

Scythian-Barbarian:
The Permutations of a Classical Topos in Jewish
and Christian Texts of Late Antiquity *

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A group of rabbinic statements in different midrashic contexts pair the toponym *barbaria* or the gentilic *barbari* with a second toponym or gentilic. In these statements the meaning of the pairing is not always certain, nor are the readings of the second name, which is lost in a multitude of variants. The key to identifying the names and understanding the meaning of the pairing lies in recognizing these statements as representing a common literary topos found among Greek and Roman writers. The rabbinic material has cast the topos in a particular form, which is found also, we shall see, in early Christian literature. Recognizing the rabbinic and Christian texts as a topos will allow us to bring a greater degree of clarity to some of the vague rabbinic references, and to solve a long-standing textual difficulty in the New Testament.

*The Texts*¹

Text 1

All we have extant of this text is the fragmentary *we-’afi[lu] smrytyn we-’afi[lu] brbryym* as preserved in quotation from a *Yelammedenu* midrash by Nathan b. Yehiel of Rome (eleventh century). Benjamin Mussafia (d. 1675) realized that the first name was corrupted and glossed *smr(y)tyn* as *srmtyn*, so that the text reads: ‘even Sarmatians and even Barbarians’. According to Nathan’s explanation, these gentilics are meant to represent uncivilized peoples, a view undoubtedly based on the *Yelammedenu* context which he had before him.²

Text 2

To the question how the messiah can appear if the Jews have not yet been subjugated to the rule of ‘the seventy nations’, a necessary condition in rabbinic thinking, God is made to answer:

If one of you is exiled to Barbaria and one to Sarmatia, it is as if you had all been exiled. Furthermore, this kingdom [= Rome] levies troops from throughout the world, from every nation. If one *kuthi* and one *kushi* subjugate you, it is as if all

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¹ See chart below, p 90

² ‘Yelammedenu’ to Num 8 6 (or 3:45) quoted in Nathan b. Yehiel’s *Arukh*, s.v. *smrytyn*, ed. Alexander Kohut, *Arukh ha-Shalem* 6 78a. Mussafia is quoted by Kohut

the seventy nations had done so.³

In this text the sense of the passage would indicate that the pairing of Barbaria/Sarmatia and Kuthi/Kushi⁴ is a merism representing the extent of the nations and peoples of the world. If one Jew is exiled to Barbaria and another Jew to Sarmatia, it is as if the Jews had been exiled to all 'seventy' nations of the world; similarly in regard to the Kuthites and Kushites subjugating the Jews.

Text 3

To Ps. 25:19 ('Consider my enemies for they are many and they bear a tyrannous hate against me'), a midrashic expansion says:

If Esau hated Jacob, he had good reason—for Jacob had taken the birthright from him. But as for the *barbari*, the *'ntyym* (or *gwntyym*), and the other nations, what have I ever done to them that they should 'bear a tyrannous hate against me'?'⁵

As most scholars recognize, the unintelligible *'ntyym* is almost certainly a mistaken reading for *gwntyym*, a dissimilated form of 'Goths' (Gotthia), which does in fact appear in a quotation of our text in *YalqSh*.⁶ Indeed, 'and *gw* are graphically similar. The two forms of Gothia, with and without *n*, alternate elsewhere in rabbinic sources. A passage in *LamR* which has *gwnt'y*

³ *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5 7 (ed Mandlebaum, 1 89–90), *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15 (ed Friedmann, p 71b), *SongR* parashah 2, sec 1 8 2(3) In all the sources the statement is transmitted in the names of mid-second-century sages *PesRK* is dated to the fifth century The parallel texts are probably based on it and are, in any case, later The reading 'Sarmatia' is preserved in one manuscript of *PesRK*, the variants (see chart below), including *brtyny*' and *mrtyny*', as well as several unintelligible names, are easily accounted for as deriving from 'Sarmatia', a place-name unfamiliar to medieval copyists *Mrtyny*' occurs only in ed pr (Salonika, 1521) of *Yalqut Shim'on* Song 986 quoting *PesR*, and is probably a corruption of 'Sarmatia' Similarly, *brtyny*' is most likely a corruption of 'Sarmatia' despite the fact that a racial antithesis of Briton–Ethiopian (on the relevance of which, see below) is attested in Pseudo-Galen (Frank Snowden, *Blacks in Antiquity*, p 175) Also arguing for 'Sarmatia' is Y S. Hirschensohn, *Sheva' Hokhamot* (London, 1912), pp 83a and 181a Regarding the reading *sdtyyh*, it seems far more likely to see in it a corruption of *srmtyyh* rather than to postulate an identification with the Sauraratae (i e *sd[r]tyyh*), a people probably of Iranian descent who made an appearance in South Russia during the second century B C E and are only known from one inscription of that date (On the Sauraratae, see J. Harmatta, *Studies in the History and Languages of the Sarmatians* (Szeged, 1970), pp 11–12). Generally speaking, 'Kushi' in rabbinic literature has the same meaning as 'Ethiopian' in Greco-Roman literature, i e. black African

⁴ The reading in *SongR* (*barbari* for *kushi*) will be dealt with below, n. 20

⁵ *Midrash Psalms* 25.14, ed S Buber, *Midrash Tehillim* (Vilna, 1891), p 108a, *YalqSh* 702 'A definite date of composition [for *MidPs*] cannot be given Most of the material [in *MidPs* 1–118] certainly dates back to the Talmudic period' (Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*², pp 322–23) *YalqSh* is an anthology of earlier midrashic material compiled by Shim'on ha-Darshan (twelfth–thirteenth centuries)

⁶ Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, 4th ed., 5 45, J Furst, *Glossarium Graeco-Hebraeum* (Strassburg, 1890), p 87, s v *brbry*, Samuel Krauss, *Griechische und Lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud Midrasch und Targum*, mit Bemerkungen von Immanuel Low (Berlin, 1899), 2 170, idem, 'Die biblische Volkertafel im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum', *MGWJ* 39 (1895), 8; Kohut, 'Arukh ha-Shalem 1 243b–244b (s v 'afriqi) and 2 324 (s v *gnt*) Buber (loc cit., n 51) also reads *gwntyym*, but he takes it as a form of *gentes*, 'nations, peoples' The context, however, calls for the name of a specific people

is quoted in 'Arukh as *gwt*' (Gotha); the 'Gothia' which identifies Magog of Gen. 10:2 and 1 Chr. 1:5 is spelled without *n* in some sources (*yMeg* 1.11, 71b: *gwtyy*); Targum Chr.: *gytyh*) and with *n* (e.g. *gynt*, *gwmt*, *qwnt*) in others (*bYoma* 10a in MS Munich 6, R. Hananel and 'Arukh, s.v. 'grmmy': *gynt*).⁷ Arguing also for an original *gwntyym*, rather than 'ntyym, in Text 3, is the reading of a genizah fragment (*gygmy*), which would seem to be a scribal corruption of *gwnty* (*ty* being read as *m*; *g/n* confusion is common).

In regard to the meaning of the gentilic pairing, here too it appears that we are looking at a merism representing the extent of the world ('and the other nations').⁸

A similar statement about undeserved hatred by the nations is found in a comment on Ps. 109:3, 'They fought against me without cause'. The rabbinic explanation claims that this refers to Barbaria and 'S(h)tutia' (*š/štwtyh*).⁹

The following chart lists the various names found in the texts. (The 'Eliezer' text is discussed in Appendix I below.)

