

## The Barbarian in Greek and Latin Literature

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Various peoples have a term indicating all foreigners collectively,<sup>1</sup> but few of those concepts have had such a long history as the ancient Greek “barbaros” which is still in use in many western languages. Its meaning varied over time. It is the argument of the present paper that it is worth reconsidering carefully what the word says about Greek and Roman attitudes towards other peoples over time. This is not an attempt to make an essential contribution to questions of ethnicity — Greek and non-Greek, or Greek self-definition through the recorded views of others.<sup>2</sup> The aim is to understand somewhat better what this intriguing term can teach us about Greek and Roman attitudes to non-Greeks and non-Romans. This will be based on literary sources of all kinds, including poetry and tragedy from the eighth century BC until the fourth century AD. This is justified because the aim is not to trace objective practicalities, such as, e.g., the manner in which foreigners were treated, but rather ideas and concepts that may be expressed in different literary forms. The first source discussed is a good example of this.

### Greek

The term occurs first, once only, in Homer (*Il.* 2.867) where the Carians are called ‘*barbarophōnoi*’ that is: ‘of foreign speech’.<sup>3</sup> This may or may not be derogatory. In either case, it has often been misinterpreted as indicating an original linguistic basis for the term “barbaros” itself, in other words: the essence of barbarism is speaking a foreign language. This, however, is by no means obvious; for in the *Iliad* the term may mean no more than that the people mentioned spoke a foreign (barbarian) language. Generally speaking, all *barbaroi* are undoubtedly *barbarophonoi*, but this does not mean that the essence of being a *barbaros* is the difference in language. It may be just one of the characteristics of *barbaroi*. Another passage, in the *Odyssey*, may be related: When Hephaistos had been expelled from the Olympus he landed on Lemnos where he received succor from the ‘wild-speaking’ Sintians.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford 1989), 4 n. 1 for the terms for foreigners used in various languages.

<sup>2</sup> E. Hall (n. 1); J. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge 1997); id. *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago 2002); I. Malkin, *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Identity* (Cambridge, Mass. 2001); Finkelberg, *Greeks and Pre-Greeks: Aegean Prehistory and Greek Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge 2005); D. Konstan, ‘Defining Ancient Greek Ethnicity’, *Diaspora* 6 (1997): 97-110.

<sup>3</sup> See A.D. Kelly in: M. Finkelberg (ed.), *The Homer Encyclopedia* (Oxford 2011), vol. 1, 123; see also: J. McInerney in: (Finkelberg [ed.]), vol. 1, 265-67. Cf. Hall (n. 1), 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Od.* 8.293-4: ἀλλά που ἤδη οἴχεται ἐς Λῆμνον μετὰ Σίντιας ἀγριοφώνους (i.e. non-Greek; see also *Il.* 1.593-4).

Thereafter, in the seventh century BC the term occurs in a fragment of the Spartan poet Alcman:

γ]ὰρ εἰ διὰ [τ]ὴν σοφία[ν πολίτην ἐπ[ο]ιήσαντο ἔστιν / ἔα[υ]τοῦ κατη[γορεῖν / ἢ τοῖς  
ἄ[ισ]μασι τὸν [Ἀλκμᾶ/να καὶ λέγειν ὅτι βάρβαρος ἦν καὶ Λυδὸς ὑπερλ / [ π]ατρίδος καὶ  
γε / [·]ου καίτ[ο] (Fr. 10a 38-45).<sup>5</sup>

Alcman's origin was a matter of dispute even in antiquity. He is frequently assumed to have been born in Sardis, capital of ancient Lydia, but the *Suda* states that Alcman was a Laconian.<sup>6</sup> The present fragment is not conclusive and even contradictory,<sup>7</sup> but in any case, it cannot be ignored that he is referred to as a barbarian and a Lydian. This then, obviously, does not refer to language or culture, but to origin and citizenship. There is certainly no reason to assume that Alcman would refer to himself as a foreigner with the irony and sarcasm encountered in the work of Lucian of Samosata or Apuleius, for that is not the sort of literature he produced.<sup>8</sup> If Alcman calls himself a barbarian, this refers to his presumed origin in Lydia, not his deficient Greek. In other words, the term designates geographic origin, not language.

The sixth century BC provides us with more instances. It appears in a fragment ascribed to Anacreon (570-488?) which is too far gone to tell us much, but it seems to refer to barbarian speech.<sup>9</sup> The term 'barbarian' occurs in at least one fragment from the work of Hekataios of Miletus (c.550-c.476):

Hekataios of Miletos says that barbarians lived in the Peloponnese before the Hellenes. In fact, almost all of Hellas was inhabited by barbarians in ancient times, as we can infer from the traditional tales themselves.<sup>10</sup>

As observed in the commentary to this fragment, it is unclear whether the whole of this passage in Strabo 7.7.1, cited there, should be attributed to Hekataios, or just the first sentence. According to Hekataios, pre-Greek peoples (i.e., Pelasgians) occupied the

<sup>5</sup> D.L. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford 1962), 30 with comments; M. Davies, *Poetarum melicorum Graecorum fragmenta*. (Oxford 1991), 6-10. Cf. Claude Calame, *Alcman: Introduction, texte critique, témoignages, traduction et commentaire* (Rome 1983), T 5, 4-6 ; T6 ; T8.

<sup>6</sup> *Suda*, s.v. Ἀλκμάν. Calame (n. 5), xiv-xvi ; Cf. D. A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric* (Cambridge, MA 1938), vol. 2, 402-406. For his date, see also G.O. Hutchinson, *Greek Lyric Poetry: A Commentary on Selected Larger Poems* (Oxford 2001), 71,

<sup>7</sup> See the comments by Page (n. 5). Cf. Campbell (n. 6), 13c and d on 404-5; 16 on 408.

<sup>8</sup> For these authors about their origin: B. Isaac, 'Attitudes Towards Provincial Intellectuals in the Roman Empire', in E. Gruen (ed.), *Cultural Identity and the Peoples of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Los Angeles 2011), 491-518.

<sup>9</sup> D. Page, *Supplementum Lyricis Graecis* (Oxford 1974), S 313: ὁ γὰρ Ἀνακρέων φησί (a) κοίμισον δὲ, Ζεῦ, σόλοικον φθόγγον (b) μή πως βάρβαρα βάζηις. Page explains in his comments that he cannot make sense of the Greek as it stands.

<sup>10</sup> Brill's New Jacoby I F 119: Ἐκαταῖος μὲν οὖν ὁ Μιλήσιος περὶ τῆς Πελοποννήσου φησίν, διότι πρὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὠικησαν αὐτὴν βάρβαροι. σχεδὸν δὲ τι καὶ ἡ σύμπασα Ἑλλάς κατοικία βαρβάρων ὑπῆρξε τὸ παλαιόν, ἀπ' αὐτῶν λογιζόμενοις τῶν μνημονευομένων.

Peloponnese before the Hellenes.<sup>11</sup> If not just the first sentence, but the entire passage in Strabo may be attributed to Hekataios, this is of interest for historical reasons, but does not affect the meaning of ‘barbarian’ as used here. To remove any doubt of this, the sequel may be cited here:

Pelops led his people from Phrygia to the Peloponnese, which is named after him, and Danaos brought his people from Egypt. There are Dryopes, Kaukonos, Pelasgians, and Leleges and other such peoples who occupied the regions on the Peloponnesian side of the Isthmos, and the other side too. The Thracians who came with Eumolpos took possession of Attica, while Tereus occupied Daulis in Phokis, and the Phoenicians who came with Kadmos the Kadmeia, and the Aones, Temmikies and Hyantes (as Pindar says [F 83 Maehler]: ‘There was a time when they called the Boiotian people “syas (swine)”’). And their barbarian origin is indicated by their names, such as Kekrops, Kodros, Aiklos, Kothos, Drymas, and Krinakos. The Thracians, Illyrians, and Epeirotes even to this day are on the flanks (i.e., of Greece), even more so formerly than now, since the barbarians possess a large portion of the territory that is at present indisputably part of Greece. The Thracians hold Macedonia and a large part of Thessaly, while the Thesprotians, Kassopaians, Amphilocheans, Molossians, and Athamanes, Epeirote peoples, occupy the upper parts of Akarnania and Aitolia.

We see here that Hekataios mentions *barbaroi* purely in an ethnic sense, as representing non-Greeks, descendants from non-Greeks, inhabiting parts of the mainland of Greece. If the sequel may be attributed to him rather than to Strabo — which is not at all clear — it follows that he also identifies non-Greeks by their non-Greek personal names.

At least one fragment of Heraclitus (535-475) may suggest that in his opinion there existed a typically non-Greek mentality:<sup>12</sup> ‘Poor witnesses for people are eyes and ears if they have barbarian souls.’<sup>13</sup>

Marcovich says that ‘if they have’, as in the quotation above, is only conditional, not causal. The fragment, he comments, stresses the need of personal intelligence or insight for the apprehension of the Logos (which, we may add, barbarians lack by definition). Sextus Empiricus, who quotes this passage, adds: ‘It is as if he had said: “It is characteristic of barbarian souls to trust in irrational senses”’.<sup>14</sup> Emphasis here is thus on

<sup>11</sup> See R.L. Fowler, ‘Pelasgians’, in E. Csapo & M.C. Miller (eds.), *Poetry, Theory, Praxis: The Social Life of Myth, Word and Image in Ancient Greece* (Oxford 2003), 2-18, at 9-10, and C. Sourvinou-Inwood, ‘Herodotus (and others) on Pelasgians: Some Perceptions of Ethnicity’, in P. Derow & R. Parker (eds.), *Herodotus and his World* (Oxford 2003), 103-44; for a discussion of Hdt. 1.56-8: pp.122-131; for the traditions concerning the descent of these heroes, see Finkelberg (n. 2), chaps. 2 and 4. See also below on Herodotus.

