

# Hidden History

The Unsung Saga of the Black Man



(In Chapter 16, beginning on page 169, of J. A. Rogers' "SEX AND RACE", the noted historian-anthropologist further delineates his painstaking research on Negro ancestry in Europe.)

MISCEGENATION IN HOLLAND, BELGIUM, AUSTRIA, RUSSIA, POLAND

"NEGRO STRAIN entered Belgium and the Netherlands after the Christian era principally through the Jews who migrated there in large numbers from Spain and Portugal; and from the Spanish occupation of the Low Countries which lasted nearly three centuries (1526-1792). As was said, Spain had large numbers of Negroes in her armies, and Negro blood in her nobility. According to a seventeenth century Spanish classic, 'El Valiente Negro en Flandes,' by Andres de Claramonte y Corroy, a Negro ex-slave, Juan de Merida, rose to be the lieutenant-general of the Duke of Alba, the Spanish commander in Flanders.

"The Spaniards tinged the fair skins of the Nordics of the Netherlands, and created, according to Theophile Gautier, 'a new Flemish type with brown skin and black hair, a second race which the soldiers of the Spanish Duke of Alba have sown between Brussels and Cambrai.' Another writer, Bogaert Vache claims, however, that there was a black-skinned race living in the Low Countries before the Spanish invasion. He says, 'There are documents which prove the existence of blacks in Flanders in the Middle Ages. I have long called attention to this fact in the Life of St. Godelieve (eleventh century) written by one of her contemporaries, Drogon, a monk of the Abbey of St. Andre-Ies-Bruges.' Margaret, Countess of Flanders, (1568) was known as 'Black Meg' (Zwarte Griet). Beethoven's 'blackish-brown' skin and 'Negroid traits' might have come from this Spanish stock. Indeed, he was called 'The Black Spaniard of Bonn.' His Malay strain might have come in by a Malaysian's settling in Holland. Countries as Holland, France, Belgium, England, which have colonies usually have a considerable number of their dark subjects living in the mother country.

"Negroes, in fairly large numbers, are to be found in Belgian sea-ports, principally Antwerp. I saw hundreds of them there. Some of them had married Belgian wives and had children. They came principally from the Congo. Negroes are also in the Belgian army in Belgium.

"Whatever the Belgian may be in Africa, he is free from color prejudice at home. In 1929, when one of the hostesses, in a Brussels nightclub refused to dance with a Congo merchant at the instigation of the American patrons, the proprietor threatened to discharge her the next time she did so.

"The Hollanders, too, were utterly free from color prejudice. One morning in Amsterdam I came down to breakfast at my hotel to see a tall, handsome Dutchman with a coal-black West Indian wife. The other guests, at the table, about nine in number, were chatting and laughing with this mixed couple, apparently oblivious of the difference in color. When I mentioned this to the editor of one of Amsterdam's leading dailies, he added, 'There are several colored officers in my regiment and the white men obey them as readily as the other officers. My fiancée had colored ancestors, too, and nobody thinks any the worse of her.'

"At the Hague a white cigar salesman told me with glee how some residents of the town had squelched the racial enthusiasm of certain Americans who had tried to have a Negro doctor ejected from a hotel in which he had been living for years. In Rotterdam, at the leading vaude-

ville house I saw what was billed as 'A Black and White Act,' in which an Aframerican entertainer, Harry Wellmon, danced and sang with his white partner. At one hotel I saw a Negro, who had married the daughter of the proprietor and lived as free from care and work as a pet cat. Rotterdam, like Amsterdam, had a fairly large number of Negroes.

AUSTRIA

"Austria, as was said in Chapter Two, was peopled by Negroes in pre-historic times. Evidences of Grimaldi culture have been found there, the most noted of which is the statuette of a Negro woman with wooly hair, enormous breasts, buttocks with large humps of fat, and elongated nymphs, all of which are characteristics of the unmixed Hottentot-Bushman race of South Africa. This statuette, the oldest known sculpture of the human form was discovered at Willendorf, hence its name the Venus of Willendorf. It is now in the Vienna Museum.

THE TATARS, or Tartars, a Mongolian race, which had a Negro strain swept through European Russia in the thirteenth century under Batu Khan, subduing the Slavic princes, and conquering the peoples of Poland, Eastern Germany, Poland, Austria, and Hungary. J. J. Marcel says, 'Their frequent alliances with the Pelasgians, Semitic, and Negro races modified the primitive type of the Tartars.'

"Later, as has already been said, came the Turks, who went as far as the walls of Vienna after conquering parts of Russia, Poland, Hungary, and Switzerland. The most famous body of Turkish troops were the Janizaries, who were largely Negro slaves of the Sultan. It may be presumed that these soldiers made free with the women as conquerors usually do. The German invaders of Belgium in 1914 left behind progeny to fight Germans in 1940; the French soldiers on the Rhine also left children to attack France in 1940; and Americans, white and black, left thousands of children in the Philippines, some of whom later, may have been clamoring for independence.

