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The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe

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On various occasions civilized man has found himself marching side by side with men at lower (or different) levels of social and cultural development. The great civilizations were accustomed to compare themselves quite favorably with these barbarian neighbors, whom they viewed with varying degrees of condescension, suspicion, scorn, and dread. Civilized man, with his urban institutions, his agrarian way of life, his technological and economic sophistication, and his conspicuous literary and plastic artistry, conceived of himself as superior to these other folk with whom he sometimes competed for domination of the richer parts of the world. Long before the ancient Greeks invented the word 'barbarian' to describe the Scythians and other peoples who differed from them in not subscribing to the ideals of Greek culture, other civilized men had expressed similar sentiments toward alien peoples with whom they came into contact. This was the point that the old Akkadian author was trying to make when he spoke of neighboring tribes as people 'who knew not grain' and who 'had never known a city'.[1] Subsequently, both in Asia and Europe the spokesmen of a civilized style of life expressed their dislike or distrust of the barbarian by means of a stereotyped image of him which was couched in terms favorable to civilization. A Chinese chronicler, for example, remarked of the fierce Hsiung-Nu, who troubled the peace of the Middle Kingdom, that 'their only concern is self-advantage, and they know nothing of propriety and righteousness'.[2] After the conversion of the Uighurs from nomadism to agriculture, from warfare to peace, and from heathenism to Manicheanism, a memorialist of his people commented proudly on his tribe's progress from barbarism to civilization: 'This land of barbarous customs, smoking with blood, was transformed into a vegetarian state, and this land of slaughter became a land devoted to good

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[1] S. Piggott, *Ancient Europe from the Beginnings of Agriculture to Classical Antiquity* (Chicago, 1965), p. 256; S. N. Kramer, *The Sumerians: Their History, Culture, and Character* (Chicago, 1963), p. 63.

[2] *Records of the Grand Historian of China translated from the Shih Chi of Ssu-ma Ch'ien*, trans. B. Watson (2 Vols.; New York, 1961–3), II, 155.

works'.[3] Comparable attitudes were displayed by a considerable number of Greek and Latin authors. The barbarian, whose way of life was viewed as less excellent than that of classical Greece, was frequently libelled by Hellenic writers;[4] and most Roman commentators, following this lead, viewed Germanic and other kinds of barbarism as far too wild and woolly for their liking.[5] Such rhetoric and the prejudices which it embodied contributed toward the fashioning of medieval opinion of barbarians.[6]

The concept of 'barbarism', like its antonym, 'civilization', was the invention of civilized man, who thereby expressed self-approval by contrasting his condition with that of others whom he assumed to exist at lower levels of material, intellectual, and moral development. The awareness of being civilized, that new sense of identity which civilization gave its participants, was as much the product of cultural growth and refinement as the more tangible and visible achievements of civilized experience.[7] The antithesis which opposed civilization to barbarism was a highly useful cliché, and one which served equally well as a means of self-congratulation and as a rationalization for aggression.[8] Despite occasional efforts to idealize the barbarian and to extoll his real or supposed virtues, his civilized admirers were usually just applauding in him what they imagined to be their own lost innocence—those pristine qualities abandoned by their ancestors in their journey from simplicity and purity toward the delicious vices of civilization. The pejorative implications of the word 'barbarian' were almost invariably present in its use in Graeco-Latin antiquity and in medieval Europe and Byzantium, although its precise applications and connotations reflected changing historical circumstances. The *furor barbaricus* was evoked in civilized minds, whether the word was applied

[3] Quoted by R. Grousset, *L'Empire des Steppes* (Paris, 1939), p. 174, and cited by C. Dawson, *The Mongol Mission* (New York, 1955), p. x, n. 1.

[4] The authoritative work on the Greek view of the barbarian is J. Jüthner, *Hellenen und Barbaren aus der Geschichte des Nationalbewusstseins* (Leipzig, 1923).

[5] See A. N. Sherwin-White, *Racial Prejudice in Imperial Rome* (Cambridge, 1967). The title of Mr. Sherwin-White's book is misleading, because Roman bias was 'cultural' rather than 'racial' in the modern sense.

[6] There is nothing in the historiography of the European Middle Ages comparable to K. Lechner's study of the meaning and use of the word in Byzantine literature, *Hellenen und Barbaren im Weltbild der Byzantiner* (Munich, 1954).

[7] R. Erwin, 'Civilization as a Phase of World History', *American Historical Review*, LXXI (1966), 1188–9. In this highly interesting article Erwin tries to put civilization in proper perspective within the context of world history.

[8] D. Sinor, 'Les Barbares', *Diogène*, XVIII (1957), 54, argues that the Chinese always viewed the barbarian as aggressive. See also M. Granet, *La Civilisation Chinoise* (Paris, 1929), pp. 86 ff. There are some interesting comments on nomadism and barbarians applicable to history in general in O. Lattimore, *Studies in Frontier History: Collected Papers, 1928–58* (London, 1962), pp. 415 ff., 469 ff. The Greek poet, Cavafy, speculates on the relationship of civilization to barbarism in 'Expecting the Barbarians', which concludes, ' . . . night is here but the barbarians have not come. Some people arrived from the frontiers,/ and they said that there are no longer any barbarians./ And now what shall become of us without any barbarians?/ Those people were a kind of solution.' Quoted from *Complete Poems of Cavafy*, trans. R. Dalven (New York, 1961), p. 19, by E. Stillman and W. Pfaff, *The Politics of Hysteria* (New York, 1965), p. 5.

to Cimmerian, Scythian, Celt, German, Tartar, or Turk. It called forth feelings of dread, distrust, and hatred for a variety of peoples, who were viewed by their civilized critics as being, to a greater or lesser extent, warlike, unpredictable, and cruel. In Asia, in Greece and Rome, and in medieval Europe this libel of the barbarian was a link binding together more specific applications of the term. It has been observed that the civilized bias against barbarian *saevitia* and *crudelitas* constituted a 'moral barrier' dividing the two cultures and that it seemed to justify the 'cold war' waged between them historically.[9] When the ambition or arrogance of civilized man coincided with specific political, military, or religious objectives such antagonisms might be concealed behind the idealistic ventures of a civilizing or missionizing kind. At other times there was no effort to hide them. This moral barrier between civilization and barbarism and the cold war which it condoned may, it has been argued, be sufficient to explain the aggressions of both sides by offering opportunities 'for cathartic outbursts of warlike zeal' when 'passion or politics demanded it'.[10] The progress of modern understanding in history and anthropology makes scholars hesitate to draw moral distinctions between cultures and encourages them to admit the integrity and usefulness of the various alternatives to a civilized style of life.[11] Such objectivity and dispassion were, however, extremely rare among ancient and medieval men, who usually viewed the barbarian, whoever he happened to be, as the very incarnation of perfidy and savagery.

I. THE GRAECO-ROMAN BACKGROUND

Although the concept was far older, the Greeks were the inventors of the word 'barbarian', which first appeared as an onomatopoeic tag with distinctly negative, if not pejorative connotations, and which was bequeathed to all subsequent European literatures.[12] Greek authors applied the word indiscriminately to those peoples, principally Asian, whose unacquaintance with Greek culture distinguished them from those who were busily engaged in fashioning classical Hellenic civilization. It soon assumed a fierce and strident ethnocentrism directed against alien folk,

[9] A. Alföldi, 'The Moral Barrier on Rhine and Danube', *Congress of Roman Frontier Studies*, ed. E. Birley (Durham, 1952), pp. 1–16.

[10] Piggott, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

[11] The best work recently on the cross-cultural approach to history is P. Bagby, *Culture and History: Prolegomena to the Comparative Study of Civilizations* (Berkeley, 1959).

[12] In addition to Jüthner (q.v. supra), see H. Diller, 'Die Hellenen–Barbaren–Antithese im Zeitalter der Perserkriege', *Fondation Hardt*, Entretiens VIII (1962), 37–68; G. Murray, *Five Stages of Greek Religion* (New York, 1930), pp. 59–62; W. Jaeger, *Paedeia: the Ideals of Greek Culture* (3 Vols.; New York, 1939–44), II, 256–57; L. Edelstein, *The Idea of Progress in Classical Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1967), p. 48; H. D. F. Kitto, *The Greeks* (Chicago, 1964), pp. 7–8 (who minimizes the pejorative content of the word); A. Pauly, *Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (43 Vols.; Stuttgart, 1893–1967), s.v. 'Barbaroi'; and C. Daremberg and E. Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines* (5 Vols.; Paris, 1877–1913), s.v. 'Barbari'.

who differed from the Greeks in their lack of appreciation for the *polis*, the Greek language, and the literary and artistic ideals of the city-state. Greek poets, dramatists, and philosophers usually considered Greek civilization as the norm, and were fond of portraying the barbarian as the oaf, the slave, and the predator. Although a handful of intellectuals like Herodotus were aware of the accomplishments of non-Greek nations, especially the Egyptians and Persians, and although a few Stoic and Cynic philosophers were prepared to argue for the natural unity of mankind and the relativity of all judgments concerning cultural excellence, nonetheless, the familiar libel of barbarians usually passed unchallenged in the circles of the intelligentsia. The most that was conceded was that climate and geography might account for certain differences between peoples and that a degree of objectivity was necessary to judge and evaluate foreign ways of life. The civilized bias against barbarism insofar, that is, as it is reflected in Hellenic literature, was not significantly affected by the widening horizon of Greek knowledge and experience. Alexander the Great and the new cultural cosmopolitanism which Macedonian imperialism inaugurated divorced Greek culture from the Greek race and spread it to former barbarian peoples; but the old antagonism between Greek civilization and barbarism, with its ethical connotations, remained alive and compelling.[13]

The Romans received the word and its message from the Greeks. During the era of imperial expansion they applied it to those various tribes, particularly the Celts and the Germans, who pressed against their widening frontiers. Cultural pride and contempt for barbarians, reinforced by the Greek example, were sharpened by actual clashes with such peoples during the course of Roman expansion. Like the Greeks, the Romans often portrayed the contest of civilization and barbarism in moral terms. Manners and morals, Cicero observed, rather than language constituted the principal difference between the two cultures.[14] Although *Romanitas* was a cultural rather than a racial phenomenon, to which provincial peoples could convert by adopting the Latin language, the toga, Roman law and religion, and submitting to the *Pax Romana*, the possibility of acculturation did not diminish the presumed opposition of civilization to barbarism. The two cultures remained vehemently and even violently separate; and a Roman historian could sympathize with the Greek point of view, that 'with aliens, with barbarians, all Greeks wage and will wage eternal war, for they are enemies perpetually by nature and not for reasons that change from day to day'.[15] Tacitus, who has sometimes been viewed as

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[13] Polybius remarked, in *The Histories*, XI, 34, that the invasion of nomads threatened a region with a lapse into barbarism. See the edition by W. R. Paton for the Loeb Classical Library [LCL] (6 Vols.; Cambridge, Mass., 1960), IV, 300–2.

[14] *De Re Publica*, I, 37, 58, ed. C. W. Keyes, LCL (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), p. 86.

[15] Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, XXI, 29, 15–16, ed. B. O. Foster *et al.*, LCL (14 Vols.; Cambridge, Mass., 1967), IX, 86.