⁷ Without *yMeg* 1 11, 71b *gwtyy*', Targum Chr (see P Grelot, *Biblica* 53 (1972), 135, Jastrow, p 228) With the examples cited are from witnesses to *bYoma* 10a quoted by R. Rabinovicz, *Diqduqe Soferim (Variae lectiones in mischnam et in talmud babilonicum)* (Munich, 1866–97), ad loc Rabinovicz lists other variants also with dissimilated form *qndy*, *qnty*, *qnty*, *nwmt*, *nytnyy*'. Obviously the reading of the printed editions (*qndy*) derives from *qnty*' (ed pr Venice as well as edd Basel and Constantinople), which apparently goes back to *gnty*' and is not 'Scandia', a toponym otherwise 'completely unattested in [rabbinic] literature' (see M Goshen-Gottstein, *Sheqi'im mi-Targume ha-Miqra' ha-Aramiyim* (Fragments of Lost Targumim) (Ramat Gan, 1989), 2 100) Probably the other readings listed by Rabinovicz also go back to *gnty*' either via phonetic interchange of *n/m* (*gwmt*'), or scribal error of *g/n* (*nytnyy*'), or both (*nwmt*) The reading of 'Aggadot ha-Talmud' quoted by Rabinovicz (*gnt*') may also represent an original *gnt*' with *n* being read as *b* On these names see also A Neubauer, *La géographie du Talmud* (Paris, 1868), p 422, n 3; C T R Hayward, *Saint Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis* (Oxford, 1995), pp 138–39 with cited literature, Kohut 1 244 and 2 368, Jastrow, pp 21 and 270, Levy, *Worterbuch uber die Targumim* 1 13, P S Alexander, *The Toponymy of the Targumim with Special Reference to the Table of Nations and the Boundaries of the Land of Israel* (Ph D diss, Univesity of Manchester, 1974), pp 108–12.

⁸ Lately D. Sperber has accepted the reading 'ntyym and has conjectured an identification with the Antae, a Slavonic tribe which invaded Thrace in the sixth century ('Varia Midrashica III', *Revue des Études Juives* 134 (1975), 128–32, reprinted in *Essays on Greek and Latin in the Mishna, Talmud, and Midrashic Literature* (Jerusalem, 1982), pp 179–83, and in *Magic and Folklore in Rabbinic Literature* (Ramat Gan, 1994), pp 137–41) Sperber would also see 'ntytyh underlying the *stwyh* of *MidPs* 109 to be discussed below I cannot agree with this. Not only would we have expected Antae to be more commonly transliterated with *alef*, as Sperber himself notes, but it is strange that rabbinic literature would have preserved the name of a Slavonic tribe whose appearance on the stage of history is limited to a one-time invasion (ca 531) of Thrace Sperber claims that at this same time the Berbers invaded Mauretania and *MidPs* thus refers to both of these invasions of the *barbarim* and 'ntyym In regard to the reading *mstym* (MS Frankfurt), Buber (loc. cit.) would see it as an error for 'ntym found in the other manuscripts The reading *tbryym* ('Tibereans') is, according to Kohut, a corruption of *brbryym* Certainly *dbryym* (MS Frankfurt) is

⁹ *MidPs* 109 3 in the printed editions and some manuscripts, but not in MS Parma and thus not in Buber's edition (based primarily on this manuscript), nor in Braude's English translation (based on ed Buber) See ed Buber, ad loc , p 233a, n 2 Variants for Barbaria *barbarim*; for S(h)tutia *kuthum*, 'antwtym', 'rbym ('Arabs') < 'antwtym?'. Krauss, Kohut and Strack-Billerbeck ('vielleicht') feel that Shtutia is a corruption of 'Scythia' (respectively *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter* 2:583, s v, and 'Biblishe Volkertafel', p 8, n 6, 'Arukh ha-Shalem 2:184, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (Munich, 1926), 3 630), and Buber thinks it a corruption of 'Mauretania' (*MidPs* 25.14)

'Ends of the Earth'

				<i>Yelammedenu</i>	1	I
ברברי	כותי	סמטריה	ברבריה	<i>SongR</i>	2	II
	כותי	סמטרייה	ברברייה	<i>PesR</i>	3	
כוש	כותי	סד(ג)טייה	ברבריא		4	
כוש	כותי	סדיוטייא	ברבריה		5	
	כותי	ברטניא	ברברייא		6	
כותי	כותי	סרמטים	ברבריי'		7	
	כותי	מרטניא	ברבריא		8	
	כותי	בריטניא	ברבריא		9	
	כותי	סמטיא	ברבריה	<i>PesRK</i>	10	
כוש	כותי	סדטייה	ברבריה		11	
כותי	כותי	סרמטי'	בר בר		12	
כוש	כותי	סרמטייא	ברבריא		13	
	כותי	ברטניא	ברבריא		14	
				<i>MidPs 25</i>	15	III
					16	
					17	
					18	
					19	
					20	
					21	
					22	
					23	
				<i>YalqSh</i>	24	
				<i>MidPs 109</i>	25	
					26	
					27	
					28	
					29	
					30	
'Eliezer'						
				<i>GenR</i>	31	

Manuscript identification for the various readings is found in the respective critical editions where available. Additional information is noted below. My thanks to Y. Sussman and Mitchell Silverstein for providing me with the readings of *MidPs* and to B. Kern-Ulmer for those of *PesR*.

3. Parma 3122 (formerly 1240)/ 4. Casanata 3324/ 5. CJS/Dropsie (formerly London)/ 6. JTS 8195/ 7. Ed. pr (Prague, 1653 or 1656)/ 8. Yalqut Shim'on, ed. pr (Salonika, 1521)/ 9. Yalqut Shim'on, ed. sec (Venice, 1566)/ 15. Cambridge Trinity College 48, Parma (de Rossi 2552) 1232, Halberstam (ברבריים ענותיים) 16. Warsaw 119, ed. pr Constantinople (ענותיים) (ברבריים ענותיים) 17. HUC 47/ 18. Vatican 76/ 19. Paris 152/ 20. JTS R. 1914/ 21. Frankfurt 8°93 (Merzbacher 5)/ 22. Cambridge. TS Box 1/ 23. Cambridge Trinity College 49, Vatican 81/ 25. See Buber's note ad loc. and to Ps 25/ 26. Florence Bibl. Nat. 13, Vatican 81, Frankfurt 8°93 (Merzbacher 5), Warsaw 119 (ברבריים שחותיים) 27. Cambridge Trinity College 49 (שתיים) 28. JTS R. 1914/ 29. Vatican 76/ 30. Hebrew Univ/Schocken, Paris

It is clear that *barbaria* and *barbarim* in these texts are proper nouns referring to a specific place and people. But where? In another article I have shown that there were several places in the Near East and the Mediterranean region of late antiquity that went by the name of Barbaria (or similar-sounding names based on the root *brbr*).¹⁰ One particular area, on the east coast of Africa, was especially well known by that name. There is an abundance of evidence—Egyptian, Hellenistic, Jewish, Christian, Arabic, and even Chinese—ranging from the second millennium B.C.E. up until our times attesting to the toponym Barbaria in what is today Sudan and Somalia.

