

## ARABS AS "BARBAROI" BEFORE THE RISE OF ISLAM

The present paper sets out to examine how the term *barbaroi* was applied to Arabs by the Byzantine authors. The traditional use of the appellation *barbaroi* in the sources of the Classical and Roman period, and the general pattern of *barbaroi* in the Byzantine sources will be touched upon before focusing on the special and particular Byzantine application of the name *barbaroi* to Arabs.

Use of the word *barbaros* in Classical and later periods:<sup>1</sup>

In the Classical sources the word *barbaros* is synonymous with speaking an unintelligible tongue. Since the language barrier served as the primary differentiation between the Hellenes and foreigners, this meaning was applicable to all people who spoke any language other than Greek.<sup>2</sup> The Greek word *barbaros* corresponds to the Skr. *barbar*, an onomatopoetic name used for sputterers and in the plural form applied to foreign people.<sup>3</sup> The theory of a Sumero-Babylonian origin of this name expressed by Weidner<sup>4</sup> is no longer acceptable.<sup>5</sup> The Latine *barbarus* from which this was transmitted to the European languages was taken over from Greek usage.<sup>6</sup>

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1. See J. Haarhoff, *The Stranger at the Gate* (Boston, 1951); J. Jüthner, *Hellenen und Barbaren* (Leipzig, 1923); K. Lechner, *Hellenen und Barbaren im Weltbild der Byzantiner* (Munich, 1954); R.V. Mattei, "Sul concetto di 'barbaro' nel medioevo," *Studi di storia e diritto in onore di Enrico Besta*, Vol. IV (Milan, 1939), pp. 483-501; M. Reverdin, ed. *Grecs et Barbares* (Fondation Hardt. Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique, 8, (Geneva, 1961); Joseph Vogt, "Kulturwelt und Barbaren zum Menschheitsbild der spätantiken Gesellschaft," *Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse*, Jahrgang 1967. Nr. 1; J. Zeiller, *Paganus, Etude de terminologie historique* (Fribourg-Paris, 1917); and cf. Annalina Calo Levi, *Barbarians on Roman Imperial Coins and Sculpture* (New York, 1952).

2. "Κἄρες βαρβαρόφωνοι," *Iliad*, II. 867.

3. H. Frisk, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Griechischen*, Vol. I (1960), p. 219, "Onomatopoetische Reduplikationsbildung, mit aind (nachred.) barbara-stammeln, pl. Bez. nicht-arischer Völker."

4. *Glotta*, 4, (1913), p. 303 ff.

5. J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Vol. I (1959), p. 22.

6. Chantaine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*, Vol. I (1963), p. 165.

Strabo considers the word *barbaros* an onomatopoeic reference to harsh enunciation,<sup>7</sup> yet emphasizes that the paucity of speech refers not to the speaker's own language but to his broken Greek.<sup>8</sup> Byzantine hagiographers mention "barbaric language"<sup>9</sup> in connection with any unintelligible foreign tongue, and the original meaning of *barbaros* as speaking an unintelligible language was not lost on the lexicographers.<sup>10</sup>

A natural consequence of this unfavorable meaning is the differentiation which occurs between Hellenes and barbarians in patterns of behavior and culture with pejorative overtones based on the assumed superiority of the Greek culture.<sup>11</sup>

The works of Plato provide a good example. He divides mankind into two parts, the civilized *Hellenes* and the uncultured *barbaroi* and believes that they are bound to engage in perpetual warfare.<sup>12</sup> As a result, barbarian came to be equated with a people or individual possessed of brutality and rudeness, a tradition which persists from the classical period to the present day.

The fusion between Greeks and barbarians planned by Alexander the Great, an effort to bridge the cultural differences, was ignored by his successors.<sup>13</sup> After Alexander's regime, however, some Greek authors did attempt to change the practice of viewing non-Greeks as barbarians. Eratosthenes<sup>14</sup> considered

7. *Geography*, XIV, 2, 28. "Οἶμαι δὲ τὸ βάρβαρον κατ' ἀρχάς ἐκπεφωνῆσθαι οὕτως κατ' ὀνοματοποιῖαν."