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Rousseau's precursor as the champion of barbarian virtue, was evidently using German manners as a touchstone for some gentle social criticism and nostalgia. Although he wrote admiringly of the virtues which he *thought* the Germans possessed, 'these were not barbarian virtues of courage and toughness ... but those ancient civilized virtues of which Roman writers had long been deploring their own loss'.[16]

The dichotomy between civilization and barbarism was not easily eroded either by humane philosophies like Stoicism or by the new universalistic religion of Christianity. Christianity, like Stoicism, preached a message of cosmopolitanism grounded on notions of spiritual and moral unity. This new spiritualized tribalism offered its communicants a fellowship in a religious commonwealth which ignored the old boundaries of *polis*, nation, class, or tribe. Paul and his disciples addressed themselves impartially to Jew, gentile, Greek, Roman, and barbarian.[17] The third-century Syrian Christian, Bardesanes of Edessa, expressed the hope that all nations, civilized and barbarian, might be reconciled in a common Christian allegiance, as Themistius and Libanius at an earlier time had advocated the peaceful incorporation of barbarians into the classical *oecumene*.[18] Paulinus of Nola hoped that the missionary effort of Bishop Nicetas of Remesiana might result in the pacification of the barbarians of Dacia.[19] But Christian cosmopolitanism never became the official policy of the Roman state even after the conversion of Constantine and his successors to the new religion. What happened was, rather, the absorption of Christianity into *Romanitas*; and the moral barrier separating civilization and barbarism stood its ground. The adoption of Christianity by the Roman Empire merged the faith with the other aspects of Roman culture to such an extent that they were perfectly equated by the time of the collapse of Roman rule in the West in the fifth century A.D. The Christian religion, which itself had been denounced by pagan critics like Arnobius as a barbarian rite, was from the fourth century forward identified as simply another attribute of Latin civilization.[20] To patriotic Romans like Ambrose, the Christian bishop of Milan, the alliance of Christianity and the empire assured the triumph of both.[21] The primitive cosmopolitanism of Christian-

[16] Sherwin-White, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

[17] Colossians, III, ii; and also A. T. van Leeuwen, *Christianity in World History*, trans. H. H. Hoskins (London, 1964), pp. 118–33, 197–204.

[18] S. Mazzarino, *The End of the Ancient World*, trans. G. Holmes (New York, 1966), p. 162; Alföldi, *loc. cit.*, p. 4.

[19] *Poema*, XVII, lines 261–4, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus ... Series Latina* (221 Vols.; Paris, 1844–64), ed. J. P. Migne, LXI, cols. 488–9, which reads, *Orbis in muta regione per te/ Barbari discunt resonare Christum/ Corde Romano, placidamque casti/ Vivere pacem.* See also *Poema*, XXVII, lines 69–71, col. 650.

[20] *Adversus Nationes*, II, 66, cited by P. Courcelle, 'Anti-Christian Arguments and Christian Platonism: from Arnobius to St. Ambrose', *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*. ed. A. Momigliano (Oxford, 1963), p. 155 and n. 56.

[21] C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine* (New York, 1940), p. 350.

ity had been drained away by its political success. The vast majority of Christian Romans identified the goals of the religion as identical with those of the state; and the ideals of Christianity were narrowed sharply to coincide with Roman ethnocentrism.

From ancient Greek and Latin sources, with their notion of the intrinsic superiority of civilization to barbarism, the European and Byzantine Middle Ages inherited the concept of the barbarian along with certain specific prejudices against him. The classical image of the barbarian had to be accommodated, however, to the changing historical circumstances of the next thousand years. What Marc Bloch once called 'historical semantics' might be useful in explaining the medieval European attitudes toward the barbarian and in clarifying some of the presuppositions of European morality, spirituality, and psychology during the same era. Alterations in the relationship of civilization to barbarism occasionally endowed the word *barbarus* with a new meaning and the ancient biases had to be adjusted to new realities. A description of the uses and meanings of the term in the literary sources of medieval Europe, together with the study of what constituted its antonym at various times during the same period, should reveal much about the preoccupations and anxieties of medieval European man.

II. THE GERMANIC BARBARIAN AND THE FALL OF ROME IN THE WEST

The barbarian *par excellence* of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. was the Germanic invader and occasionally the Hunnish and Alanic nomads who accompanied him.[22] Theodosius' experiment in the political and military accommodation of barbarism to the Roman state succeeded neither in saving the Empire nor in diminishing the antagonism of the majority of Roman subjects, Christian and pagan alike, toward the barbarian newcomers.[23] The philosophical cosmopolitanism of his faith, for example, did not still Ambrose's fear and hatred of peoples whose way of life was so different from what he himself knew and loved. To the bishop of Milan and his contemporaries, Roman civilization and barbarism continued to stand in stark contrast, divided by a cultural and moral chasm so immense that Christianity could not bridge it.[24] Prudentius, fiercely patriotic,

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[22] G. Vernadsky emphasized the continuing importance of steppe nomadism within European history in 'The Eurasian Nomads and their Impact on Medieval Europe', *Studi Medievali*, ser. terza, IV/2 (1963), 401–34. See for the steppe nomads and Rome, Mazzarino, *op. cit.*, p. 25; G. Walser, *Rom, das Reich und die Fremden Völker in der Geschichtschreibung der Frühen Kaiserzeit* (Baden, 1951). There has recently developed considerable interest in steppe nomadism, see E. D. Phillips, *The Royal Hordes: Nomad Peoples of the Steppes* (New York, 1965), and for an appreciation of their art, D. Carter, *The Symbol of the Beast: the Animal-Style Art of Eurasia* (New York, 1957).

[23] Cochrane, *op. cit.*, pp. 345–6. See also M. Pavan, *La Politica Gotica di Teodosio nella Pubblicistica del suo Tempo* (Rome, 1964).

[24] J.-R. Palanque, *Saint Ambroise et l'Empire Romaine* (Paris, 1933), pp. 330–2, citing *De Officiis*, II, 71.

insisted on the irreconcilability of civilization and barbarism and compared their difference with that separating Christians from pagans. 'As different is the Roman from the barbarian as man is different from the animal or the speaking person from the mute, and as they who follow the teachings of God differ from those who follow senseless cults and superstitions'.[25] Augustine of Hippo was typically Roman in his attitude toward the barbarian. Despite his ingenious effort to elevate contemporary discussions of the fate of Rome from the merely historical level to the metaphysical, and despite his insistence on the relative unimportance of the barbarian sacking of Rome against the backdrop of God's plan of redemption, he continued to contrast Roman civilization and barbarism in the conventional manner. His repetition of the familiar story of the forbearance of the Visigothic warriors in sparing the Christian shrines and their sacred treasures merely reflected his astonishment and gratification that fierce barbarians could occasionally display the Roman virtues of piety and mercy.[26] Although his faith was broad enough to encompass such monstrosities as pygmies, Sciopodes, and Cynocephalae within the family of Adam, he viewed the barbarian in the old way—through the narrow prism of Roman pride.[27]

This cultural antagonism is vividly displayed in the actual indifference of Christian Romans toward converting the Arian and pagan Germans to trinitarian Christianity and in the remarks of an Arian Christian apologist of the fifth century, the anonymous author of a commentary on the gospel of Matthew known as the *Opus Imperfectum*.[28] The reluctance of Roman Christians to undertake the conversion of the Germanic barbarians before their entrance into the Empire is revealed by his insistence upon the inadequacy of Christianity to assuage the ferocious customs of the invaders and of his opposition to those missionaries who preach to 'unlearned, undisciplined, and barbarian peoples, who neither seek nor hear it with judgment and who have the name of Christians but the manners of pagans'.[29] On a few occasions when Christian apologists waxed especially idealistic or hopeful they might, like St. Jerome, wish that Romans and 'savage Bessians' would some day raise their voices in unison in praise of Christ.[30] But as a social and cultural group, the Roman intelligentsia, Christian and pagan alike, remained disdainful and distrustful of their Germanic

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[25] *Contra Orationem Symmachi*, II, 816–19, ed. H. J. Thomson, LCL (2 Vols.; Cambridge, Mass., 1961–2), II, 70. See also lines 291–3, p. 28.

[26] *De Civitate Dei*, I, 1, ed. G. E. McCracken *et al.*, LCL (7 Vols.; Cambridge, Mass., 1960–6), I, 12–14. Augustine attributed (I, 7) this uncustomary mercy of the barbarians to divine influence since they are naturally fierce and cruel: '*Absit ut prudens quisquam hoc feritati inputet barbarorum. Truculentissimas et saevissimas mentes ille terruit, ille frenavit, ille mirabiliter temperavit. . . .*'

[27] *Ibid.*, XVI, 8 (Vol. V, pp. 47–8).

[28] E. A. Thompson, 'Christianity and the Northern Barbarians', *Conflict between Paganism and Christianity*, ed. A. Momigliano, pp. 76–7.

[29] Quoted in translation, *ibid.*, p. 69 and n. 2.

[30] *Epistolae*, LX, 4, ed. F. A. Wright, LCL (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. 272.

neighbors. Ammianus Marcellinus dedicated his *History* to arguing the defense of the Empire and *Romanitas* against the savage forces threatening it within and without.[31] Jerome editorialized on the sacking of the capital in A.D. 410: 'The world sinks into ruin'.[32] Bishop Sidonius Apollinaris, who sniffed his patrician nose at malodorous barbarians (but safely at a distance), bewailed the 'fury' and 'malignity' of his Burgundian and Gothic oppressors.[33] *Romanitas*, whether pagan or Christian, was still juxtaposed against barbarism during the later Roman period.[34]

Both Orosius and Salvian, writing in the fifth century, continued to contrast Roman civilization with barbarism and to apply the old judgments about the moral and cultural inferiority of the barbarian. Nevertheless, they were forced to recognize the rapidly changing relationship between the two cultures and to propose solutions for or at least explanations of the events which preoccupied their contemporaries. When Orosius composed his *Seven Books against the Pagans* as a sort of historical proof-text to Augustine's *City of God*, it did not yet seem that the situation in Europe was hopeless. Even though the barbarians occupied parts of Europe, an emperor still sat at Rome and the possibility of the restoration of Roman power and prestige through an accommodation with the conquerors was still cherished. Orosius was a typical Roman patriot insofar as he viewed the barbarian with fear and distrust. Yet he was convinced of the possibility and desirability of assimilating the barbarians into Roman society through their conversion to the Roman faith. Addressing himself to the pagan detractors of Christianity, he insisted 'that it was through the mediation of the Christian religion, which united all peoples in the recognition of a common faith, that those barbarians became subject to the Romans without a conflict'.[35] The barbarians could be pacified by adopting the Christian religion, which would unite Roman and barbarian in a much more permanent and satisfactory fashion than the old paganism. Orosius had already seen signs of this reconciliation. Describing the leniency of barbarian rule in Spain, in contrast to the former Roman administration, Orosius noted the moral and cultural effects of the Christian Roman environment. 'Soon afterward, the barbarians came to detest their swords, betook themselves to the plough, and are affectionately treating the rest of the Romans as comrades and friends'.[36] Orosius usually viewed the

[31] D. Earl, *The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome* (Ithaca, 1967), pp. 101–3, 111–15.

[32] *Epistolae*, CXXVIII, 5 (p. 478).

[33] *Letters*, III, 4; Poems, XII, ed. W. B. Anderson, LCL (2 Vols.; Cambridge, Mass., 1963–5), II, 20–2 and I, 212. He speaks of the Gothic 'whirlwind' in *Letters*, VI, 10 (Vol. II, p. 274).

[34] For Venantius Fortunatus' contrast of *Romanitas* and barbarism, see E. Sestan, *Stato e Nazione Nell' Alto Medioevo: Richerche sulle Origine Nazionali in Francia, Italia, Germania* (Naples, 1952), p. 169.

[35] *Historiarum adversum Paganos Libri VII*, I, 16, ed. C. Zangemeister (Leipzig, 1889), p. 29. Translated by I. W. Raymond for the Columbia Records of Civilization (New York, 1936).

[36] *Ibid.*, VII, 41 (p. 296).

