RACE

Martin Orkin with Alexa Alice Joubin

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INTRODUCTION

Race as a concept is often defined in relation to marginalized identities that are seen by members of dominant cultures as other. The project to define or describe race is notoriously complex and slippery. Older attempts to fix race often re-emerge or persist even where they seem to have disappeared or to have been superseded by newer understandings. Formulations of race are also complicated by the apparent symbiotic relation, which projects to identify race appear to have, with racism. Where race is, racism seems in one way or another never far behind. Perhaps this is because the definition of race often entails an identification of difference. The definition itself is an assertion of identity. In such transactions, an impartial conceptualization of race too often appears beyond human capacity.

Moreover, chronology is itself a complicating factor in the study of race. Many of the existing volumes on race trace the changing meanings of the term. But even if later meanings for the term race were not available, for example, in the early modern period, processes structuring pernicious individual or group relations were already under way. Race is one of the markers of identity used to define these relationships. In an age of trade, travel, and incipient colonization, contact with other peoples, as Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton have argued, "meant that notions of geographic difference were in dialogue with questions of religion, nationality, colour, conversion, women, sexuality, the human body, lineage, diet, and human nature."[1] The eventual outcomes of many such dialogues were not, as the history of colonization shows, always benign.

Will we gain a deeper understanding of the notion of race in our times by analyzing pre-enlightenment texts? There have been debates between "presentism" and "historicism," between the approach that involves reading the past directly from the present perspective that

acknowledges the partisan perspective of the enquirer, and the approach to isolate and privilege historical usage of a particular concept such as race without connecting it to the perspective of the enquirer, although this latter position has undergone some revision in recent years. We argue that even though evidence of early modern racial hatred comes under different terminologies, it is still hatred. Reading histories of race enables us to develop a broader perspective involving the identification of the various ways in which similar issues operate by way of different discourses or guises. We should not, therefore, allow the importance of studying racial histories to disappear in thickets of semantic debate about appropriate usage of the words "race" or "white" or "black" or the terminology such as "racial" and "racialist."

Cultural locations past and present affect notions of race. The idea of race informs a multitude of practices, including issues of labor, migration, culture, and even recreation. For example, Daniela Flesler has shown that contemporary Spain, like other Western countries, has experienced a transition in migration patterns from being an exporter of emigrants to being, in the final decades of the twentieth century and beyond, a country for the reception of immigrants.[2] In the case of Spain, Moroccans constitute the second largest national group of resident foreigners. They are the least accepted of immigrant groups in Spain and they have been the main victims of collective violent attacks. Hatred of Moroccan workers, stereotyped as alien attackers or invaders, is complicated by their characterization as "Moors," resonating the "Arab and Berber Muslims [known as 'Moors'] who colonized the Iberian Peninsula in AD 711 and who were responsible for its Arabization and Islamicization in the Middle Ages."[3] Likewise, football (soccer) in the United Kingdom, Russia, and Europe remains frequently embroiled in episodes entailing charges of racism and a struggle for anti-racism.[4] Such incidents of racism in football often reflect, too, even now, Western colonialist ways of imagining race. In a recent study of the proclaimed policy of color-blind casting in certain contemporary British theatre companies, Jami Rogers concludes that "there is still a very real glass ceiling in Shakespeare production, which the multiple and flawed practices of non-traditional or color-blind casting reinforces, perhaps unwittingly."[5] In the USA, strands of cinema or rap music openly challenge and confront present-day North

American modes of racism.[6] In Israel and Palestine, Ashkenazi Israeli remain hostile towards Mizrachi Jews from North African countries, and the Druze communities in Israel have mixed experiences. Recent right-wing Israeli reception of Eritrean and Somali refugees and extremist hatred between Jews and Muslims further exacerbate the situation.[7]

This range of examples suggests that race may be enunciated in multiple, sometimes complex and conflicting ways within particular locations (and in particular texts). At the same time, the terms race and racism are now bearers of particular, ever evolving, denotations precisely as a result of the more extensive analysis and research that has taken place during this period compared with preceding centuries. Some of the ways in which we now think about racism and the word "race" are all relatively newly developed.[8]

