

Marginality in the Ancient Greek World

INTRODUCTION COURSE OVERVIEW

CLASS 1630 | FALL 2024

Dr. Maggie Beeler
Department of Classics
University of Pittsburgh



Agenda

- 1 Attendance
- 2 Announcements
- 3 For today
- 4 For next time

Attendance

TopHat



Announcements

Course updates and administration

- Self-Assessment 1
- Response Paper 1

For today

ORIENTATION: RECEIVED ANCIENT IDEA(L)S

Orients students to modern popular and scholarly engagements with ancient ideas of race via (neo)classical sculpture.

Read

- Painter 2010. “Introduction.” In *The History of White People*, ix-xi.
- Painter 2010. “The white beauty ideal as science.” In *The History of White People*, 43-58.
- Wecker 2015. “The scandalous story behind the provocative 19th-century sculpture ‘Greek Slave.’” *Smithsonian*.

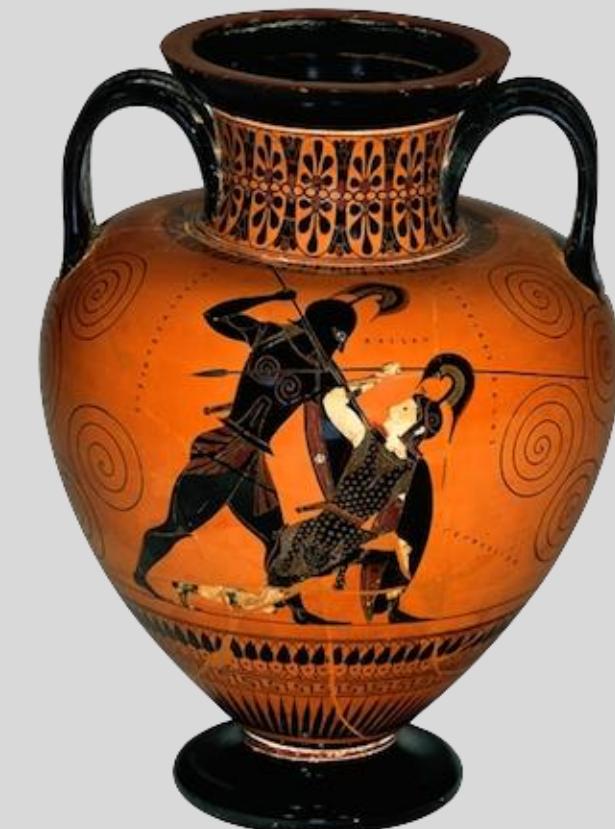
Further reading

- Nelson, Charmaine A. 2000. “White Marble, Black Bodies and the Fear of the Invisible Negro: Signifying Blackness in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Neoclassical Sculpture.” *Canadian Art Review* 27.1/2: 87-101.

Submit: Response Paper 1 (due Tue, Sep 3 at 1:00 PM)

Classics

- Classics is study of ancient Greece & Rome
- term “classical” is value-laden
- sets up a hierarchy with Greek & Rome culture at the top as “exemplary”



Reception

- values
- beliefs
- customs
- practices
- food
- clothes
- religion
- technology
- art & architecture



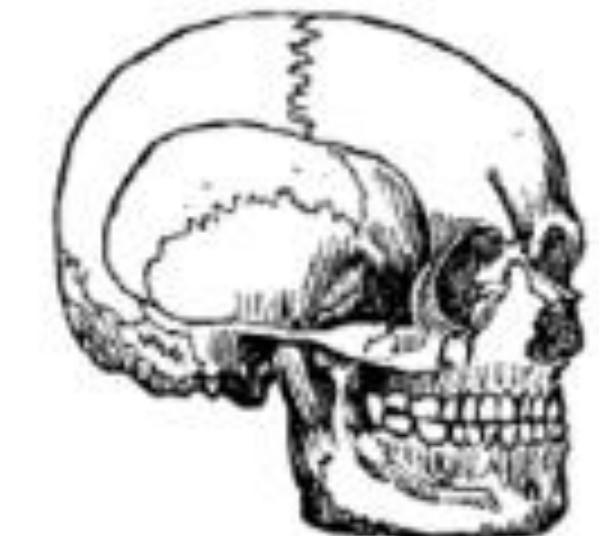
Classics & scientific racism



FIG. 339. — Apollo Belvidere.⁵³³



FIG. 340.⁵³⁴



Greek.



FIG. 341. — Negro.⁵³⁵



Creole Negro.

FIG. 342.⁵³⁷

FIG. 343. — Young Chimpanzee.⁵³⁸

The History of White People

New York
Times
Bestseller

"Race," Nell Irvin Painter writes, "is an idea, not a fact."

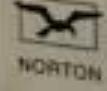
... This terrific new book spins a less familiar narrative: the "notion of American whiteness," an idea as dangerous as it is seductive, ...

The best parts of *The History of White People* manage to both soberly assess the damage and almost gleefully highlight the craziness behind it. It's shocking that a book about such ugliness should be such fun to read.

Painter maintains a calm, ironic, almost bemused tone—a wise choice, when the material speaks for itself in such bizarre voices."

—Kate Tuttle,
Boston Sunday
Globe

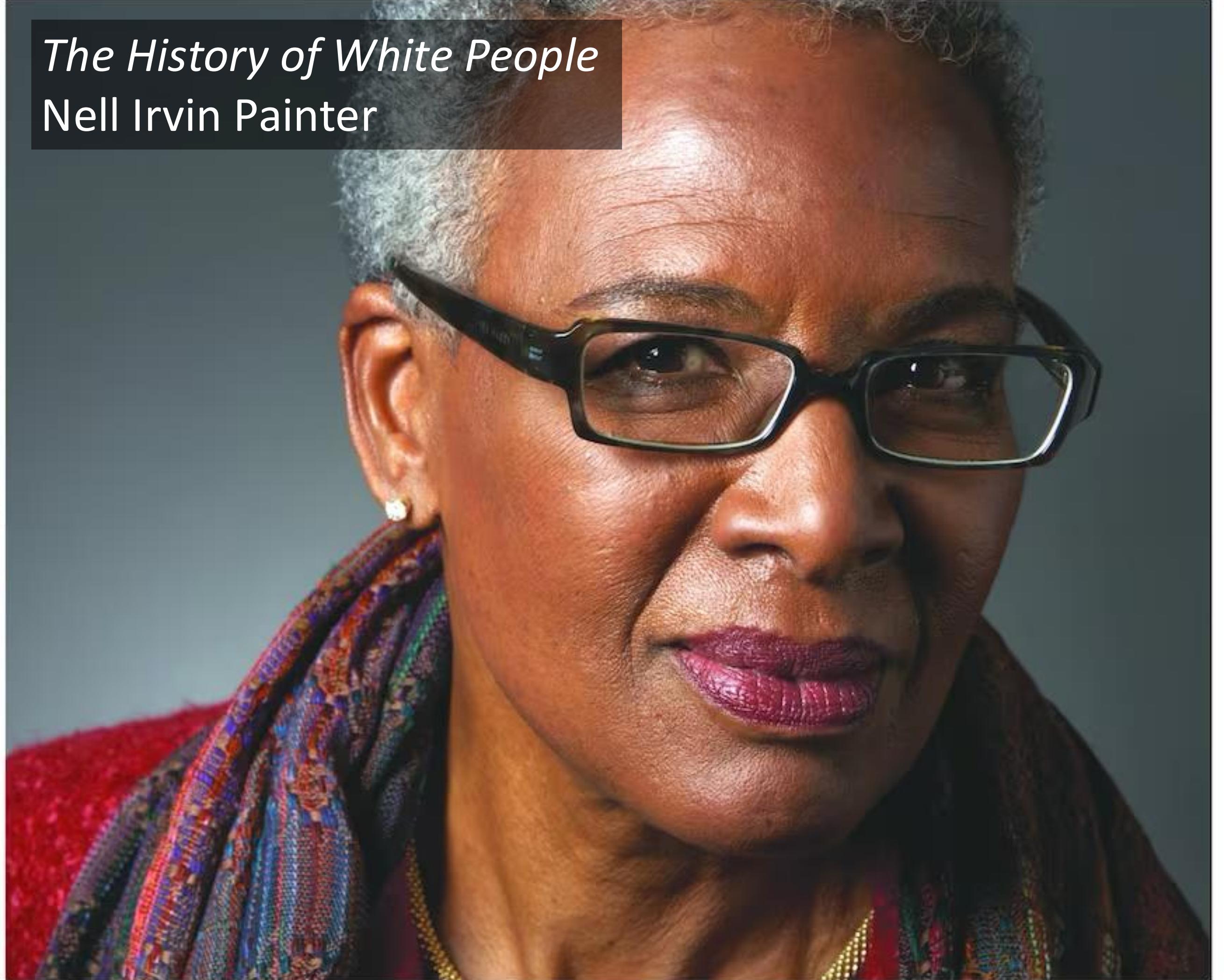
Nell
Irvin
Painter



THE
HISTORY OF
WHITE PEOPLE
NELL IRVIN
PAINTER

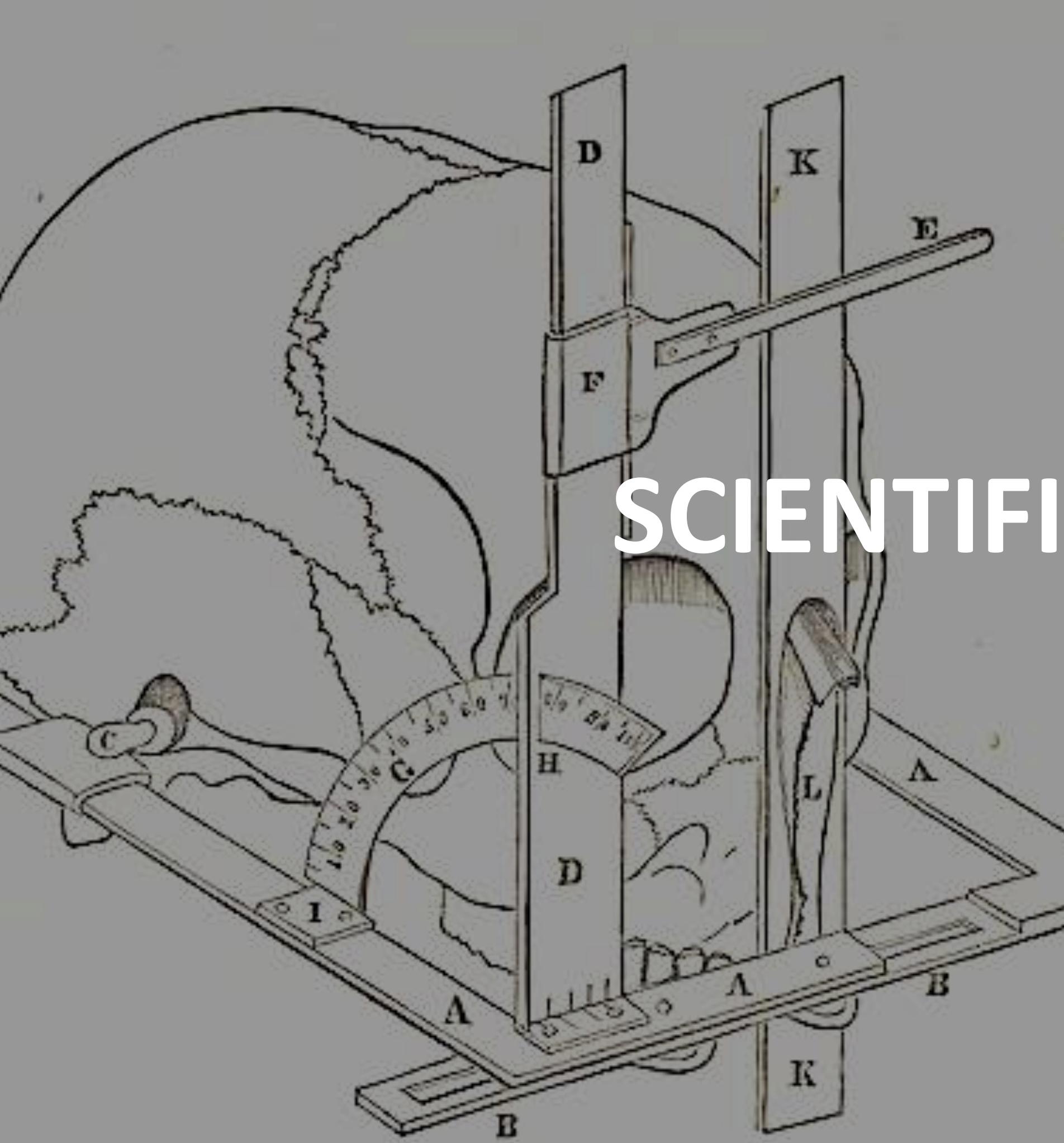
The History of White People

Nell Irvin Painter



“In addition, not a few Westerners have attempted to racialize antiquity, making ancient history into white race history and classics into a lily-white field complete with pictures of blond ancient Greeks. Transforming the ancients into Anglo-Saxon ancestors made classics unwelcoming to African American classicists. The blond-ancient-Greek narrative may no longer be taught in schools, but it lives on as a myth to be confronted in these pages.”