8. In a late hagiographical work, the "Logos eiston Hagion Barbaron," A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Analecta*, I, (Petrograd, 1891), p. 412, the term barbaric language takes on the meaning of "bad Greek." This hagiographical work also combines within the appellation barbarian the following meanings: (a) of non-Byzantine origin; (b) having rough manners and appearance, *op. cit.*, p. 406: "βάρβαρος γὰρ τὸ γένος, βάρβαρος τὸν τρόπον, βάρβαρος τὴν ἀπήνειαν," moreover of (c) clothed in a barbaric fashion, *op. cit.*, p. 413, "ἐνδυμάτων βαρβαρικῶν."

9. Theodoret, "De Natura Hominis" *P.G.* 83, 4 col. 949.

10. Eustathius, "Com.," *Geographi Graeci Minores*, Text 4, p. Stephanus Byzantius, *Ethnica*, ed. Dindorf, Vol. I (Leipzig, 1825), p. 103: "βάρβαρος οὐκ ἐπὶ ἔθνους, ἀλλὰ ἐπὶ φωνῆς ἐλαμβάνετο."

11. Aristotle *Politics*, 1285, 20. "Οἱ βάρβαροι δουλικώτεροι τὰ ἡθὴ φύσει τῶν Ἑλλήνων" and Euripides *Orestes*, 485, where Menelaus insults Tyndar by calling him a barbarized Greek after residing for a long time among the barbarians: "βεβαρβάρωσαι, χρόνιος ὦν ἐν βαρβάροις."

12. The *Republic*, 470 C "Ἕλληνας μὲν ἄρα βαρβάροις καὶ βαρβάρους Ἕλλησι πολεμεῖν μαχομένους τε φήσομεν καὶ πολεμίους φύσει εἶναι..." However, it is not clear whether Plato still held this view when he wrote the *Politics*, cf. *Politics* 262D and K. Vourveris, *Platon und die Barbaren* (Athens, 1938).

13. Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization* (3rd ed., London, 1952), pp. 178-179.

14. Strabo, *Geography*, 1, 4, 9.

that "it would be better to make such divisions according to good qualities and bad qualities."

Rome inherited the Greek conception of the division of mankind into two parts and attempted to erect a barrier symbolic as well as actual in order to keep distinct the line between Graeco-Romans and barbarians. The *Jus Romanum* meticulously described under what conditions the barbarians were allowed to enter the Roman orbit.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the division between Greek and barbarian lost its rigidity and under the new conditions the relations between the two worlds appeared more complex. A great number of barbarians were welcomed inside the Roman confines and offered a positive contribution to Roman culture.<sup>16</sup>

Now the barbarians belong to two categories, those within the Roman orbit and those beyond the Roman confines. The former by their removal from the wilds of *Barbaria* and their establishment into *Romania* entered into a new spiritual world and could no longer be considered alien and uncivilized.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, with the establishment and expansion of the Roman Empire there was a considerable number of inhabitants among the new peoples—mainly from the upper class—who were thoroughly hellenized and could not be considered barbarians.

The introduction of Christianity into the Roman Empire caused little change and the word *barbaros* continued to be applied, with few exceptions, to anyone beyond the Roman orbit and it was often accompanied with derogatory connotations.

The authors of the Roman Empire followed different patterns in their use of the term *barbaroi* which represented on one hand their own convictions and on the other reflected the changes due to the evolution of the Roman Empire.<sup>18</sup> Thus the spirit of the apostle Paul appears in Gregory Nazianzenus who

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15. Ramsay MacMullen, "Barbarian Enclaves in the Northern Roman Empire," *L'Antiquité Classique*, 32, 2, (1963), p. 552.

16. T.J. Haarhoff, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

17. E.A. Thompson, "Christianity and the Northern Barbarians" in *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed., A. Momigliano (Oxford, 1963), p. 78.