Since the project to construct or articulate race has been a fluid and constantly changing endeavor, the introductory part of our book, "Fixing the fetters of race," begins by tracing early attempts to demarcate the origins of the concept of race. These include articulation, prior to the eighteenth century, of cultural notions of barbarism, or religious difference, or the construction of epidermal schemata that have been deployed to denote the physical characteristics of a race. We will then register the imaginings, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, of the scientific and biological underpinnings of race. Further, we will trace state legislation in various regions that sought to enshrine in law in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and to naturalize certain constructed categories of race. Lastly, we will seek to register social and political movements, based upon racial hatred, such as fascism, or eruptions of genocide in the twentieth century, that all depend upon entrenched assumptions about race.

The second part of the book, "Recasting the fetters of race," will examine significant examples of the re-writing of the concept of race arising, first, from the impact of slavery, second, from the decisive impact of the phenomena of colonialism and post-colonialism, and, third, from more recent, varied demarcations of one particular manifestation of race: "whiteness."

The third part of the book, "Loosening the fetters of race," will chart newly expanded articulations of race in motion, and

the particular consequences of the movement of peoples, thereby initiating a theoretical awareness of the phenomenon of exile that has intensified across the world during the past few decades. We look, first, in Britain, at emergence of what is referred to as the New Racism as well as the shifts in identity formation in the contexts of increasing demographic diversity. Second, and in the larger context of Europe, we examine issues related to immigration. Third, in the particular case of the USA, the importance of the civil rights movement is discussed with attention to the disappointment in the gains it seemed to promise and to the emergence of what is known as critical race theory and arguments that it has generated for ongoing political activism. Fourth, juxtaposed against such dominant theoretical re-thinking of race, we consider aspects of racial histories in East Asia and the USA; fifth, we examine aspects of the Palestine–Israel conflict, and, finally, we turn to aspects of Islam and to non-Islamic responses to its claims and practices. The very terms "race" and "racism" are sometimes in these analyses shown to be limited, and, on occasion, brought into question.

The tensions inherent in racism, as we have already suggested, still seem to emerge and infect many different geographical locations. While questions of race and its afflictions have informed past national, communal, or personal situations, they still persist in the present, sometimes in terrible and violent permutations. In some cases deadly eruptions of racism make it imperative that we maintain and develop a critical focus upon the multiple imagined ways in which issues of race inform and inflect human interaction. The urgent question, in a book concerned with "the new critical idiom" is: in view of the current burgeoning of complex models for reading race and racism, how are we to respond effectively to historically generated discourses of racism that are increasing in intensity in the present? Moreover, how are we now to think about assertions—when these appear in one way or another in any text—that aim to privilege exclusive and exclusionist forms of group identity and the hierarchies of superiority and inferiority that they seek to promulgate? How do we deconstruct the presence of language that generates violently antagonistic stereotypes and hostile responses to individual or group difference?

In considering the various manifestations of race, this book will especially engage with some of the ways in which both the

conception of race and the recent analysis of racism may help us to understand past and present-day writings around race.[9] But it is important to emphasize that our aim is never to imply or privilege particular definitions. Articulating the multifaceted and often fluid conceptualizations of race will perhaps always be a task in process. It is our hope, however, that such understandings of the multiple ways in which race has been or is now read, may help to counterbalance the destructive virulence of racisms of all kinds.

Notes

1 Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton, eds., *Race in Early Modern England: A Documentary Companion*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, 3.

2 See Daniela Flesler, *The Return of the Moor: Spanish Responses to Contemporary Moroccan Immigration*, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2008. We are indebted to her for the information that follows.

3 Flesler, *The Return of the Moor*, 3.

4 See, for example, Jon Garland and Michael Rowe, *Racism and Anti-Racism in Football*, Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2001.

5 See Jami Rogers, "The Shakespearean Glass Ceiling: The State of Color-blind Casting in Contemporary British Theatre," *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 31:3, 2013, 428.

6 See, for example, films such as the controversial *American History X* (1998) dir. Tony Kaye, or popular films such as *Remember the Titans* (2000) dir. Boaz Yakin, starring Denzel Washington. See also a related genre in rap music, for instance.