-Nell Irvin Painter, The History of White People



SCIENTIFIC RACISM



Scientific racism

BEAUTY IDEALS

Johann Joachim Winckelmann
(1717-1768)

- art historian
- promoted Greek art as the ideal of human beauty
- developed relative chronology for Greek sculpture based on increasingly naturalistic style of human body
- linked aesthetic ideals to racial characteristics

CLASSIFICATION

Carl Linnaeus
(1707-1778)

- physician, zoologist, botanist
- classified humans into 4 categories: European, American, Asian, African
- ascribed behavioral and cultural traits to each group
- laid groundwork for scientific racism by linking physical and cultural characteristics

FACIAL ANGLES

Petrus Camper
(1722-1789)

- anatomist
- developed the facial angle measurement to compare human skulls
- claimed Europeans had the largest facial angle, closest to classical Greek statues
- helped establish craniometry as a (pseudo)scientific method of racial classification

MONOGENESIS

Johann Friedrich Blumenbach
(1752-1840)

- physician
- classified 5 varieties of humans based on geography and physical characteristics: Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, Malay
- thought Caucasian original race others degenerated from but did not propose strict racial hierarchy
- argued all races one species (monogenesis), differences due to environment

POLYGENESIS

Robert Knox
(1791-1862)

- anatomist
- believed races were separate species with innate differences (polygenesis)
- claimed racial mixing produced inferior offspring
- influential in developing scientific racism in Britain

Beauty ideals

“FATHER OF ART HISTORY”



WINCKELMANN (1717-1768)

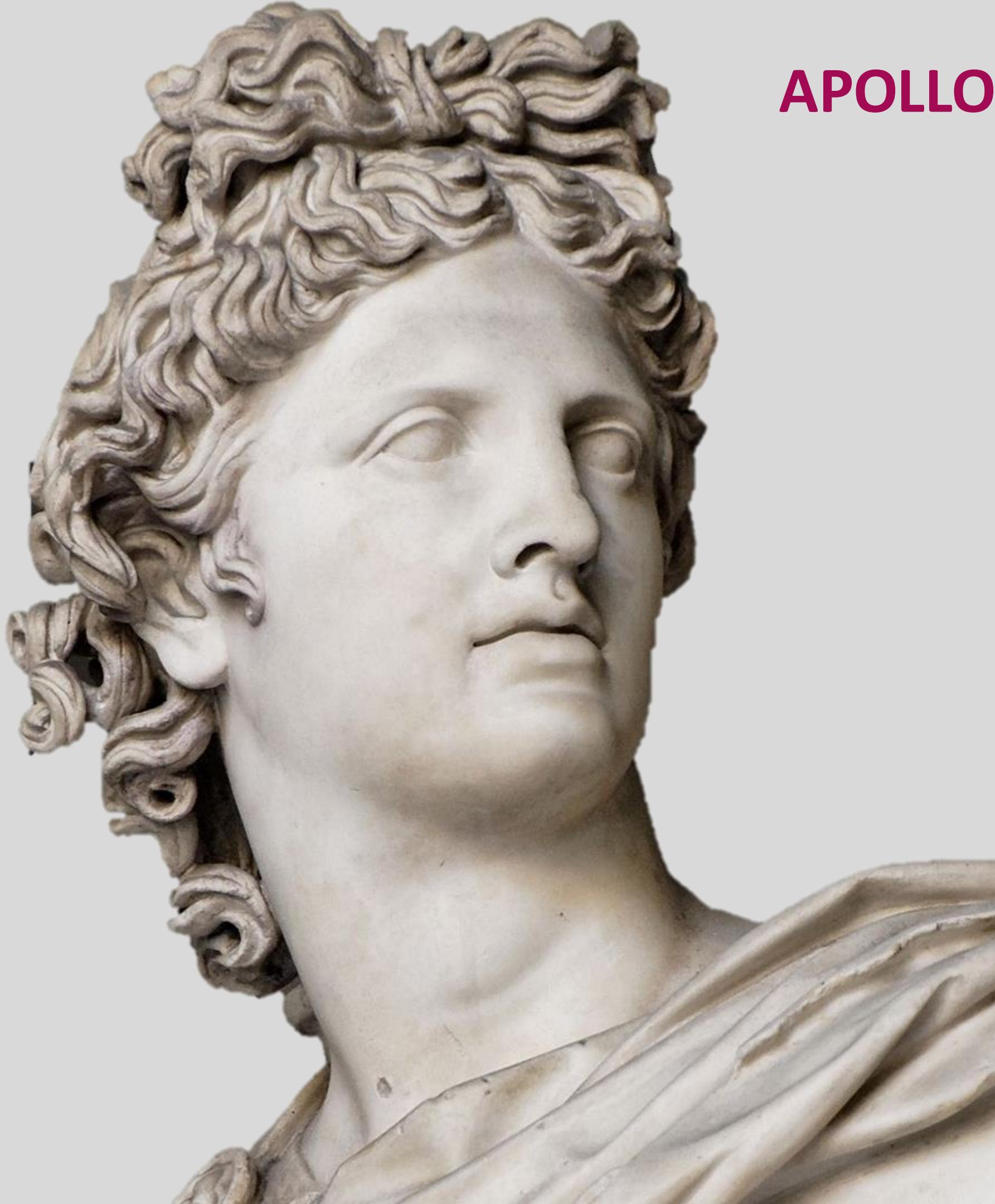


Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums/*History of the Art of Antiquity* (1764–67)

Apollo Belvedere



APOLLO BELVEDERE



Polychromy





News | HBO

Scientific racism

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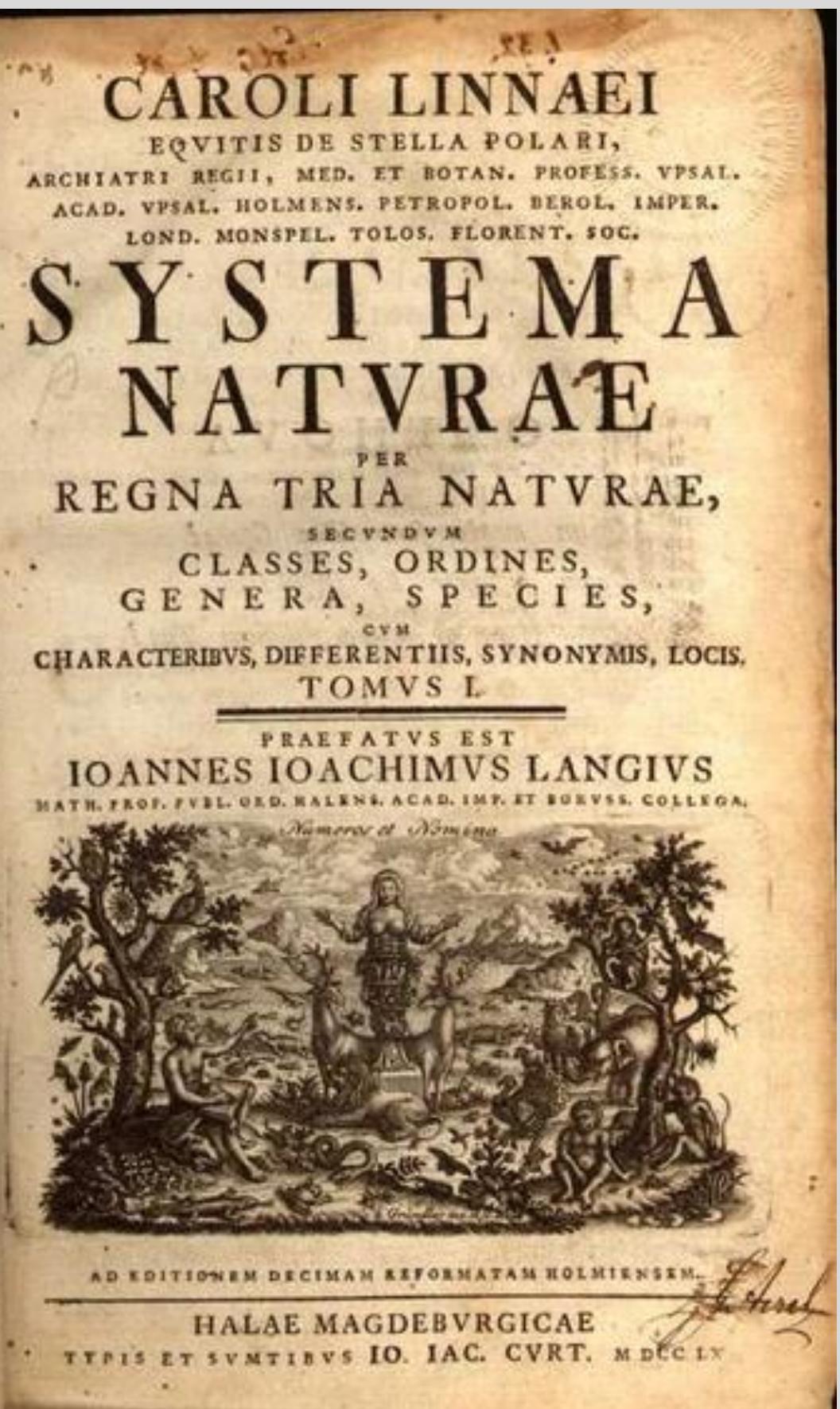
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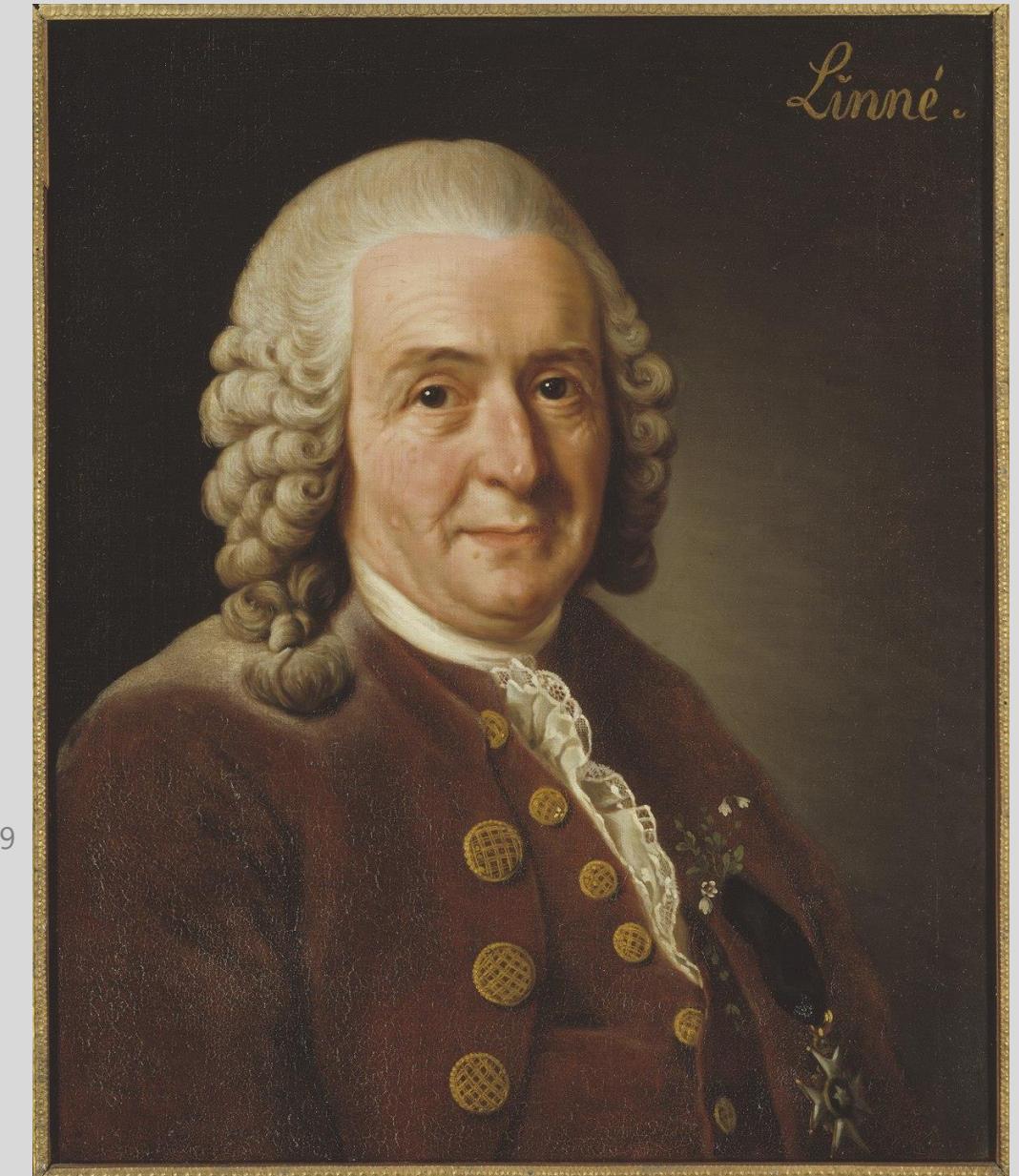
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Classification