18. For the attitude of the most important authors in the late Roman period see the analytical account of Vogt, *op. cit.* The development of the common man's attitude of the Graeco-Roman worlds towards the barbarians is difficult to depict and has not been adequately studied. As late as the 3rd century A.D. in a letter written in Egypt the word *barbaros* appears as synonymous to *ἀνάνθρωπος* (=ἀπάνθρωπος) used by a Greek in Egypt to characterize the Egyptians who were considered imperfectly civilized (P. Oxy. XIV, 1681), quoted by H.I. Bell "Philanthropia" in *Hommages à Joseph Bidez et à Franz Cumont*

emphasizes the unity of all mankind, barbarians, Greeks, men or women.<sup>19</sup> But as the ties between the Christian Church and the Empire grew closer, the barbarians were faced simply as common enemies of both. An inscription in Syria<sup>20</sup> clearly expresses the new attitude, it involves an invocation of Jesus Christ's aid in fighting the barbarians.

Likewise the depiction of barbarians in art and on coins in the later Roman period is unaltered by Christianity. On some coins even Constantine the Great is depicted dragging one barbarian while treading on another.<sup>21</sup> As Rudolfo de Mattei has shown,<sup>22</sup> the lack of Christianity is only one quality distinguishing Romans from barbarians and is of secondary importance in differentiation. The true antonym of Christian is pagan, just as the true antonym of Roman is barbarian. The same spirit of the division of mankind into the civilized and the barbarians appears in the Byzantine period in which all non-subjects of the Empire are barbarians whether in the East "Ἕῃοι" or the West "Ἑσπέριοι βάρβαροι."<sup>23</sup>

Special use of the word *barbaros* in the post-Classical period:

In the post-Classical period the most important applications of the word *barbaros* are the following:

A. *Barbaroi* in a religious sense. 1. Barbaroi for Gentiles, as opposed to Jews.<sup>24</sup> 2. Heretics as Orthodox Christians.<sup>25</sup>

B. *Barbaroi* with an ethnic meaning.<sup>26</sup> 1. The Goths: Procopius, in his *History of the Wars*, constantly uses the word *barbaroi* for the Goths, but applies it to other people as well. 2. The inhabitants of Malta<sup>27</sup> due, presumably, to those who came there from Africa. 3. The inhabitants of the region called

(Brussels, 1948). To this we can add a reference to the synonymous word of *barbaros*, *apanthropos* again used to characterize the lack of humanity in the Egyptian Laws, (P. Oxy. II, 277, vii).

19. "Oratio VII" P. G. vol. 35, col. 785 "ἵνα μηκέτι ὦμεν ἄρρεν καὶ θῆλυ, βάρβαρος, Ἐκύθης..."

20. Jalabert and Mouterde, *Inscriptions Grecques et Latines de la Syrie*, Vol. II, p. 164.

21. Caló Levi, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

22. *op. cit.*, p. 483 ff.

23. For full references see Lechner, *op. cit.*, p. 74 ff.

24. For examples see G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1962), p. 289.

25. Lampe, *ibid.*

26. None of the works mentioned above (note 1) examines all ethnic applications of the word *barbaros* and its particular application to the Arabs.

27. Act. 28; 2,4. *Barbaroi* is wrongly translated as barbaric people.

Barbaria<sup>28</sup> in South-East Africa. 4. The Arabs as a whole and certain nomadic Arab tribes.

### *Barbaroi and Arabs*<sup>29</sup>

Since the Arab world is apart from the Roman sphere, the Arabs were naturally considered to be *barbaroi*. Nevertheless, their treatment as *barbaroi* is different from that accorded barbarians living to the west of the Empire. Arabs are generally called *barbaroi* in the following manner:

1. As *barbaroi*, they are bearers of a culture different to the point of being derogatorily considered: "Σαρακηνοὶ τῷ ἥθει βάρβαροι, τῇ γνώμῃ κακοποιοί." <sup>30</sup> (Saracens: barbaric in manners, evil in mind). Occasionally the derogative meaning may even be dispensed with, as when the Saracens who fed and kept Saint Sabas still retained the name of barbaroi.<sup>31</sup> Saracens are thus shown as a part of all the eastern barbarians<sup>32</sup> in the manner of their linkage by Menander:<sup>33</sup> "Σαρακηνοὺς καὶ τοὺς ὁποιοῦσιν βαρβάρους..." (Saracens and the assortment of all the other barbarians"). The cultural differentiation also includes religious differences, brought about by those practices considered inferior to the practices of Christianity. Religion alone, of course, is insufficient to discriminate the Byzantines from the Arabs. It should be remarked, however, that the Christianized Arabs often escape being called barbarians, to the extent that they are even meticulously distinguished from pagan Arabs. It can thus be seen in the *Narrations* of Ammonius<sup>34</sup> that the

28. Stephanus of Byzantium, *Ethnica*, ed. Dindorf, Vol. I (Leipzig, 1825), p. 103-4, is familiar with the ethnic meaning of the word *barbaros* as applied only in this particular case.

29. M.A. Kugener in his short article, "Sur l'emploi en Syrie, au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle de notre ère, du mot 'barbare', dans le sens de 'arabe'," *Oriens Christianus*, Vol. VII, (1907), pp. 408-412, traces in the Syriac and Greek sources some applications of the word *barbar* for the Arabs. His description of its usage for those Arabs in or near Mesopotamia is correct. He fails, however, to realize the meanings of the word *barbaros* for Arabs in general as well as its particular use for certain other tribes besides those in Mesopotamia. The Greek authors and the Syrian translators also apply this word much earlier than the sixth century, which he takes as his *terminus ante quem*.

30. Life of Saint Sabas, ed. Schwartz, "Kyrillos von Scythopolis", in *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* 49, 2 (Leipzig, 1939), p. 97.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

32. The Persians are also called barbarians. See for example, Marcellinus, *Julianus*, xxiii, 5,2.

33. "Excerpta". ed. Bekker and Niebuhr, *C.S.H.B.*, Vol. XIV (Bonn, 1829), p. 360.

34. Ed. Combefis, *Illustrium Christi Martyrum Lecti Triumphi* (Paris, 1660) cf. also *Sinaiticus Graecus* 267.

Arabs of Pharan, Christianized by Moses, are not called barbarians, as are the pagan Saracens. Three Saracens in the *Life of Euthymius*<sup>35</sup> are described as “δύο τῶν βαρβάρων μετὰ τινος χριστιανοῦ Σαρακηνοῦ” (two barbarian Saracens with a Christian Saracen), and here also a distinction is made between the Arabs Christianized by Euthymius, and the Saracens (called barbarians only) who devastated the camps of those Christianized Arabs.<sup>36</sup>

Similarly, in the Byzantine illuminations, Christianity which — as it has been said — had no power to alter the brutal representation of the favorite theme in art and on coins of later Roman Empire, i.e. the exercise of acts of cruelty by the emperors over vanquished barbarians, did influence the representation of the barbarian Arabs who embraced Christianity and were sanctified. Thus while the Arabs are depicted in general with coarse characteristics and exotic clothing,<sup>37</sup> the Arab saints and martyrs appear with the same austere features and clothing as the Byzantines. Their sainthood broke their ties with their *barbaroi* compatriots and united them with the Byzantines. A characteristic example is to be found in the miniature of the Arabo-Syrian Saint Symeon Stylites,<sup>38</sup> where the Byzantine looking Saint is contrasted with exotic looking coarse-featured fellow countrymen.

A striking exception to this usage is the *Vita of Hagios Barbaros* written long after the advent of Islam. This Saint an Arab or Berber born in Africa<sup>39</sup> eventually became a pious monk at Mount Athos and even a saint under the strange appellation the Barbar Saint (*Hagios Barbaros*). Thus barbarism seemed in this case united with sainthood. Nevertheless, a careful examination of the text reveals that the appellation *barbaros* refers to his qualities before he became a Christian. This is clearly manifested in the text where we find the expression “τέως βάρβαρος”<sup>40</sup> (being previously [before his Christianization] a barbarian).

