some vases depict Ethiopian attendants of Memnon as being remarkably Caucasian in appearance, for example fig. 15.

⁶ See Ch2.3.

⁷ See Ch3.1.

⁸ See Ch3.1.

we have the first literary references to dark-skinned Ethiopians, and Negroes appear on plastic vases and in depictions on vase paintings, the realism of which suggest the use of real models. If Herodotus is correct, then Ethiopians would have first appeared in Greece in large numbers in the army of Xerxes in 480 BC.

It is in the perceptions of the geographical location of Ethiopia that the influence of Homer and the early poets is most evident. Of the connotations carried by the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία, that of geographical extremity appears to have been by far the strongest. Two traditions of the geographical locations of Ethiopia seem prevalent in Classical literature: that of the eastern and western Ethiopians, and that of an African Ethiopia. In both of these traditions, the idea of geographic extremity plays a major role of the Greeks' perception of Ethiopia as a geographical entity.⁹

The tradition of placing Ethiopians in the extreme east appears to survive until Euripides. Even after the Ethiopians are no longer explicitly placed in the east, they are often confused with the Indians and other eastern races in Greek literature. It is not correct to consider the eastern Ethiopians to be pre-scientific, since the exact boundaries of science and myth were not as well defined as they are to us today.¹⁰ Neither is it likely that the tradition of the mythical Ethiopians in the east was purely poetic, since prose writers give quite mythical accounts of Ethiopia, and occasionally place the Ethiopians in the east.¹¹

Dark-skinned people appear in the south as early as Hesiod, but it is Herodotus who firmly places the Ethiopians in Africa. Herodotus speaks of many groups called Ethiopians, and exactly what he means by the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία is unclear, but Ethiopia does seem to be the southern extreme of the world in Herodotus' symmetrical conception of geographical space. In fact, the Ethiopians form part of a north-south paradigm in which they are often used to represent southern extremity and all that goes with such extremity in Greek perceptions of reality, while the Thracians, Scythians, Hyperboreans and Cimmerians are used as examples of northern geographical extremity.¹² Thus, Ethiopia, because of its southern extremity, and proximity to the sun, is a climatic extreme, in which the air is extremely dry and the

⁹ See Ch3.2.

¹⁰ Brillante (1990:94).

¹¹ See Ch3.2.1.

¹² Ethiopia is not the only southern land which appears in the north-south paradigm.

winters are excessively hot, in the same way that the Thracian winters are excessively cold and harsh. It becomes apparent that the Ethiopians are often considered to be southern opposites (and sometimes parallels) to races in the north, particularly the ones mentioned above. In addition, it becomes apparent that the north-south paradigm and the concept of the Ethiopians as extremely distant geographically is central to the Greek perception of the Ethiopians in general.¹³

It is impossible to tell from the literature prior to the Hellenistic period, exactly where the Ethiopians were thought to dwell. Neither is it possible to tell whether the term Αἰθιοπία was a geographical or political indicator. As has been mentioned earlier in this chapter, Herodotus refers to a number of tribes as Ethiopians, and mentions an Ethiopia which appears to be a southern extreme of Libya. Furthermore, Ephorus claims that all the lands to the south were referred to as Ethiopia, suggesting that the logical meaning of the term Αἰθιοπία rests on geographical location. However, other authors speak of Ethiopia as though it were politically autonomous. Thus, the most logical conclusion is that even the Classical Greeks, much like their ancestors discussed in the beginning of the chapter, did not have a clear conception of the place they called Αἰθιοπία.¹⁴

Often the term Αἰθίοψ has been taken by modern authors to be a synonym for 'Negro'. Such an assumption ignores the rich web of connotations associated with the term. In reality, the term does not have any real synonym in English, either true or logical.¹⁵ To understand the variety of meanings attached to the term Αἰθίοψ and the connotations carried by it as regards Greek perceptions of the Ethiopians' somatic characteristics, one has to examine the use of the term in the context of Greek thought.

From the late sixth century BC, it becomes clear that the term Αἰθίοψ was firmly associated with Negroid characteristics. In addition, it becomes clear that the Greeks viewed these characteristics as being extreme in respect of difference from their own somatic norm. This perception of extremity was most often expressed within the context of the north-south paradigm, with the Ethiopians appearing as opposites of the Thracians and Scythians, all of whose somatic characteristics were variously explained

¹³ See Ch3.2.2.

¹⁴ See Ch3.2.2.1.

¹⁵ True synonyms carry the same connotations whereas logical synonyms simply share the same logical meaning.

by environmental theories. Occasionally Egyptians took the place of the Ethiopians in this scheme, and even Indians appear as signs of somatic extremity. However, if an example were needed of a dark-skinned person to illustrate some point, the Ethiopian was most often chosen to express this.¹⁶

The term Αἰθίοψ seems to have become synonymous with darkness of skin toward the end of the Classical period so that in certain contexts it could be used as a somatic indicator. In other words, context makes it clear that Αἰθίοψ could be used to indicate any person of Negroid characteristics. It must be realised, however, that this was simply one of a number of possible uses of the term.¹⁷

The fact that the Ethiopians were conceived of as being extremely distant from the Greek somatic norm does not preclude the possibility that the term could be used to describe people of a wide range of hues, or that Ethiopians could be of varying shades of darkness. Peoples' perceptions of extremity as regards any gradable quantities, such as colour, kinship and race, vary drastically from culture to culture. It is clear, from the fact that occasionally the Egyptians were used as examples of extreme somatic distance, that the Greeks perceived a range of somatic types as being extreme with respect to distance from their somatic norm. Furthermore, depictions of the Andromeda myth in red-figure vase paintings show attendants (presumably considered to be Ethiopian) who appear to be decidedly mulatto, although the limitations of the red figure technique make it difficult to tell whether these attendants are meant to be Negroid or not. The fact that later writers invent terms to describe people of intermediate colour indicates a semantic gap. Furthermore, the Garamantian tribe is variously described as being Ethiopian and not Ethiopian, making it likely that the shade of these people probably represented the fairest skin tone covered by the term Αἰθίοψ.¹⁸

The last question regarding the somatic type of the Ethiopian concerns the possibility that the Greeks thought it possible that Caucasians could be Ethiopian. Certainly, Andromeda, Cepheus and Memnon appear so in vase paintings and are never referred to otherwise before the Hellenistic period. The fact that Andromeda's attendants appear Caucasian in some vase paintings, while some have only the two

¹⁶ See Ch4.1.1.