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Facial angles

PRIMATE

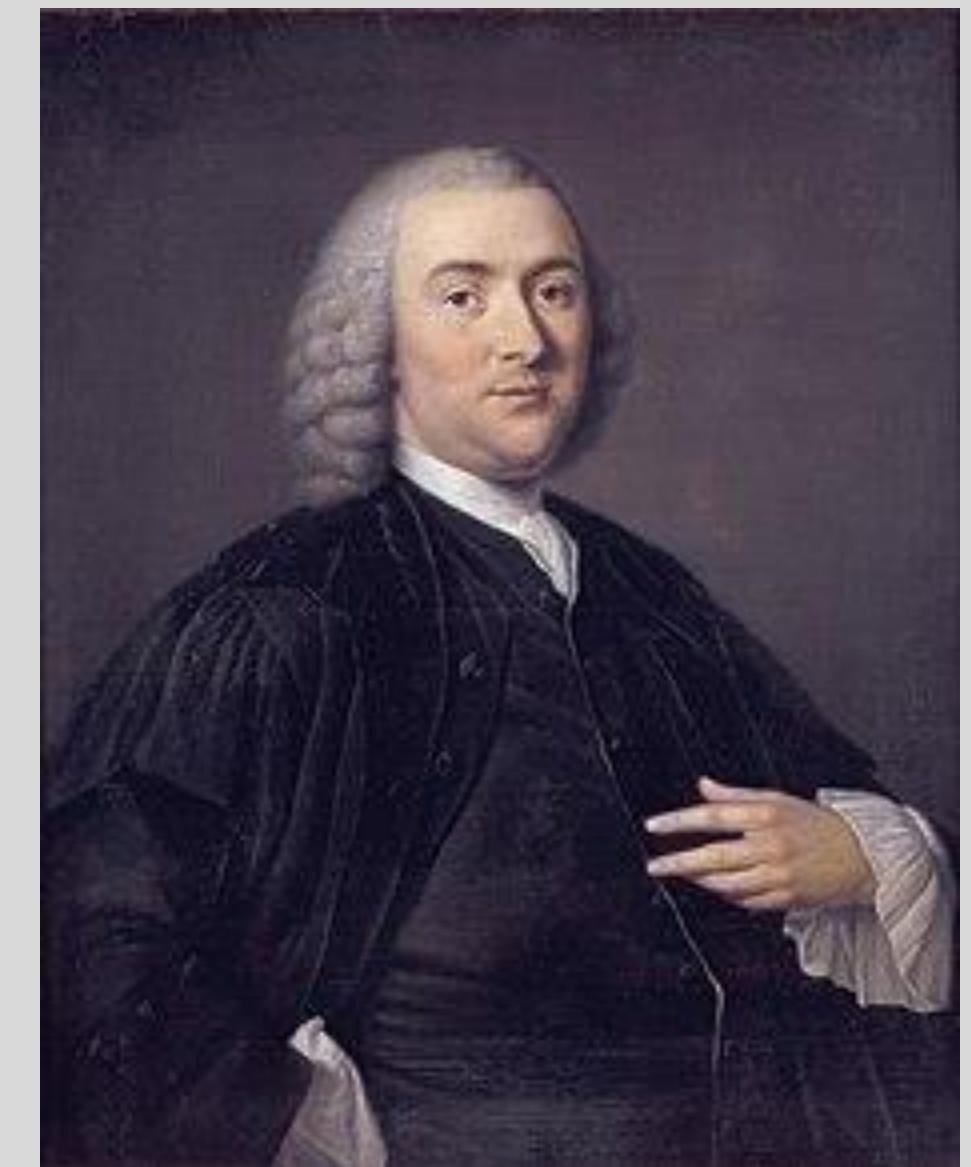
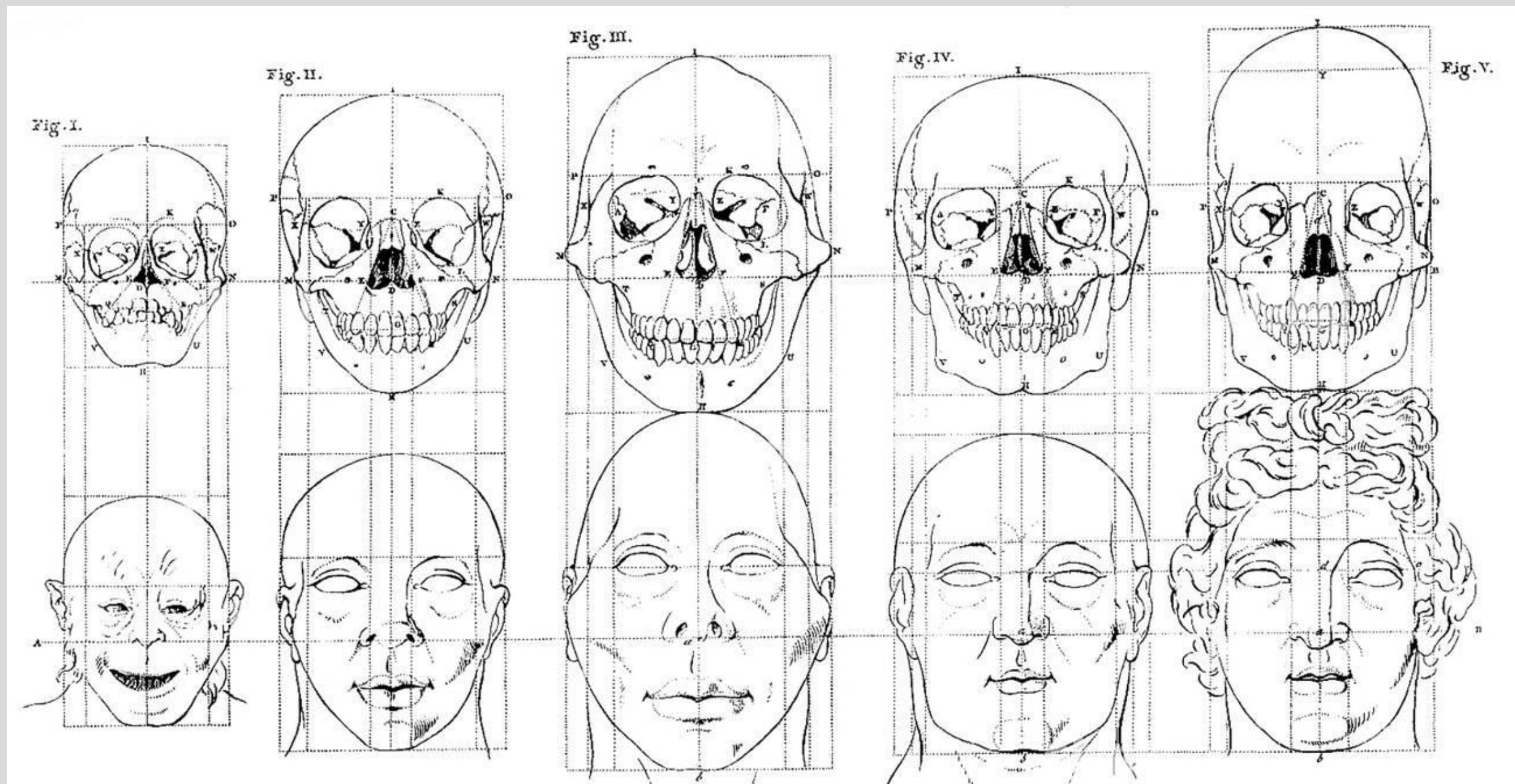
AFRICAN

MONGOLIAN

EUROPEAN

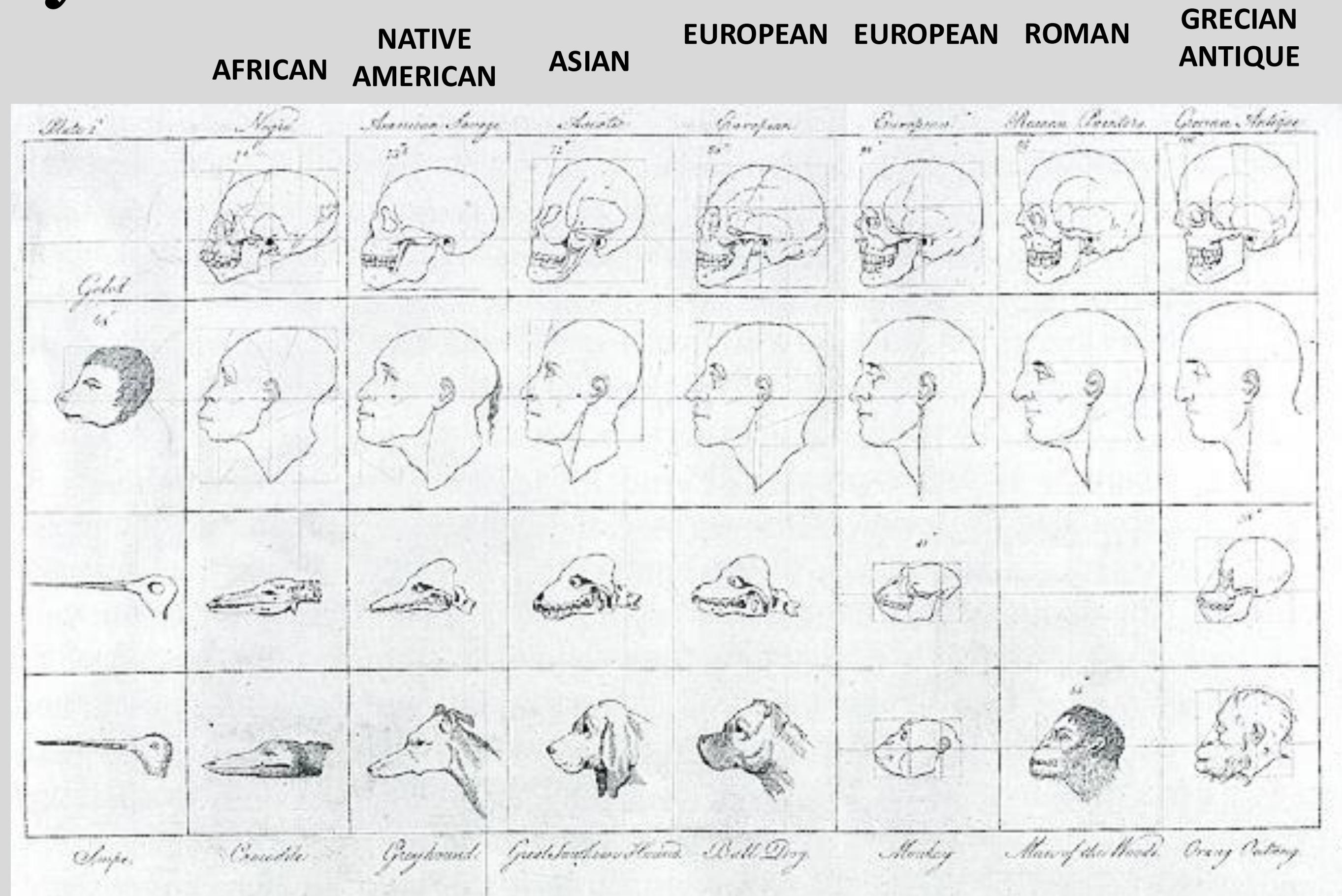
APOLLO

PETRUS CAMPER
(1722–89)



Physiognomy

- *physio* (nature) + *gnomon* (judgement)
- judging innate character based on their facial characteristics
- 18th & 19th c. pseudoscience
- rooted in Greek idea that beauty is virtue



Charles White, *An account of the regular gradation in man, and in different animals and vegetables* (1799).