Germanic intruder as the wild brute, distinguished from the peace-loving and submissive Roman by his intractability and disorderliness. It was Orosius who reported Athaulf's observation that his hope of turning *Romania* into *Gothia* had to be abandoned when he discovered that the 'unbridled barbarism' (*effrenatam barbariem*) of his fellow Goths made them incapable of learning obedience to law. Accordingly, Athaulf decided to restore and renovate the Empire since he could not be its transformer.[37] Orosius also noted that barbarian kings like Athaulf and Wallia, who tried to establish secure and stable barbarian states, promoted peace and harmony. Thus, they showed their ability to renounce one of the most distinctive and unfortunate faults of barbarism—its belligerency and disregard for law and order. In Orosius' view conversion to Christianity offered the best hope of this transformation and of the eventual civilizing of barbarians. The two cultures might ultimately be reconciled, he argued, in their allegiance to a common faith; and the successful attainment of this goal was assured by virtue of the fact that it coincided with God's plan for the salvation of all men.[38]

By the time that Salvian, the priest of Marseilles, composed the *Governance of God* about the middle of the fifth century, the situation in the Roman West had grown much more serious. There no longer seemed to be any hope of accommodating Roman power and the German presence. It was impossible to be optimistic about the revival of the Empire in Europe. Pursuing an approach reminiscent of Tacitus, Salvian extolled as the supposed virtues of barbarism the familiar virtues of civilized man— justice, moral probity, and a sort of rough honesty, which the Roman had regrettably surrendered in his progress toward power, privilege, and prosperity. In desperation some former subjects of Rome now sought among the barbarians what was no longer forthcoming from imperial administrators. 'They seek among the barbarians the Roman mercy, since they cannot endure the barbarous mercilessness among the Romans'.[39] On the ethical level, Salvian insisted, the faults and shortcomings of the barbarian were likewise those of the Roman; but the Roman cannot excuse himself so easily since his Christian faith should have inspired him to pursue a better life. 'The barbarians are unjust and we are also; they are avaricious and so are we; they are faithless and so are we; to sum up, the barbarians and ourselves are alike guilty of all evils and impurities'.[40] What has sometimes been interpreted as Salvian's idealization of the barbarian was not such at all. He still assumed that the barbarian represented the worst in human life; his concept of the barbarian was the old slanderous

[37] *Ibid.*, VII, 43 (p. 300).   [38] B. Lacroix, *Orose et ses Idées* (Montreal, 1965), pp. 161–73.
[39] *De Gubernatione Dei Libri VIII*, V, 5, in *Salviani Presbyteri Massiliensis Opera Omnia*, ed. F. Pauly, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum (Vienna, 1883), p. 108. Translated by E. M. Sanford for Columbia Records of Civilization (New York, 1930).
[40] *Ibid.*, IV, 14 (p. 88).

one. The author of the *Governance of God* was simply noting the paradox which had arisen as a result of the moral degeneration and spiritual bankruptcy of contemporary Roman society, which had abandoned the distinctive attributes of Christian civilization and which had become no better and even worse than the barbarian. His book had, of course, an ulterior motive. The *Governance of God* was an exercise in moral criticism written in the form of Christian apologetics and history. Salvian's ostensible tolerance and objectivity were rhetorical devices with specific moral and religious aims clearly in sight. Fundamentally, he saw the barbarian in the old way, as a deceitful and fractious boor. For him, as for most Roman intellectuals, *Latinitas* and the Empire appeared as the only acceptable alternative to a cruel and hostile savagery.[41]

Although *Romanitas* was fading in Europe during the sixth century, the old antithesis of Roman and barbarian with the moral labels attached to it was perpetuated. To Pope Gregory I the contrast between the freedom of men of Roman lineage and the servility of barbarian life was still relevant.[42] The Emperor Justinian in a statute addressed to the prefecture of Africa in A.D. 534 made the point that the Arian Vandals were a threat both to political freedom and the true faith.[43] The Roman statesman and sophisticate, Cassiodorus Senator, who served the Gothic king, Theodoric, in several high offices, astutely avoided applying the word to his and Italy's new masters, although he found it suitable for describing the bad manners of the subjects, neighbors, and enemies of the Ostrogothic kingdom.[44] In the *Variae*, the exquisite letters which Cassiodorus composed and issued in Theodoric's name, he drew the distinction between the peaceful, law-abiding life demanded by *civilitas*, civilization, and the senseless, raging fury of the barbarians. In a letter to the Jews of Genoa, Theodoric or, rather, Cassiodorus, noted that: 'The observance of the law is the sign of *civilitas* . . . for what is better than that people should wish to live under the rule of justice? For this brings together people from their wild state into a civilized community'.[45] A proclamation to his Gaulish subjects urged them

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[41] The Germans were the principal representatives of barbarism during this era; although the word was also applied to soldiers of the Empire. See R. Latouche, *Les Grandes Invasions et la Crise de L'Occident au Ve Siècle* (Paris, 1946), pp. 14–15; and the interesting article by W. G. Sinnigen, 'Barbaricarii, Barbari, and the Notitia Dignitatum', *Latomus*, XXII (1963), 806–15.

[42] *Registrum Epistolarum*, ed. P. Ewald and L. M. Hartmann, Monumenta Germaniae Historica [MGH] (2 Vols.; Berlin, 1891–9), I, 325, line 2.

[43] *Roman State and Christian Church: A Collection of Legal Documents to A.D. 535*, ed. and trans. P. R. Coleman-Norton (3 Vols.; London, 1966), No. 646. Victor of Vita, *Historia Persecutionis Africanae Provinciae*, ed. M. Petschenig, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum (Vienna, 1881), p. 103, speaks of the '*barbara ferocitas et heresis Arriana*' of the Vandals.

[44] As did Jordanes, according to P. Courcelle, *Histoire Litteraire des Grandes Invasions Germaniques* (Paris, 1948), pp. 172–3. See A. Momigliano, 'Cassiodorus and Italian Culture of His Time', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, XLI (1955), 207–45.

[45] *Cassiodori Senatoris Variae*, IV, 33, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH, Auctores Antiquissimorum (Berlin, 1894), p. 128: '*Custodia legum civilitatis est indicium et reverentia priorum principum nostrae quoque testatur devotionis exemplum. Quid enim melius quam plebem sub praecepto degere velle iustitiae, ut conventus multorum disciplinabilium sit adunatio voluntatum? Hoc enim populos ab agresti vita in humanae conversationis regulam congregavit.*'

to 'obey Roman customs' and to relish the 'ancient freedom' by putting off 'barbarian cruelty' and wrapping themselves 'with the morals of the toga'. 'Dependence on the laws is the solace of human life, a protection for the weak, and a bridle for the powerful.'[46] Do not dislike the reign of law, he admonished them, because it is new, after the 'aimless craving of *gentilitas*'. To the Gauls, the Burgundians, and his own loyal Goths Theodoric sent exhortations to live according to the laws and to keep the peace—those attributes of civilization which most distinguish it from the barbarian way of life.[47] True to his own ardent classicism and his admiration for the Roman cultural heritage, Cassiodorus had Theodoric insist on the moral and legal differences between the two cultures—a stock-in-trade notion of later antiquity.

In reality, however, the old antithesis of Roman and barbarian was becoming less and less accurate as a description of prevailing social and cultural conditions in Europe as the two cultures mingled and their opposition diminished. This transformation was as much the result of the resurgence of the older subcultures of Celt, Semite, Berber, and Copt as it was the product of the introduction from without of Germanic barbarism. *Romanitas* retreated as a variety of barbarian cultures revealed themselves like islands rising from the sea.[48] Contemporary commentators described this process of the deterioration of civilization and the triumph of barbarism in moral, legal, and literary terms. Ammianus Marcellinus, for instance, noted the rise of lawlessness and disorder which characterized the later part of the fourth century and which threatened the very existence of *Romanitas*.[49] Sidonius Apollinaris, snickering at the crudities of the barbarian and playing upon the words, 'barbarian' and 'barbarism', drew an aesthetic contrast between the two cultures.[50] Rutilius Namatianus, who identified the Roman state with the preservation of peace, prosperity, and justice, assured himself that the diminution of these qualities marked only a temporary retreat;[51] although Salvian was convinced that the moral difference between *Romanitas* and barbarism had virtually disappeared.[52] Of course, these views were those of the Roman intelligentsia, to whom the defeat of Rome seemed to represent a threat to the existence of the world itself. On lower levels of society, some people preferred the uncertainty of life among the barbarians to the inevitable oppression of Roman

[46] *Ibid.*, III, 17 (p. 88).

[47] *Ibid.*, III, 43 (p. 100): '*Delectamur iure Romano vivere quos armis cupimus vindicare, nec minor nobis est cura rerum moralium quam potest esse bellorum. Quid enim proficit barbaros removisse confusos, nisi vivatur ex legibus*'. See also *ibid.*, IV, 39 (pp. 131–2).

[48] This is the argument of R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest and Alienation in the Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), p. 231.

[49] Earl, *op. cit.*, pp. 103 ff.

[50] *Letters*, III, 8; and IV, 17; V, 5 in LCL ed., Vol. II, pp. 32–34, 126, 182.

[51] *De Reditu Suo*, I, 63–6, 129–40, in *Minor Latin Poets*, ed. J. W. Duff and A. M. Duff, LCL (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), pp. 768, 774.

[52] *De Gubernatione Dei*, V, 5, in Pauly ed., p. 108.

rule. Priscus' story of the Roman renegade, who chose a life at Attila's court over that of a subject of the Empire, shows that the ancient notion contrasting the freedom and justice of civilization with the tyranny of barbarism was no longer a fair assessment of their differences.[53]

III. THE IMAGE OF THE BARBARIAN—THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

Changing conditions within Europe during the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries blurred the distinction between *Romanitas* and barbarism and promoted the adoption of new categories of differentiation. The disappearance of Roman political power in the West and the disintegration of the imperial legal, governmental, and educational systems reduced the Roman content of western culture at the same time that the triumph of the Germanic invaders was transforming Europe into a barbarian land. The Burgundian, the Ostrogoth, and the Frank were too successful to be despised as mere barbarians, and they seldom applied the term to themselves.[54] Writing in the sixth century the Frankish historian, Gregory of Tours, rarely used the word and never in reference to the Franks. In his books of miracles, however, he employed *barbarus* as a synonym for pagan, thereby showing the religious connotation that the word was gradually assuming.[55] This transition from a cultural to a religious meaning and the substitution of the antithesis of barbarian and Christian for the older contrast of barbarian and Roman was completed by the end of the seventh century. The principal distinction within the European consciousness became a religious one; and the Catholic Christian was distinguished from the barbarian, who was the heathen or the Arian heretic. The conventional moral attributes of barbarism—its ferocity, treachery, and brutality—were retained. On the other hand, when the word had assumed primarily a religious meaning it could be applied retrospectively and without prejudice by a people to themselves in order to describe a pre-Christian phase of their national history. The Salian code of the Franks shows this usage when it reflected on the heathen condition of the Franks *dum adhuc ritu detiner- etur barbarico*, before, that is, their conversion to Christianity.[56] The same

