

HAS THE STUDY OF RACIAL DIFFERENCES IN INTELLIGENCE OVERCOME ITS RACIST ORIGINS?

Jacques Juhel
University of Rennes

It seems that Professor Lynn's target article shows proof that differential psychology's haunting ghosts have appeared once again, at the risk of justifying some racist conceptions as well as discrediting our science which still has to often convince people of its methodological relevance and theoretical interest. Can such a famous psychologist and competent scholar accept scientifically studying the relationship between racial differences and intelligence without realizing the ethical and social implications of the thesis he will defend? We have seen in the past the disastrous influence of hierarchically oriented racial theories and we cannot believe that Richard Lynn is unaware of the consequences. Lynn's choice of propounding a speculative and unverifiable evolutionary theory of racial differences in intelligence shows us that he is not afraid that certain social Darwinist extremist followers could find in his assumptions a theoretical justification of what they would feel to be a political society's necessary adaptation to this differential statement.

Does one have to recall again how the 19th century construct of races based on phenotypes is exceedingly dubious? Are people such as Melanesians, Ceylonese or South-Saharan Africans who live in equatorial countries to be classified in the same racial category because of their skin colour? We still know that race taxonomy for Mongoloids, Caucasoids, Australoids and Negroids, actually appears to be biologically questionable. Who can now admit not knowing the large inconsistencies revealed by genetic studies on population distinctions? These findings have given proof that every population is *genetically polymorphous* (Lewontin, 1974) and that, according to the genetic characters under consideration, human populations present different genetic relationships. When, for instance, a comparison based upon HLA-A and HLA-B groups of tissue frequency shows a hort genetic distance between Indo-Europeans and African-Negroids, one must however take into account that these latter populations are genetically very distant from Asiatics, Amerindians and Oceanians. On the other hand, when immunoglobulin molecular structures (Gm groups) are compared, European and Oriental populations look genetically similar

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and are both very distant from Africans. Yet, it is well known that genetic variations are very much higher within-races than between-races as established in the 1970's by several studies concerning protein variation and blood group distributions, 85% of global genetic variations can be explained by intraracial group variability (Lewontin, 1972; Loehlin, Lindzey, & Spuhler, 1975; Latter, 1980). What is the scientific interest of a distinction between races when no one significant genetic differentiation between them is proven?

Nevertheless, let us consider the facts that Lynn thinks support the assumption of a strong dependence between a mean level of intelligence and ethnic characteristics. The first set of results is relevant to the comparison between mean IQs of various racial groups: Mongoloids (97-110), Caucasoids (94-107), south east Asians (80-95), Negroids-Caucasoids (66-944 Amerindians (70-90) and Negroids (65-81), Yet, we've known for a long time that the use in cross-cultural studies of our classic intelligence tests such as for instance the Wechsler Scales (14 out of 15 were used in the quoted studies with Amerindians) or even *Culture-Free* tests, is problematical (Biesheuvel, 1949). As evoked but unfortunately quickly rejected by Lynn, several contextual factors could play a role in these between-group IQ differences (Berry, 1974), thus requiring that the study of these differences should be approached from an interactionist position. In addition, assuming that IQ-tests' construct-validity is nearly the same whatever the ethnic-population may be (Hakstian and Vandenberg, 1979), comparison of psychometric intelligence levels is all the less biased when the tests which are used are similar. As one can see in tables 3 and 4 or in tables 5 and 6, the diversity of the IQ-tests in the selected studies tends to go against unbiased results. A last word on these results: even though Lynn seems to be very well informed on this subject, one can be a little bit astonished to see that standard-deviations are not jointly presented with mean IQs for *every* selected study. This omission does not allow the reader to compare the magnitude of the intra-ethnic group variability with what is here considered as the between-races genetic variability.

The second main set of results supporting Lynn's hypothesis of racial differences in intelligence is derived from Arthur Jensen's choice reaction time (CRT) studies. Though several authors have found fault with Jensen's RT decomposition paradigm (Longstreth, 1984), the relationship between information processing parameters such as mean median RT or trial-by-trial intraindividual variability and psychometric intelligence seems actually indisputable. According to Jensen himself, the magnitude of this negative relationship could be about .50; one must consider that Jensen thinks that

the across trials intraindividual variability is perhaps more basic than the mean median RT, with respect to the correlation between RT parameters and psychometric intelligence (Jensen, 1987). But the interpretation of this relationship is not as obvious as Lynn seems to believe; there are several other different explanations that Jensen's hypothesis postulating RT parameters as behavioral measures of some biological and hereditary characteristics of the human central nervous system (Mackintosh, 1986). Carlson, C.M. Jensen & Widaman (1983) have for instance shown that voluntary, sustained attention, arousal or orientation may be involved in this relationship. Furthermore, the data and findings in table 7 are presented in an imprecise and ambiguous manner: what must we think for instance of the $-.94$ correlation between decision time (DT) and IQ, computed on 2 sets of 5 measures each? Are the deviations between the 5 ethnic-group's mean DTs significant or not? What are the values of the within-group correlations between DT and IQ?