Scientific racism

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Blumenbach

CAUCASIAN

"the most beautiful form of the skull, from which... the others diverge"

JOHANN
FRIEDRICH
BLUMENBACH
(1752-1840)



MONGOLIAN



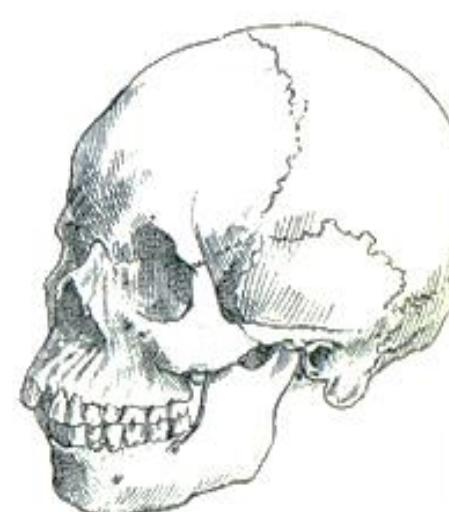
AMERICAN



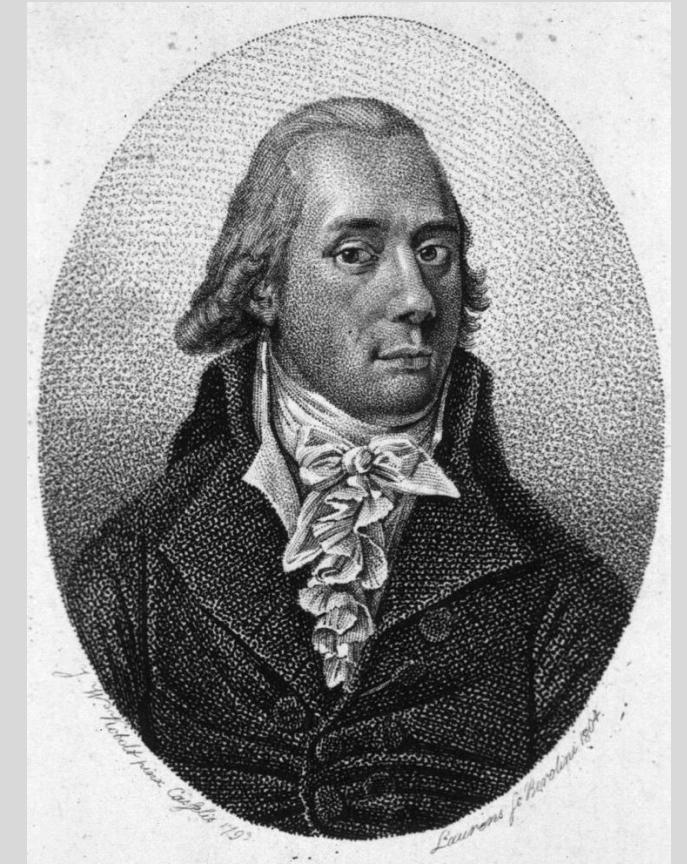
CAUCASIAN



MALAY



AETHIOPIAN



*On the Natural
Variety of
Mankind* (1775)

Scientific racism

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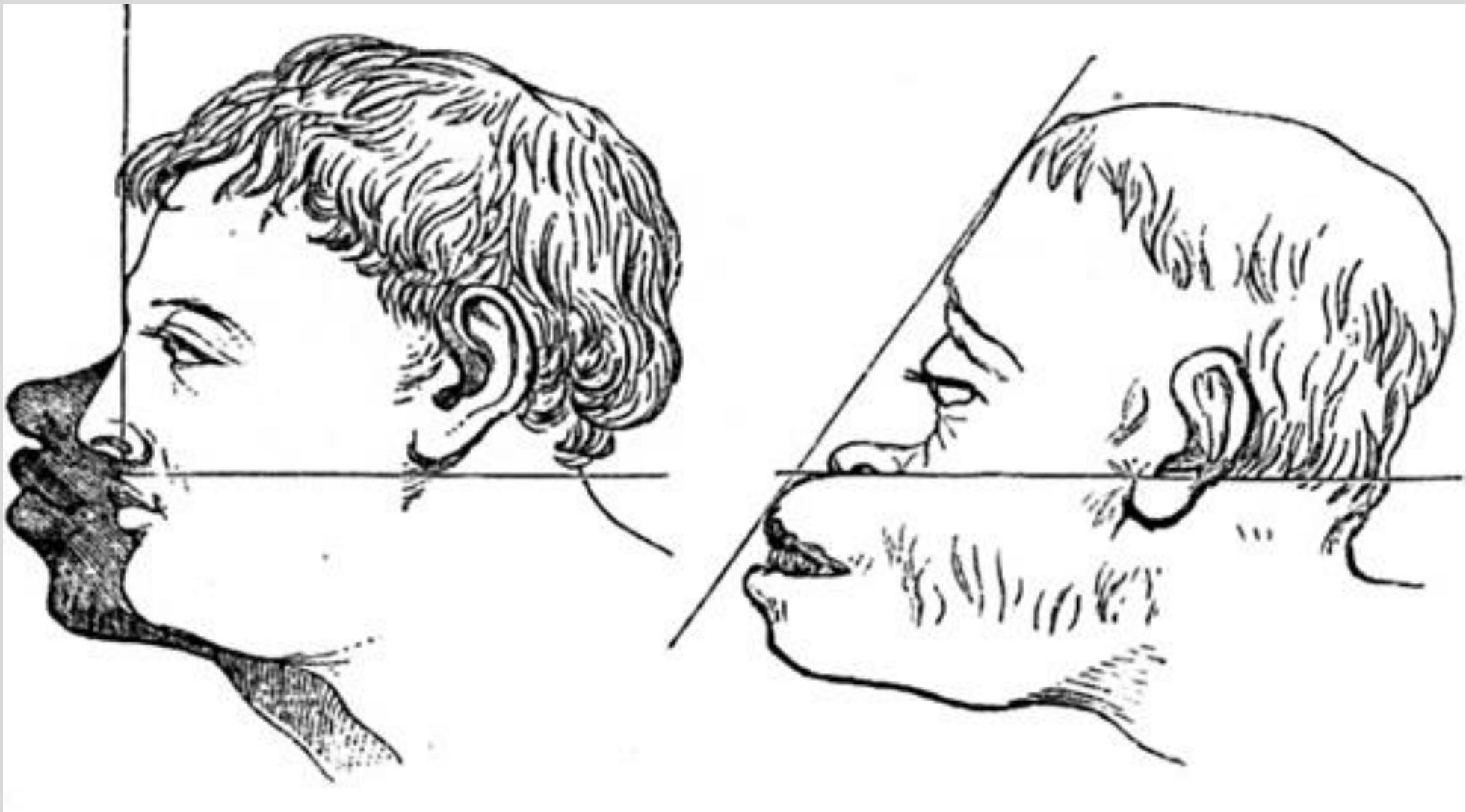
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Knox



Manual of artistic anatomy (1852)

ROBERT KNOX
(1791–1862)



Scientific racism

CRANIOMETRY & CRANIAL CAPACITY

Samuel Morton
(1799-1851)

- physician
- measured skull sizes of different races (craniometry)
- claimed white Europeans had largest skulls and highest intelligence
- work was used to justify slavery and racial hierarchies

George Robbins Gliddon
(1809–1857)

- Egyptologist
- worked with Morton to define racial classifications based on craniology
- argued that racial differences were divinely ordained and immutable
- promoted polygenist theories

Josiah Nott
(1804-1873)

- surgeon
- polygenist who argued races were separate species
- claimed mixing of races led to infertility and degeneration
- used pseudoscience to defend slavery in the American South

ARYAN

Arthur de Gobineau
(1816-1882)

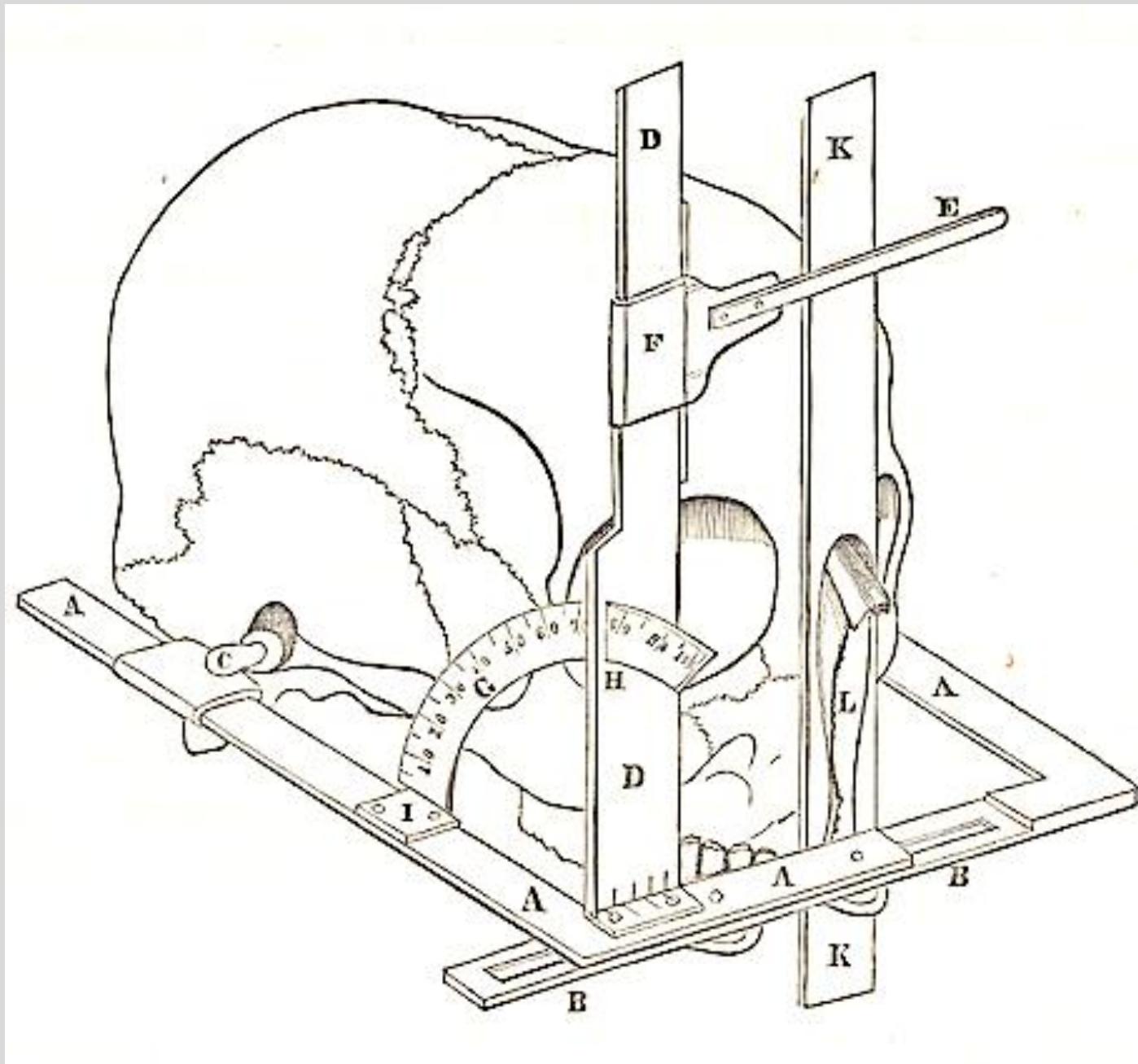
- diplomat
- proposed 3 main races: white, black, yellow
- claimed white ("Aryan") race was superior and racial mixing led to civilizational decline
- influential on later white supremacist and Nazi racial theories

EUGENICS

Francis Galton
(1822-1911)

- statistician
- founder of eugenics movement
- promoted idea of improving human race through selective breeding
- developed statistical methods to measure human traits and intelligence