<sup>12</sup> Fr. 107: κακοὶ μάρτυρες ἀνθρώποισιν ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ὄτα βαρβάρους ψυχὰς ἐχόντων. See M. Marcovich, *Heraclitus: Greek Text with a Short Commentary*, (Merida, Venezuela 1967), Fr. 13 (107, Diels Kranz), comm. on 47-8; M. Conché, *Héraclite, Fragments* (Paris 1986), 266-268.

<sup>13</sup> My translation. See also the translation by Conché (n. 12), 266: ‘Mauvais témoins pour les hommes, les yeux qui ont des âmes barbares’. Marcovich (n. 12) translates: ‘Evil witnesses are eyes and ears for men, if they have souls that do not understand their language’.

<sup>14</sup> Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Mathematicians* 7.126-34 (p.31 Mutschmann): ‘κακοὶ ... ἐχόντων’ [B 107], ὅπερ ἴσον ἦν τῷ ‘βαρβάρων ἐστὶ ψυχῶν ταῖς ἀλόγοις αἰσθήσεσι πιστεύειν’.

rationality versus irrationality, while Sextus Empiricus adds more bluntly that barbarians are irrational and Greeks rational.<sup>15</sup>

(Thales) used to say that he was grateful to fate for three reasons: first because he was born a man and not an animal, second, a man and not a woman, third a Greek and not a barbarian.<sup>16</sup>

Whatever the date of this pronouncement, here we have, for the first time, a remarkably derogatory statement about being a foreigner.

The term occurs more frequently in the surviving plays of Aeschylus (ca. 525/524 BC-ca. 456/455 BC).<sup>17</sup> In the *Supplices* the King of Argos addresses the suppliants as follows: ‘Whence come these barbarians? What shall we call you? So outlandishly arrayed in the barbaric luxury of robes and crowns, and not in Argive fashion, nor in Greek?’ Thus it refers here to dress which, if un-Hellenic, is by definition barbaric. The suppliants are recognized as foreigners by their dress.<sup>18</sup>

In the *Seven against Thebes* the scout describes Eteocles’ mares: before the attack they have muzzle-gear which, ‘filled with the breath of their proud nostrils, pipes in barbaric style.’ Here barbaric refers to an unusual noise, produced by horses.<sup>19</sup> This may not mean more than ‘unusual’ or ‘strange’ or even, fiercer: grating on the ear. It probably expresses dislike, but it would be farfetched to claim it is a comparison with non-Greek speech.

In the *Agamemnon* Agamemnon says to Clytemnestra: ‘... For the rest, pamper me not after woman’s wise, nor, like some barbarian, grovel to me with wide-mouthed acclaim ...’.<sup>20</sup>

Agamemnon tells Clytemnestra not to treat him as if he were a woman or a barbarian. As paraphrased by Fraenkel: ‘do not pamper me like a woman’, ‘do not

<sup>15</sup> Conché (n. 13) lays heavy emphasis on comprehensibility of language, or lack thereof. Those who have barbarian souls are incapable of speaking or understanding rationally, but the text as it is does not justify this and Conché’s approach may be based on conventional assumptions.

<sup>16</sup> F.W.A. Mullach, *Fragmenta Philosophorum Graecorum*, vol. 1 (Paris 1860, repr. Aalen 1968), 227 (Diogenes Laertius 1.33): *Apophthegmata* 5.9.1: “Εφασκε τριῶν τούτων ἔνεκα χάριν ἔχειν τῇ τύχῃ, πρῶτον μὲν ὅτι ἄνθρωπος ἐγένετο καὶ οὐ θηρίον, εἶτα ὅτι ἀνὴρ καὶ οὐ γυνή, τρίτον ὅτι Ἕλλην καὶ οὐ βάρβαρος.

<sup>17</sup> See, in general, Hall (n. 1).

<sup>18</sup> Aesch. *Supp.* 234-6: ποδαπὸν ὄμιλον τόνδ’ ἀνελληνόστολον πέπλοισι βαρβάρουσι κάμπυκώμασι χλίωντα προσφωνοῦμεν; This and the other translations from Aeschylus are by H.W. Smyth, Loeb. Cf. the comments by H. Friis Johansen and Edward W. Whittle, *Aeschylus the Suppliants*, 3 vols. (København 1980), 2, comm. ad loc.: ἀνελληνόστολον, a *hapax*. ‘Strangers’ clothing regularly excites attention as an indication of their race’, with parallels. For barbaric, i.e. pompous dress, see also Eur. *IA* 74: βαρβάρῳ χλιδήματι.

<sup>19</sup> *Septem* 463: φιμοὶ δὲ συρίζουσι βάρβαρον βρόμον. βρόμον is here an emendation for τρόπον MSS.

<sup>20</sup> *Ag.* 918-920: καὶ τᾶλλα μὴ γυναικὸς ἐν τρόποις ἐμὲ ἄβρυνε, μηδὲ βαρβάρου φωτὸς δίκην χαμαιπετὲς βόαμα προσχάνης ἐμοί ...

prostrate yourself in homage before me, as if I were a barbarian'.<sup>21</sup> Agamemnon, being Greek, does not want the sort of grovelling (προσκύνησις) expected from barbarians. Unspoken, but indubitably implied, is the stereotype assuming that oriental barbarians are effeminate.<sup>22</sup> As used in this passage, the term has the full negative force of alien manners and style.

Again, in the *Agamemnon*, Clytemnestra turns to the Chorus and says about Cassandra: 'Well, if her speech be not strange and outlandish, even as a swallow's, I must speak within the compass of her wits and move her to comply.' Here the term refers to language, non-Greek speech being compared with the sounds produced by swallows.<sup>23</sup>

Not surprisingly, in Aeschylus' work the term occurs most often in the *Persae*, namely ten times.

In Atossa's dream she saw one woman living in the Land of Hellas, the other in a barbarian land.<sup>24</sup> It refers therefore to land: any land not Hellas is barbarian, even when a Persian queen is speaking. When the messenger reports to Atossa about the destruction of the king's army, their own forces, he regularly refers to the barbarian forces<sup>25</sup> and so do Atossa<sup>26</sup> and the chorus.<sup>27</sup> The implication is clear: if Persians are speaking and represented as speaking in Greek, they refer to themselves simply as Persians or barbarians and a Greek audience did not assume that the latter is an incongruous term, to be used by foreigners referring to themselves. In other words, it is here a neutral term for "alien" or non-Greek.

In one instance the term is applied to speech when the Chorus addresses a prayer to the dead and the divine spirit of Darius: 'Doth then our sainted and godlike king hear me as I utter, in obscure barbaric speech, these my dismal and dolorous cries of varied sort?'<sup>28</sup>

Next is Pindar (522-443):

<sup>21</sup> E. Fraenkel, *Agamemnon edited with a commentary*, 3 vols. (Oxford 1950) vol. 2, comm. ad loc. D. Raeburn and O. Thomas, *The Agamemnon of Aeschylus* (Oxford 2011), unlike Fraenkel, take the subject of βαρβάρου φωτὸς δίκην as being Clytemnestra.

<sup>22</sup> For the effeminacy attributed to oriental peoples, see B. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton 2004), index s.v.

<sup>23</sup> *Ag.* 1050-3 (Clytemnestra to the chorus about Cassandra): ἀλλ' εἴπερ ἐστὶ μὴ χελιδόνος δίκην ἀγνώτα φωνὴν βάρβαρον κεκτημένη, ἔσω φρενῶν λέγουσα πείθω νιν λόγῳ. Cf. Fraenkel (n. 21), vol. 2. 476-7; Raeburn and Thomas (n. 21), 183: 'The twittering swallow was a common simile in Greek for foreign speech'. Similarly, *Soph. Ant.* 1002: βεβαρβαρωμένω; *Hdt.* 2.57: αἱ γυναῖκες, διότι βάρβαροι ἦσαν, ἐδόκεον δέ σφι ὁμοίως ὄρνισι φθέγγεσθαι.

<sup>24</sup> *Aesch. Pers.* 186-7: πάτραν δ' ἔναιον ἢ μὲν Ἑλλάδα κλήρω λαχοῦσα γαῖαν, ἢ δὲ βάρβαρον.

<sup>25</sup> *Pers.* 255: στρατὸς γὰρ πᾶς ὄλωλε βαρβάρων. Similarly: 337, 391, 423

<sup>26</sup> *Pers.* 433-4: αἰαῖ, κακῶν δὴ πέλαγος ἔρρωγεν μέγα Πέρσαις τε καὶ πρόπαντι βαρβάρων γένει. Also: 475 (the fallen at Marathon)

<sup>27</sup> *Pers.* 798: πῶς εἶπας; οὐ γὰρ πᾶν στράτευμα βαρβάρων περᾶ τὸν Ἑλλης πορθμὸν Εὐρώπης ἄπο; also: 844.

<sup>28</sup> *Pers.* 633-6: ἦ ῥ' αἶμι μου μακαρίτας ἰσοδαίμων βασιλεὺς βάρβαρα σαφηνῆ ἰέντος τὰ παναίολ' αἰανῆ δύσθροα βάγματα;

Countless continuous roads have been cut extending without a break or continuously for your fine deeds, both beyond the springs of the Nile and through the land of the Hyperboreans [i.e. beyond the ends of the world].<sup>29</sup> There is no city so barbarous or so strange in its speech [25]<sup>30</sup> that it does not know the fame of the hero Peleus, the fortunate in-law of gods, or of Aias and his father Telamon.<sup>31</sup>

The passage refers to the fame of Greek heroes beyond the ends of the world. It might be argued that ‘barbarous’ here is almost a synonym of παλίγλωσσος, but that is not necessary. It can be naturally taken as referring to basic culture, information and knowledge. Here it does *not* refer to language but to knowledge of the Greek heroes.

