

Vandals, Romans, Arabs, Moors
Early Medieval North Africa, c. 350-850 CE



'The Lady of Carthage', sixth-century mosaic, now in Musée Nationale du Patrimoine, Tunis.

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The Basics

Timetable

Lectures: Wednesdays @ 9am-10am, South Campus Teaching Hub Lecture Theatre 1

Seminars: Fridays @ 11am-1pm, Weeks 2, 4, 6, 9 and 11, South Campus Teaching Hub Seminar Room 9.

Course Description

North Africa is now a frontier zone at the edge of Europe, but it was once at the heart of an early medieval world centered on the Mediterranean Sea. This module moves the former Roman province of Africa (modern-day Tunisia and Algeria) from the periphery back to its rightful place at the heart of debates about the transition from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. Students will consider the consequences for the region's inhabitants of successive conquests by Vandal 'barbarians', Byzantines, and Muslim Arabs, as well as the development of sophisticated political organization among Moorish tribal federations in the mountainous hinterland on the edge of the Sahara Desert. They will explore the vibrant cultural and religious interactions that ensued in this former heartland of the Roman Empire. Above all, they will be challenged to interpret weird and wonderful early medieval sources, from martyr stories to mosaics, and potsherds to classicising poetry.

Aims

- To explore key themes in the political, social, cultural, and religious history of North Africa c. 350-850 CE.
- To evaluate modern perspectives on 'continuity' and 'change' in North Africa.
- To consider modern approaches to the interaction of different ethnic and religious groups in the early middle ages.
- To gain an appreciation of various forms of early medieval evidence (both textual and material), and how they have been deployed to make historical arguments.

Learning Outcomes

- An ability to read, analyse and reflect critically and contextually upon secondary evidence, including historical writings and the interpretations of historians
- An understanding of the development of history as a discipline and an awareness of different historical methodologies.
- A sophisticated understanding of political and socio-economic developments and cultural interactions in early medieval North Africa.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Lecture and Seminar Preparation

For each seminar, you should read a minimum of THREE items in total, including at least ONE of the three sources. Before each seminar, I will divide the group up to ensure that at least two people (including the presenter) have read each source.

Mutual Expectations

Attendance at lectures and seminars is compulsory. If you have a valid reason to miss a lecture/seminar (e.g. an illness or a family bereavement), you should get in touch with me to explain. You are responsible for catching up on work you have missed. I will be very happy to help you do so if you get in touch with me, but I will not chase you up.

For my part, I will respond to e-mails and queries as soon as I can (and certainly within 72 hours), and I strongly encourage you to come see me in office hours should you wish to discuss any aspect of the course and your own work for it.

Seminars are intended as an opportunity to **work together** to gain a better appreciation of a particular subject. This means doing the reading beforehand, coming to the session with questions and ideas to share with the rest of the group, and being **active** and **supportive** listeners when your classmates are offering their own contributions. If you have concerns about speaking in public for any reason, please come see me so that we can work out together how you can best participate.

Assessment

(1) 5-minute Presentation (15%)

For this assessment, you will give a 5-minute presentation in the week 4, 6, 9 or 11 seminar about one of the following sources. There will be an opportunity to discuss what is expected in Seminar 1. More than one presenter can take each source.

NB. Your presentation should have a powerpoint OR a handout. This should include a bibliography. I expect you to send your slides/handout to me at robin.whelan@liverpool.ac.uk by noon on the day before your presentation. Any presenter who does not do this may receive a zero for their presentation.

Seminar 2: Vandals

- 1) Victor of Vita, *History of the Vandal Persecution*
- 2) *The Latin Anthology*: Vandal-era poetry
- 3) The burial of Arifridos

Seminar 3: Byzantines and Moors

- 4) Procopius on the Reconquest
- 5) Procopius on the Moors
- 6) The Masties and/or Masuna inscriptions

Seminar 4: Islamic Ifrīqiya

- 7) Al-Baladhuri, *Book of the Conquests*
- 8) *The Teaching of Jacob Newly Baptized*

Seminar 5: City and Countryside

- 9) The Mactar Harvester
- 10) The Dominus Julius Mosaic
- 11) Victor of Vita on cities
- 12) Luxorius on charioteers
- 13) Procopius, *Buildings* on cities
- 14) Ibn Wāḍih Al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān* (*Book of the Countries*) on cities

This presentation is intended to be an exercise in source criticism. You will be marked on your ability to identify, summarize, and communicate both (a) the key features which bear on how we interpret these sources and (b) their significance for how modern historians have reconstructed late ancient and early medieval North Africa. In practice, that means that your presentation should include the following:

(a) Basic details about the source

When and where is it from?

For the texts: who wrote it? What do we know about them? What kind of genre is it? What are the contents: what is it about/what happens in it/what events does it describe?

For the tomb or the inscriptions: what (physically) is this thing? Who does this thing commemorate? What do we know about them?

There may not be straightforward answers to all of these questions! Part of source criticism is also being aware of the *limitations* of what we know, and weighing up different possible interpretations. Depending on how controversial these various features are—and how significant they are for part (b)—you may want to spend some time discussing and assessing these options.

(b) The significance of this source

What historical **questions** or historiographical **debates** does it speak to? What can it tell us about them? How have previous historians used it? What are its limitations?

Discussing the source's significance will require you to make **choices**. I do not expect you to be comprehensive in your treatment (in 5 minutes)! But this is exactly what historians do: using their judgement to **select** what they think is most salient in a source, while keeping in mind its overall contents/context/purpose.

So:

(1) Not all of these sources are the same length (e.g. Victor of Vita's three-book history as opposed to the text of the inscriptions). I have also set longer or shorter segments of these works for the purposes of the different seminars. For the longer/more complex sources in particular, you can choose whether you want to discuss the source as a whole, or drill down into one particularly important passage.

(So e.g. you could talk about Victor of Vita's *History* as a whole, or you could talk for 5 minutes about, e.g. the episode about 'barbarian clothing' in the reign of Huneric from book 2.)

(2) Likewise, I do not expect that you will speak about every possible way in which these sources might be significant. You might choose to pick one particular question, or you might talk about the variety of different questions it speaks to. (So e.g. for Victor of Vita again, you might discuss the narrow question of how the 'barbarian clothing' passage affects our understanding of Vandal and Roman identity, or you might discuss all the issues in Vandal Africa for which Victor is our main recourse.)

(3) Finally, you will need to decide the balance you will strike between discussing what previous historians have said about the source and presenting your own take on it.