7 Lisa Hajjar, *Courting Conflict: The Israeli Military Court System in the West Bank and Gaza*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

8 In the early modern period, race "connote[s] family, class or lineage" (Loomba and Burton, *Race*, 2) or is used "largely to explicate European history and nation formation" (Robert Miles, *Racism*, London: Routledge, 1989, 31). It is only in the late eighteenth century that "the sense of difference in European representations of the Other became interpreted as a difference of 'race', that is, as a primarily [pseudo] *biological* and *natural* difference which was inherent and unalterable" (Loomba and Burton, *Race*, 31). Furthermore the editors of a recent reader containing theories of race and racism note, the

> study of race and "race relations" as important social issues can be traced back to the early part of the twentieth century, at least in relation to the United States of America. It has to be said,

> however, that the expansion of research and scholarship in this field is far more recent. It is really in the period since the 1960s, in the aftermath of the social transformations around questions of race that took place during that decade, that we have witnessed a noticeable growth of theorization of race and racism.
>
> > (Les Back and John Solomos, eds., *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*, Second Edition, London: Routledge, 2009, 5)

The intensification of cultural or literary studies dealing with race, too, largely follows—with some modifications—this trajectory.

9 Our focus on recent critical idiom in the study of race does not imply replacement of, or resolution of, such critical cruces raised by historicist reservation.

PART I

FIXING THE FETTERS OF RACE

1

MARKING BARBARIANS, MUSLIMS, JEWS, ETHIOPIANS, AFRICANS, MOORS, OR BLACKS

This chapter is concerned with early attempts to formulate notions of race. First, it considers classical Greek articulations of identity, read as difference from an Asian, mainly Persian, other. Second, it explores medieval European Christian readings of religious others. Third, it examines early modern European readings of others, based not only on religion but also on different skin pigmentation. Traditional attempts to fathom the beginnings of notions of race also involved attempts to present these phenomena as constitutive or originary. But this strategy has been replaced nowadays with the recognition that ideologies of race, wherever and whenever they occur, are complex and often overlap. This will be evident even in the account that follows, which isolates particular strands for the sake of clarity and for purely analytical purposes.

"Civilization" and "barbarism"

One of the ways in which notions of race have emerged is in early impositions of a binary division between, on the one hand, that which

is known, or familiar, deriving from the same culture that is designated as "civilized," and, on the other hand, that which is not understood, or that is hostile deriving from a strange culture that is designated "barbaric." This hostility is often accompanied by both ignorance and intellectual laziness. Take China, for example. On the one hand, due to lack of contact with the outside world, the premodern Chinese court and intelligentsia designated peoples of many ethnicities and cultural origins "black," or *kunlun*. These included the Malayans and other South-East Asians. On the other hand, increased knowledge of cultural others only seemed to have broadened the lump-sum category of blackness for the Chinese consciousness. According to a study by Don J. Wyatt, from the seventh to the seventeenth centuries and through expanded maritime activity, the Chinese came into contact with slaves from Africa (modern-day Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania) who accompanied European expatriates to Asia. This only made the term black more capacious in China, as it now included even Bengali peoples of the Indian subcontinent.[1] Peoples who had not previously been regarded as "black" were now given the label "black." Such a designation, like the word "barbarian" in the West, involved relative description and is sometimes used arbitrarily.

Likewise, the Classical Greek identification of "Persians" is another early example of evolving notions of civilization and barbarism.[2] Etymologically, the word "barbarous" first meant "one who does not speak Greek." Edith Hall has argued influentially that, although there were in ancient Greece a number of Greek communities and ethnic loyalties, a simultaneous heightening of Pan-Hellenic consciousness was partly a result of continuing enmity against the Persians, "which buttressed first the Delian league … and subsequently the Athenium empire … [as a consequence the] image of an enemy extraneous to Hellas helped to foster a sense of community between the allied states."[3]

Hall traces in detail the process whereby the polarization of "Hellene," or Athenian empire, and "barbarian" emerges in fifth century tragedy, and she argues that the opposition between rational Greek and savage barbarian turned, primarily, on political difference:

> The members of the league, by the middle of the century redefined as the Athenian empire, were encouraged to think of themselves not just as the inhabitants of a particular island

> or state, but as Hellenes, as democrats and supporters of Athens … The invention of the barbarian was a response to the need for an alliance against Persian expansionism and the imposition of pro-Persian tyrants.[4]

The emergence of the concept of the "barbarian" in fifth century Greek tragedy also coincided with the need to consolidate Athenian democracy against the specter and the threat of despotism. Not only did the Persians favor despotic rule, but certain Greek cities were also ruled by tyrants. The defeat of the Persians, whose tyrants had ruled Asiatic Greek cities in their domain during the fifth century BC, was "conceptualized at Athens … as a triumphant affirmation … over the demon of tyranny."[5] Thus the need to foster "Athenian hegemony in the Aegean"[6] involved not only the isolation of Persians but also other Greek cities which had fallen under Persian influence. In addition, other groups, such as the Egyptians, and, to the West, the Thracians, were also "barbarized."[7] Hall also traces how "barbarians" were conceptualized, in the tragedies, not only in "aspects of civic life—politics, law, speech-making,"[8] but also in terms of domestic and familial life. In this way theatrical representations of "otherness" reflected particular facets of the process whereby cultural and political differences could be assimilated into a binary structure in which the key terms, "civilization" and "barbarism," were defined differentially and incorporated into the Greek language.

Of the several points that may be further stressed in Hall's study is her recognition that "the character traits imputed to other ethnic groups are usually a simple projection of those considered undesirable in the culture producing the stereotypes."[9] From the outset she argues that "Greek writing about barbarians is usually an exercise in self definition, for the barbarian is often portrayed as the opposite of the ideal Greek."[10] Thus, for example, the "cardinal Hellenic virtues as defined in fourth-century philosophy … normally included wisdom or intelligence … manliness or courage … discipline or restraint … and justice."[11] She observes that Plato lists the vices that are differentiated from these virtues, such as stupidity, cowardice, abandonment, and lawlessness. Barbarian types "are often made to manifest one or more of these vices, thus helping the tragedian to define the nature of Greek morality."[12] Again, Greek moderation was defined against "different

kinds of extremism, stupidity or excessive cunning, cowardice or bravado, primitivism or luxuriousness."[13]

Furthermore, such mechanisms of projection and self-definition resonate in the process of differentiation, which involved the obscuring of, for example, indigenous Greek violence and cruelty and its projection onto different, alien, or foreign groups. For instance, whereas the distribution of the propensity for violence in Homer's earlier poems is more even-handed and, for example, "desecration of corpses is by no means the prerogative of non-Greeks,"[14] in fifth century tragedy, the conflict with Persia is conceptualized as "a struggle of united and disciplined Greeks against alien violence."[15] "Barbarians"—not merely Persians, but Egyptians, Danaids (Greeks in an alien environment), and Thracians—were represented in tragedy as being wholly without restraint, "invested with an overbearing temper or wild *ethos* … [as well as, sometimes, a] failure to control … sexual desire."[16] Thus, in one of Euripides's tragedies, *Hecuba*, the depiction of an imaginary Thracian king, Polymestor:

> delineates the wild barbarian character at its most uncontrolled; he has crawled out of the tent on all fours, like a "mountain beast", and even threatens to eat the corpses of the women who have punished him (*Hecuba*, 1057–8, 1070–2) … [v]ocabulary suggestive of animal nature or appetites is often used in the characterization of barbarians.[17]

Of course it may be possible to argue that these observations are merely a form of cultural differentiation or xenophobia, rather than evidence of a more sophisticated racism that was to come centuries later. However, Edith Hall notes that: "The Greek term *barbarous*, by the fifth century, used both as a noun and as an adjective, was ironically oriental in origin, and formed by reduplicative onomatopoeia … simply an adjective representing incomprehensible speech."[18]

Similarly, Ali Rattansi notes that the term "barbarian" "simply denoted someone who did not speak Greek, someone who babbled, could only speak 'barbar.'"[19]