In the fifth century Herodotus uses the term ‘barbarians’, but not in any disparaging manner.<sup>32</sup> In his history of the wars between the Greeks and the Persians he describes the enemy respectfully as a formidable political and military power. The Persians were courageous (7.238), he writes, and fought valiantly (8.86; 9.71). They were also wont to honour those who did so. The Lydians too were brave and warlike (1.79). He pays much and varied attention to Egypt in a substantial part of his work, not marked by xenophobia.

Herodotus observes that the predecessors of the Greeks in their land were the Pelasgi (1.57), who spoke a barbarian language.<sup>33</sup> ‘If so, ... the Attic people, who were certainly Pelasgi, must have changed their language at the same time that they passed into the Hellenic community ...’. In this view language and ethnic identity are inseparably connected. Consequently, the Athenians were once upon a time barbarians, speaking a barbarian language, but subsequently became Greek-speaking Hellenes. This is an explicitly formulated view of the essence of ethnicity — and therefore much discussed. Being Hellene or barbarian were categories that could change over time together with language, as opposed to the very common view that gives priority to descent. This is not to deny that Herodotus held the Greeks to be superior: more intelligent than other peoples, for instance (1.60.3). Yet his attitude has been criticized in antiquity, notably in Plutarch’s essay *On the Malice of Herodotus* which attacks the author’s sympathy for barbarians, but was written in the Roman period. In 8.144 Herodotus represents the Athenians as explaining why they could not have supported the Persians: first because of the destruction of Athenian sanctuaries, second because of ‘the Hellenic ties, that is, our relationship, common language, the joint altars and sacrifices and the common customs,

<sup>29</sup> U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Pindaros* (Berlin 1922, , 1966<sup>2</sup>), 182, n. 2: ‘Im Munde eines Griechen, der eine ordentlich gehaltene Landstraße überhaupt nicht kannte, ist die Vorstellung höchst merkwürdig’.

<sup>30</sup> L.R. Farnell, *The Works of Pindar. Translated with Literary and Critical Commentaries* (1932 repr. Amsterdam 1965), 359-361; for παλίγλωσσος, see p.248 and 360: ‘speech contrary to the natural = perverse’.

<sup>31</sup> *Isthm.* 6.22-27: μυρία δ’ ἔργων καλῶν τέτμανθ’ ἐκατόμπεδοι ἐν σχερῶ κέλευθοι καὶ πέραν Νεῖλοιο παγᾶν καὶ δι’ Ὑπερβορέους καὶ πέραν Νεῖλοιο παγᾶν καὶ δι’ Ὑπερβορέους οὐδ’ ἔστιν οὕτω βάρβαρος οὔτε παλίγλωσσος πόλις, ἅτις οὐ Πηλέος ἄπει κλέος ἥρωος, εὐδαίμονος γαμβροῦ θεῶν, οὐδ’ ἅτις Αἴαντος Τελαμωνιάδα καὶ πατρός.

<sup>32</sup> See also the earlier discussion in: Isaac (n. 22), chap. 4.

<sup>33</sup> See above, on Hekataios. Cf. D. Asheri et al., *A Commentary on Herodotus Books I-IV* (Oxford 2007), 117-119; for the *Pelasgi* see also above, n. 11; cf. Finkelberg (n. 2), chap. 2.

which it would not be well for the Athenians to betray'. It has to be considered in context: the essence of the passage, usually overlooked, is that the issue itself needed to be clarified. If it had been obvious there would have been no need to say it (or for Herodotus: to write it). It remains true that the Athenians here are represented as emphasizing kinship, language, cult and customs as essential features, determining collective relationships.

Also to be noted is the admiration expressed in some sources for various remote barbarians, such as the Scythians with their sage Anacharsis, and the Ethiopians.<sup>34</sup> All this shows that the notion of "barbarian" in Athens in the first half of the fifth century BC did not necessarily and immediately have all of the heavy negative load that the term carries in modern English, even if the Greeks thought of themselves as being superior.

In the work of Thucydides (460-395 BC) the term frequently occurs as a simple indication of foreigners or foreign troops, often the Persians, as distinct from Greeks and their forces.<sup>35</sup> Thucydides has an interesting historical observation which represents, as far as I know, an approach totally novel at the time: '[Homer] does not even use the term barbarian, probably because the Hellenes had not yet been marked off from the rest of the world by one distinctive appellation'. Homer does not use 'Hellas' and 'Hellenes' to indicate all of the Greeks and he does not use the term "barbaroi" because there is no single name yet to indicate all of the Greeks collectively.

Thucydides points out the development of cultural differences between Greeks and barbarians over time, notably in dress: 'And there are many other points in which a likeness might be shown between the life of the Hellenic world of old and the barbarian of to-day'.<sup>36</sup> The implication here is that the Greeks evolved, while the non-Greeks remained stuck in an early stage of development. This is an interesting affirmation of a belief in progress — although in the past. Progress is a concept that otherwise is found hardly in antiquity.<sup>37</sup> Besides dress, language is of course emphasized as the essence of Hellenicity: Argos in Amphilochia was a Greek colony. At some stage, in need of reinforcement, 'they called in the Ambraciots, their neighbours on the Amphilochian border, to join their colony; and it was by this union with Argos that the Ambraciots learnt their present Hellenic speech, the rest of the Amphilochians being barbarians'.<sup>38</sup> The Ambraciots who joined Argos as citizens and began to speak Greek thus were no

<sup>34</sup> Cf. J.S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton 1992), 45-47; 74-76: Scythians and Anacharsis; 54-60: Ethiopians.

<sup>35</sup> Thuc. 1.1; 1.5; 1.6; 1.14.3 (Persians); 1.23.2; 1.118; Thucydides also uses the singular for a collective, thus 1.18.2: ὁ βάρβαρος, 'the Barbarian' for 'The Persians'; 1.73: φάμεν γὰρ Μαραθῶνι τε μόνοι προκινδυνεύσαι τῷ βαρβάρῳ. Note also 1.24.2: Ταυλάντιοι βάρβαροι, Ἰλλυρικὸν ἔθνος.

<sup>36</sup> Thuc. 1.6.6: πολλὰ δ' ἄν καὶ ἄλλα τις ἀποδείξειε τὸ παλαιὸν Ἑλληνικὸν ὁμοίωτροπα τῷ νῦν βαρβαρικῷ διατῶμενον.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Isaac (n. 22), 243 with references in 310-311, n. 68.

<sup>38</sup> Thuc. 2.68: ὕστερον πιεζόμενοι Ἀμπρακιώτας ὁμόρους ὄντας τῇ Ἀμφιλοχικῇ ξυνοίκους ἐπηγάγοντο, καὶ ἠλληνίσθησαν τὴν νῦν γλώσσαν τότε πρῶτον ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀμπρακιωτῶν ξυνοικησάντων· οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι Ἀμφίλοχοι βάρβαροί εἰσιν. For problems of interpretation, see A.W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. 2 (Oxford 1956), 201-2; S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, 3 vols. (Oxford 1991-2008), vol. 1, 352-53.

longer barbarians. Here again we see that Greek identity can be acquired and does not depend solely on descent. Another, related aspect of this is that there are degrees of barbarianism, or barbarity. When ‘barbaros’ simply means ‘non-Greek’ it is an absolute characteristic. There are no variations. When it approaches the modern meaning of the term, this changes matters. Thus we find the word in the superlative in Thucydides’ work:

Upon this revolution taking place, the party of Pisander and Alexicles, and the chiefs of the oligarchs immediately withdrew to Decelea, with the single exception of Aristarchus, one of the generals, who hastily took some of the most barbarian of the archers and marched to Oenoe.<sup>39</sup>

It is the argument of this paper that there is a marked change in attitudes toward foreigners, especially the Persians, in the course of the fifth century or, rather, in the second half of that century. Thus, we find one of the clearest expressions of a derogatory judgment of barbarians in Thucydides’ remark on the Thracians: ‘the Thracian race, like the bloodiest of the barbarians, being even more so when it has nothing to fear’.<sup>40</sup> This is interesting, given the personal ties of the author with Thrace and the Thracians. The occasion of the remark is the bloody conquest of Mycalessus by Thracians. Here, then, the term has a decidedly moral content: the Thracians are fearful murderers like the worst barbarians.

Towards the end of the fifth century attitudes hardened. Unlike the plays of Sophocles,<sup>41</sup> those of Euripides are rich in relevant statements, whereby it should be obvious that these do not represent opinions expressed by himself on behalf of himself, but phrases attributed by the author to his dramatic personae. Yet, these frequently represent concepts and ideas that are not encountered before, in earlier authors. Thus in 412 Euripides attributes to Helen, exiled in Egypt, the words:<sup>42</sup> ‘A slave am I, the daughter of free parents, for among the barbarians all are slaves except one’.<sup>43</sup> This passage is particularly significant, for it is an explicit confirmation of the close relationship between barbarians and slavery in Greek eyes by this time. The same point is expressed again in *Iphigenia in Aulis*: ‘And it is right, mother, that Hellenes should rule barbarians, but not barbarians Hellenes, those being slaves, while these are free.’<sup>44</sup> This is the clearest statement of an imperial ideology to be found in the Greek literature

<sup>39</sup> Thuc. 8.98 (trans. J.M. Dent): Ἐν δὲ τῇ μεταβολῇ ταύτῃ εὐθύς οἱ μὲν περὶ τὸν Πείσανδρον καὶ Ἀλεξικλέα καὶ ὅσοι ἦσαν τῆς ὀλιγαρχίας μάλιστα ὑπεξέρχονται ἐς τὴν Δεκέλειαν Ἀρίσταρχος δὲ αὐτῶν μόνος (ἔτυχε γὰρ καὶ στρατηγῶν) λαβὼν κατὰ τάχος τοξότας τινὰς τοὺς βαρβαρωτάτους ἐχώρει πρὸς τὴν Οἰνόην.