Egyptian inscriptions going back to the fifteenth century B.C.E. refer to a *brbrt* in this area; the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (first century C.E.) and Ptolemy (second century C.E.) call areas in Sudan and Somalia ‘Barbaria’ and ‘the country of the Barbarians’; Cosmas Indicopleustes (sixth century C.E.) several times identifies Barbaria with the area of Somalia; Stephanus Byzantinus (sixth century) refers to Barbaria in the same place. And the name persists well beyond the sixth century. The Christian Syriac writer Isho’dad of Merv (ninth century) refers to this Barbaria, as do the sixteenth-century (and later) Portuguese reports of East Africa. Similarly, Barbaria/Barbara (*aut sim*) as a place or people in East Africa is well known among Arabic sources beginning with the early geographers, and is found in the names of the modern Barbar (Berber) in Sudan and the Berbera on the north coast of Somalia. Indeed, in Egyptian Arabic ‘Barbare’ is a synonym for Nubian. Later Jewish (twelfth century) and even Chinese (ninth and thirteenth centuries) sources also mention an East African Barbaria.¹¹ In any case, the toponym Barbaria and the people Barbarians in the Sudan/Somalia region are well attested for the period covered by the rabbinic sources under discussion.

What about the second name paired with Barbaria(n) in the rabbinic texts? Reference to the chart will show that Texts 1 and 2 clearly read ‘Sarmatia’, and Text 3 *MidPs* 25 has ‘Goths’ following the almost certain reconstruction noted above. Text 3 *MidPs* 109, which has ‘S(h)utia’ (*š/štwtyh*), is, as we saw, considered by Krauss, Kohut and Strack-Billerbeck to be a corruption of Scythia. Is there any specific connotation to the collocation of Barbaria and Sarmatia/Gothia/Scythia?

Scythian/Ethiopian: A Greco-Roman and Jewish Topos

The Scythians, Sarmatians, Germans and Goths are considered by the Greek writers to be the remote northern races of antiquity; they are geographically near to one another and at different times their territories overlapped; and they are often grouped together under the term ‘Scythians’.¹² ‘By the

¹⁰ ‘Geographia Rabbinica The Toponym Barbaria’ (forthcoming in *JJS*)

¹¹ *Ibid.* for references to these and other sources

¹² The Scythians of Dexippus (3rd century C.E.) and Eunapius (d. ca. 420 C.E.) are Goths’ (E. A. Sophocles, *A Glossary of Later and Byzantine Greek* (London, 1860), s.v. ‘Skythai’) Orosius (fifth century) listed the Goths as a Scythian people—see the references in Herwig Wolfram, *History of the Goths* (Berkeley, 1988, original German edition, 1979), pp. 28, 34, 604 (Index), s.v.

third century B.C.E. the term [Scythia] no longer has an ethnic or national sense and designates only the collection of nomadic peoples to the north.¹³ Similarly, the southern peoples are often grouped together under the term 'Ethiopians'.

These designations specifically denote remoteness. As Pliny (*NH* 4.12.81) said: 'The name of Scythians has spread in every direction, as far as the Sarmatae and the Germans, but this old designation has not continued for any except the most outlying sections of these races (*extremi gentium harum*), living almost unknown to the rest of mankind' (transl. H. Rackham, LCL). Strabo (1.2.27) tells us that the ancient Greeks grouped together the countries of the remote north under the designation 'Scythian', and those in the far south under the term 'Ethiopian', while Ptolemy (*Tetrabiblos* 2.2.56), as Strabo, groups together the distant northern and southern races under the general terms 'Scythians' and 'Ethiopians'. Scythian and Ethiopian thus became general terms to designate, respectively, the remote northern and remote southern peoples.¹⁴

It is not surprising then that the ancients used a Scythian-Ethiopian pairing as a way to refer to the geographical extremes of their inhabited world. These were the people on the borders of the Greco-Roman world, the uncivilized barbarians. They were also the people whose complexion differed most markedly from the Greeks and Romans, for they were the lightest and darkest skinned people.¹⁵ The Scythian-Ethiopian topos thus came to be used to

'Scythians', especially p 390 n 86, p 383 n. 4, and the quotation (p 381, n 78) from Procopius' (sixth century) *De bello Gothico* 8 5 6 explaining why the Gothic peoples were called Scythians 'since all the nations who held these regions are called in general Scythians' See also the discussion and sources cited in A Brull, *Trachten der Juden in nachbiblischen Alterthum* (Frankfurt a/M, 1873), pp 4-5, n 2 A later writer grouping these northern peoples together is Ish'odad of Merv (ninth century), who identifies Gomer the son of Japhet (Gen 10 2) 'These are the Goths, Germans and Sarmatians' (*Commentaire d'Iso'dad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament* Genèse Text, ed J-M Vosté and C Van Den Eynde, CSCO 126, Scriptores Syri 67 (Louvain, 1950), p 131; transl C Van Den Eynde, CSCO 156, Scriptores Syri 75 (Louvain, 1955), p 142)

¹³ André Berthelot, *L'Asie ancienne centrale et sud-orientale d'après Ptolémée* (Paris, 1930), p 209. Berthelot also notes in regard to Sarmatia that by the time of Ptolemy this name designated a vast geographic area (p 210) On the location and peoples of Scythia and European and Asian Sarmatia, see Berthelot, pp 210-35. Regarding the Sauromatae, they are generally thought to be the same people as the Sarmatae, but see the discussion (with literature cited) in J Harmatta (above, n. 3), pp 8-10

¹⁴ Note also the Church Father Origen's (d ca 250) interpretation of the Queen of the South who 'came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon' in Matt 12 42 (Lk 11 31) Origen considers her to be the Queen of Ethiopia because Ethiopia is 'situated in the farthest place' (*Comm in Cant* 2 1, GCS 33 (Origen 8) 116, SC 375 268, see also his *Hom in Cant* 1 6, GCS 33 (Origen 8), 37, SC 37 37) Of course, the tradition that the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10 1-10) was the Queen of Ethiopia is basic to Christian Ethiopian tradition, which also interprets Lk 11 31 as referring to Ethiopia see E A W Budge's translation of the Kebra Nagast, *The Queen of Sheba and Her Only Son Menyelek* (London, 1922), pp xli, 17 (sec 21), 30 (sec 28) Budge (p lx) also records a modern North Abyssinian account according to which the Queen of Ethiopia was a Tigrē girl called 'Queen of the South'

¹⁵ See the references in Snowden, *Blacks in Antiquity*, p 262, n 32, and Thompson, *Romans and Blacks*, pp 65 and 199, n 46 The Ethiopian/Scythian formula and its variations are used in classical sources as shorthand to indicate white and black races in general The same shorthand supplies the meaning of 'Ethiopian' and 'German' also in the Jewish texts *mNega'im* 2 1 (second century) and *GenR* 86 3, ed Theodor-Albeck 2 1055 (fifth century) A much later example of the

designate anthropological and racial, as well as geographical, extremes.

Sometimes other northern peoples (Thracians, Gauls, Saxons, Germans) were substituted, or 'Egyptian' replaced 'Ethiopian', but in general the Scythians and Ethiopians became the formulaic expression of racial extremes. The geographic and racial characterizations of extremes are combined as cause and effect in the commonly found environmental theory of anthropological differentiation. The extremes of weather and environment in the remote north and south provide the explanation for different racial traits, including skin colour, the most obvious trait of all: 'The Ethiopian-Scythian formula had appeared as early as Hesiod and had become a frequent, if not the favourite, Hellenic illustration of the boundaries of the north and south as well as of the environment theory.'¹⁶

In the Islamic world the environmental theory received wide play, and the remote and uncivilized races were represented by the formulaic expression, with slight modification. Scythian became Turk (sometimes Slav), and 'Ethiopian' (i.e. Black) was turned into its Arabic equivalent: Sudan, Zanj, Abyssinian, etc. (i.e. Black). Thus al-Rāzī (tenth century) says regarding 'the young, the women, the dim-witted, as well as all the people living in the extremities of the earth, for instance the Daylamites, the Turks, the Negroes [Zanj] and the Abyssinians [Habasha]' that the study of philosophy 'clearly transcends their capacity'. Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna; d. 1037) speaks of the Turks and Negroes (Zanj) and, in general, people living in an unfavourable climate (i.e. remote lands) who have no virtues. Al-Kirmānī (d. 1021) refers to the 'Turks, Zanj, *brbr* and their like' who have no interest in things intellectual or in religious truth. Miskawayh (d. 1030) considers the 'remotest Turks ...

racial antithesis is afforded by Albertus Magnus (thirteenth century), who contrasts the black skin of the Ethiopians with the white skin of the Goths, Dacians and Slavs (J P Tilmann, *An Appraisal of the Geographical Works of Albertus Magnus and His Contribution to Geographical Thought* (Ann Arbor, 1971), pp 101-03).