The Upshot: remember this is a **5 minute** presentation. I will be looking to reward you for doing **some** of these things very well, rather than looking to punish you for **not doing everything**.

(2) 2500-word Essay (85%)

Essay questions will be released at the end of week 8. There will be an opportunity to discuss what is expected in the week 9 seminar. You will find reading lists on relevant topics on Reading Lists @ Liverpool (see below). I expect you to read at least SEVEN distinct items from one of these lists for your essay, including at least ONE primary text. The essay deadline is **Monday 6 January 2019, to hand in via Turnitin**.

Markers will take the word limit into account when assigning grades, but there is no standard penalty for failing to meet the word limit. For example, essays that exceed the wordcount will normally not have been edited properly, or will reflect weaknesses in project design. Essays that do not reach the wordcount will normally be missing opportunities to include important material. Such flaws will inevitably reduce the mark awarded.

You should also ensure that the essay is properly referenced and that you avoid plagiarism (which does not have to be intentional). The History Department has adopted the Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes and bibliography. You can find a quick guide here:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html

If you have concerns, see the following:

<https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/referencing>

https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix_L_cop_assess.pdf

Essay Writing Advice

(i) Introduction

An introduction can be the key to an excellent essay. I would usually use an introductory paragraph mainly to:

- point to the main issues and academic debates raised by the question
- indicate what your main argument/ thesis/ interpretation will be.
- briefly indicate the main stages that your analysis will take.

You are likely to produce a more impressive essay if you let the reader know right at the start what your line of inquiry or argument will be. Then you can discipline the whole essay by developing this argument in stages.

(ii) Thesis/argument

- Your argument/thesis does not have to be an extreme position. In some cases you might even have as your central argument the assertion that the state of play in the relevant field of research does not yet allow clear conclusions. But to maintain this position— just as to support any other— you will need to evaluate evidence carefully as you develop the essay.
- If you take one side in a debate, you should not only show the strength of your argument but should pay attention to the opposing arguments and point out its/their weaknesses.
- Also, don't just name-drop historians and assert that they are right or wrong: give supporting evidence for your judgement. Don't just summarise what some academics have written: evaluate what they have said.

(iii) Paragraph construction

- The first sentence of each paragraph (the topic sentence) should be very clearly focused. It should usually make an important assertion, or should signpost a significant stage in your analysis.
- The rest of the paragraph should develop this assertion or stage. Everything in the paragraph should be related to the topic stated in the topic sentence. If you start to discuss some new topic, it is time to start a new paragraph.
- The line of argument in your essay should emerge clearly when you proceed from one topic sentence to the next. When you have written a draft of your essay, read only the topic sentences and make sure that your argument becomes evident as you read from one topic sentence to the next. Everything should have a place, with paragraphs sustaining a coherent logic and the sentences within a paragraph developing from each other.
- Short and long paragraphs often betray undeveloped thoughts or poorly-structured arguments. A paragraph is a unit of thought, not distance, but look out for long or short paragraphs and consider whether they need reworking.
- Likewise, repeated, long quotations from modern historians often result in the reader losing the thread of YOUR OWN argument. They also make it harder for you to show that you've understood the point of what you've read. As a rule, unless you find a particularly neat, incisive or witty quote in an academic book, it is best to paraphrase modern scholars and quote primary texts.

(iv) Conclusion

- The conclusion should take the reader back to your overall thesis. Take stock of the main evidence that you have used to support your thesis, and make the strength of your argument clear.

(v) Footnotes

- Footnotes should be used to cite books and articles to which you are referring (even though these sources are also listed in your bibliography). Ideally, where you refer to a particular argument from within a book or article, you should footnote the relevant page(s) from the source used.
- Footnotes should also be used to show the source of quoted material. They can also be used to show where support for a particular observation or claim can be found. Footnotes should be numbered consecutively.

(vi) Bibliography

Include a bibliography. See the School of History's Undergraduate Student Guide.

Developing Your Writing Skills

The ability to write clearly, persuasively, and concisely is one of the most valuable skills you will develop over the course of your history degree. Writing can be hard but writing is also a skill that can be developed through practice and careful attention. Each time you write, edit, or proofread a piece of work you are developing your writing skills. That said, you will also benefit from working on your writing skills beyond the repeated practice of essay writing. You may find, for example, that there are some issues that get flagged up repeatedly in your feedback. These might include issues with clarity, sentence or paragraph structure, word choice, conciseness, etc.

Here are some of the resources available at the University of Liverpool that can help you to improve your writing skills. It is never too early or too late to start working on your writing skills.

Writing@Liverpool

Writing@Liverpool is a free service to help boost the academic skills of students. You will work with Writing Tutors to improve your writing skills. The Writing Tutors are experienced academic writers who are specially trained in tutoring students in 1:1 and in online contexts. If you think you would benefit from some additional support in analysing questions, becoming more critical, planning and structuring writing or developing proof-reading techniques then you can book a session here: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/humanities-and-social-sciences/writing/>

Knowhow

KnowHow offers a wide range of academic skills materials and workshops to help you gain the most from your studies. They have a section dedicated to academic writing with online materials that you can work through at your own pace. They also run regular workshops on a wide range of issues. For the full range of support available through Knowhow, see here: <https://student.liverpool.ac.uk/advice-and-guidance/knowhow>

For upcoming sessions, see here: <https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/knowhow>

Skills4Study

Skills4Study Campus is an interactive resource for developing student study skills. The service is free, but you will need to register. It provides online courses on a wide range of skills that you will develop as part of your History degree, including writing and note-taking. <https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/skills4study>

Reading Lists

The module's Reading Lists @ Liverpool page has a series of reading lists in three categories:

- (1) background/further reading to accompany the lectures
- (2) key and further reading for seminars and assessed presentations
- (3) general reading lists on specific topics

These are (in the first place) to guide you in writing your assessed essays. Everything on these lists could potentially help you to answer a question I set. Start with the general reading, and then follow your interests and your intuition as to what you need to answer the Q. I have often given short remarks to help you find the most useful reading, and to see how the different pieces in a section relate to one another. (NB there are lots of different ways to answer these questions!)

These lists will also help you to explore topics of interest in greater depth as the semester goes on. In that regard, you may wish to dip into reading on one theme or period before the questions are released.

You will notice that the lists become somewhat less clearly compartmentalized later in the period. English-language scholarship on North Africa has tended to focus on the late Roman and Vandal periods; less work has been done on Moorish and Byzantine rule outside of French historiography; and the early Islamic period has only recently become a focus of study, as historians and archaeologists push later and seek to involve North African scholars in debates. There is some stellar work about to come out; but for now, these lists have to err on the side of the general.

Lectures and Seminars

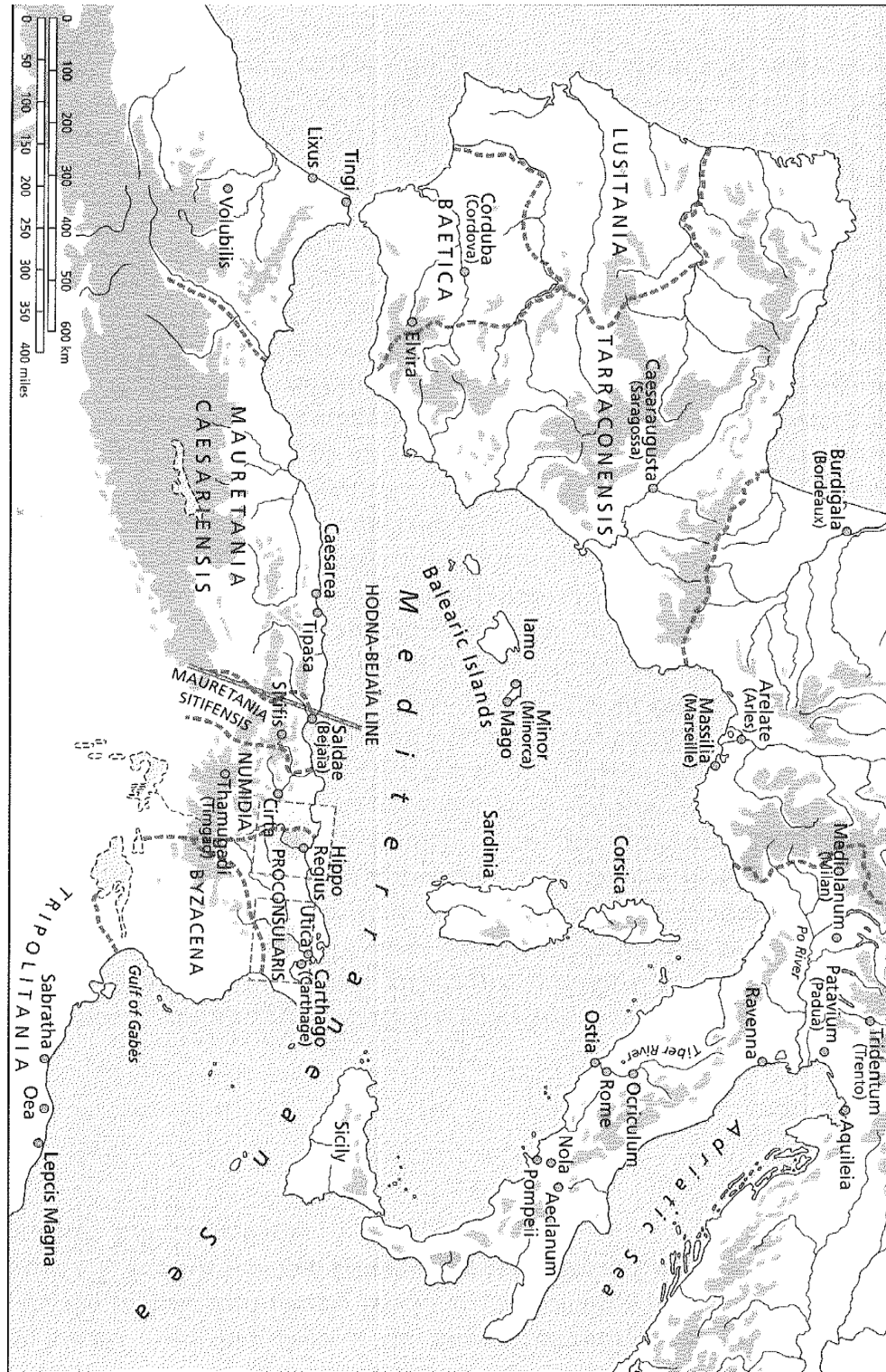
Schedule

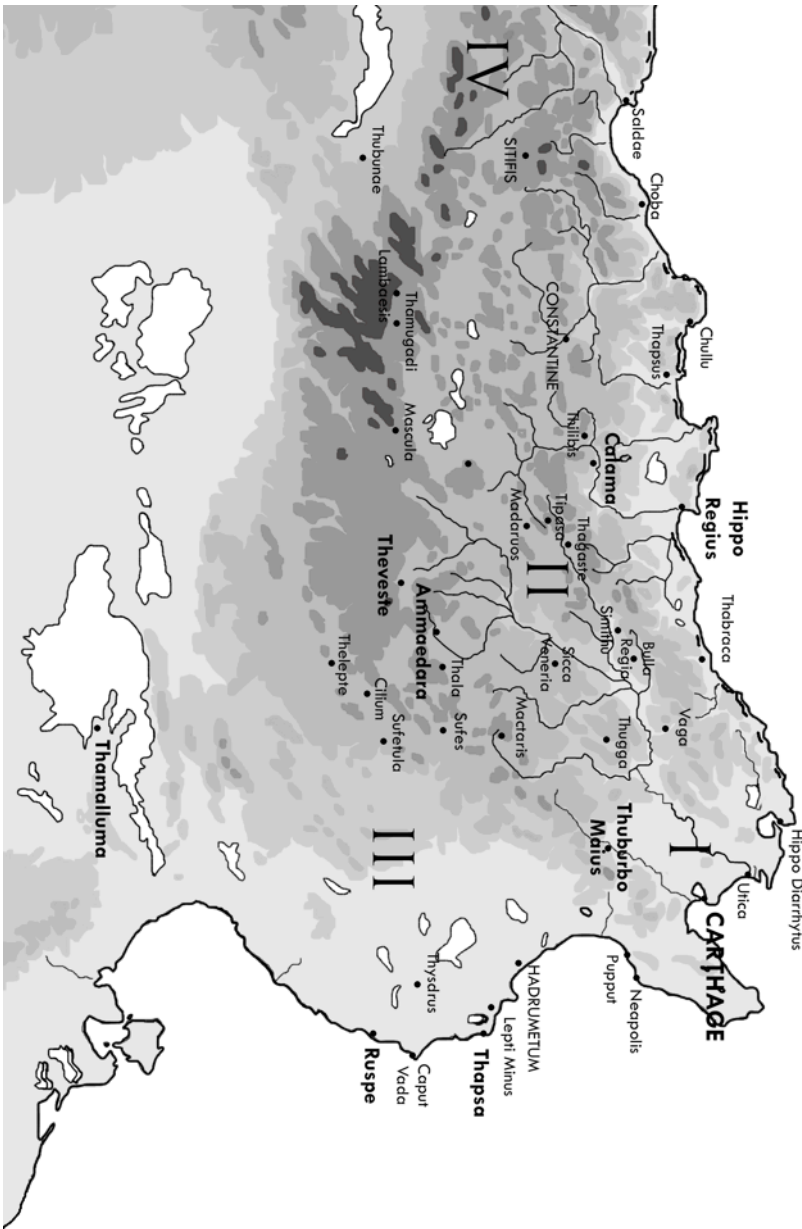
- Week 1: Lecture: 'A Land Beautiful and Flowering on All Sides': Approaching Early Medieval North Africa
- Week 2: Lecture: Christianity in Late Roman Africa
Seminar I: The Donatist Schism
- Week 3: Lecture: Vandalism 1.0? Conquest, Settlement, and Rule
- Week 4: Lecture: Vandals and Romano-Africans
Seminar II: Vandal Africa
- Week 5: Lecture: Reconquest and Reintegration: Byzantine Africa
- Week 6: Lecture: Surprisingly Moorish: The World beyond the Frontier
Seminar III: Reconquered Africa, 'Forgotten' Africa
- Week 7: READING WEEK
- Week 8: Lecture: The Arab Conquests and the Formation of Islamic Polities
- Week 9: Lecture: Muslims and Dhimmī: Religious Minorities in First Millennium North Africa
Seminar IV: From Byzantine Africa to Islamic Ifrīqiya
- Week 10: Lecture: The Economy and Rural Life
- Week 11: Lecture: The North African City in the First Millennium
Seminar V: Changing Townscapes, Changing Landscapes
- Week 12: Lecture: Between Mediterranean and Sahara: Recapping the Pre-Modern Maghreb

Maps: (1) North Africa in the Western Roman Mediterranean (Shaw, *Sacred Violence*, Map 1)

(2) Vandal Africa (Whelan, *Being Christian*, map)

(3) Islamic Ifrīqiya (Robinson, ed., *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, Volume 1, map 11)





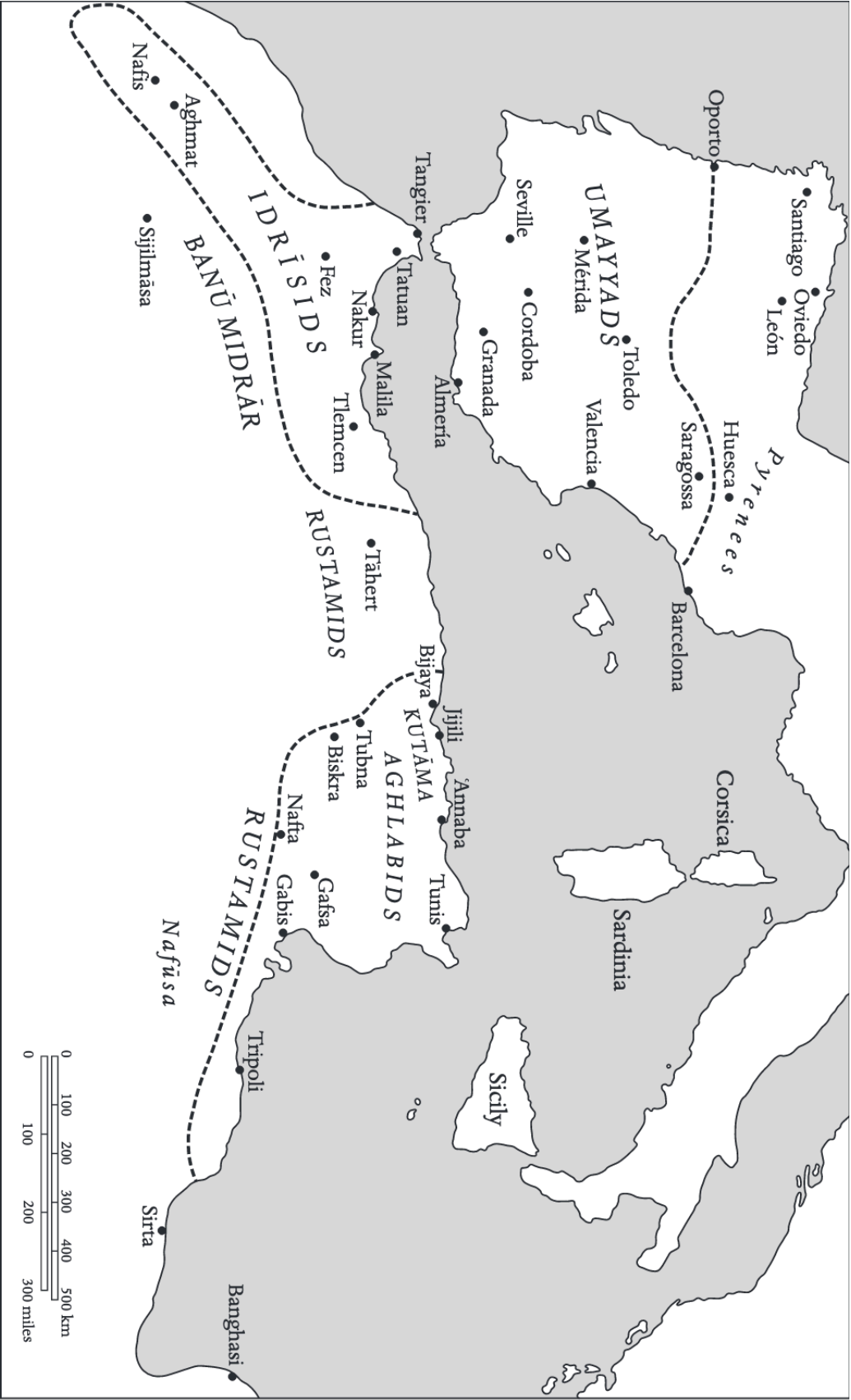
I: AFRICA PROCONSULARIS

II: NUMIDIA

III: BYZACENA

IV: MAURETANIA

SITIFENSIS



II. Spain and North Africa

Week 1

Lecture: 'A Land Beautiful and Flowering on All Sides': Approaching Early Medieval North Africa

Topics

The physical and political geography of Roman N. Africa

The place of N. Africa in the Roman world and Roman culture in N. Africa

The main developments in N. African history in the early middle ages

Reading

Leslie Dossey, *Peasant and empire in Christian North Africa*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 47 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), ch. 1.

Andy Merrills, 'Vandals, Romans, and Berbers: understanding late antique North Africa', in Andy Merrills, ed., *Vandals, Romans, and Berbers: new approaches to late antique North Africa* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 3-28.

Week 2

Lecture: Christianity in Late Roman Africa

Questions

Why was the African Church divided in two in the late Roman period? Did the Donatist schism similarly split African society?

Did late antiquity see the end of traditional Roman religion ('paganism') in North Africa?

When Romano-Africans became Christian, what were they converting to?

Key Reading

Éric Rebillard, *Christians and their many identities in late antique North Africa, 200-450 CE* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), ch. 4.

SEMINAR 1: THE DONATIST SCHISM



?The Baths of Gargilius, Carthage [mod. Tunis], site of the Conference of Carthage (411). (Author photograph).

General questions for discussion

- How did the Donatist schism come about? How did it develop? What was at stake? How did the two sides make the claim that they were the true church in Roman Africa, and their opponents in error? Why were issues of persecution, martyrdom, and religious violence so crucial? How did the schism end? (Did the schism end?!)

Essential Reading

*Brent Shaw, 'African Christianity: disputes, definitions, and Donatists', in M. R. Greenshields and T. A. Robinson, *Orthodoxy and heresy in religious movements: discipline and dissent* (Lampeter, 1992), pp. 5-34, reprinted in B. D. Shaw, *Rulers, nomads and Christians in Roman North Africa* (Aldershot, 1995), XI.

You will be divided into three groups, each of which will read one of these sources and the modern historiography on it, and come to the seminar prepared with answers to the key question based on your reading.

1. Donatist communal identity and memory

Text

The Passion of Saints Donatus and Advocatus, trans. Maureen Tilley, *Donatist martyr stories*, Translated Texts for Historians 24 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996), 51-60.

CW: violence, murder, sexual assault.

Key Question

Can the *Passion of Saints Donatus and Advocatus* tell us about the beginnings of the schism, or only about the development of Donatist communal memory as a persecuted church?

Essential Reading

*Brent Shaw, *Sacred violence: African Christians and sectarian hatred in the age of Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 187-93.

Alan Dearn, 'Donatist martyrs, stories, and attitudes', in Richard Miles (ed.) *The Donatist schism: controversy and contexts*, Translated Texts for Historians, Contexts 2 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 93-96.

Further Reading

Michael Gaddis, *There is no crime for those who have Christ: religious violence in the Christian Roman Empire*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 39 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), ch. 3.

Richard Miles, ed., *The Donatist schism: controversy and contexts*, Translated Texts for Historians, Contexts 2 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), chs by Moss and Dearn.

2. Bad Boys and Religious Violence: The Circumcellions

Text

Augustine, *Explanations on the Psalms* 132, trans. Boulding and Rotelle.

Questions

Who were the Circumcellions? Were they underused agricultural workers, overzealous monks, or simply the creation of Catholic polemicists like Augustine of Hippo? How did Augustine use the Circumcellions to draw a dividing line between the Catholics and Donatists?

Essential Reading

*Shaw, *Sacred violence*, ch. 14.

*Bruno Pottier, 'Circumcelliones, rural society, and communal violence in late antique North Africa', in R. Miles, ed., *The Donatist schism: controversy and contexts*, Translated Texts for Historians, Contexts 2 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 142-65.

Further Reading

Leslie Dossey, *Peasant and empire in Christian North Africa*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 47 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), ch. 7.

Noel Lenski, 'Harnessing violence: armed force as manpower in the late Roman countryside', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 6.2 (2013): 233-50.

3. Face/Off: The Conference of Carthage (411)

Text

Excerpts from *The Acts of the Conference of Carthage* (411), trans. E. Hermanowicz (forthcoming).

Questions

Who 'won' the Conference of Carthage? (Did anyone?) What makes the minutes such a wonderful source for African Christianity? Why did everyone spend so much time debating procedure instead of talking about 'substantive' issues?

Essential Reading

Erika Hermanowicz, *Possidius of Calama: a study of the North African episcopate in the age of Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 188-220.

Shaw, 'Disputes, definitions, and Donatists'.

Further Reading

Maureen Tilley, 'Dilatory Donatists or procrastinating Catholics? The trial at the Conference of Carthage', *Church History* 60 (1991): 7-19.

Shaw, *Sacred violence*, ch. 15.

T. Graumann, 'Upstanding Donatists: symbolic communication at the Conference of Carthage (411)', *Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum* 15.2 (2011): 329-55.

*N. B. McLynn, 'The Conference of Carthage reconsidered', in Miles (ed.) *Donatist schism*, 220-48.

Week 3

Lecture: Vandalism 1.0? Conquest, Settlement, and Rule

Questions

Why have the Vandals had such a bad reputation?

How did they end up conquering Roman Africa, and how did they consolidate their rule? How different was Vandal government from late Roman administration?

Why does the only detailed contemporary narrative of Vandal rule depict it as the malevolent persecution of demonic tyrants?

Further Reading

Averil Cameron, 'Vandal and Byzantine Africa', Averil Cameron, Bryan Ward-Perkins and Michael Whitby, ed., *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 552-59.

Jonathan Conant, *Staying Roman: conquest and identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439-700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), ch. 1.

Week 4

Lecture: Vandals and Romano-Africans



The funerary inscription of Arifridos (mid-5th c.), Thuburbo Maius (mod. Henchir Kasbat, Tunisia), Africa Proconsularis.

Questions

How much did ethnic differences matter in fifth- and sixth-century N. Africa?

Why aren't there any Vandal women?

Did Vandals and Romano-Africans forge a 'secular consensus' (MILES) around shared elite culture? Were religious controversies a divisive factor?

Further Reading

Andy Merrills and Richard Miles, *The Vandals* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), ch. 4.

SEMINAR 2: VANDAL AFRICA



The 'Vandal rider' mosaic, British Museum.

Questions to guide your reading and the seminar discussion:

- To what extent was Vandal rule a continuation of Roman government in the province, and how far did it mark a break from it?
- Does Victor of Vita's *History of the Vandal Persecution* exaggerate the importance of church conflict in Vandal Africa? Or have recent historians gone too far in downplaying it?
- How important were the ethnic identities of Vandals and Romano-Africans? Are their lifestyles 'virtually indistinguishable' (CONANT)? How can we use sources like court poetry, mosaics, or furnished burials to reconstruct how they lived their lives?

1. Persecution?

Text: PRESENTATION (1)

Victor of Vita, *History of the Persecution of the African Province*, trans. J. Moorhead, TTH 10 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992). I don't expect you to read all of this, but look at as much as you can! Some key passages (esp. for overall narrative and argument): 1.1-18, 1.22-23, 1.29, 1.51, 2.1, 2.8-11, 2.26, 2.38-39, 2.52-55, 3.1-2, 3.62. If you do this text as a presentation, you might want to explore more widely, and look at some of the individual martyr stories described throughout all three books.

[Content Warning: graphic violence, including some refs to sexual assault.]

Essential Reading

Danuta Shanzer, 'Intentions and audiences: history, hagiography, martyrdom and confession in Victor of Vita's *Historia persecutionis*', in Andy Merrills, ed., *Vandals, Romans, and Berbers: new approaches to late antique North Africa* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 271-90.

Robin Whelan, 'Arianism in Africa', in Guido Berndt and Roland Steinacher (edd.) *Arianism: Roman heresy and barbarian creed* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 243-55.

Further Reading

P. Heather, 'Christianity and the Vandals in the reign of Geiseric', in J. Drinkwater and B. Salway, ed., *Wolf Liebeschuetz reflected: essays presented by colleagues, friends & pupils*, *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* Supplement 91 (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2007), 137-46.

E. Fournier, 'Rebaptism as a ritual of cultural integration in Vandal Africa', in D. Brakke, D. M. Deliyannis and E. Watts, ed., *Shifting cultural frontiers in late antiquity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), 243-54.

2. Renaissance?

Text: PRESENTATION (2)

Luxorius, *Poems*, 18-19, 55-56, 59, 83, 90 excerpted from the *Latin Anthology*: ed. and trans. M. Rosenblum, *Luxorius: a Latin poet among the Vandals* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 123, 145, 147, 161, 165.

Essential Reading

Andy Merrills and Richard Miles, *The Vandals* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2010), 98-100, 213-27.

Further Reading

Frank Clover, *The late Roman West and the Vandals* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1992), nos IX and X ('*Felix Carthago*' and 'The symbiosis of Romans and Vandals in Africa').

Jonathan Conant, *Staying Roman: conquest and identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439-700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 43-44, 53-56, 132-36, 139, 146-48.

3. Identity

Objects: PRESENTATION (3)

See the images of the Arifridos funerary inscription and objects on VITAL, from Philipp Von Rummel, *Habitus barbarus: Kleidung und Repräsentation spätantiker Eliten im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert*, *Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde* 55 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007), pp. 339-40.

Essential Reading

Andy Merrills and Richard Miles, *The Vandals* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2010), ch. 4.

Further Reading

Philipp Von Rummel, 'The archaeology of the fifth century barbarians in North Africa', in P. Delogu and S. Gasparri, ed., *Le trasformazioni del V secolo* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 166-73.

Conant, *Staying Roman*, 49-50, 60-61.

Whelan, *Being Christian*, 195-99, 213-17.

Week 5

Lecture: Reconquest and Reintegration: Byzantine Africa



Official seal of Leontius, master of soldiers of Byzacena (text: deus adiuta Leontii magistro mil[itum] Uuza[cenae], 'God help Leontius, master of soldiers of Byzacena'). Dumbarton Oaks Collection.

Questions

Why did Belisarius' expeditionary force succeed where previous imperial armies had failed?

How did Justinian's regime seek to reintegrate North Africa into the Eastern Roman Empire? Was this process as straightforward as his triumphalist rhetoric implies?

Was Byzantine Africa in an ongoing state of military emergency?

Further Reading

Av. Cameron, 'Vandal and Byzantine Africa', Averil Cameron, Bryan Ward-Perkins and Michael Whitby, ed., *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 559-69.

Week 6

Lecture: Surprisingly Moorish: The World beyond the Frontier

Questions

How has late ancient ethnographic stereotyping and modern colonialism shaped perspectives on life beyond the Roman/Vandal/Byzantine frontier?

How have historians moved beyond them, and what sources have they used?

Are the Moorish polities best understood as post-Roman successor kingdoms?

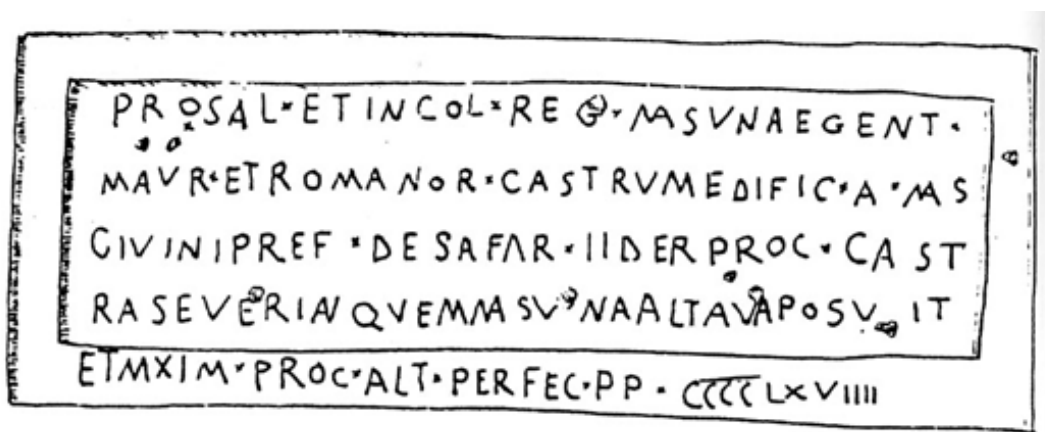
Further Reading

Michael Brett and Elizabeth Fentress, *The Berbers* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), ch. 2, esp. 70-79.

Brent Shaw, 'Fear and loathing: the nomad menace and Roman North Africa', in C. M. Wells, ed., *Roman Africa*, Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa 52 (Ottawa: Ottawa University Press, 1982), 25-46.

Andy Merrills, 'Kingdoms of North Africa', in M. Maas (ed.) *The Cambridge companion to the age of Attila* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 274-81.

SEMINAR 3: RECONQUERED AFRICA, FORGOTTEN AFRICA



The Masuna inscription (508 AD).

Questions to guide your reading and discussion in the seminar:

- How was Africa reintegrated into the Roman Empire? What roadblocks did this process hit? What was the impact on the region's inhabitants?
- How does Procopius' *History of the Vandal Wars* shape our understanding of the reconquest? What sorts of historical account does it let us write, and which does it preclude? How can we go beyond him?
- Why was it that the Byzantine armies could defeat the Vandals so quickly, but found the Moors much more difficult military opponents? Is Procopius a useful guide to relations on the frontier, or just a useful guide to Byzantine ethnographic stereotypes about weird, dangerous, untrustworthy nomads?
- Do contemporary inscriptions give us a better sense of political and social structures beyond the Roman frontier? How had Moorish polities developed in late antiquity? What connections did they have to the Roman, Vandal or Byzantine authorities? Are they best understood as 'successor kingdoms' to Roman rule (like that of the Vandals)?

1. Reconquest

Texts: PRESENTATIONS (4)

Procopius, *History of the Wars*, 3.16, 3.20-21, 4.3-4, 4.7, 4.9. (For the full joined-up narrative, read 3.10-4.9).

Essential Reading

Jonathan Conant, *Staying Roman: conquest and identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439-700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), ch. 6, 306-16.

Averil Cameron, 'Byzantine Africa: the literary evidence', in John Humphrey, ed., *Excavations at Carthage 1978* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1982), repr. in Av. Cameron, *Changing cultures in early Byzantium* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1996), 2-25.

Further Reading

Andy Merrills and Richard Miles, *The Vandals* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010), ch. 10.
 Anthony Kaldellis, 'Procopius' Vandal war: thematic trajectories and hidden transcripts', in Susan T. Stevens and Jonathan Conant, ed., *North Africa under Byzantium and early Islam* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2016), 13-21.

2. Fear and Loathing: Byzantine Ethnography

Text: PRESENTATION (5)

Procopius, *History of the Wars*, 3.25, 4.6, 4.8, 4.11, trans. Dewing.

Essential Reading

Conant, *Staying Roman*, ch. 5, 261-73.

Further Reading

Brent Shaw, 'Fear and loathing: the nomad menace and Roman North Africa', in C. M. Wells, ed., *Roman Africa*, *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 52 (Ottawa: Ottawa University Press, 1982), 25-46.
 Dick Whittaker, 'Ethnic discourses on the frontiers of Roman Africa', in *Ethnic constructs in antiquity: the role of power and tradition* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 189-205.
 David Mattingly, 'From one colonialism to another: imperialism and the Maghreb', in J. Webster and N. J. Cooper, ed., *Roman imperialism: post-colonial perspectives*, *Leicester Archaeology Monographs* 3 (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1996), 49-69.

3. The Moorish Alternative

Text: PRESENTATION (6)

Masties and Masuna inscriptions [you can choose which one or do both!]. See the images uploaded to VITAL from Andy Merrills, 'Kingdoms of North Africa', in Michael Maas, ed., *The Cambridge companion to the age of Attila* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 276, 277; Gabriel Camps, 'Rex gentium Maurorum et Romanorum: recherches sur les royaumes de Maurétanie des VI^e et VII^e siècles', *Antiquités Africaines* 20 (1984), 194, fig 4; and Pierre Morizot, 'Pour une nouvelle lecture de l'éloge de Masties', *Antiquités Africaines* 25 (1989): 265, fig. 1.

Essential Reading

Andy Merrills, 'Kingdoms of North Africa', in Michael Mass, ed., *The Cambridge companion to the age of Attila* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 274-81.
 Conant, *Staying Roman*, ch. 5, 273-97.

Further Reading

Guy Halsall, *Barbarian migrations and the Roman West, 376-568* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 405-13.

Alan Rushworth, 'From Arzuges to Rustamids: state formation and regional identity in the pre-Saharan zone', in Andy Merrills, ed., *Vandals, Romans, and Berbers: new approaches to late antique North Africa* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004) 77-98.

Week 7

Tutorial Week

Now would be a good time to catch up on reading that you've missed and to think about which source you want to take on for your assessed presentation.

Week 8

Lecture: The Arab Conquest and the Formation of Islamic Polities



Prayer hall of the Great Mosque, Kairouan (orig. 7th c., expanded under Aghlabids in 9th c.), with late antique marble columns and capitals.

Questions

What was the impact of Arab conquest and settlement on North Africa?

Why did caliphal rule splinter under the 'Abbasids, and how did the different Islamic Berber dynasties consolidate their authority?

How was North Africa integrated into a wider Islamic world at the end of the first Millennium?

Further Reading

Michael Brett, 'Arab conquest and the rise of Islam in North Africa', in J. D. Fage (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Africa, vol. 2: from c. 500 B.C. to A.D. 1050* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 490-555.

Hugh Kennedy, *The great Arab conquests* (London: W&N, 2008), ch. 6.

Week 9

Lecture: Muslims and *Dhimmī*: Religious Minorities in First Millennium North Africa

Questions

How long did it take for the inhabitants of *Ifriqiya* to convert to Islam?

Did Islamic rule see the end of North African Christianity?

What was the position of Jewish communities under Roman, Byzantine and Islamic rule?

Further Reading

Corisande Fenwick, 'From Africa to *Ifriqiya*: settlement and society in early medieval North Africa (650-800)', *Al-Masāq* 25 (2013): 9-33.

Mark Handley, 'Disputing the end of African Christianity', in Andy Merrills, ed., *Vandals, Romans, and Berbers: new approaches to late antique North Africa* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 291-310.

Averil Cameron, 'Byzantines and Jews: some recent work on early Byzantium', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 20 (1996): 249-74.

Karen Stern, *Inscribing devotion and death: archaeological evidence for Jewish populations of North Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), ch. 5.

SEMINAR 4: FROM BYZANTINE AFRICA TO ISLAMIC IFRĪQIYA



Bou Messouer mosque, Djerba, 10th century.

1. Conquests

Key reading: Hugh Kennedy, *The great Arab conquests* (London: W&N, 2008), ch. 6.

Texts: PRESENTATION (7)

Al-Baladhuri, *Kitab Futūh al-Buldān* (The Book of the Conquests of the Lands), Part V, sections 3-6, trans. Philip Hitti, *Origins of the Islamic State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1916), 352-64.

R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (Princeton, NJ, 1991), ch. 3.

Ryan Lynch, *Arab Conquests and Early Islamic Historiography: The Futuh al-Buldan of al-Baladhuri* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), introduction and ch. 2 [ON VITAL].

Compare the use of Islamic historiography by Walter Kaegi, *Muslim Expansion and Byzantine Collapse in North Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Michael Brett, 'North Africa', in J. D. Fage (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Africa*, vol. 2 from c. 500 BC to AD 1050 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 490-555.

Eduardo Manzano Moreno, 'The Iberian Peninsula and North Africa', in C. Robinson (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 581-622.

2. Apocalypse Now? Christians, Jews and the End of Byzantine Africa

Text: PRESENTATION (8)

Doctrina Iacobi nuper baptizati = 'The Teaching of Jacob Newly Baptized' iii.8-10, v.16, trans. Andrew S. Jacobs (<http://andrewjacobs.org/translations/doctrina.html>)

Walter Kaegi, *Muslim Expansion and Byzantine Collapse in North Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), ch. 4.

David Olster, *Roman Defeat, Christian Response, and the Literary Construction of the Jew* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 158-79.

Robert Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1997), 55-61.

Sean Anthony, 'Muhammad, the Keys to Paradise, and the *Doctrina Iacobi*: A Late Antique Puzzle', *Der Islam* 91.2 (2014): 243-65.

Week 10

Lecture: The Economy and Rural Life

Questions

How do archaeological surveys help us see changes in the countryside in the early middle ages?

How far can we reconstruct the lives of ordinary North African peasants?

What was the impact of the Vandal, Byzantine, and Islamic conquests on the economy of North Africa?

Further Reading

Anna Leone and David Mattingly, 'Vandal, Byzantine and Arab rural landscapes in North Africa', in Neil Christie, ed., *Landscapes of change: rural evolutions in late antiquity and the early middle ages* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 135-62.

Leslie Dossey, *Peasant and empire in Christian North Africa*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 47 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), ch. 3.

Week 11

Lecture: The North African City in the First Millennium

Questions

What had the biggest impact on Africa's cities in the first Millennium CE: political, cultural, or socio-economic change?

Did the Vandal, Byzantine, or Islamic conquest result in the end of the ancient city in North Africa?

How do archaeological excavations help us see changes in urbanism in the early middle ages?

SEMINAR 4: CHANGING TOWNSCAPES, CHANGING LANDSCAPES



The 'vintage': grape harvesting from 3rd c. mosaic, Cherchel (mod. Algeria).

Key reading: Philipp Von Rummel, 'The transformation of ancient land- and cityscapes in early medieval North Africa', in Susan T. Stevens and Jonathan Conant (edd.) *North Africa under Byzantium and early Islam* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2016), 105-17.

Then read at least ONE source from each part of the seminar.

Part I: Rural Life

Object: Presentation (9)

The 'Mactar Harvester' inscription: image and translation of text available on VITAL.

Reading

Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, The Fall of Rome, and The Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), ch. 1.

*Brent Shaw, *Bringing in the Sheaves: Economy and Metaphor in the Roman World* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2013), ch. 2.

Object: Presentation (10)

The 'Dominus Julius' mosaic (c. 400 CE): image available on VITAL.

Reading

*Lisa Nevett, *Domestic Space in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), ch. 6.

Leslie Dossey, *Peasant and empire in Christian North Africa*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 47 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), introduction and ch. 3 esp. 83-84.

Katherine Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), ch. 7, esp. 117-20.

David Parrish, 'Two Mosaics from Roman Tunisia: An African Variation on the Seasons Theme', *American Journal of Archaeology* 83 (1979): 279-85.

Part II: Urban Life

Text: Presentation (11)

Victor of Vita, *History of the Persecution*, 1.8-9, 1.15-16, trans. J. Moorhead, TTH 10 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992), 5-6.

Anna Leone, *Changing Townscapes in North Africa from Late Antiquity to the Arab Conquest* (Bari: Edipuglia, 2007), ch. 2, esp. 154-64.

Andy Merrills and Richard Miles, *The Vandals* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 206-11.

Text: Presentation (12)

Luxorius, *Poems*, 7, 20, 26-27, 38, 41-42, 50, excerpted from the *Latin Anthology*: ed. and trans. M. Rosenblum, *Luxorius: a Latin poet among the Vandals* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 115, 125, 129, 135, 137, 141,

Andy Merrills and Richard Miles, *The Vandals* (Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell 2010), ch. 8.

Anna Leone, *Changing Townscapes in North Africa from Late Antiquity to the Arab Conquest* (Bari: Edipuglia 2007), 66-72, 137-40.

Susan T. Stevens, 'The Circus Poems in the *Latin Anthology*', in J. H. Humphrey (ed.) *The Circus and a Byzantine Cemetery at Carthage* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), 1: 153-78.

Text: Presentation (13)

Procopius, *Buildings*, book 6, chs 4-6 (Leptis Magna, Carthage, Hadrumentum), trans. Dewing, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA, 1940), 373-89.

Anna Leone, *Changing Townscapes in North Africa from Late Antiquity to the Arab Conquest* (Bari: Edipuglia, 2007), ch. 3.

Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage 10 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985), ch. 10.

Text: Presentation (14)

Ibn Wāḍih Al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitab al-Buldān (Book of the Countries)*, 342-53, 356-60, trans. Matthew Gordon et al, *The Works of Ibn Wāḍih al-Ya'qūbī: An English Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 178-91, 194-98. See esp. the introduction on the Maghreb (178-79), Barqa (179-80), Al-Qayrawan (184-85), Tahart (196-97), Sijillmasa (197-98).

Matthew Gordon et al, ed., *The Works of Ibn Wāḍih al-Ya'qūbī: An English Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 9-22.

Corisande Fenwick, 'From Africa to *Ifriqiya*: settlement and society in early medieval North Africa (650-800)', *Al-Masāq* 25 (2013): 9-33.

Corisande Fenwick, 'The Arab Conquests and the End of Ancient Africa?', in R. B. Hitchner, ed., *A Companion to North Africa in Antiquity* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, forthcoming). [Proofs on VITAL]

On individual polities and cities, see also various chapters in Glaire Anderson, Corisande Fenwick and Mariam Rosser-Owen, *The Aghlabids and their Neighbours* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), e.g. Goodson on Kairouan, Fentress on Fes, Capel on Sijilmasa.

Week 12

Lecture: Between Mediterranean and Sahara: Recapping the Pre-Modern Maghreb

Questions

How was North Africa entangled in slave trading in the early middle ages? What can this show us about trans-Saharan connections?

To what extent did the Arab conquest mark a break in North African history? Does it suggest a new division of the world into Christendom and the *dar-al-Islam* (land of Islam), or is North Africa part of continuing trans-Mediterranean connections throughout pre-modernity?

Further Reading

E. Savage, 'Berbers and Blacks: Ibādī Slave Traffic in Eighth-Century North Africa', *The Journal of African History* 33 (1992): 351-68.

S. M. Guérin, 'Forgotten Routes? Italy, Ifriqiya and the Trans-Saharan Ivory Trade', *Al-Masāq* 25 (2013): 70-91.

If you've read this far, e-mail me a gif from *The Good Place* so I know you're up to speed.

Good luck!

Dr Robin Whelan

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