<sup>40</sup> Thuc. 7.29: τὸ γὰρ γένος τὸ τῶν Θρακῶν ὁμοῖα τοῖς μάλιστα τοῦ βαρβαρικοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἂν θαρσύνῃ, φονικώτατόν ἐστιν.

<sup>41</sup> See above n. 23. *Soph. Tr.* 236 and *El.* 95: land; *Aj.* 1263: language; 1289 and 1292: descent.

<sup>42</sup> Only a few representative examples are cited here.

<sup>43</sup> *Hel.* 275-6: τὰ βαρβάρων γὰρ δοῦλα πάντα πλὴν ἑνός; cf. *Or.* 1115: οὐδὲν τὸ δοῦλον πρὸς τὸ μὴ δοῦλον γένος.

<sup>44</sup> *IA* 1400: βαρβάρων δ’ Ἑλλήνας ἄρχειν εἰκός, ἀλλ’ οὐ βαρβάρους μητερ, Ἑλλήνων· τὸ μὲν γὰρ δοῦλον, οἱ δ’ ἐλεύθεροι.

of the time. Moreover, it is no coincidence that we find it toward the end of the fifth century and not earlier.

The term also occurs in connection with land.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, as we saw above, dress is one of the marks of Greek or non-Greek identity, in other texts as well:<sup>46</sup> ‘Hellenic dress and fashion in his robes doth he no doubt adopts, but deeds like these betray the barbarian. Thou, sirrah, tell me straight the country whence thou camest thither.’<sup>47</sup>

In Euripides’ phrase, attributed to Demophon, dress may be adopted, but behaviour will reveal true identity. Barbarian armour is strange. Antigone says of Tydeus, the Aetolian: ‘What a foreign look his armour has! a half-barbarian he!’<sup>48</sup> A remarkable instance of the complex use of the term may be found in the *Troades*: ‘O barbarous ills devised by Greeks’.<sup>49</sup>

Barbarians do not know sexual restraint, according to several texts:

Such is all the race of barbarians; father and daughter, mother and son, sister and brother mate together; the nearest and dearest stain their path with each other’s blood [i.e. commit incest], and no law restrains such horrors. Bring not these crimes amongst us, for here we count it shame that one man should have the control of two wives, and men are content to turn to one lawful love, that is, all who care to live an honourable life.<sup>50</sup>

‘Barbarians’ laws are no standard for a Greek city’.<sup>51</sup> True friendship is impossible between the two groups, Greeks and barbarians.<sup>52</sup> Their music is strange,<sup>53</sup> their rites are foolish.<sup>54</sup> Acculturation is possible, but, it seems, almost exclusively as a form of deterioration. One can become a barbarian, but barbarians becoming Greek is exceptional: ‘[Tyndareus to Menelaus:] You have been so long among barbarians that you have become one of them’.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Eur. *Med.* 256: ἐκ γῆς βαρβάρου; 536: Ἑλλάδ’ ἀντὶ βαρβάρου χθονὸς γαῖαν κατοικεῖς; 1330.

<sup>46</sup> Aesch. *Supp.* 234-6; Thuc. 1.6.6, both cited above.

<sup>47</sup> Eur. *Heracl.* 131(trans. Coleridge): καὶ μὴν στολήν γ’ Ἑλληνα καὶ ῥυθμὸν πέπλων ἔχει, τὰ δ’ ἔργα βαρβάρου χερὸς τάδε. It is to be noted that the subject of these comments is Copreus from Argos. See also *Heracl.* 423-4: οὐ γὰρ τυραννίδ’ ὥστε βαρβάρων ἔχω ἀλλ’, ἦν δίκαια δρῶ, δίκαια πείσομαι.

<sup>48</sup> Eur. *Phoen.* 138: ὡς ἀλλόχρως ὄπλοισι, μειξοβάρβαρος.

<sup>49</sup> Eur. *Tro.* 763: ὦ βάρβαρ’ ἐξευρόντες Ἑλληνες κακά. This is cited by Plut. *Ages.* 15.2.

<sup>50</sup> Eur. *Andr.* 173-180: τοιοῦτον πᾶν τὸ βάρβαρον γένος πατήρ τε θυγατρί παῖς τε μητρὶ μείγνυται κόρη τ’ ἀδελφῶι, διὰ φόνου δ’ οἱ φίλτατοι χωροῦσι, καὶ τῶνδ’ οὐδὲν ἐξείργει νόμος. ἂ μὴ παρ’ ἡμᾶς ἔσφερ’ οὐδὲ γὰρ καλὸν δυοῖν γυναικοῖν ἄνδρ’ ἔν’ ἡνίας ἔχειν, ἀλλ’ ἐς μίαν βλέποντες εὐναίαν Κύπριν στέργουσιν, ὅστις μὴ κακῶς οἰκεῖν θέληι.

<sup>51</sup> Eur. *Andr.* 243: οὐ βαρβάρων νόμοισιν οἰκοῦμεν πόλιν.

<sup>52</sup> Eur. *Hec.* 1199-1201: ἀλλ’, ὦ κάκιστε, πρῶτον οὔποτ’ ἂν φίλον τὸ βάρβαρον γένοιτ’ ἂν Ἑλλησιν γένος οὐδ’ ἂν δύναιτο.

<sup>53</sup> Eur. *IT* 179-181: ἀντιψάλμους ὠιδὰς ὕμνων τ’ Ἀσιητᾶν σοι βάρβαρον ἀχάν, δέσποιν’, ἐξαυδάσω; *IA.* 576: βάρβαρα συρίζων.

<sup>54</sup> *Bacch.* 482-3: {Δι.} πᾶς ἀναχορεῦει βαρβάρων τάδ’ ὄργια. {Πε.} φρονοῦσι γὰρ κάκιον Ἑλλήνων πολὺ. As observed by E.R. Dodds, *Euripides Bacchae* (Oxford 1969<sup>2</sup>), 138: ‘Every one of the foreigners’ is more emphatic than πάντες βάρβαροι.

<sup>55</sup> *Or.* 485: βεβαρβάρωσαι, χρόνιος ὢν ἐν βαρβάροις.

In the work of Xenophon (430-354 BC) the term occurs very frequently. In his major works, the *Anabasis* and the *Hellenica*, it occurs most often in the sense of non-Greeks (Persians) as distinct from Greeks.<sup>56</sup>

In the *Anabasis* the term almost always refers to Cyrus' non-Greek forces.<sup>57</sup> Xenophon attributes the use of it also to Cyrus himself when addressing Greeks,<sup>58</sup> even telling the Greeks that they are braver and stronger than many barbarians.<sup>59</sup> We do not know, of course, what Cyrus told his non-Greek men. The term can be used for languages: Pategyas, a member of Cyrus' staff is described as shouting 'in the barbarian language and in Greek'.<sup>60</sup> This does not mean that language is the essence of barbarian identity. It can also apply to dress,<sup>61</sup> to weaponry<sup>62</sup> and to valuable Persian cups and carpets.<sup>63</sup> It is used as an adjective in the superlative: the Mossynoccians, friendly to the Greek forces, were 'the most barbaric' (βαρβαρώτατοι) people Xenophon's forces met and the farthest removed from Greek customs.<sup>64</sup> The reason Xenophon gives for his judgment may be worth noting: they wanted to have intercourse openly with the women who accompanied the Greeks, for that was their custom. They continuously did publicly what other peoples would do only in private etc. This is a rare case where we see that Xenophon does not merely relate to 'barbaroi' as non-Greeks. Hellenicity is a standard. As for non-Greeks, the farther removed they are from Greek values, the more barbaric they are. As already noted on Thucydides' similar use of the term, when there are degrees of barbarism it is no longer an almost neutral term for 'foreigner,' but has become an issue of judgment. In other words, the term here approaches its meaning in modern European languages. Aristophanes uses it similarly. That, of course, is in comedy, but it is there, when Poseidon addresses Triballus: 'Ugh! You cursed savage! You are by far the most barbarous of all the gods.'<sup>65</sup>

In his *Hellenica* Xenophon uses a rare word: the term μιζοβάρβαροι, 'mixed barbarians'. This might have indicated a mixture of barbarians, but, in fact, refers to the

<sup>56</sup> E.g., *Hell.* 1.6.8; 1.6.11; 3.1.19; 3.2.12.

<sup>57</sup> E.g., *An.* 1.1.5: καὶ τῶν παρ' ἑαυτῷ δὲ βαρβάρων ἐπεμελεῖτο ὡς πολεμεῖν τε ἱκανοὶ εἶησαν; *An.* 1.2.8: καὶ ἀθροίζει ὡς ἐπὶ τούτους τό τε βαρβαρικὸν καὶ τὸ Ἑλληνικόν; *An.* 1.2.14: βουλόμενος οὖν ἐπιδειξάμενος ἐξέτασιν ποιεῖται ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ τῶν βαρβάρων.

<sup>58</sup> *An.* 1.5.16: κακῶς γὰρ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐχόντων πάντες οὗτοι οὓς ὁρᾶτε βάρβαροι πολεμιώτεροι ἡμῖν ἔσσονται τῶν παρὰ βασιλεῖ ὄντων.