¹⁷ See Ch4.1.2.

¹⁸ See Ch4.1.3.

royals as being Caucasian, has led to the suggestion that the upper classes may not have been considered to be Negroid. Evidence is too scanty to make a certain judgement on the matter, although the fact that Memnon, Andromeda, Cepheus and some of Andromeda and Memnon's attendants appear to be Caucasian in vase paintings seems to lend weight to the thesis that the Greeks did perceive the possibility of Caucasian Ethiopians.¹⁹

Blackness of skin was not the only somatic characteristic which was considered to be important to the Greek image of the Ethiopian. Ulotrichy, platyrrhiny and prognathism all seem to be significant features of the Ethiopian physiognomy to the Greek mind. While not all these are mentioned in literature, depictions in vase paintings and sculpture indicate that artists took care to render these features as faithfully as possible. In addition, the woolly hair of the Ethiopian was considered to be a significant indicator of the extreme distance of the Ethiopian from the Greek somatic norm, as evidenced not only by the great lengths to which artists went to depict ulotrichy, but also from literary references, some of which attributed curly hair to environmental theories within the context of the north-south paradigm.²⁰

Previous commentators have argued over the degree to which the Greek perception of the Ethiopians was based on myth rather than fact. The Greeks did not distinguish between myth and reality in the same way that we do, so the distinction is somewhat artificial as a tool of analysis in this context. However, certain aspects of the Greek perception of Ethiopia can be accounted for by a theory (psychoanalysis) which purports to explain the process of mythopoesis. Not only does psychoanalysis sufficiently account for the Greek perception of the Ethiopian as a noble savage, but many aspects of this perception are matched by other myths concerning peoples of the periphery.²¹

Much has been made about the association of Ethiopia with the cult of Isis and Christianity, but in the Classical period, the only two gods who seem to be at all associated with the Ethiopians are Zeus and Dionysus. References which illustrate Greek perceptions of an association between the Ethiopians and Zeus seem to be based

¹⁹ See Ch4.1.4.

²⁰ See Ch4.2.

²¹ See Ch5.1.

on the close association between the Ethiopians and the sun in the Greek mind.²² Although Dionysus is only once explicitly connected with Ethiopia in literature, archaeological evidence points to a possible association of the god with the Ethiopians. At the very least, the Ethiopians seem to share the function of Dionysus' companions in their use in Greek art, sculpture and architecture.²³

The Greek perception of Ethiopians as a race and the question of race prejudice in ancient Greece, are probably the most relevant issues in this study to modern society. Previous studies have either defined racial prejudice in such a way that it could not possibly be applicable to ancient society; or they have relied on intuitive notions of the concept of race. Thus, in this study, the broadest possible definitions of race and prejudice have been employed, while care has been taken to carefully distinguish the different senses of the terms when applied to ancient Greek perceptions.

The word 'race' in modern English usage has a number of senses, and can be used to describe a wide variety of social groups, membership of which is based on some or all of social, religious, somatic, cultural and linguistic criteria. It becomes evident that no single criterion can provide the logical basis for the definition of the term Αἰθίοψ, since the term appears to be used variously in geographical, political and somatic senses. Thus an Ethiopian may be a dark person from Africa, a fair skinned person from a country called Ethiopia, a person who speaks an Ethiopian language, or a person who resembles the somatic type most common in sub-Egyptian Africa. In any event, the Ethiopians were to the Greeks in many senses what we would call a race.²⁴

The term 'prejudice' has probably been open to more abuse than the term 'race' as regards the study of race relations. The term has been used in this study to mean any preconceived ideas, whether negative or positive. Similarly, 'race prejudice' has been taken simply to mean preconceived ideas about people of different races, for the purposes of this study. On this basis, a number of prejudices are discernible as regards Greek perceptions of Ethiopians. They seem to have been considered cowardly by some, they were often regarded as culturally backward and primitive, and seem to have been governed by a monarchy. Although there is no evidence that they were openly despised, as certain other races were (such as the Scythians, Thracians and Persians), it

²² See Ch5.2.1.

²³ See Ch5.2.2.

²⁴ See Ch6.2.

should be noted that cowardice, primitivism (both of which were accounted for by environmental theories) and monarchy were the chief justifications for Athenian slavery of other races. It is possible that within the context of Greek political ideology, not only were Ethiopians subject to race prejudice, but they were victims of some form of racism, albeit a form of racism extremely different from that practised in the modern world. However, this racism was not based ultimately on skin colour (although this formed a part), and even as slaves, Ethiopians seem to have been viewed with greater regard than other enslaved races (some of which were Caucasian).²⁵

What emerges from this study, is that the terms Αἰθίοψ and Αἰθιοπία have no real synonyms in English. The Ethiopians were part of a system of Greek perceptions of peripheral peoples, in which they occupied the southern part of a north-south paradigm of geographical extremity. The image of the Ethiopian as a peripheral nation, and the geographical extremity associated therewith, pervaded other aspects of the Greek perception of the Ethiopian. Thus, the geographic extremity was responsible for the climate, which was responsible for their somatic and cultural difference. In addition, geographical extremity is also evident as an influencing factor in the myths concerning Ethiopians and in the Greek perceptions of the Ethiopians' relationship with the gods.

It is easy to project current racial attitudes onto people of previous generations and cultures. Recent studies have attempted to play down Greek racism, perhaps in order to show that societies without race prejudice are not simply a fantasy. However, concepts of race are too fluid for direct comparisons between modern prejudices and those of old to have too much significance. To dismiss ancient forms of prejudice on the basis of their not resembling modern forms is to ignore the pervasive nature of racism and ultimately this serves as a hindrance for a deeper understanding of such a fundamental problem in modern society. Without such an understanding, we are severely weakened in the struggle against group discrimination, whatever form it should take.

²⁵

See Ch6.3.

List of Illustrations.

Abbreviations.

<i>ABV</i>	:	as in Bibliography, <i>Abbreviations</i> .
<i>ARV²</i>	:	as in Bibliography, <i>Abbreviations</i> .
<i>Para</i>	:	as in Bibliography, <i>Abbreviations</i> .
<i>Add²</i>	:	as in Bibliography, <i>Abbreviations</i> .
fig.	:	illustration number.
pl.	:	plate number.