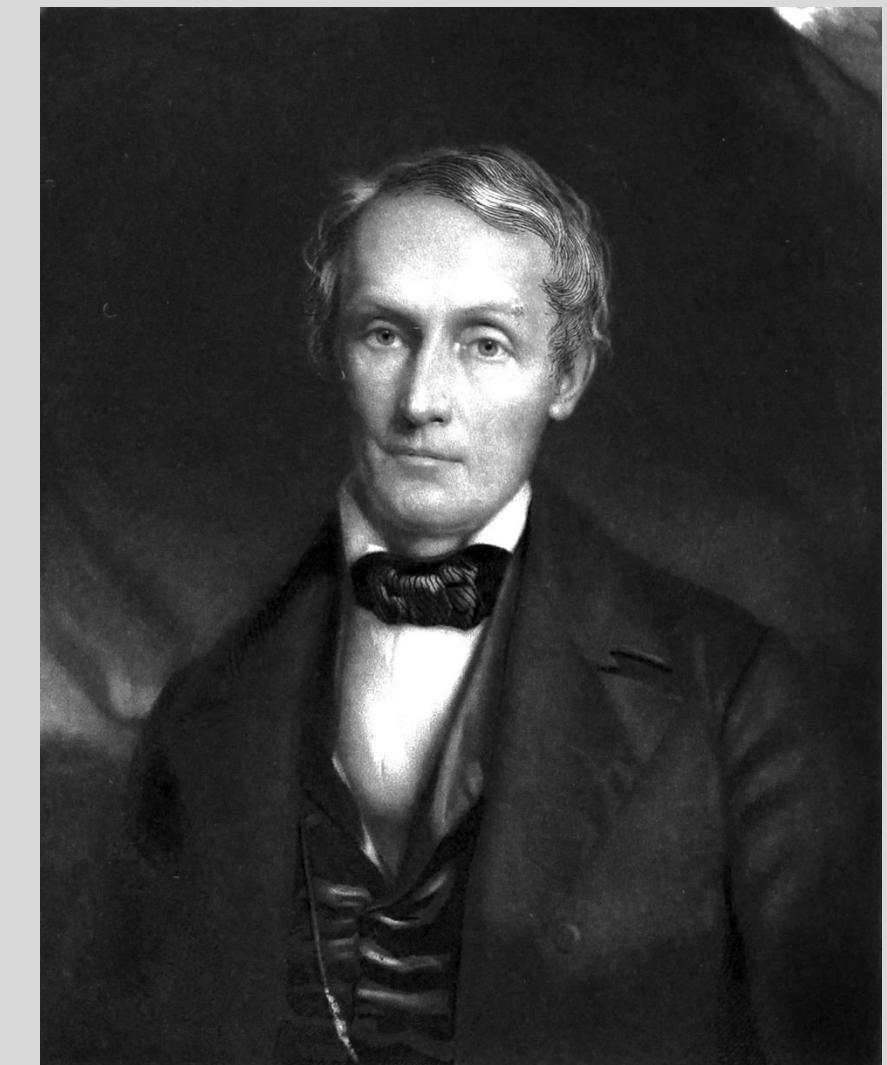
Craniometry & cranial capacity



“decided and unquestioned
superiority over all the nations
of the earth”

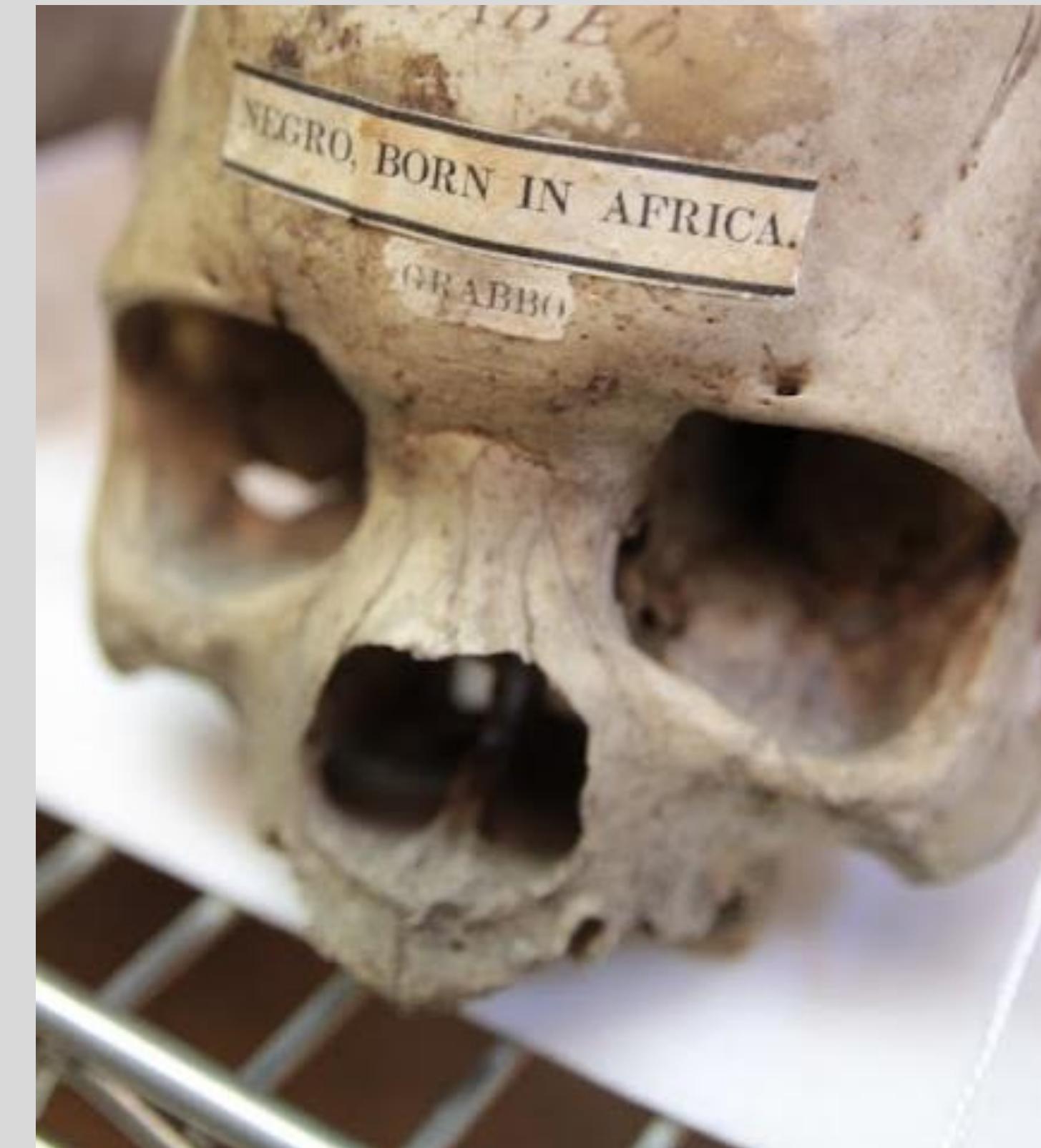
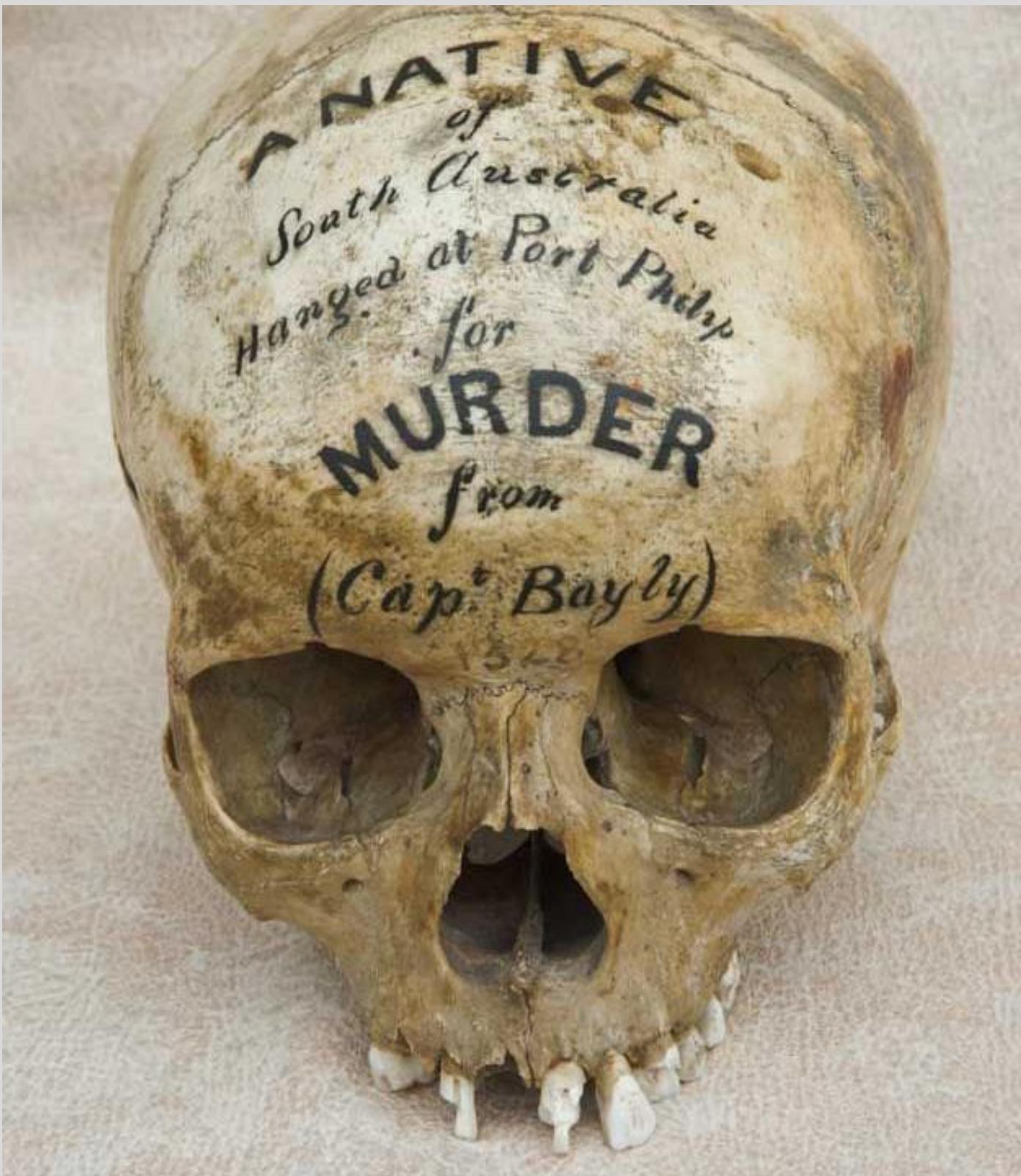
SAMUEL MORTON
(1799-1851)

28



Crania Americana
(1839)