Some exceptional cases are to be found in the *Vita* of Symeon Stylites written by Theodoret.<sup>41</sup> The spectacular ascetism of Symeon attracted flocks of Arab nomads. Theodoret, an eyewitness describing vividly but critically the

35. Ed. Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

37. For certain illuminations of pre-Islamic Arabs see my article “Pre-Islamic Arabs in Byzantine Illuminations” to be published in *Muséon* (1969).

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Analecta*, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

40. *op. cit.*, p. 406.

41. Ed. Hans Lietzmann, *Das Leben des Heiligen Symeon Stylites* (Leipzig 1908), pp. 1-18. (*Texte und Untersuchungen...*, 324)

way these superstitious nomads squeezed disorderly around the pillar of Symeon to receive the Christian enlightenment,<sup>42</sup> calls their behavior and mind barbaric.<sup>43</sup> While these characterizations apply not to Christian Arabs but to those ready to receive Christianity, two more examples refer to Christianized Arabs. In the first, representatives of two different tribes quarrel for the exclusive possession of the benevolent blessing of Symeon granted to their chieftains. Theodoret describes their feud as barbaric,<sup>44</sup> "διαμάχης βαρβαρικῆς." In the second, Theodoret speaks about a newly converted Christian Arab who violated his vow to fast and abstain from eating meat and calls him *barbaros*.<sup>45</sup> But in all these cases we are dealing, either with Arabs ready to become Christians, or fresh converts whose Christianity was too superficial to enable them to shake off their barbarian characteristics.

2. Many references to "βαρβαρικαὶ ἔφοδοι" (barbarian incursions)<sup>46</sup> illustrate that as enemies of the Byzantines, the Arabs were called barbarians. However, when they are represented as allies, they are usually not so called. Thus Eunapius calls the allied Arabs simply "Saracens" in contradistinction to the barbarian Scythians.<sup>47</sup> It is noteworthy that while Goths, Visigoths, and other barbarians of the West are always named *barbaroi* whether they are pagan and/or enemies, Christian and/or allies,<sup>48</sup> Arabs, in contrast, are not normally called barbarians if they are Christianized or have become the Empire's allies.

3. In some texts, in addition to the word *Arabs*, or other general appellations (Saracens, Agarenoi), the term *barbaroi* is substituted. It seems to have simply an ethnic meaning of Arabs without a derogatory connotation, e.g. in Theophanes<sup>49</sup> *Life of St. Saba*<sup>50</sup> and in other authors. As applied to certain Arab tribes the word *barbarian* is often written followed by no other ethnic term. *Barbaroi* is the appellation of the Skenitai or nomadic Arabs who, according to Strabo,<sup>51</sup> ranged from Mesopotamia to as far as Coele-Syria.

42. *op. cit.*, p. 10 ff.

43. *op. cit.*, p. 11.

44. *op. cit.*, p. 11.

45. *op. cit.*, p. 13.

46. For an example in hagiography see "Sophroniou logos eis to hagian baptisma," *Analecta*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

47. *Excerpta*, ed. Bekker and Niebuhr, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

48. Rudolf de Mattei, *op. cit.*, p. 498 ff.

49. Ed. de Boor, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 304.

50. Ed. Schwartz, p. 75.

51. *Geography*, XVI, 3. 1.

Evagrius' *Ecclesiastical History* calls them Skenitai Barbaroi<sup>52</sup> and Procopius<sup>53</sup> mentions a place near Sergiopolis which the Skenitai Arabs occupied, called "βαρβαρικὸν πεδῖον" (barbaric plain). Inscriptions found in Syria,<sup>54</sup> a Syrian work of Severus,<sup>55</sup> and the Life of Ahudemmah,<sup>56</sup> all mention these Arabs in that manner.<sup>57</sup> In addition to these nomads, all the Saracens from Egypt up to the river Jordan are simply called Barbaroi and are even distinguished as "ἔθνος".<sup>58</sup>

Since, in some areas, the barbarians were predominantly Arabs, it is natural that Arabs should come to be called barbaras in an ethnic sense. This is the principle reason for the terminology and not so that the similar sounds Arab, Barbar, brought about a confusion and interchangeable use of these terms.<sup>59</sup> Such confusion could only take place in the pedantic forms of the writings of certain authors or copyists.

Moreover the nomad Arabs who attacked the monasteries in South Egypt were also called *barbaroi*, and because of their association with the Blemmyes and the Mazdikes (Berberic tribes) were sometimes confused with them.<sup>60</sup>

The confusion between the Arabs and the Berber tribes can easily be explained by the vague idea on the differences of peoples and races of Africa and Asia, held by most of the Byzantine authors. The shifting of populations in Africa and their various mixtures left the Byzantines with no clear racial conception of the black peoples. In addition, because the geographical idea of most of the Byzantine authors about the location of India, Ethiopia, South Arabia and Nubia was vague and confused, they consequently failed to make distinctions between the dark brown Berbers,<sup>61</sup> the negroes of Nubia,

52. Ed. Bidez and Parmentier, (London, 1898), pp. 135, 162, 205.

53. *History of the Wars*, II 5, 29 ed. Loeb, Vol. I (Cambridge, 1945). p. 302.

54. Jalabert and Mousterde, op. cit., Vol. V. (Paris, 1939), p. 164, Vol. IX (1955), p. 277.

55. "Homilia LVII", *Patrologia Orientalis*, ed. F. Nau, Vol. IV, I, p. 93. See the correction from inhabitants into Barbaras by Kugener, op. cit., p. 408.

56. *Patrologia Orientalis*, op. cit., Vol. III (1909), p. 21.

57. These same Arabs are not called *barbaroi* but simply Arabs (al-Arab) in the "Passion of Abd-al-Masih," *Anal. Boll.*, 44 (1926), p. 337, because this passion was written much later than the period when it took place.

58. Nilus' "Narrations," *P.G.*, 79, col. 612.

59. This explanation was offered, by Kugener, op. cit., p. 412. The rare confusion in the writings of certain authors or copyists mentioned by Kugener in the words "Ἀραβες, βάρβαροι" is not a sufficient reason for their interchangeable use.

60. Cf. for example the *Menologium Basilii imperatoris* (P.G. 117 col. 256)

61. The Berbers' origin is one of the most complicated anthropological problems. Pro-



the dark Caucasians of India, and the racially mixed Ethiopians and South Arabians. Under the term *Ethiopes* or *Indoi* they included people with skin ranging in color from dark brown to deep black. The Northern Arabs were not normally included in this group of brown-black barbari. Nevertheless, their association and simultaneous raids with the Berber tribes south of Egypt and Sinai led to their confusion with the dark brown Berbers.

It should be noted, however, that certain authors, especially those living in Sinai who had direct experience with both Arabs and Blemmyes<sup>62</sup> clearly distinguish them. Thus in the *Narrations of Ammonius* the author never confuses them and moreover calls them "Μαῦροι."<sup>63</sup> This latter word, now used in modern Greek to mean Negroes, was applied solely to individuals with dark brown or black complexion by earlier authors. The *Narration of Ammonius* is the first work as far as I know which uses "Μαῦροι" to indicate a whole tribe with Negro characteristics. The name "Μαῦροι" or "Μαυρούσιοι", the appellation of the Berbers in North West Africa, is not based on the Greek word meaning black but rather derives either from Phoenician or from an indigenous tribal language.<sup>64</sup>

In the Arabic, Coptic, and Syriac translations of the Greek *Acts of the Saints*, the term *barbaros* was transliterated from the Greek. The translations were faithful to the Greek usage of the term *barbaroi* for the Blemmyes and the Mazdikes. Hence the Blemmyes, called *barbaroi* in the Greek *Life of Pachomius*,<sup>65</sup> are similarly named in the Coptic translation and are termed barbar in the Arabic.<sup>66</sup> The latter name, is a simple transliteration of the Greek word and not the one which appears later.<sup>67</sup> In the same way the

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bably they had never formed any racially distinct type. (Cf. Ch. Pellat "Berbers" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2nd edit. London, 1960) Vol. I, p. 1173 ff.

