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SIMPLE TRUTHS

About

RACE, RACISM & THE
MIDDLE AGES

From

THE PUBLIC Medievalist

1. The Middle Ages did not just happen in Europe.
2. Our current ideas about “race” are not based in science; they’re cultural.
3. Ideas about “race” have changed vastly over time, and change every day.
4. Medieval people did not think about race the same way that we do.
5. Medieval Europe was not all white.
6. People of color lived in medieval Europe.
7. Medieval Italy, Spain, and Byzantium were diverse, multicultural societies, and all the better for it.
8. Yes, conflicts between peoples happened.
9. Many medieval people were prejudiced. Violence happened. Injustice happened. It does now too.
10. But there were also people who did the right thing and stood up to that violence and hate, even in the darkest moments. Just like now.
11. The Middle Ages should not be defined by its conflicts. There were long periods of peace, tolerance, and cooperation.
12. The medieval world was at its best during the periods of peace and cooperation. Just like now.

The question is: what history do you want to celebrate, to learn from, and to emulate?