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The Routledge Companion to  
Philosophy of Race



Edited by Paul C. Taylor, Linda Martín Alcoff,  
and Luveell Anderson

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### Hegel on Race and Development

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# 4

## HEGEL ON RACE AND DEVELOPMENT

*Frank M. Kirkland*

### Introduction

Previously, among other things, I argued that Kant's philosophy could serve as a warrant justifying the *first* view of King's famous phrase in his 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech, wherein we must (i) *cease pre-judging* people by their skin color or race and (ii) *begin judging* them solely by the substance of their character.<sup>1</sup> By so judging, we gauge the strength of their character in terms independently of the physiologically racial qualities and the emotional attachments thereto and instead give moral credit to actions done and beliefs held from their sense of duty and responsibility alone. The strength and "content of their character" would presuppose that attaching racial content to moral commitments is wrong and oppressive, and that human fidelities, neutral to race, blind to color, flourish, a state of affairs to which King himself is aligned. But there is a competing *second* view to which King is also aligned.

On the second view, King's speech does entail (i) full stop, but (ii) only to some extent. I say "to some extent" because, on this view, judging people by the "content of their character" would *not* foreclose judging them by their race, especially when judging people this way is done to acknowledge and affirm the socio-cultural and historical importance of whom and what they have or may become for social life (not to pre-judge, ascribe and derive the inferiority/superiority of their intellectual and moral competences from an invariant "substance" of their physiological features). If judgments about character or disposition were conducted wholly in race-neutral fashion and, hence, separated and inoculated from socio-cultural and historical factors pertinent to race, then judging people's character in this manner would appear to leave the strength or "content of character" problematically unrelated to some social and institutional life wherein race is morally or ethically salient.<sup>2</sup> As morally relevant, judging people by race can entail subjecting oneself to a norm with motivational pull and to heeding a kind of reason with discursive weight.

Despite his "I Have a Dream" speech, King was not wholly adverse to this second view. Indeed, in his 1967 text, *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?*,<sup>3</sup> King emphatically praised the idea of "Black Power" for its moral affirmation of black self-determination and black self-regard, enabling black people "to sign with the pen and ink of assertive selfhood [their] own emancipation proclamation."<sup>4</sup> Yet, in the very

same text, he strongly criticized that idea as ultimately conveying a “black nihilistic philosophy of despair.”<sup>5</sup> Is a contradictory message on King’s part being conveyed in this 1967 text? I shall not address this matter here.

Rather I seek to examine the philosophical salience of Hegel on the race-concept (“race”) and, if any, on the contending views of the meaning of King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. The second view appears to represent a Hegelian stance by affirming that we may judge people based on factors and attachments, such as racial ones, if and when they count as shareable reasons to assess and acknowledge another. It would be deemed Hegelian, because only under certain social arrangements and historical circumstances can we judge taking such factors and attachments as ethically salient reasons in considering and recognizing the content of a person’s character.

Now in saying these things, I am *neither* expressing *nor* implying that King had read or was reliant on Hegel’s thought for the whole or any part of his 1963 speech or 1967 text. I shall, in passing, make claims that the philosophy of Hegel can be brought to bear respectively on the second view of the meaning of King’s refrain. But, in the main, this chapter makes and seeks to demonstrate two proposals. First, the philosophy of Hegel, concisely framed, can show the manners in which *normative* import can extend to the race-concept. Normatively Hegel’s idealism does entitle, through his notion of “development,” non-white people and their achievements to be construed historically within a normative framework. It does not support characterizing them as perennially unhistorical in an empirically tropistic context. Second, the philosophy of Hegel can serve to justify (i) and (ii) in King’s refrain, as “developmentally” related, not as *self-standing alternatives*. Neither proposal is entertained in the literature. Furthermore my claim does not and will not preclude a discussion of Hegel’s<sup>6</sup> controversial racial chauvinism, a discussion which has already been put forward in a variety of philosophical venues. Still, although “race” may carry normative weight on the basis of Hegel’s philosophy, which can be brought to bear on the second view of King’s speech, it prompts two points.

First, contrary to the attitudes of many scholars of Hegel to ignore his racial chauvinism, my claim will *not* involve defending, let alone implying, that Hegel’s racial chauvinism is to be discounted in and by his own philosophy. My claim should *not* be taken as an apologetic for dispensing with or disregarding his racial chauvinism. Second, contrary to critics of Hegel on racial matters, I will *not* endorse or suggest that charting his racial chauvinism sufficiently thwarts his philosophy from denying (1) that enactments of people racially characterized are representative of inferior or superior intellectual and moral competences derived from the invariant “substance” of physiological attributes and (2) that black people are *not* historically expressive full stop. Demonstrating my claim requires a concise perspective on his thought, and neither an apologetic of his core commitments discounting his racial chauvinism nor a chronicling of it.

### Hegel on Race and Development

The charge of racial chauvinism has been long-standing and still resonates against Hegel’s philosophy and against the claims of others which reverberate with the racial chauvinism attributed to him.<sup>7</sup> Hegel’s racism strongly resounds especially in the popular mind. If so, how could it even be possible to consider Hegel’s philosophy, given the hoary yet legitimate charge of racial chauvinism attached to it, as underwriting what

is the complex and complicated second version of the meaning of King's anaphoric refrain.<sup>8</sup> As we shall see, Hegel brings his own complexity to the race-concept as well as to King's refrain.

Regarding "race" and its racial cum racist ends, both in general and to blacks in particular, Hegel is best known by his claim that the indigenous inhabitants of Africa "do not have history in the true sense of the word."<sup>9</sup> Most believe that (1) Hegel's claim is based on his racial chauvinism and/or (2) the recent scientific and historiographical research on Africa has repudiated the claim's veracity. The former is, in some sense, true, about which more will be said below. Surprisingly, on the other hand, the latter is false, because Hegel's claim presupposes (a) an idealism whose *normative* benchmark distinguishes peoples who are "world historical" from those who are not and (b) some reflexive awareness on how and why that benchmark is met. Let me examine the latter stance first, due to its complexity.

For Hegel, that normative benchmark is the "idea of freedom" in spirit's self-conscious development. Self-consciously satisfying that benchmark, Hegel believes, is determinate of history's "purposive movement," is specific to the developmental advance of the "idea of freedom" for the sake of world history as reflected in certain cultural geographies and discerned in a certain kind of philosophical idealism. Hegel's normative benchmark is the criterion on which his claim that Africa's lack of history turns, and it is set within a peculiar kind of idealism through which the empirical evidence on Africa, even evidence obtained in the twentieth century through archaeological research and new historiographical methods,<sup>10</sup> must be gauged in terms of "spirit's self-determination in time under the idea of freedom." This means that Hegel denied Africa's historical relevance *normatively* and could do so even if it were affirmed scientifically.

Hegel would not deny the importance and development of the empirical sciences *per se*.<sup>11</sup> Their scientific significance in picking out and identifying those facts rendering Africa's reality as *unhistorical*, during Hegel's time, would be acceptable to him. But so would it be acceptable to him, given the past 75 years to the present, that their scientific significance has confirmed Africa's reality as *historical*. Nonetheless his idealism can affirm either side because, on its own grounds, Hegel would deny that, how, and why what is scientifically picked out and identified as evidence of, say, Africa's unhistorical or historical reality is normatively responsible for or normatively prohibits Africa from being considered as historical.

In short, his idealism would be untroubled by the outcomes and findings of the empirical sciences. Outside his idealism's normative benchmark, history is that solely elicited by what the empirical sciences and their methods deliver veridically about events as independent matters of fact or as some kind of causal outcome in their contact, in this case, with Africa's past. Inside it, such history is not rejected. However, for Hegel, it must be primarily reliant on people freely trying to give and share reasons for events they enact and discern themselves within an intersubjective context or a "cultural geography" whose norms sustain thinking and acting freely in an ongoing manner and govern such reasons even as they change and develop.

Some of these new historiographical methods would enable a comparison of, say, Africa's material development, environment, and resources with parallel information from other regions of the world, other populations. An example of such a comparison would be just what Jared Diamond did 20 years ago with extraordinary skill in his best-selling book *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, whose thesis he smartly encapsulated in his

prologue: “History followed different courses for different peoples because of differences among peoples’ environments, not because of biological differences among peoples themselves.”<sup>12</sup>

If plied to Africa, Diamond’s claim would place the movement of history in accord with persistently long-term environmental factors, but not with the “idea of freedom.” Africa’s history would not be construed as a purposive (Hegelian) movement of knowing and acting under the norm of freedom, but would rather be construed as a non-purposive (Braudelian) movement of the “long (material) duration” (*la longue durée*) with which Diamond’s conception of history would be largely consistent.<sup>13</sup> Hegel does not and would not deny that history followed different courses for different peoples because of the different long-term impact of varying geographic, climatic, and demographic constraints. But for the sake of the aforementioned normative benchmark and its resolution of how and why it is met or not, he needs rather to show that history, as a purposive movement, can follow different courses for different people because of the varying degrees, not of the uniformity, to which people developmentally frame their own cognitive and practical orientations under the idea of freedom.<sup>14</sup> What enables Hegel to take this position is his notion of “natural spirit.”

Hegel’s idealism leads him to characterize Africans, as he does all other peoples, in terms of “natural spirit,” and this means the following. Indeed Africans are sentient human beings (in Kant’s language, “pathologically affected beings”) subject to the imperatives stemming from nature. But, at the same time, they take on those imperatives in a manner, if not eliminating them (at this stage), at least mitigating their immediate impact on them. Their initial steps lead to a position wherein the invocation of nature as a reason or warrant for an enactment gradually stops being cognitively or ethically appropriate for or useful to them. But they also lead to a position wherein reasons gradually represent improved successes of Africans justifying their enactments *without* recourse to nature. Since Hegel refers to Africans as “rational” by virtue of their “mastery of nature” via religion,<sup>15</sup> they would have to engage in enactments which can incrementally downplay the cognitive or ethical appropriateness of invocations of nature as reasons or warrants, and which simultaneously can upgrade incrementally the caliber of reasons or warrants in terms of what is proffered freely on their behalf to “master” nature progressively without reliance on nature.<sup>16</sup>

As Robert Pippin has claimed,<sup>17</sup> natural spirit refers to Hegel’s incipient non-dualist position or compatibilism. It is, on the one hand, the sentience of spirit and, on the other, the impetus of spirit, wherein spirit gradually yet progressively (a) undoes, as a source of justification and truth for cognitive and ethical enactments, the natural determinations or sentience attached to them. In so doing, it (b) proceeds freely to sustain, ultimately in an ongoing way, the justification and truth of them as its own accomplishments and recognized as such. The full-fledged development of spirit is a people’s self-developing and ongoing historical accomplishment, which reflects (a) an *ever-decreasing reliance* of its enactments, responsiveness to reasons, and self-understanding on invocations or appeals to nature’s imperatives or explanations based on nature and (b) an *ever-increasing and, ultimately, ongoing reliance* of them on the self-enacted sanctioning and reflective approval of the reason-giving and reason-sharing influence pertaining to them.<sup>18</sup>

Failure to recognize this point, I believe, is the unavoidable mistake that is pervasive in the argument using scientific advancement and realism pertinent to Africa to criticize Hegel’s *normative, not empirical* claim that Africa has no history. It is a mistake

believing or expecting (1) that Hegel's claim is empirical and (2) that history elicited in the former sense provides the independent "truth maker" as the remedy to Hegel's claim.<sup>19</sup> Even though the former sense empirically would either confirm or disconfirm Africa's lack of historical status, it would also render moot or illusory the idea that the enactments and discernments of Africans were, at least in part, freely undertaken, leaving the impression, if not certifying, that their enactments and discernments, their cognitive and practical orientations, were more tropistic than not.

For Hegel, history elicited in the normative sense is history "in the true sense of the word," is "the record of spirit's efforts to achieve knowledge of what it is in itself, i.e., freedom" and "hence knowledge of freedom as its sole purpose."<sup>20</sup> It is then spirit's account of how a certain conception of freedom comes to be significantly widespread and extensively significant in its own development. This is what Hegel's conception of history is about. Its course can be briefly construed as that wherein a people knew and lived through their enactments that only *one* was free, to a people who knew and lived through their enactments *some* were free, to a people who knew and lived through their enactments that *all* are free in an ongoing manner.<sup>21</sup>

Like Kant, Hegel distinguishes the conceptual jurisdiction of nature from that of freedom wherein, according to Hegel, "spirit" receives its significance and to which it is identified. But, unlike Kant, Hegel does *not* argue that they are irreducible, that a transition from one to the other needs be made, and that the moral demands subject to the latter jurisdiction ought to be effectuated in this world. Rather Hegel concedes that they cannot be reducible to each other as long as spirit differentiates itself and progressively continues to do so away from the conceptual jurisdiction of nature such that moral demands under its own jurisdiction *ought* to become effectuated, not ultimately, but *developmentally* in this world.