62. The origin of the Blemmyes — usually considered as Berbers — is uncertain. They have often been identified with the contemporary tribes of Bedja, but this hypothesis is still disputed (Cf. A. Paul, *A History of the Beja Tribes*, Cambridge, 1959). It should be noticed that both the illustrator of the miniatures of the *Menologium of Basil II* and the author of the *Narrations of Ammonius* present them as black.

63. In the Arabic version of the *Narrations of Ammonius* the word *Mauroi* is translated "Sudān" black used now for the inhabitants of Sudan. *Codex Sinaiticus Arabicus* 400, p. 201.

64. G. Camps, "Massinissa ou les débuts de l'histoire," *Libyca*, Vol. VIII (1960), p. 147.

65. *Subsidia Hagiographica*, 19 (1932), p. 133.

66. W.E. Grim, *Theological Texts from Coptic Papyri* (Oxford, 1913). p. 144.

67. In the Arabic version of the *Acta Apostolorum* we find the more faithful transliteration." (ed. Agnes Smith Lewis in *Horae Semiticae*, Nr. 3, (1903), p. 13.

Syriac transliteration of the Greek *barbaros* is used for the Saracens and for the Blemmyes in the Syriac version of Ammonius' Narrations.<sup>68</sup>

The following conclusions may be drawn from the above discussion:

1. Originally the term *barbaroi* in the Byzantine period as applied to the Arabs followed the same basic meanings which it had used in the Classical and Roman periods, i.e. people speaking an unintelligible language or speaking Greek with harsh enunciation, and being of different culture. Often pejorative overtones were added to this designation.

2. The term *barbaroi* was applied simply as a synonymous word for Arabs or other generic appellation applied to them (Saracens, Ismaelitae etc.), but always in reference to certain confined regions: (a) the area stretching from Sinai till about Elusa, (b) South of Egypt where the Arab tribes were often confused with other nomadic people, particularly the Blemmyes, (c) the nomad Arabs in and around Mesopotamia.

3. In the West all people living beyond the Roman orbit whether mortal enemies or loyal allies, pagans or devoted Christians could never shake off the appellation *barbaroi*. On the other hand, in the East normally the Arabs, when allied to the Byzantines were able to escape this appellation. Moreover, by embracing Christianity, the Arabs normally were detached from the barbaric world. Naturally, the Christian Arab martyrs or saints were completely incorporated into the Byzantine world. This can be particularly observed in Byzantine illuminations. The Arab saints portrayed there adopt the austere Byzantine forms and are sharply distinguished from their coarsely presented compatriots.

The Chassanid Arab tribes are not called *barbaroi* by the Byzantines because of their constant alliance with the Empire and to a lesser degree because they were, often superficially, Christianized. In contrast, the Lakhmid tribes are many times called by the Byzantines *barbaroi*, because of their alliance with the Byzantines' mortal enemies, the Persians and because of their paganism.<sup>69</sup>

The culmination of all the qualities to help eradicate any appellation of *barbaroi* is to be found in reference to the Arabs of South Arabia who embraced Christianity c. the beginning of the 4th century A.D. They were loyal allies of the Byzantines and devoted Christians, ready to become martyrs for their faith.<sup>70</sup> With the appearance of Muhammad, the archenemy of the Byzantines and of Christianity in the eyes of the Byzantine writers all Arabs became *par excellence barbaroi*.

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68. Agnes Smith Lewis, *Horae Siniticae*, No. IX (Cambridge, England), (1912), pp. 2, 3, 7.

69. It should be noted that there was a considerable number of Nestorian Christians in al-Hira. Cf. Georg Graff, *Geschichte...* (Vatican, 1944), p. 18 ff. (Studi e Testi, 118).

70. Cf. the "Martyrium of Saint Arethas," ed., J. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca*, Vol. V., pp. 1-62.