¹⁶ Frank Snowden, *Blacks in Antiquity*, pp 171-77 and 197, quotation on 177, see also Lloyd Thompson, *Romans and Blacks*, p 105, idem in *Proceedings of the African Classical Associations* 17 (1983), 8; and I Opelt and W. Speyer in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 10 (1967), 268. Regarding Hesiod's reference to 'the Ethiopians, the Ligurians and also the Scythians, Hippe-molgi' (Snowden, p 171), cf *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, ed B P Grenfell and A S Hunt (London, 1915), 11 48, no 1358, fr 2, line 15, which is now read as 'the Ethiopians, the Libyans', in the new edition of *Fragmenta Hesiodae* by R Merkelbach and M. L. West (Oxford, 1967), p 74, no 150. To the examples cited by these authors, add also Herodotus' comment (2 22) about the cranes who each winter fly from cold Scythia to hot Ethiopia, and that of Sextus Empiricus (*Adversus mathematicos* 9 247-249), who indicates southern and northern extremes by reference to Ethiopia and the Hyperboreans (see also Juvenal 3 79-80). The Ethiopian-Scythian formula is not just a literary topos, Snowden notes iconographic parallels found in the Greek Janiform vases juxtaposing the heads of Blacks and white barbarians (op cit, p 25, cf also p 53, and in the *American Journal of Archaeology* 94 (1990), 162 reviewing V Karageoghis, *Blacks in Cypriot Art* (Houston, 1988)). Perhaps also the choice of language pairing Germans and Blemmyes, attributed to the Byzantine emperor Anastasius I (491-518), is meant to hunt at the geographic frontiers of the Roman empire in general, in addition to specifically referring to the wars with these peoples. Anastasius did carry on wars with several peoples at the Roman frontiers. The text reads 'The wars which I have to carry on with the barbarians who are called the Germans, and with those who are called the Blemmyes, and with many others' (W Wright, *The Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite* (Cambridge, 1882), pp 13-14 of the English translation and p 17 of the Syriac; the *Chronicle* is a Christian Syriac work dating from about 500 C E).

and the remotest Negroes [zanj]’ more animal than human. Similarly Ṣā’id al-Andalusī (d. 1070) speaks of ‘those who live furthest to the north . . . the Slavs, the Bulgars, and their neighbours’ and those who live at ‘the limit of the inhabited world in the south . . . the blacks, who live at the extremity of the land of Ethiopia, the Nubians, the Zanj and the like’.¹⁷

To return now to the rabbinic sources, it will be recalled that the purpose of the pairing was to convey the sense of uncivilized barbarism (Text 1) or geographic extremes (Texts 2 and 3), precisely the senses conveyed by the antithetical pairing of Scythian-Ethiopian in the classical sources. Since, as we have seen, Barbaria was a well-known location in the distant south, it would therefore seem that the rabbinic sources are using the same Scythia-Ethiopia topos, but substituting Barbarians for Ethiopians and Sarmatians/Goths for Scythians, to refer to the people from the ends of the known world.¹⁸ In ac-

¹⁷ Al-Rāzī, *A’lām al-Nubuwwa*, quoted and translated by Shlomo Pines, ‘Shū’ite Terms and Conceptions in Judah Halevi’s *Kuzari*’, in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 2 (1980), 204, text published by P Kraus in *Orientalia* 5 (1936), 361–62, excerpt vii Ibn Sīnā is cited from E I J Rosenthal (the original text is still in manuscript), *Political Thought in Medieval Islam* (Cambridge, 1958), pp 154–55, and M Horten, *Die Metaphysik Avicennas* (Halle, 1907), p. 680 Al-Kirmānī is in *Rāḥatū’l-’ql*, ed M K Hussein and M M Hilmy (Cairo, 1953), p 241 Miskawayh is in *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*, ed C K. Zurayk (Beirut, 1966) p. 69, the quotation is from Zurayk’s English translation of Miskawayh, *The Refinement of Character* (Beirut, 1968), p 61, similar statement, without the identification of specific nations, at p 47 (Arabic) and p 42 (English). Miskawayh is the source for Maimonides who, similarly, spoke about the ‘Turks found in the remote North [and] the Negroes [al-sūdān] found in the remote South’ (Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed* 3 51, in the Judeo-Arabic text edited, with a French translation, by S Munk, *Le Guide des Égarés* (Paris, 1866), 3 123, the English translation is that of S Pines (Chicago, 1963), pp. 618–19) (At 3 29 (Pines, p 515), Maimonides uses a Turk/Hindu antithesis to define the ‘extreme edges of the world’ where pre-monotheistic pagan religion is still practised, but see below, Appendix II on Philoponus) For Miskawayh as Maimonides’ source, see S Harvey, ‘A New Source of the Guide of the Perplexed’, *Maimonidean Studies* 2 (1991), 31–47 An Ethiopian/Slav topos to represent geographic extremes is used also by another Jewish writer in the Islamic world. Moshe ibn Ezra, in explaining why speech is more natural to the Arabs than to any other people, places them in a middle and beneficent clime between two extremes ‘Their speech is less dry than the Ethiopians [*habashim*] and more moist than the Slavs’ (*Sefer ha-’Iyyunim weha-Driyyunim*, Judeo-Arabic text with Hebrew translation by A S Halkin (Jerusalem, 1975) pp 30–31) Ṣā’id is in his *Tabaqāt al-Umam* quoted and translated in B Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East* (New York/Oxford, 1990), pp 47–48

¹⁸ Note Cosmas’ repeated association of Barbaria with the area called by Matt 12 42 / Lk 11 31 ‘the ends of the earth’ (Cosmas 2 50 and 6 12, in the English translation of J W McCrindle, *The Christian Topography of Cosmas, an Egyptian Monk* (New York, 1967, originally published by the Hakluyt Society), pp 51 and 251–52) and, much later, Berman Ashkenazi (sixteenth century, Poland), *Mattenot Kehunah to QohR* 2 7 ‘[Barbaria] is the name of a distant country at the edges of the inhabited world’ Another indication that black Africa (Ethiopia, Barbaria) was considered to be at the ends of the earth in the rabbinic, as in the classical, mind, comes from the cycle of Alexander stories preserved in rabbinic literature (e.g. *LevR* 27 1, pp 618–21, and *PesRK* 9 1, pp 148–49, see M. Margulies’s edition of *LevR* (Jerusalem, 1953–60) and Theodore and Albeck’s of *GenR* 33 1, pp 301–02, for further sources) In one such story Alexander goes to ‘Africa’ to visit King Qasya, whose name is generally understood to be based on the Hebrew *qes*, ‘end’ See Oppenheim, ‘Zur talmudischen Geographie’, *MGWJ* 17 (1868), 385, S Lieberman’s note in *PesRK* ed Mandelbaum 2 474 and *Yerushalmi Neziqin*, ed E S Rosenthal with S Lieberman (Jerusalem, 1983), p 136, S Rapoport, *Erech Millin* (Prague, 1851), p 71, the discussion and literature cited by Israel J Kazis, *The Book of the Gestis of Alexander of Macedon* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), pp 20–23, 184–85, finally, in regard to ‘remoteness’ being incorporated into a proper name, cf *al-Masjad al-Aqsā*, ‘the remotest sanctuary’ in Qur’an 17 1, *Encyclopedia of Is-*

cordance with this explanation, we can now accept the conjecture encountered above that 'S(h)lutia' (*š/šwtwyh*) in Text 3 *MidPs* 109, which is 'Goths' in *MidPs* 25, is a corruption of Scythians (presumably *škwtyh*). The two names are interchangeable in the topos.