1. Leiden F.1947/9.1; photograph after Desanges (1976: fig.12).
2. Map of the Nile after Zabkar (1975: frontspiece).
3. Nikosia, K.-A.D.545; photograph after Karageorghis (1988: fig.2).
4. Nikosia, Salamis Tomb 79.no 157; photograph after Karageorghis (1988: fig.12).
5. Berlin, V.I.3259; photograph after Karageorghis (1988: fig.20).
6. Repoussé disc with winged lion and enemy, Salamis Tomb 79; photograph after Karageorghis (1969: fig.20).
7. Oxford, 1938.537; photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.142).
8. Chora: Archaeological Museum reconstruction; drawing by P. de Jong, after Snowden (1976: fig. 146).
9. London B 209 (now 1849.5-18.10), neck amphora attributed to Exekias (*ABV* 144.8; 686; *Para* 60; *Add²* 39); photograph by E. A. Mackay.
10. Berlin F 4049, attic head vase; photograph after Snowden (1970: fig.9).
11. Paris: Louvre CA 987, *aryballos* attributed to the Epilykos Class (*ARV²* 1530.middle 2; *Para* 501; *Add²* 385); photograph after Snowden (1970: fig.13).
12. Philadelphia MS 3442, amphora attributed to Exekias (*ABV* 145.14; *Para* 60; *Add²* 40); photograph after Snowden (1976: fig. 155).
13. New York 1898.8.13, neck amphora attributed as Near Exekias (*ABV* 149; *Para* 62; *Add²* 42); photograph after Kossatz-Deissman (1992: fig.6).
14. Bristol H 801, unattributed hydria; photograph after Lissarrague (1990: fig.2).
15. Berlin 3237, calyx-krater (not attributed, but referred to by Beazley *ARV²* 1690; *Para* 480); photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.176).
16. detail of fig. 1 above; photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.156).
17. New York 1924.97.29, *lekythos*; photograph after Kossatz-Deissman (1992: fig.70).
18. Brussels A 130, neck amphora attributed to the Swing Painter (*ABV* 308.82; *Add²* 83); photograph after Böhr (1982: pl.123).
19. Boston 63.2663, *pelike* attributed to the Kensington Class (*Para* 448; *Add²* 325); photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.175).
20. Munich 1507, neck amphora attributed to the Leagros Group (*ABV* 375.207; *Add²* 100); photograph after Lissarrague (1990: fig. 1a).
21. London E 169, hydria attributed to the Polygnotos Group (*ARV²* 1062; 1681; *Add²* 323); photograph after Snowden (1970: 26).
22. New York 1907.286.66, calyx-krater attributed to the Spreckels Painter (*ARV²* 617.2 after Richter/Hall (*apud* Boardman (1989: 245)); photograph after Boardman (1989 fig.19);

23. a. Paris: Louvre Camp. 11292, krater fragment; photograph after Voss (1963: pl. xviii,b).
 b. Basel Market: H.Cahn, cat no. 347, cylix fragment; photograph after Voss (1963: pl. xviii, f).
24. Berlin inv.3291, *lekythos* attributed to the Bosanquet Painter (*ARV*² 1227.9; *Add*² 350); photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.197).
25. Detail of fig.10 above; photograph after Snowden (1970: fig.15b).
26. Athens 1129, *lekythos* attributed to the Beldam Painter (*Para* 292; *Add*² 139); photograph after Snowden (1970: fig.89).
27. Paris: Louvre N 3408, *oenochoe* attributed to the Nikias Painter (*ARV*² 1335.34; 1690; *Para* 522; *Add*² 365); photograph after Snowden (1970: fig.88).
28. Ruvo, Jatta Collection 1402, Apulian *askos*; photograph after Snowden (1970: fig.2).
29. London 1893.3-3.1 *skiphos*; photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.185).
30. Naples 86339, polychrome *lekythos*; photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.21).
31. Bust of Zeus from Naples; photograph after Cook (1964: 349.fig.271).
32. Lipari, Museo Archeologico Eoliano 927; photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.205).
33. Syracuse: Museo Archeologico Nazionale 47039; photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.206).
34. San Simeon, Calif., 5715 (formerly 9904), *kantharos* attributed to the Toronto Class (*ARV*² 1537, foot; *Add*² 387); photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.178).
35. Vienna 3724, amphora attributed to the Flying-Angel Painter (*ARV*² 280.9; *Add*² 208); photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.200).
36. Würzburg 302 amphora; photograph after Snowden (1920: fig.22).
37. Berlin 3382, *alabastron* attributed to the Painter of New York 21.131 (*ARV*² 269, foot; *Add*² 206); photograph after Snowden (1976: fig.164).