Another argument inducing Lynn to insist that the two races with the highest intelligence levels are the Mongoloids and the Caucasoids concerns their significant contribution to civilization. Nobody would dispute the fact that progress in civilization in so far as a value and a model of social organization has emerged from Asian and European crucibles. But for which scientific reasons is it possible to assimilate what one must primarily consider as a cultural evolution with a biological evolution? Once generated by biology, culture has not developed because of genetic influence (we know the weakness of the between ethnic groups genetic variations) to the contrary, there is every indication that culture is more probably the product of many acquired characters which have been handed down.

Lynn's neo-Darwinian explanation of the evolution of racial differences is founded on the assumption that the "higher races" emerged because some *Homo erectus* populations had to overcome the problems of survival in cold temperate climates in Europe or in the northern latitudes of Asia. According to this hypothesis, Caucasoids and Mongoloids would have more highly developed intelligence than the populations living in tropical and subtropical Africa because of higher cognitive demands and consequently, of a stronger selection pressure. Lynn thinks that what he believes to be [quite solid evidence for a positive association between brain size and intelligence] is sufficient proof for his theoretical argument. We have computed the uncorrected weighted correlation for the 16 mentioned studies ($N = 38647$); this correlation is about $.14$. Whether this correlation between brain size and intelligence is regarded as a weak or strong relationship is a subjective judgment; but is this evidence really a

good argument? Many anthropologists are far from sharing Lynn's opinion because of the numerous contradictions found by paleontologists or speciation biologists. The fact that the weak inter-ethnic genetic variation is noted more longitudinally than latitudinally (i.e. not with climate differences) is one of the many contradictions that go against the assumption of race hierarchization by selection pressure (Piazza, Menozzi and Cavalli-Sforza, 1981) quoted in Blanc, 1984).

In conclusion, we feel that Lynn's compilation of differential statements concerning groups designated as races, and his attempt to propound an explanatory theory, seem to express the strength of his conviction concerning the interest of research and theory on racial differences. Though Lynn has an absolute right to academic freedom, one may perhaps inquire as to whether such a conviction is not prejudicial in regards to an ethical approach towards the potential relationship between ethnic-groups and psychometric intelligence (Zuckerman, 1986). We think that when the reader could get the impression that the author is trying more to convince rather than to strictly present data and discuss ideas; the risk is high that such a proposal concerning the evolution of racial differences in intelligence may play a part in the development of a racist ideology.

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ESSAYS ON GERMANIC RELIGION

EDGAR C. POLOMÉ
University of Texas, Austin

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Institute for the Study of Man
6861 Elm Street, Suite 4H
McLean, Virginia 22101
Telephone: (703) 442-8010
Fax: (703) 847-9524

**RACE DIFFERENCES IN INTELLIGENCE:
A MICROEVOLUTIONARY AND
ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Vaclav Vancata

Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Prague

The paper on "Race Differences in Intelligence: A Global Perspective" by Richard Lynn yields us an extensive outline of the research in human intelligence. The first question should concern the nature of human intelligence, its meaning in evolutionary perspective and the contemporary concept of human race and its use in recent anthropology.

In my opinion, the intelligence is one part of human cultural adaptive complex. Its original meaning is to secure the optimal reaction of an individual to certain environmental factors in the framework of cultural adaptive reactions; it naturally includes tool use, tool making and artificial modifications of the environment (Blumenberg 1983, Geist 1978, Vancata and Privratsky 1983 a, b, Vancata et al 1981, 1986). However, the reaction norm depends not only on the parameters of an individual but there is also a strong dependance on the experiences of the individual and his group or population. The cultural traditions of a group, the social structure, social status and "adaptive level" or technological level of the group, etc. as well as physiological parameters of a given population are of a great importance for the formation of cultural adaptive mechanisms. The last point is closely connected with the concept of race in recent physical anthropology and human biology and genetics (cf. Benes 1979, Korn 1978, Vogel and Motulsky 1979, Wolpoff 1980).

The static concept of race that is used by Lynn has been seriously challenged by both physical anthropologists and human geneticists many years ago because of continuous morphological variability between major races, gene flow, migrations and isolation of various populations and many other factors (Benes 1979, Geist 1979, Santangelo 1989, Vogel and Motulsky 1979). It is almost impossible to establish precisely whether the degree of intelligence in individual human groups has been influenced by the genetic parameters specific for the major races or by the non-specific genetic factors and up to which degree. These two facts make it difficult to accept the author's concept as really comprehensive. There is no doubt