The evidence would thus indicate that the rabbinic sources are using a topos from the Hellenistic/Roman world. This analysis allows us now to identify *kuthi* in the second pairing of Text 2. We can confirm the view of those who have recognized that the normal meaning of *kuthi* as 'non-Jew' is unacceptable in this text, and have suggested that *kuthi* is a corruption of *skuthi* (Scythian) or *guthi* (Goth).¹⁹ Text 2 thus presents a neat chiasmic parallel: Barbarian-Sarmatian // Scythian-Ethiopian.²⁰

*lam*² 6 707a (O Grabar) Although 'Africa' in Rabbinic texts often (but not always, see S Krauss in the *Jewish Encyclopedia* 1 226b, to which other examples can be added) indicates North Africa, there are some hints in this story that black Africa is meant. First, of course, the relationship of Qasya with *qes* indicates the 'ends of the earth'. Second, the traits exhibited by the inhabitants of the area (including the Amazons in one story)—justice, piety and wisdom—are those we find among the classical writers as characteristic themes regarding the Ethiopians: 'An image of pious just Ethiopians became so imbedded in Greco-Roman tradition that echoes are heard throughout classical literature' (Snowden, *Blacks in Antiquity*, p 144, discussion of the image on 144–50 and 180–81, and Thompson, *Romans and Blacks*, pp 88–93 with literature cited at nn 9 and 14). Third, this story puts the kingdom beyond 'the Mountains of Darkness', a toponym used elsewhere for locations at the ends of the earth, including the southern end in black Africa. In two midrashic accounts not related to the Alexander cycle (J D Eisenstein, 'Osar ha-Midrashim' (New York, 1915) 2 434, and *NumR* 16 25) 'Mountains of Darkness' are found 'beyond the rivers of Ethiopia' or near the Sambation River in Ethiopia. Similarly in a thirteenth-century account (fiction?) of a Jewish traveller, Jacob ha-Nasi of Persia (A Harkavy, 'Hadashim Gam Yeshanim', *Ha-Gat*, ed L Rabinowitz (St Petersburg, 1897), pp 66–67). In Arabic literature we find mention of the 'black mountains' at the source of the Nile. Al-Umarī (d 1349) quotes 'the reliable *shaykh* Sa'īd al-Dukkālī to the effect that 'it is common knowledge in the land of the Sūdān that the Nile at its source descends from black mountains which appear from afar to be clouds' (Al-Umarī is translated in Levtzion and Hopkins, *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources*, p 257). Cf Diodorus Siculus 1 37 9 'The inhabitants of the area around Meroe call the Nile, "Water from Darkness".'

Actually, a Jewish view of black Africa as being at the southern extreme of the world predates the rabbinic period, for it is found in the Bible. This is how most biblical scholars today understand Amos 9 7, 'The children of Israel are like Ethiopians to me', i.e. the children of Israel are no more special to me than the most remote people on the face of the earth. See Shalom Paul, *Amos*, in the Hermeneia series (Minneapolis, 1991), pp 282–83, Hans W Wolff, *Joel and Amos* in another volume of the Hermeneia series (Philadelphia, 1977; original in German, 1975), p 347, Francis I Andersen and David N Freedman, *Amos* in the Anchor series (New York, 1989), pp 867–69, see also J H Hayes, *Amos, the Eighth-Century Prophet* (Nashville, Tenn., 1988), p 219, A Hakham, *Amos*, in the Da'at Miqra' series (Jerusalem, 1990), p 71. A partial listing of earlier scholars who agreed with this interpretation was compiled by Gene Rice, 'Was Amos a Racist?', *Journal of Religious Thought* 35 (1978), 42 n 13, who also took the same view. To Rice's list add also H E W Fosbroke in *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed N B Harmon (New York, 1956), 6 848, ad loc., and N H Snaith, *Amos, Hosea and Micah* (London, 1956), p 49. It is possible that this meaning of remoteness also underlies the choice of Kush in Zephaniah's prophecy against the nations (2 5–12), thus indicating God's universal reach. (I J Ball, *A Rhetorical Study* (Berkeley, 1988), p 141, Adele Berlin, *Zephaniah* in the Anchor series (New York, 1994), p 112. Ball also refers to Ezek 29 10, Est 1 1, 8 9, and Ps 68 32f where 'Kush', he says, carries the same connotation of remoteness.) Compare also Isaiah 18 1–2, 'Ah, land beyond the rivers of Nubia [Kush]! Go, swift messengers, to a nation far and remote, to a people thrust forth and away' (translation New Jewish Publication Society).

¹⁹ Cf P S Alexander, *Toponymy of the Targumim* (n 7, above), p 356, n 15.

²⁰ Note that the reading in *SongR* which has *barbari* for *kushi* (*PesR* and *PesRK*) is also an

Colossians 3:11, 'Barbarian/Scythian'

Just as the Greco-Roman sources have provided us the key to understanding the rabbinic texts, we can turn to the rabbinic texts to provide the explanation of an enigmatic New Testament passage. In a series of antitheses Paul states (Colossians 3:11):

Here is no more Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, *barbaros*, Scythian, slave, free; but all are in Christ.

Assuming *barbaros* is a common noun 'barbarian', scholars have long noticed the apparent lack of antithesis in the barbarian/Scythian pairing, and therefore concluded that the two terms are synonymous, with Scythian being a sort of 'super-barbarian'.²¹ Although Theodor Hermann had suggested some sixty years ago that 'barbarian' in Colossians means 'Ethiopian', the suggestion has not become well accepted, because, although Hermann had cited early references to a black African *Barbaria* (*Periplus* and Ptolemy), he could not document any cases of a north/south topos using the toponyms Scythian/Barbarian.²² However, the rabbinic texts provide just such documentation. In addition we can now add to Hermann's *Periplus* and Ptolemy the many other Hellenistic, Christian, Islamic and Jewish sources that refer to the East African *Barbaria*. It would appear that Paul was using the place-name *Barbaria* in opposition to the place-name *Scythia*, and his antithesis, then, was racial-geographic (black/white), according with the national (Greek/Jewish), religious (circumcised/uncircumcised) and social (slave/free) antitheses in the passage.