Figure One

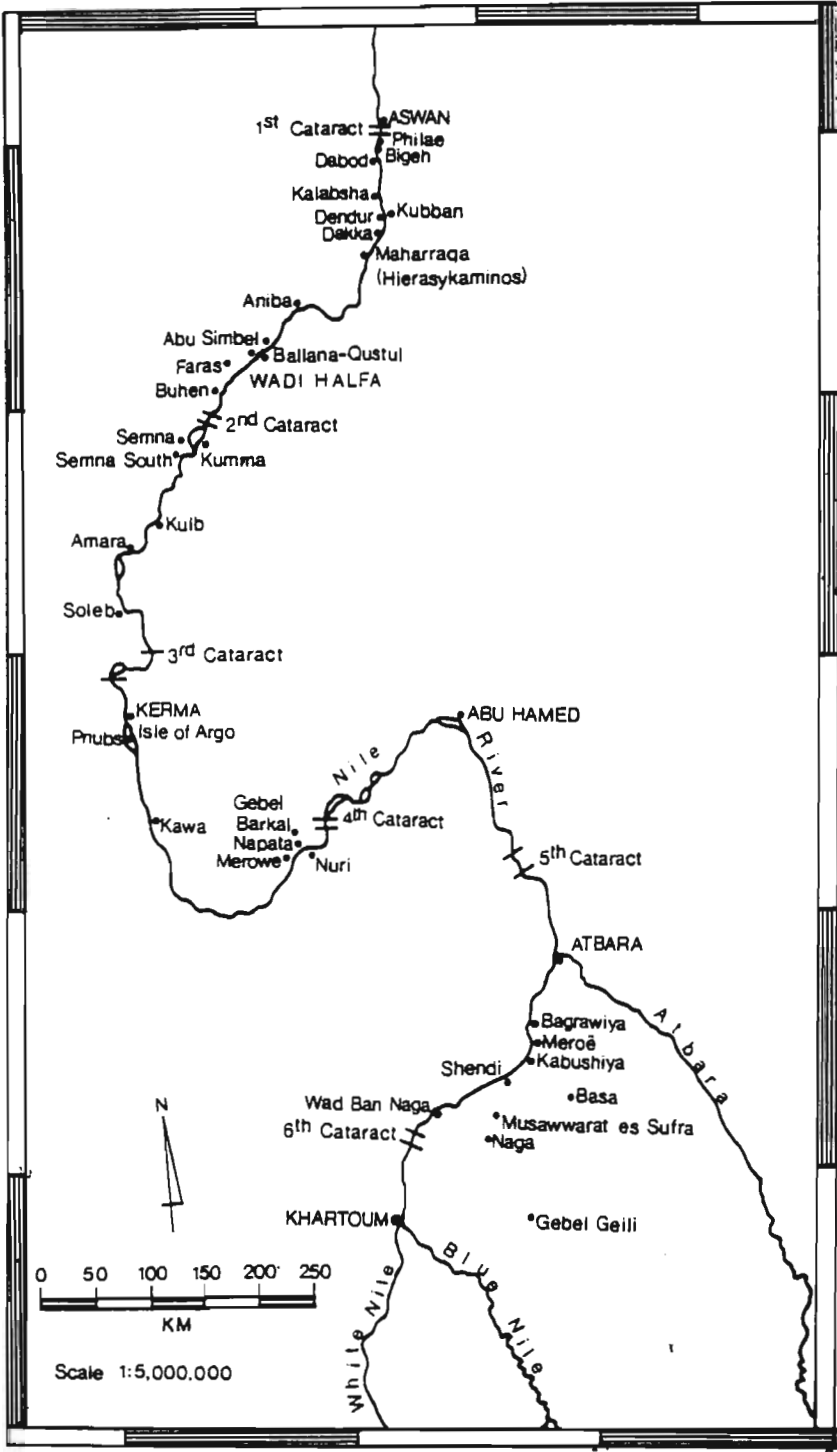


Figure Two



Figure Three

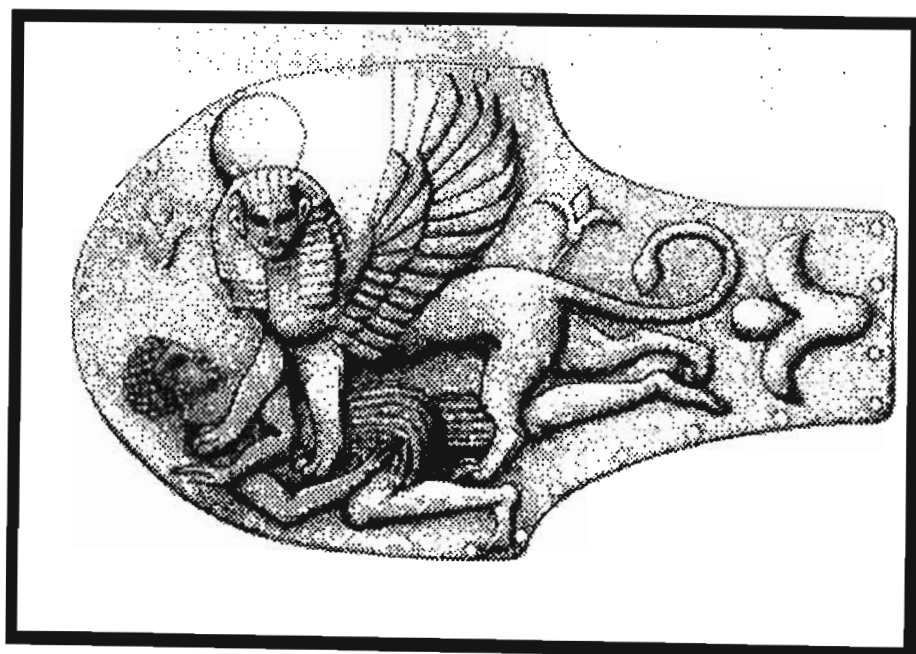


Figure Four



Figure Five



Figure Six

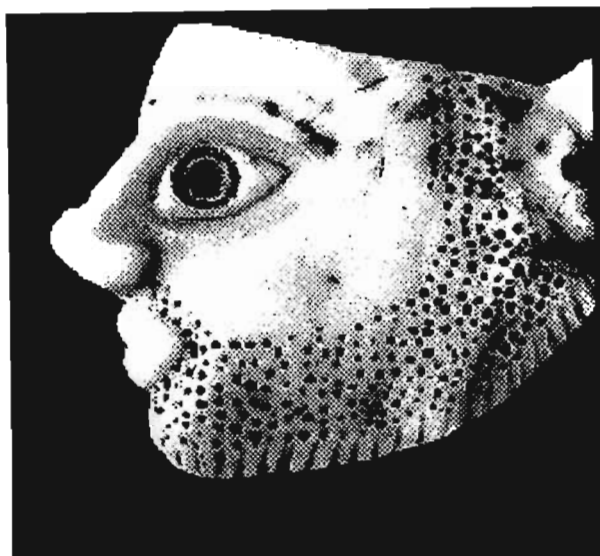


Figure Seven



Figure Eight



Figure Nine



Figure Ten



Figure Eleven

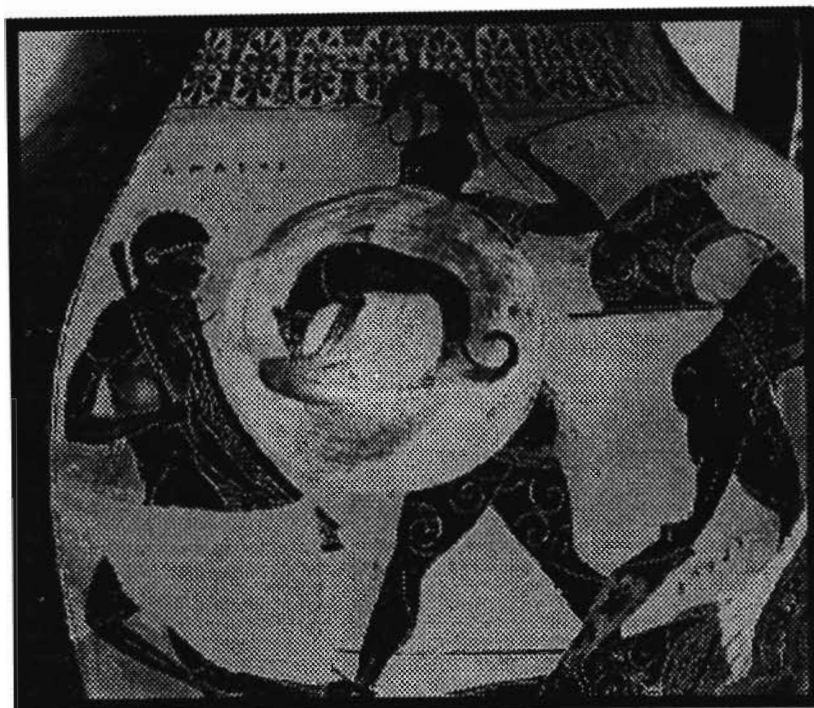


Figure Twelve

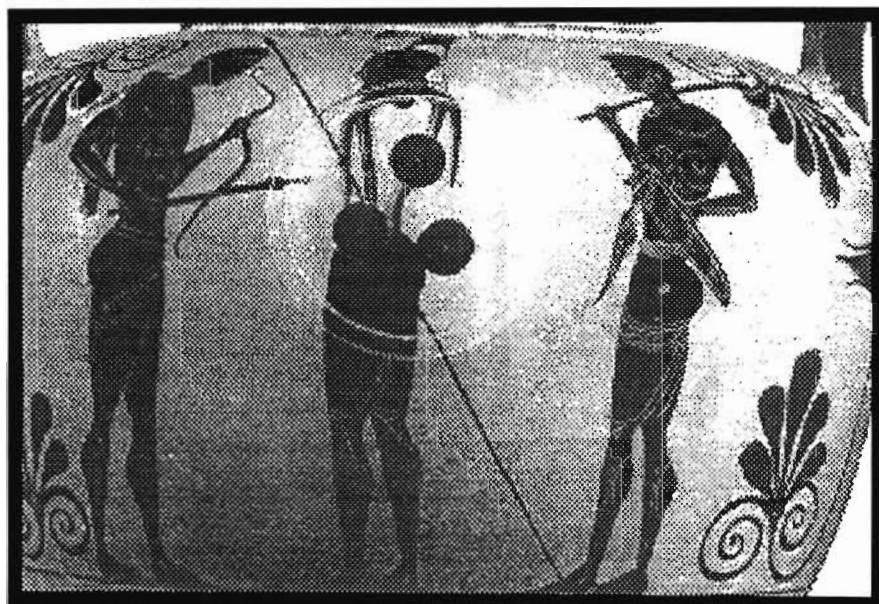


Figure Thirteen



Figure Fourteen



Figure Fifteen



Figure Sixteen



Figure Seventeen



Figure Eighteen



Figure Nineteen

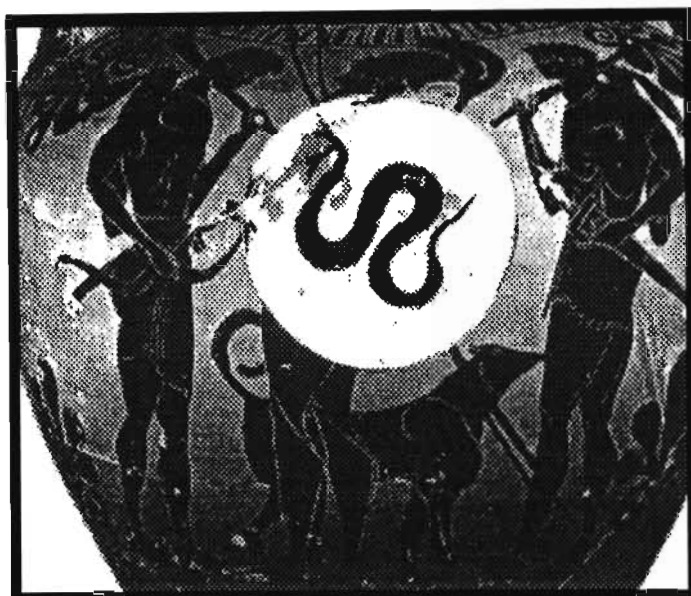


Figure Twenty

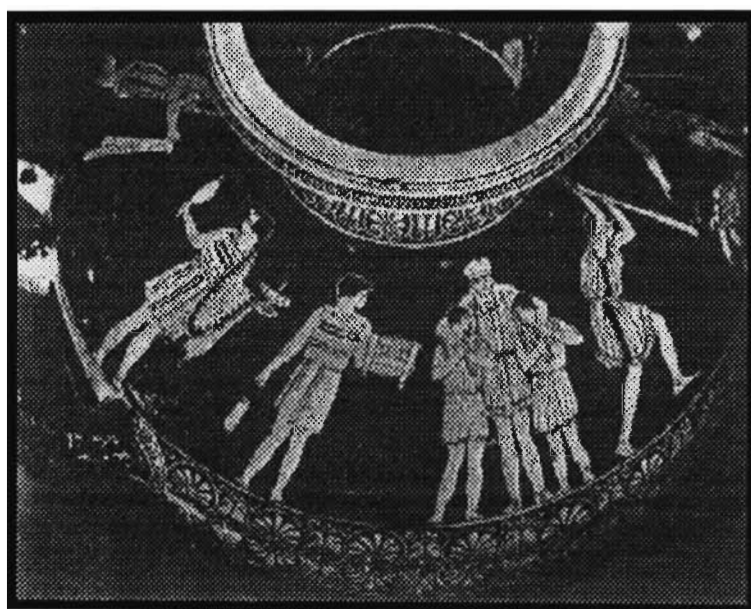


Figure Twenty-one.

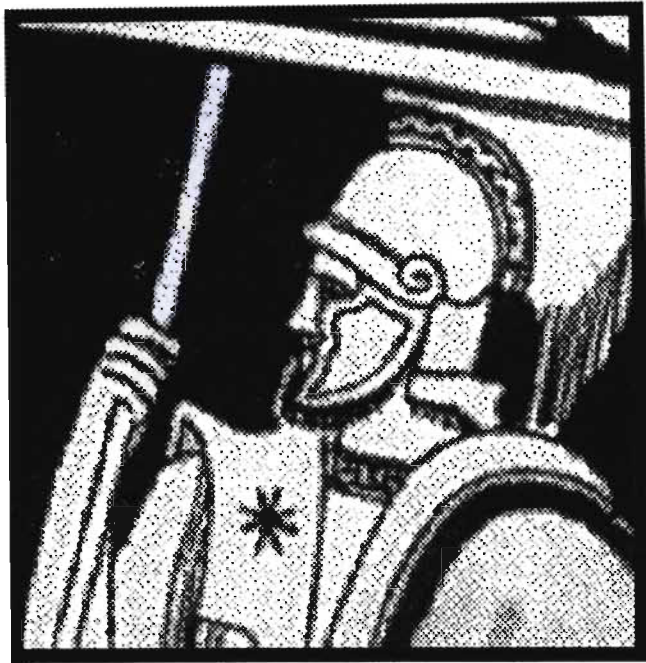


Figure Twenty-two



a.



b.

