

de ceux qui imitent en sachant. Le lien entre ces deux types d'hommes est celui qui relie la science théorique et critique à la science directive et pratique. Mais le philosophe se distingue aussi bien du sophiste que du politique. Le philosophe a la réalité que lui confère son contact avec les êtres réels; le sophiste n'a qu'un simulacre de réalité et le politique n'existe que comme activité du savoir philosophique. Le naturel philosophe est la condition du maintien de la différence entre l'intelligence et l'intelligible ainsi que des multiples différences qui distinguent les intelligibles entre eux. La *philosophia* doit être entendue comme élan, désir, inspiration. Sa propre méthode, la dialectique, peut se manifester comme *maïeutique* et comme division.

En conclusion nous pouvons dire que les dialogues platoniciens oscillent entre deux tentations: celle qui consiste, pour le philosophe, à assumer les images négatives —son délire, son bavardage, son inscience, son atonie— tout en indiquant à ceux qui peuvent entendre que cette folie est le seul désir qui vaille, ce jeu pénible la plus haute science. La *philosophia* n'a pas d'autre réalité que cet élan qui pousse à examiner, et pas d'autre chemin que celui qui consiste à donner et à recevoir le *logos*.

Le livre s'achève par un appendice où on examine la tradition sur l'origine des termes *φιλοσοφία*, *φιλόσοφος* et les occurrences préplatoniciennes et un autre appendice où on cherche l'authenticité et la chronologie des Dialogues.

L'écrivain, grâce à sa pensée profonde, critique, dialectique et grâce à sa connaissance approfondie des textes anciens, nous donne un livre très important pour chaque penseur, un livre excellent et vraiment nécessaire à tous ceux qui étudient et aiment la pensée platonicienne.

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Martin BERNAL, *Black Athena*, vol I: *The Fabrication of ancient Greece 1785-1895*, London, Free Association Books, 1987, 575 pp.

With this fraudulent work the Hebrew descendent professor Martin Bernal attempts to overthrow the significance of classical Greek civilization, as a self-sufficient historical presentation, by raising the audacious and provocative question «what is classical in classical civilization?». The *Black Athena* attempts to compile «evidence» pertaining to the massive cultural borrowings, which Greece made from Egypt and the West-semitic civilization during the 2nd millenium BC, and, in particular, between 2100-1100 BC. Given the high



level of contacts —according to the author— between Greece and ancient Egypt and Near East «it is likely that some of the words, place names and religious cults of Egyptian and Semitic origin... were introduced into the Aegean at this time... However, in Crete and Cyclades which may well have been largely Semitic-speaking, these cultural elements are much more likely to have continued» (p. 17).

In particular, the volume I of this work refers to the development of the «ancient model in antiquity» and of the «aryan model» in competition as they are for the explanation of Greek civilization, and he proposes his «revised ancient model». The «ancient model of antiquity» —according to the author— advocates that the Greek civilization was the outcome of the colonization of Greece around 1.500 BC by Egyptian and Phoenicians (Semites), which did civilize the indigenous populations, while, on the other hand, according to the «aryan model» invasions from the North took place in Greece which conquered the pre-Hellenic or Aegian civilization; thus classical civilization itself was the outcome of mixtures of the Indo-European Hellenes with the indigenous population. Finally in the «revised ancient model» the view that author accepts the Egyptian and Phoenician colonization of Greece, the first inhabitants of which did speak an Indo-Hittite language which did not leave any trace.

In chapter I «The ancient model in antiquity» (pp. 75-120) the author refers to «sources confirming» the Egyptian colonization of Thebes and Athens, of the Egyptian conquest of Argolida and the foundation of Thebes by Phoenicians. In chapter II «Egyptian wisdom and the Greek transmission from the dark ages to renaissance» (pp. 121-160) the author examines the attitudes of the Greek fathers who tamed the Egyptian religion by transforming it into philosophy after the «crash» of neo-platonism, and he pays special attention to Hermes Trismegistos. In chapter III «The triumph of Egypt in the 17th and 18th centuries» (pp. 161-188) the author attempts to explain on the basis of the rising racism the «unwillingness» of European thinkers to consider the Greek civilization as the result of Egyptian and Semitic mixtures with the indigenous population. In chapter IV «Hostilities to Egypt in the 18th century» (pp. 189-223) and in chapter V «Romantic linguistics: the Rise of India and the Fall of Egypt, 1740-1880» (pp. 224-280) the author points out that the rise of black slavery made European thinkers to exclude Africans from European civilization. Chapter VI «Hellenomania I, The Fall of the ancient model, 1790-1830» (pp. 281-316), chapter VII «Hellenomania 2» (pp. 317-336), chapter VIII «The Rise and Fall of Phoenicians, 1830-1885» (pp. 337-366), chapter IX «The final solution of the



Phoenician problem, 1885-1945» (pp. 367-399) and chapter X «The post-war situation: the return to the broad Aryan model, 1945-1985» (pp. 400-438), together with the Appendix «Were the Philistines Greeks?» (pp. 445-450) and several maps, the glossary and notes constitute the remaining of this volume.

The scientifically arbitrary and fraudulent treatment of this topic, as it is based on irresponsible interpretations of references from classical texts, makes the author unable to understand that the existence of classical Greece—as a bequest of a meanings, value structures and accomplishments—is a historical fact and not the result of hypothesis testing (i.e. the acceptance or rejection of hypotheses) or model analysis. As a fact of mind, the existence of classical Greece does remain independent from the assumptions of a «sociology of knowledge» or of a «sociology of civilisation» theory; the anti-african or anti-semitic attitudes of the European thinkers, can not explain the existence of classical Greece: when anti-african and anti-semitic attitudes are on a high level, the existence of classical Greece is being confirmed, while, when the anti-african or anti-semitic attitudes of European thinkers are on a minimal or moderate level, the existence of classical Greece is being rejected or disproved. The limited references of the classic writers (such as for instance from Aeschylus or Plato) to Egypt were not so much intended to corroborate a past historicity—and in this case the Egyptian and Semitic colonization of ancient Greece about 1.500 BC—but, on the contrary, they tend to express, among others, the innate attitude of Greeks to the latent and the distant; such an attitude ultimately defends the solvency of mythical thinking next to the reason, for the dramaturgy of mind.

Regardless of the possible mixtures or influences on a limited scale, because of the commercial relationships and navigation among the East-mediterranean peoples, it remains, though, inexplicable, why only the Greek civilization and not another one did culminate at the golden age, while the contribution of peoples which Greeks supposedly did immitate disappear quickly without leaving analogous monuments of mind?

Some common linguistic formulations and word sounds among the East-mediterranean peoples could be better explained on the basis of the identity of the physical and geographical terms, i.e. independently from the supposed immitation made by a historical nation i.e. the Greeks from other peoples without an analogous historicity. On the other hand, the Jews who distinguished themselves in the two millenia of diaspora—and really western civilization owes much on Jewish thinkers—did write not in Hebrew language but in the language of their host countries. In contradistinction to the Hebrew



language, the Greek language itself is an accomplishment without any other cultural equivalent.

Finally, on the methodological level, the author attempt to focus his thesis on isolated and ambiguous, references to classical texts, to fabricate his unacceptable structure without taking into account alternative explanations of the same passages, or referring them, in every case, to broader wholes or systems of meanings. Such a methodology tends to carry his analysis to excessive slippings and almost comic conclusions. The circular argumentation of this approach and the concentration of his attention to the meaningless or the arbitrary explanation of the particular (Aeschylus writes tragic poetry and not history after all) forces him to repeat for numerous times the logical error of accepting that which does remain unproved.

In this fraudoulous scientific-like work, with its black and mournful undercover, the classical Greece of *Black Athena* is not of course in danger, neither could it be burried, as he was intended to, the star of David to shine, but on the contrary, it constitutes itself the funeral of dark intentions which brought such a work into existence. Sionist critics were ready to welcome this book —the volume II of which examines, among others, the Egyptomania of Sparta, together with the Egyptian and West-semitic components of Greek civilization, while the volume III is dedicated to «solving the riddle of the Sphinx» together with other studies in the Egyptian and Greek mythology—with brilliant exclamations. Egypt is being often used indirectly to permit semitism to «glamor» from the texts.

While a scientific theory or a model becomes stronger, the more it resists from being rejected by the data or alternative theories, the author of *Black Athena* systematically avoids alternative explanations of the data which he uses. The main argument of the *Black Athena*, which sees Greece as an other-lighted mediator of the Egyptian and Semitic culture to Europe, could be summarized as follows: «The major components of classical civilization are African and Semitic in origin, but, unfortunately, we can not prove such a proposition».

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