Paul's expression thus parallels (in idea) the Greco-Roman and, even more closely (i.e. in idea and language), the Jewish sources. To designate geographical and/or racial extremes, the pagan authors use the Ethiopian/Scythian topos. Paul uses Barbarian/Scythian, with Barbarian representing the southernmost extreme. The Jewish sources use Barbarian/Sarmatian (Scythian,

indication of the rabbis' substitution of *Barbaria* for Ethiopia in the topos

²¹ See Michel Bouttier, 'Complexio Oppositorum', *New Testament Studies* 23 (1976), 9, J Juthner, *Hellenen und Barbaren*, p 143 n 238; and I Opelt and W Speyer in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 10 (1967), 268: 'Scythia bildet keinen Gegensatz, sondern eine Steigerung', or N A Dahl in *Biblich-historisches Handwörterbuch*, ed B Reicke and L. Rost (Göttingen, 1962), p 197 'etwa die Skythen (Kol 3:11) konnten als typische Barbaren gelten', or H Windisch in *TDNT* 1 553 'a particularly notorious barbarian'

²² Hermann, 'Barbar und Skythe Ein Erklärungsversuch zu Kol 3,11', *Theologische Blätter* 9 (1930) 106–07 Rejecting Hermann, see for example, M Barth and H Blanke, *Colossians* in the Anchor Bible series (New York, 1994), p 416, or E Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon* in the Hermeneia series (Philadelphia, 1971, original German, 1968), p 144 n 76 Strangely, Barth and Blanke do not mention the *Periplus* and refer only to Philoponus when they reject Hermann with the argument that he could not find a source contemporaneous with Colossians Others merely accept the explanation of barbarian as a common noun, without referring to Hermann's theory; see e.g. James D G Dunn, *The Epistle to the Colossians and to Philemon A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich , 1996), p 225 The only commentary I could find that seems to accept Hermann, at least as a possible explanation, is that by O Michel in *TDNT* 7 449–450, n 11 See also H Balz in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, 1990, original German 1978–80), 1 198

Goth, German).²³

With the meaning of Colossians (racial antithesis) now in hand, we may be able to go one step further and return to the rabbinic material, providing it with a richer nuance. For the idea of racial antithesis would give greater poignancy to rabbinic Text 2, which would then represent both the geographic and anthropological (racial) extremes, and therefore the extent, of the peoples of the world. If one Jew is exiled to one geographic extreme and another Jew to the other extreme, it is as if the Jews had been exiled to the entire world in-between ('seventy' nations). When speaking of exile, geographic terms of reference are in order. When speaking of subjugation in one's own land, however, geographic descriptions of the conquerors may be irrelevant and the more obvious terms of reference may be anthropological or racial. Thus the Jews, even in their own homeland, could be subjugated to any nation or people, represented by the anthropological extremes of Scythian/Ethiopian (*kuthilkushi*).

Conclusion

To summarize, we have seen that the Greco-Roman sources use 'Scythian' as a synonym for the distant northern peoples (Scythians, Sarmatians, Germans, Goths), and 'Ethiopian' for the distant southern peoples (black Africa), and that the pairing of Scythian/Ethiopian is used as a figure of speech to denote geographic extremes and uncivilized behaviour. We have also seen that a group of rabbinic texts uses a similar figure of speech, only substituting the southern toponym *Barbaria(n)* for *Ethiopia(n)*. The topos in the rabbinic

²³ The association of racial extremes with geographic extremes apparently lies behind the choice of an Ethiopian as the first Gentile convert to Christianity (Acts 8 26–40). Nothing could more visibly indicate the universalist posture of the early church than the conversion of those from the most remote parts of the world. Indeed, Philip's conversion of the Ethiopian became a symbol of Christianity's conversion of the world, and in Christian metaphor the 'Ethiopian' later became (beginning primarily with Origen, emphasized by Augustine) the symbol for the church of the Gentiles. As Augustine said, explaining 'Ethiopians' in Ps 72(71):9, 'By the Ethiopians, as by a part the whole, he signified all nations, selecting that nation he named especially, which is at the ends of the earth (Per Aethiopes, a parte totum, omnes gentes significavit, eam ligens gentem, quam potissimum nominaret, quae in finibus terrae est)', and 'Is he God only of the Jews? Is he not also of the nations [Gentiles]. But Ethiopia, which appears to be the extreme of the nations, is justified through faith without the works of the law (Sic ergo Aethiopia, quae videtur extrema gentium, iustificatur per fidem sine operibus legis)'. Similarly, explaining Ps 68.32 (67 31), 'Ethiopia, which seems to be the farthest limit of the Gentiles', *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 71 12 (CCL 39 980f) and 67 40 (CCL 39.897). For the same reason, used to make the opposite point, Amos 9 7 compares Israel to the Ethiopians, see above, n 18.

One classical source seems to use this topos with the same nuance as does Paul—that race of any sort (whether one be an Ethiopian or a Scythian) is of no consequence in determining the value of a human being. Menander (*Fragments* 533K) says 'The man whose natural bent is good / He, mother, he, though Aethiop, is nobly born / "A Scyth", you say? Pest! Anacharsis was a Scyth!' (transl. F. G. Allinson in LCL, pp 480–81; see Snowden, *Blacks in Antiquity*, pp 176–77, and see the similar idea expressed by Augustine (d 430), *De civitate Dei* 16 8). Perhaps this use of the topos naturally suggests itself, for it can be found across cultures and times. Here, for example, is an eighteenth-century pamphlet reflecting life in colonial Brazil: 'The blackest man in all Africa, because he is a man, is just as much a man as is the whitest German in all Germany' (quoted in C. R. Boxer, 'Negro Slavery in Brazil', *Race* (1964), 41, *idem*, *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire* (Oxford, 1963), p 105).

sources is used in precisely the same way as it is used in the classical texts, that is to denote geographic extremes and uncivilized behaviour. The same figure of speech appears in Colossians with the same sense of geographic extremes and with, it appears, the attendant connotation of racial extremes.

The Ethiopian/Scythian topos was part of the literary world of the eastern Mediterranean of late antiquity. The classical sources have allowed us to uncover the topos in the rabbinic material, which in turn casts light on a New Testament passage. The totality of the texts fills out the picture, delineating the contours of the topos and defining its meaning for a better understanding of the rabbinic and the New Testament passages.

APPENDIX I

There is another rabbinic text that pairs Barbarian with a second gentile (Ethiopian). Eliezer, the servant of Abraham (Gen. 15:2), is considered to be a descendant of Canaan according to rabbinic tradition. In an exegesis of Prov 17:2 ('A servant who deals wisely . . .'), Eliezer is said to have preferred serving Abraham, since as a descendant of Canaan he was doomed to a life of slavery (Gen 9:25) and should he leave Abraham his chances for a better master would not improve. In fact, they might considerably worsen. In the words put in Eliezer's mouth

A *kushi* [= Ethiopian] or a *barbari* might enslave me! It is better for me to be a slave in this household and not in some other household²⁴

The connotation of *kushi* or *barbari* in this context would seem to be clear. The expression, set in antithesis to Abraham, the model of piety and proper behaviour,²⁵ is meant to convey uncivilized barbarism. In light of the discussion above, it would appear that in this text too Ethiopia and Barbaria represent the uncivilized far distant peoples, but in this case instead of the peoples being at the opposite ends of the world they are found together at one end, the southern extreme.²⁶

²⁴ *GenR* 60:2 (ed. Theodor-Albeck 2:640). *GenR*'s final redaction is put in the fifth century (probably the first half). A. Neubauer (*La géographie du Talmud*, pp. 411–12, n. 7) is of the opinion that 'Barbaria' here is the Roman Marmarica in North Africa, with a labial *m/b* interchange. Another reference to '*kushi* or *barbari*' occurs in some variant readings of *GenR* 60:3, as listed in ed. Theodor-Albeck (2:642) and in M. Sokoloff, *The Genuzah Fragments of Bereshit Rabba* (Jerusalem, 1982), p. 147. However, the fact that '*kushi* or *barbari*' appears only in some variants to *GenR* and does not appear in any manuscript or edition of *LevR* or *bTa'an*, the parallels to *GenR* 60:3, strongly indicates that the reading is not original but was copied from the immediately preceding section, *GenR* 60:2. Internal transfer of material in *GenR* is characterized by M. Kister as 'a very common phenomenon' ('Observations on Aspects of Exegesis, Tradition, and Theology in Midrash, Pseudepigrapha, and Other Jewish Writings', in John C. Reeves (ed.), *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of Jewish Pseudepigrapha* (Atlanta, 1994), p. 33, n. 85 and see n. 83). Kister is talking about transfer made at the redactional stage, while in our case it is equally possible that the transfer was made later by scribes, since the passage is missing partially or completely in different *GenR* manuscripts and citations, as well as in the parallel sources.