Figure Twenty-three



Figure Twenty-four

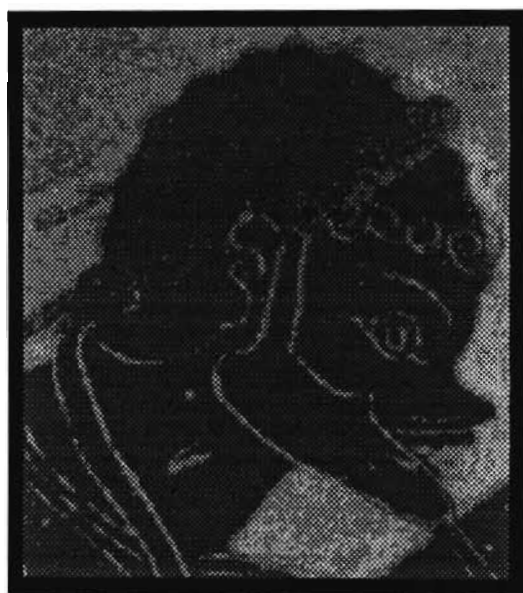


Figure Twenty-five

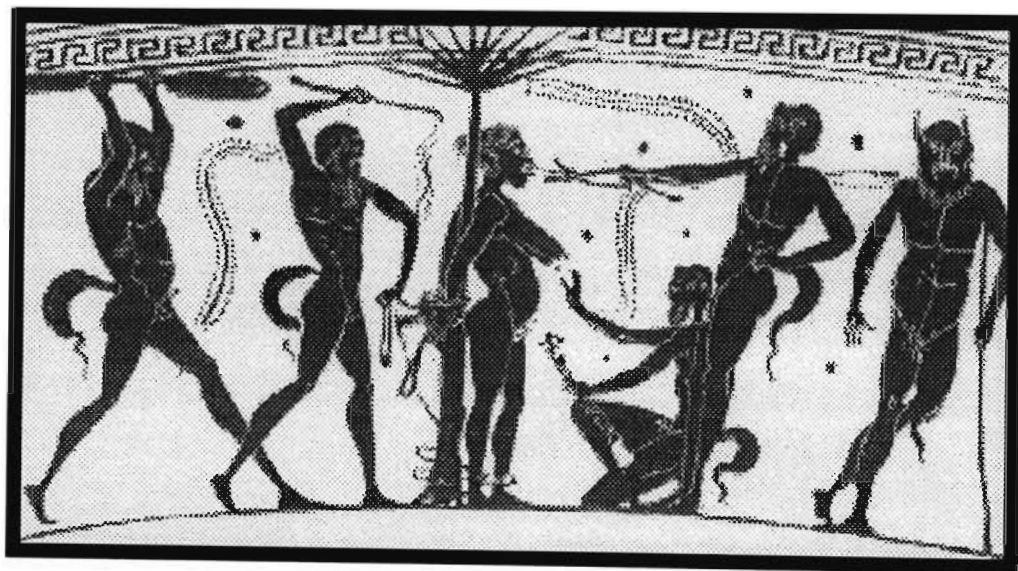


Figure Twenty-six

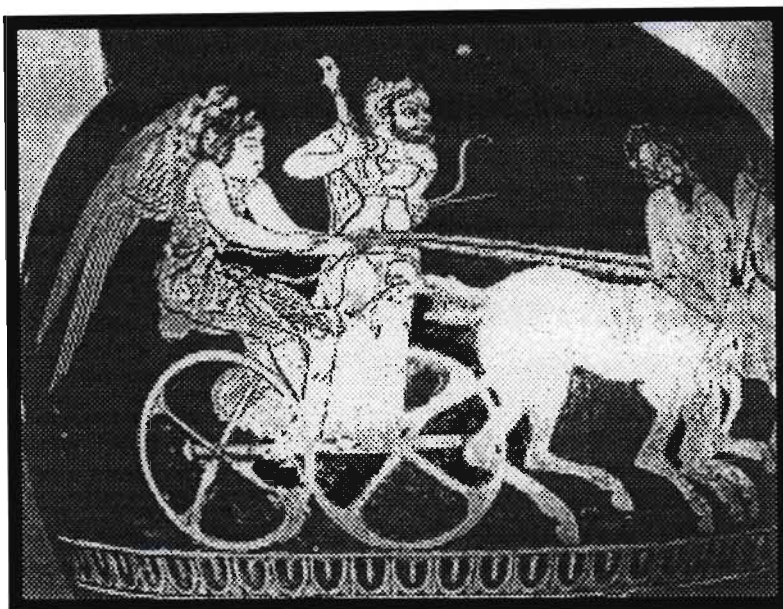


Figure Twenty-seven



Figure Twenty-eight



Figure Twenty-nine



Figure Thirty



Figure Thirty-one

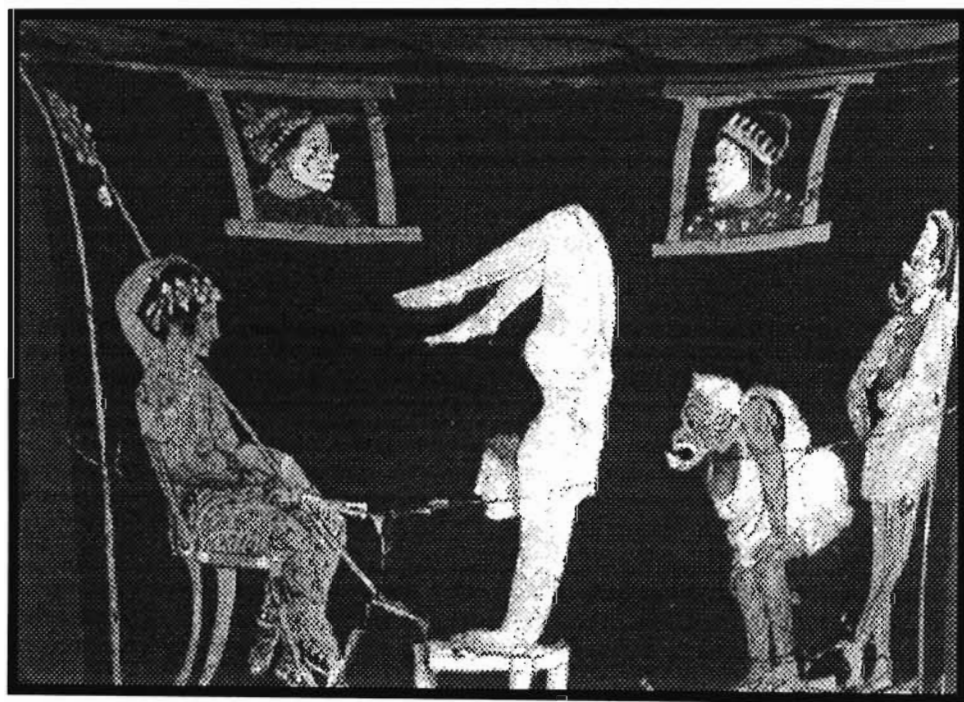


Figure Thirty-two

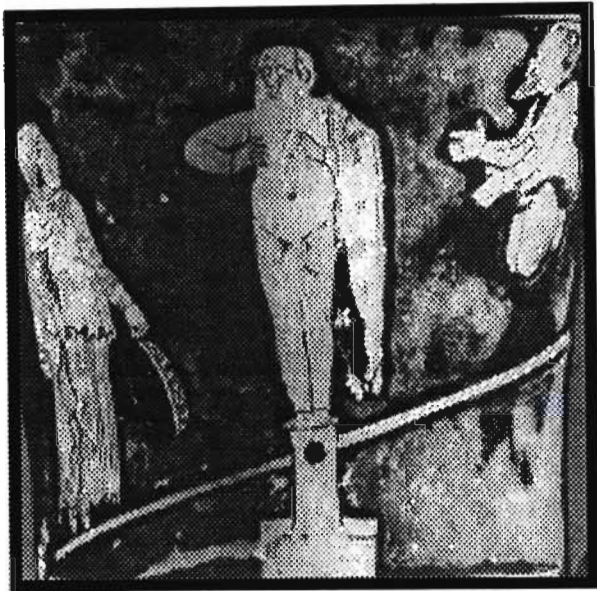


Figure Thirty-three

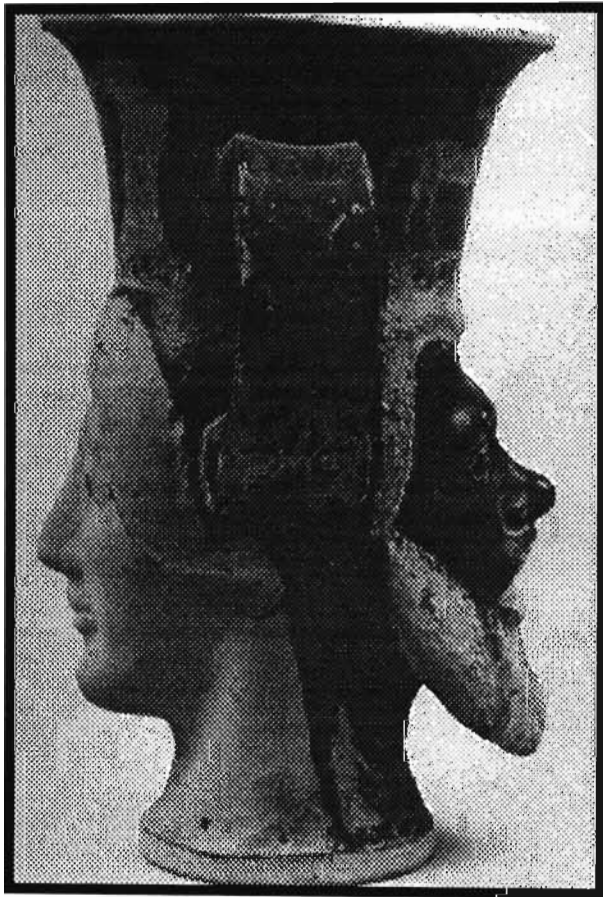


Figure Thirty-four



Figure Thirty-five



Figure Thirty-six



Figure Thirty-seven

Appendix One: Abbreviations

<i>Add</i> ²	Carpenter, T.H. 1989., <i>Beazley Addenda</i> , Oxford.
<i>ABV</i>	Beazley, J.D. 1978., <i>Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters</i> , New York (reprint).
<i>ARV</i> ²	Beazley, J.D. 1968., <i>Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters</i> second edition, Oxford.
<i>CAH</i> II	Boardman, J. & Hammond, N.G.L. [edd.] 1982., <i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i> Vol II, Cambridge.
<i>Diels</i>	Diels, H.H & Kranz, W. [edd.] 1951., <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratike</i> , Berlin.
<i>FGrHist</i>	Jacoby, F [ed.] 1957-1969., <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , Leiden.
<i>GHA</i> II	Mokhtar, G. [ed.] 1990., <i>General History of Africa</i> vol II abridged edition, London.
<i>Image</i>	Bugner, L. [ed.] 1976., <i>The Image of the Black in Western Art</i> vol. I, New York.
<i>LIMC</i>	1981-1994., <i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> vols I-VII, Zürich; München.
<i>LSJ</i>	Liddell, H.G. & Scott, R. 1966., <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> rev. Jones, H.S., Oxford.
<i>Nauck</i> ²	Nauck, A. [ed.] 1964., <i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> , Hildesheim.
<i>OCD</i> ²	Hammond, N.G.L & Scullard, H.H. [edd.] 1976., <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> second edition, Oxford.
<i>OCD</i> ³	Hornblower, S & Spawforth, A. [edd.] 1996., <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> third edition, Oxford; New York.
<i>OED</i> ²	Simpson, J.A. & Weiner, E.S.C. [edd.] 1989., <i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i> second edition, Oxford.
<i>Para</i>	Beazley, J.D. 1971., <i>Paralipomena</i> , Oxford.

Abbreviations of Journal Titles are as in *L'Année Philologique*.

Abbreviations of ancient works follow the conventions adopted by *OCD*³ if not otherwise shown in the bibliography of primary sources.

Appendix Two: Bibliography of Primary Sources.

Achilles Tatius

Leuk

Achilles Tatius incl. tr. Seaton, R.C. 1967., London..

Ael.

NA

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Aesop

fab.

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PV, Supp.

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Ag.

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frg.

*Nauck*².

Agatharchides

De Mare.

Burstein, S.M. [tr. & ed.] 1989., *Agatharchides of Cnidus: On the Erythrean Sea*, London.

frg.

FGrHist.2a.86.

Anaxagoras

frg.

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Ap. Rhod.

Argon.

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Arist.

Gen. an.

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Hist. an.

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Mete.

Aristotle: Meteorologica incl. tr. Lee, H.D.P. 1962., London.

[*Phygn.*]; [*Col.*];

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Pol.

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[*Pr.*]

Aristotle: Problems incl. tr. Hett, W.S. 1961., London..

Soph. el.

On the Sophistical Refutations incl. tr. Forster, E.S. 1965., London..

- Arr.**
Anab. *Arrian* incl. tr. Robson, E.I. 1967.
- Ath.** *The Deipnosophists* incl. tr. Gulick, C.E. 1967.
- Ctesias**
Indica McCrindle, J.W. [tr. & ed.] 1973., *Ancient India as Described by Ktesias the Knidian*, Philosophers' Press.
frg. *FGrHist*.3c.688.
- Dem.**
Meid. *Demosthenes* vol III incl. tr. Vince, J.H. 1964., London..
- Diod. Sic.** *Diodorus of Sicily* incl. tr. Oldfather, C.H 1960., London..
- Diog. Laert.** *Diogenes Laertius* incl. tr. Hicks, R.D. 1966., London..
- Ephorus**
frg. *FGrHist*.2a.70.
- Eur.**
frg. *Nauck*²
- Genesis** 1988., *The Holy Bible: Good News Edition*, Cape Town.
- Gilgamesh** Pritchard, J.B. [ed.] 1969., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, Princeton.
- Hdt.** Hude, C. [ed] 1967., *Herodoti Historiae*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Heliodorus**
Aethiopica Morgan, R.J. 1989., 'An Ethiopian Story' in Reardon, B.P. [ed.], *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, Berkeley.
- Hes.**
Op.; Th.; [Sc.] *Hesiod, The Homeric Hymns and Homeric* incl. tr. Evelyn-White, H.G. 1967., London.¹
Hesiodi: Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum ed. Solmsen, F. 1970., Oxford.
Hesiode: theogonie, les travaux et les jours, le bouclier ed. Mazon, P. 1977., Paris.
- Cat.* *Hesiodi: Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum* ed. Solmsen, F. 1970., Oxford.
- Aethiopis* Evelyn-White (1967: 507-509).
- Hippoc.**

¹ Unless otherwise stated, the edition presented in this volume will be used.

- Aer.** Hippocrates incl. tr. Jones, W.H.S. 1963., London..
- Hom.**
Il. *Homer: The Iliad* incl. tr. Murray, A.T. 1967., London..
Od. *Homer: The Odyssey* incl. tr. Murray, A.T. 1966., London..
- Isoc.**
Paneg. *Isocrates* incl. tr. Norlin, G. 1966., London..
- Joseph.**
BJ *Flavii Iosephi opera* ed. Niese, B. 1955., Berlin: Weidmann.
- Lycoph.**
Alex. *Callimachus: Hymns and Epigrams, Lycophron* incl. tr. Mair, A.W. 1960., London..
- Macro.**
Sat *Saturnalia* vol I ed. Willis, J., 1970: Leipzig.
- Men.**
frg. *Menander: The Principal Fragments* incl. tr. Allinson, F.G. 1964., London..
- Mimnermus**
frg. *Elegy and Iambus* vol I ed. & incl. tr. Edmonds, J.M. 1961., London..
- Ov.**
Her.;Am.; *Ovid: Heroides and Amores* incl. tr. Showerman, G. 1963., London..
- Philostr.**
Imag. *Philostratus: Imagines, Callistratus: Descriptions* incl. tr. Fairbanks. 1960., London..
VA *Philostratus: The Life of Appolonius of Tyana* incl. tr. Conybeare, F.C. 1960., London..
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Pyth.
- Pl.**
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Prt. *Plato: Laches, Protagoras* incl. tr. Lamb, W.R.M. 1961., London..

- Plin.**
HN *Naturalis Historiae* ed. Mayhof, C. 1967., Stuttgart.
- Pompon.** *Chorographie* ed. Silberman, A. 1988., Paris.
- Ptolemy**
Tetr. *Tetrabiblos* incl. tr. Robbins, F.E. 1964., London..
Geog. *Claudius Ptolemy: The Geography* ed. & tr. Stevenson, E.L. 1991., New York.
- Sext. Emp.**
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Aj. *Sophocles* vol II incl. tr. Storr, F. 1961., London..
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- Xen.**
An. *Xenophon: Anabasis* incl. tr. Brownson, C.L. 1968., London..
Cyr. *Xenophon: Cyropaedia* incl. tr. Miller, W. 1960., London..
Oec. *Xenophon: Memorabilia and Oeconomicus* incl. tr. Marchant, E.C., 1968., London..
Symp *Xenophon: Symposium and Apology* incl. tr. Marchant, E.C. 1968., London.
- Xenophanes**
frg. *Diels.*

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