<sup>59</sup> *An.* 1.7.3: ὦ ἄνδρες Ἕλληνας, οὐκ ἀνθρώπων ἀπορῶν βαρβάρων συμμάχους ὑμᾶς ἄγω, ἀλλὰ νομίζων ἀμείνονας καὶ κρείττους πολλῶν βαρβάρων ὑμᾶς εἶναι.

<sup>60</sup> *An.* 1.8.1: ἐβόα καὶ βαρβαρικῶς καὶ ἑλληνικῶς.

<sup>61</sup> *An.* 4.5.33: Ἀρμενίους παῖδας σὺν ταῖς βαρβαρικαῖς στολαῖς.

<sup>62</sup> *An.* 4.8.7: ἐντεῦθεν διδάσασιν οἱ Μάκρωνες βαρβαρικὴν λόγχην τοῖς Ἕλλησιν, οἱ δὲ Ἕλληνας ἐκείνοις Ἑλληνικὴν.

<sup>63</sup> *An.* 7.3.18: ἐκπώματα καὶ τάπιδας βαρβαρικός.

<sup>64</sup> *An.* 5.4.34: τούτους ἔλεγον οἱ στρατευσάμενοι βαρβαρωτάτους διελεῖν καὶ πλεῖστον τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν νόμων κεχωρισμένους.

<sup>65</sup> *Ar. Av.* 1573 (trans. O'Neill): Οἴμωζε· πολὺ γὰρ δὴ σ' ἐγὼ ἐόρακα πάντων βαρβαρώτατον ἐῶν.

inhabitants of a city who are partly Hellenes, partly non-Greek.<sup>66</sup>In his minor works there are notable occurrences of the term: ‘Very well, in the first place, it is clear as day that both Greeks and barbarians believe that the gods know everything both present and to come ...’.<sup>67</sup> Both Greeks and non-Greeks here represent all of humanity. In his *Ways and Means* Xenophon proposes measures regarding the metics (Greek resident aliens). They could, among other things, serve in the army, and he remarks:

The state would gain if the citizens served in the ranks together, and no longer found themselves in the same company with Lydians, Phrygians, Syrians, and barbarians of all sorts, of whom a large part of our alien population consists.<sup>68</sup>

An interesting episode is related by Xenophon in his life of Agesilaus (king of Sparta, 400-360 BC):

Moreover, believing that contempt for the enemy would kindle the fighting spirit, he gave instructions to his heralds that the barbarians captured in the raids should be exposed for sale naked. So when his soldiers saw them white because they never stripped, and fat and lazy through constant riding in carriages, they believed that the war would be exactly like fighting with women.<sup>69</sup>

This represents the fourth-century attitude toward Persians which is not normally encountered in the fifth century, marked by elements of contempt, intended humiliation and the claim that they were effeminate. The *Life of Agesilaus* is an early text that regularly, and as a matter of course, emphasizes the need not merely to save Greece, but to subdue Asia.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>66</sup> *Hell* 2.1.15: καὶ προσβαλῶν πόλει τῶν Ἀθηναίων συμμαχῶ ὄνομα Κεδρεΐαις τῆ ὕστεραία προσβολῆ κατὰ κράτος αἰρεῖ καὶ ἐξηνδραπόδισεν. ἦσαν δὲ μίξοβάρβαροι οἱ ἐνοικοῦντες. Cf. Eur. *Phoen.* 138: μίξοβάρβαρος. Pl. *Menex.* 245d4: οὐ γὰρ Πέλοπες οὐδὲ Κάδμοι οὐδὲ Αἴγυπτιοὶ τε καὶ Δαναοὶ οὐδὲ ἄλλοι πολλοὶ φύσει μὲν βάρβαροι ὄντες, νόμῳ δὲ Ἕλληνες, συνοικοῦσιν ἡμῖν, ἀλλ’ αὐτοὶ Ἕλληνες, οὐ μίξοβάρβαροι οἰκοῦμεν. The Athenians are pure Hellenes and not half foreigners. Cf. Finkelberg (n. 2), 37. For a variant terminology, cf. Thuc. 4.109: οἰκοῦνται ξυμμεικτοῖς ἔθνεσι βαρβάρων διγλώσσων. This refers to foreigners who spoke their own language and Greek as well; cf. Gomme (n. 38) vol. 3, 588-589. Usually ξύμμεικτος is used by Thucydides for an unspecified mixture, e.g., 2.98; 3.61; 4.106; 6.4; 6.17.

<sup>67</sup> *Symp.* 4.47.1: Οὐκοῦν ὥς μὲν καὶ Ἕλληνες καὶ βάρβαροι τοὺς θεοὺς ἠγοῦνται πάντα εἰδέναι τὰ τε ὄντα καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα εὐδηλον.

<sup>68</sup> *Vect.* 2.3-4: ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ ἡ πόλις γ’ ἂν ὠφεληθεῖη, εἰ οἱ πολῖται μετ’ ἀλλήλων στρατεύοιντο μᾶλλον ἢ εἰ συντάττοιτο αὐτοῖς, ὥσπερ νῦν, Λυδοὶ καὶ Φρύγες καὶ Σύριοι καὶ ἄλλοι παντοδαποὶ βάρβαροι πολλοὶ γὰρ τοιοῦτοι τῶν μετοίκων.

<sup>69</sup> *Ages.* 1.28 (trans. Marchant, Loeb): ἠγούμενος δὲ καὶ τὸ καταφρονεῖν τῶν πολεμίων ῥώμην τινὰ ἐμβαλεῖν πρὸς τὸ μάχεσθαι, προεῖπε τοῖς κήρυξι τοὺς ὑπὸ τῶν ληστῶν ἀλικομένους βαρβάρους γυμνοὺς πωλεῖν. ὀρώντες οὖν οἱ στρατιῶται λευκοὺς μὲν διὰ τὸ μηδέποτε ἐκδύεσθαι, πίονας δὲ καὶ ἀπόνους διὰ τὸ ἀεὶ ἐπ’ ὀχημάτων εἶναι, ἐνόμισαν μηδὲν διοίσειν τὸν πόλεμον ἢ εἰ γυναιξὶ δεοὶ μάχεσθαι. The same story is told by Plut. *Ages.* 9.5.5.

<sup>70</sup> *Xen. Ages.* 1.8: κάλλιστον δὲ πάντων ἐκρίνετο <τὸ> μὴ περὶ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλλὰ περὶ τῆς Ἀσίας τὸν ἀγῶνα καθιστάναι.

Xenophon's *On Hunting* opens with a lengthy praise of hunting which was taught by Cheiron to many heroes of myth, including Achilles. This section concludes with an ideological statement:

These, whom the good love even to this day and the evil envy, were made so perfect through the care they learned of Cheiron that, when trouble fell upon any state or any king in Greece, it was solved through their influence; or if all Greece was at strife or at war with all the Barbarian powers, these brought victory to the Greeks so that they made Greece invincible.<sup>71</sup>

One may question the logic of this statement of Xenophon, but that is irrelevant here. Xenophon claims that hunting has to be learned by the young so that they may become good in war and 'in all things out of which must come excellence in thought and word and deed'.<sup>72</sup> Given that this is his persuasion, it is to be noted that Xenophon here raises the possibility that 'all of Greece' would be at war with 'all the Barbarians'. It is a programme for which there was no precedent in Greece.<sup>73</sup>

We have seen a selection of passages in which the term 'barbarian' is used from the beginning until the fourth century. Is there a conclusion to be drawn? Obviously it is used frequently as a plain term distinguishing Greeks from non-Greeks. As such it appears most often in the works of the historians: Hekataios of Miletus, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon. Descent is found early on (Alcman, Hekataios, Herodotus). Descent and geography are combined by Hekataios of Miletos. It is frequently associated with language throughout the period, in the works of Homer, Aeschylus, Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon. Herodotus at least once directly links language, religion and customs with ethnicity. Pindar links it with culture (familiarity with Greek heroes). Dress and weapons can have barbarian characteristics according to Aeschylus, Thucydides, and Euripides. One fragment of Heraclitus associates it directly with mentality. Closely related is the association with behaviour: slavish and effeminate (Aeschylus, Euripides and Xenophon). Morals and laws are considered essential in the works of Thucydides and Euripides. The latter also includes sexuality and sexual customs among aspects of barbarism. Religion and religious customs are brought out by Herodotus and Euripides.

<sup>71</sup> Xen. *Cyn.* 17: οὗτοι δὲ τοιοῦτοι ἐγένοντο ἐκ τῆς ἐπιμελείας τῆς παρὰ Χείρωνος, ἧς οἱ μὲν ἀγαθοὶ ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἐρώσιν, οἱ δὲ κακοὶ φθονοῦσιν, ὥστ' ἐν μὲν τῇ Ἑλλάδι εἶ τῷ συμφοραὶ ἐγίνοντο ἢ πόλει ἢ βασιλεῖ, ἐλύοντο <δι> αὐτούς· εἰ δὲ πρὸς τοὺς βαρβάρους πάντας πάση τῇ Ἑλλάδι νεῖκος ἢ πόλεμος ἦν, διὰ τούτους οἱ Ἕλληνας ἐκράτουν, ὥστε ἀνίκητον τὴν Ἑλλάδα παρέχεσθαι.

<sup>72</sup> *Cyn.* 1.18: ἐκ τούτων γὰρ γίνονται τὰ εἰς τὸν πόλεμον ἀγαθοὶ καὶ [εἰς] τὰ ἄλλα ἐξ ὧν ἀνάγκη καλῶς νοεῖν καὶ λέγειν καὶ πράττειν.

<sup>73</sup> Note however, arguments for earlier roots of a Panhellenic ideology: M.A. Flower, 'From Simonides to Isocrates: The Fifth Century Origins of Fourth-Century Panhellenism', *CA* 19 (2000), 65-101.