There is, at the very least, embedded in such linguistic demarcations a potentially demeaning (racist) inference in the strong implication that Greek is speech whereas other languages are nothing more than incoherent babbling. In the early modern period, this potential

becomes more explicit in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, when Miranda defines Caliban's acquisition of English as an acquisition of the power of speech itself, thus dismissing his own language as the gabbling of a "thing most brutish":

> Abhorred slave,
> Which any print of goodness will not take,
> Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
> Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
> One thing or another. When thou didst not, savage,
> Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
> A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes
> With words that made them known. But thy vile race—
> Though thou didst learn—had that in't which good natures
> Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou
> Deservedly confined into this rock,
> Who hadst deserved more than a prison.[20]

The image of the "slave," which informs Miranda's address to Caliban points to a further set of ambiguities that resonates in the ancient world. Exclusion from language implies both silence and lack of agency, both of which are elided into more general imaginings of racialized subordinate groups just as exclusion from political process denies a voice to a significant and expanding group within the Athenian polis. As Hall observes,

> the economic basis of the Athenian empire was slavery, and most of the large number of slaves in fifth-century Athens were not Greek … [thus providing] further stimulus for the generation of arguments which supported the belief that barbarians were generically inferior.[21]

She goes on to observe that "The democratization of the political system in Athens was made possible only by expanding the slave sector, and almost all Athenian slaves were 'barbarians'. 'Free' was becoming synonymous with Hellenic, 'servile' with 'barbarian.'"[22]

In the ancient world, as in ensuing centuries, slavery may well have been taken for granted, but the cruelty inherent in established

systems of political order, reduces and renders equivocal all claims to what is implied in definitions of civilization and freedom. And it does so for Miranda's self-admiring comments to Caliban, in a play written and performed in the early seventeenth century. Moreover, to justify herself, she uncannily reiterates the charge, imagined in the ancient world, of inferiority. Caliban's is a "vile race" that has that "which good natures/Could not abide to be with." It is for this reason that she insists that he has "deservedly" been "confined … more than [in] a prison." The binary of the familiar, read as "civilized," and the foreign, read here as "barbaric," surfaces repeatedly as a strand in attempts to define race often, as in this example, without any necessary connection to, or influence from, the ancient Greek example. Indeed Hall registers, even in the ancient period, Egyptian and Chinese versions of a similar binary.[23] This strategy of representation emerges also as a feature in the representation of different peoples, groups, and eventually nations, at later periods.

Two examples will serve here to illustrate the point. First, the use of the phrase "swart gevaar" ("black danger") that was common during the apartheid period in South Africa and, second, aspects of the behavior of certain groups of spectators, and, on occasion, players, at present-day football matches in parts of Europe and the United Kingdom. The Afrikaans phrase, "swart gevaar" was used by the apartheid government in South Africa primarily to classify skin pigmentation in ways which favored those whom it determined to be "white." This, incidentally, was designed to identify the numerical threat of the groups of disenfranchised people it categorized as "black." However, the phrase attracts an important secondary meaning. First, the word, "swart" ("black") is a generalization that actually applies to several groups of people, speaking different languages, and with differing histories. Indeed, there are now, in postapartheid South Africa, 11 official languages. Moreover the negative implications associated with the word, "black," in some uses of the color, as "unclear," "inchoate," "menacing," is intensified by its collocation with the word, "gevaar" ("danger"), thereby reinforcing a particular series of wholly negative political meanings.

The phrase, "swart gevaar," became part of the political rhetoric used by the supporters of apartheid to justify white and, by implication, "civilized," minority rule, in the face of the imagined threat from

an inchoate and violent, engulfing "barbarism." Furthermore, the phrase lay behind aspects of the apartheid misrepresentation of South African history. For example, the history of the Eastern Cape in Southern Africa during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries included numerous frontier wars. Over time, these involved settlers, the British and the Dutch or Boers who spoke what would become Afrikaans, and the predominantly Xhosa groups, the Koi and the San. In a segregationist and then apartheid revision, what were a series of struggles amongst several groups over land and livestock became a white minority civilization battling against the dangers posed by a totalized, potentially overwhelming, "black" barbarism.

In the second example, elements of racist abuse in the very different context of present day British and European football games also manifest an occasional surfacing of the civilization versus barbarian binary. In accounting for what they define as white working-class male fan behavior at British matches, Ellis Cashmore and Jamie Cleland advance a number of possible explanations for the behavior of these spectators and, sometimes, even players.[24] These explanations include a "history of fictive kinship,"[25] a structured, normalized fictive "whiteness,"[26] or envy at the skill and wealth of targeted "black" players.[27] The manipulation of the binary during colonialism may also have affected its recurrence during European football matches. In the case of Britain, Cashmore and Cleland cite the experience in the early 1980s of Kenny Mower, a black player for Walsall Football Club in the English West Midlands:

> Mower was a local man and went to school in the area. Every time he stepped on the playing field, there was a swift, brutal reception from the crowd. Violent racist abuse echoed round the stadium when Mower appeared; each time he touched the ball, there was a harsh, discordant mixture of sounds: epithets, boos and animal-like grunts. Fans hurled bananas at him, as visitors to a zoo might feed chimpanzees.[28]

Cashmore and Cleland argue that, although media coverage of such racism fluctuated in subsequent decades amongst certain groups, racism has always been present on such occasions. More recently, factors such as struggling economies, or fears of immigration, may

have further encouraged a rise in the press reporting of such behavior in Britain, Europe, and Eastern Europe. The racist behavior of sections of football crowds also involves hooliganism. This hooliganism itself is a manifestation of the animality which such spectators engage in but is also simultaneously displaced onto others. Also, in these cases, and because of the crucial difference of skin pigmentation, hostility may be further generated by an inadvertent counter-identification with an allegedly barbaric other onto whom the spectators' own insecurity is projected. In other words, envy at the success of the other (the player of color) generates an exaggerated compensatory expression of superiority in the spectator that seeks to re-establish a particular social hierarchy. The result is a series of contradictions that an ideology under considerable pressure from the changes in social relationships, is designed to efface.

The imagined differences between the civilized and the barbarous is one of a number of components in the more complex process of the fashioning of race. As Albert Memmi points out, in the second half of the twentieth century, the reading of racial "difference" is itself complicated.[29] He notes that the term has been used, in the course of time, both by conservatives and by progressives. Conservatives, for example, who wished, and still wish, to defend the colonial order, treated the colonized subject as inferior while simultaneously constructing themselves as superior. Progressives, on the other hand, arguing against the notion of difference as signifying inequality, have come down in favor of the concept of a single and equal human nature that transcends time and geographical or cultural location. But emphasizing that difference, in culture, religion, and appearance is inevitable and that "[t]o be is to be different,"[30] Memmi argues that "the real stakes against racism, which must also inform anti-racism, do not concern difference itself but the use of difference as a weapon against its victim, to the advantage of the victimizer."[31] In other words, the issue involves the uneven distribution of power, and the ways in which one group internalizes its own power and exercises it over another. On the matter of difference Memmi concludes: "Differences can exist or not exist. Differences are not in themselves good or bad. One is not racist or anti-racist in pointing out or denying differences, but one is racist in using them against someone to one's own advantage."[32]

Two relatively recent implicit uses of the binary of "civilization" and "barbarism" as a means of reading encounters, between the ancient Romans and other groups serve to reinforce the argument advanced here. The twentieth century poet W.B. Yeats's wonderful poem "Long-legged Fly,"[33] is deeply disturbing, as the first stanza indicates:

> That civilization may not sink,
> Its great battle lost,
> Quiet the dog, tether the pony
> To a distant post;
> Our master Caesar is in the tent
> Where the maps are spread,
> His eyes fixed upon nothing,
> A hand under his head.
> *Like a long-legged fly upon the stream*
> *His mind moves upon silence.*

The imagery in these lines suggests the beautiful fragility of acts of concentration, intellectual endeavor, and creative order, notwithstanding the fact that the poem goes on to reveal that such acts are masculine, military, and informed by leader-worship, Greco-Roman or classical, European and Western, and, ultimately, by implication, "white."

