

*The Image of Early Medieval Barbaroi
in Contemporary Written Sources and Modern
Scholarship: the Balkan Perspective*

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Abstract. – The barbarians of the Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages were of scholarly interest from the 19th c. onwards. Though there are numerous publications on various aspects of the barbarians, most of it focuses on the role they had in the collapse of the Western and the trails of the Eastern Roman Empire. During the last two decades, an enormous scholarly contribution is given into dampening the negative representation of the Early Medieval barbarians as primitive, belligerent people who were inferior to the Romans and Byzantines in any regard. This article gives a review on the accounts of the contemporary authors held as authorities on the history of the barbarian tribes, which combined with the survey of the material evidence, retrieved with archaeological excavations, offers another perspective of the barbarians and the *Romaioi* as equal participants in the events that shaped their world, instead of the image of superior, civilized people of a great Empire and the savage tribes of inferior culture who threatened the same Empire.

The barbarians¹ of the Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages² were a subject of extensive research from the 19th c. onwards. The result is

¹ The barbarians that will be addressed in this article are the ones who have raided the territory of present day Republic of Macedonia, though not exclusively. Therefore, the focus will be mostly on the Huns, Avars, Slavs, and Goths. This is mostly due to the fact that later on in text I will address the archaeological material connected with the raids performed by them and I have best access to and knowledge on the material coming from Macedonia.

an extensive scholarship on the matter, yet the main focus is on the role they had in the disintegration of the Western Roman Empire and turmoil they caused for the Eastern part, later known as Byzantium.³ During the last two decades, an enormous contribution is given into dampening the negative representation⁴ of the Early Medieval barbarians as primitive, belligerent people who were inferior to the Romans and Byzantines in any regard; the very image which was created by the contemporary authors. If the accounts of these authors are taken by their face value, it is quite easy to construct and support such opinion.⁵ One should approach these sources warily, because it is quite possible that these authors voiced a political stance and had limited or non-existing direct contact with the barbarian tribes; the barbarians in their accounts can be possibly reconstructed by using older, now lost writings. Same as the archaeological material, the written sources need the proper context as for one to be able to extract the useful information from them.

² On the chronology and factors for the barbarian raids of Macedonia in the Early Middle Ages, see JARIĆ, 2010:47-66. The article offers a timeline of the various barbarian raids on Macedonia from the 4th to the 7th century AD.

³ On the scholarship of the Middle Ages, see TIERNY, 1999, KNOWLES & OBOLENSKY, 1968; KAEGI, 1982; KAEGI, 2003; HALDON, 1997; OSTROGORSKY, 1969 and FINE, 1991. For the Huns, see MAENCHEN-HELFEN, 1973; THOMPSON, 1966a; GORDON, 1966; KOCH *et al.*, 2007:378-388; BÓNA, 2002; DAIM, 1998: 71-95 and LINDLER, 1981: 3-19. For the Goths, see HOCHMAN, 1971; HEATHER & MATTHEWS, 1991; HEATHER, 1995b: 145-173; WOLFRAM, 1987; BURNS, 1984; BARNISH & MARAZZI, 2007, THOMPSON, 1996b and ЗЕЧЕВИЋ, 2002.

⁴ CURTA, 2001; CURTA, 2006; CURTA (ed.) 2011; HEATHER, 1989: 103-128; HEATHER, 1995a: 4-41; HEATHER, 2009; CROKE, 1987: 117-134; CROKE, 2005: 473-494; POHL (Ed.), 1997; LADNER, 1976: 1-26; LIEBESCHUETZ, 2006; MATHISEN & SHANZER (eds.), 2011, GILLET (ed.), 2002 and JOHNSON (ed.), 2012. Also, the contribution on several authors in *Ktema* 9, 1984: "L'image du barbare en Grèce et à Rome" (*non vidi*).

⁵ SIMONOVA, 2011: 67-87. Another, though more mildly voiced variant of this opinion, is having the barbarian raids as a terminal factor for the urban life on many settlements on the Balkans and thus accenting the brutality of the barbarians; this goes especially for the cities on the territory on present-day Macedonia.

Another methodological matter is the usage of written sources solely. Due to abundance of archaeological material, the scholarship on the Early Middle Ages, regardless of dealing with the Western or the Eastern part of the Empire, exacts more interdisciplinary approach; for the artifacts sometimes reveal a quite different story from the written sources.

The barbarians had indeed contributed for the turmoil of the Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. They were belligerent and violent, but so were the Romans and the Byzantines. The raiding activity of the barbarians is just one piece of the puzzle; they also had an intricate religious beliefs and a complex social hierarchy, demonstrated through the material culture. The warfare, especially the one of the barbarians with Central Asian origin, was a novelty that reshaped the Byzantine army, as well as the whole art of waging war in the Early Middle Ages.⁶ Therefore, the more cautious approach to contemporary written sources and the survey on the material culture and the manifestation of religious and hierarchical concepts through it can reveal the world of the Early Medieval barbarians on a more profound level.

The written sources dated to the Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages have dealt considerably with the barbarian tribes of autochthonic, European origin and the newcomers from the Central Asian steppes. This is not surprising, if taking into account that the raids and the threat they presented for the Empire were omnipresent. The history of these tribes can be traced to the writing of many authors, yet can it be taken verbatim? These writings can be valued and useful if one tries to see beyond the political siding, the bias on both personal and social level and bears in mind the possibility that the barbarians were described on base on second-hand information or/and older accounts. Though some of the authors had a direct contact with some of the tribes, or at least claimed that they had, these experiences are just a piece of the patchwork of information instead the primary source and they can be masterfully distorted as to enhance the political stances and bias of the author. However, these writings offer a glimpse of the people utterly different from the Romans and Byzantines. If combined with the archaeological material and keeping an open mind, the written sources recrea-

⁶ The *Strategikon* of Pseudo-Maurice gives the information that the military techniques and strategies of the various barbarian groups were employed by the Byzantine army. See DENNIS (trans.), 1984.

te the world of the barbarian tribes who had their role in shaping of modern-day Europe.

Ammianus Marcellinus—an Antioch nobleman, a soldier and a historian wrote *Rerum gestarum libri XXXI*,⁷ where he described the events between the ruling of the Emperor Nerva (96) and the battle of Adrianople (378), when the Roman army was decimated and the Emperor Valens lost his life in the clash with the Visigoth army. Of 31 books, only 18 have survived and they cover the period between 353 and 378 AD.

Ammianus Marcellinus had a tendency to insert digressions in his work; some of them are ethnographic excurses. These digressions are no less valuable than the rest of his writing. The last book is completely dedicated to the barbarians, to the tribes of Huns, Goths, Alans and Alamanni. Here, an ethnographic digression introduces the account on the Huns and Alans. Ammianus does not spare his severe words in his attempt to describe the Huns. For him, there are little more than beasts walking on two legs, who practice mutilation and cranial deformity on their male youngsters. The cranial deformity has been archaeological confirmed, yet it was not a praxis connected exclusively with the Huns. Some of the other barbarian tribes practiced it as well, albeit on a different gender, different social group and for a different reason.⁸

⁷Several editions and publications of *Res Gestae* exist; the most important is the *Codex Fuldensis* (Vaticanus Latinus 1983), while the latest one is one of W. SEYFARTH. I encountered three projects for the digitalization of *Res gestae*—one by the *Latin Library*, giving the original texts of Books 14–31, the online edition by *Tertulian Project* which offers a compilation of English translations by various scholars and the *Ammianus Marcellinus Online Project* which offers the structure of the Books in English, as well as useful information on translations in other languages, relevant references, etc. The site also offers a brief discussion on the place of origin of Ammianus, offering Thessalonica or Alexandria as possibilities. For the Latin Library, see <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/ammianus.html>; for the Tertulian Project, see http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/index.htm#Ammianus_Marcellinus and for the Ammianus Marcellinus Online Project, see <http://odur.let.rug.nl/~drijvers/ammianus/index.htm>. All links were last accessed on 5th of April, 2012.

⁸ For general information on the artificial cranial deformation as a phenomenon, see ŽIVANOVIĆ, 1984: 253–256. On the artificial cranial deformation amo-

For a cultivated nobleman and a learned person such as Ammianus Marcellinus was, the customs and traditions of the Huns seemed rather crude. The same can be said for Procopius or any other author of the contemporary times; it is easy to brand the unknown and different as inferior and primitive. One cannot tell if this was indeed a true rendering of the Hunnic society or an image seen through the eyes of person who felt himself superior towards them; perhaps the truth was somewhere in the middle. Yet, being also an experienced soldier, he did them justice and described them as excellent horsemen. In my opinion, this is the one of the important moments in the threat the barbarians of the nomadic steppe represented for the Empire. The Empire was used to fighting the people of the *Barbaricum*, yet the weapons that both the Roman soldiers and the barbarians of autochthonic, European origin were result of the same tradition, the similar art of waging war. There was difference in the quality of fashioning of the weapons themselves and the military training of the persons who wielded them; yet each side knew what to expect on a battle field. The Huns, representing the first wave of Asiatic, steppe nomad horsemen, introduced a completely new way of waging war, a more mobile and agile method; combined with a new, more powerful weapon-the reflex bow. The new military strategy and the new weapon represented a threat for the rigid, legion-based Roman army. Changes were needed for an effective response. As Fine points out, the military reforms of Constantine, combined with the previous ones of Diocletian, have reshaped the imperial army into more flexible, mobile units which were more efficient against this new ways of waging war. It resulted in forming two major groups: the *limitanei*, whose role was to protect the borders and the mobile troops, organized in five units, each under a commander who reported directly to the Emperor himself; the role of the mobile troops was to move fast and provide reinforcement at an endangered

ng Huns, see SALAMON and LENGYEL, 1980: 93-104. The artificial cranial deformation was adopted by other barbarian tribes who had contact with the Huns. The Gepids practiced in on women, quite the opposite of the Huns, who practiced it preferably on males - the warriors. For artificial cranial deformation among Gepids, see MIKIĆ, 1999: 257-68 and among Proto-Bulgarians, see ENCHEV *et al.*, 2010. The artificial cranial deformation was also practiced by the Avars, a later steppe nomad tribe.

border.⁹ Yet, the Huns in these early days after the arrival in Europe were not united; some of the Hunnic groups ransacked the Empire, some served as mercenaries. Their “hit-and run” technique while mounted and the new weapon were employed by both the Imperial army and the various raiding parties lead by different Hunnic warlords. Hence, the information that Ammianus himself gives that the Huns were not ruled by any king and instead that they followed an improvised authority by their current chieftains is plausible.¹⁰

This considerably balanced situation changed around 440. Prior to that point, the arrival of the Huns has influenced the moving of the other barbarian groups, such as the Goths, but they have not represented an immediate military threat to the Empire. Yet, under the rule of the leader Bleda and later, under the rule of his kinsman Attila, the Huns began uniting and acting on a coherent, collaborative level; enhanced with conquering other tribes and incorporating them in the Hunnic federation. The raids were now a planned thing, a part of a bigger pattern. Yet, rich booty was not the prime motivation; it was conquering territory for a realm of theirs. Under Attila, the Hunnic realm prospered beyond the Danube *limes* and considerable part of present-day Vojvodina.

One of the most severe raids was the one of 447; the raiding parties were commanded by Attila himself. The plain of Vojvodina was a convenient place for launching high-scale raids on the rich Balkan cities. Stobi, the capital of Macedonia Secunda was sacked¹¹ and most probably the near-by capitol of the province of Dardania-Scupi was also attacked, though it is not yet confirmed archaeologically.¹² The marauders of Attila came to the outskirts of Constantinople and as a response to this threat, the Emperor Theodosius II erected the Long Walls; which ran from the Black Sea to Selymb-

⁹ FINE, 1991: 19.

¹⁰ In 283/4, the Emperor Valentinian II had paid a coalition of Huns and Alans to attack the Alamanni who caused troubles at the Rhine border; in 388 the Goths and Huns served together in the campaign against Maximus. In 425 Aetius was given control over Gaul by the Emperor Valentinian III, mostly due to the strong military support he had from the Huns. See HEATHER, 1995a: 9 and 26.

¹¹ WISEMAN and MANO-ZISI, 1974: 117-148; MIKULČIĆ, 1981: 210-226.

¹² JARIĆ, 2010: 51.

ria, on the Sea of Marmara. Yet, 70 other Balkan cities which lacked the mighty protection of the Capital were not as fortunate. Singidunum, Serdica, Phillipopolis and Ratiaria were among these cities.¹³ The Thermopylae was the southern-most post on this campaign; Illyricum and Thrace were also raided. The culmination point of this activity forced the Byzantine Emperor to pay tribute to Attila.¹⁴

The aftermath of this great raid is known through the writings of Priscus. He was most probably a Thracian by origin and a learned person in philosophy and rhetoric who spent few years as a traveling diplomat. His work is preserved in fragments and it is believed that covered the period between 411 and 472. Priscus gives an elaborated account, completely preserved, on his journey from the Capitol to the court of Attila, in the year of 448. Yet, his writing gives information on Hun-related events much prior to the great raid of 447. Priscus writes on the negotiations which took place in the city of Magrum in 434, as well as the conquering of Sirmium, Vinimacium and Margum in 441 and the fall of Naissus in the following year.¹⁵

In 448, Priscus was part of a Byzantine delegation sent to the court of Attila, lead by Maximianus. Priscus had the role of a secretary and they were also accompanied by the translator Bigilas. This delegation was a response to the demand of Attila for the refugees from his realm and claimed the lands conquered with his resent raids: from the southern bank of the Danube, from Paeonia to the Thracian city Novae, with a breadth of five days journey for an active man; the devastated Naissus marked the borderline between the Hunnic realm and the Byzantine Empire. Attila enhanced these claims with the treaty he made with Aetius, a general of the Western Roman Empire. The letter was brought to Constantinople by two of most important persons in Attila's reign-Edécon, known for his military expertise and the scribe Orestes, who came from Sirmium.

During their journey, the delegation witnessed the devastation of Attila's raids and probably they expected the dwelling of the people who inflicted it to match it in primitiveness and crudeness. Yet, they were greeted by relatively luxurious dwellings, so much different than the hide tents usu-

¹³ КОВАЧЕВИЋ, 1977:32.

¹⁴ TREADGOLD, 1996:13.

¹⁵ БАРИШИЋ *et al.* 1955:9-12.

ally common for the steppe nomads, at least which could be said on the houses of the ruling elite. These dwellings, as well as the bath built with stone masonry, was work of Onegesius who also originated from Sirmium. The conversation Priscus had the following day, while waiting to deliver gifts to Onegesius, with a person who claimed to be a Greek living among the Huns offers an introspection of the Hunnic society, through a comparison with the Byzantine one. Surprisingly, it was not the Hunnic community who came shorthanded in this chat. Yet, the same can be Priscus' fabrication in attempt to shed light on phenomena he found lacking in his own surrounding by juxtaposing the two societies.

Priscus dealt with the military and diplomatic activities of the Huns; while writing on the siege and conquering of Naissus, he gives the information that the Huns were quite familiar with siege machines and that their usage was the main factor for the fall of Naissus. This would mean that the Huns learned the siege warfare from the Romans and employed it successfully. Yet, some of the excurses on everyday situation offers more profound rendering of the Hunnic world. On the way to Attila's court, the delegation was sheltered from a storm by one of Bleda's spouses. She was the head of a village, despite being the wife of Attila's deceased kinsman and rival and despite being a woman. As token of gratitude, she was given the same rich gifts of silverware, furs and Indian pepper as any male warlord of Attila's reign probably would have been given in the same situation.¹⁶

As for the non-Huns incorporated in the Hunnic society, the cases of Orestes and Onegesius, both brought from the devastated Sirmium speak on how they were given the equal treatment and the same chance to prosper as both of them were included in Attila's elite. Same goes for the unnamed Greek who came in Vinimacium to trade and was captured during the raids. He became a soldier and was richly awarded for his military achievement; he also became a free man and married a Hunnic woman. He gives

¹⁶ Compare this with the role of women in the society of another Asiatic nomad people – the Mongolians, especially the role of Mongolian queens - *katuns*. For more, see DAVIS-KIMBALL, 2003: Chapter 9. If the abundance of grave goods can be considered as one of the indicators for status in a social hierarchy, the excavations of Hunnic necropolises have revealed rich female burials. See more in MARTYNOVA, 1988:61-83.

the information that the main “profession” among the Huns is the military one - after the raids everyone was left to their own leisure; without disturbing each other on any matter. Priscus himself calls the Huns the “Royal Scythes”, probably being aware that the Huns were the ruling party in a conglomerate of various people and languages; he mentioned that the people of Attila’s court spoke Latin, Hunnic, Gothic and as shown, Greek.¹⁷

The delegation was successful one; again a semi-balance of peace was achieved, though the Huns remained a dominant military presence on the Balkans up to 450, when they moved the scope on their raids towards West. In 453, Attila was defeated in Gaul and died; the supremacy of the Huns was obliterated by a strong anti-Hunnic coalition lead by the Gepid king Ardarich in the aftermath of Attila’s death.¹⁸ Yet, that was not the end of the steppe nomads on the Balkans; on the quite contrary-it was the very beginning: the sixth century brought the Avars and three centuries later, the Magyars will emerge.

The power vacuum that was left on the Balkans after the disintegration of the Hunnic federation was taken advantage of by the Goths. These people of Germanic origin were not novelty for the Byzantine Empire; the arrival of the Huns triggered the moving of the Goths on Roman territory in the second half of the fourth century. The Goths stayed on the Balkans for more than a century; first as adversaries, then as *foederati* of the Empire. They claimed a territory of their own, from the north of Stara Planina – a mountain range in the eastern Balkans. This was their base for raiding activities to Greece, Thessaly, Thrace and Macedonia; they even reached the outskirts of Constantinople.¹⁹ Two of the Byzantine Emperors, Leo and Zeno, employed the traditional Byzantine technique of fueling the conflicts

¹⁷ Priscus mentioned another group of people who spoke a language that was completely different from the Hunnic, Greek, Latin and Gothic languages. Clued on this information, Barišić introduces the idea that there were Slavs incorporated in the realm of Attila, as well. See more in БАРИШИЋ, 1952: 52-63. Priscus also mentioned that he was given a pass over a river by barbarians who made boats of a hollowed tree log - the *monoxyla* which were described by later Byzantine authors as typical Slavic invention. See in БАРИШИЋ *et al.*, 1955: 14, footnote 14.

¹⁸ WHITBY, 1988: 68; КОВАЧЕВИЋ, 1977: 32.

¹⁹ WHITBY, 1988: 68.

between two or more barbarian tribes—in this case the Ostrogoths and Visigoths, but of no avail. In 479, the Ostrogoths, then under the rule of Theodoric were offered land in Dardania (in the vicinity of present-day Pautalia) and they accepted it. Yet, that did not put a stop on their raiding activities. The great urban centres were endangered again, in response Heraclea Lyncestis and Epidamnos were evacuated and the people of Thessalonika decided that the defense of the city depended on them.

Byzantine authority was restored on the Balkans after 489 when Theodoric moved his Ostrogoths and founded a kingdom of his own in Italy. After 476, Odoacer ruled with the West, as representative of Emperor Zeno. Theodoric was sent to reclaim the West and that removed the Gothic threat from the Balkans, though this solution will not fare great on the long stand. This will result in further conflicts and will launch campaigns for bringing this territory under Byzantine thumb again.²⁰

The turn of the fifth and the sixth century brought the rule of Anastasius (491-518). This was not a very prosperous period for the Byzantines; the circumstances exacted the weakened Empire to engage in war with the Persians. The reforms Anastasius made on the monetary system increased the soldiers' paychecks, so the increased salaries attracted a great deal of native inhabitants as army recruits and that tipped the scale for the barbarian percentage in the Byzantine army. Thus, a certain level of stability was achieved during the end of the fifth century, but not for long.

The sixth century was an eventful one. A new danger was looming over the Empire, coming from another group of arrivals from the steppe nomads – the pugnacious Avars and the more peaceful Slavs. The Avars came from their homeland in Central Asia in gradual waves and claimed the land now known as the Hungarian Plain, where they established a mighty tribal federation. The Empire fought back for preserving this territory, both its resources and the strategic point it represented for launching raids on the neighboring regions. This was the time of the Justinian (527-565), an Emperor of completely different ilk from his predecessors. His controversial political manoeuvres, almost complete neglect towards the senatorial class and autocratic ruling will mark him as the first Medieval ruler. Justinian spent 40 years defending the East from the Avaro-Slavic raids and trying to reclaim

²⁰ FINE, 1991: 22.

the West from the Ostrogoths, as well as North Africa from the Vandals. As said, the sixth century was an eventful one indeed, so there is no wonder that it was penciled down by many contemporary authors.²¹

Procopius from the lovely Caesarea was as much of controversial author as Justinian was a controversial ruler. From his pen a panegyric and a pamphlet spawned concerning the same persons, with just few years between. The pamphlet was the voice of the member of the senatorial class which was slowly losing its power under Justinian, the panegyric a flattery attempt to preserve as much as it can from what is left from that power.

Procopius spent a great portion of his life traveling, mostly as a secretary of General Belisarius, one of the most skilful military men of Justinian. He accompanied Belisarius on his campaigns to re-conquer the Vandal Africa and the Ostrogothic Italy for the Emperor. Yet, first were the Persian wars (527-531); then Belisarius was sent to fight the Vandals in North Africa (533-534). Procopius stayed in Africa up to 536, under another commander Solomon, while Belisarius was sent to Italy. Afterwards, Procopius joined Belisarius in Italy and returned to the Capitol in 540 and the following year both of them went again to the Persian front. From 542 onwards till his death, most probably in 565, Procopius spent his days working on his accounts in Constantinople. He never visited his beloved Caesarea again.

The first of the works of Procopius was dedicated to the wars he participated in as a scribe to Belisarius. *De bellis* was written in 8 books; the first and second one cover the Persian Wars, the third and the fourth is on the Vandal Wars and the fifth, sixth and seventh books are dedicated to the Gothic Wars. The last one is a miscellaneous addition to the previous 7 books. The first seven books were published at the end of 550 or the beginning of 551, while the last one was published in 553.²²

²¹ Of the many authors I will try to focus on the work of Procopius and his contemporary Jordanes, for it is not feasible one to address all of them in a sole article. The work of Agathias, Teophylact Simocatta, John Malalas and Euagrius, as well as the *Chronicon Paschale* will be addressed on some other occasion. The *Strategikon* of Pseudo-Maurice text and the *Miraculi S. Demetrii I and II*, as sources for the joint raids of the Avars and Slavs will be briefly discussed later on in the text.

²² БАРИШИЋ *et al.*, 1955: 17-18

On the military history of the Balkans, the books dedicated to the Gothic Wars are the most informant ones, because they provide excurses dealing with the situation on the Danube *limes* and the surrounding regions and thus giving account on the Avaro-Slavic raids, mostly sections dedicated to an individual raid. The source of these accounts was both his direct contact with the people in question and older written accounts.

After finishing *De bellis*, Procopius dedicated his time on writing the *Historia arcana*. The coherent, learned and experienced military observer gave place to the bitter, open critic on actions of Justinian, his consort Theodora, Belisarius and many other Court people. On his commentaries of Justinian's strategy towards the Slavs on the Danube *limes*, Procopius dwelt on raids of the Slavs. This data is a useful addition to the information provided in the *Wars*.

The last work of Procopius was dedicated to the building projects of Justinian, in the period between 530 and 552. *De aedificiis* was probably compiled in some period before 558.²³ The heavy criticism is gone and it has given way to pompous and praising, if artificial, account. One cannot tell if this account was created to dampen the hinted criticism in *Wars* or an attempt for Procopius to get in Justinian's good book and thus provide a promotion. Or that the Emperor himself or other court person gave him the task to describe the ambitious projects Justinian undertook; the speculation on reasons why this account came to being are limitless. Six books were written, though the whole work was unfinished, probably because the untimely death of Procopius. Of these books, the fourth one bringing the information on the building activities in Illyricum is the most useful for the history of the Balkans.²⁴

During his reign, Justinian had strong army lead by two experienced generals, Belisarius and Narses. But, he also had an unsolved conflict with Persia and an oncoming threat from the Avars and Slavs. As to avoid confrontation of two fronts, Justinian neutralized the Persian threat first. He enhanced his army in quantity, by adding the newly recruited soldiers to the

²³ As Curta points out, the collapse of the dome of Hagia Sofia, which happened on the 7 of May 558, was not mentioned in Procopius' *Buildings*. See CURTA, 2001: 37.

²⁴ БАРИШИЋ *et al.*, 1955: 20-21.

well trained and experience troops and thus created the new field army of Armenia. Persia did not have the resources to match the improved army of Justinian and the Perpetual Peace was signed in 532.²⁵ The protection of the Balkans was enhanced with an enormous building project; for instance, 400 fortifications were renovated or built on the territory of present-day Macedonia solely during the sixth century.

After the neutralization of Persian danger and the Vandal Wars, Justinian turned his scope on the West. He perceived Ostrogothic Kingdom and the successors of Theodoric as the greatest obstacle for fulfilling the unison of the Western and Eastern Empire, so Justinian fought 40 years to annex Italy, Spain and North Africa to the Eastern Empire. This war waging demanded more and more soldiers to be withdrawn, so a section of the Danube *limitanei* was sent to Italy and that weakened the *limes*. This resulted in beginning of the Avar-Slavic invasions.²⁶

Procopius gives a detailed description on the Slavs in *Bellum Gothicum III*, during the episode of the true and phony Chilbudius. He describes them as people living under democracy and that they resolved matters on public gatherings. Procopius rendered the Slavs as foot soldiers, armed with small shields and spears, never wearing armor. He even compared them with the Huns, dubbed as *Masagetai*, as both tribes having poor hygiene, but also having a kindhearted nature. On his opinion, the Slavs and the Antes were once the same tribe, known as Spori and thus they have the same language, same physical appearance and worshiped the same deities.²⁷ Procopius claimed that he has written events that he witnessed directly or had them described by direct eyewitnesses. However, this cannot be reviewed because he did not state his sources. He probably obtained the information for his Slavic excurses from the Slavic mercenaries while staying in Italy. Yet, his sources on the Slavs after the final settlement in Constantinople in 542 were probably older written accounts and oral traditions.²⁸ He refers to the raiding activities of the Slavs, which by the middle of the sixth century became an annual matter. They raided Thrace and Macedonia; Greece was also atta-

²⁵ TREADGOLD, 1996: 15.

²⁶ FINE, 1991: 22.

²⁷ БАРИШИЋ *et al.*, 1955: 25-31.

²⁸ CURTA, 2001: 37-38.

cked as southernmost up to Corinth. The lightly armed marauders did not possess the knowledge to breach fortification walls so they attacked for booty, but did not settle on Byzantine territory.²⁹ The arrival of the Avars and the forming of the First Avar Khaganate in Pannonia was the reason for the Slavs to settle on Byzantine territory; some moved to the south and became *foederati* of the Empire, while the greater number of them was incorporated in the Avar Khaganate.³⁰

Jordanes, the contemporary of Procopius, introduced a digression on the Slavs while working on his *Getica*. This author was of Gothic origin and served as a *notarius* to an Eastern Empire general by the name Gunthigis or Gaza. He wrote his accounts during the middle of the sixth century in Constantinople, the *De summa temporum vel origine actibusque Romanorum* (the *Romana*) and *De origine actibusque Getarum* (the *Getica*). As Jordanes himself offers the information in his preface of the *Getica* he was already writing the *Romana* when he was asked to compile a history of the Gothic people by a person named Castalius. The *Romana* which he returned writing to after he finished the *Getica*, was commissioned by person known as Vigilus.³¹

The work of this author was usually frowned upon, mostly due to his rudimentary Latin and that influenced greatly the importance and plausibility of the information it offers. Yet, if one takes into consideration that he was requested to write accounts on both the Roman and Gothic people and served as a secretary to a *magister militum*, it is clearly obvious that he was a learned and experienced person. As for the clumsy Latin, one should bear in mind that it was his third language, beside his native Gothic and Greek, the language of Scythia and Moesia where Jordanes grew up. He needed Latin for his job as a *notarius*, because Latin was the language of the sixth century Byzantine army and a grammatical analysis of his works betrays the Moesian influence and the similarity of the Latin typical for the contemporary army and administration.³²

Jordanes introduced a digression on the Slavs in his *Getica*. If compared with the one of his contemporary Procopius, it is quite a humble one.

²⁹ TREADGOLD, 1996: 15

³⁰ FINE, 1991: 29.

³¹ CROKE, 2005: 474.

³² CROKE, 1987: 120.

Yet, as Curta points out, the interesting thing is that his account is completely the opposite of Procopius'. The latter one sees them as newcomers, while Jordanes connects them with the Venethi in attempt to make a legendary origin of the Slavs. Procopius' Slavs lived near the Danube; Jordanes' Slavs are located in Scythia. According to Procopius, they were nomads who lived in democracy; while Jordanes mentioned that they had a king named Boz and settled them near swamps and forests. It is quite possible that Jordanes is engaged in some polemic with Procopius; probably on the imperial attitude towards the barbarians and that this polemic was channeled in his work.³³ The fact that both authors were contemporaries and wrote their works in Constantinople lends more credibility to this opinion.

As for the Goths, Jordanes provides a voluminous account. The *Getica* begins with the geographical origins of the Goths, their moving into Europe up to their separation as two groups of people at the end of the fourth century. The work now takes two paths- a separate history of the Visigoths up to the present days of Jordanes and a separate for the Ostrogoths. It is well known that he embodied the work of Cassiodorus for his *Getica*, yet certain passages betray the influence of other sources, both Greek and Latin. More often than not, he introduces these authors while beginning or concluding some of digressions and cites the classical authors as to provide an alternative or additional source. So, on the digression of the Vandals, he names Dexippus as his source and on the digression of the Huns, he cited Priscus and Orosius. It is quite possible that Jordanes turned to these works to expand the now lost *historia* of Cassiodorus and also added writings derived from his personal experience.³⁴

The section of the *Getica* dedicated to the Ostrogoths is more than half of the book. Jordanes cited three authors only: Dio Chrysostom, an elusive author named Fabius and the Byzantine author Priscus. Broke is on

³³ It is well known that Jordanes used the now lost work of Cassiodorus for his *Getica* and Symmachus' for his *Romana*; see more in Broke, 2005:475. CURTA argues that the sources for his account of the Slavs are more probably written than oral and that he used Tacitus, Solinus and through him, Pliny the Elder and at least one map-the Peutinger Map. See more in CURTA, 2001: 39-43. Also, see the very recent article by W. Liebeschuetz on Jordanes' work – LIEBESCHUETZ, 2011: 295-302 (*non vidi*).

³⁴ CROKE, 1987: 121-122.

the opinion the Priscus, whose *Byzantine History* covered the events between 430 and 474, is the main source for this section of the *Getica*. For the events from 474 onwards, he relied more on oral traditions and his personal experience. So, he supplemented the work of Cassiodorus with Greek sources and the knowledge derived from his own people. This is quite an advantage over Cassiodorus, for he did not know Greek and Gothic. So, Jordanes is ought to be given credit as independent author who used his vast knowledge of languages, older written account and his experience as a military *notarius* to complete the works he was commissioned for. His writings are certainly both pro-Gothic and pro-Byzantine, for he considered that if the Amali – the ruling class of the Goths has submitted themselves to a great leader as Justinian; they will achieve even greater glory and prosperity. There was a positive climate for such an opinion, because it was a period when Ravenna was ceased and the Ostrogothic Kingdom in Italy was Byzantine again.³⁵ Furthermore, this underlines the polemic with Procopius, a person who viewed Justinian in a completely different, derogative light.

The reclaiming of the Ostrogothic Kingdom was by all means an asset, yet it did not stop the Avar-Slavic raids. Justinian left the reclaimed Ostrogothic Kingdom to his successors, as well as weakened Danube *limes* which attracted various barbarian groups into claiming parts of Byzantine territory. The Avars represented the second wave of steppe nomads. Their moving to Europe was the result of the expanding Turkish federation during the middle of the sixth century. They subdued the people of the Black Sea region, including the Coutrigurs.³⁶ On their warfare, the Avars fashioned reflex bows and were excellent horsemen. Their troops were swift, mobile and persistent enough to besiege fortified cities. The khagans ruled over a great conglomerate of people after they have subdued a part of the Slavs, the Protobulgars and the remnants of the Huns under their thumb.³⁷

The Avars emerged on the Balkans by the alliance of the Lombard king Alboin and the Avar Khagan Bajan in 566-567. Previously, the Gepids and the Lombards fought for the territory which was vacated after the Os-

³⁵ *Ibid.*: 124-126

³⁶ WHITBY, 1988: 85. The best known Coutrigur raid is the one of 539-540; Illyricum was completely sacked and the raiding parties reached Chalcidice.

³⁷ FINE, 1991: 30.

trogoths departed to Italy. Albius promised Bajan the city of Sirmium and the control of Pannonia, if they defeat the Gepids. Fearing the alliance, the Gepids turned to Byzantium for support and promised Sirmium as a reward to Emperor Justin II. One year after the alliance between the Avars and Lombards, the siege of Sirmium began. Both sides lost and won battles, while the starved population fled the city. The city fell in Avar hands in 582, the first year of the rule of Emperor Maurice. It was a long fight for one city solely, but the capture of Sirmium meant control over Pannonia and influence on the Danubian frontier. The alliance between the Avars and the Lombards did not last; the latter withdrew to Italy, leaving the whole of Pannonia to the Avars. This was the territory the Avars claimed for their powerful tribal federation under the rule of their Khagans.³⁸

The First Avar Khaganate lasted from 568 to 626; the Second from 626 to 811.³⁹ The Avar-Slavic raids, the sieges of Thessalonica and the settlement of the Slavs are known through the hagiographic account of the Thessalonian archbishop John, written in the second decade of the sixth century; the latest date suggested is 620. In 13 homilies, the author describes the miracles performed by St. Demetrius—the patron of Thessalonica, as to save the city from the raids and the sieges. Of the events described, the more important ones are the raid of 5000 Slavs during the reign of Maurice and the seven-day siege, the civil war and the famine in Thessalonica during the reign of Phocas. *Miraculi St. Demetrii* II is the anonymous writing which gives information on the events that happened during the first decades of Heraclius' rule (610-641). It has three homilies only, but it provides information on the sieges of Thessalonica and mentions the Slavic leaders by their name.⁴⁰

³⁸ КОВАЧЕВИЋ, 1977: 40.

³⁹ The chronological framework of the Khaganates was offered by Kovačević. See КОВАЧЕВИЋ, 1977: 11.

⁴⁰ Roughly, it can be said that *Miraculi St. Demetrii I* covers part of the events of the First Avar Khaganate, while *Miraculi St. Demetrii II* covers the events of the beginning of the Second Avar Khanagate. Both accounts offer useful information on the Slavs and Avars—their techniques for siege and waging war — especially on the usage of siege machines; as well as the first settlements of the Slavs in the vicinity of Thessalonica. On *Miraculi St. Demetrii I*

The period of the First Avar Khaganate was the peak of the Avar supremacy and the period of the greatest Avar-Slavic raids. The final point of these raids was Constantinople itself or the rich Balkan cities; Thessalonica was one of the favoured targets. In 584, an army of 5000 Slavic warriors, by the order of the Khagan, reached the Long Walls of Constantinople. The mighty fortification proved itself impenetrable again, so the scope of the raid was turned on Thessalonica. Again, of no avail.⁴¹ The same year the Avars conquered Singidunum. In 586, another unsuccessful siege of Thessalonica followed; it failed due to famine and plague in the barbarian camp.⁴² A devastating campaign on the provinces of Dardania, Macedonia Prima, Macedonia Secunda and followed this siege. This raid is archaeologically attested in the urban centres on the territory of modern-day Macedonia; it is traditionally held that this raid devastated the urban life of Heraclea Lyncestis, Bargala and Stobi. It was documented via a destruction layer of the fortification of Markovi Kuli-vicinity of Skopje.⁴³

The raids continued up to 591, when Emperor Maurice signed peace with the Persians. Thus avoided fighting on two fronts, he transferred troops to the Balkans and re-conquered Singidunum. The old Danube border was restored and the Avars and Slavs were sent on the north of it. Singidunum was besieged two more times, in 593 and 596. In 599, the Avars breached the Byzantine defense and reached the outskirts of Constantinople. Again, the threat was neutralized by plague in the barbarian camp. One year later, Sirmium was re-conquered, the control over Pannonia was retrieved and the old Danube *limes* was completely restored. The Avars were paid annual tribute as for not to launch raids on Byzantine ground. Yet, Maurice broke the peace first, by sending troops on the north of Danube.⁴⁴ Though this campaign was almost devastating to them, the Avars pulled their forces quite quickly. The Danube *limes* was breached again and the Avars sent ar-

see БАРИШИЋ *et al.*, 1955: 173-184, on *Miraculi St. Demetrii II* see БАРИШИЋ *et al.*, 1955:185-216.

⁴¹ КОВАЧЕВИЋ, 1977: 54 and БАРИШИЋ *et al.*, 1955: 175.

⁴² КОВАЧЕВИЋ, 1977: 57 and БАРИШИЋ *et al.*, 1955: 176-184.

⁴³ On Heraclea Lynkestis, see МАНЕВА, 1983: 175-186; on Bargala see АЛЕКСОВА, 1989: 68 and АЛЕКСОВА, 2001: 96-97; on Stobi see WISEMAN & MANOZISSI, 1974:117-148. On Markovi Kuli, see MIKULČIĆ, 2002: 190-195.

⁴⁴ FINE, 1991: 32-33.

mies across during the reigns of Phocas and Heraclius. The Slavs settled massively on the Balkans. The scope of the Avar raids was shifted to the west and parts of modern-day Bosnia, Croatia and Dalmatia was sacked; Salona fell in the period between 619 and 626.⁴⁵ The second decade of the seventh century brought sieges on Thessalonica and Constantinople again. The walls of Thessalonica protected the city during the siege of 617 or 618. A new, interesting moment for the Balkan history is that the main carriers of this siege was the Slavs who lived in the vicinity of the city and tried to include the Avar Khagan by promising rich gifts, but negotiating as equals. Certainly, there were still Slavs under the control of the Avar Khagane, but great groups have already settled on the Balkans.⁴⁶

The unsuccessful siege of Constantinople in 626 marked the end of the First Avar Khaganate; from this point onwards the Avars started to lose their position on the Balkans. Yet, the fortresses that Justinian built and rebuilt were still in use, if one can judge from the archaeological material and that introduces the possibility that they were still perceived as a threat to the Empire.⁴⁷

The siege of 626 was led by the Khagan himself and the Persians were his allies. The fleet of *monoxyla* navigated by the Slavs and the Bulgars ought to have been one of key points of the Khagan strategy, but it was destroyed by a storm and the survivors fled the battlefield. The knowledge of Slavs to produce and navigate the boats were heavily used by the Avars, who being horsemen, had no knowledge of aquatic matters. On this very siege, it was reported that even women took part in navigating the fleet.

Furious of the failed siege, the Khagan executed the survivors. This triggered an internal turmoil within the Khaganate, which resulted in open battle in 629. Six years later, the Bulgars under the lead of Koubrat left the Khaganate. The beginning of the Second Avar Khaganate was denoted by this very loss of supremacy on the Balkans. The Avars tried to expand on the west, yet that expansion was ended with the Avaro-Frankish war (791-805). This result of this war is the Frankish control of the western parts of the Khaganate and incorporation of the eastern parts in the ever-growing

⁴⁵ CURTA, 2001: 74.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*: 108.

⁴⁷ JARIĆ, 2010a: 30-46.

kingdom of the Bulgars. The Avars appear two more times on the Balkans, in 811 and 814, but as mere mercenaries of the Bulgar Khan Krum.⁴⁸

The barbarians left their legacy not only in the written sources, but also through their material culture. The weapons, tools, jewelry and other artifacts speak as clear as the words. The material that can be connected with the barbarians is usually found in their burials and in the destruction layers of the cities they sacked. The archaeological material that I will refer in the following section of the text comes from present day Macedonia, though the most important finds from the surrounding area and the core of the barbarian realms will be mentioned, as for the proper context to be given.

The first newcomers from the Central Asian steppe brought with them new weapon—the reflex bow, known under the name composite bow as well. This weapon exceeded the range of the regular bow and its unique asymmetric design allowed to be used while mounted on horse. A reflex bow was made of several layers of wood glued together and fashioned by the elastic forces of the wood bent in the opposite direction, As to preserve the elasticity of the bow, when it was not strung it was kept in a special case attached to the belt or the saddle of its owner. The points where the elastic forces met, like the middle and the tips of the bow, were enhanced with plaques made of bone and antler. Special types of arrowheads were used with these bows and they match the types found in the Eurasian steppes. The most common type was the three-ribbed arrowhead.⁴⁹ The bows were used by every able-bodied male in the Hunnic society, including the ruling class. The Hunnic leaders, such as Attila, were considered excellent archers. The reflex bows were so integrated in the Hunnic world, that they were placed in the tombs. The bows found in the tombs of the nobility often have plaques made of precious metals, such as gold. A common gift in a nobleman's burial is the double-edged long sword, usually luxuriously decorated. The belt garniture found in the noblemen burials were clasped with buckles of silver and gold. The bows found in graves of persons with humbler origin had bone plaques, while their belts were made of common metals. Yet, swords were the sign of the nobility and they are not present in the more

⁴⁸ FINE, 1991: 90-94.

⁴⁹ VIDA, 2003: 305; HEATHER, 2005: 162-164.

humble burials. Two assemblages of grave goods coming from the burials of Hunnic nobility, found in Hungary, illustrate the custom perfectly.⁵⁰

The material culture of Avars is similar with the one of the Huns; both people reflect the same, Central Asian traditions. The male burials also are rich with weapons and the luxurious belt garnitures as symbol of higher rank; the horses were usually buried with their owners and the rich harness. Among the burials of the First Avar Khaganate, the long, straight double-edge sword is common in noblemen burials; while in the burials of the Second Avar Khaganate have certain novelties-instead of double-edge sword the one-edge, curved saber is more common. The Avars also used the reflex bow and deposited it in their burials.⁵¹ A very typical find for both Khaga-

⁵⁰ The tombs of the ruling elite was often accompanied with a funerary sacrifice, burned separately from the grave. One of the richest such finds was discovered at Pécs-Úszőpuszta. A similar, though much richer assemblage of two hundred objects was found near Szeged-Nagyszentmiklós. See Balint, 2004. The hoard from Bátaszék had a 96 cm double-edged sword, golden plaques of a reflex bow and buckle belt. The assemblage from Pannonhalma has similar structure, with an 80 cm bow with golden end and grip plaques. A set of swords, one unadorned and the other with scale-pattern gold mounts and two sets of horse harness were included in this assemblage. For more information and illustrations of all above mentioned assemblages, see MÜLLER, 2003: 284-287. On the double-edge swords with luxurious decorations and their symbolic as Hunnic noblemen' insignia, see SALAMON & LENGYEL, 1980: 93-104. For additional information and illustration of Hunnic artifacts, see TOTH, 2005: 115-128. See also the following exhibition catalogue - VORWERK, 2008. Also, I would like to recommend few of Michel Kazinski's latest works on the Great Migration Period, concerning the Huns and the later Avars. See КАЗИНСКИЙ, 2012a: 332-334; KAZINSKI, 2012b: 139-199, 287-296 and KAZINSKI, 2012c: 381-403.

⁵¹ On Avar burials and weapon grave goods, see КОВАЧЕВИЋ, 1977: 118-130; GARAM, 1995; VIDA, 2003: 305-307; ПОПОВИЋ, 2007. For more information and illustrations of Avar material culture, see the following exhibition catalogues: ARSLAN, E.A. & BUORA, M (eds.), 2000; DAIM, F., 1996; GARAM, É. & KOVÁCS, T. (eds.), 2002; MEIER-ARENDET, W. & KÜRTI, B. (eds.), 1985; MENIS, G.C., BONA, I. & GARAM, É. (eds.), 1995 and GARAM, É., 2005: 129-143. A very recent publication, in honour of Éva Garam, com-

nates is the belt-buckle garniture made of metal, where the sword, bow and other requirements were attached. These belts were also popular among the Byzantine soldiers, as well. Regardless of Byzantine or barbarian provenances, it denoted the soldier's profession and possibly, his rank. The belt buckles of the Second Avar Khaganate bear a very characteristic feature – griffins combined with grapevine, so these Avars were dubbed by archaeologists as the “the people of griffins and grapevines.”⁵²

The remnants of the reflex bows coming from the territory of present-day Macedonia were retrieved from the destruction layers of two great cities – Stobi and Heraclea Lyncestis. The burned plaques from Stobi were found in Ward 21 of the *Domus fullonica* complex, together with a one-edge dagger and a three-ribbed arrowhead; the two other three-ribbed arrowheads were found in Ward 28. The destruction layer of Ward 21 contained a multitude of coins, the newest ones minted by Emperors Theodosius II and Valentinian III, in 450 and 455 respectively. This destruction layer was followed with a renewal phase and it was dated with coins of Marcian (450-457) and Leo I (457-474), so the latest point to date the destruction layer is 450. The arrowheads from Ward 28 have similar dating, so one can connect this destruction layer with Attila's raid of 447.⁵³

The stiffening plaques coming from Heraclea Lyncestis were not found with additional, chronologically sensitive material. The two bone plaques and two three-ribbed arrowheads were found near the Episcopal Basilica; their location might indicate the same raid, though it cannot be said for certain. The third arrowhead was found near the Basilica D. Both of these objects were in use during the sixth century. Maneva has made an attempt to identify the provenance of the bone plaques based on their dimension. The stiffening plaques of the Avar bows more curved, shorter and narrower than the ones of the Hunnic bows. The Hunnic bows had dimensions of 130-140 cm, while the Avar ones of 160-70. The difference is even more accentuated when the earlier Hunnic bows are compared with the Avar bows.

piles the work of several authors concerning different aspects of the material culture of the Avars. See VIDA (ed.), 2012. On the Avar goldsmith's techniques, see BALINT, 2010: 146-160.

⁵² DAIM, 2010: 61-67.

⁵³ On the bow from Stobi, see МИКУЛЧИК, 1981: 210-226.

Yet, this cannot be taken as a solid rule, since the plaques coming from a single bow can differ in dimensions, depending on their position. This method proved to be problematic for the plaques of Heraclea, because they are poorly preserved, with parts missing; though Maneva is on the opinion that the plaques came from an earlier type of reflex bow-late Hunnic or an early Avar one. If one takes in consideration that they are found near objects which were in use during the sixth century and that other material witnessed on the presence of Byzantine army in same period in Heraclea as response to the Avar-Slavic raids, it is possible to connect that the bow and the arrowheads can be connected with one of these raids.⁵⁴

The most exclusive find that can be connected with the barbarian raids came from Heraclea Lyncestis as well. It is a helmet with rivets, one of the 49 rare finds of such helmets. Yet, its unique decoration makes in one of the kind. This helmet is very well known to the scholarly public, so I will not dwell on its description.⁵⁵ It was fashioned in the period between 489 and 523; the fact that it was found in a layer coin-dated to 584/5, suggests it was worn by more than a half century and that the owner was a high ranking officer in the Byzantine army.

The barbarians of both autochthonous, European and Central Asian origin threatened the Empire from the fourth to the eighth century AD, almost a half a millennium. The raiding activities and the claiming of imperial territory reshaped the urban life on Balkans and the barbarian raids were considered as devastators of many cities. The Empire fought back with any way possible-open battles, diplomatic games, tributes, making *foederati* of one tribe as to fuel the conflict with other tribes. The Eastern part of the Empire, later known as Byzantium outlived its Western counterpart by the sheer ability to adapt and change. The whole army and the concept of waging war was re-invented as to make the army more capable in dealing with the new threat that the steppe nomads and their Oriental military tradition represented; the *Romaioi* accepted both military techniques and allies. Tributes were paid and gifts were exchanged as to avoid fighting with two or

⁵⁴ MAHEBA, 1985/86/87:49-59.

⁵⁵ See MAHEBA, 1986: 71-78 and the newer, updated text on the symbolic of the helmet's decoration MAHEBA, 2001: 83-93. Both texts provide detailed illustrations of the helmet.

more tribes at the same time; yet when it was convenient the Byzantine Emperors did not doubt to break the truce and attack themselves.

As for the concept of viewing the barbarians as “primitive, inferior and savage” just because they raided and attacked the “civilized and superior” Byzantines and Romans, is a dated and superficial idea, in my opinion. The imperial territory rich both in resources and strategic position was a fair game for everyone when its defense was weakened—the barbarians tried to carve realms for themselves and the Byzantines tried to defend it. Perhaps this is oversimplification of the matters, but it all came to land and resources, for those meant power and ability to fund armies for further conquests and to defend the conquered. There is no real solid ground to compare the Empire and the *Barbaricum*, because both worlds had their rich material culture, intricate religious beliefs and complex social hierarchy, though utterly different. The contemporary written sources captured the severest aspects of the barbarians, demonstrated through their raids. Yet, a keen eye will catch a glimpse of the aspects among the harsh words. And when it comes to harsh words, even the Emperors and their deeds were not spared from them.

Instead of comparing them to decide which side was the superior one, it is more prudent to observe them as two inseparable halves, which influenced on each other greatly. The comparison will do justice on either side, for as an internet saying, dubiously attributed to Einstein goes: “Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.” Each had its better and worse moments and their combination created modern Europe, so the Barbarians and the *Romaioi* were the two sides of the same coin, instead of polar opposites.

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