An essential feature appears in the later fifth century, namely a marked tendency toward the use of the term in an imperialist ideology. It is found in Euripides and Xenophon and will gain force in the fourth century.<sup>74</sup>

Two further points are significant: there are degrees of barbarism in the works of Thucydides, and Xenophon (and Aristophanes). Second, Herodotus and Thucydides both see the possibility of change: barbarians may become Greeks and the reverse may also occur, not easily, but the former is attested in historical sources, and the latter at least mentioned as a possibility. This removes the quality of being barbarian out of the realm of descent and into the cultural and social sphere. Of course it is possible to associate a belief in descent and bloodline with mental and physical characteristics. However, when ‘barbaroi’ can become Greeks or the reverse — this no longer applies.

Can we draw clear-cut conclusions from this list? The term “barbaros” always refers to foreigners, except in a few cases of comparison, and is clearly associated with a variety of characteristics, depending on the perspective of the source. It is sometimes seen as a matter of pure bloodline, of descent. Whether or not this is the case, the accompanying qualities are many. It cannot be maintained that language is *the* central element, but neither are collective merit, behaviour or outward appearance.<sup>75</sup> One feature stands out: in the course of the fifth century there are indications of increased polarization and moral disapproval. The earlier authors who celebrated the successful defence of the Greeks against the Persian invaders spoke of barbarians in terms that are different from those used by later ones. These prepared the moral and intellectual ground for the Greek counter-invasion.

### Latin (Roman) Authors

Moving on to the Roman use of the term we shall see that it was used in various ways different from those found in Greek literature. The overall impression is one of relative conceptual simplicity as compared with the use of the word in Greek. It is employed, first, as indicating non-Greek, when Roman authors let Greek characters talk about foreigners. Second, in a majority of cases it indicates non-Romans, mostly referring to the enemy in conflict, in battle situations and, less frequently, to the enemy in war in a broader sense as well as in hostile diplomacy. Clearly, we find *barbari* in other contexts, but those are a minority of the sources in which the term occurs. Third, it is used frequently in the modern, negative sense of “barbarian” as a derogatory substantive or adjective, not immediately associated with foreignness. Finally, the term ‘barbarian’ occurs with a dual meaning, indicating both non-Roman identity as well as including a derogatory qualification in the modern sense of the word.

<sup>74</sup> Isocrates, Plato, Aristotle are discussed in this sense in Isaac (n. 22), 70-73; 175-181; 283-288, 299-301.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. the complex use of ethnic terminology in Herodotus as analyzed by C.P. Jones, ‘ἔθνος and γένος in Herodotus’, *CQ* 46 (1996), 315-20.

1) *Non-Greek*

In specific contexts ‘Barbarus’ can indicate non-Greeks in Roman literature. As noted below (133), a special case is the passage in Plautus’ *Captivi* where a Greek calls barbarian (sc. Italian) cities ‘unpleasant’. Another early, much discussed text is given by Pliny where he cites the elder Cato:

They [sc. Greek medical practitioners] have conspired among themselves to murder all barbarians with their medicine; a profession which they exercise for lucre, in order that they may win our confidence, and dispatch us all the more easily. They are in the common habit, too, of calling us barbarians, and stigmatize us beyond all other nations, by giving us the abominable appellation of Opici [i.e. an ancient Italic people]. I forbid you to have anything to do with physicians.<sup>76</sup>

Cato’s letter to his son has been frequently discussed and variously interpreted.<sup>77</sup> It will not concern us here what this says about Roman prejudices against Greek medical practitioners. The point is that Cato twice mentions the word *barbari*, where he cites Greeks as referring to Romans. The first instance is probably meant to be ironic or cynical. When he uses the word for the second time, he is explicitly and fiercely critical of the application of the term by Greeks toward Romans.

Cicero considers the division of mankind.<sup>78</sup> His categories are: sex, nation, country, family, age. As regards nation, the question is whether a stranger is Greek or a barbarian.

Roman authors, when dealing with Greek history or geography, use the term for non-Greeks as a matter of course.<sup>79</sup> Greek authors writing under Roman rule may refer to non-Greeks in a context where they deal with Greeks and others. In such discussions they use the term in connection with non-Romans. Diodorus, for instance, does both, depending on the context.<sup>80</sup> Josephus mentions ‘Hellenes and barbarians,’ but also calls the Sarmatians barbarians when discussing Roman frontier problems.<sup>81</sup> The same is true for the work of Cassius Dio.<sup>82</sup> In poetry, Ovid uses the term at least once for someone

<sup>76</sup> Plin. *NH* 29.14.8 (citing Cato, writing to his son): *quandoque ista gens suas litteras dabit, omnia conrumpet, tum etiam magis, si medicos suos hoc mittet. iurarunt inter se barbaros necare omnes medicina, sed hoc ipsum mercede faciunt, ut fides iis sit et facile disperdant. nos quoque dictitant barbaros et spurcius nos quam alios Ὀπικῶν appellatione foedant. interdixi tibi de medicis.*

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Isaac (n. 22), 226-228

<sup>78</sup> Cic. *Inv.* 1.35.7: *mortalium autem pars in hominum, pars in bestiarum genere numerantur. atque hominum genus et in sexu consideratur, virile an muliebre sit, et in natione, patria, cognatione, aetate. natione, Graius an barbarus; patria, Atheniensis an Lacedaemonius; cognatione, quibus maioribus, quibus consanguineis.*

<sup>79</sup> For instance, Nepos, *Them.* 4.5; Ages. 3.1; Plin. *NH* 127.3 (3).

<sup>80</sup> Diod. *Sic.* 4.82.6: *παρὰ τοῖς βαρβάροις, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς Ἑλλησι*; 38/39.21: *ὁ Σπάρτακος ὁ βάρβαρος.*

<sup>81</sup> Joseph. *AJ* 4.12: *οὔτε παρ’ Ἑλλησιν οὔτε παρὰ βαρβάροις*; *BJ* 7.94 (Sarmatians).

<sup>82</sup> Dio 7.25: *συμπεσόντες δὲ τοῖς βαρβάροις*; 36.1b.2.1: *καὶ αὐτὸν οἱ βάρβαροι τῆ τε τοξείᾳ καὶ τῆ νάφθᾳ κατὰ τῶν μηχανῶν χρομένην δεινῶς ἐκάκωσαν.* 38.34.6: *ὁ βάρβαρος = Ariovistus*

non-Greek, when he attributes a letter written by Briseis to Achilles which she herself is said to have described as ‘written hardly in Greek with a barbarian hand’.<sup>83</sup>

Finally: Juvenal divides mankind into three categories: Greeks, Romans and barbarians.<sup>84</sup>

## 2) Non-Roman

### a) The enemy in battle

The most frequent, regular occurrence of the term is in connection with battles where the barbarians are the non-Roman enemy. There is no need to cite examples in full. Livy probably has more instances than any other author.<sup>85</sup> However, it is common throughout.<sup>86</sup>

### b) The enemy in war in a broader sense

This is fairly common and the term may apply to any enemy, Persians, Thracians, Spanish, Illyrians. As in the previous category, and unlike the first, discussed above, it is not intended to be disparaging. It simply refers to a non-Roman enemy in war, or to non-Romans in the Roman army.<sup>87</sup>

A few examples will suffice. Cicero refers to Thracian raiders in Macedonia as *barbari*.<sup>88</sup> Livy calls the Illyrian king a barbarian.<sup>89</sup> Again, the fact that in such cases the term need not imply a value judgment is clear from Tacitus who describes a man who had commanded the royal fleet of Pontus as a barbarian slave.<sup>90</sup> Fronto calls the Parthian king a *barbarus*:

A few days before Lucius of his own accord had sent a letter to Vologaesius to put an end to the war by agreement, if he would; but the barbarian, while he spurned the offer of peace, paid dearly for it.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Ov. *Her.* 3.3.4: *Quam legis, a rapta Briseide littera venit, vix bene barbarica Graeca notata manu.*

<sup>84</sup> Juv. 10.138: *Romanus Graiusque ac barbarus induperator.*

<sup>85</sup> E.g., Liv. 23.18.2: *ubi ad moenia accessere, quia silentium erat, solitudo uisa; metuque concessum barbarus ratus moliri portas et claustra refringere parat.*

<sup>86</sup> *Bellum Africum* 93.1.5; *Bellum Alexandrinum* 43.2.4; Tac. *Ann.* 12.17; 12.29; 12.35; *Amm. Marc.* 19.11.10; 19.11.13-14.

<sup>87</sup> Sall. *Cat.* 19: Spanish cavalry; *Bellum Africum* 51.6.3, where *equites barbari* are non-Roman cavalry in the Roman army; also: Tac. *Hist.* 3.5; 3.47; Fronto, below, n. 91; HA *Max.* 7.4: *tribuni barbari.*

<sup>88</sup> Cic. *Prov. Cons.* 2.3.5; 2.4.

<sup>89</sup> Liv. 43.20.4: Perseus of Macedon seeks Gentius as an ally, but his envoys *remittuntur sine mentione pecuniae, qua una barbarus inops impelli ad bellum [non] poterat.*

<sup>90</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 3.47: [Anicetus, a freedman of Polemon of Pontus] *subita per Pontum arma barbarum mancipium, regiae quondam classis praefectus, moverat.*

<sup>91</sup> Fronto, *Princ.* 2.14.12: *Paucis ante diebus L<uciu>s ad Vologaesum litteras ultro dederat, bellum, si vellet, condicionibus poneret; dum oblatam pacem spernit barbarus, male*

In the fourth century the *Historia Augusta* states in a much discussed passage:

In this period and frequently on other occasions in numerous regions where the barbarians are kept out not by rivers but by *limites*, Hadrian kept them apart by high stakes dug deep into the ground ... so as to form a palisade.<sup>92</sup>

c) *Foreigners in a civilian, non-military context*

Of course there are references to non-Romans in a context other than battle or warfare. They are not very numerous however, and relatively late. Tacitus says of Vonones, the new Parthian king: The barbarians '[i.e. the Parthians], too, welcomed him with rejoicing, as is usual with new rulers ...'.<sup>93</sup> In Tacitus' facetious description of the Frisian envoys to Rome in AD 58 they are called *barbari*.<sup>94</sup> There is no hostility in these passages. In this connection we may note the use of *barbaricum* and *barbaria* for non-Roman territory.<sup>95</sup>

A special case that may be mentioned is that of the *Isauri* who are described in the *Historia Augusta* as having reverted to the status of barbarians because they were (no longer) Romans. They were barbarians again because they successfully excluded themselves from Roman authority.<sup>96</sup> A special case of poetic fancy is when Ovid calls himself a barbarian because, at Tomi, nobody understands him: 'the barbarians ... they speak their own language and I have to express myself with gestures. I am the barbarian here, for nobody understands me'.<sup>97</sup>

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*mulcatus est.* Cf. *Princ.* 2.14.14: 2.16, 'the barbarians' had a high regard for Lucius Verus' justice and clemency.

<sup>92</sup> HA *Hadr.* 12.6: *per ea tempora et alias frequenter in p<l>urimis locis, in quibus barbari non fluminibus sed limitibus dividuntur, stipitibus magnis i<n> modum muralis saepis funditus iactis atque conexis barbaros separavit.*

<sup>93</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 2.2: *barbari laetantes, ut ferme ad nova imperia.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ann.* 13.54.13: *profectique Romam dum aliis curis intentum Neronem opperiantur, inter ea quae barbaris ostentantur intravere Pompei theatrum.* See also various instances in the *Historia Augusta*: HA *Pius* 5.4.3; *Marc. Ant.* 14.1; *Avid. Cass.* 4.9.2; *Sev. Alex.* 45.2-3; 48.3; *Max.* 12.1; 62.2; 5; *Gord.* 14.1; *Gall.* 4.6; 13.7.

<sup>95</sup> E.g., *Ov. Tr.* 3.1.18; 3.3.46: *barbara terra*; 3.11.7; 4.4.86; 5.2.31: *barbara tellus*; *Pont.* 3.1.5: *barbaria*; HA *Sev. Alex.* 47.1; *Max.* 10.2; 12.1: *barbaricum*; *Tyr. Trig.* 5.4 in solo *barbarico*; *Sev. Alex.* 58.5: *barbaria.*

<sup>96</sup> HA *Tyr. Trig.* 26: *denique post Trebellianum pro barbaris habentur; et<eni>m in medio Romani nominis solo regio eorum novo genere custodiarum quasi limes includitur, locis defensa, non <h>om<i>nibus.* Note, however, the different phrasing in *Probus* 16.5, where mention is made of 'the barbarians who live among the Isauri'.

<sup>97</sup> *Ov. Tr.* 5.10.27-38: ... *exercent illi sociae commercia linguae: / per gestum res est significanda mihi. barbarus hic ego sum, qui non intellegor ulli.*

3) *Barbarian in the negative sense of the word — close to modern English usage*

The term is found several times already in the work of Plautus (c. 254–184 BC), not in any clear-cut single meaning, but invariably negative.<sup>98</sup> It can indicate ignorance: ‘Oh, Lydus, you are a barbarian! I fancied you were ever so much wiser than Thales and here you are, sillier than a barbarian babe in arms — your age, and not knowing the names of the gods!’<sup>99</sup> It may be used for barbarian (i.e. Roman) plain fare. Barbarian as a term for Roman or Latin is also found elsewhere in Plautus’s work<sup>100</sup> Barbarian cities are disagreeable.<sup>101</sup>

While this paper does not aim to give a full survey of the occurrence of the word, let alone provide reliable statistics, it is immediately clear that one of the most prolific suppliers of attestations of the term ‘barbarian’ in a multitude of negative passages is Cicero, particularly, but not exclusively, in his judicial rhetoric. It will suffice here to give a number of examples.

Unnecessarily cruel: ‘What bandit was ever so wicked, what pirate was ever so barbarous, as to prefer stripping off his spoils from his victim stained with his blood, which he might possess his plunder unstained, without blood?’<sup>102</sup>

Ignorant: ‘But there is a word written in those documents, which that barbarian and profligate man never noticed, and would not have understood if he had’.<sup>103</sup>

Impious: ‘There is a temple of Minerva in the island, of which I have already spoken, which Marcellus did not touch, which he left full of its treasures and ornaments, but which was so stripped and plundered by Verres, that it seems to have been in the hands, not of any enemy — for enemies, even in war, respect the rites of religion, and the customs of the country — but of some barbarian pirates’.<sup>104</sup>

Cicero also uses it to indicate a combination of undesirable characteristics:

<sup>98</sup> *Capt.* 492: *barbarica lege*; the meaning is disputed.

<sup>99</sup> Plaut. *Bacch.* 121 (trans. Paul Nixon): *An non putasti esse umquam? o Lyde, es barbarus; quem ego sapere nimio censui plus quam Thalem, is stultior es barbaro poticio, qui tantus natu deorum nescis nomina.*

<sup>100</sup> *Cas.* 747a: *facite cenam mihi ut ebria sit. sed lepide nitideque volo, nil moror barbarico bliteo*, ‘Make sure that my dinner is sumptuous. But I want it neat and delicate. I have no use for barbarian [sc. Roman] chard’. Barbarian for ‘Latin’: *Trin.* 18-19: *huic Graece nomen est Thesauro fabulae. Philemo scripsit, Plautus vortit barbare* (Plautus translated it into barbarian).

<sup>101</sup> *Capt.* 884: *barbaricas urbes*, said to be *asperae* (unpleasant). As noted below, this is a case where a Greek is cited in Latin as referring to Rome or Italy.

<sup>102</sup> *Rosc. Am.* 146.8 (trans. C.D. Yonge): *Quis umquam praedo fuit tam nefarius, quis pirata tam barbarus ut, cum integram praedam sine sanguine habere posset, cruenta spolia detrahere mallet?* Also: *Dom.* 140.8; *Flac.* 24.9; *Cat.* 3.25.11.

<sup>103</sup> *Verr.* 2.5.148.7 (trans. C.D. Yonge): *Sed scriptum exstat in isdem litteris quod iste homo barbarus ac dissolutus neque attendere umquam neque intellegere potuit.* Also: *Phil.* 3.15.1.

<sup>104</sup> *Verr.* 2.4.122 (trans. C.D. Yonge): *Aedis Minervae est in Insula, de qua ante dixi; quam Marcellus non attigit, quam plenam atque ornatam reliquit; quae ab isto sic spoliata atque direpta est non ut ab hoste aliquo, qui tamen in bello religionem et consuetudinis iura retineret, sed ut a barbaris praedonibus vexata esse videatur.*

Him [sc. Apronius] did Verres employ as his chief agent in all his adulteries, in all his plundering of temples, in all his debauched banquets; and the similarity of their manners caused such a friendship and unanimity between them, that Apronius, whom everyone else thought a boor and a barbarian, appeared to him alone an agreeable and an accomplished man.<sup>105</sup>

Another author who readily provides examples of foreigners described in negative terms is Tacitus. Thus he attributes a speech to Severus Caecina in the senate against the presence of wives of Roman officials on duty in the provinces: ‘... A train of women involves delays through luxury in peace and through panic in war, and converts a Roman army on the march into the likeness of a barbarian progress’.<sup>106</sup> The assumption is that foreign, or more precisely, eastern rulers are always accompanied by a train of women and servants. Whatever Caecina may have said, the stereotype of eastern luxury and lack of moderation is familiar, like that of immoderate banqueting by decadent orientals, used by Plautus above. In a much later passage Tacitus praises Seleucia on the Tigris which, in spite of the fact that it was under Parthian rule, remained ‘a powerful and fortified city which had not lapsed into barbarism, but had clung loyally to its founder Seleucus’.<sup>107</sup> Tacitus implies that oriental rule corrupts and causes degeneration — aspects, he feels, of barbarism.