Against this may be set the example of Howard Brenton's very different reading of the Romans, in his play, *The Romans in Britain*, performed in London in 1980.[34] Brenton's vision concentrates on the ferociously brutal impact that the Romans and, by implication, other Western "civilizations," made upon the peoples and the cultures that they colonized. An envoy warns the local Celts:

> There is a Roman Army and it is coming.
> It is an army of red leather and brass.
> It is a ship.
> It is a whole thing. It is a monster. It has machines.
> It is Roman.[35]

The inversion in these lines invests the adjective, "Roman," with a mechanized and barbarous violence that underpins the contradiction to

the claims it associates with "civilization." It confirms the well-known axiom from Walter Benjamin that every document in civilization is also, at the same time, a document in barbarism ("Es ist niemals ein Dokument der Kultur, ohne zugleich ein solches der Barbarei zu sein").[36]

Marking religious difference: imagined monstrosity, ugliness, and sin

Civilization and barbarism lean heavily for their definitions upon relative physiological and behavioral differences. However, another early emerging marker of race turns on religious binaries. For example, race and ethnicity have been important elements in the development of contemporary U.S. Buddhism. Joseph Cheah has identified traces of Orientalism in the writings of the founding figures of Western Buddhism, such as Brian Houghton.[37] The commonly used terms "ethnic Buddhist" and "convert Buddhist" are problematic concepts. "Ethnic" Buddhist is a term that has been used to describe Buddhists in the USA who are of Asian descent, while "convert" Buddhist refers to Buddhists who are of European ancestry. The two groups have different interpretations of the teachings of Buddhism, with the religion serving as a connection between Asian-Americans and their immigrant parents or grandparents. In this case, their religious identity merges with their ethnic identity.

Another example of how race and religion intertwine is the medieval Christian Church. It imagined threats from Muslims and Jews, who were part of a larger group of those whom the Church considered to be pagan enemies. The totalizing use of terms such as "Muslims," "Islam," or "Jews" is paradoxically as stereotypically reductive, as is, in many respects, the use of the term "medieval European Christianity" itself. To take one of the categories cited above, eleventh century Islam manifested within itself an increasing diversity and complexity: for example there were Turks in the East, Berbers, with very different views from those in the West, and there was also the growth, against Sunnism, of Shi'sm, that came with the revival of the Persian empire and the replacement of the caliphate with the sultanate. Christian imaginings of non-Christian religious groups, however, were not always, for one reason or another, uniformly negative. Thus, what follows, therefore, can offer only a

partial picture of the historically more significant medieval Christian fabrications of non-Christian group identities.

In several respects, the construction of the categories of "Muslim" and "Jew" reflects a similar set of assumptions. For example, racial identity is defined here throughout the medieval and early modern periods by climate, or by astrological or humoral factors. It is also believed to be evident in physiognomy, and in suggestions of monstrosity, animality, and abnormality. At the same time, such imagined characteristics carry with them a theological and metaphorical significance in that they denote in one way or another, fantasized demonic agency. Such imaginings about non-Christian group identities are sometimes interwoven with notions of barbarism or wildness. Moreover, Debra Strickland has recently shown that,

> [c]lassical ideas about the structure of the universe, the make-up of the human body, and the nature of the "barbarian" … were transmitted to medieval Europe either directly or in Latin translations from Greek or Arabic that were widely circulated in the West from the twelfth century onward.[38]

Classical and medieval authorities also held that particular climates, astrological influences, and the specific composition of bodily "humours," involving the combination of different fluids within the human body had an impact on physical experience and character.[39] For them, "the implications of climatic, humoral and astrological theories all point to ideal human types in Western Europe, not in Africa, India, the Near East, or the Far North."[40] These latter geographical locations were, inevitably, considered to be the edges of civilization. Thus, Muslims living in the excessively hot Middle East were deemed cowardly as a result of the climate they inhabited. William of Malmesbury quotes Pope Urban II's call to crusade at the Council of Clermont in 1095, which contains a description of Muslims as

> The least valiant of men … It is in fact well known that every nation born in Eastern clime is dried up by the great heat of the sun; they may have more good sense, but they have less blood in their veins, and that is why they flee from battle at close quarters: they know they have no blood to spare.[41]