Precisely *when* did a conception of human blackness, one that is construable as being roughly akin to our own in an ethnoracial sense, first arise in Chinese consciousness? We are of course naturally compelled to think that no such consciousness of blacks could ever have arisen prior to direct contact by the Chinese with them—with that being an event that could not plausibly have occurred much before the last third of the first millennium of the Common Era, at the earliest. Nevertheless, Chinese philosophical literature produced as early as the fourth and third centuries BCE as well as a succession of writings of disparate genres of intervening and subsequent eras confront us with an unexpected reality. Therein, we find that there are already incipient intimations of a Chinese awareness of a breed of being, sometimes verifiably encountered and sometimes not, that differed uniquely from known other men by bearing a complexion that was just as uncharacteristically alien as it was unalterably black.