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[53] Translated in *The Age of Attila*, ed. C. D. Gordon (Ann Arbor, 1960), pp. 86–7.
[54] See the extremely helpful and thorough study of E. Ewig, 'Volkstum and Volksbewusst-sein im Frankenreich des 7. Jahrhunderts', *Caratteri de Secolo VII in Occidente . . . Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull' alto Medioevo, II* (Spoleto, 1958), 609–20. An older work is F. Thibaut, 'Les Impôts Directs', *Révue Historique de Droit Francaise*, XXV (1901), 708–9. References to some secondary sources are in L. Musset, *Les Invasions: les Vagues Germaniques* (Paris, 1965), pp. 219–20.
[55] *Vitae Patrum*, VI, in *Gregorii Turonensis Opera*, ed. W. Arndt and B. Krusch, MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum (2 Vols.; Hanover, 1884–5), II, 681. Translated by E. Brehaut for Columbia Records of Civilization (New York, 1916).
[56] *Pactus Legis Salicae*, Germanenrechte Neue Folge: Westgermanisches Recht, ed. K. A. Eckhardt (2 Vols. in 4 parts; Göttingen, 1954–7), I/2, 314. The prologue reads: '*Nuper ad catholicam fidem conversa, inmunis ab herese, dum adhuc ritu detineretur barbarico, inspirante Deo, inquirens scientiae clavem, iuxta morum suorum qualitatem desiderans iustitiam et custodiens pietatem*'.

source also contrasted the punishments to be imposed on 'Roman', 'Frank', and 'barbarians living under the Salic law', by which the Franks were distinguished from the non-Franks.[57] Among the clearest and earliest illustrations of the purely religious use of the word are those provided by surviving examples of Celtic penitential literature, which stipulated punishments for persons who served as scouts or informers to the heathen and led them to attack their fellow Christians. The perfect identification of the barbarian and the pagan occurs in the sixth-century Welsh compilation known as the 'Synod of the Grove of Victory', and it is repeated in later sources.[58] A mid-seventh-century Welsh penitential decreed a penance for the *catholicus* (Christian) who dared let his hair grow in barbarian fashion (*in more barbarico*).[59]

By the end of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth centuries the identification of the barbarian with the pagan was general throughout Europe, and this usage was continued into the later Middle Ages even after alternatives had been suggested.[60] During the first several medieval centuries the word *barbarus* was applied to Slavs, Magyars, Vikings, Germans, and even Saracens.[61] To the author of the *Chronicle of the Poles* the fierce Silesians, Pomeranians, and Prussians were *'barbarorum gentilium ferocissimas nationes'*.[62] The English chronicler, Aethelweard, made the point in the tenth century when he noted that Woden had been a former *rex barbarorum*, whom, after death, the *pagani* had made a god.[63] In many early medieval sources *barbarus* is opposed to *Christianus*, and the religious character of their struggle is emphasized. The predatory nature of barbarians continued to be noted. To the Saxon Poet the Huns were a 'wild people zealous at war'.[64] Rudolph of Fulda, the annalist, used *barbarie* as

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 322 (XI, 1): '*Si quis ingenuus Francum hominem aut barbarum occiderit, qui lege Salica vivit. . . .*'
[58] *The Irish Penitentials*, ed. L. Bieler, Scriptores Latini Hiberniae, V (Dublin, 1963), p. 68: '*Qui praebent ducatum barbaris, .XIII. annis, tamen si non acciderit stragis Christianorum et sanguinis effusio et dira captivitas. Si autem evenerit, agant residuo vitae penitentiam reiectis armis. Si autem voluerit et non ad vota sibi barbaros ad Christianos educere, residuo vite suae peniteat'.* See also p. 126.
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 148.   [60] Ewig, *loc. cit.*, p. 620.
[61] See the references in various early medieval sources in MGH, Scriptores, IV, 57, 89, 218, 510, 592, where the pagan identification is obvious. For the identification of Slavic peoples as *barbari*, cf., *ibid.*, pp. 255, 610, 615, 792, 793; for Magyars, *ibid.*, pp. 67, 268, 402, 403, 454, 455; for Northmen, *ibid.*, pp. 704, 705, 760, 761, 773, 775; and for a stray reference to Saracens as *barbari*, *ibid.*, pp. 652–4. For an especially early reference, cf. Migne, LV, cols. 1029 ff.
[62] MGH, Scriptores, IX, 425.
[63] *The Chronicle of Aethelweard*, I, 3, ed. A. Campbell (London, 1962), p. 7. For other examples, see I, 4; III, 4 (pp. 9, 31). For a later English example of the equation of barbarians and pagans, see William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Pontificium Anglorum Libri Quinque*, ed. N.E.S.A. Hamilton, Rolls Series [RS] (London, 1870), pp. 48, 215.
[64] MGH, Scriptores, I, 244. For a twelfth-century example of the notion of 'tyrannical' barbarism, see Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae*, ed. J. Hammer (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), p. 99. Widukind, *Rerum Gestarum Saxonicarum Libri Tres*, III, 54, ed. G. Waitz and K. A. Kehr, Scriptorum Rerum Germanicarum (Hanover and Leipzig, 1904), p. 113, gives an especially dramatic description of barbarism: '*Sclavus barbarico more frendens et multa convicia evomens*'.

a synonym for *ferociter*,[65] and an eleventh-century chronicler describing the earlier depredations committed by Germanic Arian invaders of the West emphasized the 'savagery of the immense, horrible, and terrible attack'.[66]

During the early Middle Ages *barbarus* kept its classical meaning, as the opposite of Roman or Latin, only on the linguistic and literary levels, where it was used to designate the vernacular languages, usually Gothic, or by grammarians to identify certain faults of Latin grammar or pronunciation. The latter comprised the 'barbarous' corruptions, *barbarismus*, *barbarolexis*, introduced into pure Latin composition. Readers of Isidore of Seville were acquainted with 'barbarisms', errors of spelling and speaking, or the *barbarolexis*, which was the fault of interjecting a foreign word into classical Latin.[67] Latin stylists loved to let their fancies play with such 'barbarous' mistakes, which were sometimes personified, and which helped recall the ancient antithesis of *Latinitas* and barbarism.[68] The grammarians kept alive the classical sense of *barbarus* at a time when most authors were stressing its religious implications.[69] The enthusiasm of the scholars of the Carolingian Renaissance for the Latin classics enhanced their awareness of the old distinction. Einhard, who styled himself *'homo barbarus'*, in the same breath excused his inadequacies as a Latinist.[70] On another occasion in his biography of Charlemagne he described the emperor's decision to change the names of the days of the week, the months, and the winds, a reform which aimed at strengthening Christianity by breaking the association of the calendar with pagan worship. Einhard contrasted the new vernacular names, which had been stripped of their cultic associations, with the former heathen names *partim latinis partim barbaris*, which evoked memories of heathen worship.[71] It was, however, only on these literary and linguistic levels that the opposition of *Latinitas* and barbarism survived.

Either because of the preferences of his sources or the varying historical incidents which he sought to describe, the English historian, Bede, used

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[65] MGH, Scriptores, I, 405. Cf. also MGH, Scriptores, IV, 150, where the *Translatio S. Liborii*, spoke of the Saxons as *'barbarae et semipaganae nationi'*. Danes are called 'pagan' and 'barbarous' by Matthew Paris in the *Chronica Majora*, ed. H. R. Luard, RS (7 Vols.; London, 1872–83), I, 428. But they are called 'pagans' by Asser, *Life of King Alfred together with the Annals of Saint Neots*, ed. W. H. Stevenson (Oxford, 1904), pp. 49, 54, 69, etc.

[66] MGH, Scriptores, VIII, 307.

[67] *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, ed. W. M. Lindsay (2 Vols.; Oxford, 1911), I, 32. Cf. A. Souter, *Glossary of Later Latin to 600 A.D.* (Oxford, 1957), s.v. *'barbarizo.'*

[68] See the quotations from the *Hisperica Famina* and Aldhelm in W. F. Bolton, *A History of Anglo-Latin Literature, 597–1066* (2 Vols.; Princeton, 1967), I, 46, 91.

[69] E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. W. R. Trask (New York, 1953), p. 414.

[70] *Vita Karolini*, Proem, MGH, Scriptores, II, 443.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 458: *'Mensibus etiam iuxta propriam linguam vocabula imposuit, cum ante id temporis apud Francos partim latinis partim barbaris nominibus pronunciarentur.'*

the word 'barbarian' in its linguistic, moral, and religious senses during the course of writing his *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*. On one occasion he spoke of an English prince offended by the 'barbarous' speech of a foreign preacher;[72] on another, he denounced pagans 'puffed up with barbarous folly'.[73] Nor did Bede forget that the Romans built a wall to prevent the 'barbarous nations' of Picts and Scots from ravaging the south.[74] Describing the slaughter in Northumbria perpetrated by the 'pagan' Penda and the 'barbarous' Cadwalla, Bede evoked the classical prejudice against the barbarian, who just happened to be a baptized Christian. 'Cadwalla, although he had the name of a Christian and professed that life, yet was he in mind and manners so barbarous, that he spared not even the sex of women or the harmless infancy of young children, but delivered them all to death with torments according to his beastly cruelty. . . .'[75]

The adoption of Catholic Christianity by most of the nations of Europe banished barbarism to the frontiers. The success of Irish and Anglo-Saxon missionary efforts and of Carolingian imperialism broadened the extent of the Christian community and endowed it with a unified territorial existence. The idea of a more or less spiritually homogeneous Christendom, sharpened by attacks on its periphery by Avars, Slavs, Vikings, Magyars, and, occasionally, Arabs, evolved as a fact, if not as a name, during the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries.[76] This closing of the Christian *oecumene* against heathen barbarians drew vividly the distinction between the lands of the Christians and the barbarous regions without.[77] During the same period when the barbarian was usually the non-Catholic Christian or heathen, a similar 'ideological conflation' was associating *Romanitas* and *Christianitas*.[78] The *Romani* or *respublica Romana* had by the eighth and ninth centuries become equivalent to those persons who submitted themselves to the Roman or Western Church, although the word, *Romani*, also retained a narrow geographical sense to describe the citizens of Rome and Italy.[79]

[72] *Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, III, 7, in *Opera Historica*, ed. J. E. King, LCL (2 Vols.; Cambridge, Mass., 1962–63), I, 358.

[73] *Ibid.*, II, 5 (Vol. I, p. 228).   [74] *Ibid.*, III, 2; I, 12 (Vol. I, pp. 330, 60).

[75] *Ibid.*, II, 20 (Vol. I, p. 316).

[76] D. Hay, *Europe: the Emergence of an Idea* (New York, 1966), pp. 27 ff. Hay has commented on barbarians, pp. 23–4, and nn. See also C. Curcio, *Europa: Storia di Un' Idea* (2 Vols.; Florence, 1958), I. 113 ff.

[77] J. Rupp has analyzed the evolution of a papal theory of Christendom in *L'idée de Chrétienté dans la Pensée Pontificale des Origines à Innocent III* (Paris, 1939). See also W. M. Daly, 'Christian Fraternity, the Crusaders, and the Security of Constantinople, 1097–1204; the Precarious Survival of an Ideal', *Mediaeval Studies*, XXII (1960), 43–91.

[78] W. Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages* (2nd ed.; London, 1962), p. 61. See also pp. 63, 89, 111, 221–4.

[79] *Ibid.*, p. 63; Ewig, *loc. cit.*, p. 614 and n. 79. Ullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 47, quotes in translation a highly interesting letter from Pope Gregory II to the Byzantine emperor wherein the word 'barbarian' is used in a cultural sense: 'It is regrettable that the savages and barbarians have become cultured, whilst you as a cultured individual have degraded yourself to the level of the barbarians. . . .'

These important semantic changes, enforced by the drastically altered political and cultural conditions of Europe, were the result of the redefinition of the very ideas of 'civilization' and 'barbarism'.

The identification of the Christian religion with the tradition of imperial Roman unity was to have an important part in the formulation of Carolingian political theology and diplomacy. In the reign of Charlemagne Pope Hadrian I condoned Frankish imperialism by writing to Charles to express the papal hope that the Frankish ruler would vanquish all barbarian peoples and enemies of the church of God.[80] In the next generation Louis the Pious promoted the conversion of the Swedes, who bordered his realm: 'Burning with the ardor of the faith he began to seek how he might be able to constitute an episcopal see in the northern parts, that is, on the frontiers of his empire; for thence it would be suitable for the bishop seated there to go more frequently into those parts in order to preach and thence all of the barbarian nations would be able to take the sacrament of divine mystery more easily and more fully'.[81] The same point was made in the familiar charter of the Emperor Otto II granting to the merchants of Magdeburg the right to trade 'not only in Christian but in barbarian areas'.[82] Helmold, the chronicler of the conversion of the Slavs, usually identified the barbarian as the pagan and was acutely aware of the frontier separating Christendom from barbarian peoples.[83] This image of the barbarian as heathen is also prominent in the *Chronicle of the Poles*, which narrated the struggle in another no-man's land between Christianity and paganism.[84]

Despite the survival of the non-Christian meaning of the word, *barbarus*, into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, however, it implied much more. The *furor barbaricus*, the qualities of ferocity, belligerency, and cruelty, continued to apply. Writing in the twelfth century, William of Malmesbury used the word in its religious sense to describe the early Anglo-Saxons, but

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[80] *Codex Carolinus*, MGH, Epistolae, III, Nos. 52, 53, 55, 61, 62. etc., quoted by R. E. Sullivan, 'The Papacy and Missionary Activity in the Early Middle Ages', *Mediaeval Studies*, XVII (1955), 83 and n. 12.

[81] Rimbert, *Vita Anskarii*, 12, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, p. 33, quoted by Sullivan, *loc. cit.*, p. 86 and n. 41.

[82] MGH, Diplomatum Regum et Imperatorum Germaniae, II (Hanover, 1888), No. 112 (p. 126).

[83] *Helmoldi Presbyteri Bozoviensis Cronica Slavorum*, I, 6, 8, 21, 22, 40, ed. J. M. Lappenberg and B. Schmeidler, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum (Hanover and Leipzig, 1909), pp. 16–17, 19, 44, 45, 83. Translated by F. J. Tschan for Columbia Records of Civilization (New York, 1935). Adam of Bremen is also accustomed to equate 'barbarian' and non-Christian and is likewise acutely aware of the frontier separating Christendom and barbarous regions. Cf. *Adami Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum*, II, 25; IV, 8, 23, 29, ed. G. H. Pertz, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum (Hanover, 1846), pp. 67, 185, 197–8, 203. Translated by F. J. Tschan for Columbia Records of Civilization (New York, 1959). Both authors tend to view the 'barbarian' like pioneers encountering the Indians in the nineteenth century. Both were also aware of the classical contrast of Greek and barbarian, q.v. Helmold, *op. cit.*, I, 2 (p. 8); Adam of Bremen, *op. cit.*, II, 19 (p. 61).

[84] MGH, Scriptores, IX, 429, 449, 455, 466.

he also noted the effect of their conversion to Christianity in abolishing the warlike habits of the English—a distinctive trait of the barbarian. 'In the first years of their arrival, they were barbarians in their look and manners, warlike in their usages, heathens in their rites; but, after embracing the faith of Christ, slowly, by degrees, because of the peace they enjoyed, putting the exercise of arms in second place, they gave themselves entirely to works of religion'.[85] To the English historian, Christianity was a civilizing force capable of achieving the moral as well as the spiritual conversion of its adherents.

IV. THE IMAGE OF THE BARBARIAN—THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

The crusades may have fostered the conceptualization of a geographical Christendom, but contact with the Moslem enemy did not affect the image of the barbarian which circulated in Europe. The Moslem did not conform to the medieval stereotype of the barbarian, and the word was seldom applied to the Arab, the Persian, the Seljuk Turk, or, until the fifteenth century, the Ottoman. Islam was not viewed as a pagan religion but rather as a particularly hateful and dangerous corruption of the true faith—a pernicious heresy.[86] Its founder, Mohammed, was customarily described in European Christian sources as the reprobate, the arch-deceiver, and the false prophet. European acquaintance with the wealth and power of the Moslem states and the martial prowess of Arab, Persian, and Seljuk, who were sometimes viewed as the chivalric counterparts of Christian knights, made the conventional image of the barbarian quite irrelevant as an apt description of them. Christian apologists created a mythical portrait of Islam as a perversion of true religion—the delusion of pawns and dupes. On the popular level European Christians sometimes stood in awe of Moslem power and success, and often gave the devil his due by endowing the Moslem warrior with the attributes of Christian chivalry or by discovering a Trojan ancestry for the Turks. Only infrequently was the word 'barbarian' applied to the Moslem of the crusading era, and then only as a pallid synonym for non-Christian. Leo II of Armenia, writing to Pope Innocent III, spoke of the struggle between *barbares nationes* and *Christianitas*, represented by himself and his allies, but this was exceptional.[87] Humbert of Romans, the fifth minister general of the Dominican order, called a belief in Christ the greatest need of barbarian nations, who must receive it in order to win salvation.[88] On another occasion, however, he felt obliged to distinguish among *'schismatici christiani'*, *'perfidis Judaeis'*,

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[85] *De Gestis Regum Anglorum, Libri Quinque; Historiae Novellae, Libri Tres*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS (2 Vols.; London, 1887–9), II, 304.

[86] N. Daniel, *Islam and the West: the Making of an Image* (Edinburgh, 1960), pp. 273, 276.

[87] Rupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–3, and nn. 3c, 3e.

[88] B. *Humberti de Romanis Quinti Praedicatorum Magistri Generalis Opera de Vita Regulari*, ed. J. J. Berthier (2 Vols.; Rome, 1888–9), II, 377.

'*Saracenis deceptis*', '*paganis*', '*idolatris*', and '*barbaris et gentibus universis*'.[89] In the reign of Philip IV of France the royal counsellor and proponent of Christian harmony, Pierre Dubois, urged the establishment of European peace and cooperation as a necessary first step toward a renewal of the crusading effort and the defeat of the barbarians, including, supposedly, the Moslems.[90] Something approximating the classical view of barbarism, but referring to Moslem lands, is contained in a letter of the Emperor Frederick II addressed to the Christian prelates of Europe and attempting to dissuade them from attending a council convened by his enemy, Pope Gregory IX. An unfortunate accident, an ill wind, the letter stated, could cast their ships on the shore of 'barbarous nations', which are ignorant of their laws and languages and where they could expect to suffer perpetual imprisonment.[91] The imperial scribe was obviously contemplating the hazardous sea voyage through the Mediterranean and the 'barbarous nations' were the Moslem principalities of North Africa. Not until the fifteenth century and the Ottoman occupation of Constantinople would the word be applied with any frequency to the Moslem antagonists of Christian Europe. At this late date the image of the barbarian had been drained of much of its religious content, and it was used principally to connote ferocity, brutality, and cruelty. The 'barbarous' character of the Ottoman Turk was apparently a stereotype arising from the Turkish ravishment of the Byzantine capital in 1453, the horrifying details of which were reported to Europe by Greek émigrés and Italian merchants; and this sense of the term was reinforced by Turkish success in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To Pope Pius II and his contemporaries, who were attempting to revive the crusading ideal in Europe, the Ottoman was the very symbol of the rampaging, rapacious barbarian whose ferocity in battle and whose fanatic hatred of Christianity seemed to place Christian Europe in dire jeopardy.[92]

During the later Middle Ages the territorial concept of barbarism was somewhat confused by conflicting uses of the term *Barbaria* to signify both the realm of the Moslem Berbers of North Africa, the modern 'Barbary', and the eastern lands inhabited by ferocious barbarians. At the beginning of the thirteenth century the St. Alban's chronicler, Roger of Wendover, spoke of it as lying beyond the Euphrates and the Red Sea.[93] Matthew of

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[89] *Ibid.*, p. 492.
[90] *De Recuperatione Terre Sancte*, I, 44, ed. C.-V. Langlois (Paris, 1891), p. 57. Translated by W. I. Brandt for Columbia Records of Civilization (New York, 1956).
[91] J. L. A. Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi* ... (6 Vols. in 12; Paris, 1852–61), V/2, 1078: '*Est etiam in mari ventorum rabies inevitabilis, improvisa, que dum Romam applicare creditis, repente vos in barbaras projiciet nationes ubi est lingue vestre ignorantia, legis perversitas, amissio libertatis et captivitatis perpetue desolamen*'.
[92] R. Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk [1453–1517]* (New York, 1967), pp. 8, 71, 152.
[93] *Flores Historiarum*, ed. H. G. Hewlett, RS (3 Vols.; London, 1886–9), I, 179, and also p.

Westminster, however, placed *Barbaria* in North Africa, when he described the consternation provoked by the arrival of Louis IX in Tunis.[94] Ralph Higden's *Polychronicon* located it in an area bounded by the Tanais, the Danube, and the northern ocean.[95] African 'Barbary' assumed an ethnic connotation, although the notion of the land of the Berbers sometimes elided with the sense of 'barbarous' as pagan.[96] During the later Middle Ages both the Asian and the African sites were accepted—'Barbary' as the land of the Berbers and Asian *Barbaria*, where the people were heathen barbarians.[97]

The cessation of pagan attack upon most of Europe by the eleventh century made barbarism both less immediate and less painful. Within Christian Europe the heathen had virtually disappeared as an identifiable type. On the other hand, the internal transformation of Europe, or at least certain parts of it, as a result of economic and social changes which were occurring at this time, encouraged some observers to apply the term 'barbarian' to other European peoples and places. The purely religious meaning of the word was diminished when it was used to express the condescension of some Europeans toward others who seemed less advanced or refined. The moral, social, and cultural implications of the word re-emerged in the later Middle Ages as it became less relevant as a denominator of religious identification.[98] This sense of the word was closer to its classical usage, and its popularity may be due both to the recovery of classical learning and to the accelerated material and intellectual development of certain parts of Europe as contrasted with others. In any event when a Christian can call another Christian a 'barbarian' the word no longer reflects real religious distinctions. Writing about 1031 the Cluniac monk, William of Volpiano, of the abbey of the Holy Trinity, Fécamp, expressed his disdain for

[94] *Flores Historiarum*, ed. H. R. Luard, RS (3 Vols.; London, 1890), III, 20.

[95] *Polychronicon*, ed. C. Babington and J. R. Lumby, RS (9 Vols.; London, 1865–66), I, 170: '. . . propter barbaras gentes quas continet generaliter Barbaria appelatur'.

[96] *Primera Cronica General de España*, ed. R. Menéndez Pidal (2 Vols.; Madrid, 1955), I, 27, 157; the notion of 'barbarous' or 'heathen' is suggested by Frederick II's letter cited in note 91 above.

[97] Sixteenth-century maps reproduced in R. A. Skelton, *Explorer's Maps* (New York, 1958), figs. 45, 60, place *Barbaria* in North Africa. In the fifteenth century an English source said, 'Wytlandia is . . . inhabite with peple of barbre worschippenge ydoles', *New English Dictionary*, s.v. 'Barbary'.

[98] There has been considerable doubt concerning the precise meaning of the word *barbarus* during the later Middle Ages in Europe. The contributor to *Enciclopedia Italiana di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* (36 Vols.; Rome, 1929–39), s.v. '*Barbari*', gives a summary of changing uses in the later Middle Ages. R. de Mattei, 'Sul Concetto di Barbaro e Barbarie nel Medio Evo', *Studi di Storia e Diritto in Onore di Enrico Besta per il XL Anno de Suo Insegnamento*, IV (Milan, 1939), 495–6, has argued that the classical antithesis of *Latinitas* and *barbarus* was kept during the whole of the Middle Ages. For a collection of citations showing the use of the word in the literature of the later Empire and the early Middle Ages, see Du Cange, *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* (10 Vols.; Paris, 1937–8), s.v. '*Barbarus*'.

218. Adhelm placed it in Scythia, *Opera*, ed. R. Ehwald, MGH, Auctorum Antiquissimorum (Berlin, 1919), p. 72. Cf. Ralph of Coggeshale, MGH, Scriptores, XXVII, 348–9.

Normandy's 'barbarous dukes'.[99] The Normans had been converted to Christianity following the settlement of Rollo and his band on Frankish territory early in the tenth century. These Scandinavian pirates were new-comers to Latin Christian civilization, and the memory of their heathen origins survived for a long time in continental song and legend.[100] William, a Piedmontese of Swabian ancestry and a luminary of the Ottonian Renaissance, may have been expressing his contempt for a distant, recently converted folk with a somewhat dubious past. A similar use of the word appears in the well-known sermon of Pope Urban II delivered to the clergy and laity assembled for the council of Clermont in 1095, which was reported by the English chronicler, William of Malmesbury. In the course of his appeal to the Christian nobility of France to take up the task of freeing the holy places of the East from Moslem defilement, Urban con-trasted the relative extent of Christian and infidel dominions throughout the world. He observed, 'How small is the part of it inhabited by us Christians! for none would term Christian those barbarous peoples who live on distant islands on the frozen ocean, for they live in the manner of brutes (*quia more belluino victitat*)'.[101] Urban's contemptuous aside may have seemed justified by the relatively recent conversion of most of Scandinavia—the achievement of St. Olaf—and the apparent moral and cultural backwardness of northern Europe as it appeared to a southern European. The same point was made by Pope Paschal II in a letter to the English primate, Archbishop Anselm, in 1102. Paschal admonished Anselm, '*positus inter barbaros*', not to desist from preaching the truth, in this case, the Gregorian interpretation of the investiture of the higher clergy, out of the fear of the 'violence of tyrants', nor out of concern for threats or blandishments.[102] In Paschal's letter the non-Christian content of the word has been reduced to the extent merely of implying the lack of piety and justice.

Medieval European scholars never succeeded in fashioning a general theory of cultural development comparable to the work of Ibn Khaldun or a handful of great Moslem and Chinese historians.[103] Only rarely did they go beyond the received classical and scriptural texts to explore more thoroughly and from a secular point of view the nature of barbarism or the precise relationship, as they saw it, between barbarism and civilization. One rather exceptional and neglected example of retrospective sociological

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[99] 'Liber de revelatione . . . Fiscannensis', *Acta Sanctorum*, VI/I, 353, cited by N. F. Cantor, *Church, Kingship, and Lay Investiture in England, 1089–1135* (Princeton, 1958), p. 22.

[100] W. P. Ker, *The Dark Ages* (Edinburgh, 1958), p. 224.

[101] *De Gestis Regum*, II, 395.

[102] *S. Anselmi Cantauriensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia*, ed. F. S. Schmitt (5 Vols.; Edin-burgh, 1946–51), IV, 124 (Ep. 222): '*Deo autem gratias quia in te semper episcopalis auctoritas perseverat, et inter barbaros positus non tyrannorum violentia, non potentum gratia, non incensione ignis, non effusione manus a veritatis annuntiatione desistis*'. Cited by Cantor, *op. cit.*, pp. 158–9.

[103] See M. Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History* (Chicago, 1964), pp. 193–204.

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criticism in the Middle Ages is provided by the work of the twelfth-century Anglo-Welsh author, Gerald of Wales. It is tempting to underestimate Gerald. His gossipy style, his enthusiasm for Celtic prophecy, his scandalous public squabble with the English archbishop, Hubert Walter, for possession of the see of St. David's, and his racial biases—such do not establish confidence in his judgment or discretion.[104] Nonetheless, Gerald's interests were broad. His acquaintance from birth with the two cultures, Celtic and English, and his service to the English king in Wales and Ireland made him conscious of issues of comparative social and cultural development which seldom attracted the attention of other European scholars. He composed reports of both Wales and Ireland, and in the *Topographia Hibernica* he attempted to generalize on those social and attitudinal factors which differentiated Irish culture from its more civilized neighbor. For instance, Gerald contrasted the natural and uncontrived methods of child-raising among the Irish, which accounted for their vigor, handsomeness, and stamina, with the artificial constraints of civilization. While admitting the physical virtues of the Irish people, Gerald condemned their lack of cultivation, which was so obvious in their manner of dress and in their attitudes and which stamped them as truly barbarous: '*barbarus tamen tam barbarum quam vestium, necnon et mentium cultus, eos nimirum reddit incultos*'.[105] Despite the conversion of the Irish to Christianity long before, Gerald complained of their failure to conform to the basic teachings of their faith and of their vicious ignorance. Uncouth and unpredictable, the Irish bore a clear resemblance to the barbarian of the Graeco-Latin sources. But Gerald succeeded in going beyond mere slander in evaluating Irish society and morals, by attempting to explain the historical and cultural circumstances—their pastoralism, their isolation from the benevolent influence of more advanced nations, their marginal way of life—which condemned them to poverty and underpopulation and helped explain their barbarous condition.

This people is a sylvan folk, inhospitable; a people subsisting on cattle only and living bestially; a people who have not departed from the primitive pastoral life. Mankind generally progresses from the forests to the fields and thence to the towns and the conditions of citizens; but this nation, despising agricultural labor, not coveting the riches of cities, and averse to civil laws, follows the same life as their forefathers in forests and open pastures, willing neither to abandon old habits or learn anything new.[106]

All of these ideas were available to Gerald in Cicero and his other classical sources.[107] His remarkable achievement lies not simply in repeating the old

[104] For Gerald's life and works, see M. Powicke, *The Christian Life in the Middle Ages and other Essays* (Oxford, 1935), pp. 107–29.

[105] *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, ed. J. F. Dimock, RS (8 Vols.; London, 1861–91), V, 150.

[106] *Ibid.*, p. 151. For additional uncomplimentary judgments about the morals and customs of the Irish, see *ibid.*, pp. 165, 168.

[107] See A. O. Lovejoy and G. Boas, *A Documentary History of Primitivism and Related Ideas*: Vol. I. *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1935), pp. 243 ff.

ideas about the barbarian, but, rather, in attempting to fashion a socio-
logical and moral critique of Irish society. For our purposes, his character-
ization of the Irish as barbarians shows how the disappearance of a real
internal barbarism represented by the pagans of the early Middle Ages,
combined with the uneven social development of different European
peoples, could lead to the broadening of the term from one of purely
religious significance to one of moral and cultural differentiation. That
distinction between what Professor Stuart Piggott has called 'conserving'
and 'innovating' societies or between barbarism and civilization was also
meaningful to Gerald.[108]

As Gerald's work clearly reveals, the recovery of much of the corpus of
classical learning—the achievement of the 'twelfth-century Renaissance'—
transmitted to medieval Christian scholars classical attitudes about the
barbarian and his primitive way of life. The classical criticism of the
barbarian, which often equated him with the dumb brute, found a place
within the moral speculation of the Christian scholastics. The 'anti-
primitivism' of Cicero, who had applauded man's progress from a state of
nature to a state of civilization, was helpful in formulating medieval
psychological and ethical opinions. The influence of Ciceronianism is
evident, for example, in the panegyric composed by the twelfth-century
poet, Peter of Poitiers, in commemoration of the visit of the Cluniac abbot,
Peter the Venerable. It repeated the familiar calumny about the barbarian,
in this instance, an unnamed critic of Peter the Venerable: '*Barbare crudelis,
homo bestia, livida pestis*'.[109] Peter of Poitiers' 'barbarian' was another
Christian cleric, who was made the target of literary rebuke according to
classical sentiments which were then being revived. Much more important
uses were, however, to be made of these ancient sources of information.

The Ciceronian idea of savagery pervaded the medieval concept of
barbarism. The barbarian was viewed as illustrative of the retarded, dis-
oriented, irrational infancy of mankind, before man had begun to achieve
better things for himself through his submission to law and the exercise of
reason. Albertus Magnus, Aquinas' master, quoted various classical
sources, including Cicero, to support his generalization contrasting the
sweet reasonableness and tractability of civilized man with the disorderli-
ness and irrationality of the barbarian. The barbarian, he observed, was
he 'whom neither law, nor civility (*civilitas*), nor discipline disposes to
virtue'.[110] As Cicero had truly noted, barbarians are '*sylvestres homines*',

[108] Piggott, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–18. For another assessment of Ireland's deprivation, see William
of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Regum*, II, 485.
[109] Migne, CLXXXIX, col. 58. For Peter of Poitiers, see M. Manitius, *Geschichte der Latein-
ischen Literatur des Mittelalters* (3 Vols.; Munich, 1923–64), III, 901–2.
[110] *Liber VII Ethicorum*, Tract. I, 1, in *B. Alberti Magni Ratisbonensis Episcopi, Ordinis
Praedicatorum, Opera Omnia*, ed. A. Borgnet (39 Vols.; Paris, 1890–99), VII, 464. For back-
ground, see G. Boas, *Essays on Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore,
1948); Lovejoy and Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*, pp. 243 ff.

sharing the ways of wild beasts and being neither Greek nor Latin. Like brutes they gorge themselves on human flesh and quaff their bloody beverage from human skulls. The barbarian, unlike civilized man, is 'moved rather by unreasoning fury, lust, and self-delusion'. St. Thomas made the same point by commenting on the unwillingness or the inability of the barbarian to submit himself to natural law, good morals, and the rule of right reason.[111] In the course of examining some of the problems confronting the Franciscan missionary the English scholastic, Roger Bacon, contrasted the barbarian with rational man (*quando barbarorum, quando hominum rationabilium*).[112] An understanding of the mental and moral deficiencies of the barbarian way of life would probably have been very useful to the Franciscan or Dominican friar engaged in the difficult but vital task of winning souls to Christ. The scholastic idea of the faults of barbarism had, therefore, some value in the scheme of Christian education and apologetics. The relevancy of this problem was being brought home to medieval man quite forcefully in the early thirteenth century by the reappearance of the *furor barbaricus* in a particularly disturbing and disgusting form.

The most familiar 'barbarian' of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was the Tartar. European knowledge of this new kind of barbarism was considerably enlarged through the efforts of Dominican envoys such as John of Plano de Carpine, William of Rubruck, and others whom various Christian princes and popes dispatched to the East to discover the real intentions of the Mongols, to dissuade them from further aggression against Christian lands, to convert them to the true faith, and, perhaps, to establish an alliance with them against Islam. Well before Marco Polo ventured into Asia and returned to tell his thrilling tale of its marvels, Europeans were fairly well informed about this barbarian folk through the missionary reports, especially John of Plano de Carpine's book, which circulated in the West in the immensely popular encyclopaedia of Vincent of Beauvais. These accounts reinforced European awe, suspicion, and disgust by detailing the fierce ways, filthy habits, and repelling diet of the Tartars. The report of John of Plano de Carpine expressed the 'moral barrier' dividing civilization and the barbarians by rehearsing the familiar complaints about them.

They break any promises they make as soon as they see that the tide is turned in their favour, and they are full of deceit in all their deeds and assurances; it is their object to

[111] *Ethicorum Liber VII*, Lect. 1 in *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Doctoris Angelici Ordinis Praedicatorum Opera Omnia* (25 Vols.; New York, 1948–50), XXI, 224: '*Quorum primus est ex conversatione gentis, sicut apud barbaros qui rationabilibus legibus non utuntur, propter malam communem consuetudinem aliqui incidunt in malitiam bestialem*'.

[112] *The Opus Majus of Roger Bacon*, ed. J. H. Bridges (2 Vols.; Oxford, 1897), I, 301: '*Receperunt etiam pericula infinita, eo quod nesciverunt quando intraverunt regiones fidelium, quando schismaticorum, quando Saracenorum, quando Tartarorum, quando tyrannorum, quando hominum pacificorum, quando barbarorum, quando hominum rationabilium*'.

wipe off the face of the earth all princes, nobles, knights and men of gentle birth . . . and they do this to those in their power in a sly and crafty manner: then because it is unfitting that Christians should be subject to them in view of the abominations they practice and seeing that the worship of God is brought to nought, souls are perishing and bodies are afflicted beyond belief in many ways; it is true at first they speak fair words, but afterwards they sting and hurt like a scorpion. . . .[113]

These and other 'factual' reports of Tartar society seemed to give credence to an ancient legend, which in the face of real danger from the East, was being carefully and widely re-studied during the thirteenth century.[114]

The Tartar threat to civilized Europe during the later Middle Ages was expressed in a 'sublimated mythologized form' by the legend of Alexander's inclosure behind the Caspian Gates of the terrible peoples of Gog and Magog.[115] According to this story, which associated the strange and ferocious tribes of Gog and Magog cited by *Ezekiel* and *Revelation* with the heroic figure of Alexander as he was portrayed in Jewish, Christian, and Moslem mythology, the Macedonian conqueror had excluded the peoples of Gog and Magog from the civilized world by building stout walls of iron or brass traditionally located in the Caucasus at the passes of Dariel or Derbend. Gog and Magog, even before their association with Alexander, had possessed an eschatological significance. The author of *Revelation* described the coming of these hordes as a sure sign of impending doom. It was very easy to identify them with several historical enemies of civilization. *Ezekiel* may have been thinking of the Cimmerians; and the author of *Revelation* probably had the Scythians in mind. The fully developed myth of Alexander and the inclosed nations was doubtlessly enhanced in its historical relevancy by the invasion of the Huns in A.D. 395; and subsequently it circulated throughout the Mediterranean world in Syriac, Greek, and Latin versions.[116] With only a slight change in the proper names, Gog and Magog could be turned into Goth and Magoth and the legend related to the Germanic invasions of the fifth century.[117] Such ancient and medieval authors as Commodian, Ambrose, Orosius, Isidore, Godfrey of Viterbo, and Ranulph Higden did precisely this.[118] Geography, physique, and institutions tended, however, to suggest their identification with the steppe nomads—Scythians, Huns, Alans, Avars, and Tartars—who occasionally managed to penetrate the defenses of

[113] *Ystoria Mongolorum*, VIII, 3, in *Sinica Franciscana*, ed. A. van den Wyngaert (7 Vols.; Quaracchi-Florence, 1929–65), I, 94. Translated in Dawson, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[114] Ostensibly factual reports were heavily colored by presupposition based on ancient myth and rumor. See the remarks of L. Olschki, *Marco Polo's Precursors* (Baltimore, 1943), p. 13. For a recent discussion of European knowledge of Mongol Asia, consult L. Olschki, *Marco Polo's Asia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960).

[115] A. R. Anderson, *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog, and the Inclosed Nations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), p. 8.

[116] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[117] This is the usage of *Mandeville's Travels: Texts and Translations*, trans. M. Letts, Hakluyt Society, Ser. II, Vols. 101–2 (2 Vols.; London, 1953), II, 380.

[118] Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 9–11.

European civilization. The identification of Gog and Magog with the Tartars and Turks was popularized in Europe through the circulation of such ancient sources as the *Revelations* of the *Pseudo-Methodius*, a Latin work of the seventh century, and the *Cosmography* of Aethicus Ister, which dates from about the same time.[119] The *gentes inmundas et aspectu orribilis* seemed to conform perfectly with the description of the Tartar horde presented by European missionaries; and such writers as Quin-lichinus of Spoleto, Rudulph of Ems, the author of the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, Peter Comestor, Roger Bacon, Ricold of Monte Croce, Albertus Magnus, Vincent of Beauvais, and Marco Polo agreed.[120] The thirteenth-century English chronicler, Matthew Paris, quoted a letter from Henry Raspe, Landgrave of Thuringia and kinsman of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, wherein Mongol bestiality is described in terms reminiscent of Gog and Magog: '*sunt enim corpore terribiles, vultu furiosi, oculis iracundi, manibus rapaces, dentibus sanguinolenti, et eorum fauces ad carnem hominum comedendam et humanum sanguinem absorbendum omni tempore sunt paratae*'.[121] Another document preserved by the same source, the transcript of a speech by a Russian archbishop in 1244, seems to reflect the influence of Aethicus Ister, the other popular medieval source for the Alexandrian legend.[122] From the time of its appearance in the fourth century the legend of Alexander and the inclosed nations served not only to identify the various historical challengers of civilization but also gave hope for the eventual triumph of Christian civilization over the forces of Antichrist. The eschatological content of the story of Gog and Magog both satisfied European curiosity about an astonishing and frightening people, the Tartars, and reassured medieval man that they occupied a place in the Christian plan of salvation.[123]

Long before the Italian humanists of the Renaissance expressed their pride in Latin civilization and their faith that the resiliency of Roman culture had enabled Italy to prevail over the Germanic barbarism which had engulfed Europe a thousand years before, other European commenta-tors had complimented Italy for its civilizing influence. Bishop Otto of

[119] The *Pseudo-Methodius* has been published by E. Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und For-schungen* (Halle, 1898). Aethicus Ister in his *Cosmographiam*, ed. H. Wuttke (Leipzig, 1853), p. 18, identified the Turks as the descendants of Gog and Magog: '*Gens ignominiosa et incognita, monstruosa, idolatria, fornicaria in cunctis stupriis et lupanariis truculenta, a quo et nomen accepit, de stirpe Gog et Magog. Comedent enim universa abominabilia et abortiva hominum, iuvenum carnes iumentorumque et ursorum, vultorum, item charadrium ac milvorum, bubonum atque visontium, canum et simiarum*'.

[120] Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 46 ff.; for Richard of Monte Croce, see *Peregrinatores Medii Aevi Quatuor*, ed. J. C. M. Laurent (Leipzig, 1864), pp. 114–18. The Tartars, *Magogoli, Mogoli*, are said to be descended from Gog and Magog (p. 118).

[121] *Chronica Majora*, VI, 77.

[122] *Ibid.*, IV, 386–9.

[123] See G. Cary, *The Medieval Alexander* (Cambridge, 1956), p. 130; and C.-V. Langlois, *La Connaissance de la Nature et du Monde au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1911), p. 81, which quotes a French source to the effect that the peoples of Gog and Magog are such, '*Qui char d'omme manjuent crue/ Et bestes com gent mescreue*'.

Freising, memorializing the deeds of his nephew, Frederick Barbarossa, cited as an example of the pacifying and civilizing effect of the Italian environment on barbarians the fate of the Lombards, who had occupied the peninsula in the seventh century. After their settlement the Lombards 'put aside crude, barbarous ferocity, perhaps from the fact that when united in marriage with the natives they begat sons who inherited something of the Roman gentleness and keenness from the mothers' blood, and from the very quality of the country and climate, retain the refinement of the Latin speech and their elegance of manners. In the governing of their cities, and in the conduct of public affairs, they still imitate the wisdom of the ancient Romans'.[124] The clearest sign of this acculturation was their willingness to submit to orderly government, their love of liberty, and their devotion to peace. On the other hand, the success of *Latinitas* in resisting barbarism could be contrasted with Hungarian culture, which even in Otto's day displayed, he said, unmistakable signs of its barbarian origins. The imprint of Hunnish, Avar, and Magyar occupation is evident in the appearance, customs, and institutions of contemporary Hungary, so that 'it is not surprising that the province remains crude and uncultured in custom and in speech'.[125] In other words, the process could work both ways. Accidents of history or cultural geography might either stimulate civilization or impose upon a region an indelible barbarism. Through such rough categories of cultural and ethnological analysis Bishop Otto fashioned a primitive theory of acculturation capable of explaining the relationship of civilization and barbarism historically and in his own times.

For Italian scholars of the Renaissance humanism was a form of nationalism.[126] Like the ancient Roman authors they admired, the humanists contrasted *Romanitas* with barbarism and used this distinction as a means for expressing a fierce cultural pride and patriotism. Dante, for instance, hoped that the triumph of Roman imperial power over the peninsula would vindicate the historical and cultural heritage of the Italian people. In a letter to the Lombards he urged them to lay aside their acquired barbarism (*coadductam barbariem*) and respond to the challenge according to their Trojan and Latin ancestry.[127] For him, Italy's future lay in the direction of a revivification of the ancient political and cultural ideals.[128]

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[124] *Gesta Friderici I Imperatoris*, II, 13, ed. G. Waitz, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum (Hanover, 1884), pp. 92–3. Translated by C. C. Mierow for Columbia Records of Civilization (New York, 1953).

[125] *Ibid.*, I, 32 (p. 40).

[126] R. Wallach, *Das Abendlandische Gemeinschaftsbewusstsein im Mittelalter* (Leipzig, 1928), pp. 36–7; for the concept of barbarism in the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance, see D. Hay, 'Italy and Barbarian Europe', *Italian Renaissance Studies: A Tribute to the Late Cecilia M. Ady*, ed. E. F. Jacob (London, 1960), pp. 48–68.

[127] In the fifth letter, published in *Dantis Alagheri Epistolae: the Letters of Dante*, ed. P. Toynbee (Oxford, 1920), p. 52.

[128] See the seventh letter, *ibid.*, p. 110, wherein Dante said that God brought under Roman rule '*barbaras nationes et cives*'.

Petrarch is even more ardent in insisting on the recognition of the unique position of his native Italy as the exclusive heir and agent of civilization. Foreign intervention in the political life of Italy beginning with the arrival of the Emperor Henry VII, followed by French, Spanish, and other German intruders, heightened the nostalgia of the Italian humanists and sharpened their sense of cultural pride. On one occasion Petrarch said flatly that all Frenchmen were barbarians, although it did not necessarily follow that all barbarians were French.[129] Appreciation of the classical heritage, and the ability to preserve it, distinguished civilized nations like Italy from the barbarians elsewhere. Further, northern barbarism was contagious. '*Sic nostri in Galliam vel Germaniam translati, naturam illarum partium imbiberunt, mores barbaricos*'.[130] The foolishness, mendacity, and ferocity of the barbarian contrast vividly with Italian manners and morals, and Petrarch declared his national pride by saying simply: '*Sumus enim non Graeci, non Barbari, sed Itali et Latini*'.[131] In this he was not alone. In 1313 Robert of Anjou, king of Naples, appealed to Italian patriotism in a letter, which denounced the German people as a harsh and intractable nation, 'bound rather to the savagery of barbarism than to the Christian faith'.[132] A similar denunciation of the Germans was published under the name of the ruler of Milan, Giangaleazzo Visconti, who posed as a patriot in having expelled the German invaders under the Emperor Rupert of Bavaria—'those barbarous nations, enemies of Italy'.[133] The word *barbarus* was a useful term of slander to be launched against French, Spanish, and German intruders, who in the eyes of Italian statesmen and their humanist secretaries were responsible for the turmoil of Renaissance Italian life. They were not entirely original in this. Liutprand of Cremona in the tenth century had hurled the word with great relish against the Byzantine Emperor, Nicephorus: 'Bristly, unruly, countrified, barbarian, harsh, hairy, a rebel, a Cappadocian'.[134] Anna Comnena spat it at 'barbarous' Franks, with, perhaps, more justification.[135] The Greeks had long before called the Romans by the same name that Italians were applying to foreign intruders in the age of the Renaissance. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Italy the contrast between 'Roman-Italian civilization' and 'foreign barbarism' had been stated so eloquently and so frequently that Machiavelli was using a familiar argument when he urged the expulsion of

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[129] Quoted by R. de Mattei, *Studi . . . Enrico Besta*, pp. 495–6, from *Apologia contra cuiusdam Anonymi Galli Calumnias, Opera*, ed. H. Petri (Basel, 1554), p. 1180. See R. de Mattei, *Il Sentimento Politico del Petrarca* (Florence, 1944), pp. 38 ff.

[130] R. de Mattei, *Studi . . . Enrico Besta*, p. 496.

[131] *Ibid.*

[132] Quoted in translation from MGH, Leges, IV/2, 1372, by D. Hay, *The Italian Renaissance in Its Historical Background* (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 94–6.

[133] Hay, *Italian Renaissance*, pp. 138–9.

[134] *Relatio de Legatione Constantinopolitana*, 10, MGH, Scriptores, III, 349.

[135] G. Buckler, *Anna Comnena* (London, 1929), pp. 440–1, cited by Hay, *Italian Renaissance Studies*, ed. Jacob, p. 54, and nn. 3, 4.

barbarian outsiders from his native land.[136] In applying the term 'barbarian' to other European peoples, few authors attempted to be objective. In the sixteenth century Benedetto Varchi admitted that the word could have several meanings. When applied to a region, it simply meant 'strange' or 'foreign'. Yet when applied to a person, it took on its ancient pejorative implications—'cruel', 'brutish', and 'savage'.[137]

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the ancient literary and linguistic usage, which contrasted Latinity with barbarian culture became dominant and was employed to justify the intellectual and political pretensions of Renaissance Italy. The ancient antithesis which opposed the classical languages to the vernaculars and which condemned any importation from outside as a 'barbarization' of the pure classical tongue was now inflated into a cultural and political program.[138] These ideas were very old, and they had never died out. The Carolingian and Ottonian revivals had reminded European intellectuals of the virtue of proper Latin composition. The twelfth-century Renaissance had led to a revival of classical artistry. Those reared in the classical tradition were well acquainted with the juxtaposition of Greek to barbarian or of *Romanitas* to barbarism. In the fourteenth century the English scholar, Bishop Richard de Bury, contrasted Greek and barbarian in his *Philobiblon*.[139] In 1286 the Italian encyclopedist, Balbi, observed that formerly all men were called 'barbarians' except Greeks and Romans.[140] With the revival of an ardent and energetic classicism in the age of Petrarch and Boccaccio, this enthusiasm for Greece and Rome was greatly intensified and it merged with the frustrated national aspirations of the Italian intelligentsia of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to vindicate their arrogance and to stimulate their hopes.

The use to which Italian pedants and patriots had put the word *barbarus* had its impact on northern European intellectuals. At the end of the fifteenth century Conrad Celtis, a self-styled 'barbarian', urged his fellow Germans to emulate the ancient nobility of Rome: 'In the same way you who have taken over the empire of the Italians should cast off repulsive barbarism and seek to acquire Roman culture'.[141] This purely literary application of the term was popular in humanist circles of Europe seeking to imitate the educational ideals of the Italians.

[136] *Il Principe*, XXVI, in *Niccolò Machiavelli Opere*, ed. M. Bonfantini (Milan/Naples [1954]), pp. 83–6.

[137] Hay, *Italian Renaissance Studies*, ed. Jacob, pp. 62–3.

[138] See the discussion of the barbarian destruction of classical Rome in 'A Report to Pope Leo X on Ancient Rome', of the authorship of either Raphael or Baldassare Castiglione, translated in *A Documentary History of Art*, ed. E. G. Holt (2 Vols.; Garden City, New York, 1957), I, 290–4.

[139] *Philobiblon*, ed. S. Hand (Albany, 1861), p. 132.

[140] Hay, *Italian Renaissance Studies*, ed. Jacob, p. 56.

[141] *Ibid.*, p. 64, citing Celtis, *Selections*, trans. L. Forster (Cambridge, 1948), p. 43.

On the other hand, northern European scholars eventually came to appreciate their barbarian origins when such seemed to exhibit moral or political virtues rather than literary deficiencies. A growing acquaintance with national histories and an admiration for national accomplishments encouraged certain European scholars to exalt the Germanic invaders of the Roman Empire as a source of moral and social (as opposed to literary) excellence. The German humanist, Beatus Rhenanus, took pride in the knowledge that the barbarian conquerors of Rome were the ancestors of his own noble race. 'For the triumph of the Goths, the Vandals, and the Franks are our triumphs'.[142] The illustrious Dutch classicist, Erasmus, argued the barbarian origins of the Italian aristocracy itself. 'When I was at Rome some scholars seriously held the opinion that the heroic spirits among the Italians were descendants of the Goths and the other barbarian nations, whereas the undersized and ill-born and weak were the true remnants of the Roman race. Whence it was deduced that the greatest part of the Italian nobility took its origin from the barbarian nations'.[143] A century later, Hugo Grotius, following the lead of Swedish historical opinion, which extolled the noble Goths as the precursors of the Scandinavian nations, expressed his admiration for primitive Germanic law over the 'ingenuity', 'instability', and 'inconsistency' of Roman jurisprudence.[144] Both Italians and Germans were using the word as a loose term of opprobrium, guided by contemporary political considerations. Italian classicists, acutely aware of their classical antecedents, seized upon Latin civilization as their birthright and used it to justify their claims to political independence and cultural superiority over the rest of Europe. Somewhat later, northern European humanists and historians for similar ethnocentric reasons complimented themselves on their descent from those ancient destroyers of Rome, who seemed in retrospect to have enjoyed priority over more refined peoples by virtue of a sort of rough-hewn moral probity and considerable (though untutored) manliness. The admiration for classical and Italian literary blandishments was counterbalanced by a patriotic appreciation of their own vigorous and successful past. Tacitus' remarks about barbarian virtue now served to inspire descendants of those former conquerors of Rome and even the supposed ancestral qualities of belligerency and simplicity were turned to their advantage.

V. SOME CONCLUSIONS

Viewing the origins of civilization in world perspective, as some historians have recently urged us to do, the genesis and expansion of a civilized style of life might be portrayed in terms of the emergence of several primary centers of civilization along an axis running from North Africa eastward

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[142] Mazzarino, *op. cit.*, p. 88.
[143] *Ibid.*   [144] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

to China.[145] From these civilized oases, surrounded by a sea of barbarians, there was a gradual extension of civilization outward by the conversion or conquest of neighboring non-civilized or barbarian peoples. Such a point of view stresses the competition of civilization with barbarism in antiquity and the Middle Ages and tends to interpret world history according to a piston-like exchange between them. There is, as we have seen, considerable justification for such a view of history to be found in the attitudes displayed by the apologists for civilization toward their barbarian antagonists.

The ancient antithesis of civilization and barbarism, endlessly repeated in the literature of antiquity and the Middle Ages, derived from a process of social and cultural differentiation which produced historically a sequence of contrasting societies.[146] The image of the 'barbarian', whatever its specific historical context and to whomever applied, was the invention of civilized man who thereby expressed his own strong sense of cultural and moral superiority. As the Greeks had bequeathed to the Romans, so the Romans passed on to Byzantium and medieval Europe certain specific prejudices against the less advanced and usually less settled and articulate outsider, who was despised both for his behavioristic eccentricities and his cultural primitiveness.

The dissolution of the Roman state and its civilization in the West as a result of internal decay and Germanic attack eroded the old distinction, so long cherished by Latin *literati*, between *Romanitas* and various kinds of barbarism and substituted for it a new distinction based upon religion. By the end of the seventh century, if not a bit earlier, the 'barbarian' had become the pagan or Arian heretic in contrast to the trinitarian Christian. The diminution of the Latin character of European culture and the mingling of German and Romanized provincial populations promoted the adoption of the purely religious meaning of the word 'barbarian' and the identification of civilization itself with Christian orthodoxy. The closing of the civilized *oecumene* through the conversion of heathen and heretic peoples of the European heartland pushed barbarism back to the frontiers where its old competition with civilization continued to be fought out. The juxtaposition of 'barbarian' with 'Roman' survived only on literary and linguistic levels.

The triumph of Christianity within Europe and the social and cultural differentiation of certain parts of continental society during the later Middle Ages strengthened the ethical and attitudinal content of the term *barbarus*, which was prominent in its ancient usage and which had never

[145] The best-known advocate of this view is William McNeill, *Rise of the West* (Chicago, 1963); but see also Marshall Hodgson, 'The Interrelations of Societies in History', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, V (1962–3), 242 ff.

[146] For a discussion of the differentiation of Chinese society from that of the nomadic barbarians, see O. Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers of China*. American Geographical Society (New York, 1940), pp. 53 ff.

been forgotten. The notion of the *furor barbaricus*, which was most dramatically and dreadfully manifested by the Mongol threat of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, stressed the cultural and moral antagonism of civilization and barbarism over their purely religious difference, and circulated widely through the Western world in the apocalyptic legend of the inclosed tribes.

The recovery of the great corpus of classical learning in the later Middle Ages contributed to feelings of cultural and literary superiority, reinforced the ethical implications of the use of the word 'barbarian', and revived the classical image of civilized man's degenerate, deceitful, and deadly antagonist. The memory of the Latin contrast of 'Roman' and 'barbarian' was extremely popular among Italian humanists of the Renaissance, who saw its value as a rhetorical device for expressing their own sense of cultural identity and as a vindication of the growing demand of Italian patriots for freedom from foreign intrusion. Although in principle and practice, northern European scholars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries exhibited their awareness of the literary and linguistic virtuosity of Italian humanists, and followed their southern brethren in expressing admiration for classical literature over various 'barbarous' vernaculars, this literary usage of the word ultimately suggested a further extension of its purely secular meaning. Inspired by Tacitus and their own nascent ethnocentrism, Teutonic scholars exalted the image of the barbarian as the upright, brave, and hardy fellow, unencumbered by an articulate but possibly debilitating past. It was just a step, and one which was occasionally taken, from this explicitly self-conscious and secular usage of the word 'barbarian' to the recognition of its purely relative meaning. When it dawned on European observers that, depending on how one was viewed and by whom, anyone, including themselves, might be considered a 'barbarian', then its subjective and relative nature was clearly noted, and even its pejorative content considerably reduced.[147] But even at this time—the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the image of the barbarian was receding from sight.

Although the 'barbarian' in his Ottoman form continued to thrill Europe, as an object of historical and mythical speculation he was being rivaled by the 'noble savage', whose existence was then being reported by the earliest explorers of the non-European world.[148] A preoccupation with the 'barbarian' in the East was diminished by this growing interest in the

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[147] A Scottish source from the mid-sixteenth century observed: 'Euere nation reputis vthers nations to be barbariens, quhen there tua natours and complexions ar contrar til vtheris', *New English Dictionary*, s.v. 'Barbarian'. In the fifteenth century the people of Hereford were said to be 'ferocious and uncivilized', W. W. Capes, *The English Church in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (London, 1900), p. 204.

[148] For a sixteenth-century German illustration of 'New World savages' and 'Old World barbarians' side by side, see M. T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia, 1964), p. 127.

noble savage to the far West.[149] During the course of composing his great survey of the destruction of Roman civilization in Europe, Edward Gibbon breathed a sigh of relief in the realization that the technological and material superiority of Europe had finally banished the barbarian as a serious threat to Western civilization.[150] The self-confidence and vitality, which had enabled European man to raise insurmountable barriers against the barbarian hordes, had also allowed him to undertake the dramatic expansion of European civilization which brought him into contact with the non-European primitive.

[149] The psychological and historical implications of the image of the 'noble savage' in Western civilization have been brilliantly described by H. Baudet, *Paradise on Earth: Some Thoughts on European Images of Non-European Man*, trans. E. Wentholt (New Haven and London, 1965).

[150] *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J. B. Bury (3 Vols.; New York, 1946), II, 1224-5.