Morton Cranial Collection



Morton Cranial Collection



The New York Times

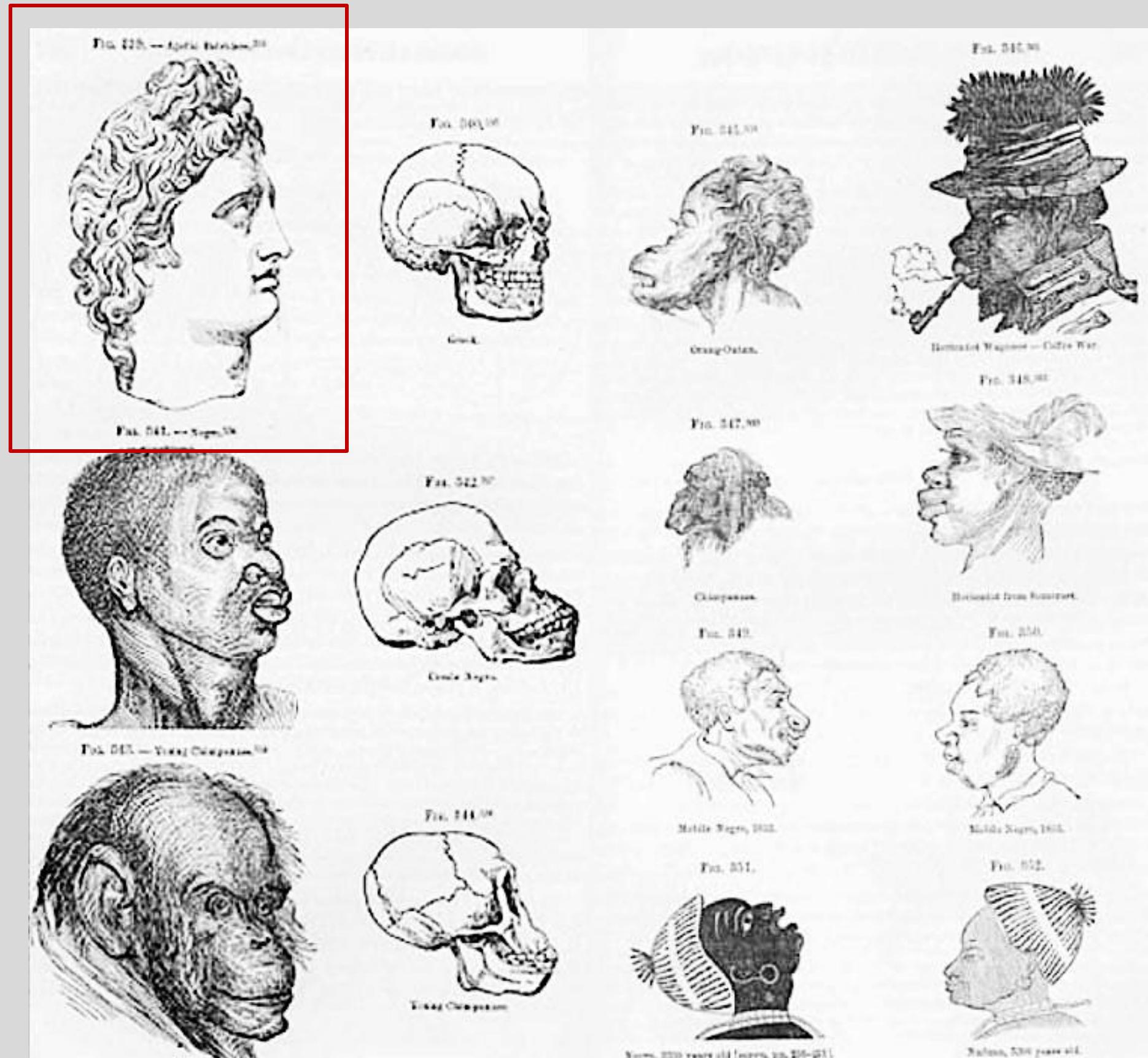
Penn Museum to Bury Skulls of Enslaved People

The Philadelphia museum hopes to provide a formal burial to 13 Black Philadelphians whose remains were used by a 19th century anatomist to formulate racist theories.

Give this article

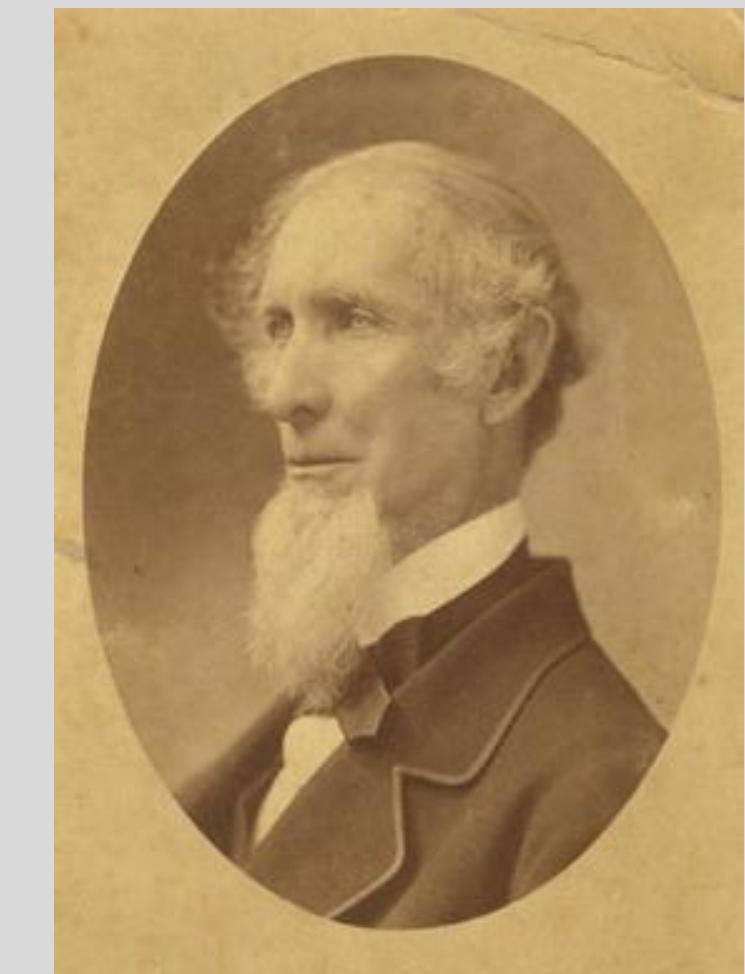


Cranial capacity



“Nations and races, like individuals, have each an especial destiny: some are born to rule, and others to be ruled.... No two distinctly-marked races can dwell together on equal terms.”

JOSIAH NOTT
(1804-1873)



Types of Mankind
(1854, with Morton and Gliddon)

FIG. 125.—*Apteronotus macrourus*, 20.



Plak. 542, von Stegmaier



Fok 547 - Vast Corporation



Page 34 of 34



1-1



Chang-O



Illuminated Wagons — Coffins

FIG. 3



Blurred Lines Summary



Chapman



ANSWER



Multiple Targets



www.Cheer.com



Negro, 2270 years old (fig. 9), pp. 216-.



第10章 第3节

Types of Mankind (1854)

Scientific racism

CRANIMETRY

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CRANIAL CAPACITY

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ARYAN

Arthur de Gobineau
(1816-1882)

- diplomat
- proposed 3 main races: white, black, yellow
- claimed white ("Aryan") race was superior and racial mixing led to civilizational decline
- influential on later white supremacist and Nazi racial theories

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Aryan

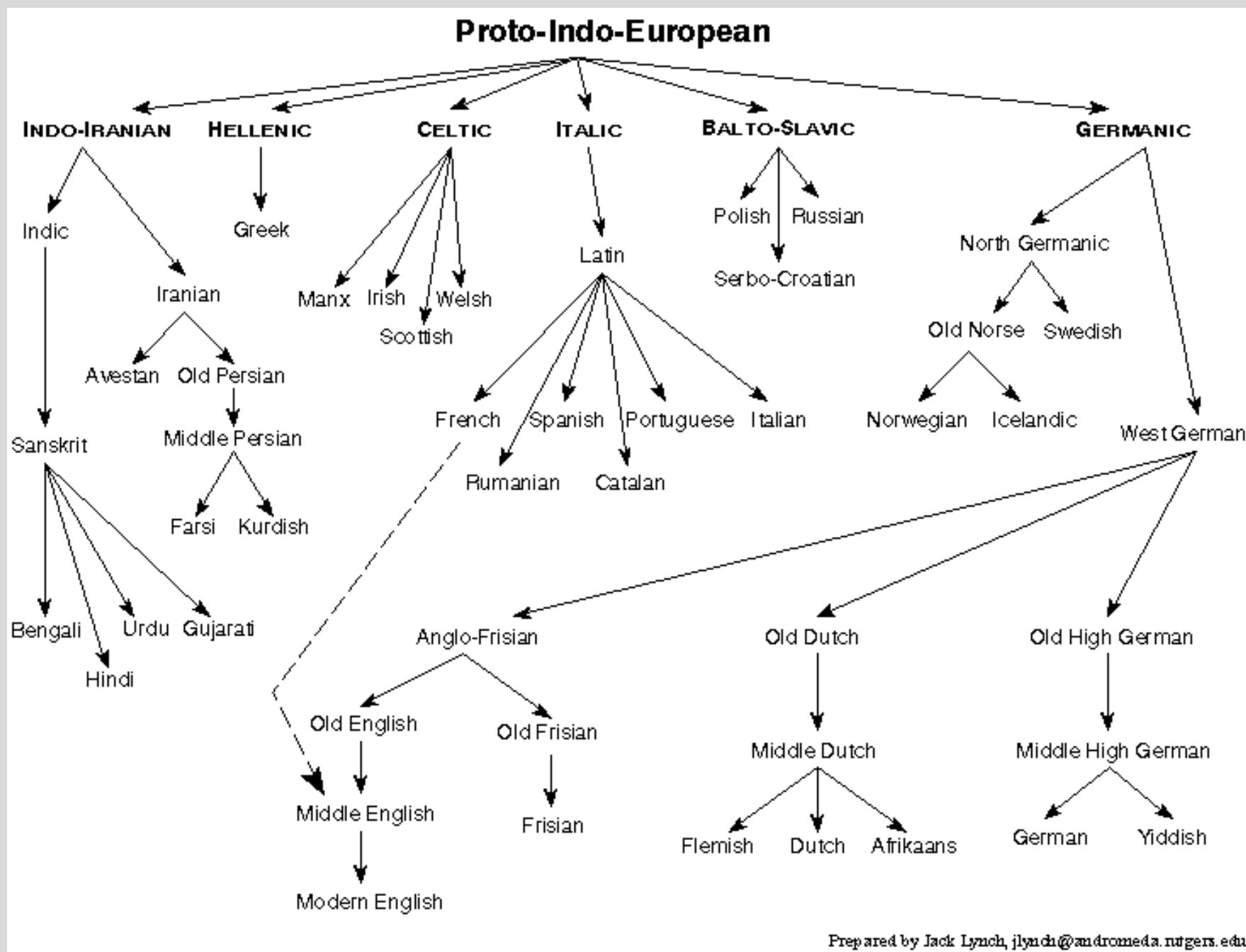
ARYAN

आर्य - *arya* 'noble'
(Sanskrit)

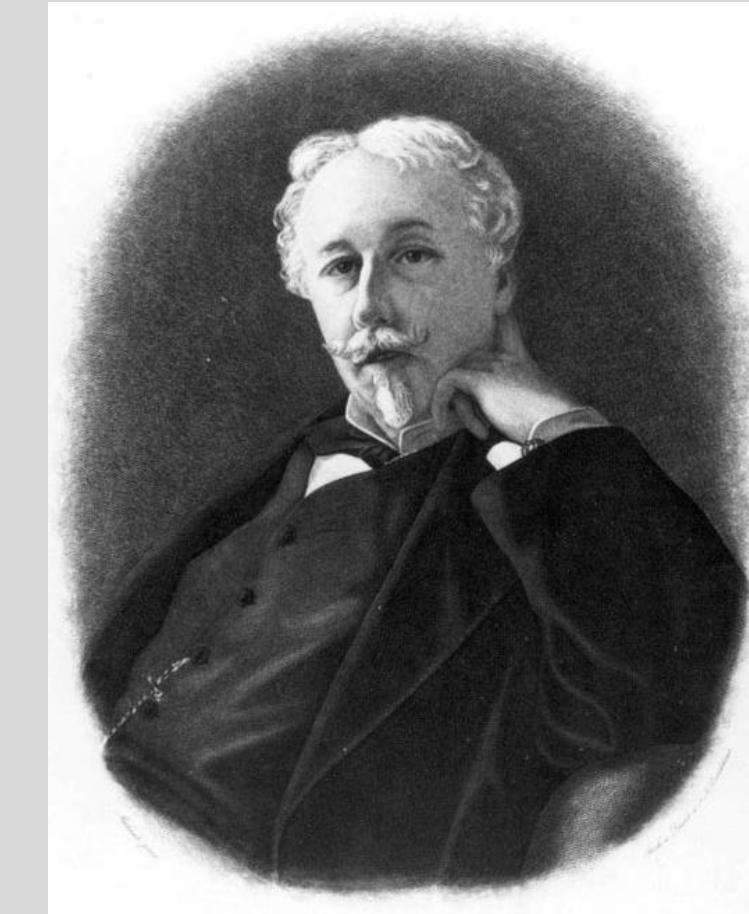
=
αξιος - *axios* 'worthy'
(Greek)

DE GOBINEAU
(1816-1882)

INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGE FAMILY



34



*An Essay on the
Inequality of the Human
Races (1853-1855)*

Scientific racism

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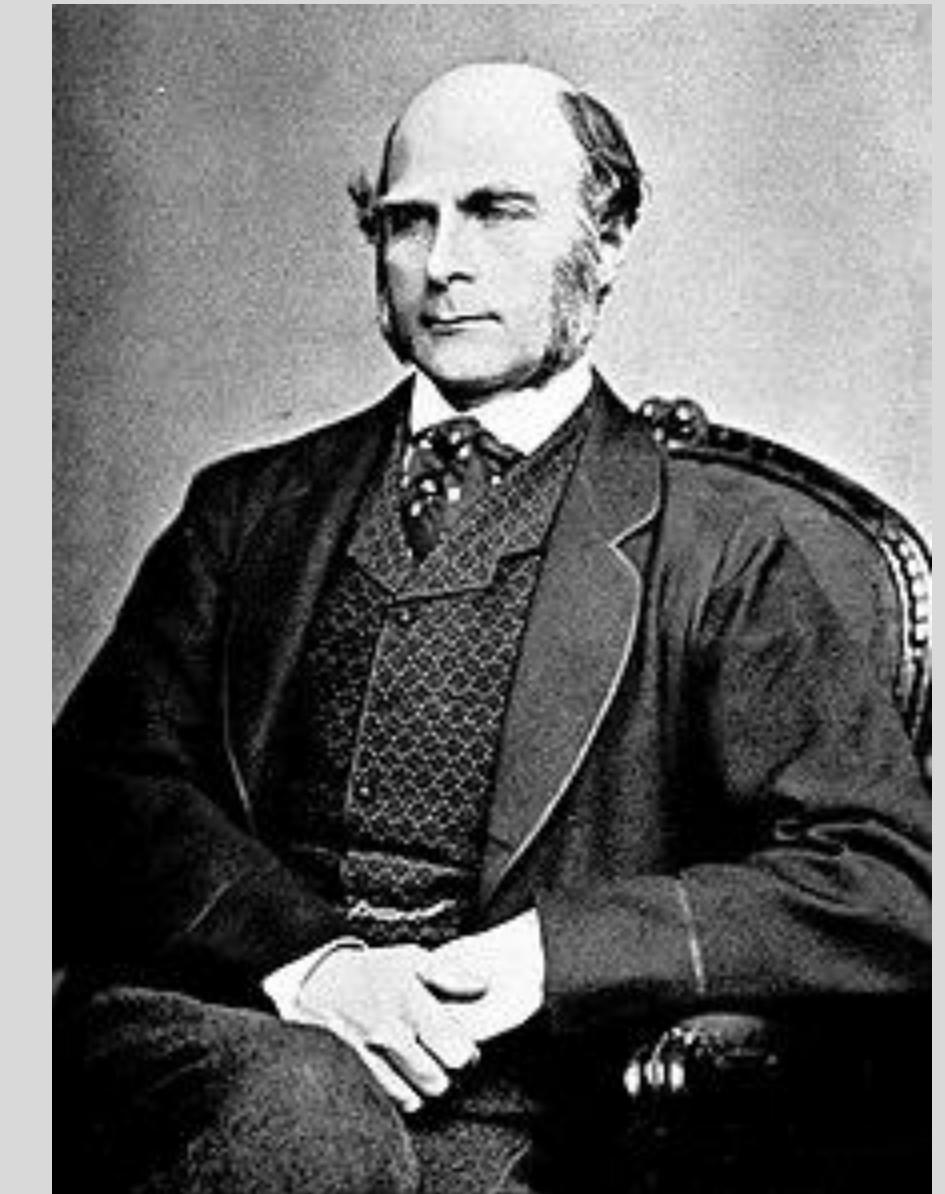
Eugenics

“the ablest race of whom history bears record”

“We have no men to put by the side of Socrates and Phidias, because the millions of all Europe, breeding as they have done for the subsequent 2,000 years, have never produced their equals...it follows...that the average ability of the Athenian race is, on the lowest possible estimate, very nearly **two grades higher than our own—that is, about as much as our race is above that of the African...**”

36

FRANCIS GALTON
(1822-1911)



Heredity Genius (1869)

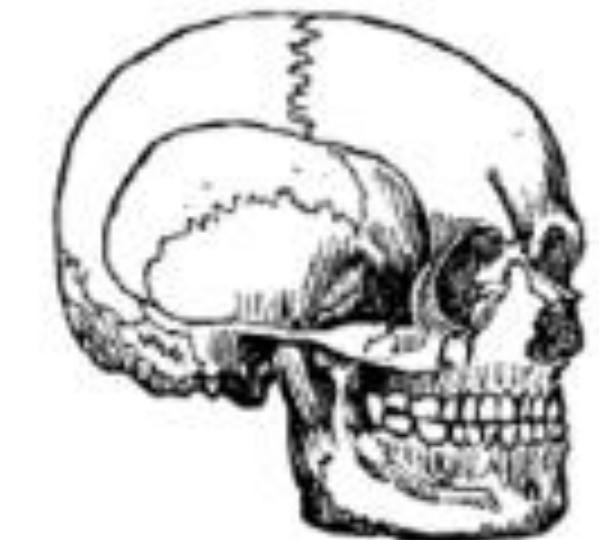
Classics & scientific racism



FIG. 339. — Apollo Belvidere.⁵³³



FIG. 340.⁵³⁴



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Creole Negro.

FIG. 343. — Young Chimpanzee.⁵³⁶



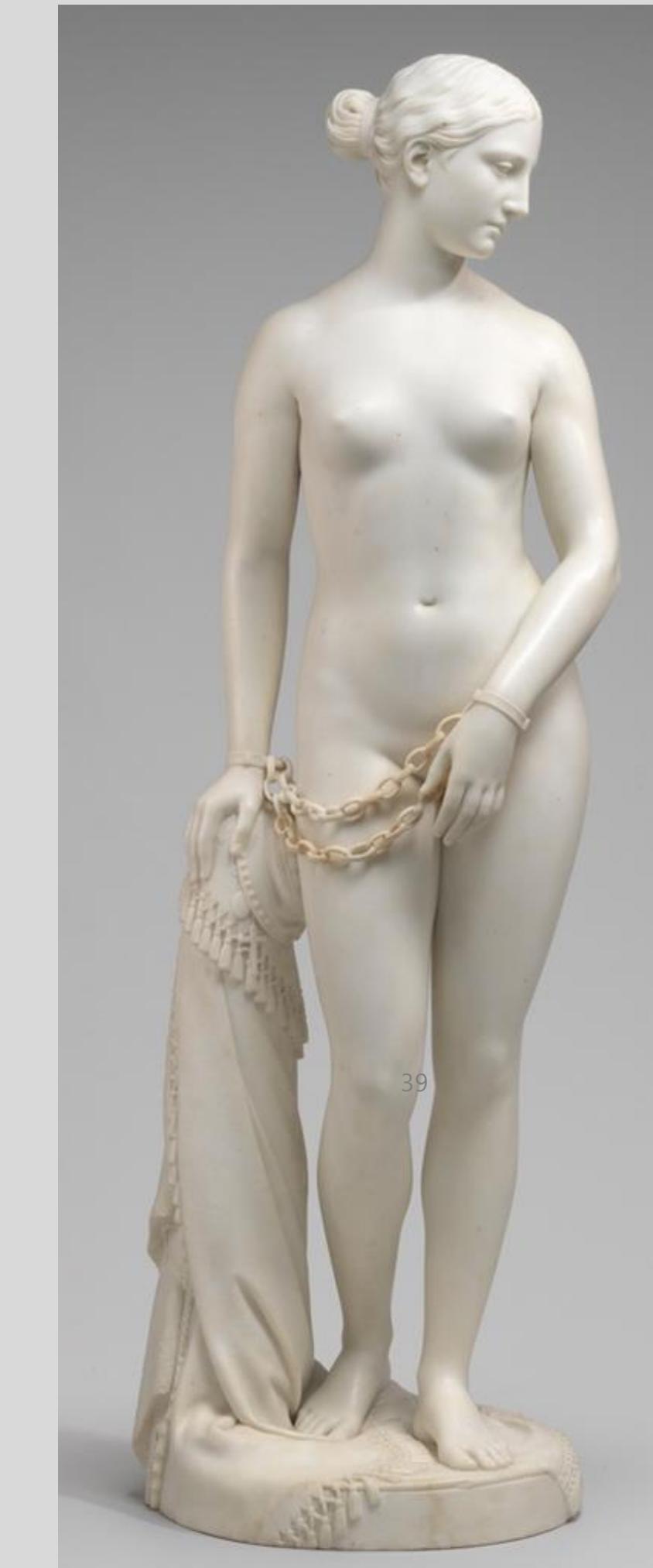
“Beauty early rivaled measurement as a salient racial trait.”

-Nell Irvin Painter, The History of White People

White beauty idea(l)s

NEOCLASSICAL

- 19th century Neoclassical sculpture of nude female
- series of marble sculptures carved by American artist Hiram Powers (1805-1873)
- inspired by the Aphrodite of Knidos by Phidias (sculptor of Parthenon marbles)
- Greek Slave illustrates Victorian racialized reception of the classical ideal



Greek Slave (1841-43)



Aphrodite of Knidos

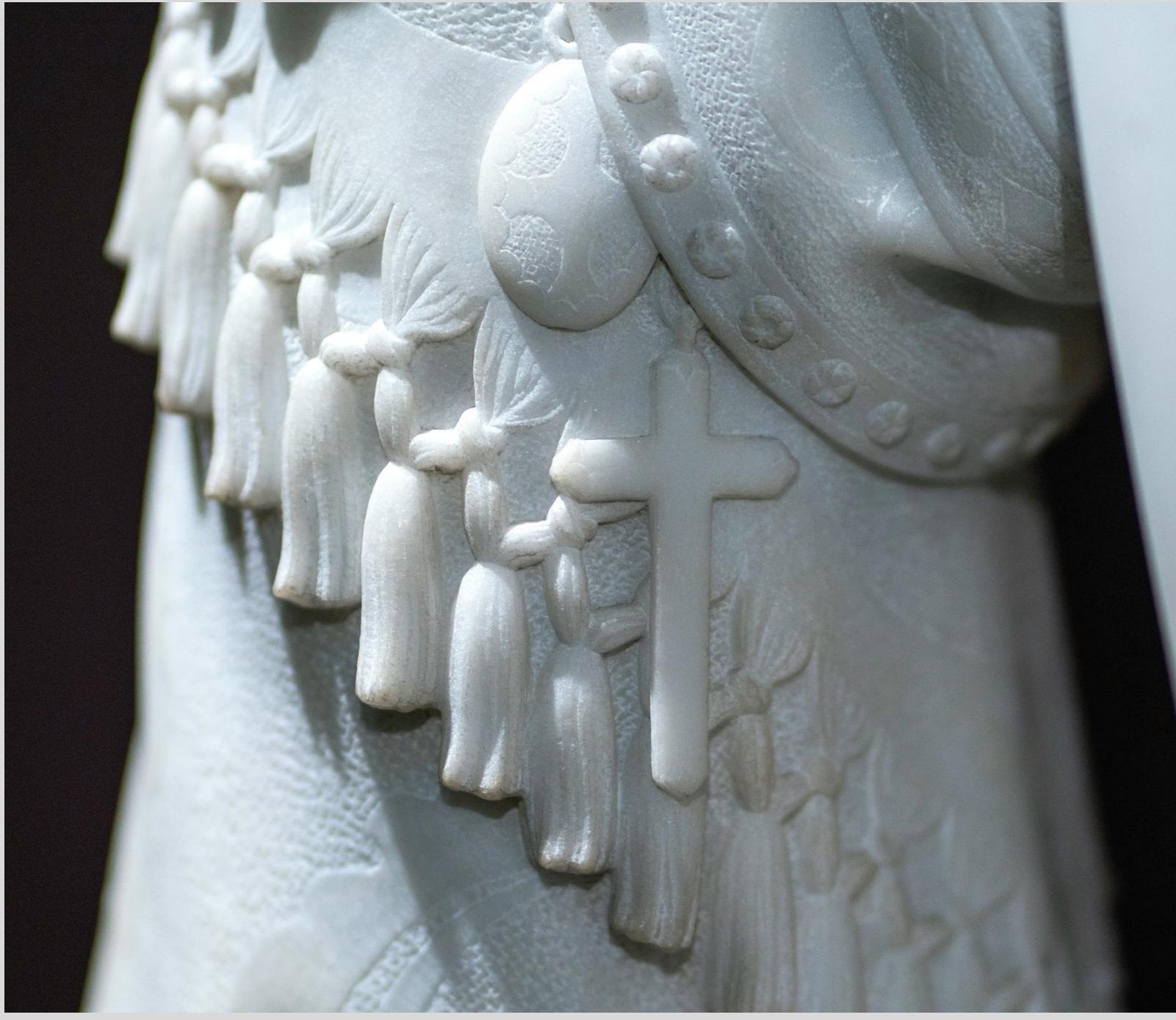
THE GREEK SLAVE

Hiram Powers (1805-1873)



THE GREEK SLAVE



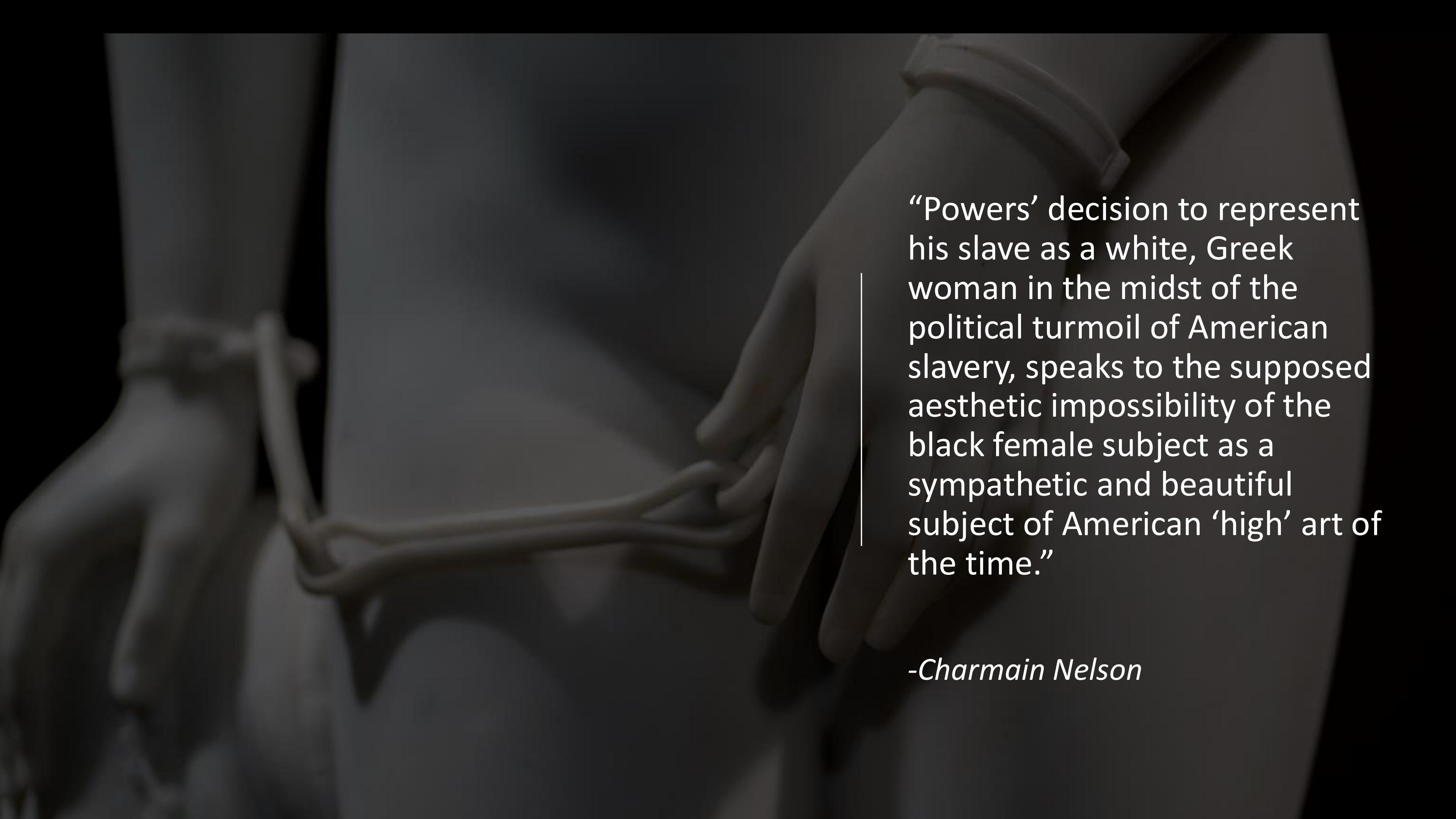


The Greek Slave

CHARMAINE NELSON

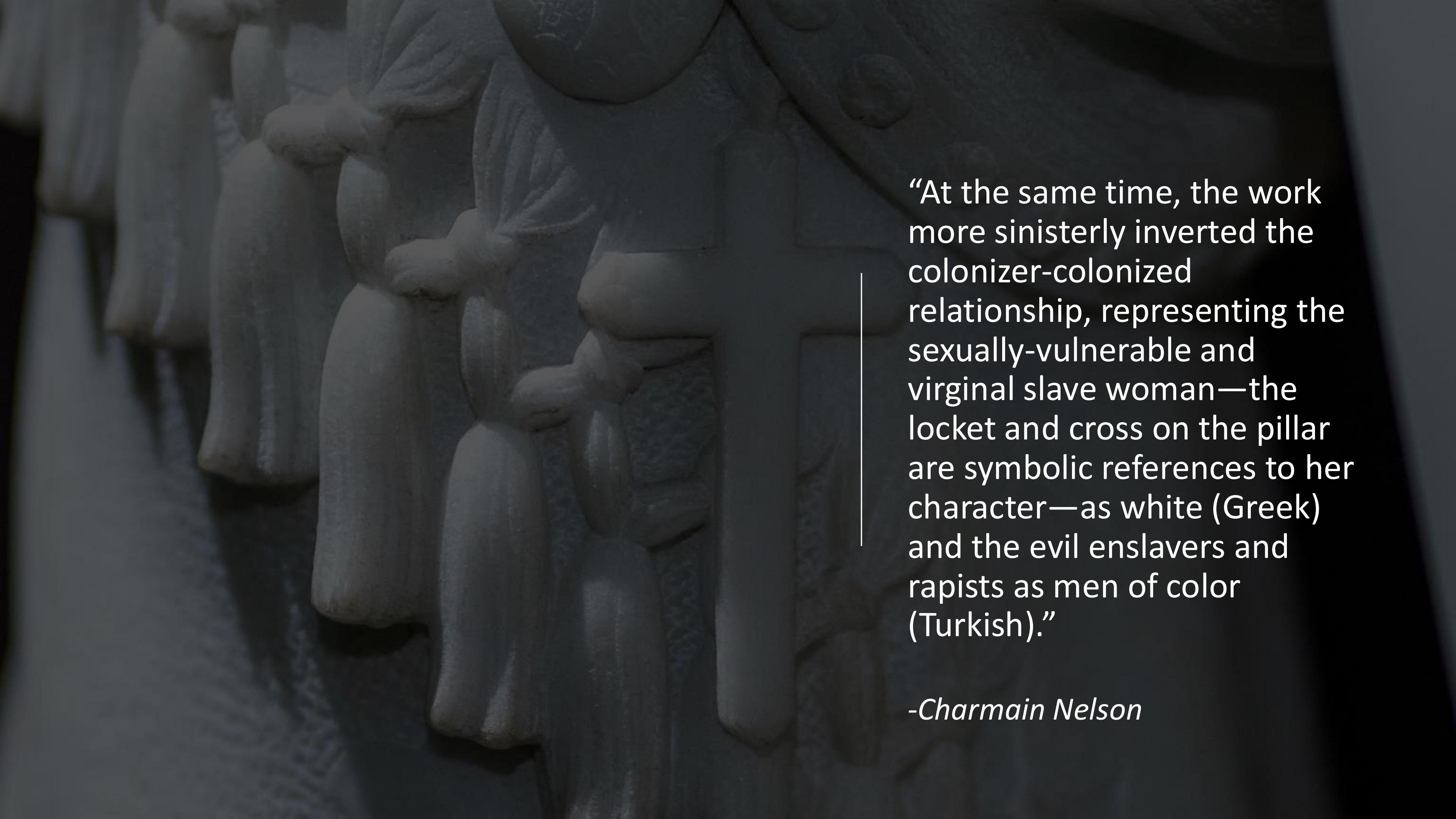
“White Marble, Black Bodies and the Fear of the Invisible Negro: Signifying Blackness in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Neoclassical Sculpture.”





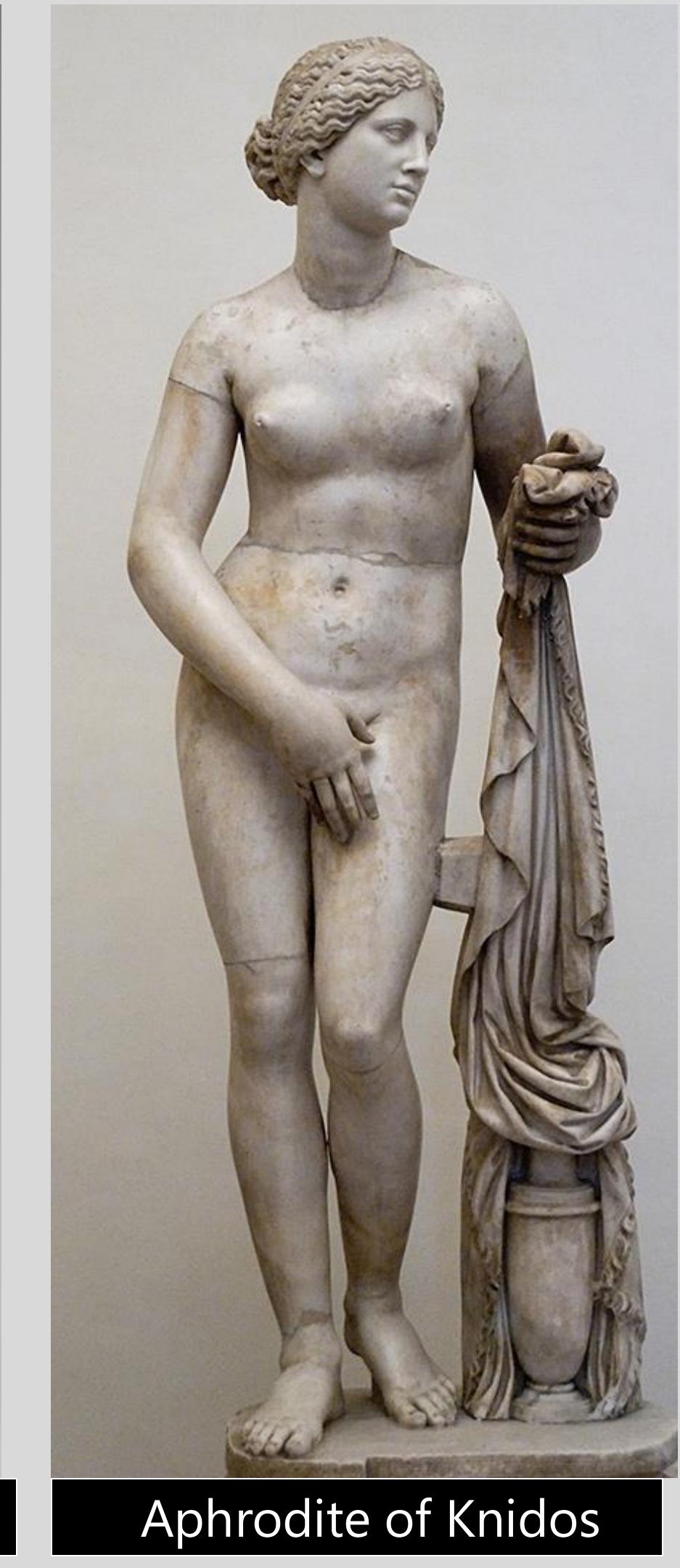
“Powers’ decision to represent his slave as a white, Greek woman in the midst of the political turmoil of American slavery, speaks to the supposed aesthetic impossibility of the black female subject as a sympathetic and beautiful subject of American ‘high’ art of the time.”

-Charmain Nelson



“At the same time, the work more sinisterly inverted the colonizer-colonized relationship, representing the sexually-vulnerable and virginal slave woman—the locket and cross on the pillar are symbolic references to her character—as white (Greek) and the evil enslavers and rapists as men of color (Turkish).”

-Charmain Nelson



Greek Slave (1841-43)

Aphrodite of Knidos



Identity Evropa is at the forefront of the racist "alt-right's" effort to recruit white, college-aged men and transform them into the fashionable new face of white nationalism. Rather than denigrating people of color, the campus-based organization focuses on raising white racial consciousness, building community based on shared racial identity and intellectualizing white supremacist ideology.



**EXTREMIST GROUP
INFO:**

SPLC Designated Hate Group

Date Founded: 2016

Location: Alexandria, Virginia

Ideology: [White Nationalist](#)

For next time

FOCUS: MEDITERRANEAN COMPLEXIONS AND COMPLEXITIES

Explores ancient and modern definitions of race and issues of skin color in the ancient Mediterranean.

Read

- McCoskey 2020. “Race.” In *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*.
- Dee 2003. “Black Odysseus, White Caesar: When Did White People Become ‘White’?” *Classical Journal* 2: 156-167.

Submit: **Reading Quiz 1** (due Tue, Sep 10 at 1:00 PM)