Representing poetry, we may cite Ovid, who, having struck his beloved, Corinna, exclaims: ‘Who will not say “madman, barbarian!” to me?’<sup>108</sup> On another occasion she, herself is a *barbara*.<sup>109</sup>

4) *Barbarian in a combined sense: both non-Roman and derogatory as in modern usage.*

As might be expected, Cicero provides a good number of instances. Callanus, the Indian philosopher whom Alexander met was ‘an untutored barbarian, born at the foot of the Hindu Kush’.<sup>110</sup> Gauls who attacked Fonteius were ‘a savage and intolerable band of barbarians’.<sup>111</sup> Especially telling is the following passage which deserves being quoted in full:

Did you (Verres) dare to take away out of Enna the statue of Ceres? Did you attempt at Enna to wrench Victory out of the hand of Ceres? to tear one goddess from the other? — nothing of which those men dared to violate, or even to touch, whose qualities were all more akin to wickedness than to religion. For while Publius Popillius and Publius Rupilius

<sup>105</sup> *Verr.* 2.3.23.10: *tantamque habet morum similitudo coniunctionem atque concordiam ut Apronius, qui aliis inhumanus ac barbarus, isti uni commodus ac disertus videretur.*

<sup>106</sup> *Tac. Ann.* 3.33 (trans. M. Hadas): *in esse mulierum comitatu quae pacem luxu, bellum formidine morentur et Romanum agmen ad similitudinem barbari incessus convertant.*

<sup>107</sup> *Ann.* 6.42: (Seleucia) *civitas potens saepta muris neque in barbarum corrupta, sed conditoris Seleuci retinens.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ov. Am.* 1.7.19: *Quis mihi non ‘demens!’ quis non mihi ‘barbare!’ dixit?*

<sup>109</sup> *Am.* 3.1.48: *quid, cum me munus natali mittis, at illa rumpit et adposita barbara mersat aqua?*

<sup>110</sup> *Tusc.* 2.22.52: *Callanus Indus, indoctus ac barbarus, in radicibus Caucasi natus.*

<sup>111</sup> *Cic. Font.* 20.44: *Video, iudices; sed multis et firmis praesidiis vobis adiutoribus isti immani atque intolerandae barbariae resistemus.*

were consuls, slaves, runaway slaves, and barbarians, and enemies, were in possession of that place; but yet the slaves were not so much slaves to their own masters, as you are to your passions; nor did the runaways flee from their masters as far as you flee from all laws and from all right; nor were the barbarians as barbarous in language and in descent as you were in your nature and your habits; nor were the enemies as much enemies to men as you are to the immortal gods. How, then, can a man beg for any mercy who has surpassed slaves in baseness, runaway slaves in rashness, barbarians in wickedness, and enemies in cruelty?<sup>112</sup>

To sum up: in this text barbarians are barbarous in language and by descent, they are wicked and cruel.

Livy is another author well represented: In 205 Scipio seeks to gain Syphax, a Carthaginian ally, as ally for Rome. ‘At that time the king had a treaty with the Carthaginians; and Scipio, thinking it would have for Syphax no more weight and sanctity than is usual for barbarians, with whom loyalty depends upon success, sent Gaius Laelius as an envoy to him with gifts’. He was successful, of course.<sup>113</sup> According to Frontinus, ‘When Ventidius was waging war against the Parthian king Pacorus ... he turned the treachery of the barbarian to his own advantage ...’.<sup>114</sup> Next, Tacitus: During the Revolt of Boudicca, the rebels stormed Camulodunum and: ‘In their rage and their triumph they spared no variety of a barbarian’s cruelty’.<sup>115</sup> In the *Germania* the Sennones are described as having publicly slaughtered a human victim, as they celebrate the horrible beginning of their barbarous rite.<sup>116</sup> Barbarians lack interest and curiosity in natural phenomena<sup>117</sup> and are ignorant of military engines and the skilful management of sieges, contrary to the Romans.<sup>118</sup> In fact, in their view any kind of action and courage is better than sound planning and caution: ‘With barbarians, indecision is a slave’s weakness, prompt action king-like’, he comments, when telling of Tiberius’ diplomacy and the Parthians.<sup>119</sup> In the *Historia Augusta* Maximinus Thrax is a fine target for comments on barbarians. He was a ‘half barbarian and scarcely yet master of

<sup>112</sup> Verr. 2.4.112.6 (trans. Yonge): *Tenuerunt enim P. Popilio P. Rupilio consulibus illum locum servi, fugitivi, barbari, hostes; sed neque tam servi illi dominorum quam tu libidinum, neque tam fugitivi illi ab dominis quam tu ab iure et ab legibus, neque tam barbari lingua et natione illi quam tu natura et moribus, neque tam illi hostes hominibus quam tu dis immortalibus. Quae deprecatio est igitur ei reliqua qui indignitate servos, temeritate fugitivos, scelere barbaros, crudelitate hostes vicerit?*

<sup>113</sup> Liv. 28.17: *foedus ea tempestate regi cum Carthaginiensibus erat, quod haud grauius ei sanctiusque quam uolgo barbaris, quibus ex fortuna pendet fides.* See also 27.17.9; 28.18.6.

<sup>114</sup> Front. *Strat.* 1.1.6: *Ventidius Parthico bello adversus Pacorum regem ... perfidiam barbari ad utilitates suas convertit.* Tacitus (*Hist.* 3.48: 5) too claims that perfidy and treacherousness are characteristic of barbarians.

<sup>115</sup> Tac. *Agr.* 16: *expugnatis praesidiis ipsam coloniam invasere ut sedem servitutis, nec ullum in barbaris [ingeniis] saevitiae genus omisit ira et victoria.*

<sup>116</sup> Tac. *Germ.* 39.2: *caesoque publice homine celebrant barbari ritus horrenda primordia.*

<sup>117</sup> *Germ.* 45.5.

<sup>118</sup> *Ann.* 12.45: *nihil tam ignarum barbaris quam machinamenta et astus oppugnationum: at nobis ea pars militiae maxime gnara est.*

<sup>119</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 6.32: *et barbaris cunctatio servilis, statim exequi regium videtur;* see also for similar pronouncements: 1.57; 1.68.

the Latin tongue, speaking almost pure Thracian'.<sup>120</sup> Severus saw him 'rioting in his barbarian way among the crowd'.<sup>121</sup>

Particularly prolific in this sphere is Ovid, already mentioned, who uses the term "Barbarus" and derivatives at least seventy-three times, more than half of them concerning his banishment to Tomi on the Black Sea, which he describes as more of a Thracian environment than a Greek one: 'Who would believe there are Greek cities among the names of place-names of the inhuman barbarians?'<sup>122</sup> Tomi is inhabited by a 'barbarian crowd, mixed with Greeks (which) frightens us, for they live with us without separation, the barbarians'.<sup>123</sup> He lives a life of barbarian shackles,<sup>124</sup> 'in *Barbaria*',<sup>125</sup> where they speak a barbarian language.<sup>126</sup>

### Conclusions

The essence of what is seen as barbarism shifts over time as a consequence of changes in self-perception. The term 'barbarian' originated in Greek and, in modern English, it has, almost three thousand years after it is first attested, a fairly straightforward meaning: it indicates a rude, wild, uncivilized person; an uncultured person; as an adjective it refers to someone who is uncivilized, rude, savage, barbarous, the opposite of being British. This is therefore usually, but not necessarily, applied to foreigners. It is quite common to call a compatriot 'barbarian', suggesting that she or he behaves like a foreigner.

In Greek and Roman texts, we have seen that there are important differences and shades of meaning to be detected over time. In Greek literature the word almost always refers to foreigners, hardly ever to Greeks, except for the sake of comparison. In ancient Greek texts the determining factors of being Greek are complex and, as a consequence, the same is true for being barbarian: language is one of them, but by no means the only one or the most important one, as claimed very often. Significant in this respect is the fact that it was recognized that one can change one's language. However, no less important are: geographic origin, descent, religion and citizenship. Here too the possibility of change was acknowledged, in the case of religion and citizenship, but others are fixed and cannot be changed. The accompanying characteristics are many and are closely connected with varying and developing attitudes toward group identity: the essence may be a combination of factors: customs, morals, behaviour (effeminacy), basic culture, and external appearance (dress). Towards the end of the fifth century BC there is a clear and strong shift toward negative judgment and moral disapproval. Then, in the course of the fourth century, ideology becomes a dominant force: foreigners are

<sup>120</sup> HA *Max.* 2.5: *semibarbarus et vix adhuc Latinae linguae, prope Thraecica.*

<sup>121</sup> HA *Max.* 3.2: *in turba exultantem more barbarico.* See also 12.3; 12.8-9.

<sup>122</sup> *Tr.* 3.9.2: *Hic quoque sunt igitur Graiae -quis crederet? urbes inter inhumanae nomina barbariae.*

<sup>123</sup> *Tr.* 5.10.27: *... et tamen intus mixta facit Graecis barbara turba metum. quippe simul nobis habitat discrimine nullo barbarus ...* See also above, 132.

<sup>124</sup> *Tr.* 2.1.206: *barbara vincla.*

<sup>125</sup> *Tr.* 3.10.4: *me sciat in media vivere barbaria.*

<sup>126</sup> *Tr.* 5.2.67.

regarded as slaves by nature, cruel, murderous, and sexually uninhibited. This is part of a pattern that developed in tandem with the surge of Greek imperialism

By contrast, in Latin literature it is easier to distinguish clear-cut patterns. The determining characteristics, complex in Greece, are straightforward for Romans. Since there was no argument about what it was to be a Roman, it was obvious who was not a Roman, i.e. a barbarian. The term may refer to non-Greeks in texts dealing with Greeks, or citing Greeks, or to non-Romans, but also, as in modern English, in a derogatory sense, to Romans themselves. In Roman texts there is no doubt or question as to what makes someone a Greek or non-Greek, a Roman or non-Roman. As a consequence of conquest, empire, and the systematic grants of citizenship, there never was any doubt that it was possible for a barbarian to become a Roman.<sup>127</sup> “Barbari” is the usual term for non-Romans in passages associated with battle or warfare. In such a context it may be used without any negative or derogatory associations. However, negative qualities are predominant in non-military contexts where the word often indicates untutored savages, people barbarous in language and by descent. Generalizations are common: foreigners are naturally wicked; loyalty for them depends upon success; they are treacherous, and impious. Their rites are immoral and bloody; they are ignorant and lack intellectual curiosity, discipline and inhibition. They are unnecessarily cruel. The shift from Greece to Rome is obvious: both cultures deny the barbarian the qualities which they themselves regard as essential. In the case of the Romans among the most important of those are: loyalty, honesty, piety, and discipline. Finally: the negative characteristics are also, not infrequently, applied to Romans, as in modern English, where a barbarian could be a compatriot regarded as resembling an uncivilized foreigner.

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<sup>127</sup> So far nobody has written a book *Becoming Greek*, while there is a well-known monograph by Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge 1998).