²⁵ Cf. Origen, *Comm in Cant. Cantic*, Prologue, GCS 33 (Origen 8) 78, 'For Abraham declares moral philosophy through obedience' (*Abraham nunquam moralem declarat philosophiam per oboedientiam*), and Philo, *On Abraham* 4, who speaks of the patriarchs' 'good and blameless lives' as being a model for others to follow.

²⁶ As indeed recognized by S. Krauss, 'Die biblische Volkertafel im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum', *MGWJ* 39 (1895), 3, n. 1, except that he misunderstood the toponym as referring to Barbary in North Africa. Krauss realized that by '*kushi* or *barbari*' the midrashic text means to

Origen also uses two far distant locations near to one another, Mauretania and Britain, to indicate the extreme ends of the world, in this case to the west: 'Behold the Lord's greatness. "The sound of his teaching has gone out into every land, and his words to the ends of the earth" (cf. Ps 19:4(5)) Our Lord Jesus has been spread out to the whole world . . . The power of the Lord and Saviour is with those who are in Britain, separated from our world, and with those who are in Mauretania (qui ab orbe nostro in Britannia dividuntur et qui in Mauritania), and with everyone under the sun who has believed in his name. Behold the Saviour's greatness It extends to all the world.'²⁷

In another homily Origen may come even closer to the rabbinic expression: 'As long as . . . we adopt Egyptian and *barbaros* morals, we do not merit to be counted before God among the holy and consecrated (aegyptios germus et barbaros mores, haberi apud Deum in sancto et consecrato numero non meremur).'²⁸ Given the interchange between 'Egyptian' and 'Ethiopian' in expressions referring to the southern borders of the world (see above, p. 93 and references in Appendix II), it is tempting to read *barbaros* as the proper noun 'Barbarian'. Origen's 'Egyptian and Barbarian' would then closely parallel the rabbinic 'Ethiopian and Barbarian' to refer to those who live at the edges of the world and thus lack civilized behaviour. However, biblical 'Egyptian' is commonly allegorized as any people of low moral standards,²⁹ and Origen in particular shared this reading.³⁰ In this light, *barbaros* may simply mean 'barbaric'³¹

connote the most distant peoples of the known world, but the inhabitants of North Africa are not among them.

²⁷ *Hom in Lucam* 6, GCS 35 (= Origen 9) 41–42. Similarly in Origen's *Hom in Ezech* 4 1, GCS 33 (Origen 8) 362, SC 352: 162–63. Elsewhere Origen lists several peoples (Seres, Ariacins, Britains, Germans, Dacians, Sarmatians, Scythians and Ethiopians, especially those 'on the other side of the river') (Zephaniah 3 10) to indicate the far reaches of the world where the Gospel has not yet fully penetrated (*Comm in Matt series* 39, GCS 38 (Origen 11): 76. All sources are quoted by A. Harnack, *Der kirchengeschichtliche Ertrag der exegetischen Arbeiten des Origenes*, III Teil *Die beiden Testamente mit Ausschluß des Hexateuchs und des Richterbuchs*, TU 42 4 (Leipzig, 1919), p 109

²⁸ *Hom in Num* 1 3, GCS 30 (Origen 7): 4, SC 415, pp. 34–35

²⁹ E.g. Origen's contemporary, Tertullian 'Every sinful race is called Egypt or Ethiopia, a *specie ad genus*' (*De Spectaculis* 3 8, CCL 1 1 231) Elsewhere Tertullian says that biblical 'Egypt' sometimes symbolizes 'the whole world when charged with idolatry and abomination' (*Adv Marcion* 3 13 10, CCL 1 1 525–526, *Tertullian Adversus Marcionem*, ed. and trans E Evans (Oxford, 1972) 1.210–211, whose translation I adopt, the Latin reads *superstitiosus et maledictionis elogio*) See also Rev 11 8. For these examples, see J Buchner, *Quint Sept Flor Tertullianus, De spectaculis Kommentar* (Wurzburg, 1935), p 19, n 46, and M Turcan's edition of *De Spectaculis* in SC 332, p 115, who also mentions the *ca* tenth-century Suda (ed A Adler, Leipzig, 1928–38, 2 160, 26) *Αἰγυπτιαζειν - τὸ παυόργειν καὶ κακοτροπεύεσθαι, τοιοῦτοι γὰρ οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι* For a later period, see Hugh of St Victor, *De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris* 16 (PL 175 23) *Aegyptus significat voluptates mundi et secularia desideria*, 'Egypt signifies the pleasures of the world and earthly desires' This symbolic value of Egypt goes back at least to Philo where 'Egypt' is allegorized as the 'earthly body' or the 'senses', 'passions', or, as an adjective, 'body-loving', 'passion-loving', 'pleasure-loving' (see J W Earp's Index of Names in the LCL Philo, vol 10, pp 303–304), similarly Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 1 5 30 4, GCS 15 20 (see also 2 10 47 1, GCS 15 138) For the relationship between these church Fathers and Philo, see the relevant chapters in David T Rumia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature* (Assen/Minneapolis, 1993)

³⁰ Origen on the Egyptians *Hom in Genes* 16.1 and 6, GCS 29 (Origen 6) 136–137, 143, *Hom in Exod* 4 6 and 8 3, GCS 29 (Origen 6): 178, 222, *Hom in Num* 8.3, GCS 30 (Origen 7) 5, *Hom in Jesu Nave* 5 6, GCS 30 (Origen 7) 318–319, all quoted by A Harnack, *Der Kirchengeschichtliche Ertrag der Exegetischen Arbeiten des Origenes*, I Teil *Hexateuch und Richterbuch*, TU 42 3 (1918), pp 51–52

³¹ The rabbinic text can possibly, but not convincably, be interpreted to conform with the

APPENDIX II

We mentioned above that in the Greco-Roman sources 'Egyptian' sometimes replaces 'Ethiopian' as the southern boundary of the world. So, for example, Hippocrates uses an Egyptian/Scythian formula to indicate climatic extremes (*On Airs, Waters, Places* 18–19), and Philo, *De vita Mosi* 2.19, uses it apparently to imply geographic extremes. The substitution of 'Egyptian' for 'Ethiopian' in the formula is paralleled also in a rabbinic source. 'From Noah God derived all the seventy nations and gave them the lands He gave *gnty*' (var *gntyym*) to the *gntym* [i.e. the Goths, see literature cited above at n. 6], and Egypt to the Egyptians, and thus he apportioned to all' (non-extant *Yelammedenu* text quoted in *'Arukh* 3:324, s.v. *gnt*). In all these sources—classical, Hellenistic and rabbinic—the purpose of the pairing is to indicate geographic extremes.