Hegel claims that Africans are "enmeshed in natural spirit."<sup>22</sup> Such a claim is not a racial disparagement of them.<sup>23</sup> Africa's indigenous or diasporic populations cannot be regarded as naturally unable of or ontologically contrary to this self-development, as most are prone to say,<sup>24</sup> as if the impetus of spirit is permanently absent in African peoples. Rather their self-development under both (a) an *ever-decreasing reliance* of its enactments and responsiveness to reasons on appeals to nature's imperatives or explanations based on nature and (b) an *ever-increasing and, ultimately, ongoing reliance* of them on the reason-giving and reason-sharing influence pertaining to them is not fully in effect. It is not fully actualized in their practices or enactments, and is still provisionally reliant, at least in part, on making reference to nature's imperatives as a warrant for explaining their practices and enactments.

Africans then are regarded as without historical relevance in Hegel's idealism, because their enactments, responsiveness to reasons, and self-understanding, for the time being, lead back, more often than not, to their warrant of them in terms of appeals to nature, to their warrant of them as more "naturalistic" than not. Their enactments and discernments discount, in Hegelian parlance, their "*negative relation*" to their own appeal to nature, to their own natural spirit, a "negative relation" that Hegel regards as an incipient expression of freedom. Consequently, in the context of Hegel's idealism, Africa as a cultural geography "vanishes" from history in the normative sense, but not necessarily in the empirical one. Within his idealism, Hegel could concede the former while affirming the latter. So Africans would have a history, empirically and scientifically so, but *not* normatively so, that is, as people acting fully under the idea of freedom.



Thus we have jumped from the frying pan into the fire. We have shown that Hegel's claim that "Africa is unhistorical" *cannot* be an empirical one. He is not claiming that being unhistorical is that which Africa empirically is. But that now puts us in the position to see that Hegel's claim that "Africa is unhistorical" is normative. He is claiming that "Africa is what it must and should be, viz., unhistorical." Does that mean that there cannot be constitutively and regulatively any experience and rationality of the indigenous inhabitants of Africa and those of its diaspora to delineate in terms of the idea central to Hegel's idealism, namely, people thinking and acting under the "idea of freedom?" If so, there is at least one thing for certain—King's anaphoric refrain could *never* have Hegel's idealism as a possible warrant.

But since I am of the mind that Hegel's idealism can serve as a possible warrant for King's refrain, the question to ask is how should the relation of Hegel's philosophy to "race" generally, to blacks particularly, be ascertained? A conclusion different from the prior one needs be reached, a conclusion Hegel himself never made, but a conclusion which Hegel's idealism could embrace, which would affirm that blacks *do not and ought not* "vanish" from history in the normative sense. To make this point, we need to return to Hegel's conception of "natural spirit" as his explicit entry into "race."

We have shown "natural spirit" to be that wherein spirit is increasingly less susceptible to treating its reasons and cognizance of them as effects, signs, or sets of natural causes or inclinations and increasingly more reliant on its reasons and cognizance of them as stemming from its own developmental orientation and away from nature as an explanatory source. This point emphasizes *that and how* spirit is differentiated from nature. But there is another point of emphasis. The spiritual differentiation from nature is *variable, not uniform*, when it is employed in terms of the *degree and extent* to which spiritual differentiation from nature occurs at any given time. *Hegel uses the degree and extent to which such differentiation occurs to distinguish human groups racially, ethnically, and geographically in a cultural sense.*<sup>25</sup>

Regarding this second point of emphasis, Hegel is *not* making a case for the possible belief that some relatively fragile sense of freedom is subordinate to some weighty determinism in force, as can be practically found, but not morally endorsed, say, in Kant. Rather Hegel is trying to make a case for how this normative idea of freedom is pertinent to the manifestation of "race" as something *achieved*, even progressively so, and as something *neither* constantly naturalized *nor* necessarily expunged morally. And Hegel attempts to demonstrate this point by referring to "natural spirit" in terms of "racial differentiation or variety," in short, Hegel's racialism.<sup>26</sup>

Most contemporary philosophers have come to understand, through K. Anthony Appiah, racialism as a doctrine to be dismissed or a doctrine that ought *not* to be tightly embraced.<sup>27</sup> It is, for Appiah, the doctrine that

there are heritable features, possessed by members of our species, that allow us to divide them into a small set of races in such a way that all the members of these races share certain traits and tendencies with each other that they do not share with members of any other race.<sup>28</sup>

In short, it is the doctrine affirming the existence of races, a doctrine, Appiah maintains, is false. Appiah's contention is that, under racialism, the "traits and tendencies" definitive of a racial singularity constitutes the singularity's "racial essence." What this

means is that the visibly natural morphological features of a singularity are not simply inessential and contingent, but racially indispensable and constant features, establishing them as the essential and necessary racial differences among singularities, not as the ancillary and superficial attributes they are. Consequently the constancy of the racial features of each singularity is the perennially ontological order and reality a singularity racially ensouls and embodies. And Hegel, according to Appiah, is among those who had subscribed to this false doctrine.<sup>29</sup>

Although Hegel subscribes to racialism, he would not need to be wedded to Appiah's account of it. Appiah's account requires that "race" refers to an animal organism comprising of singularities already distinguished from and opposed to each other, all subject to the same human genus, but each differentiated by its own racial essence. There would then be a given variety of races each essentially instantiated by its own racial type. Hegel's account, on the other hand, would require that "race" refers to an animal organism, but whose singularities, subject to the same human genus, are the differential outcomes of each singularity's impetus for distinguishing itself from another through its habits, dispositions, and location as well as coming to recognize this act of distinguishing as its own.<sup>30</sup> There would then be a distinctive variety wherein racial singularities are not tokens or instantiations of racial type, but unique racial singularities. Nowhere do Hegel's account of racialism and its variety of racial singularities embrace or entail a racial essence for defining the singularity of a racial group.

Racial singularities sustain "race," for Hegel, as "natural spirits" (*Natürgeister*),<sup>31</sup> movements of spirit discernible in natural and geographical limits, limits that mark the degree in which "race" is connected to the variable development of racial singularities minimally or not. They are groups of sentient, human beings, the variety of which is manifest geographically and the identities of which are differentially conveyed less by some particular sentient feature(s) that marks them essentially than by particular accomplishments conveyed in their distinctive habits, rituals, and socialized emotional dispositions. Despite their sentience, they manifest the degree and extent each develops, i.e., "spiritually" distances its accomplishments (habits, rituals, emotional dispositions) as responses to nature's imperatives. For Hegel, it is the accomplishments of this development that differentiate and diversify across racial singularities and within them, differentiating and diversifying what counts as "race" in terms of singularities freely expressing a concept that cannot but motivate its realization in a context leading to all being free in ongoing fashion. In short, in comparison to Kant, racial singularities, without "natural spirit," would have natures, but would not have histories.

Hegel does believe that racial singularities develop differently, unevenly, and to different degrees over time. Nowhere does Hegel argue for the equality of them; nowhere does his idealism embrace this view. Yet we should not confuse Hegel's views on the comparative levels of development among racial singularities with the stages of development themselves. The developmental stage of any given racial singularity must be variable. A racial hierarchy may be rigid but, by virtue of any racial singularity's accomplishments ("movement of spirit"), the stages of development cannot be and, to that extent, the hierarchy cannot be constantly in stasis. In short, a racial group's development cannot be fixed. If this were to hold, even Hegel's idealism would have to allow that all human beings, including Africans, are sufficiently able to develop the impetus of spirit further away from nature's course.



That is to say, if dark skin color, a certain physiognomy, and a geographical location in equatorial Africa are fixed characteristics, physiologically and geographically, they are not evidence of a fixed and unalterable boundary to a racial singularity's enactments and its capabilities to advance with reason its enactments even further from nature's imperatives under the auspice of freedom. Although Hegel himself compromises this view, his argument for this position is to be found in his discussion of what he calls "peoples," "nations," or "national spirits" (*Nationgeister*),<sup>32</sup> what I believe we would call today "ethnicities," that is, culturally organized groups within races each minimally bearing some political aim grounded in the cultivated relevance of their habits and dispositions.

Some have contended that, for Hegel, this suggests a move from racial differentiation (difference/diversity across racial singularities) to ethnic differentiation (difference/diversity within them), a contention Bernasconi holds valid. Indeed, Bernasconi maintains that this move allows Hegel to displace "race" with "people," enabling Hegel to remove Africans (as well as other peoples of color) from any connection to history.<sup>33</sup> As Bernasconi recognizes, Hegel denies any connection of the idea of different "peoples" to Africa, claims the diversity of peoples is absent in "Africa proper," while affirming both the connection of this idea to Europe and the diversity of peoples within it. In short, Hegel regards Africa totally and solely as a racialized continent wherein Africans are, in Hegel's words, an "undifferentiated and concentrated unity."<sup>34</sup> Calling all blacks or Africans "negro," without any reference to ethnicities or to "national spirits," is the case in point as well as compromising, to say the least, the pertinence of "natural spirit" to Africa and its diaspora.

As a consequence, Bernasconi ascribes a chauvinistic "racial basis" to Hegel's notion of world history, excluding all but Caucasians from being historical subjects in the full sense, insofar as only Caucasians can be characterized in terms of peoples.<sup>35</sup> He notes that Hegel states, "the philosophy of history has the world-historical significance of *peoples* as its subject matter."<sup>36</sup> The allusion is that "peoples" have such significance, not races, and seems to confirm the aforementioned suggestion that ethnic differentiation (*national spirit*) displaces racial differentiation (*natural spirit*) at the level of history. So not only does Bernasconi give very little credence to the idea of freedom, affirmed in Hegel's idealism, as a normative benchmark for assessing a racial singularity's contribution to world history. But he also takes seriously Hegel's employment of the displacement of "race" as a necessary criterion for ascribing such a singularity's contribution to and role in world history as well as its members' enactments under the idea of freedom. Any singularity construed without this displacement of "race" cannot be construed ethnically and under that idea. As a consequence, "race" cannot be historically significant.

However, Bernasconi misses a major point. Hegel goes further in the aforementioned quotation concerning history and peoples. "If we take 'world history' in its broadest sense, such significance will be the highest development achieved by the original disposition of the national character, the most spiritual form achieved by the *natural spirit dwelling within nations*."<sup>37</sup> Natural spirits (races) are not displaced. They are still operative in "peoples." Nations are fused with natural spirit and thereby still "racialized." Races and ethnicities, natural and national spirits, overlap each other.

As "ethnicized," a race may differentiate or diversify into a number of ethnicities or "peoples."<sup>38</sup> Ethnicities of a racial singularity differentiate from each other, cultivating

the degree and the extent to which each incrementally advances its rationality further from natural imperatives under the auspice of freedom. Ethnicities, each with distinct yet deep habits of heart, of mind, of body, may belong to the same racial singularity. But, since the achievements obtained by an ethnicity in the “movement of spirit” vary in each racial singularity, there is variability in stages of development. Stages of development would vary within different ethnicities of a racial singularity *and* across the ethnicities of different racial singularities. Although Hegel himself delineates neither with respect to Africa, nothing precludes his idealism from doing so.

“Race” then does not appear to be displaced by the notion of “people” in Hegel’s idealism. Again “race” does not refer to a sentient group which simply embodies its nature and geographical habitat as an immediate response to nature’s imperatives. It refers rather to a sentient group defined by (a) a way of being habitually disposed, not immediately responsive, toward the appropriateness of something naturally or geographically influential and (b) members’ openness to the variety in taking up this way of being habitually disposed and thereby being responsive, each in their own specific way, to the relevance of these natural and geographical influences in representing what members do. There is no (a) without (b) and vice versa.

But neither (a) nor (b) are immediately natural responses to natural stimuli or steps in the natural maturation of a sentient being toward its natural end. Otherwise they would be in the service of natural processes significant to the species’ perpetuation. Expressing a “negative relation,” they rather lend themselves, at least minimally, to rising above such processes, to (c) being understood as self-ascriptions, in the sense of commitments to be acknowledged (by both oneself and others), and open to further development over time (even to the point of being challenged and revised if unsuccessful in the interim.) The “movement” of (a) through (c) conveys the cultivated differentiation of spirit from natural spirit, a cultivated differentiation incrementally reflecting spirit’s own autonomous outcome and embodied in ethnicized races historically and gradually reflecting the degree and magnitude of this cultivated outcome in different ethnicized races historically.

As an ethnicized racial singularity then, black “people” would be neither naturally precluded in full from that “movement” of historically expressing its cultivated difference gradually from nature nor would they be historically precluded in full by the degree and extent it carries out this cultivation. They would be “spiritually” limited *pro tem* or “spiritually” ongoing in that “movement.” Their cultivated difference would have to be in some magnitude and in some variably qualitative way part of the historical narrative of spirit, and the degree and extent of carrying out that cultivation would be open incrementally to expression in that historical narrative.

### Hegelian Postscripts

Most Hegel scholars such as Alfredo Ferrarin, Robert Pippin, and Michael Wolff<sup>39</sup> have focused their scholarly attention exclusively on natural spirit’s first sense, in which it is employed in terms of *that and how* spirit is differentiated from nature, but *not* on its second sense, in which it is employed in terms of the *degree and extent* to which spirit is differentiated from nature. It is its second sense wherein Hegel distinguishes human groups racially and geographically. This is why Hegel’s racialism is non-existent in their otherwise very thoughtful analyses.

Most critics of Hegel's intellectual treatment of racially non-white "peoples" of color believe the non-existence of Hegel's racialism in the discourse of current Hegel scholarship reveals the indifference of Hegel scholars to this matter, to their silence on it, since Hegel scholars do not regard his treatment of it as having any resonance, one way or the other, on Hegel's philosophy generally. But, with the exception of Allegra de Laurentiis and Michael Hoffheimer, they do not focus either on natural spirit at all or on Hegel's racialism as stemming from the second sense of natural spirit. Or, as most do, they identify automatically Hegel's racialism with his racial chauvinism. This is why it is not unusual for critics to claim that Hegel regards Africans as so immersed in nature that its spiritual impetus and cultivation never get off the ground, so to speak, or are non-existent. Rather than take, on the basis of natural spirit, the variable degree and extent of Africans' cultivated differentiation from nature as a limited pro tem spiritual accomplishment yet open to an incrementally normative development historically, they are taken exclusively as invariant natural attributes, as natural and physically geographical determinations, of Africans full stop. And this position serves as the basis for the contention, falsely in my mind as I have argued above, that Africans were without any real (empirical) history in Hegel's philosophy.

So Hegel scholars have revealed the importance of "natural spirit" to Hegel's idealism without assessing the racialism attached to it; critics of Hegel have drawn out the racial chauvinism in Hegel's racialism without examining "natural spirit" as that to which Hegel's racialism belongs. Each side emphasizes one sense of it the other neglects, despite the philosophical commitment in his idealism to both senses. I have, to the contrary of each side, assessed both notions and their importance.

Again Hegel's first sense of "natural spirit" is employed in terms of *that and how* spirit is differentiated from nature. His second sense is employed in terms of the *degree and extent* to which spirit is differentiated from nature. He uses that second sense to distinguish human groups racially and geographically. This is the source for the charge of Hegel's racism, although those who make this charge against Hegel rarely, if ever, mention "natural spirit," let alone understand it. Hegel wants, I believe, to claim that the greater or lesser the degree and extent spirit is differentiated away from nature expresses how great or less the strength of a group's *incipiently rational motivation, not natural capacity*, to comprehend or enact what counts as objective, moral, and desirable under the idea of freedom. But, to the contrary, Hegel's remarks on this second sense of "natural spirit" leaves his critics with the strong belief that the degree and extent to which a group "spiritually" differentiates or distances itself from nature are reliant on the natural racial kind and geographical features of the group. As a consequence, the degree and extent of the group's spiritual differentiation away from nature are, for Hegel's critics, *less an accomplishment and more an attribute* of the group, thus undermining his conception of spirit itself.

Contrary to Hegel scholars, I am neither stating nor implying that Hegel's racialism or racial chauvinism is irrelevant to Hegel's enterprise as a whole. Contrary to Hegel critics, I am neither stating nor implying that registering Hegel's racial chauvinism is sufficient to prevent Hegel's idealism from holding the field against the positions that African enactments are representative of invariant natural attributes or they are not historically expressive, even minimally so.

What has been done so far is more fully flesh out and finely adjust the sense of "natural spirit" in terms of "racial variety" or Hegel's "racialism." In so doing, an argument

can be credibly made, supported by Hegel's idealism, that, under the auspice of freedom, Africans are ethnically differentiated; that they advance incrementally, in varying degrees, not just their habits and social dispositions as well as their cognizance of them within reason from nature's imperatives, but also advance incrementally beyond their habits and the sedimentation of the acquired positivity of ethno-racial membership. The conceptual space has now been cleared for elaborating on Africa's history, but now in terms of satisfying in full Hegel's normative benchmark—spirit's self-determination in time under the auspice of freedom. A form of African life, in which only one, and no other, is free, gives way to another form of African life, in which ultimately one is and thereby all are free in ongoing fashion, namely, that which motivated, for example, the Saint Domingue Revolution (SDR).<sup>40</sup>

The impact of Kant's notion of "transition" on "race" is quite different from that of Hegel's concept of "development" (*Entwicklung*) on it. In Kant's philosophy, "race" and its purported racist ends are matters whose empirical reality reliant on scientific certification is subject to the conceptual jurisdiction of nature. But his "transition" to the conceptual jurisdiction of freedom makes their reality and credential as (a) conceivably irrelevant to the moral demands of the species, or (b) hopefully quashed in their moral foreclosure, or (c) effectively eliminated in this world guided by what morality proclaims what ought to be done. With the "transition" to the conceptual jurisdiction of freedom, in short, "race" and its racist ends are to be morally expunged categorically. This is why, as stated above, Kant's philosophy could underwrite the first view of King's refrain via (b) or (c).

With Hegel, on the other hand, "race" and its purported racist ends are matters of spirit, meaning that their explanatory impact would fall increasingly less under the conceptual jurisdiction of nature. They rather would be open to revision developmentally under the conceptual jurisdiction of freedom by which spirit is entailed. This means, to make a very long story very short, the following. The intelligibility of "race" is increasingly *not* dependent, at least in large part, on "race's" acquisition of empirical reality and/or scientific certification, thereby justifying the first-order truth of the natural place in the hierarchy it attaches to and sets as the natural end of a group. Rather it is increasingly dependent on the propriety of being subject to self-conscious warrant to enable and sustain with reason what counts as its first-order truth, especially when what counts periodically peters out, is from time to time no longer motivationally effective. An ethno-racial singularity is developed by the conditions of an individual's degree of attachment to what counts as "race" in ongoing, not repetitive, ways expressive of the caliber of reasons shared in a context wherein one is free, and thereby all are free. Admittedly these remarks sound theoretically flamboyant, especially (a) since Hegel's notion of "development" appears to be nothing more than a dab of blush when plied to Africa and its diaspora, and rather flaccid, especially (b) since Hegel never expressly made them.

Sylvia Wynter tags the consequences of what could be called Hegel's theoretical histrionics in her well-known essay, "Is 'Development' a Purely Empirical Concept or Also Teleological?: A Perspective From 'We, the Underdeveloped.'"<sup>41</sup> She argues that the notion of development is culturally specific, not culturally neutral, whose genesis and structure are subject to the "Western epistemological order," in which an understanding of African "traditional system of thought" would remain entrapped. Briefly the strategies of development implemented today to remedy Africa's long-standing and ever-deepening economic and ecological crisis, she contends, have been and still are

reliant primarily on that epistemological order. According to Wynter, given this crisis, Africa and its diaspora have been called upon, time and again, to acquiesce to both “development” along material (empirical) and normative (teleological) lines they do not and would not prescribe for themselves. For Wynter, such has been their history, both in empirical and in normative terms.

The consequence of such acquiescence is that Africa and its diaspora are made to experience themselves as the “*massa damnata* (those not elected for salvation),”<sup>42</sup> always coupled to the narrative of “development” as “we, the underdeveloped.” In effect, Wynter is highly incredulous of “development” at work along material lines (modernization) and development at work in over-ambitious philosophies of history with their affirmation of “faith in uninterrupted progress” as the horizon for human beings, especially for those of African descent.

Although a more sophisticated analysis of Wynter’s essay cannot be presented here, it is clear that her skepticism to “development” would extend toward Hegel’s, given its emphasis on progress. But there are a number of points that must be kept in mind regarding Hegel’s conception of “development.” First, Hegelian “development” is *not* natural maturation or growth to a natural end state, because it is operative only in spirit. Second, it is *not* advancement to an end state of perfection or to something utopian, materialist or otherwise, because of the indeterminacy surrounding perfection. Third, it is *not* eschatology leading to a divine end state, involving some dramatic transcendent incursion consummating the history of the world from the outside, because it proceeds arduously, gradually and internally via the giving and sharing of reasons, if not struggles.

As Hegel puts it, “development in the spiritual world is at once a hard and unending struggle with itself . . . hard and strenuous labor on itself.”<sup>43</sup> A retrospective dimension is to be had in Hegel’s conception of “development.” It is found neither in Wynter’s skeptical account nor in the three aforementioned conceptions. Her account and those conceptions do not tally “development’s hard and strenuous labor on itself.” What people of African descent as ethno-racial singularities thought, desired, and did, and why they thought, desired, and did it in the face of colonialism or enslavement and their aftermaths, would be outcomes of “development” for Hegel *only following* their grasp and reconstruction of what they were dedicated to enacting, recognized or unrecognized, as their thoughts, desires, and deeds. Those oppressive institutions can never be justified, given their real historical role in the impediment to the human self-development and material development of people of African descent. But they may not preclude for Hegelian “development” other institutions consistent with people of African descent being free *if and only if* that consistency is ever defended in a manner wherein even the assumption, not just the claim, of privilege and disparity is non-existent and not in force.<sup>44</sup> “Race” is reconstructed as it “develops” not as a concept to be made empirically real or factually true, but as a concept to be made normatively fulfilling with good, salient reasons.<sup>45</sup>

What spirit counts as a first-order truth objectively, obligatorily, and desirably not only can be unsuccessful as models of experience, but its effort to abide these models can reveal only in retrospect its periodic incapability to sustain the ongoing alteration of them and their authority. Hegel’s idealism admits that the ongoing alteration, not the constant reauthorization by nature or positivity, of what is counted by a people (or an ethno-race) can be regarded as yielding better outcomes of what counts than those of and in previous periods of time. But what this signifies is that a great number of matters

that could count do not. This would be due not *solely* because of what has happened to people (ethno-racial singularities), or what people do not consider or comprehend or have not considered or comprehended, but inclusively because of what people have not let themselves consider or comprehend for the time being.

The ongoing alteration of what people count can be sustained only when each and all as individuals are free, ubiquitously recognized by other free individuals, and hence set in a context which abides the flourishing of such self-determination and recognition. In Hegel's idealism, "change [or alteration of what counts] is [not progress, but] a form of progress"<sup>46</sup> to and for the sake of freedom. History becomes the sequence of such changes to a stage wherein alteration of what counts is an unending affair, because what counts as reasons at any period can peter out or cannot be sustained. "Race" as a bona fide concept of spirit can both give way incipiently and give sway ultimately to ongoing revisions of reasons salient to individuals to acknowledge and evaluate the relation of its content to character under normatively historical conditions. That relation is attendant to ethno-racial singularities pertinent to the development of a "spiritual" or socially constructed life in which all are free. The second version of King's anaphoric refrain would find support in this Hegelian idealistic point.<sup>47</sup>

Let me end this chapter with my paraphrase of a claim by Michel Foucault. In his 1970 installation to the chair of "History and Systems of Thought" at the Collège de France, he did two things in his "Inaugural Lecture." He (a) dedicated it to the noted French Hegelian and existentialist Jean Hyppolite, despite his own anti-Hegelianism and anti-existentialism, and (b) criticized the philosophical position most prominent in France at the time—structuralism—despite what was alleged to be his attachment to and sentiments for it. My paraphrase thereof indexes below a philosophical position prominent at this moment.

Most people working in critical race theory or Africana Philosophy "flee or dismiss Hegel [and Kant]" because of the disparaging and disconcerting remarks [both have] made about peoples of color or because of a customary indifference to them as philosophers. "But truly to escape Hegel [and Kant] would involve an exact appreciation of the price we have to pay to detach ourselves from [them.]" "The appreciation of this price [would] assume that we are aware of the extent to which Hegel [and Kant], insidiously perhaps, [are] close to us; it [would] imply knowledge, permitting us to think against Hegel [and Kant]. . . . We [would] have to determine the extent to which our anti-Hegelianism [and anti-Kantianism are] possibly [each one's] tricks directed against us, at the end of which [they] stand, motionless, waiting for us."<sup>48</sup>

## Notes

- 1 The first view is addressed in the chapter "Kant on Race and Transition" in this volume.
- 2 A proponent of this view would be Cornel West who, in arguing against the "pitfalls of racial reasoning" (pseudo-authenticity, closing-ranks mentality, male subordination of women), still makes a case for a "prophetic moral reasoning" wherein "*the moral content of a mature black identity [coincides with] accenting the crucial role of coalition strategy in the struggle for justice and promoting the ideal of black cultural democracy.*" See his *Race Matters* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 31 (my emphasis).
- 3 See Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010), 23–69.
- 4 King, *Where Do We Go From Here*, 44.



- 5 King, *Where Do We Go From Here*, 46–47.
- 6 For representative discussions on *Hegel's racialism*, see Robert Bernasconi, “With What Must the Philosophy of World History Begin? On the Racial Bias of Hegel’s Eurocentrism,” *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 22 (2000): 171–201; Allegra de Laurentiis, “Race in Hegel: Text and Context,” in *Philosophie Nach Kant: Neue Wege zum Verständnis von Kants Transzendental- und Moral-Philosophie*, ed. Mario Egger (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2014), 591–624; Michael Hoffheimer, “Race and Law in Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion,” in *Race and Racism in Modern Philosophy*, ed. Andrew Valls, 194–216 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005) and “Hegel, Race, Genocide” in *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 39 (2001): 35–62; Frank M. Kirkland, “Hegel and the Saint Domingue Revolution—Perfect Together?: A Review of Susan Buck-Morss’ *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*,” *Logos: The Journal of Modern Society and Culture* (online) 11, no. 2–3 (2012): n.p.; Patricia Purtschert, “On the Limit of Spirit: Hegel’s Racism Revisited,” *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 36, no. 9 (2010): 1039–1051.
- 7 See the speech of the recently former president of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, titled “Dakar Speech,” July 26, 2007. For critical responses to the speech, see Makhily Gassama, ed., *L’Afrique répond à Sarkozy* (Paris: Philippe Rey, 2008).
- 8 The discussion in this essay will be conveyed from the vantage point of Hegel’s idealism and not exclusively from his “Geographical Basis of World History” as is usually done. It will attend to his conception of “natural spirit,” on which his discussion about Africa and its diaspora should turn.
- 9 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*, trans. Hugo Barr Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 190, hereinafter cited as *LPWH*.
- 10 Jan Vansina, *De la tradition orale: essai de method historique* (Tervuren: Mémoire no. 36 du Musée Royal de l’Afrique Centrale, 1961); Basil Davidson, *Africa in History*, rev. ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995); John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Jacqueline Ki-Zerbo, ed., *General History of Africa, Vol. I: Methodology and African Prehistory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); Roland Oliver and Brian Fagan, *Africa in the Iron Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Thurstan Shaw et al. (ed.), *The Archaeology of Africa: Foods, Metals, and Towns* (New York: Routledge, 1993); David Phillipson, *African Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Joseph H. Greenberg, *The Languages of Africa* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966); John Reader, *Africa: Biography of the Continent* (New York: Knopf, 1998).
- 11 See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Encyclopedia Logic*, trans. T. F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting, and H. S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), 33, sec. 9. Furthermore, Hegel would not speak against any empirical science supporting the race-concept.
- 12 Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (New York: Norton, 1997), 25.
- 13 Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle et capitalisme* (Paris: A. Colin, 1967), 17.
- 14 For another position regarding geographical influence and the idea of freedom, see David Harvey, *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).
- 15 Hegel, *LPWH*, 179. “Man knows only himself and his opposition to nature, and this is the sole rational element which the African peoples recognize. They acknowledge the power of nature and attempt to raise themselves above it.”
- 16 Whereas Kant would characterize these enactments under “skill” and “discipline,” still empirically conditioned and dependent on naturalized freedom, Hegel would characterize them as outcomes stemming from a need to decrease dependence on nature and a motivation to refine such a need freely and increasingly.
- 17 See Robert Pippin, “Naturalness and Mindedness: Hegel’s Compatibilism,” *The European Journal of Philosophy* 7, no. 2 (1999): 194–212. See a similar, but more expansive, essay in his *Hegel’s Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 36–64.
- 18 See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit, Vol. 1* (with German text), trans. and ed. M. J. Petry (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1978), 7, hereinafter cited as *PSS, Vol. 1*. “These are the two aspects [of spirit’s impetus]. Yet if we inquire into what spirit is, the direct answer is that it is this movement, this process of moving straight away from, freeing itself from nature” (translation altered; my addition).

- 19 This failure can also be found both in arguments using anti-racism and in arguments affirming the existence of material and civilizational advancement in Africa to criticize Hegel's claim.
- 20 Hegel, *LPWH*, 54–55.
- 21 Hegel, *LPWH*, 54–55.
- 22 Hegel, *LPWH*, 190.
- 23 An example of Hegel's racially disparaging remarks would be the following:

[M]an as we find him in Africa has not progressed beyond his immediate existence . . . All our observations of African man show him as living in a state of savagery and barbarism, and he remains in his state to the present day. The negro is an example of animal man in all his savagery and lawlessness, and if we wish to understand him at all, we must put aside all our European attitudes. We must not think of a spiritual God or of moral laws; to comprehend him correctly, we must abstract from all reverence and morality, and from everything we call feeling. All this is foreign to man in his immediate existence, and nothing consonant with humanity is to be found in his character.

- See Hegel, *LPWH*, 177. In Kantian language, Africans would be “pathologically necessitated,” not “pathologically affected,” racially in Hegel's eyes. But these remarks do not even allude to characterizing Africans in terms of “natural spirit.”
- 24 Representative of this view, but in a sophisticated way, is the impressive work by Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 72–95, hereinafter cited as Trouillot. See also Pierre-Franklin Tavares, “La Conception de l’Afrique de Hegel comme critique” [“Hegel's Conception of Africa: A Critique”], *Chemin Critiques* 2, no. 2 (1991): 153–166.
- 25 These two points connect “race's” natural spirit to the recent spate of, say, “bio-social” or social-natural accounts of “race,” which either correlate social categorization of “race” to the geo-histories of breeding populations or give biological content to “race's” social categorization. But whereas bio-social accounts address *ontologically* how and why “race's” social categorization must be attached to biological genealogy or to biological content for scientific utility or medical purposes in examining peoples or their members, natural spirit addresses *normatively* how and why “race's” social categorization must “increasingly *not* rely on” (Hegel) or “infinitely transcend” (Du Bois) that attachment for the sake of explaining its differences in terms of its achievements as outcomes of freedom. For such “bio-social” accounts, see Philip Kitcher, “Does ‘Race’ Have a Future?,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 35, no. 4 (2007): 293–317 and Quayshawn Spencer, “What ‘Biological Racial Realism’ Should Mean,” *Philosophical Studies* 159, no. 2 (2012): 181–204. In examining social-natural accounts, Paul Taylor addresses *pragmatically* ethno-racial singularities (distinguishing racial groups from racial breeding populations) in terms of having “we-intentions.” The question to Taylor, under Hegelian lights, would be—to what extent? See Paul Taylor, *Race: A Philosophical Introduction* (New York: Polity Press, 2003), 103–104. An earlier work that *phenomenologically* addressed the “bio-sociality” of “race” is Lucius Outlaw's *On Race and Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 1996).
- 26 See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit, Vol. 2* (with German text), trans. and ed. M. J. Petry (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1978), 44–83, § 393–394, hereinafter cited as *PSS, Vol. 2*.
- 27 For racialism's dismissal, see Kwame Anthony Appiah, “Racisms,” in *Anatomy of Racism*, ed. David Theo Goldberg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 4–5; in contrast, for its needed slackening, see “Race, Culture, Identity: Misunderstood Connections” in Kwame Anthony Appiah and Amy Gutmann's *Color Conscious: The Political Morality of Race* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 104.
- 28 Appiah, “Racisms,” 5.
- 29 Appiah, “Racisms,” 5.
- 30 See Hegel, *PSS, Vol. 2*, 44–93, §§ 393–395.
- 31 Hegel, *PSS, Vol. 2*, 44–49, § 393.
- 32 Hegel, *PSS, Vol. 2*, 64–67, § 394.
- 33 Bernasconi, “With What Must the Philosophy of World History Begin? On the Racial Basis of Hegel's Eurocentrism,” 187–188.

- 34 Hegel, *LPWH*, 177.
- 35 Bernasconi, “With What Must the Philosophy of World History Begin?,” 171.
- 36 Hegel, *PSS*, Vol. 2, 67, § 394.
- 37 Hegel, *PSS*, Vol. 2, 67, § 394.
- 38 On this point, Hegel would appear to have something in common with both Linda Martín Alcoff and David Theo Goldberg, who themselves prefer the notion “ethnorace” rather than “race.” The difference, however, between Alcoff and Goldberg, on the one hand, and Hegel, on the other, is that the former takes seriously, albeit does not affirm, the idea that “race” refers to visible physiological markers and “ethnicity” refers to matters of cultural identity. Alcoff and Goldberg subscribe to “ethnorace” to reconcile problems produced by the difference between the referents of the two notions. For Hegel, a race cannot be understood without ethnicity and vice versa. Both are matters of spirit. There is no immediate difference between the notions’ referents to reconcile, because the two notions mediate each other. For Hegel, the intelligibility of one requires the intelligibility of the other. See Linda Martín Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 246 and David Theo Goldberg, *Racist Cultures: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 74–77.
- 39 See Alfredo Ferrarin, *Hegel and Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 234–283; Pippin, “Naturalness and Mindedness”; and Michael Wolff, *Das Körper-Seele-Problem: Kommentar zu Hegel, Enzyklopädie* (1830) § 389 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1992). An exception may be Terry Pinkard, who appears *not* to discount the second sense. See his *Hegel’s Naturalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 64–68 and 81–82 n.55.
- 40 For a view expressing the impossibility of such a conceptual space for the enactment of the SDR under Hegelian auspices, besides Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*,” 97, see Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009) and Pierre-Franklin Tavares, “Hegel et Haiti ou le silence de Hegel sur Saint-Domingue” [“Hegel and Haiti—Or Hegel’s Silence on Saint-Domingue”] in *Chemin Critiques* 2, no. 3 (1992): 113–131. For a view expressing, contrariwise, the possibility thereof, see Frank M. Kirkland, “Hegel and the Saint Domingue Revolution—Perfect Together?: A Review of Susan Buck-Morss’ *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*.”
- 41 Sylvia Wynter, “Is ‘Development’ a Purely Empirical Concept or also Teleological?: A Perspective from ‘We the Underdeveloped,’” in *Prospects for Recovery and Sustainable Development in Africa*, ed. A. Y. Yansané (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 297–316.
- 42 Wynter, “Is ‘Development’ a Purely Empirical Concept or also Teleological?,” 305.
- 43 Hegel, *LPWH*, 127.
- 44 For a position that may be contrary to the one above, but still would respect the importance of some kind of Hegelian development on the African continent, see the excellent book by Olúfémi Táíwò, *How Colonialism Preempted Modernity in Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).
- 45 Again this conclusion is not drawn from Hegel himself. But it is responsive to two claims made by Hegel. First, it is important to keep Hegel’s famous, albeit elusive, remark in mind—“philosophy’s task is to be its own time comprehended in thoughts”—when philosophically commenting on “race.” Second, this point becomes more important when it is recognized that Hegel, in his *LPWH* (190), stated that he would forgo historical diagnosis of the Americas, because spirit’s long and hard developmental work had not yet taken hold. For us, that would mean developmental work on “race” had not been done. Hegel passed away in 1831, so it would be quite simple to conclude that Hegel proffered nothing like what I attribute to his idealism. But it can be argued that the “spiritual” development of “race” in the Americas was picked up by and took off from the works of Antenor Firmin, Anna Julia Cooper, W.E.B. Du Bois, Alain Locke, and C.L.R. James, indeed less so with Firmin’s positivist anthropology, Cooper’s feminist social epistemology, and Locke’s critical pragmatism and more so with Du Bois’ historically interpretive sociology and James’ theoretically concomitant avowal of the importance of Hegel’s dialectic and allegiance to Marxian theory for peoples of color and their histories. Examining the Black Atlantic intellectual tradition for ascertaining and seeking to complete a comprehension of “race” through, not against, Hegel is a topic for another essay.

- 46 Hegel, *LPWH*, 128 (my additions).
- 47 Although it cannot be done here, Hegel's notion of spirit and its specific form of development can be regarded as a *strong* precursor to and *stronger* in comparison with the notion of "social construction." "Social construction" is construed and pursued in terms of how we have acquired or been taught the social conventions by which the objectivity, propriety, and desirability of "x" is thought and acted upon. Spirit, on the other hand, is that which construes and pursues in thought and action "x" on the basis of freely expressed and shared reasons in the face of the grounds of "x" collapsing or expiring with no guarantee (metaphysical, natural, or conventional) to uphold the objectivity, propriety, and desirability of "x" other than the caliber of reasons to sustain or innovate them effectively.
- 48 Michel Foucault, *L'ordre du discours* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1971), 74–75. See also Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language," in his *Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Rupert Swyer (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 235 (my additions; translation altered).

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