Race, Racism, and the Middle Ages

Gens, genus (f)

- That which belongs to birth or descent
- Race or clan embracing several families united together by a common name and certain religious rights
- Gens humana = human race

Picture a person living in the medieval period

University of Virginia
August 12th, 2017

Aryan Guard,
Based in Alberta

"In light of the recent events in the United States, most recently the racist violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, the undersigned community of medievalists condemns the appropriation of any item or idea or material in the service of white supremacy. In addition, we condemn the abuse of colleagues, particularly colleagues of color, who have spoken publicly against this misuse of history."

"As scholars of the medieval world we are disturbed by the use of a nostalgic but inaccurate myth of the Middle Ages by racist movements in the United States. By using imagined medieval symbols, or names drawn from medieval terminology, they create a fantasy of a pure, white Europe that bears no relationship to reality. This fantasy not only hurts people in the present, it also distorts the past. Medieval Europe was diverse religiously, culturally, and ethnically, and medieval Europe was not the entire medieval world. Scholars disagree about the motivations of the Crusades—or, indeed, whether the idea of "crusade" is a medieval one or came later—but it is clear that racial purity was not primary among them."

--Medieval Academy of America (August 2017)

Christchurch Massacre,
New Zealand
March 15th, 2019

ron456785   1 year ago

the Washington Post is now blackwashing Europe's Medieval history in this atrocious article about the shooting in NZ, pandering to SJWs, saying "Europe was never fully white", lol - they even link to "Medieval PoC's" Twitter account. Medieval PoC is a not too bright, hysterical, pathological liar ("my gypsy ancestor was smuggled into the U.S. in a suitcase while fleeing from the nazis") afrofantast and SJW from Tumblr. She takes depictions of non-Europeans in European art (such as the Three Kings visiting the Christ child and paintings of the colonial era) completely out of context to prove Europe was never entirely white and how Africans and Asians were erased from our European history books by evil white men. Hence history books have to be rewritten and Africans/Asians have a right to be in Europe today - or that's how the reasoning goes. I'm sure it makes progressives and migrants with serious issues like M-PoC feel good about themselves to be able to say: "you idiots and racists, don't you know Europe was never completely white, Africans belong there" - that's what it's all about in the end: feels over reals. It isn't true, but the truth is irrelevant to SJWs, feelings are everything. This is the sort of source WP cites today, this is the absolute state of quality journalism in the U.S.

Comment on *Washington Post* article, March 2019
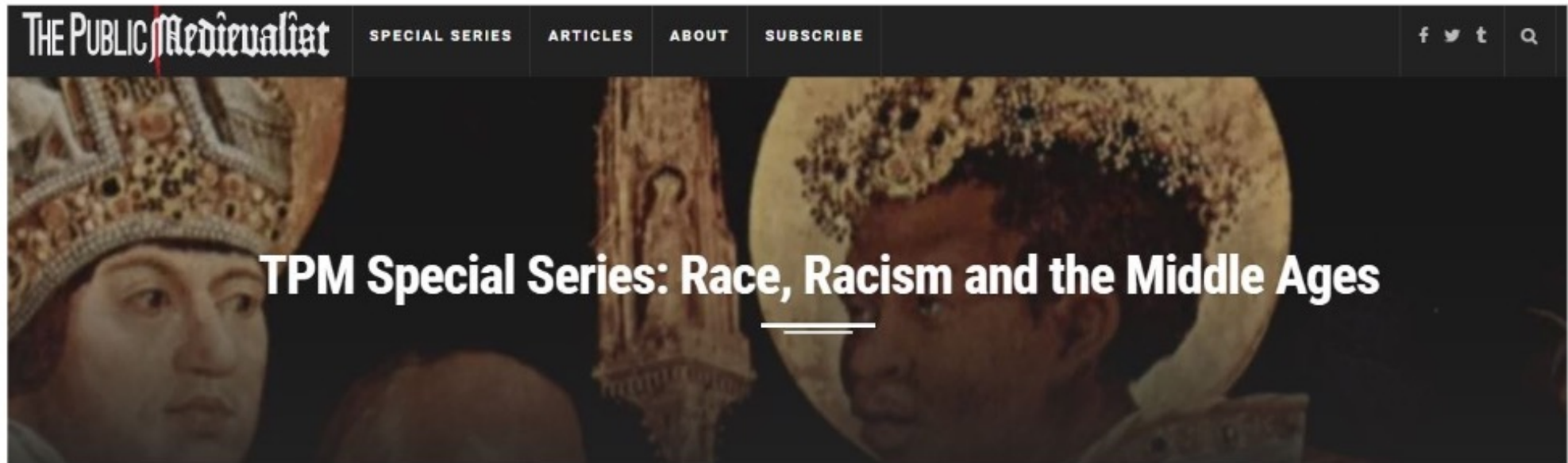
Capitol Riots,
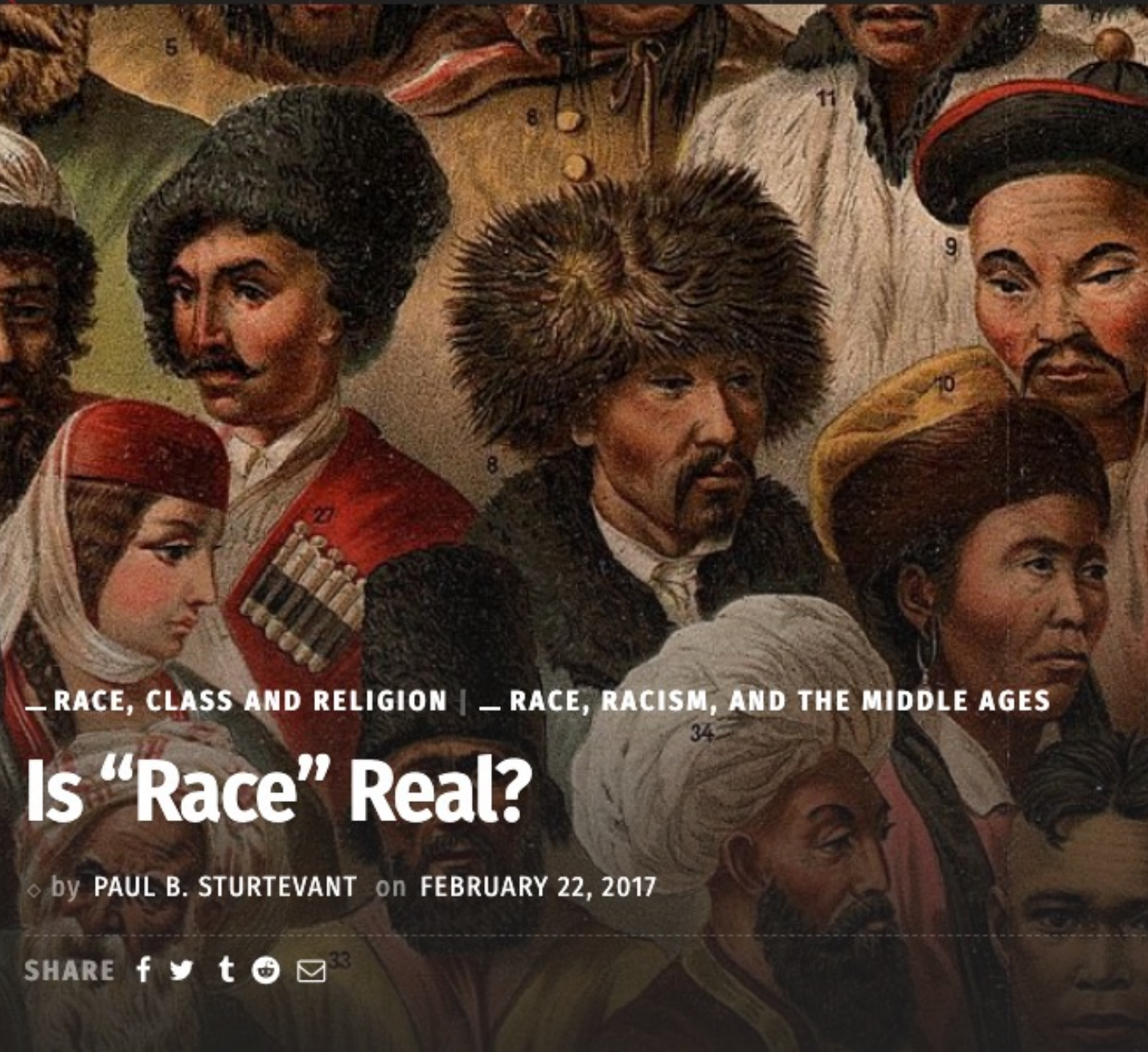# Jan 6th, 2021

Today's focus…

- Defining race: today and in the medieval period

- Medieval society as pluralistic

- Weaponization of medieval Europe as a white utopia

The Public Medievalist

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TPM Special Series: Race, Racism and the Middle Ages

editor and author, Paul Sturtevant

_RACE, CLASS AND RELIGION | _RACE, RACISM, AND THE MIDDLE AGES

Is "Race" Real?

◇ by PAUL B. STURTEVANT on FEBRUARY 22, 2017

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- Race and racial categories are arbitrary
- Race and racial categories are based on cultural perceptions and other factors NOT scientific fact

The logic of race may seem sound at first glance. For example, runners from sub-Saharan Africa often dominate track categories in the Olympics, and African Americans dominate the NBA and NFL. By inductive reasoning, therefore, black people must naturally make better athletes. And since white people dominate business, academia, and politics in the U.S. and Europe, surely that is because they have some innate abilities in those arenas. But inductive reasoning like this is flatly incorrect; when you begin to examine the idea of race—and the meanings that are made from it more closely, the whole thing quickly unravels.

Scientists, sociologist and psychologists have found that there are no behavioral or intellectual differences whatsoever between peoples based on race or ethnicity that cannot be attributed to other—typically social—factors, or good old individual variation. Africans dominate running in the Olympics because of cultural factors, not biological ones. Chief among the factors that determine people's circumstances are those affected by social, institutional and structural racism—which explains why white people dominate business, academia, and politics in the U.S. and Europe.

from Paul Sturtevant, "Is Race Real?" available here:
https://www.publicmedievalist.com/is-race-real/

Medieval Ideas of Race

"race"--English 1547

Spanish, Portuguese, French
--15th century

France, 1450s

Gens
Natio
populous

=   **PEOPLE**

Difference —— Descent
—— Customs
—— Language
—— Law
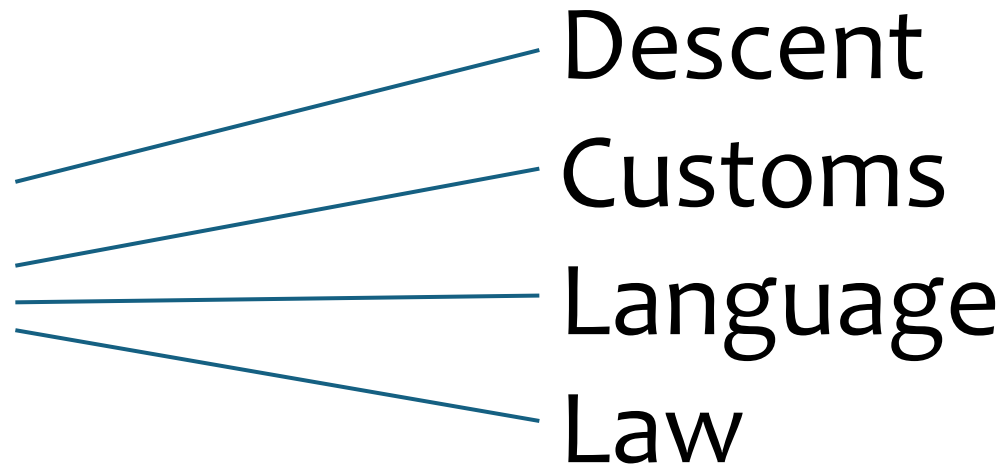
"The race of the sea coasts (low lands) is domesticated, civilized, faithful, patient, cultivated, decently dressed, refined and peaceable, devout in worship, yet always ready to withstand any harm done by its enemies. The mountain race [gens], however, is wild, untamed, primitive, intractable, inclined to plunder, leisure-loving, quick to learn, skillful, handsome in appearance but vilely dressed and continually fiercely opposed to the English people and language, but also to their own nation, on account of the difference of language."
(John of Fordun, 14th century)

Religion and Race

Jewish money-lenders, 13th century

"What do you think the devil can accomplish through the Jews, who are so numerous, almost all educated and most adept at trickery, so well endowed with the good life and the usuries allowed them by Christians, so loved by our princes on account of the services they provide and the flatteries they spew forth, so scattered and dispersed throughout the world, so secretive in their deceptions that they display a remarkable appearance of being truthful?"
      --Ramón Martí (1275)

1275 manuscript

- Pontius Pilot and Jews as deceivers
- Accusations of Blood Libel (e.g. William of Norwich, 12th c. England)

Species	1	2	3	4	5
Americanus	Red, choleric and straight	Straight, black and thick hair; gaping nostrils; [freckled] face; beardless chin	Unyielding, cheerful, free	Paints himself in a maze of red lines	Governed by customary right
Europaeus	White, sanguine, muscular	Plenty of yellow hair; blue eyes	Light, wise, inventor	Protected by tight clothing	Governed by rites
Asiaticus	Sallow, melancholic, stiff	Blackish hair, dark eyes	Stern, haughty, greedy	Protected by loose garments	Governed by opinions
Africanus	Black, phlegmatic, lazy	Dark hair, with many twisting braids; silky skin; flat nose; swollen lips; Women [with] elongated labia; breasts lactating profusely.	Sly, sluggish, neglectful	Anoints himself with fat	Governed by choice [caprice]

Carl Linnaeus, *Systema Naturae* (10th edition, 1758)

Oliver Goldsmith, *A History of Earth and Animated Nature* (1774)

"They [the variations] are actual marks of degeneracy in the human form; and we may consider the European figure and colour as standards to which refer all other varieties."

Chinese.   Laplander.   Hottentot.   Negro.   American.

Image from an 1822 edition of Goldsmith's book. It shows the "typology" of races.

Medieval History as Nation-building exercise

Great Zimbabwe, 11th-15th c.

Illuminated manuscript from 1350, Unknown artist

St. Maurice, patron saint of Holy Roman Emperors (medieval Germany)

Alfonso el Sabio, Spain, 1280s

Illuminated poem, "Conversion of a Black Man to Christianity" in *Cantigas de Santa Maria*

Giotto, Italy, 1304-1306

Scenes from the Life of Christ, The Flagellation