We also find 'Indian' substituted for 'Ethiopian' in the topos, whether to indicate geographic extremes or complexion contrast. Asclepius 24 (Hermetic Corpus) says that 'the Scythian or Indian or some such neighbour barbarian will dwell in Egypt' (B.P. Copenhagen, *Hermetica* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 81 and 241, on the dating—3rd century C.E.—see pp. xl–xliv; Copenhagen's comment to the effect that 'Scythian or Indian' may perhaps be understood as a topos for nameless barbarian is in complete agreement with the theory I have proposed in this essay). In addition, and similar to the example of Julian (d. 363) cited by Snowden (p. 175), is that of Sextus Empiricus (second to third centuries C.E.) who substitutes Indian for Ethiopian and shows the variety of human shape (*σώματα*) by contrasting Indian and Scythian (*Pyrrhoniae hypotyposes* 1.80). Another example may be brought from Origen, who indicates the two extremes of the inhabited world by naming Britain and India (*Hom. in Jesu Nave* 15.5, GCS 30 (Origen 7): 389–90; SC 71: 348–49), as noted by A. Harnack, TU 42.3 (1918), p. 52. Of course, these examples reflect the Ethiopian/Indian interchange of antiquity, a relevant example of which occurs in the Christian John Philoponus of Alexandria (sixth century). He contrasts the complexion of the German at times with the Ethiopian and at times with the Indian (A. Šanda, *Oposcula Monophysitica Johannes Philoponi* (Beirut, 1930), pp. 29, 55 (Syriac text); note however that Šanda consistently translates (pp. 66, 96) 'Ethiopian'). Lastly, recall Maimonides' contrast of Turk/Indian to define the ends of the world (above, n. 17).

APPENDIX III

Col. 3.11 sets out a series of four antitheses. Greek/Jew, circumcised/uncircumcised, Barbarian/Scythian, slave/free. Gal. 3:28 has three antitheses (Jew/Greek, slave/free, male/female), of which the first two are common with Colossians.³² A version of the Morning Benedictions of the Jewish prayer service reads: 'Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who has created me human and not animal, male and not female, Jew and

explanation given for Texts 1–3, that is as a merism expressing north and south extremes, since a far northern Barbara/Barbare is mentioned in some sources (the Palestinian Targums, the Christian Syriac *Cave of the Treasures* and the *Tabula Peutinger*, see 'Geographia Rabbimica' for references and discussion). However, since whenever the toponym Barbara elsewhere indicates an ends-of-the-earth location, and thus an 'uncivilized' connotation, the reference is to the well-known East African location, as I have shown, I therefore see the toponym in *GenR* 60.2 as being in the same location.

³² The third antithesis (male/female) appears as a variant in Colossians, but is not original to the text and derives from Gal. 3:28. See *TDNT* 552.

not gentile [goy], circumcised and not uncircumcised, free and not slave.³³ The ‘blessing’ text thus parallels four of the five Christian antitheses, with the fifth (Barbarian/Scythian) being irrelevant to the one saying the blessing, a Jewish male, who is neither Barbarian nor Scythian.

It is generally recognized that the nature of the Jewish Morning Benedictions as well as its formulation closely parallels the report that Socrates used to say that there were three blessings for which he was grateful to Fortune: ‘that I was born a human being and not an animal, a man and not a woman, a Greek and not a barbarian’.³⁴ Following is a listing of the antithetical elements found in these sources:

<i>Element</i>	<i>Diogenes Colossians Galatians</i>			<i>Blessing Texts mss</i>				
				<i>Cambridge</i>	<i>Turin</i>	<i>Antonin</i>	<i>Montefiore</i>	<i>Parma</i>
Greek/Jew or Jew/gentile	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Circumcised/uncircumcised		*		*	*	*	*	*
Free/slave		*	*	*	*	*		*
Barbarian/Scythian		*						
Human/animal	*			*	*	*	*	*
Man/woman	*		*	*	*	*	*	*
Male/female						*		
Pure/impure						*		

Clearly the linkage of these antitheses, explicit or implied, in different numbers, whether three (Diogenes and Galatians) or four (Colossians), and for different purposes, whether to express inclusion of the diverse (Galatians, Colossians) or exclusion of the other (Diogenes), was a topos in the Hellenistic world. The Jewish blessing, then, containing these antitheses, reflects that same world. The blessing’s listing of Jew/gentile together with circumcised/uncircumcised parallels Colossians’ listing of Jew/Greek together with circumcised/uncircumcised. There is thus no need to assume that the circumcised/uncircumcised clause was added in the Islamic period, as Mann, Asaf, Lieberman and Wieder do.³⁵ Thus, we cannot say with these scholars that the blessing text as found in the genizah and some other manuscripts is very late. On the contrary, it is very early.³⁶

³³ This version was first published by J Mann from a genizah text at Cambridge (‘Genizah Fragments of the Palestinian Order of Service’, *HUCA* 2 (1925), 277), who notes that the ‘Turin Mahzor’ also has these five antitheses, in slightly different form (p. 274, n. 19). S. Asaf (in *Sefer Dinaburg*, ed. Y. Baer, Y. Guttman and M. Schwabe (Jerusalem, 1949), p. 121) noted a similar reading in another genizah text (Antonin 993) and N. Wieder (in *Sinai* 85 (1979), 106–109) in two other manuscripts (Montefiore 214 and Parma 67, see also Wieder, p. 114).

³⁴ Diogenes Laertius 1.33.

³⁵ Mann, p. 274, Asaf, p. 121, n. 4, S. Lieberman, *Tosefta Ki-fshutah* 1.120 to *Ber* 6(7) 18, Wieder, pp. 108–109, n. 55, and p. 114.

³⁶ Cf. T. Groner in *Bar-Ilan* 14–15 (1977), 95–96.

ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FREQUENTLY CITED WORKS

For the various editions and translations of rabbinic works, see G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, transl. and ed. M. Bockmuehl (2nd ed., Edinburgh, 1996). The dates of rabbinic works indicated in this essay are those usually accepted and are followed by Stemberger

- CCL Corpus Christianorum, series Latina (Turnhout and Paris, 1953–)
- CSCO Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (Louvain, 1903–)
- GCS *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig, 1901–)
- Jastrow, Marcus, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (London/New York, 1903)
- Kohut, Alexander, *'Arukh ha-Shalem (Arukh Completum)* (Vienna, 1878–1892), an edition and expansion of Nathan b. Yehiel's (1035–1110, Rome) *'Arukh*, including Benjamin Mussafia's (seventeenth century, Hamburg/Amsterdam) annotations *Musaf he-'Arukh* first published in the Amsterdam 1655 edition of Nathan's work; repr. New York, 1955
- Levtzion, N and J. F. P. Hopkins, *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History* (Cambridge, 1981)
- Levy, Jacob, *Chaldaisches Wörterbuch über die Targumim* (Leipzig, 1881)
- , *Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim*, nebst Beiträgen von H. L. Fleischer, 2 edition mit Nachträgen und Berichtigungen von L. Goldschmidt (Berlin, 1924)
- MGWJ *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums*
- Neubauer, A, *Le géographie du Talmud* (Paris, 1868)
- SC Sources Chretiennes (Paris)
- Snowden, F., *Blacks in Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass, 1970)
- TDNT *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. Kittel, English ed. (Grand Rapids, 1964)
- Thompson, L., *Romans and Blacks* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1989)
- TU *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig)