

A. Medieval views on climate and intelligence

Ibn al-Faqih al-Hamadani (tenth century):

A man of discernment said: “The people of Iraq have sound minds, commendable passions, balanced natures, and high proficiency in every art, together with well-proportioned limbs, well-compounded humors, and a pale brown color, which is the most apt and proper color. They are the ones who are done to a turn in the womb. They do not come out with something between blonde, buff, blanced, and leprous coloring, such as the infants dropped from the wombs of the women of the Slavs and others of similar light complexion; nor are they overdone in the womb until they are burned, so that the child comes out something between black, murky, malodorous, stinking, and crinkly-haired, with uneven limbs, deficient minds, and depraved passions, such as the Zanj, the Ethiopians, and other blacks who resemble them. The Iraqis are neither half-baked dough nor burned crust but between the two.

Concise Book of Lands [1] (pp. 45-46)

Maimonides (1135–1204):

The people who are abroad are all those that have no religion, neither one based on speculation nor one received by tradition. Such are the extreme Turks that wander about in the north, the Kushites who live in the south, and those in our country who are like these. I consider these as irrational beings, and not as human beings; they are below mankind, but above monkeys, since they have the form and shape of man, and a mental faculty above that of the monkey.

The Guide for the Perplexed 3:51.384 [2]

Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406)

We have explained that the cultivated region of that part of the earth which is not covered by water has its center toward the north, because of the excessive heat in the south and the excessive cold in the north. The north and the south represent opposite extremes of cold and heat. It necessarily follows that there must be a gradual decrease from the extremes toward the center, which, thus, is moderate. The fourth zone is the most temperate cultivated region.

The bordering third and fifth zones are rather close to being temperate. The sixth and second zones which are adjacent to them are far from temperate, and the first and seventh zones still less so. Therefore, the sciences, the crafts, the buildings, the clothing, the foodstuffs, the fruits, even the animals, and everything that comes into being in the three middle zones are distinguished by their temperate (well-proportioned character). The human inhabitants of these zones are more temperate (well-proportioned) in their bodies, color, character qualities, and (general) conditions. They are found to be extremely moderate in their dwellings, clothing, foodstuffs, and crafts. They use houses that are well constructed of stone and embellished by craftsmanship. They rival each other in production of the very best tools and implements. Among them, one finds the natural minerals, such as gold, silver, iron, copper, lead, and tin. In their business dealings they use the two precious metals (gold and silver). They avoid intemperance quite generally in all their conditions. Such are the inhabitants of the Maghrib, of Syria, the two 'Iraqs, Western India (as-Sind), and China, as well as of Spain; also the European Christians nearby, the Galicians, and all those who live together with these

peoples or near them in the three temperate zones. The Iraq and Syria are directly in the middle and therefore are the most temperate of all these countries.

The inhabitants of the zones that are far from temperate, such as the first, second, sixth, and seventh zones, are also farther removed from being temperate in all their conditions. Their buildings are of clay and reeds. Their foodstuffs are durra and herbs. Their clothing is the leaves of trees, which they sew together to cover themselves, or animal skins. Most of them go naked. The fruits and seasonings of their countries are strange and inclined to be intemperate. In their business dealings, they do not use the two noble metals, but copper, iron, or skins, upon which they set a value for the purpose of business dealings. Their qualities of character, moreover, are close to those of dumb animals. It has even been reported that most of the Negroes of the first zone dwell in caves and thickets, eat herbs, live in savage isolation and do not congregate, and eat each other. The same applies to the Slavs. The reason for this is that their remoteness from being temperate produces in them a disposition and character similar to those of the dumb animals, and they become correspondingly remote from humanity. The same also applies to their religious conditions. They are ignorant of prophecy and do not have a religious law, except for the small minority that lives near the temperate regions. (This minority includes,) for instance, the Abyssinians, who are neighbors of the Yemenites and have been Christians from pre-Islamic and Islamic times down to the present; and the Mali, the Gawgaw, and the Tadrar who live close to the Maghrib and, at this time, are Muslims. They are said to have adopted Islam in the seventh [thirteenth] century. Or, in the north, there are those Slav, European Christian, and Turkish nations that have adopted Christianity. All the other inhabitants of the intemperate zones in the south and in the north are ignorant of all religion. (Religious) scholarship is lacking among them. All their conditions are remote from those of human beings and close to those of wild animals. "And He creates what you do not know."

The Muqaddimah I: Third Prefatory Discussion [3]

B. Comment on "Reservations about Rushton" by James R. Flynn

In another paper of this issue, James R. Flynn argues that the "Ice Age hypothesis" cannot explain Chinese IQ and is therefore falsified. He begins by arguing that the Chinese are divided into two groups with different origins: "While northern Chinese may have been north of the Himalayas during the last Ice Age, the southern Chinese took a coastal route from Africa to China" [4] (p. 42). In reality, both groups originated in northern China. The Han spread into what is now southern China long after the last Ice Age, between the third and tenth centuries AD [5]. In addition, it is no longer believed that northern and southern Han form two distinct gene pools. Instead, a genetic gradient runs from north to south, as a result of varying degrees of intermixture with earlier populations of southern China, and probably earlier migrations from the north [6].

Finally, Flynn assumes that a hypothesis is falsified if it cannot explain all of the data. This is setting the bar too high. There are always secondary explanations and secondary factors.

References

1. Lewis, B. *Race and Slavery in the Middle East. An Historical Enquiry*; Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 1990; ISBN 0-19-506283-3.
2. Moses Maimonides. *The Guide for the Perplexed*; George Routledge & Sons: London, UK, 1910.

3. Ibn, K. *The Muqaddimah. An Introduction to History*; Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, USA, 2015; ISBN 9780691166285.
4. Flynn, J.R. Reservations about Rushton. *Psych* **2019**, *1*, 35–43, doi:10.3390/Psych1010003.
5. Wen, B.; Li, H.; Lu, D.; Song, X.; Zhang, F.; He, Y.; Li, F.; Gao, Y.; Mao, X.; Zhang, L.; et al. Genetic evidence supports demic diffusion of Han culture. *Nature* **2004**, *431*, 302–305, doi:10.1038/nature02878.
6. Ding, Y.C.; Wooding, S.; Harpending, H.C.; Chi, H.C.; Li, H.P.; Fu, Y.X.; Pang, J.F.; Yao, Y.G.; Yu, J.G.X.; Moyzis, R.; et al. Population structure and history in East Asia. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* **2000**, *97*, 14003–14006, doi:10.1073/pnas.240441297.