"THE PEOPLE of Central Europe especially the Hungarians, show to a marked degree the mixing which has happened as the result of the various invasions. Haydn, great Austrian composer, who was called 'The Blackamoor' because of his very dark skin, probably came of this Turkish-Negro stock. The same has been said of Goethe.

"At least one noble Austrian family of the eighteenth century, the von Feuchtersleben, had a direct Negro strain. The daughter of Angelo Solliman, a Negro from the Congo, who was a favorite of the Prince of Lichtenstein, and also of Joseph II, of Austria, married the Baron Eduard von Feuchtersleben. Their son inherited the title. Solliman, himself, also married into the nobility.

"Vienna was also the scene of the triumphs of the great mulatto violinist, George A. P. Bridgetower, whose father was an African Negro and his mother, Polish or German. Bridgetower was a close friend of Beethoven, accompanying the latter on the violin and interpreting his works. The two friends parted when the Countess Guiccardi, with whom Beethoven was madly in love, became too friendly with Bridgetower.

FRANZ JOSEPH II of Austria-Hungary, like Czar Nicholas II, had a number of stalwart Negro attendants at his court, splendidly dressed, and who served largely for show. These Negroes had white wives and mulatto children.

"At present, Negroes are few in Central Europe. One meets from time to time, however, the child of an occasional Negro student or musician by some white mother.

"In 1933, an incident occurred in Budapest that caused considerable excitement and had a play put on about it. A coal-black Cuban, who was a physician and a boxer, went into an aristocratic wave-bath with a white girl to the horror and indignation of the sixty English and American visitors and bathers. Descending on the proprietor, the English and the Americans declared that if the Negro used the bath again they'd quit. It was sixty against one and the proprietor told the Negro not to use the bath. The latter protested to the newspapers, which, together with the doctors of the town, raised such a fuss that the mayor issued an order against the discrimination. The play about the affair was entitled, 'The Man They Wouldn't Let Take A Bath.'

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"That a prehistoric Negro race also lived in Russia is highly probable. Statuettes of the Grimaldi type have been found at Gagarmo on the Upper Don. Professor Dixon in 'The Racial History of Man' said that the early Negro type could be discerned in Eastern Russia as late as the Middle Ages.

TATAR AND MONGOLIAN invasions from Asia brought in considerable Negro strain, too. There is a type of Russian whose skin is white and hair is straight but whose face is distinctly Negroid as, for instance, Yermoloff, who was one of the lovers of Catherine the Great. It was probably this that caused Potemkin, Catherine's principal lover, to call Yermoloff 'a white Negro.' Princess Murat in her 'Catherine the Great' calls him a 'half-Negro,' but Yermoloff's portrait shows him a white man with a strongly Negroid face. Maxim Gorki came of this stock, and Lenin, too.

"From the sixteenth century onwards and perhaps earlier, hundreds of Negroes were taken into Russia as mascots, the most noted of whom was Abram Hannibal, great-grandfather of Pushkin, who rose to be general-in-chief of the Russian army under the Empress Elisabeth, Schuyler, in his 'Life of Peter the Great' says, 'Negroes were in esteem, as indeed they have been of recent years. Volynsky sent from Astrakan a couple to Catherine in order to ingratiate himself with her and Peter had several, one of whom was Abram or Ibrahim Hannibal.'

HANNIBAL'S FIRST wife, a Greek, bore him a white child and when accused of infidelity replied that tricking a Negro was no wrong. His second wife, Regina von Schelberg, a German noblewoman, gave him eleven children, all mulattoes. Five of these were sons, all of whom rose to distinction. Ivan, the eldest, was victor over the Turks at the battle of Navarin in 1770, and governor of the Ukraine. Another, Joseph, was a naval commander and navigator, whose daughter, Nadejda, married Count Pushkin, who belonged to one of the thirty-one leading families of Germany, Russia, Luxembourg, Italy and England.

"Pushkin's daughter, Natalie, Countess of Merenberg, was married to Prince Nicholas of Nassau. Their daughter, the Countess de Torby, wed the Grand Duke Michael, brother of Nicholas II of Russia. A daughter of the latter union married George, Marquess of Milford Haven, great-great-grandson of Queen Victoria. One of Pushkin's sons, General Prince Pushkin, was commander of the Russian troops in Poland in 1890. Direct descendants of Pushkin still live in Russia.

"CATHERINE THE GREAT in her portrait by Lampi has a Negro with her. So has Peter the Great in one of his portraits. Peter III was so fond of his Negro, Narcissus, that he would make the ambassadors of great lands wait while he played with him. When he was imprisoned by Catherine he asked that Narcissus be permitted to stay with him. When T. Morris Chester, a captain of United States Volunteers, an unmixed Negro, visited Russia in 1867, the Czar invited him to a military review, during which he rode with the Emperor and later lunched with him and his family at the Winter Palace.

"Another African Negro, Michael Egypteos, was taught naval designing, built several warships and rose to be major-general and head of the naval dockyards at St. Petersburg. He married a Russian wife and one of his daughters married a Swedish army officer.

"The late Czar, Nicholas II, had a corps of thirteen Negroes, very black, and of magnificent build and height as an exotic setting for his palace. They were dressed in gorgeous robes and

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